



Invites you to a conversation with

**Prof. Sheila Jasanoff**

*Pforzheimer Professor of Science and  
Technology Studies*

*Director, Program on Science, Technology and  
Society*

*Harvard Kennedy School*

*John F. Kennedy School of Government*

Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2017,  
3 pm – 5.30 pm  
@ ESG - Workshop Space,  
1575, Ring Road,  
Banashankari II Stage,  
Bangalore, 560070

**Deconstructing notions of 'science capital'  
and 'world class city' in the context of  
Bangalore and the proposed 'science city'  
in Challakere**

Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/AaagER4QcaB2>

Bangalore is imagined as India's 'science capital', 'silicon valley', and as an aspiring 'world class city'. Uncritical acceptance of such imaginations determine pathways of development that are steeped to favour those with agency, capital and access to political power. As the State increasingly surrenders its Constitutional responsibilities in shaping policies that are socially and politically inclusive, cities like Bangalore are fast turning into highly divided metropolises guided by processes of financialisation of land, services and other resources. Public investments in "high tech" sectors flows freely, as investment in housing, health and social services for working classes and the poor diminishes rapidly. Despite such skewed choices disadvantaging millions, such models of development are being propagated nation-wide with 'High-tech' 'high-speed' industrial corridors linking Bangalore, Chennai, Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, etc., peppered, as they are in recent years, with 'smart cities' that are being championed with nationalistic fervour.

While demands for democratisation of decision-making are increasing, these are limited largely to project-driven local concerns and impacts. On the rare instance when the State takes initiative in submitting a technological choice to public debate, as was the case with the proposal to introduce GMO food crops in India, the public has engaged with an heightened sense of social responsibility, and the outcome has been a choice widely regarded as mature. It is desirable that such practices become systemic to public decision making, particularly in cities, so that they may truly become urbs of inventiveness with inclusivity. But a State wary about losing investments, makes such democratic choices extremely difficult, if not impossible, thus gentrification is the outcome. Corporates and science and tech establishments rarely step out in support of democratic decision-making, be it in the shaping of a city, or in envisaging the pathways for science and tech development in India.

This is clearly evident in Challakere, Chitradurga, projected as India's 'science city'. Here, large swathes of pristine community conserved grasslands, that supported tens of pastoral and farming communities, have been diverted for a massive military-industrial-nuclear complex. Basic notions of Constitutional accountability and protection of human rights have been thrown to the winds on the claim that such 'sacrifices' are warranted for the 'security of the nation'. And there is rarely reportage of the calamitous consequences that local communities are bearing.

In our conversations with Prof. Jasanoff, these and other issues will be broached to understand what such events and developments would mean for the futures of the Bangalore region.

**Sheila Jasanoff** is Pforzheimer Professor of Science and Technology Studies at the Harvard Kennedy School. A pioneer in her field, she has authored more than 120 articles and chapters and is author or editor of more than 15 books, including *The Fifth Branch*, *Science at the Bar*, *Designs on Nature*, and *The Ethics of Invention*. Her work explores the role of science and technology in the law, politics, and policy of modern democracies, with particular attention to the nature of public reason. She was founding chair of the STS Department at Cornell University and has held distinguished visiting appointments in the US, Europe, and Japan. Jasanoff served on the Board of Directors of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and as President of the Society for Social Studies of Science. She has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Sarton Chair of the University of Ghent, and an *Ehrenkreuz* from the Government of Austria. She holds AB, JD, and PhD degrees from Harvard, and an honorary doctorate from the University of Twente.

**RSVP:**

Please confirm your participation by emailing [pushpa@esgindia.org](mailto:pushpa@esgindia.org) by 15<sup>th</sup> March, Wednesday (3 pm), or by calling or sending a text message to: 9880663608 or 9448377402. This is essential so we can make necessary beverage arrangements and also to optimally plan our meeting space.