

Call for Papers

## SPT 2017: The Grammar of Things

20th conference of the Society for Philosophy and Technology  
June 14-17, 2017 – Darmstadt, Germany

### Thematic Overview

When we talk and think about technology, we are talking about *ars* and *techne*, artefacts and socio-technical systems – and always about putting things together, co-ordinating people and things. Seeking to understand, interpret, and knowingly inhabit the human-built world, we explore what works together, how to construct, engineer, compose, grow, plan, assemble, or design in appropriate, fitting, sustainable, and sociable ways.

These are questions of grammar: How do things work together in the motor of a car, in a public square, in a soap opera, in the painting of a historic scene, in a deliberative process? What are the principles of composition in a musical score or a computer program? How closely are things related in an ‘Internet of Things’? What sustains the operation of a concrete machine? Who acts when a law is enforced, a plan realized, a code compiled, a script executed? How do users become designers, how do scientists become engineers, how do artefacts become moral agents?

Such examinations of the grammar of things implicate epistemology, social imaginaries, and design ethics. They provoke analysis from the various traditions in philosophy of technology and seek to draw on contributions from history of technology, cultural studies, design theory, anthropology, art history, cognitive psychology, computer science, engineering education and other fields.

Topics of discussion include:

- technological arrangements of people and things
- design as experimental ethics
- genres of art and technology and how they talk to each other
- right and wrongs in working knowledge
- design theory and standards of appropriateness
- manuals of composition and craft learning by example
- reasoning and acting with things
- logics and heuristics of design
- notations, specifications, standards and technosocial norms
- local constellations and global forces
- ethics, politics, and the governance of technosocial systems
- robustness and vulnerability of technological (e.g., urban) infrastructures

By way of an excursion and dedicated sessions the conference will also draw on its surroundings (Darmstadt, Mainz) and explore their relevance for the philosophy and history of technology:

- making things work together on the page – the printing press, the book, and the *Kulturtechnik* of reading
- total design – from art nouveau to standardization in architecture

Beyond these topical headlines, we also welcome

- other topics in the field of philosophy and technology

## Plenary Speakers

- Pamela Andanda (Law, University of Witwatersrand)
- Christian Bök (Poet, Charles Darwin University)
- Sybille Krämer (Philosophy, Freie Universität Berlin)
- Dagmar Schäfer (Sinology, Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte Berlin)
- Astrid Schwarz (Philosophy, ETH Zurich)
- George Stiny (Design and Computation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology)
- Shannon Vallor (Philosophy, Santa Clara University)

## Proposals and Submissions

We welcome submissions of abstracts for individual papers, panels for three or four speakers, and proposals for mini-tracks consisting of several panels (if you are interested in organizing a thematic track, please contact the organizers ahead of time). 350-word abstracts for individual papers, 800-1000 word abstracts for panels should be submitted by Dec 5 at <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=spt2017>. Enter abstracts and keywords in the space provided on the submissions page (treat panel proposals like multi-authored papers). Feel free to additionally include a pdf-version of your abstract. We expect to announce accepted papers by March 1, 2017.

It is also possible to host a separate pre-conference workshop in the afternoon of June 13 and/or the morning of June 14. Please contact the organizers for more details.

## Early Career Award and Graduate Student Paper Awards

*SPT Early Career Award (sponsored by Philosophy & Technology)*

The Springer journal *Philosophy and Technology* (Editor-in-Chief Luciano Floridi), in coordination with the Society for Philosophy and Technology, is proud to sponsor the 2017 SPT Early Career Award. The award, which includes a 500 Euro cheque to be presented to the winner at the 2017 biennial meeting in Darmstadt, Germany, will be given to an early career scholar whose accepted paper for SPT 2017, in the judgment of the SPT Executive Board, best embodies exceptional and innovative scholarly work that promises to expand

the scope of research in this field. Priority will thus be given to work that promotes growth and open horizons in philosophical research on technology, for example, by developing new ideas, topics, methodologies, arguments, conceptual frameworks or disciplinary perspectives. **Early career scholars (less than 10 years since the Ph.D., with exceptions for parental leave) whose abstracts are accepted by the SPT 2017 program committee may submit full papers to the SPT Board at [sptgianninaong@gmail.com](mailto:sptgianninaong@gmail.com) by April 1, 2017 for award consideration;** the winner will be notified by April 30 and listed on the conference program. Additional funds for travel to SPT 2017 may be offered. The award winner must be willing to submit the paper for consideration for publication in *Philosophy and Technology*. The award will be formally presented to the winner at the closing SPT session on June 17.

### *SPT Graduate Student Paper Awards*

The Society for Philosophy and Technology will sponsor up to five graduate student paper awards given to outstanding submissions by graduate students for SPT 2017. These awards will include a 500 US-\$ travel stipend. Graduate students (including the equivalent of Ph.D. candidates, doctoral students, or research master students) who wish to be considered for an award must submit a complete draft (max. 3000 words) of the paper to be considered to an independent SPT award committee at the email address below by January 1, 2017, following the separate submission of the abstract by December 5. The full paper should be stripped of identifying information but include a cover sheet with the paper title, 150-200 word abstract, the author's name, contact info and current graduate program details (e.g., date of enrollment, degree being pursued, department and institution.) Submitted papers will be blind reviewed by the SPT award committee. Only authors whose abstracts are accepted by the program committee for the conference program will be eligible to receive a graduate student paper award, and those selected must register and present the paper at the conference to receive the award and stipend. Co-authored submissions are ineligible for graduate student paper awards unless all authors are graduate students and are listed as such, with the required program information, on the paper cover sheet. **To apply for a graduate paper award, please submit a full paper (max 3000 words) and cover sheet to [sptgianninaong@gmail.com](mailto:sptgianninaong@gmail.com) by January 1, 2017.**

### **Local Arrangements**

Darmstadt is located a few kilometers from Frankfurt airport, the cost for accommodations in Darmstadt is reasonable by international standards, child care will be provided. The conference fee has not been set and will be in the neighborhood of 250 Euro.

For more information see [www.philosophie.tu-darmstadt.de/spt2017](http://www.philosophie.tu-darmstadt.de/spt2017)

Please send inquiries to spt2017 <[spt2017@phil.tu-darmstadt.de](mailto:spt2017@phil.tu-darmstadt.de)>, contact the organizers Sabine Ammon <[ammon@tu-berlin.de](mailto:ammon@tu-berlin.de)> or Alfred Nordmann <[nordmann@phil.tu-darmstadt.de](mailto:nordmann@phil.tu-darmstadt.de)>, or visit the homepage of the *Society for Philosophy and Technology*.