

## Evaluating the Broader Impact of Inter- and Transdisciplinary Research Proposals

Organizers:

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- *Britt Holbrook* ([CSID](#), University of North-Texas)
- *Christian Pohl* (td-net and [ETH Zurich](#))
- With representatives from the following foundations:
  - Mercator Foundation Switzerland:
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### *Description*

This workshop addresses the needs of public and private funding agencies concerned with questions surrounding the broader societal impacts of research, ex ante, ex nunc, and ex poste. The workshop will begin with a brief account of the CAPR ([Comparative Assessment of Peer Review](#); <http://csid-capr.unt.edu/>) project. Funding agencies will then be invited to briefly present their approach to evaluating broader impacts of research proposals. The workshop will then turn to a conversation about different approaches that can be taken to the evaluation of broader impacts.

Inter- and transdisciplinary research is often driven by the desire to achieve an impact beyond the science system and the world of ISI-citations. The US National Science Foundation subsumes these impacts under the term „broader impacts“. Since the introduction of the broader impacts criterion in 1997 the US NSF has struggled to define and evaluate the term and balance it with the intellectual merits of research (Frodeman and Holbrook).

The Centre for the Study of Interdisciplinarity (CSID, University of North Texas) is completing a four-year project that has been examining these questions. Called the Comparative Assessment of Peer Review (CAPR, 2008-2012), the project examines how six US and foreign public science agencies conduct the peer review process, with a focus on how broader societal impacts issues are taken into account in the review of proposals.

The aim of the workshop is to reflect on current practices of evaluating the broader impact of inter- and transdisciplinary research proposals. Public and private funding agencies are invited to briefly present their approach, answering questions such as:

- What is the agencies understanding of broader impacts?
- How is a proposal's potential for broader impact assessed?
- What other questions are agencies facing in this respect?

The agencies' approaches will be discussed in the light of the actual results of the CAPR project, as well as in exchange with the other funder experiences.