

## „Responsible Research & Innovation“: Meeting Societal Challenges as a Challenge to Science and Technology?

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In past decades, “global challenges” or “grand societal challenges” have become key concerns in the discourses on global change and governance. In this talk, I will elaborate on how in these discourses science and technology have been portrayed as providing solutions to global problems but, increasingly, have also been criticized for only carrying limited problem-solving capacity. Moreover, science and technology themselves have been addressed again and again as bringing about challenges to society which would require serious attention and care. Hereby, the ways in which science and technology are generated, regulated, applied and appropriated have become an issue, thus concerning researchers and innovators, decision makers in government and industry, as well as civil society organizations and citizens alike. “Responsible research and innovation” (RRI) can be considered the most recent major attempt at exploring and supporting novel configurations of research and technology development which, through inclusion of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary formats (i.e., by including the social sciences and humanities and forms of public engagement, respectively), should be better able to meet societal challenges and, at the same time, provide both better innovations and improved societal legitimacy. In consequence, a critical question regarding the prospect of RRI will be to what extent it may strengthen science and technology – or: empower scientists and engineers – or rather undermine the foundations of their power and self-understanding.