The Grand Challenge to **Harness Technology for Social Good** is unique among the Grand Challenges in that it sets out not to address a specific issue or problem, but to fundamentally transform the field of social work with respect to its relationship to technology. Specifically, it aims to harness big data and deploy information and communication technology to improve the efficacy of social programs, accelerate the pace of social discovery, and reduce inequalities.

During the past five years, network members have led the field in this direction through their practice, research, teaching, and advocacy. They have served as a resource for the field, providing information and serving as a forum for people to meet and connect around the technology issues affecting them and their work.

A great deal of movement has occurred in 2020, as COVID-related social distancing measures drastically accelerated the field's adoption of technology — from remote working and teaching to virtual conferences to telehealth. In this sense, the coronavirus pandemic brought new attention and urgency to this Grand Challenge.
Over the past five years, members of the Grand Challenge to Harness Technology for Social Good and their colleagues have:

- Authored working papers on harnessing big data in social work and innovating social work practice through the integration of technology
- Articulated and advocated for policy recommendations including:
  1. Expanding internet connectivity for underserved households
  2. Unlocking government data to drive solutions to social problems
  3. Opening the possibility of social work practice across state lines
- Hosted a six-part webinar series covering such topics as telemental health, thanatechnology, and digital mapping as well as a special webinar on COVID-19, “Leading in a time of crisis”
- Participated in Project Connect, an initiative of the University of Washington School of Social Work for “social work students to gain valuable experience by working with local agencies to support vulnerable populations impacted by the COVID-19 crisis”
- Hosted a conference, sponsored by the University of Southern California, on social work and technology
- Published numerous articles and a book, "Teaching Social Work with Digital Technology," which aims to help “educators make pedagogically sound, rational, practical, and ethical decisions about integrating technology into their social work programs”
- Advised their colleagues and students of social work, both formally and informally, including several DSW students from USC whose final projects were focused on technology, including resource website and apps
- Developed SWVirtualPal, a social media platform for social workers, as part of their work with iHeartTech, the Institute for Healthy Engagement and Resilience with Technology
- Discussed the implications of artificial intelligence for the field of social work in light of COVID-19 in The Social Work Podcast, hosted by network co-lead Jonathan Singer
- Pioneered novel applications of virtual reality to social work education at the University of Utah and Ball State University

Over the next five years, Harness Technology for Social Good network members and their colleagues will work toward the following objectives:

- Provide feedback on the Technology Advisory Group of the Council on Social Work Education
- Conduct and publish a first-of-its-kind, rigorous, comprehensive review of the scholarly literature around social work and technology published between 2015 and 2019. This peer-reviewed publication will provided a better understanding of the state of the science around these issues
- Engage in policy-related efforts around the “digital divide,” which has become more striking in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic
- Collaborate with all of the Grand Challenge networks to identify creative, effective uses of technology to address issues in each challenge area