

INNOVATION AND THE POLITICS OF TECHNOSCIENTIFIC FUTURES: PROBLEMS, ENGAGEMENTS AND POSSIBILITIES

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Abstract:

Innovation represents a powerful means of constructing socio-technical futures. However, innovation can take many forms: from ambitious statements (not least in Europe) about the development of nations and regions to more localized efforts at achieving responsible and sustainable change. Furthermore, 'innovation' is open to diverse conceptual and empirical perspectives: from case-studies of innovation-in-action to the analysis of larger political discourses around 'innovation futures' and from analysis of power imbalances and inequities to the more economic and policy concerns addressed by Innovation Studies. Innovation is significant within the larger politics of technoscientific futures. However, the ways in which it becomes materially constructed and interpreted is very much open to reflection, critical engagement and empirical analysis.

What problem formulations are embedded within current imaginations of innovation? What new kinds of public and socio-technical engagements can be imagined? What are the conceptual possibilities for understanding the relationship between innovation and emerging socio-technical futures? How is 'innovation' defined and framed within particular contexts? And what are the implications for our understanding of the politics of technoscientific futures?

In this session, we invite contributions from STS scholars whose work addresses the interface between innovation, STS and technoscientific futures. Contributions are invited which focus on the European context but also more globally. We invite empirical work but also conceptual contributions to the technoscientific futures of innovations.

Potential topics include: innovation, futures, engagement, policies, socio-technical change.

Key words:

Innovation, futures, socio-technical change