

"Critical Issues in Science and Technology Studies"

Proposal for a Poster

Title: Participatory Research Funding as a First Step Towards Robust Knowledge Production?

The aim of this project is to expand the discourse on participation, legitimization and "robust knowledge production" from STS topics like genetics, nanotechnology or agricultural biotechnology to the field of the social sciences. Its purpose at this conference is to get feedback from a STS perspective.

The project deals with several issues: How are publics (stakeholders and individuals) involved in the definition of topics for targeted social science funding programs on the level of the European Union and in Austria? How does the official public participation discourse of the institutions involved differ from actual practices in the process of defining social science research foci worth funding? Is participation perceived as a tool to enable lay participation in research and knowledge production, thus as a part of legitimizing research, or is it rather perceived as a tool for political legitimization by the administrators, main (non-academic) stakeholders and politicians involved in these processes?

A document analysis of the relevant institutions dealing with research funding will be undertaken to map the decision processes relevant for the definition of topics in targeted funding programs and to gather data for a discourse analysis on public participation. Second, interviews with stakeholders, administrators and politicians are scheduled to elicit the actual practices and evaluate the impact of public participation measures in research funding.

I propose a poster presenting a research project dealing with the topic of public participation in research funding. The poster will discuss methodology, theoretical background, research questions, hypotheses, empirical data retrieval and preliminary results.

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Related conference themes: indirectly to the topic of knowledge brokerage; ethical, legal and social aspects of science