

HUMAN AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS (HSD) RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE: THE ROLE OF THE HUMANITIES

11 March 2015

CSIR Conference Centre



science  
& technology

Department:  
Science and Technology  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**MAPUNGUBWE**

INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC REFLECTION (MISTRA)



**HSRC**  
Human Sciences  
Research Council

**Information Circular**

**Human and Social Dynamics (HSD) Research Seminar Series**

**Public engagement for good governance: the role of the Humanities**

**11 March 2015**

**The Amethyst room**

**CSIR Conference Centre**

**Pretoria**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction and background	4
Programme of events	7
Workshop packs and documents	11
Registration	11
Venue	11
Internet access and communication facilities	11
The weather	11
Exhibitions	11
Key contact details for your visit	12
Addendum A: Directions to the CSIR Conference Centre	13

## **INTRODUCTION**

We look forward to your participation in the Human and Social Dynamics Research Seminar, which the Department of Science and Technology (DST) is hosting in collaboration with the Human Sciences Research Council. The seminar will focus on 'Public engagement for good governance: the role of the Humanities'. This seminar is scheduled to take place on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 in the Amethyst room at the CSIR Conference Centre, Pretoria.

## **PURPOSE OF DST RESEARCH SEMINARS**

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) Human and Social Dynamics Research Seminar Series aims to:

- Disseminate research findings and transmit a body of new knowledge through an interactive process of critical dialogue and collegial critique through the social sciences and humanities (SSH) research community and other interested actors in the National System of Innovation (NSI);
- Provide an avenue for rated and other researchers, including researchers from rural-based universities to engage in knowledge dialogues across faculties and with other actors in the NSI;
- Present and discuss new and ongoing research, identify research gaps, and suggest new research agendas in SSH with a view to forging closer links between the research communities in these fields;
- Reinforce the visibility of SSH research to the higher education and science council sector;
- Enhance wider public understanding of the SSH, including the value and status of both individual and team-based research; and
- Strategically promote, develop and coordinate collaborative and interdisciplinary research within and between higher education institutions and science councils.

## **PURPOSE OF DST RESEARCH SEMINARS**

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) Human and Social Dynamics Research Seminar Series aims to:

- Disseminate research findings and transmit a body of new knowledge through an interactive process of critical dialogue and collegial critique through the social sciences and humanities (SSH) research community and other interested actors in the National System of Innovation (NSI);
- Provide an avenue for rated and other researchers, including researchers from rural-based universities to engage in knowledge dialogues across faculties and with other actors in the NSI;
- Present and discuss new and ongoing research, identify research gaps, and suggest new research agendas in SSH with a view to forging closer links between the research communities in these fields;
- Reinforce the visibility of SSH research to the higher education and science council sector;
- Enhance wider public understanding of the SSH, including the value and status of both individual and team-based research; and

- Strategically promote, develop and coordinate collaborative and interdisciplinary research within and between higher education institutions and science councils.

#### **PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SEMINAR**

The seminar will present an overview of the current practice of public engagement that aims to promote fair and transparent democratic governance in South Africa using case studies from some international countries. This will include reporting on public participation as a consultative requirement in the integrated planning processes of local government.

Central to the discussion will be the policy development, operational challenges and institutional arrangements that feature in the *DST Science Engagement Framework (version 2, September 2013)*. Based on the understanding that public engagement embraces two distinct branches of research - Public Understanding of Science (PUS) and Science Communication (SC), - it follows that the field is complex and diverse.

Science communication researchers study the impact of the media and other channels of communication on policy in order to ensure good governance. The topics of interest to science communicators are embedded within the multi-media communication process characterised through displays in science museums, science reporting in the media, TV, radio and knowledge exchange on the internet.

The field of research known as Public Understanding of Science (PUS) provides data to governments (for policy development) through global and national surveys - with the added functionality of developing comparative analysis models. To facilitate these models a theoretical framework is emerging that is in line with a transdisciplinary approach to research that facilitates growing interaction between the sciences and the social sciences and humanities (SSH). Researchers in both fields engage with the public and report on activities that include the popularisation of scientific research through reconstruction of scientific projects, reporting on new discoveries to the public and celebrate achievements and the initiation of new theories from a science-focused point of view.

