

CALL FOR PAPERS

The First Princeton Young Scholars' Interdisciplinary Conference on Soviet Science and Technology:

The Great Experiment Revisited: Soviet Science and Techno-utopianism

Princeton University
February 10–11, 2012

(Deadline for Submission: November 20, 2011)

The organizing committee invites graduate students and young scholars to submit proposals for the First Princeton Young Scholars' Interdisciplinary Conference on Soviet Science and Technology to take place at Princeton University in Princeton, New Jersey, on February 10–11, 2012.

Soviet claims of an alternate anti-capitalist modernity were based on a socialist understanding of and command over nature. By the 1950s, scientists and engineers composed the largest portion of the Soviet elite. From works of science fiction like Bogdanov's Red Star to the Soviet atomic bomb, from importing Ford tractors to cloning IBM computers, the Soviet Union placed science and technology at the forefront of its vision of human progress. Home to many infamous ecological disasters, the Soviet Union was a place where the deeds, words and images of technological utopianism had transformative power over nature and society.

The conference will unite and coordinate scholarship by young scholars on the historical personalities, texts, images, representations, and institutions that were involved in the successes and failures of the Soviet Union as a modern scientific and technological superpower. In particular we aim to explore the links between cultural form and utopian ideals and the planning and realization of technological megaprojects by the Soviet state. Such questions must be answered through an interdisciplinary approach that combines scholars of Slavic literature, socialist art, architecture, and the history of science and technology.

Graduate students and young scholars who are interested in participating in the conference should submit a one-page paper proposal and one-page curriculum vita (in Word or PDF format) to Robert MacGregor (rmacgreg@princeton.edu) and Ksenia Tatarchenko (ktatarch@princeton.edu).

Proposals must be received no later than November 20, 2011 in order to be considered. Limited travel funding is available. Please indicate if you wish to be considered for subsidized travel. Notification of acceptance will be made in December. For additional information about the conference, please contact the conference organizers at the addresses above.

The conference will feature a keynote by Loren Graham (Professor Emeritus, MIT), a roundtable discussion of Princeton and outside faculty, and a series of panels of graduate student papers with commentary. The format will be commentary and discussion on pre-circulated papers of 10-15 pages posted online in advance. All participants will be invited to a dinner on Friday, February 10 and accommodation with Princeton graduate students will be available.