

AsSIST-UK Launch Event

August 25 2015

Fulton Building, University of Sussex, Brighton.

Venue details: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/aboutus/campus/buildings/teaching/fulton>



Introduction

The principal aim of the meeting is to establish a new national association, AsSIST-UK, Association for Studies in Innovation, Science and Technology, whose purpose is primarily to establish much stronger links between and a national voice for STIS. the meeting is an opportunity to reflect on the contribution that UK STIS has made and can make towards our understanding of innovation systems, governance, value practices and the role of civil society. The meeting is structured to allow extended discussion around these themes. This is preceded by a general plenary agreeing a statement of Foundational principles, attached here as an Annex.

Programme

12.00 - 12.45 Lunch/networking for delegates. Fulton Building Social Space

12.45 – 1.30 Introduction and confirmation of the Founding Resolution of the Association (Plenary) Room: Fulton B (Chairs, Andrew Webster, SATSU, University of York/Robin Williams, ISSI, University of Edinburgh)

See Annex 1 for the Foundational Statement

After the opening plenary the afternoon is devoted to two sessions, each of which will have parallel theme-based discussion reflecting on the contribution that STIS has made to the area and the challenges – both intellectual and policy-related – that lie ahead for the field. The bullet-points below are simply a way of helping to frame (rather than close off) the discussion. Each chair will give a five minute introduction to the theme to set some ideas running. Then the floor is open to debate. The debate will help provide an agenda for *future* thinking, especially within and through AsSIST-UK, and not focus too heavily on particular substantive issues/domains within STIS.

Please come to the meeting with ideas and suggestions related to the Themes you decide to attend: as a *national association* what strengths can we draw on, where might we have most influence, and what should be our main focus/audience in the future

13:30 – 14:30 First Thematic parallel sessions:

a) The process and practice of innovation (Chair: Anne-Marie Coles, Leader of the Sustainability, Technology & Innovation Research Group, University of Greenwich; Rapporteur: tba) Room Fulton 104

- What have been the more significant contributions that STIS has made towards understanding the process of innovation and the role of expertise in *different* technological sectors? Are there generic changes in innovation (such as moves towards ‘re-distributed manufacture’) that call for new forms of STIS analyses?
- Does STIS constitute a distinct scientific paradigm that accounts for the complex process and practice of innovation?
- How has work within STIS offered insight into the origin, use and obsolescence of technology?
- What is the relevance, utility and limitations of the concept ‘innovation’ in *non-technology based* sectors, and outside the private sector, that is, ‘innovation’ in services, in the creative sectors, in public services, in the third sector, and in social enterprises. How can STIS contribute here?

b) Governance and policy for STI (Chair: Johan Schot, Director, SPRU, University of Sussex; Rapporteur: Kieron Flanagan, Manchester Institute of Innovation Research, Manchester Business School) Room Fulton 103

- What are the changing needs for innovation policy in our current world, the history of innovation policy and its deficiencies to deal with these needs, and how to develop policy and governance structures that are relevant? What might be involved in moving innovation policy from a competition to a transformative change agenda. In what ways has more collaboration between STS, the economics of innovation, the politics of the state and the history of technology become necessary because of this?
- How are we to understand the geographies of governance beyond national boundaries at global/local levels? What likely shifts will we see in the future?
- How far is policy and its instruments (such as the energy-related ‘Green Deal’ and feed-in-tariffs) part of a wider shift towards consumer-focused innovation which aim to promote the adoption of particular types of technologies and influence the creation of technological pathways
- What are the principal insights that STIS has offered about the meaning of governance and risk in different domains? To what extent is there a regulatory crisis in the social management of science and technology?