The role of the humanities is central to endorsing the basic principles of science engagements with society: this includes ensuring the right to access to information; respect for traditional knowledge systems, commitment to the core principles of ethics and social responsibility and fostering critical citizens through the establishment of a scientific temper. Public engagement serves a dual function of transferring, interpreting and sharing new knowledge through mixed fora such as consensus conferences, citizen juries, expert panel discussions, scenario workshops and impact assessment modules. The complexity of engaging with the public takes place within a broad framework of ; 'citizen involvement', 'stakeholder engagement', 'participatory technology assessment', 'indigenous people's rights', 'local community consultation', 'NGO intervention', 'multi-stakeholder dialogue', 'access to information' and 'access to justice'.

The process of public engagement gave rise to the current 'science and society' paradigm. We find that the European Commission's Monitoring Policy and Research Activities on Science in Society in Europe (MASIS) 2012 report ([www.masis.eu](http://www.masis.eu)) considers the 'science in society' paradigm in Europe to be dominated by issues related to its role in sustainable development as well as its role to

appropriate governance. In this regard the MASIS report states: 'Discussions and processes relating to the appropriateness of science in society should be inclusive and based on broad public and stakeholder engagement'. As driver for the Horizon 2020 research flagship, the MASIS 2012 report states that: '... the Europe 2020 societal challenges can only be tackled if society is fully engaged in science, technology and innovation and it should be stressed that the dynamics of public and stakeholder engagement remains an important object for further research and experimentation''. With South Africa becoming a part of the broad international community of science communicators this report serves as guide.

It is within this frame of reference that the seminar will review current public engagement policies, operational practices and institutional arrangements. The seminar will seek to identify the gaps which could address the development of good 'public engagement' practice and relevant policy through an engagement with international experts.

## PENULTIMATE PROGRAMME

**Date:** 11 March 2015

**Venue:** Amethyst room, CSIR Conference Centre, Pretoria

**Chair:** Prof. Narnia Bohler-Muller, HSRC

**Rapporteur:** Dr Stephen Rule, Consultant

---

**08:00 - 09:00 Registration, Tea & Coffee**

---

**09:00 - 09:10 Introduction**

---

**09:00 - 09:10 Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Dr Temba Masilela, HSRC

---

**9:10 – 09:50 Session 1: Review of international best practice**

---

09:10 – 09:30 *Reflexivity in science and institutional creativity: the ordinary' turn*

Prof. Joelle Le Marec. Professor of Information and Communication Sciences at the Centre de Recherche Lettres Arts Cinéma (CERILAC) at the Université Paris Diderot, Prof. Le Marec will present some recent trends in science studies, rooted in a question: is there a theoretical, cultural and political "treasure" in ordinary practices and living knowledge?

Those questions rose from several disciplines, and several intellectual communities:

- ethnology of neighbourhood, urban sociology and daily uses of language
- studies of daily life in research and the sociology of interdisciplinary 'field works'
- ordinary practices of investigation, and the condition of public
- studies of the care and formal attention to engagement
- political views about common decency

Some of those trends will be discussed in detail and the presentation will then propose new forms of cultural and social creativity that are presently made in scientific institutions.

09:30 – 09:50 **Q & A**

---

**09:50 – 10:40 Session 2: Review of international best practice**

---

09:50 – 10:10 *Science, Public Engagement, Citizenship in the 21e Century*

Professor Bernard Schiele, Science communication specialist, University of Quebec in Montreal.

Public engagement (PE) refers to a two-way communication between experts (decision makers, scientists) and lay-persons, contrary to the one-way science communication (SC) which has characterised and dominated so far the relations between the scientific community (or its representatives or spokespersons) and the general public. On the one hand, from a practical point of

view, PE is all about making decisions on matters that concern a community (such as managing environment, health, risk) by bringing together a diversity of interacting competencies and interests in order to reach a consensus (through public meetings, expert-citizen panels, public hearings, deliberative forums). Sometimes the engagement is indirect (public consultations, Internet, discussion groups) On the other hand, the increase of a two-way mode of interactions to achieve a common goal signals a profound change in society. It is related to : 1) a transformation of the role of the institutions in our modern complex societies; 2) an evolution of the relationship to knowledge (expertise is being redefined while previously marginalized forms of knowledge – often local – are now recognized and integrated in the decision making process) ; 3) a redefinition of citizenship ; 4) a transformation of the nation state ; and 5) a globalizing world. In short : the development of PE has something to do with the redefinition of boundaries in a world where new synergies between expert and lay knowledge are growing and new ways and means of interaction between people are developing. This presentation will focus on these changes.

