

STEPS Centre Summer School on pathways to sustainability

University of Sussex, 13th – 24th May 2013

www.steps-centre.org

The ESRC Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability Centre (STEPS Centre) at the University of Sussex is pleased to announce a major two-week international summer school on Pathways to Sustainability. Involving innovative forms of teaching and interaction, including an international team of leading researchers in this field, the Summer School will be held from 13 - 24 May 2013 in Brighton, UK.

Applications are invited from highly-motivated doctoral and postdoctoral researchers or those with equivalent experience, working in fields around development studies, science and technology studies, innovation and policy studies, and across agricultural, health, water or energy issues.

There is a premium on interdisciplinary approaches and on interests and orientations that converge with work of the STEPS Centre. Numbers are limited, so recruitment will be by refereed selection. Participants will be required to pay a fee, but a number of scholarships are available.

Outdoor 'walkshop'



Now entering its second five-year phase, the STEPS Centre is a flagship initiative of the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Located in well-appointed buildings on the University of Sussex campus in the South Downs National Park near the vibrant cosmopolitan city of Brighton, the STEPS Centre is a joint initiative of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and SPRU – Science and Technology Policy Research. The Summer School will take place during the 2013 Brighton Festival – a famously energetic and eclectic celebration of culture and arts running from 4 May - 2 June – with plenty of opportunities for students to engage.

Founded in 2006, the STEPS Centre is part of a global network of institutes and organisations concerned with the key roles played in development and social change by science and technology. Working with partner institutes in twenty countries across five continents the STEPS Centre has pioneered a number of highly policy-engaged initiatives aiming at radical rethinking of the contributions made by knowledge and innovation towards social equity, democratic empowerment and environmental integrity. To this end, the STEPS Centre is building an innovative portfolio of interdisciplinary theory, analytical frameworks and practical tools to strengthen academic research and policy appraisal alike – prioritising the interests of the most marginal groups.

Focusing on the self-reinforcing and path-dependent interactions of social, technological and environmental systems – and informed by an analysis of the way different kinds of power help shape the social framing of knowledges, the STEPS Centre has developed a unique ‘pathways approach’ to research and policy engagement. Drawing on innovation and development theory, science and technology and policy studies, ecological economics, decision analysis and political ecology, the Summer School will explore and apply the associated array of crossdisciplinary concepts, analytical frameworks, empirical methods and policy strategies.

Participants will join the wider team of STEPS researchers in lectures, seminars, interactive exercises and innovative ‘walkshop’ events in the beautiful nearby Sussex countryside. The emphasis will be on grounded theory, collaborative learning and participatory experience. Students are encouraged to bring current research projects offering particular opportunities for applying the STEPS Centre ‘pathways approach’.

Curriculum

Starting and ending with one-day workshops in the Sussex countryside, the Summer School will be built around fourteen further half-day sessions interspersed with periods for collaborative study, group deliberation and private reflection, as well as a day-long ‘conference’ developed by participants themselves. There will be a number of organised evening events, both academic and social, while the Brighton Festival offers a unique choice of further evening activities.



Participants at last year's event

Themes covered in web-posted readings and teaching and discussion sessions will include:

- the politics of sustainability
- complexity in dynamic interacting systems
- interdisciplinarity in social and natural science
- knowledge and power
- understanding risk, uncertainty and ignorance
- livelihoods, institutions and development
- equity, social justice and pro-poor action research
- global governance of science and technology
- the political dynamics of regulation
- innovation and social change
- socio-technical transitions
- civil society and social innovation
- responsibility, accountability and enterprise
- sustainability, security, resilience and transformation
- ‘opening up’ expertise and consensus
- participatory tools and practices
- science, policy and the media
- technology access and delivery
- strategies for communication and engagement
- the politics of diversity and pluralism
- active citizenship and innovation democracies
- prosperity, wellbeing and green growth

Sessions will offer opportunities to relate these themes to specific issues and policy debates across the STEPS Centre’s core domains of food and agriculture, health and disease, water and sanitation, and energy and climate change.

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

People



Melissa Leach (STEPS Director). A Professorial Fellow at IDS, Melissa originally trained as a geographer and social anthropologist. Her interdisciplinary research explores the politics of local knowledge and practices and science-policy processes across a wide range of environmental and health issues.