14:30- 14:45 Refreshments

14:45 – 15:45 Second Thematic parallel sessions:

c) Values and valuation (Chair: Vicky Singleton, Director of Women's Studies/Member of the Centre for Science Studies, University of Lancaster; Rapporteur: tba) Room Fulton 104

- How is value interpreted/generated and mobilised in the technosciences and with what political and economic implications?
- What are the values of the scientist and of scientific communities, and how do they relate to the values of other groups in the context of the fashionable notion of responsible research and innovation?
- How do social values become incorporated into technology development and can social 'good' survive the need for technologies to be economically competitive? Why do scientific and technological controversies arise and how are they resolved? Is there anything we should not know or do?
- Can the tension between values and interests in STIS be resolved? If so how?

d) Engagement and civil society (Chair: Theo Papaioannou, Head of Development Policy and Practice, Open University; Rapporteur: Stevie de Saille, Sociological Studies, University of Sheffield) Fulton 103

- How has/does the scientific community frame the notion of 'citizen science' and how does that contrast to STIS and policy generated ideas of public participation/engagement?
- What are the political implications of making science more public and how does this relate to issues of social justice, legitimacy and transparency in politics and policymaking?
- Can communities successfully own technologies (eg. District heating schemes), how far have we moved on from the deficit model of scientific and technological knowledge? How do we measure success in participation and engagement in scientific and technological issues?
- What critical position should STIS take in regard to the use of social media as a vehicle for engagement with science?
- Should STIS engage with conceptual innovations of civil societies and communities in addressing challenges of the 21st century?

15.45 – 16.30 Plenary – Brief Feedback¹ from the Sessions and Forward Look: (Chair: Robin Williams) Room Fulton B

Strategic priorities for AsSIST-UK: this will address for example REF challenges; ESRC Doctoral Training Centres etc (Plenary); proposed *Controversies in STIS* book (with Routledge)

¹ We will ask some colleagues to make a note of the key issues raised during the Sessions, which will inform our Report on the meeting itself.

16:30 Close/informal networking

Any queries contact:

andrew.webster@york.ac.uk (relating to the programme)

sarah.shrive-morrison@york.ac.uk (relating to travel bursaries for PhDs)

p.j.bolton@sussex.ac.uk (relating to local arrangements at Sussex)

Annex 1

AsSIST-UK Founding Resolution

General statement about AsSIST-UK: aims and objectives

Motion to establish AsSIST-UK as a membership organisation to represent and support research, scholarship and education in the fields of Science Technology and Innovation Studies.

The mission and role of AsSIST-UK

- to represent our emerging field in discussions with academic communities, with research and education institutions and funding and policy bodies, and with wider publics
- to support the development of research and scholarship and related activities and bring this work to the attention of interested audiences
- to support trans-disciplinary collaboration and engagement with scientists, engineers, government, public and industry
- to support education and training and capacity development
- to explore mutually beneficial interaction and collaboration with other bodies in the field with cognate purposes – including but not limited to the European Association for Studies of Science and Technology and the BSA's Science and Technology Studies group.

Organising principles/objectives

In pursuing these goals AsSIST-UK will seek to be inclusive:

- by encompassing diverse research traditions (including but not limited to Science and Technology Studies, Innovation Studies, Science and Technology Policy, Political economy of Science and Technology, Economics of Innovation, History and Philosophy of Science, Technology and Medicine, Technology Management as well cognate approaches from geography, environmental studies, organization studies, policy studies etc)
- by attending to the diverse needs of research students and junior scholars and more established staff
- by attending to the needs of individuals and groups of scholars not just in larger research centres but also smaller centres and individuals located in other disciplinary contexts

We have established a *development group* through an extended dialogue with an inclusive range of constituencies. We nominate this development group, for a 2 year term, to carry forward our work.

The development group would be charged:

- 1) to develop a constitution and arrangements for governance, funding, membership etc
- 2) to organise a variety of activities including workshops
- 3) to organise a further national AsSIST-UK conference that would be invited to approve proposals for new organizational arrangements, including the franchise and arrangements for a electing a properly representative executive committee and officers
- 4) to carry out other activities in support of the aims and objectives of AsSIST-UK.

Values and organizing principles

- in its work the development group would seek to be inclusive, with balanced representation of the various analytical traditions and of different centres, larger and smaller, across the UK
- in furthering the organisation's goals the development group would be empowered to co-opt additional members, to appoint officers etc and to set up subgroups to include wider constituencies in various activities in support of the organisation's goals (eg producing a website, newsletter, social media, doctoral researchers group).
- The emphasis will be on self-help activities and virtual forms of organization that minimize the need to apply potentially exclusive membership fees

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