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Title

Non-Academic Careers for STS Graduate Students : Hopping off the Tenure Track / Thomas S. Woodson ; Matthew Harsh ; Rider Foley

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Abstract

Science, Technology & Society (STS) graduate programs primarily train graduate students to work in tenure track academic jobs. However, there are not enough tenure track academic jobs to match the supply of STS graduate students, nor does every STS graduate student want to become an academic. As a start to addressing these challenges, we hosted workshops before the 2017 Society for the Annual Meeting of the Society Studies of Science and the 2018 ST Global conference. In those workshops, panelists with PhDs in STS and related fields and working in non-academic faculty careers such as government agencies, non-profit foundations, and industry emphasized that students must showcase how their skills are useful to non-academic organizations. The panelists offered a wealth of stories on how their STS perspective supported their careers, yet most had faced implicit and explicit mentoring from STS faculty that ran counter to their career aspirations. The conversations centered on reframing research and conveying to potential employers how their STS training would support their future careers. A takeaway point that resonated with many participants was the need for

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STS graduate programs to rethink how they market themselves, recruit students, and critically reflect upon the measures of success. By implicitly steering graduate students solely towards an academic career, STS graduate training will miss an opportunity to make a positive impact on society. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)