

Taiwan's new digital minister is a transgender software programmer who wants to make government more open



Audrey Tang (CC BY 4.0 Camille McOuat @ Liberation.fr)
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August 26, 2016

The Taiwanese government has appointed Audrey Tang, a transgender software developer and self-described “civic hacker” to its executive council to head digital policy. Tang, 35, will be the youngest and first transgender official in Taiwan’s executive government, known as the yuan.

Tang will be tasked with making the government more transparent, and making data about how it works available to all, as well helping form Taiwan’s “[Asian Silicon Valley](#),” a new tech zone devoted to the “internet of things” industry. On [Facebook](#) on Aug.25, she said that her mission was not to do propaganda but to “serve as a channel” that combines “intelligence and power.”

Tang is currently working as a consultant for Apple, in a position that reportedly earns her [a bitcoin per hour](#) (link in Chinese). She left school at age 12 and developed a search engine for Mandarin lyrics at age 15, then several other startups. At age 24, she transitioned from a man to a woman.

Tang [started a web page](#) to answer questions before she starts the new job on October 1. She said she will be “using digital services to assist public servants, welcoming contributions from civic tech, open knowledge, and collaborative innovations.”

Previously she consulted on the government’s [vTaiwan](#), an online policy discussion platform and has been working on [gOv community](#), an online Taiwanese initiative that “pushes information transparency, focusing on developing information platforms and tools for the citizens to participate in society.”

During Taiwan’s 2014 [Sunflower Movement](#), in which students took over Parliament to protest against a trade deal with China, Tang was involved in broadcasting the event from a live cam inside the building to the streets outside. This wasn’t a rebellious act, [Tang said](#), instead the broadcasts “were intended to encourage people to talk, that’s all.”

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In Fifth Grade we were all taught our bodies are made of Atoms. Atoms have Electrons in their outer Shells. Electrons Repel, thus no Atom can Touch any other Atom. You cannot Touch the Chair you are sitting on. A Human body will have over 10 to the 27th electrons. This is more than the number of grains of sand on the Earth.

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