



ISRF Workshop: Today's Future 21-22 June 2017 - Het Scheepvaartmuseum, Amsterdam

Today's Future: Challenges and Opportunities Across the Social Sciences

To our historic peers, the Future was a progressive place, a period to which everyone looked forward in anticipation of, for example, better medicine, improved social and economic prosperity, enhanced human rights – a fairer, more predictable world. But the Future does not look so bright from the first part of the twenty-first century. Trapped between narratives of the past in which Western hegemonies triumph and experiences of upheaval caused by heightened political instability, a global refugee crisis, increased poverty, war and extinction – Today's Future collapses back upon us, threatening to be worse. So what is social science doing to prepare?

Social science is often considered to be too slow, too unwieldy and not robust enough to compete with 'hard' sciences, maths and economics. But the fact that social science is many things is precisely what makes it so adaptable, flexible and creative. Through cross-disciplinary critique - anthropology, psychology, sociology, political science, geography, archaeology - social science helps us to understand contemporary issues from the perspective of multiple temporalities. How does globalisation look from the hyper-temporality of climate change? How successful has the project of decolonisation been when we see imperialism re-emerging in Russia, China and the Middle East? What is there to celebrate about neo-liberal capitalism from the perspective of those who must compete for basic resources such as food, water and clean air? What are we doing to tackle issues associated with unrest and over-crowding in our towns and cities? Through better understanding the ways in which people find meaning and value in the world, social science perspectives improve our chances of surviving the coming storms to live peacefully and sustainably on the small planet that we all call home.

At this, the fifth, annual ISRF workshop our theme asks: what are the practical ways in which the work we variously do as social scientists may be considered to take on the major challenges facing us in the twenty-first century? We invite participants to present their work whilst considering the ways in which it functions as a catalyst for or advocate of change. How does social science expose the fissures of power relations manifest in the world today? How do we assess different paradigms of value when there is increased competition for resources? How can we better apply the work we do to hold governments, politicians, corporations and other powerful elite, to account? What can we look forward to? How may Today's Future be characterised?

Workshop Title: Today's Future: Challenges and Opportunities Across the Social Sciences

Dates: 21-22 June 2017

Location: Het Scheepvaartmuseum, Kattenburgerplein 1, 1018 KK Amsterdam

Registration: <https://isrf-todaysfuture.eventbrite.co.uk>

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Day One	21st June	Day Two	22nd June
8:45am	Coffee & Registration	9:00am	Welcome & Coffee
9:15am	Introduction - Louise Braddock (ISRF Director of Research)	SESSION ONE	
SESSION ONE		9:30am	Reimagining the Future: Gender, Environment and Imagined Landscapes ISRF Independent Scholars in Discussion - Chair: Bregje de Kok (University of Amsterdam) & Danielle van den Heuvel (University of Amsterdam)
9:30am	What Does Today's Future Look Like? A dialogue between two leading scholars of globalisation and the sociology of economics - Chair: Pál Nyíri (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)	10:15am	ISRF Fellows' Presentations
10:30am	Coffee Break	10:45am	Coffee Break
SESSION TWO		SESSION TWO	
10:45am	ISRF Fellows' Presentations	11:00am	Fantasy Forecasting Panel Discussion between five current/former Dutch politicians, international scholars, journalists and pundits. - Chair: Patrick Overeem (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
11:45pm	ISRF Early Career Fellows' Panel Discussion	12:00pm	Lunch
12:45pm	Lunch	SESSION THREE	
SESSION THREE		1:30pm	Improvised Research Proposals
2:15pm	ISRF Fellows' Presentations	3:30pm	Coffee Break
2:45pm	ISRF Residential Research Groups - Discussion Panel	3:45pm	Plenary Talk - James Symonds (Professor of Historical Archaeology, University of Amsterdam)
3:45pm	Coffee Break	4:05pm	Open Floor Discussion
SESSION FOUR		5:00pm - 6:00pm	Drinks Reception
4:00pm	ISRF Fellows' Presentations		
5:00pm - 8:00pm	Drinks & Supper		