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## Interview

### 'Let's take care that responsible innovation does not get diluted'

Dr Jack Stilgoe is a lecturer in social studies of science at University College London. He was a keynote speaker at the symposium *Neuroimaging meets society*, organised by one of NWO's Responsible Innovation research groups in July.



Stilgoe is interested in the governance of emerging technologies. He switches between research and practice, acting for instance as consultant for the UK's Engineering and Physical Research Council.

*You aim to govern emerging technologies. But don't these technologies just run their own course?*

'I think it is possible to choose and enforce a desired course for a technology in its early stages, even though it is incredibly hard. The least we can do is try to anticipate what the intended and unintended societal impact of a new technology will be. What do we want with it, what concerns do people have, and what should we do to resolve these? For certain technologies we can see with hindsight that they were not governed well from the outset. Genetically modified crops are a prime example of this. So yes, I think it is definitely worth trying to maximise the benefits of a new technology for society.'

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# Research results

## Pitfalls of networked military operations

On 6 October Christine Boshuijzen will defend her doctoral thesis *Moral decision making in network enabled operations*. Her research is part of a [study](#) within the Responsible Innovation research programme into 'moral fitness' of military personnel. Boshuijzen is the first researcher to have performed a detailed analysis of the risks of network enabled military operations.



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## Friendly surveillance works best

For a friendly, safe and economically healthy nightlife a positive approach aimed at a good atmosphere is more effective than just a show of power and 'more police on the streets'. Collaboration between entrepreneurs, the police and private security personnel in combination with video surveillance makes such an approach possible.



Social geographer Jelle Brands concludes this based on a study in the NWO programme Responsible Innovation. Brands defended his PhD thesis on 12 September 2014. Brands' research is part of the Responsible Innovation project *Surveillance in urban nightscapes*.

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# Research in progress

## Neuroimaging could be the key to a better society

Neuroimaging techniques are a strongly emerging technology and could bring about a revolution in various areas of society, provided we now choose in which directions we want to develop them. This is one of the conclusions of a dialogue between neuroscientists and future users of the technology, organised by the research project [Towards an appropriate societal embedding of neuroimaging](#).



Techniques to produce images of the brain (neuroimaging) are highly promising and developing rapidly. For researchers from the Athena Institute at VU University Amsterdam this provided the basis to bring neuroscientists and professionals together in a series of dialogues. Their aim in doing this is to achieve a better match between the expectations of science and society. Three application areas of neuroimaging were considered: healthcare, education and safety.

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## Human enhancement conference transcends yes or no debate

The international conference on cognitive enhancement held in August attracted some seventy experts from different disciplines and a wide range of countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Israel, Switzerland, the UK and the US.



'It is rare that neuroscientists, social psychologists and philosophers engage in a real substantive exchange of insights', says Filippo Santoni de Sio, one of the conference organisers. 'But at this conference, they did. We got beyond the classic debate between those who are for and those who are against human enhancement and managed to get down to a genuine analysis. The conference has given us as philosophers a more solid, scientific ground for our theories. I trust we in turn sharpened the normative consciousness of the scientists.'

[Read an interview with Nicole Vincent on doping in the workplace >](#)

## Events

### Design and engineering for well-being

On 20-21 November 2014 Responsible Innovation researchers Ilse Oosterlaken and Annemarie Mink of Delft University of Technology are organising a two-day seminar on 'Design and engineering for well-being, agency and justice'. Critical reflection is on the agenda, but also concrete methods and approaches to effect positive change in practice and to educate designers and engineers.

### ***Responsible Innovation***

*Technological developments may fail if their ethical and social consequences are not considered in time. NWO's Responsible Innovation programme funds and encourages research that considers the ethical and social aspects of new technology from the design phase onwards. Researchers from different scientific disciplines collaborate in this programme, such as ethicists, behavioural scientists, economists, psychologists and engineers.*

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