



RESEARCHER LINKS

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Call for Participants to Workshop on “Responsible Innovation and the Governance of Socially Controversial Technologies”

Under the British Council and FAPESP Researcher Links scheme we will be holding a workshop on “Responsible Innovation and the Governance of Socially Controversial Technologies” in UNICAMP, Campinas, Brazil on 19 – 21 MARCH 2014. The workshop is being coordinated by Prof Phil Macnaghten (UNICAMP, Brazil and Durham University, UK) and Dr Jack Stilgoe (UCL, London), and will have contributions from other leading researchers (Prof Brian Wynne, Lancaster University, UK; Prof Richard Owen, University of Exeter, UK; Prof Marcelo Knobel, UNICAMP, Brazil; Dr Marko Monteiro, UNICAMP, Brazil). We are now inviting Early Career Researchers from the UK or Brazil (within the State of Sao Paulo) to apply to attend this workshop. All travel and accommodation expenses will be covered by the Researcher Links programme. The application form, with more details on the initiative, is attached and should be sent both to Phil Macnaghten (p.m.macnaghten@durham.ac.uk) and Jack Stilgoe (j.stilgoe@ucl.ac.uk j.stilgoe@ucl.ac.uk) before the deadline of 06 DECEMBER 2013.

Theme of Workshop

The governance of emerging science and technology is a major challenge for contemporary democracies. Over the last few years researchers (including the coordinators and mentors of this proposal) have begun to develop a framework for responsible innovation that seeks to address this challenge and that aims to ensure that the directions and trajectories of science and innovation can be modulated in democratic, socially acceptable and desirable ways. With funding from the UK Research Councils, we have been able to undertake some initial experiments that provide insights into the opportunities and challenges of implementation. Responsible innovation is thus an emerging field of discourse on how to produce knowledge on and properly enact a democratic governance of new technologies that offers promising prospects for on-going debates on Science and Technology Studies (STS), Human Geography, Sociology, Social Psychology, Anthropology, Political Science and beyond. Responsible innovation can become a site for reflection on the governance of socially controversial technologies, and help to turn these reflections into practical policy action, empowering inquiry to act beyond academia.

In this workshop we aim to foster a debate on how UK–Brazil collaborative research on the socially responsible governance of research and innovation might be fostered and promoted (cognisant of current institutional and cultural barriers and differences). We further aim to begin to scrutinise how a framework of responsible innovation might be applied in terms of the governance of (emerging and current) socially controversial technologies in Brazil. Proposed substantive research foci will include collaboration on agricultural (such as analysis of debates on GM agriculture), energy (such as analysis of debates on biofuels,

hydroelectric dams and pre-salt exploration) and climate change technologies (such as geoengineering). We aim to open up discussion of these technologies, how they have emerged out of distinctive contexts and political economies, and whether a framework of responsible innovation offers innovative pathways to discuss, reflect on and propose novel responses to the ethical, political, economic and social dilemmas posed by these controversial technologies.

Submissions are encouraged from all those who have a critical interest in the responsible innovation agenda and who are keen to develop new avenues of collaboration. We are particularly interested to use the workshop opportunity to build research links between the UK and Brazil, to seed collaboration in various forms and to develop new and sustainable networks.