

ALAMBA International Symposium 2023

The Future of Work and the Just Economy

April 7-11, 2023

The Symposium Challenge

While most might feel that education is important in its own right, many see education primarily as a means for a lifetime of employment. The students of member schools of the MBA international symposium typically progress to highly selective universities, and then to demanding, usually service sector, careers. Throughout economic history there has always been speculation as to how the future of work would look, which is itself dependent on how the economy would look; sometimes that speculation has been accurate, at other times less so. The nature of fairness in an economy is of perennial importance and relevance; capitalism as an economic engine relies to some extent on inequality and there is much genuine concern, particularly amongst the young, about how far capitalism can provide acceptable outcomes across societies. At ALAMBAIS 2023 we will examine how working lives have evolved into their present state across countries (particularly of MBAIS schools, and of Africa) what might be the future of work, and how far our societies' current economic models will remain fit for purpose. There is no better place to do this than at ALA, since its ethos is one of developing entrepreneurial leadership to best help the African continent prepare for and respond to the challenges of an uncertain future,

The challenge of the ALAMBA International Symposium 2023 is for students, after examining the evolution of work, the wider economy, and their impact on the individual and society, to consider the future of work and the just economy, and suggest practical steps they can take to best prepare for that future, and to mitigate particular problems they identify.

Over the first ten years of the Winchester International Symposium we considered a range of fascinating topics, each with unique importance and relevance to the host school; this is the third year of the Montgomery Bell International Symposium and that central purpose remains. Two factors common to each symposium have been the intellectual talent and commitment of the students, and the distinct cultural backgrounds that have so illuminated their contributions. In other words, a shared scholarship together with a unique cultural perspective have created an extremely fertile forum for discussing ideas. This will be as relevant and important as ever this year: at ALAMBAIS we aim to look specifically at the issue of work in our different societies, to identify the unique as well as common forces that have contributed to our different labour markets and the distributions of income and wealth, to look at the future of work, and at the particular challenges our systems and societies might face, and to propose practical solutions to those challenges.

Students from the group of Symposium schools will come together in Johannesburg in April 2023, after having worked online for six months on the topic areas overleaf. Each school will draft a monthly 750-word response to a particular question set within each topic area; the response will follow a month of discussion of the issues arising from an introductory essay. The response will be posted online in the shared *Google* group, and submitted to TJP. Students will thus have a further week in which they are expected to comment on others' submitted responses.

As before, TJP will send participating students the introductory essay on each topic area, together with required and suggested reading, on the dates overleaf. Intermediate tasks – such as reading relevant articles, watching YouTube or TED talks, listening to podcasts – will also be assigned as appropriate. Students will again be encouraged to form their own social media group to become acquainted before the Symposium.

Student pairs will pursue a personal project which will examine one labour market or distributional aspect of their own society. The specific project must gain prior approval. Students must submit their completed project presentations to TJP, by means of *YouTube* upload (or other common video format) one month before the beginning of the Symposium; this will allow for greater consistency, as well as for accurate time management at the Symposium. Completed and approved projects will be presented at ALAMBAIS.

At ALAMBAIS 2023, students will discuss ideas during daily debates, listen to expert speakers, and respond to prompts that will allow them to use their online work. These responses will take the form of short presentations. At the end of the week, students will come together to draft The Symposium Accord, which will be a common response to The Symposium Challenge.

Symposium Online Topic Schedule (and deadlines)

October 10, 2022 (Nov 10, 2022)	The Evolution of Work and the Economy; essay posted by TJP Students submit essays to TJP and post online for general comment
Nov 17, 2022 (Dec 17, 2022)	Work and Distribution in the Modern Economy; essay posted by TJP Students submit essays to TJP and post online for general comment
Jan 15, 2023 (Feb 15, 2023)	Africa: Work and the Just Economy; essay posted by TJP Students submit essays to TJP and post online for general comment
Feb 22, 2023 (Mar 22, 2023)	The Future of Work and the Just Economy; essay posted by TJP Students submit essays to TJP and post online for general comment
Jan 15, 2023	Deadline for Personal Project approval
Jan - Mar, 2023 (Mar 27, 2023)	Personal Project work Students submit completed personal projects to TJP

Block 1 (Oct 10 – Nov 10): The Evolution of Work and the Economy

Economic theories of development. Agriculture to manufacturing to services. Case studies across countries, notably the UK, US, China and on the African continent. The fundamental importance of the distribution of income. Marx and his theory of the exploitation of labour. 20th century experiences of deindustrialization. Predictions for the future of work and the just economy over time, both from economists (e.g. Keynes) and writers (e.g. Orwell).

Block 2 (Nov 17 – Dec 17): Work and Distribution in the Modern Economy

What has happened to working lives in the 21st century, and why? How far has technology driven these changes? The ownership of land and capital. Globalisation and the recent growth in populism: Brexit, Trump, EU scepticism. Why are so many people in western countries no longer economically active? Covid and its role in the changing face of work. Work as a part of a dignified modern life and not merely to earn income. The work-life balance in different countries.

Block 3 (Jan 15 – Feb 15): Africa: Work and the Just Economy

ALA and its ethos. Why has sub-Saharan Africa found economic development so challenging? Demographics and work. The Human Development Index and theories of economic development particular as applied to Africa. Stereotypes and individuals: the danger of branding a single “African” experience. South Africa’s unique story, particularly regarding its own demographics and politics. Zimbabwe and land reform. The interface of politics and economics in Africa, notably with regard to income and wealth distribution.

Block 4 (Feb 22 – Mar 22): The Future of Work and the Just Economy.

How far is the situation facing today’s youth different from before? How important are the demographic issues facing South Africa with its high percentage of young people; is this an opportunity or a curse? The young and mental health. Social media and technological drivers of change. Inequalities of income and wealth distribution and likely government (in)action. Globalisation and climate change. What do ALAMBAIS students identify as the major future challenges and how can they improve future outcomes?

Personal projects (Jan – March, 2020. Deadline March 20, 2020):

Students must complete an independent and original investigation into an aspect of the future of work of their choice, but from their home country, concentrating on one of the four themes above. The project must be approved by TJP by **January 15, 2023**. The completed investigation must be uploaded as a video presentation by **March 27, 2023** and take no more than ten minutes in total; this will be the same presentation that the students will give at ALAMBAIS and will enable TJP to be assured of the content and timing. Students will present their projects during ALAMBAIS 2023.

Hatim Eltayeb, acting CEO, African Leadership Academy
Tim Parkinson (TJP), ALAMBAIS Academic Director

September, 2022