

Faculty: Samuel Evans, Research Assistant Professor, School of Arts & Sciences

Project Locations: London and Cambridge, England

Dates: flexible between end of May 2019 and late July 2019

Project Title: Novel Governance of Security Concerns in Bioengineering

Project Details: How do we know when areas of science and technology might pose security concerns? For hundreds of years, states of had a small set of established ways to answer this question, and they all revolved around lists of objects of concern. Bombs are concerning, feathers are not. Smallpox is concerning, but malaria is not. Problems with this approach are becoming increasingly obvious, either when the security status of an emerging area of research is not yet known, or when some objects might pose significant security concerns, but are not amiable to governing through institutions like export controls or secrecy classification. In the summer of 2019, Professor Evans will organize a series of international events to bring together people on the front line of making these decisions in the US, UK, and potentially several other countries. These meetings are designed to impact both theory development in Science and Technology Studies (and related fields of International Relations, Critical Theory, and Institutional/Organizational Analysis), and on actual policy developments in national and international settings. The project will take place at the University of Cambridge, in the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk, a hive of research activity on the social and governance issues around biosecurity, artificial intelligence, and other areas.

Tasks and Responsibilities of Research Assistant: The student can expect to write up briefs on security governance practices, help organize a series of meetings between Prof. Evans and government, academic, and industry officials, and participate in those meetings. The student will also provide editorial assistance to Prof. Evans in his various publications. The student is welcome and encouraged to use this opportunity to explore their own research interests connected with the project. The student will meet regularly with Prof. Evans to help define those interests, methods by which they might be studied, and, if desired, work towards a publication.

Qualifications:

Required:

- Must be able to deliver on assigned tasks in a timely and professional manner
- Clear, succinct writing with a purpose are at the core of this project, and the student will be expected to both produce her own and refine the writing of others on this project
- Experience in organizational logistics (like running meetings and writing briefs) is highly desired

Preferred:

- A background in Science and Technology Studies, International Relations, Critical Theory, and/or Institutional/Organizational Analysis

Description of Field Site:

The student will be in Cambridge and London, both urban centers in England. Cambridge is a small university city a 45 minute train ride from London. London is one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities.

Housing in England:

Students will stay on the campus of Cambridge University in Cambridge, England.