10:10 – 10:30 **Q & A**

---

**10:30 – 11:10 Session 3: Review of international best practice**

---

**10:30 – 10:50** *Promotion of public engagement in the South; a transdisciplinary approach.*

Prof Gauhar Raza, Science Communication through Multi-media. NISCAIR, CSIR, India.

The continuous, rejection, correction and replacement of previously arrived at scientific conclusions, doctrines, laws or conceptual models are the hallmark of modern science. It is through competing scientific ideas, tested on the anvil of scientific method, that science expands the horizon of knowledge and achieves relative exactitude. Within the scientific culture milieu, individuals are so acculturated that the process is well understood. However, the ever-changing nature of scientific knowledge creates cultural-cognitive-dissonance, when it encounters the public culture and subcultures. Consequently, scientific ideas face resistance before they become part of peoples' cultural structure of thought. More often than not, scientific explanations compete with culturally absorbed ideological positions, which include superstition and irrational beliefs, held by the public. The so-called scientific method, which is not a linearly laid out method but a rainbow of techniques and process, employed by scientist when investigating a scientific problem and arrive at conclusions, ensures the communality of a scientific culture across national, social, religious, ethnic, racial and cultural bounds. It follows that engagement with the public is a complex and convoluted process worthy of further attention by the scientific world.

10:50 – 11:10 **Q & A**

---

**11:10 – 11:30 Tea**

---



---

**11:30 – 12:10 Session 4: Stakeholder perspectives : Review of current public engagement practice in South Africa**

---

Moderator: Tom Suchanandan, DST

11:30 – 11:50 *Behind the numbers – science measurement and the public understanding of science in South Africa*

Mr Saahier Parker, HSRC

The emergence of formal institutional science measurement in the early 20th century provided the foundation for the formation of an entire industry related to STI indicators (Science, Technology and Innovation). The study of the way(s) in which the public engages, contributes, values and supports science has been part of this evolution and embraces the notion of the changing and complimentary conversation around the study of science engagement. This paper will explore the public facing empirical measures as a component of public engagement activities in South Africa. What is the purpose of public understanding of science (PUS) surveys in South Africa, what opportunities have been identified and how are the varied public(s) impacted by the contribution of STI to social and economic progress in South Africa? Drawing on the limited universe of empirical evidence from within South Africa, we will review the current state of public understanding of science research in South Africa and explore proposed research toward addressing some of the gaps that have been identified.

11:50 – 12:10 **Q & A**

---

**12:10 – 13:00 Session 5: mediator for public engagement**

---

12:10 – 12:30 *Political challenges for public communication*

Dr Hester du Plessis, Faculty head: Humanity, Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA)

The current political landscape is characterised by a growing demand for socio-political change by Social Movements, Unions and civil society organisations. These movements and organisations are transforming the public platform as a space of regulated formal exchange of information to one of spontaneous, unregulated and informal information sharing. It will be posed that social mobilisation is changing the science communication political landscape. Social movements and organisations are demanding and enforcing the opportunity to negotiate democratic rights - often in innovative ways and sometimes aggressively. At the same time the newly 'occupied' public space provides opportunity for the sharing of information and new ideas by an informed and politically active public. As a result the role of the popular public political intellectual as science communicator could be progressively marginalised by the open approach of public opinion in its collective and informed demand for radical socio-political and economic transformation

12:30 – 13:00 **Q & A**

---

**13:00 – 14:00 LUNCH**

---

---

**14:00 – 15:00 Session 6: Reflection and recommendations for best practices in public engagement in SA**

---

Moderator: Prof. Narnia Bohler-Muller, HSRC

---

**15:00 – 15:10 Closure and the way ahead.**

---

---

Departure

---

## **WORKSHOP DOCUMENTS**

On registering, delegates will be provided with supporting documentation at the workshop in their workshop packs, including the workshop programme, abstracts and biographies.

