



Cornell University

Summer Institute on Contested Global Landscapes*
Cornell University, May 18 - 23, 2014

Knowledge and the Politics of Land

Applications are currently being accepted for the second **Summer Institute on Contested Global Landscapes** to be held at Cornell University May 18 - 23, 2014. We welcome applications from advanced graduate students (i.e., completing dissertations) and junior scholars (i.e., who received a Ph.D. after May 2011) in the humanities, social sciences, and other relevant disciplines.

The theme of the 2014 Summer Institute is “Knowledge and the Politics of Land.” In the context of what has been called a contemporary “Global Land Grab” and expanded interest in questions of natural resource availability and access, we ask what role knowledge and knowledge production have played in shaping the politics, economics, and social life of land and land management. How have various disciplines, professions, and indigenous knowledges facilitated and challenged shifting patterns of ownership and access to land in the past and the present? How are knowledge-making capabilities both mobilized and shaped by struggles over land?

We seek to critically examine the relationship between knowledge (and ignorance) in land politics across time, space, culture, and ecology. We are interested in receiving proposals across this broad topic as well as on a number of more specific, interrelated issues, including:

- Knowledge claims and knowledge-making in contemporary land deals;
- How and why certain forms of knowledge are moved, diffused, and imposed (as well as those that do not travel) and the wider environmental, economic, social, and political implications of such (im)mobility;
- How actors negotiate particular and universal knowledge claims;
- The role of measurement, standardization, estimation, and prediction in both reflecting and reproducing the politics of land;
- The role of various experts and multiple, often competing forms of expertise in enabling, but also complicating and sometimes undermining struggles over land;

* Organized by the Institute for the Social Sciences (ISS) with funding from the ISS and the Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future at Cornell University.

- The ways that particular social and natural science disciplines are enmeshed in the politics of land management;
- Construction of systems of innovation, land economics, and the politics of diffusion;
- How knowledges of state and non-state actors combine, compete, and manifest in land politics;
- The complex relationship and dynamics between “lay,” “local,” and “indigenous” forms of knowledge and “expert” or “scientific” knowledge;
- How notions of scarcity, abundance, productivity, and potentiality infuse and animate the production and politics of knowledge.

Over the course of five days and through a mix of feedback on pre-circulated papers, intensive discussions, speaker sessions, and regional field trip(s), participants will have the opportunity to develop their own work and acquire new skills in a vigorous, collegial, interdisciplinary setting.

Successful applicants (up to 10) will signal broad empirical and theoretical originality. The Institute intends to stimulate vibrant and unexpected cross-disciplinary exchange among scholars whose research is directed to different times and spaces. This call for applications is not limited by historical period or world region.

A secondary goal of the Summer Institute is to produce an edited volume or special issue(s). To that end, applicants will be expected to submit a substantive draft of an unpublished paper in advance of the meeting (by April 15, 2014). The workshop will serve, in part, to stimulate further development of these papers for inclusion in the eventual publication(s). All working papers will be pre-circulated to all participants to stimulate ideas, foster synergies, and enhance the quality of feedback participants will receive on their own work. After participants submit final and publishable versions of their contributions to the edited volume/special issue (by October 1, 2014), they will receive a small honorarium. The Institute will cover travel (up to \$600 per participant), food, and housing costs.

Application deadline is midnight (EST) on December 15, 2013. Applicants should apply using this online [form](#). Please upload a cover letter (max. 2 pp single-spaced), a current CV, and a writing sample in one PDF document. Submit an abstract (no more than 300 words) in PDF format of an unpublished paper (that the applicant will contribute to the Institute and have reviewed in final form for possible inclusion in the edited volume/special issue). Lastly, please have a letter of recommendation emailed to socialsciences@cornell.edu prior to December 15, 2013. Successful applicants will be notified by February 1, 2014. International participants will be responsible for researching and completing their own visa and related legal arrangements. Please note that accepted applicants are expected to attend the entirety of the Institute.

The Summer Institute is connected to a larger project on [Contested Global Landscapes](#) that held a [2013 Summer Institute](#). The 2014 Summer Institute is coordinated by Sara Pritchard (Science and Technology Studies), Steven Wolf (Natural Resources), and Wendy Wolford (Development Sociology). Questions should be directed to Sara Pritchard at sbp65@cornell.edu, Steve Wolf at saw44@cornell.edu or Wendy Wolford at www43@cornell.edu.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What file formats may I use to submit my materials?

Please upload PDF files using this [link](#). No hard copies are needed.

What are the expectations for the cover letter?

In addition to describing the applicant's interest in the Summer Institute and a précis of their intellectual project, the cover letter should include the name and email address of the applicant; the date, institution, and field of expected or awarded Ph.D.; the working title of the proposed paper; and the name of the author of the letter of recommendation.

How should letters of reference be submitted?

Letters of reference should be sent by email directly by the letter-writer from their personal email address as an MSWord or pdf file to socialsciences@cornell.edu.

How will I know when the ISS has received all my application materials and my file is complete?

You will receive an email from the ISS after submitting your application on line. Applications received by December 9, 2013, will be notified if their letter of recommendation has not been received.

When will the ISS stop accepting applications for review?

We will no longer accept applications after December 15