CALL FOR SESSIONS
STS CONFERENCE GRAZ 2019

CRITICAL ISSUES IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY STUDIES

http://sts-conference-graz.tugraz.at

Dear Colleagues:

The STS Conference Graz 2019 is the joint Annual Conference of the Science, Technology and Society Unit - Graz University of Technology, the Inter-Disciplinary Research Centre for Technology, Work and Culture (IFZ) and the Institute of Advanced Studies on Science, Technology and Society (IAS-STS).

In our call for sessions we suggest the following thematic fields and we would like to encourage participants to think outside the box by combining thematic fields and considering potential intersections:

THEMATIC FIELDS

DIGITIZATION OF SOCIETY

Are we nowadays witnessing a digital transformation of society, which is different from how information and communication technology has induced social change in the past decades? Current discourses about a "digital revolution" that encompasses every sphere of social life ("digitization of work", "digitization of business", "digitization of education", digitization of healthcare" etc.) suggest that such a digital transformation of society is on its way. Empirical observations from quite different social fields support the impression that the transformative power of digitization is still growing. Mobile devices, connectivity, social media, platforms, big data and related developments as well as the new practices and social innovations associated with them are about to induce substantial changes in many spheres of society. Currently, we can observe how Twitter changes the political communication. In the economic sphere a revolution in industrial production and work is heralded ("Industry 4.0") and new forms of platform economy are emerging. In everyday life, new social practices like those of the quantified self movement can be found. Techniques and practices of gamification are emerging in different fields of society. It is important to understand the impact on society of these socio-technical innovations, the challenges they pose as well as the opportunities associated with them. In doing so, proposals for submissions should focus on a particular social field, a particular phenomenon of digitization (such as big data or gamification), or a particular opportunity (e.g. democratization) or challenge (e.g. privacy).

TOWARDS LOW-CARBON ENERGY AND MOBILITY SYSTEMS

The analysis of social, technological and organisational frameworks of energy use and mobility systems forms the basis for proposals in this thematic field. They should focus on the shaping of sustainable energy and mobility and the mitigation of climate change.

Socio-economic aspects of energy and mobility technologies, strategies of environmental technology policy and the development of measures and strategies for the promotion of renewable energy sources are in the focus as well as the transition to a sustainable energy and mobility system. Further important themes are regional governance, climate policy strategies, innovation policy, participation and the role of users.

GENDER – TECHNOLOGY – ENVIRONMENT

This area of research particularly focuses on gender and queer-feminist dimensions in science and technology. On the one hand, individual perspectives of actors in the technological field are taken into account; on the other hand, educational, organisational, societal, environmental, and political issues (e.g. the debate of sexism in academia; inlusion of gender criteria in research funding policies) are gaining more and more relevance.

Of special interest for this year's conference are:

Studies and practical experiences about structural change policies and activities of academia and research to overcome social injustices and increase gender equality and diversity.

Queer-feminist perspectives on science and technology, including analyses of the reproduction of sexual binaries or reproductions of marginalized/hegemonic positions and 'normalizations' in and through science and technologies.

LIFE SCIENCES / BIOTECHNOLOGY

Following three decades of public debate, agricultural biotechnology continues to be a deeply controversial issue in the EU and some other countries, partly fuelled by progress in science and technology innovation and novel application areas, for instance GM industrial and energy crops, synthetic biology, novel breeding techniques, gene editing of animals, or gene drives. Research should contribute to a better understanding of the regulatory, broader policy and governance challenges of biotechnology, and/or explore strategies to manage these challenges.

SUSTAINABLE AND INNOVATIVE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT & ECODESIGN

The demand side policy "green public procurement" and the supply side policy 'ecodesign' are used to support the transition towards green markets.

Nonetheless, scientific research in these respective fields is still limited. Researchers investigating the following areas are encouraged to propose sessions:

The environmental impact and the innovation potential of green public procurement and 'ecodesign'; the hurdles, success factors, efficacy, and wider implications of European or national policies for green and innovative public procurement and 'ecodesign'.

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

There are growing efforts to make the food system more sustainable, and to tackle challenges related to food security, food poverty and justice, nutrition, food quality and safety, resource scarcity, loss of farm land and negative environmental impacts. To tackle these challenges, various strategies are developed at different geographies and scales. They are ranging from local level initiatives, such as communities reasserting responsibility for food policy, to national, supra-national, and global food policies and initiatives.

Proposals for sessions focussing on different forms of sustainable food systems, as well as on related social practices and socioeconomic/technical processes in the production, distribution, marketing, and consumption of food are encouraged. A particular focus lies on governance mechanisms, policies, and their (potential) contribution to a wider transformation towards more sustainable urban and rural areas, regions and societies.

TEACHING STS

Teaching is an important part of academic life. STS graduates are not only needed in academia, but also in the policy domain, public services and administration as well as in the private sector. STS has also a long tradition in teaching engineers. In this way, teaching became conceived as an opportunity way to engage with the shaping of technology. By making engineering students reflexive about their occupation, teaching is framed as an instrument of enhancing responsibility in research and innovation. We invite colleagues in the field to submit proposals in order to address topical issues regarding teaching STS. Session proposals should specify a thematic focus and suggest a suitable format (paper presentation, panel discussion, workshop etc.) by which a chosen theme may be disused. Issues of particular interest include, but are not limited to those, listed below:

- Teaching the classics: much of the classical STS literature was written in the 1980s. As fundamental as these texts are and as much as they inform more recent work, classical texts need revision. Updating may include empirical evidence, conceptual flaws, response to criticism and further development of initial positions.
- Teaching engineers: STS teaching material that appeals to engineering students is scarce. It may help if the material (e.g. a case study) relates to the particular type of engineering of the students of a given course. It is especially challenging to keep up to date with new developments in engineering while at the same time introducing basic STS concepts. Proposed sessions are encouraged to facilitate the exchange of best practice examples.
- Networks: Those who are members of a network or keen on creating one are especially invited to use a session of this conference for a gathering where others can join in. Matters of concern may also be specified for such open network gatherings.

Sessions do not need to be limited to academic paper and presentations.

We encourage you to also suggest interactive and innovative session formats, such as discussion groups, slow talks, etc.

Please let us know in case you plan an alternative setting by briefly describing it.

For submitting your session abstract, please use this online form and send an abstract (max. 500 words) no later than October 31, 2018.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Call for Sessions 4.9.2018 – 31.10.2018
Notification of selected sessions: November 2018

Call for Abstracts 19.11.2018 -18.1.2019
Notification of selected abstracts: Beginning of February 2019

Online Registration 1.2.2019 – 20.4.2019

Submission Full Paper
Proceedings can be submitted after the conference until June 30, 2019