

DIS/ENTANGLING TECHNOSCIENCE:

Vulnerability, Responsibility and Justice

8th STS Italia Conference

University of Trieste, Italy, 18–20 June 2020

CALL FOR TRACKS

The **8th STS Italia Conference** will be held in **Trieste, Italy, 18 to 20 June 2020**, by the Italian Society of Science and Technology Studies, in collaboration with the Department of Political and Social Sciences of the University of Trieste.

We are now inviting proposals for tracks. The selected tracks will be subsequently included as part of the formal call for papers. The submitted tracks are meant to engage with the general theme of the conference: “**Dis/Entangling Technoscience: Vulnerability, Responsibility and Justice**”.

This major theme refers to the complex and ambivalent role of technoscience and innovation in constituting societies – making possibilities flourish, but also creating new vulnerabilities. The emergence of new, severe forms of labour exploitation through digital platforms and algorithms, the risk of massive and hidden surveillance practices and the related commodification of personal information, the emergence of novel forms of genetic discrimination in the context of genomic medicine and the public unease with and controversy over the public accountability of expert communities are just some of the most well known and vivid examples of the epistemic and biopolitical importance of re-considering technoscience in the context of justice and vulnerability.

Indeed, in societies intensely shaped by technoscience, vulnerability – the exposure to harm and the susceptibility to subsequent loss – can be understood as an emergent property of the relationships between human actors and material objects, technological artefacts and infrastructures and social processes and structures. However, the effects of these processes (the levels, intensities and types of vulnerabilities) are unevenly distributed and closely interconnected in space and time and across different social worlds. Such an unequal distribution points to the underlying, fundamental question of justice in a “technologically dense society”. More broadly, it refers to exploring the reasons for this vulnerability, addressing topics such as the forms and sources of power and participation, the limits of control and epistemic uncertainty, the expectations, representations and interests of the social actors and the (often assumed) neutrality of scientific knowledge and technology. It refers to examining how responsibilities for this state of affairs are defined and assigned, addressing topics such as models of governance and regulation, ethics and values, hegemony and contestation and discourse and legitimation. For these reasons, justice and responsibility in technologically dense societies not only represent an important research object for science and technology studies and other related fields, but their exploration is also a way to assert the civic commitment of the STS community itself.

The conference will welcome empirical and theoretical contributions addressing diverse aspects of the social study of science, technology and innovation from different disciplines and fields, such as anthropology, economics, design, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, semiotics and sociology.

Contact Email Address: stsitaliaconf@gmail.com

Track proposals should be submitted via email to the organising committee, <stsitaliaconf@gmail.com>, by 20 October 2019. Along with traditional academic sessions, the submission of alternative formats is encouraged. These can include (but are not limited to) roundtables, workshop-style sessions, theatrical debates, and other performances. Applicants are encouraged to engage with the general theme of the conference. We welcome proposals covering a wide variety of topics and domains, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Co-creation in science and technology
- Communication, media and digital technologies
- Critical perspectives on consumption practices
- Design practices in and outside of official/conventional research and development settings
- Coping with vulnerability in and through education
- Engaging art in technoscience
- Environmental sustainability, adaptation and resilience
- Expectations, promises and visions of science, technology and innovation
- Forms and practices of public participation and engagement
- The gender–technology relationship
- Grassroots innovations for sustainable development
- Hackerspaces, makerspaces and DIY centres
- Information infrastructures and infrastructuring practices
- Platforms, algorithms and the organisation of society
- Political economy of science, technology and innovation
- Medical practices and the public shaping of biomedical research
- Postcolonial technoscience: science and technology in non-Western countries
- Responsibility in science and innovation
- Science, technology and innovation policy
- Work, organisation and technology

Submissions for thematic tracks should be written in Italian or English using the template available here: < bit.ly/2krHKE0 >. They should include a short description of the proposed theme (max. 400 words) and information about the convenors (max. 50 words for each convenor, including email addresses). Convenors will be notified of track acceptance by 18 November 2019.

Convenors will independently set session topics and organise each track according to the numerical constraints specified by the conference organisers. Convenors who consider an abstract interesting but not suited to their thematic track will be free to redirect the abstract to the scientific board for submission to another track. If a track draws fewer than three abstracts, the scientific board will decide whether to run the track or merge it with another track.

IMPORTANT DATES

October 20, 2019: Deadline for track submission
November 18, 2019: Notification of track acceptance or rejection
November 25, 2019: Conference announced with a call for abstracts
February 9, 2020: Deadline for abstract submission
March 2, 2020: Notification of abstract acceptance or rejection
March 29, 2020: Early registration deadline
April 19, 2020: Closing date for registration
May 24, 2020: Publication of the final conference programme
June 18–20, 2020: Conference

Contact Email Address: stsitaliaconf@gmail.com

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

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