TRACK 22. TECHNOLOGICALLY DENSE ENVIRONMENTS: A BRIDGE BETWEEN STS AND ORGANIZATION STUDIES

In the past years, a reflection has emerged around the connection between STS and other domains, especially management and organization studies. That is exemplified, for example, by the international workshop titled "Does STS mean business?" in 2004, the session at EASST 2006 titled "STS as a boundary discipline: interacting with Organization Studies", where a number of established STS scholars shared their experiences of "becoming" STS researchers, or by the special issue of the journal "Organization" in January 2009, exploring the relationship between STS and Organization and Management Studies. Regardless of these efforts, many are still struggling to engage with other disciplines, or find the balance between being "STS" and "practically useful".

Our intent, with this stream, is to deepen such reflection, focusing on the empirical issues emerging in Technologically Dense Environments (TDE). In such an environment complex socio-material practices mobilize the joint action of heterogeneous elements, both humans and non-humans, in supporting collective work, blurring the distinction between natural and artificial ontologies.

The connections that take place in TDE are the locus where the performance of science and technology is enacted through organizational and working practices. Proposing such a tightly integrated STS-informed Organization-oriented view suggests that we should not speak from the STS perspective only, of which critical analysis de-constructs the making of technological products or services or phenomena, but also apply our observation and findings to the field in a more proactive way, helping to balance the construction of a TDE. Through this lens, we would like to call for contributions studying TDE, that can be seen as sites of scientific and technological production, as well as sites of working and organizing practices using scientific and technical means.

Doing this kind of research pushes the STS scholars to confront situated methodological challenges, act as a boundary worker across different fields. Such discussion can serve as relationship building and networking between STS scholars for sharing experiences and support, as well as a bridge for linking empirical, methodological and theoretical issues that different disciplines (e.g., STS, Organization Studies) face, finding a common ground to tackle and/or conceptualise these issues.

Possible topics are, but not limited to:
- empirical findings from TDE fields, studying organizing processes from a STS-informed perspective;
- theoretical reflections on the bridge building and spanning between different fields;
- map, discuss and exchange methods and methodologies used in different fields.

Abstracts of no more than 500 words should be sent by email (following website instructions) by 2010 March 15th.

Convenors:

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