Andy Stirling (STEPS Co-director; SPRU Research Director). Trained in archaeology and anthropology, then at Greenpeace, before research on science and technology policy. He focuses on uncertainty, power, diversity and transformation.



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



Gerry Bloom (STEPS Health and Disease Domain Convenor). A Fellow at the IDS, Gerry trained as a physician and health economist. His work focuses on health system development in contexts of rapid social and economic change, including the emergence and spread of organisational and

technological innovations and the creation of institutions for safety, effectiveness and fairer access to health services.



Julia Day (STEPS Communications Manager). Julia is a journalist who joined STEPS from The Guardian in London where she worked for six years as media reporter and assistant editor on MediaGuardian.co.uk. She previously worked as a reporter and

editor for various business magazines. Before entering journalism she worked in publishing and marketing.



Adrian Ely (STEPS Head of Impact and Engagement; Lecturer at SPRU). Adrian's areas of research interest include the environmental impacts of GM crops, biotechnology regulation, risk and uncertainty in policy-making around new

technologies and innovation for sustainable development. Adrian convenes the Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto project.



Jeff Knezovich (STEPS Health Domain). Jeff is the Policy Influence and Research Uptake Manager for the Future Health Systems consortium and is also a contributor to the STEPS Centre health domain. Trained in sociology, he focuses on the political

and social dynamics of change in complex systems.



Fiona Marshall (STEPS member; Senior Lecturer at SPRU). Fiona is an tropical agricultural ecologist/environmental scientist specialising in interdisciplinary initiatives to understand and address the impacts of environmental change on the livelihoods of the poor.



Hayley MacGregor (STEPS member; IDS Research Fellow). Hayley is a medical doctor and social anthropologist whose areas of research include mental health and disability, human rights discourses and health citizenship, and the regulation of and responses to medical technologies.



Lyla Mehta (STEPS Water and Sanitation Domain Convenor; IDS Fellow; Adjunct professor, Noragric, Norway). 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



Erik Millstone (STEPS Agriculture and Food Domain Co-convenor; 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,

the interactions between scientific and policy considerations in both risk assessment and risk management, BSE, GM crops and obesity policy



Adrian Smith (STEPS member; Senior Research Fellow at SPRU). Adrian specialises in critical analysis of environmental policy processes and research into relationships between technology, society and sustainable development.



John Thompson (STEPS Agriculture and Food Domain Co-convenor; IDS Research Fellow). 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. A

resource geographer by training, he currently serves as Co-Convenor of the STEPS Food and Agriculture Domain and Joint Director of the Future Agricultures Consortium.



Linda Waldman (STEPS member; IDS Knowledge, Technology and Society Team Leader). Linda is a social anthropologist whose research areas include indigenous identity and nationalism, environmental pollution, asbestos disease and its socio-cultural ramifications.

Applications

Please send your application by email to Harriet Dudley (h.dudley@ids.ac.uk) who will acknowledge receipt. The email should mention if you would like to request a scholarship (see details below).

Your application should have 3 pages (maximum) attached:

- 1 A one-page description of your research background and interests, and therefore why you are interested in attending the STEPS Summer School 2013
- 2 A one-page CV with details of your academic background and current employment (if relevant), as well as contact details
- 3 A one-page reference from an academic supervisor or professional contact.

The deadline for sending applications is 31 January 2013. We hope to be able to let you know whether your application has been successful by 28 February 2013.

Fee

The fee for the STEPS Summer School 2013 is £500. This will be payable one month before the start of the Summer School.

Scholarships

We have a number of scholarships available that cover the following costs:

- STEPS Summer School 2013 fee
- Return flights or rail travel to the STEPS Summer School 2013
- Subsistence: £300 per week for accommodation, local travel and food.

Scholarship requests will be assessed on the strength of your application, with priority given to candidates from low-income settings. You should state your reasons for requesting a scholarship in your application email.

The STEPS Centre is the leading research centre for the Sussex ESRC Doctoral Training Centre's Innovation and Sustainability: Management and Policy pathway. STEPS academics supervise Sussex ESRC Doctoral Training Centre students and contribute to the development of the pathway.

Location

The STEPS Summer School 2013 will take place at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) on the Sussex University campus at Falmer, near Brighton, East Sussex, UK.

For information on how to get to IDS, visit:
www.ids.ac.uk/visiting-ids



Brighton Festival. Photo: Steven Miller

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 2013 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.