The Center for Nanotechnology in Society
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

NSF Grant Extends CNS-ASU Laboratory Integration Activities to Global Scale

Dr. Erik Fisher, Assistant Research Professor, The Center for Nanotechnology in Society at Arizona State University

Policies in many nations are placing new pressures on emerging technologies to more explicitly align research and development activities with beneficial societal outcomes. However, neither the capacity of laboratories to respond to such pressures, nor the role that interdisciplinary collaborations between natural and human scientists may play in enhancing responsiveness, is well understood.

To address these limitations, the National Science Foundation has awarded CNS-ASU faculty Erik Fisher and David Guston a three-year, $540K grant to support the **Socio-Technical Integration Research Project (STIR).** STIR will study the extent to which collaborations between social and natural scientists working alongside one another in research laboratories may advance responsible innovation. The objectives of STIR are to:

- identify and compare external expectations for laboratories to engage in responsible innovation;
- assess and compare the responsiveness of laboratory practices to these pressures;
- investigate how interdisciplinary collaborations may assist in elucidating, enhancing or stimulating responsiveness.

STIR
SocioTechnical Integration Research
International Laboratory Engagement Study

STIR will train ten social science/humanities doctoral students—half in the United States and half in other countries—to each carry out paired laboratory studies based on a research method developed by Fisher, the project's principal investigator. These students will spend approximately four months working intimately with scientists and engineers in two laboratories, one in their home countries and one abroad. The paired studies will allow students to gain comparative understanding of the capacity of laboratories to inform and strengthen science-society linkages.

STIR Workshop 1: Constructing Foundations

A kickoff workshop was held at Arizona State University in January, 2009. It consisted of three days of readings, exercises, and seminars by an international set of senior collaborators in order to train the interdisciplinary team of student investigators.

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