

The evolution of a new governance model through the challenge of climate change – a research project

A residency at the Institute of Advanced Studies, Nantes, France, 2019

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The **Institute of Advanced Studies of Nantes (IEA)**, France, the first advanced studies institute in France, opened in 2009, offers the possibility of a residency for 20-25 researchers to spend nine months or shorter periods in an environment conducive to study.

I am spending a total of nine months here this year. My subject is the evolution of a new model of global governance in response to the challenge of climate change, with three themes:

- The evolution of the legal regime and especially the Paris Agreement
- The role of non-state actors (cities, local government, business and civil society)
- The relationship between science and policy

The question of responsibility is of course central; what is emerging is a model of shared and autonomous responsibility, replacing the previous ‘top-down’ approach.

The **Institute of Advanced Studies of Nantes (IEA)**, **France**, opened in 2009, was the first advanced studies institute in France. It follows the Princeton model, offering a place for 20-25 researchers to spend nine months or shorter periods in an environment conducive to study. A feature of this IEA from the beginning has been its policy of openness to fellows from the global South, who make up about half of the intake.

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The project’s starting point is the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. It seeks to consolidate and further explore themes worked on in recent years. The project is centred on three themes:

1 The role of science (how the findings of the IPCC have been assimilated and used by political leaders and decision-makers, and the obstacles to implementation of appropriate measures. The relationship between 'policy relevant' and 'policy prescriptive', in the terminology of the IPCC);

2 The place of non-state actors in the new model represented by the Agreement (business, local government, cities and civil society);

3 The new model of global governance of climate that is emerging. (Significance for the evolution of international law, relevance to other questions stemming from the common heritage of humankind, non-state actors, questions relating to responsibility, new alliances of countries).

The idea is to lead to a synthesis which will be useful both in climate change and other global challenges.

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It has proved a very stimulating environment. The experience of interacting with the other fellows is enriching. The cross-disciplinary exchanges lead to new insights into one's own research. In my case, I have introduced some concepts into my approach to climate change that came from discussions with researchers specialising in the history of accounting. That is entirely in the spirit of the Institute.

The core events of the week are firstly the Monday morning seminar, where a fellow will present his or her work, followed by a discussion. This is followed by a lunch, one of the three meals fellows have together. Tuesday evening features either a lecture, or a film presented by a fellow, after which fellows meet over dinner. There is a further lunch on Thursday. Apart from these regular events, fellows are completely free to undertake their own work.

The working conditions are excellent. The Institute is housed in a modern building overlooking the Loire River. Fellows have an office, access to a library and information service, as well as several rooms to meet or socialise. Accommodation is provided in apartments occupying the upper floors of a hotel residence right next door.

As well as the research, there are opportunities to engage with the broader community for those who wish to do so. I have been part of many events with the private sector, community groups and other academic institutions.

The IEA is open to researchers in many fields. Some of the disciplines of my colleagues are law, linguistics, accounting, history, sociology, demographics, psychoanalysis, literature and anthropology. The institute also welcomes artists, who may come for shorter stays. A filmmaker, two novelists and a musician have been here during my stay.

On the IEA website www.iea-nantes.fr you can find out about its current activities and see the profiles of all present and past fellows, who number over 300 now. There is also information about how to apply for a fellowship.

Adrian Macey

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