

Debating Responsible Research and Innovation

1. Responsible Research and Innovation

‘Responsible research and innovation’ (RRI) is a discourse and policy framework that has emerged in recent years especially in Europe (the discourse of ‘anticipatory governance’ is a largely parallel and possibly more diffuse framework that has developed in recent years in the United States). RRI has been described as a ‘transparent, interactive process, by which societal actors and innovators become mutually responsive to each other, with a view on the acceptability, sustainability and societal desirability of the innovation process and its marketable products’. The core idea is one of taking care of the future through collective stewardship of science and innovation in the present, of shaping innovation processes before technological ‘lock-in’ sets in, and of developing governance mechanisms that do not rely solely on the orienting capacity of market mechanisms. RRI differs from traditional approaches to techno-scientific governance in moving from the governance of risk to the governance of innovation, and for promoting a collective ethics of care and stewardship amongst scientists and innovators. In addition, the presence of ‘purpose questions’ (why are researchers doing it, who or what will benefit, what are the alternatives and so on) marks a clear distinction from the typical ethical focus of techno-science advisory councils and ethics committees.

Debates about and experiments with the new framework of RRI are spreading quickly, with a comparable amount of rising questions. In this session we aim to promote a conversation between theoretical and empirical contributions coming from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (including from science and technology studies, sociology, philosophy, political science, amongst others).

Topics of interest may include, but are not limited to:

- Theoretical and methodological dimensions of RRI
- Historical and policy underpinnings of RRI
- Relationship of RRI with the themes of sustainability and resilience
- Commonalities with and differences from other understandings of and approaches to ‘anticipation’ and ‘anticipatory governance’
- Case studies of different stages and forms of application of the RRI concept and framework
- Emerging themes and controversies surrounding the RRI concept and framework

2. Proponents

Phil Macnaghten (University of Wageningen)

Luigi Pellizzoni (University of Trieste)

3. Relevant information

- To submit an abstract to this workshop send a mail to Luigi Pellizzoni (pellizzoni@sp.units.it) before 15 April 2015
- Further information on the conference is available from <http://www.projectanticipation.org>
- Session’s speakers should register and pay the conference fee:

- Early registration (before 1 September 2015): € 150
- Late registration (from 1 September 2015): € 200

4. Important dates

- Abstract submission: 15 April 2015
- Acceptance notification: 15 May 2015
- Final program: 15 June 2015
- Early registration: Before 1 September 2015
- Deadline registration: 20 October 2015