NR32 / Institutional Perspectives on STI Policy in the Global South

Topic : Research

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GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The objective of this panel is to bring together critiques of the institutional frameworks supporting STI, along with normative ideas on how India and societies of the global south can think about institutions in a manner that is relevant to their contexts. These studies will show where new practices and perspectives are required, in order to do ‘institutional work’, particularly in terms of leadership, levels of government, relationships between the state, citizens, the private sector and the environment, institutional innovation and processes of institution building.

The following questions may be used as a guideline to motivate studies submitted to this panel. How can we end the path-dependency that locks us into unsustainable development? What role could new technologies (AI, the 5th industrial revolution, deep tech etc.) play in introducing new approaches to institution building? What would a sovereign agenda regarding these technologies look like? What are the ‘micro-foundations’ for new institutions and how can they be strengthened? What is the role of universities and knowledge institutions in imagining and preparing strong institutions? Furthermore, papers can examine how policies can ensure that these new forms of institutions and institutional work advance citizens' capabilities, and do so in a manner that is equitable and sustainable. The studies will also attend to issues such as the ontological positioning of policy concerns, and implications for epistemological approaches.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Formulating, designing, and implementing public policy (including STI policy) is deeply interconnected with nurturing stable, mature, reflexive, and locally grounded institutions. In a democratic polity, policies have little hope of successful implementation, no matter how well-intentioned and well-thought-out they may be, if an appropriate institutional structure is not available support them. This includes institutions that are involved with the production of science and technology, as well as with the governance and management of technology and innovation. Such institutions include responsive and context-sensitive organizations, regulatory frameworks, checks and balances, mechanisms that ensure access, participatory forums, ethical norms, and systems of accountability and transparency, among others. Fossil fuel-driven, hedonistic economic growth models, have driven the planet towards the climate crisis and deepened inequality. The core of our concern is the creation and nurturing of institutions that can move us past the cycle of imitating policies that keep us locked into this development paradigm.

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We welcome original research papers, based on empirical work in the global south, that explore these ideas in areas such as sustainable habitats, technical higher education, urban missions, agriculture, and rural development, among others. We hope to initiate discussions for a special issue/edited volume on new

approaches to institutional work that are suited to the needs and contexts of the global south, and to the goals of social justice and environmental sustainability.