



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



Centre for
Biomedicine
Self and Society



‘Novel Beings Network’ Workshop:

‘Navigating the proactive/reactive regulatory debate for emerging and future technologies’

09:45-15:00 Wednesday 24th March, Online via Zoom

Supported by Newcastle University Humanities Research Institute



This workshop will focus on one challenge for the future development of a useful regulatory framework around novel beings and moral status holding technologies. We are faced with the clash between proactive and reactive methodologies, which is a constant presence in the regulation of any emerging technology. A proactive approach (as understood here) asks that given we can strongly predict the emergence of the technology of interest, what can we do now to mitigate their negative and secure their positive impacts when they do arrive? The pace of law often being slow to develop, it seems sensible to start to act now. This might mean the development of new regulatory instruments in advance, adaptation of existing law, guidance codes, and more. Reactive here refers to the regulatory response to technology that we commonly see, wherein we acknowledge that it is difficult to pre-empt or predict the effect of a future technology, and so wait until epistemic questions are answered and the technology is a real and present concern before acting. Reactive regulation might involve reinterpretation and use of existing legislation, amendments to expand applicability where necessary, or responsive action.

Convenors: Dr David Lawrence, Dr Sarah Morley

A Padlet is available [HERE](#) for you to provide a brief text introduction to yourself and your work.

Please find Zoom login details in your email; and feel free to contact David (d.lawrence@ed.ac.uk) or Sarah (sarah.morley@newcastle.ac.uk) with any questions.

If you are joining for part of the day or partway through a session, please just join the waiting room and we will get you into a group as quickly as possible.

Agenda

Waiting room/Arrival – 9.45am.

Please be logged in before 10 for a prompt start

Introduction- 10:00- 10:15

Dr Sarah Morley, Dr David Lawrence

Key Speaker inc. Q&A- 10:15-11:00

Prof. Roger Brownsword (*Kings College London*)

Comfort break: 11:00-11:10

Session 1- 11:10-1:00

10:30-10.45 Breakout Discussion 1

- What does the proactive/reactive division in approaches to regulation mean to you and your area of expertise?

11:45-12:00 Group Reflections

Lunch- 12:00-13:00

Room will be left open for communal lunch if you so choose

Return- 13:00-13:10

Outlining the afternoon's objectives

Please be logged in by 13:00 for a prompt start

Session 2- 13:10-13:55

13:10-13:45 Breakout Discussion 2

- Where there are definite gaps in the regulation of emerging technologies, how are these overcome (or not) in your fields?

13:45-13:55 Group Reflections

Comfort break: 13:55-14:00

Session 2- 14:00-15:45

14:00-14:35 Breakout Discussion 3

- How can we best strike a balance with regulation as technological advancements accelerate?

14:35-14:45 Group Reflections

Concluding Remarks- 14:45-15:00

Dr David Lawrence, Dr Sarah Morley