Call for Abstracts

Progress in Science and Society. Workshop with Philip Kitcher

June 14, 2017 | Leibniz Universität Hannover | Deadline March 12, 2017

Topic

Is the notion of progress suitable to analyze such disparate endeavors as science, ethics, economics or society as a whole? If so, what conceptual assumptions does such a notion require? In a recent contribution, Philip Kitcher suggested that progress has to be understood as the successful attempt to solve pragmatic problems. Consequently, whether or not a development can be called progressive depends on the contextual aims of the involved agents. Since these aims can legitimately vary, progress is a local phenomenon. However, Kitcher also pursues a universalist strategy: Pragmatic problem solving should help to realize the all-embracing goal of creating a good life for all. For Kitcher, this “Ethical Project” reaches back to the early stages of human evolution and serves as the ultimate touchstone for progress. Science, for instance, makes progress if it is devoted to problems of human wellbeing and if it finds solutions to these problems that promote practical realizations of the good life.

In a one day workshop at Leibniz Universität Hannover, we will discuss the merits and challenges of the notion of progress. A special emphasis will be put on progress in science and ethics as well as the work of Philip Kitcher regarding these fields. However, progress in further areas (economy, law, politics) as well as contributions unrelated to Kitcher are also welcome. Philip Kitcher will be present at the workshop and give a keynote lecture. Furthermore, he will give a public evening lecture on Monday, June 12.

Submissions

We invite submissions for 30 minutes talks (plus 20 minutes discussion); there are four to five free slots. Please submit a short abstract including no more than 200 words and an extended abstract with no more than 750 words. Abstracts need to be submitted in an anonymized document (PDF or DOC) together with the title of the talk. Please send the document, attached to an email that states your name, affiliation and position as well as the title of the talk, to admissions@philos.uni-hannover.de. The deadline is March 12, 2017. Notice of acceptance will be sent out two weeks later. We might be able to provide limited travel reimbursement for accepted speakers (only for PhD students without any other travel funding; please indicate in your email if you would like to qualify for this). Participants who do not give a talk are also welcome and are asked to register in advance. There is no registration fee.

Organizers

The workshop is organized by the DFG research training group "Integrating Ethics and Epistemology of Scientific Research", a joint project of Leibniz University Hannover and Bielefeld University. It aims at bridging the gap between theoretical and practical philosophy of science. The GRK is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

Organization committee: Markus Dressel, Saana Jukola, Roel Visser

Further information: www.grk2073.org