

Call

Governance of socio-technical transformation towards smart cities

Agenda for a GoST Workshop / a Special Issue

The objective of this workshop and the related special issue is to take stock of GoST research on smart cities/ urban digitalization.

Hundreds of cities worldwide are currently envisioning processes of transformation based promises to use “smart” technologies in order to meet the sustainability challenges of the 21st Century.

Following the GoST approach, the workshop seeks to explore crucial but neglected governance issues in areas of urban digital infrastructure/ smart cities by uncovering multi-dimensionality and temporalities of socio-technical transformations on the ground. Based on case studies in a variety of countries, we seek to explore how transformations towards smart city are governed, by who, what end, and with what consequences.

We invite specifically topic-focused contributions from the GoST project that examine ideas of the smart city and ways how to govern socio-technical transformations towards smart cities in just and democratic way. We welcome:

- Contributions that illustrate why the STI framework provides a useful lens for interrogating dominant assumptions, promises and understandings concerning smart city, including divergent understandings of the common good
- Case studies of/ comparisons between the temporality and performativity of smart city visions
- Comparisons of futures of ‘smart cities’ with other ‘abstract futures’ in the domain of T2S or in other domains (such as Net Zero)
- Studies of the historical provenance of smart city discourses and how expertise shaped its adoption (where the smart city comes from and how the vision is made)
- Research on how the smart city discourse is related to particular ways of knowing that shape modes and styles of governing it (including questions such as: who gets to imagine smart cities, how is the smart citizen imagined and how have civil society actors and most vulnerable groups been invited? Who *owns* the smart city? What role for foreign investors and international agencies?)
- Research on the entanglement between global, national, local and project-related politics of Smart cities (multi-scale nature of the topic and related questions of subsidiarity)
- Research on how smart city discourses has become a controversial and politicized terrain of configuration for essentially conflicting interests concerning long-term sustainable transformation
- Studies of the pandemic as constitutional moment for enabling digital technologies? How is the pandemic framed – as opportunity or crisis for the smart city / for reaching sustainability?