

Workshop announcement: (How) Does governance matter? Epistemic consequences of attempts to shape research content

Abstract submission deadline September 15th 2020, workshop takes place on February 11-12, 2021

Drawing on research traditions in the sociology of science, science and technology studies and science policy studies, this workshop aims to cross boundaries between these fields to enhance our understanding of the ways in which different actors attempt to influence research content, processes and practices. The changes in the authority relations that occurred during the last decades (Whitley et al. 2010) have led to an increase in the numbers of actors that have an interest in and the capability to affect the direction of research: The long-standing attempts of commercial actors to direct science towards profitable innovations have gained even more traction with the state's increasing support of academy-industry collaborations and of the patenting of academic research. In addition, the state itself has increasingly tied its funding of the sciences to expectations of "societal impact". Governance reforms in many OECD countries have increased the dependency of research organisations on extramural funding, the necessity to demonstrate high research performance in systematic evaluations and the capabilities of research organisations to influence their research through hierarchical steering. Research organisations increasingly rely on bibliometric indicators and research information systems through which researchers can be monitored, which increases the influence of commercial companies that provide such services. Finally, research is becoming increasingly politicized by the state, political parties and civil society actors who recognise the role of research as a major power base in modern societies and attempt to increase their influence on and through research, albeit with varying degrees of success.

While attempts by these actors to steer the directions of research have grown considerably, their influence on the content of research and research practices is far from obvious and still little understood.

- How do these attempts affect how researchers choose their topics, theoretical and methodological approaches, and their actual ways of doing research?
- By which means, under what conditions and with which intentions do actors seek to influence research content and research practices according to their interests, and when do these attempts have unintended consequences for its content?

Answering these research questions requires empirical research and theory development that address the construction and exercise of influence on research and researchers and researchers' reactions towards it. As this inherently draws on different traditions in the social studies of science, the aim of the workshop is to bring together researchers from the sociology of science, science and technology studies and science policy studies. We invite theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions that address the question of how, under what conditions and with which intentions different actors seek to influence research and how these influences affect the content of research and research practices.

References

Whitley, R., et al., Eds. (2010). *Reconfiguring Knowledge Production: Changing authority relationships in the sciences and their consequences for intellectual innovation*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

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The workshop takes place on February 11-12 2021 in Berlin. In case the workshop cannot take place due to travel restrictions, a virtual intermediate meeting will take place on the same dates and the physical workshop will be postponed to a later date in 2021.

Jointly organized by

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Dr. Thomas Franssen (Leiden University)

Prof. Dr. Jochen Gläser (Technical University Berlin)

Dr. Anne K. Krüger (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities)

Call for participation

The workshop will be limited to 18 participants and focus on in-depth discussions of papers. While there will be space for short presentations of each paper, workshop participants are expected to read all draft papers before the workshop.

We invite scholars from the sociology of science, science and technology studies and science policy studies to propose papers by submitting an extended abstract (max. 600 words) to Thomas Franssen (t.p.franssen@cwts.leidenuniv.nl) and Anne Krüger (anne.krueger@bbaw.de) by **September 15th 2020**.

Selected abstracts will be announced shortly after September 15th. Full draft papers are expected to be submitted in **December 2020**. Publication of selected papers in an edited volume or special issue will be decided upon in collaboration with the participants.