

# Pathways to Sustainability

## STEPS Summer School

11–22 May 2020

**Institute of Development Studies  
University of Sussex, UK  
Hosted by the ESRC STEPS Centre**



### **The ninth and final STEPS Summer School on Pathways to Sustainability**

An immersive course on theories and practical approaches to sustainability, through creative, interactive and participatory learning.

Topics include knowledge politics; policy processes; democracy in science, technology and innovation; politics of the environment; and inter- and transdisciplinary methods.

**Open to doctoral and post-doctoral students**

Apply at **[steps-centre.org/summerschool](https://steps-centre.org/summerschool)**

## About the STEPS Centre

The STEPS Centre is a flagship initiative of the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). It is jointly hosted by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) at the University of Sussex.

Founded in 2006, the STEPS Centre is part of a global consortium of institutes and organisations concerned with the roles that science and technology play in development and social change.

Working with partners in 20 countries, the STEPS Centre has a policy-engaged programme which has helped to rethink the dynamic relationships between knowledge, innovation, democracy and the environment.

In 2015, STEPS launched a Global Consortium with hubs in Africa, Latin America, North America, South Asia, China and Europe. The Centre closes at the end of 2021, with plans for exciting follow-on activities to continue the work in new ways.

## About the Summer School

The Summer School is held on the University of Sussex campus in the South Downs National Park near the vibrant cosmopolitan city of Brighton.

This year's course will be the ninth and last ever Summer School to be run by the STEPS Centre. It takes place during the 2020 Brighton Festival — an energetic and eclectic celebration of culture & arts from 2–24 May — with plenty of opportunities for students to engage.

## Themes and topics

The STEPS Centre has developed a unique 'pathways approach' to research and policy engagement, which recognises the co-evolving trajectories of change in society, technology and the environment.

The pathways approach is used to appreciate how politics and power shape the social framing of knowledge and decision-making for sustainability.

Drawing on innovation and development theory, science and technology studies, political economy, ecological economics, decision analysis and political ecology, the Summer School will explore and apply the range of associated crossdisciplinary concepts, analytical frameworks, empirical methods and policy strategies.

### Themes include:

- Relationships between science, knowledge, framing, discourses and power
- Understanding risk, uncertainty, ambiguity and ignorance
- Policy processes and the politics of sustainability
- Methods and methodologies: interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary practices
- The STEPS pathways approach and its application in diverse settings
- Politics and global discourses about climate change, planetary boundaries and the Anthropocene
- Political ecology and resistance
- The politics of nature and natural resources
- How to 'open up' and 'broaden out' appraisal and decision-making
- Innovation and socio-technical change
- Emancipatory, democratic transformations to sustainability

Participants will be encouraged to engage and develop their personal research topics and ideas in interaction with other students and with STEPS Centre members.





## Learning approaches and experiences

**Walkshops:** Set within the South Downs National Park, the Sussex University campus is surrounded by fields and woodlands. The Summer School includes two day-long immersive 'walkshops' in this landscape, focusing on particular themes, guided by a set of questions and materials, and facilitated by STEPS Centre staff. The informal setting and movement allow a different kind of conversation to take place.

**Interactive methods:** Alongside lectures, the Summer School includes World Cafés, small group work and interactive sessions to encourage participants to share their experiences and explore questions more deeply.

**Participant-led conference:** Participants design a 'conference' to be held at the end of the Summer School, with sessions developed in small groups during the course. From participatory games to creative, imaginative debates, every year is unique.

**Social events:** The Summer School includes optional social events and a chance to explore Brighton during its most exciting month, when the Brighton Festival and the Festival Fringe bring a wide range of events to town, from high culture to free music shows and street performances.

**STEPS Annual Lecture:** Every year the course features a lecture by a leading scholar to provoke debate, in front of a public audience. Past speakers include Mariana Mazzucato, Achim Steiner and Kate Raworth.



## People

### STEPS Centre members involved in the Summer School include:

**Ian Scoones** (STEPS Co-director). A Professorial Fellow at IDS, Ian trained as a natural resource ecologist and works on the intersections of science, policy and environmental and agricultural change, particularly in Africa.

**Andy Stirling** (STEPS Co-director). Professor of Science and Technology Policy at SPRU, Andy trained in archaeology and anthropology, then at Greenpeace, before research on science and technology policy. He focuses on uncertainty, power, diversity and transformation.

**Amber Huff** (IDS). Amber Huff is a social anthropologist and political ecologist. Her primary areas of focus include politics of conservation, resource struggles and conflict, environmental policy, rural livelihoods in southern Africa.

