

# SSSP news

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*News from the uOttawa Science, Society and Policy Network*

*January 2013*

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## **Elizabeth Dowdeswell Speaking at the ISSP**



ISSP Distinguished Speaker Series 2012-2013

**Insight and Impact:  
A contribution from the Council of Canadian Academies**

**[Elizabeth Dowdeswell](#)  
President and CEO  
Council of Canadian Academies**

Tuesday, January 29, 4:30 - 6:30pm  
Desmarais Building, Room 12102 (12th floor)  
University of Ottawa

**Free. In English.**

**Reception** to follow talk.

[Register for the event here](#) or through [the ISSP site](#). Registration closes January 28.

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## #ISSP: Looking Forward to 2013



We know that science, technology and innovation are needed to solve many of our key problems. But we *don't know* (or can't agree on) how to foster, regulate and use them to our best advantage. It's high time to debate, investigate, train and communicate on this issue.

This just about sums up the rationale behind the Institute for Science, Society and Policy. It runs through all the work we do - our teaching, our research, and our public outreach.

Life at the ISSP has been busy. [Our annual report for the 2011-2012 academic year](#) outlines the wide range of projects we undertook - and the considerable success we celebrated. 2013 will be another busy year. Here are a few of the topics we're taking on:

### *The future is already history*

Science and technology are accelerating - and it's often surprising what's already old news. Knowing your genome costs less than university tuition and the shirt you're wearing may already contain nanomaterials. Self-driving cars have already clocked over a hundred thousand miles and Kenyans are using cell-phones as wallets this very instant.

Tomorrow's students have to understand this acceleration and the opportunities and risks it brings. The ISSP's [graduate education program](#) will give them the tools. We aim to receive program approval from uOttawa this year.

### *Floating in an ocean of information, but thirsty for answers*

The information age is a mixed blessing. We have more data than information, more information than understanding, and more understanding than wisdom. Everybody wants decisions to be informed by (or at least respectful of) evidence. But the extent to which evidence is actually used in public policymaking is a subject of concern. We saw proof of this last summer, when the Death of Evidence march in Ottawa attracted national and international attention.

We need to publicly discuss how science and technology intersect with policymaking. The ISSP will address these opportunities and concerns at [Science and Society 2013](#). We're organizing this conference with [Situating Science](#) and the [Professional Institute of the Public Service](#). The conference will engage academics, public servants and the public at large.

### *Thinking about Innovation*

Innovation is like traffic planning - everybody agrees it's important and everybody is an expert in it. Since it has been a hot topic for some time, we seem drowned in reports, complexity and recommendations. What's missing is a summary based on the current consensus among academics - the short, inclusive and coherent story.

The [Innovation Policy Decalogue](#) is our humble contribution to thinking about innovation. The final version will be completed this month. The Decalogue has already provoked considerable discussion. And we have every intention to keep this discussion alive.

With these and other projects, 2013 is set to be another exciting year for the ISSP.

Thank you to all the readers of the SSP News - over 500 of you have opted-in to get the publication since last spring. We'll keep you informed with provocative blog entries and news

from the University of Ottawa's [Science, Society and Policy Network](#). Please stay tuned.

Marc Saner  
Director  
Institute for Science, Society and Policy  
University of Ottawa

[Return to the Top](#)



## Peter Calamai Awarded Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal



ISSP Fellow Peter Calamai was recently one of 60,000 Canadians to receive the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. The medal "serves to honour significant contributions and achievements by Canadians".

Congratulations Peter!

## Women in Academia: Take the Final Step Conference



The Council of Canadian Academies' (CCA) [recent report on the status of women in academia](#) has generated a great deal of discussion - much of which took place in the Globe and Mail, where ISSP Affiliate and Mechanical Engineering Associate Professor [Catherine Mavriplis](#) was quoted several times. The CCA report decries the paucity of women in full professor positions.

To address this issue, Catherine is organizing under her NSERC / Pratt & Whitney Canada Chair for Women in Science and Engineering a workshop tailored to women associate professors who wish to prepare themselves for promotion to full professor. The bilingual conference, [Take the Final Step](#), will be held at the University of Ottawa this Thursday and Friday. The workshop is offered in cooperation with the equivalent chair for Québec, la Chaire CRSNG-Industrielle Alliance pour les femmes en science et en génie au Québec, Université Laval (Québec, QC), held by [Nadia Ghazzali](#). Nadia is serving her first year as President or Rectrice of l'Université du Québec à Trois Rivières.



## Who Speaks for Science? Rees Kassen in *Physics and Society*

[Rees Kassen](#) recently published 'Who Speaks for Science? Experience from Canada' in *Physics and Society*. The article "offer[s] some reflections on the disconnect between scientists and elected officials, and discuss[es] approaches currently underway in Canada to help bridge this gap".

Rees is an ISSP Core Member, and Associate Professor and University Research Chair in Experimental Evolution at the University of Ottawa,



Read the article [here](#).

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## Enhancement and Global Regulation: Gregor Wolbring in *Asian Bioethics Review*



[Gregor Wolbring](#) recently published "Ethics Theories and Discourses through an Ability Expectations and Ableism Lens: The Case of Enhancement and Global Regulation" in *Asian Bioethics Review*.

The paper "analyses a sample of ethical theories for their exhibited ability expectations, highlights forms of ableism evident in various ethics discourses, and discusses the implication of the findings for how we govern ourselves, chart human progress and advances in science and technology, locally and globally focusing in particular on the topic of human enhancement"

Gregor is an ISSP Fellow and Assistant Professor at the University of Calgary.

Read the paper [here](#) (restricted access). Gregor can be contacted [here](#).



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## Other News

### Patrick Fafard Co-edits and Contributes to Special Issue of Journal

ISSP Core Member and Associate Professor at the University of Ottawa, Patrick Fafard recently served as co-editor of a special issue of the [Journal of Urban Health](#). The theme was "Knowledge Translation and Urban Health Equity: Advancing the Agenda". He also was the author of a paper in that special issue, entitled "[Public Health Understandings of Policy and Power: Lessons from INSITE](#)".

### Jeff Kinder Facilitating Science Policy Workshop

On February 4, ISSP Fellow Jeff Kinder will facilitate a workshop entitled "Science Policy 101 - The Integration of Science and Policy" at the [Yukon Government Science Policy Forum](#).

### Hessel Article Quoted in *The New York Times*

A recent edition of *SSP News* highlighted "[Hacking the President's DNA](#)", an article co-authored by ISSP Fellow Andrew Hessel and published in *The Atlantic*. Perhaps the most interesting response to the article to date is this - [opponents of the BGI takeover of Complete Genomics are using it to support their case](#).

## Congratulations and Good Luck to Valerie Harbour

Congratulations and best of luck to Valerie Harbour, who recently began her new assignment as a Program Officer at the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council. Previously Valerie worked as a Research Consultant at the ISSP.

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INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE SUR LA SCIENCE,  
LA SOCIÉTÉ ET LA POLITIQUE PUBLIQUE  
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The Institute for Science, Society and Policy carries out research,  
teaching and public engagement on the relationship between society  
and science, innovation and technology.

The ISSP is centered at the University of Ottawa.

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Thanks to members of the ISSP and uOttawa [SSP Network](#) for providing contributions

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