



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Utility spots: science policy, knowledge transfer and the politics of proximity

Smit, J.P.

Citation

Smit, J. P. (2021, May 6). *Utility spots: science policy, knowledge transfer and the politics of proximity*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3166496>

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3166496>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3166496> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Smit, J.P.

Title: Utility spots: science policy, knowledge transfer and the politics of proximity

Issue Date: 2021-05-06

Acknowledgements

It was the circulation of embodied ideas between diverse spots that made this dissertation possible. Here I would like to say a word of thanks to all the colleagues and students, librarians and archivists, as well as friends and family who contributed to the various inspiring, interactive and supportive environments in which I worked on utility spots.

The Institute for Philosophy, in Leiden, is the first place to attend to. Sincere thanks go to my supervisor, James McAllister, for giving me the opportunity and freedom to find my own path. Your conscientious reading of my often-unpolished drafts taught me a great deal. I am also indebted to Frans de Haas for helping me jump various formal hurdles. Halfway through my PhD, the philosophers moved from the post-war concrete Reuvenplaats to the renovated neo-gothic P.J. Veth building, a former zoological laboratory amidst the famous *hortus botanicus*. Regardless of this relocation, the social fabric of the institute continued to rely on the unwavering support of Karineke, Carolyn and Patsy. Life at the institute also benefited greatly from its international PhD population and the cheerful Chinese hotpots, Chilean nights and Christmas dinners that we shared. Special thanks go to Jieya, Hao, Jamie, Victor, Maria and Celeste for vital day-to-day reassurance.

Two interdisciplinary meeting places were particularly inspiring. In the Soeterbeek convent in Ravenstein I had the privilege to enjoy the company of many passionate science studies PhD candidates and scholars at the WTMC workshops and summer schools. The earnest and open attitude of the training school coordinators, Bernike Pasveer and Govert Valkenburg, and its director, Sally Wyatt, was essential, as were the early morning runs along the Maas and the numerous table tennis competitions. At the University College London Department of Science and Technology Studies on Gordon Square it was very stimulating to participate in the cohabitation of history, philosophy and sociology scholars. Thanks to Chiara Ambrosio and Erman Sözüdoğru, I felt instantly at home.

On the margins of academia, two places played an important role. This project began to unfold at the Rathenau Institute in The Hague, as intern to Stefan de Jong and Leonie van Drooge. You remained caring custodians and I am thrilled we are again working together. Also the joyful collaborations with Patricia Faasse on the history of science policy, and with Laurens Hessels on impact evaluation, originated here. At a later stage

I regained the motivation to persist in my doctoral studies at the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome (KNIR). Frits van Oostrom, with some help of the 'Feestclub' (you know who you are!), created an ideal atmosphere for reflecting on academic life.

Less tangible but nonetheless important has been the broader history of science community. For engaging discussions, I thank all *Shells and Pebbles* editors, 'Glind' and 'Rolduc' participants, as well as Danielle Fauque, Robert Fox, Friso Hoeneveld, Arie Rip, Geert Somsen, Brigitte van Tiggelen and, in Leiden, Ad Maas, Stephanie Meirmans, Cor Smit, Frank Steenkamp and Didi van Trijp. Special thanks go to Ab Flipse, Abel Streefland and Fabian Krämer, for allowing me to explore the science park at their conferences; to David Baneke and Sjang ten Hagen for useful comments on (parts of) the draft; and to Jeroen Bouterse, for an affirmative reading of my work at a crucial moment.

I like to think that most ideas unfolded during commutes through the megalopolis 'Randstad', which many people made more than worth the trouble. In and around Amsterdam: de Hombres, de Geuzen, the Ses Snart cyclists, Bar Delight, and, of course, Sjoerd, Marjan, Elisa, and Hella. In Rotterdam I was happy to explore a new city together with Iwan, Doreth, Qian, Bente, Pourya and Sjaan, and to meet my neighbours Uma, Mathijs and Suzanne. To all: thanks for showing me what life is about. Pivotal to the doctoral journey were also the ever-listening ears and loving support of Aniek, again Iwan and, in the first years, Nadja; and the multi-layered companionship of Naïmé, reflected in the cover.

In closing, several places and people deserve special mention for allowing me to retreat, concentrate or recharge. Thank you Andrea for sharing your lovely home over the several weeks that I spent in Maastricht indulging myself in science parks. The decisive push to complete this dissertation was given on a phenomenal *kaaszolder* in Hoorn: Loet and Eliane, your hospitality during this time was highly appreciated. Above all, I could always return to Nootdorp, where my parents were there for me, even when they were not at home: a 'thank you' is far from enough, Johan and Patty. Then finally, there's the person with whom I have the greatest fun thinking out loud, moving between all these places and exploring new ones, preferably by bike: weer of geen weer, Lietje, ik zit met liefde bij je in het wiel.

Curriculum Vitae

Jorrit Smit was born on November 9, 1988 in Arnhem, the Netherlands. In 2011, he completed the interdisciplinary bachelor programme Bèta-Gamma at the Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA), where he majored in physical chemistry. During his bachelor Jorrit was elected to the faculty student council which he served as chairman. In 2011, he obtained a Thomas More scholarship for an additional year of philosophy study at KU Leuven. Between 2012 and 2015, Jorrit followed the History and Philosophy of Science research master at Utrecht University. As part of this programme he spent a semester abroad at the History Department of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and conducted an internship at the Rathenau Institute, a science policy think tank in The Hague. He obtained his MSc degree *cum laude* with a thesis on the societal value of Ernst Cohen's physical chemistry in the early twentieth century.

In 2015, Jorrit obtained a grant in the PhDs in the Humanities funding scheme of the Dutch Research Council (NWO). At the Institute for Philosophy of Leiden University he set out to study the history and philosophy of science policies that aim to stimulate the societal value of scientific research. During this PhD trajectory, he was a visiting scholar at the Science and Technology Studies department at University College London (UCL) and PhD-representative in the board of the national graduate school in science studies (WTMC). He also commenced editorial activities at public philosophy magazine *Wijsgerig Perspectief* and history of science blog *Shells and Pebbles* that continue to this day.

As of September 2020, Jorrit is a postdoctoral researcher in the project Evaluating Societal Impact at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Results of his research have appeared in *Studium, Science and Public Policy* and *Research Evaluation*, as well as in edited volumes published at Routledge and Verloren.