**Adrian Ely** (SPRU, University of Sussex). Adrian's research includes the environmental impacts of GM crops, biotechnology regulation, risk and uncertainty in policy-making around new technologies and innovation for sustainable development.

**Marina Apgar** (IDS). Marina is a human ecologist with 20 years' experience working directly with marginalised communities in international development across the research-practice divide supporting locally defined development pathways.

**Rose Cairns** (SPRU). Rose's research focuses on humanity's changing relationships with nature, and how ongoing transformations in these relationships could be shaped in ways that make them more sustainable, equitable and meaningful.

**David Ockwell** (Department of Geography, University of Sussex). David specialises in climate change policy with a particular focus on low carbon technology transfer and development, and on public engagement with climate change.

**Melissa Leach** (Director, IDS). A former director of the STEPS Centre, Melissa's interdisciplinary research explores the politics of local knowledge and practices and science-policy processes across a wide range of environmental and health issues.

**Fiona Marshall** (SPRU). Fiona is a tropical agricultural ecologist and environmental scientist specialising in interdisciplinary initiatives to understand and address the impacts of environmental change on the livelihoods of poor people.

**Erik Millstone** (Emeritus Professor of Science Policy at SPRU). Erik trained as a physicist and philosopher, but now works on science and public health policy; his interests include public and environmental health protection policies, interactions between science and policy in both risk assessment and management, BSE, GM crops and food.

**Adrian Smith** (SPRU). Adrian specialises in critical analysis of environmental policy processes and research into relationships between technology, society and sustainable development, including the role of grassroots innovations and technology associated with automation.

**John Thompson** (IDS). John has worked on power, policy and sustainability issues in complex and dynamic agri-food, water and natural resource systems for 30 years, in both developing and industrialised countries.

**Lyla Mehta** (Institute of Development Studies). Lyla is a sociologist and uses the lens of water and sanitation to address issues concerning scarcity, access, rights, knowledge, power and the cultural politics of environment and development.

For a more complete list of STEPS Centre staff, see: [steps-centre.org/people](https://steps-centre.org/people)

## How to apply

Please use our online form to apply\*:  
[steps-centre.org/summerschool](https://steps-centre.org/summerschool)

You will need to enter personal information, including:

1. A brief personal statement explaining why you are applying to the STEPS Summer School (maximum 500 words) and details of your qualifications, professional experience and any publications, including a CV.
2. A reference, as an attached document (2 x A4 sides), from your academic supervisor/tutor or your current employer.

The application process is selective, and places are limited.

The deadline for sending applications is 23.59 GMT on Sunday 26 January 2020. Please note that applications received after that deadline will not be considered. We hope to be able to let you know if your application has been successful by 28 February 2020.

\*If you are unable to access the form, please contact Becky Ayre: [b.ayre@jds.ac.uk](mailto:b.ayre@jds.ac.uk)

### Fee

The fee for the STEPS Summer School is £1,000 GBP.

### Scholarships

A small number of bursaries are available to applicants whose country of origin is not in the OECD (see [bit.ly/OECDlist](https://bit.ly/OECDlist)) - including those who are currently working/studying in OECD-member countries.

Scholarships may cover part or all of the following:

- STEPS Summer School fee
- Return flights or rail travel to the STEPS Summer School
- A contribution towards visa costs
- Accommodation
- Subsistence allowance (a limited amount to cover food and local travel)

Fee reductions are also available for those studying on the Sussex University campus, and those who are enrolled in a studentship or post-doctoral fellowship in the ESRC's SeNSS (South East Network for Social Sciences).

There are spaces on the application form to give details of your eligibility for a scholarship or a fee reduction.



Brighton Festival / smileham / Flickr

### Staying in Brighton and Hove

The City of Brighton and Hove gets very busy in May, and short-term accommodation can be hard to find and expensive. Successful applicants to the STEPS Summer School will be provided with a list of reliable accommodation sources, including rooms to rent in houses let by trustworthy landlords, and budget guesthouses. It will be important for you to make your accommodation booking as soon as possible after you have been informed of the success of your application. Living costs in Brighton range from £30–£100 per day for accommodation, food and local travel.

Tea and coffee will be provided for Summer School participants during each day, and a picnic lunch will be provided at both workshops, but other meals are not provided.

### Getting to IDS

The STEPS Summer School will take place at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) on the Sussex University campus at Falmer, near Brighton, East Sussex, UK.

For information, visit: [ids.ac.uk/visiting-ids](https://ids.ac.uk/visiting-ids)

For more information, visit our website:

[steps-centre.org/summerschool](https://steps-centre.org/summerschool)