## **REGISTRATION**

The Registration Desk for the workshop will be located in the Foyer of the Amethyst Room in the CSIR Conference Centre

Registration commences at 8h00 on 11 March 2015. On arrival, delegates and guests should register and collect their workshop bags from the registration desk. The Registration Desk will be open for general information enquiries throughout the workshop.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

All presenters must please see that their PowerPoint slides are loaded onto the computer systems in advance of their session. IT staff that will be assisting at the event include Mr Thabo Stamper (cell: 076 628 3579, E-mail: TStamper@hsrc.ac.za).

Should you have any additional material you would like to make available to delegates, please bring along around 65 copies to provide delegates.

A printer will be available, but only for a limited number of copies

## **INTERNET ACCESS AND COMMUNICATION FACILITIES**

Internet access is available in the CSIR Conference Centre

Please note that it is not possible to provide a sufficient number of computers and work stations to cater for everyone expected to join us. We therefore recommend that you bring along your own laptop.

## **THE WEATHER**

March season is usually good weather in Pretoria. You may expect average temperatures of 23° C to 34° C during your visit in Pretoria, usually with cool evenings. **We highly recommend that delegates bring along umbrellas.**

For more accurate information, visit the South African Weather Bureau's website:

<http://www.weathersa.co.za>.

## **EXHIBITIONS**

Please support the exhibitors in the foyer of the Amethyst, where HSRC Press books will be available to view.

## **PARKING**

Parking is available for delegates using their own transport

#### KEY CONTACTS DETAILS FOR YOUR VISIT

Events manager: <b>Ms Arlene Grossberg</b> , Tel 012 302 2811, Cell: 078 168 2996, E-mail: <a href="mailto:acgrossberg@hsrc.ac.za">acgrossberg@hsrc.ac.za</a> & <b>Ms Carolina Roscigno</b> , cell: 0825705312, E-mail <a href="mailto:croscigno@hsrc.ac.za">croscigno@hsrc.ac.za</a>
IT: <b>Mr Thabo Stamper</b> cell: 083 993 6657, E-mail: <a href="mailto:TStamper@hsrc.ac.za">TStamper@hsrc.ac.za</a>
Registration desk: <b>Ms Happy Solomon</b> 073 553 2930, E-mail: <a href="mailto:HSolomon@hsrc.ac.za">HSolomon@hsrc.ac.za</a> , Ms Zuzi Khuzwayo, E-mail: <a href="mailto:ZKhuzwayo@hsrc.ac.za">ZKhuzwayo@hsrc.ac.za</a>
Travel and accommodation: <b>Rahab Singwane</b> Travel Adventures International, Email: <a href="mailto:rahab@travadv.co.za">rahab@travadv.co.za</a> Cell: 082 593 4385, Tel: +27 (0) 12 460 7421 Our After Hours Number 082 419 6661 Docex 293, Pretoria
CSIR Event Coordinator: Ms Bontle Thusi, Tel: 012 841 3822, E-mail: <a href="mailto:BThusi@csir.co.za">BThusi@csir.co.za</a>

#### Have we forgotten something?

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or need further information about your trip

We look forward to seeing you soon!

We hope that you have an enjoyable and successful workshop.

ADDENDUM A

Meiring Naude Road, Brummeria, Pretoria | PO Box 395, Pretoria, 0001

Tel: +27 12 841 3884 | Fax: +27 12 841 2051

E-mail: [icc@csir.co.za](mailto:icc@csir.co.za) | Web: [www.csiricc.co.za](http://www.csiricc.co.za)

DIRECTIONS TO THE CSIR CONFERENCE CENTRE

LOCATION MAP



**Directions from North  
(travelling on N1 South)**

Take N1 South  
Take the Lynnwood Road turnoff  
and turn left into Meiring Naude Road  
Cross over one set of  
traffic lights (Kings Highway)  
Turn right into the first entrance,  
which is the CSIR south gate  
Keep left and follow the signs to  
the CSIR International Convention Centre

**Directions from South  
(travelling on N1 North)**

Take N1 North  
Take Lynnwood Road offramp  
after Atterbury Road  
Turn right over highway  
Turn left into 1st street  
(Meiring Naude Road)  
Cross over two set of  
traffic lights (Kings Highway)  
Turn right at the next set of traffic lights,  
which is the CSIR south gate  
Keep left and follow the signs to  
the CSIR International Convention Centre

**CSIR** International  
Convention Centre  
*naturally hospitable • globally accessible*

