

**The Cultural Politics of the Global Knowledge Economy:  
Technology, Environment and Society  
July 11-12<sup>th</sup> 2005  
Conference Centre, Lancaster University, UK**

Recent major commitments made by many Western governments to the intensification of globally competitive investments in science on the one hand, and to public engagement in the domain of science, innovation and society on the other, raise important but ill-defined tensions and questions. Neo-liberal economic models of globalisation, manifest in such initiatives as the EU Lisbon Agenda, encourage the assumption that knowledge is a global universal whose primary meaning is to be defined in terms of instrumental commercial exploitation and control. And the recognition in Europe, and increasingly internationally, that this agenda raises major science and society issues, is being compromised by being framed in terms of the need for governments to secure public acceptance of the scientific, technological and social trajectories being generated by neo-liberal dynamics of innovation.

Against this background, the colloquium will gather together significant representatives from academia, non-government organisations and the policy world in order to explore a number of urgent questions:

- What role is knowledge being made to play in the global economy?
- How does this shape what develops and counts as 'knowledge'?
- How is the shift to more inclusive forms of knowledge- and policy-making interacting with the growth of corporate power and ownership of knowledge?
- What effects are these developments having on public reactions to new developments in science and technology?
- What are there prospects for a global civil society which can encourage the knowledge economy to assume more humanly responsive forms?

The colloquium will:

- explore political-economic perspectives on global shifts in knowledge-production processes, and sociology of science insights into public reactions to science and technology
- address issues of institutional design for attempting to reconcile public concerns with increasingly competitive global knowledge-investments
- attempt to determine the form that critical interventions need to take if they are to be effective and appropriate

Speakers will include Dr Andrew Barry (Goldsmiths College), Professor James Fairhead (Sussex), Professor Malcolm Grant (UCL), Professor Robin Grove-White (Lancaster), Professor Sheila Jasanoff (Harvard), and Dr Shiv Visvanathan (New Delhi).

The colloquium will run from lunch on 11<sup>th</sup> July to lunch on 12<sup>th</sup> July. During the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup> there will be a dinner to celebrate the achievements of Professor Robin Grove-White on the occasion of his retirement. For more information, please contact Kate Lamb, IEPPP, Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 3YG, UK; tel: +44 (0)1524 592674; fax: +44 (0)1524 592503; email [k.l.lamb@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:k.l.lamb@lancaster.ac.uk). The number of places will be limited.

Organised by Bronislaw Szerszynski, Claire Waterton and Brian Wynne of the Institute for Environment, Philosophy and Public Policy with the financial support of the ESRC Science in Society Programme, the ESRC Centre for Economic and Social Aspects of Genomics, the Lancaster Environment Centre and Lancaster University's Faculty of Social Sciences.

