

INITIATIVE FOR SCIENCE, SOCIETY AND POLICY

Living Technology

One of the most powerful and revolutionary technologies the coming generations will encounter is 'living technology' - technology with life-like properties such as self-repair, self-reproduction, local intelligence, and the ability to evolve. How can we prepare ourselves for the future in which there are man-made materials that are alive, in which we can redesign and mold the features of our unborn children, in which autonomous robotic systems take care of the elderly? How can we navigate in this brave new world? What kind of world do we want?

Local and Regional Sustainability

By the middle of this century, the developed world will have to reduce its CO₂ emission by at least 95%. We already have visions of a low carbon, sustainable future, but how to make scientists, policymakers, companies and citizens act, rather than talk? ISSP works with the World Wide Fund for Nature and other stakeholders to create a Low Carbon City Index and to build a network of ambitious sustainable local settings.

Two exciting examples are the Sønderborg region in Denmark (ProjectZero) and Sonoma County in California, both aiming to "go zero" on CO₂ emissions.



Lars Klüver,
director of The Danish Board of
Technology:

"ISSP fills a serious gap of declared social responsibility in the scientific community by establishing dialogues between academia and the rest of society. This is a needed complement to the already well-established policy analysis based on ethics, technology assessment and foresight."

Peter Rathje, CEO, ProjectZero.

ProjectZero is aiming to make the Danish Sønderborg-region CO₂ neutral by 2029, based on energy savings, renewable energy supplies, clean-tech business development as well as individual and collective behavioural changes: "ISSP has given our regional sustainability efforts a much needed and strong gateway to global university research, which didn't exist earlier. Also, the initiative has given us a national and an international network, which would have been very difficult for us to establish ourselves. I strongly believe that this Initiative can benefit other similar projects..."

INVITATION TO DIALOGUE

ISSP

THE INITIATIVE FOR SCIENCE, SOCIETY AND POLICY

Science and Technology are critical components of Society

For centuries science and technology has dramatically changed the human condition for better and for worse and has brought about many new possibilities for mankind. Despite the critical importance of science and technology, only little attention is directed towards their importance as components in our societal planning and in our public discourse. Scientific issues sporadically emerge, when for instance a sheep has been cloned for the first time, or when a large ice sheet melts from global warming. But then the issues tend to be quickly forgotten again. This lack of sustained attention has enormous costs for our lives and our future. We need to address and consider the consequences of these developments and how they actually affect our world. We need to develop a clear sense of Scientific Social Responsibility.

Action is needed

Climate change, globalization conflicts, as well as the promises and fears of nanotechnology are examples of issues that are increasingly affecting our everyday life. Society too often considers these issues only when doing immediate damage control. In general, there is too little of insightful dialogue between scientists, politicians and society at large.

This starkly contrasts world, in which the technological recognized to butions to a to survive and competitive.

with the business latest scientific and developments are make vital contri- firm's ability remain

Mission

The Initiative for Science, Society, and Policy (ISSP) seeks to create a thorough and responsible dialogue among scientists, policy makers, business leaders and the general public. ISSP's overall goal is to generate a general awareness of important emerging technologies and to enable an informed conversation about what is possible and what we want. In this way, ISSP seeks to develop Scientific Social Responsibility. In the long run, the Initiative also seeks to help society make better practical policy decisions by monitoring and clarifying the dynamics of current societal changes. ISSP is politically independent and chooses topics on the basis of scientific quality and societal impact. Leading national and international scientists, policymakers and business leaders will address issues as:

- How will artificial life, stem cells, cloning, robotics and internet based collective intelligence change our world in the coming generation? What kind of world do we want?
- We already have visions of a low carbon, sustainable future, but how to make scientists, policymakers, companies and citizens act, rather than talk?

The Initiative is created through the vision and support of the University of Southern Denmark and it is expected to grow into a consortium of universities and research institutions across Denmark and beyond. Contact us at issp@sdu.dk and please see www.science-society-policy.org for further information.