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Launch AnnouncementEXPERT TASKFORCE
ON
**GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE
GOVERNANCE**

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GEG's Expert Taskforce on Global Knowledge Governance is directed by Dr. Carolyn Deere-Birkbeck and supported by the Ford Foundation. [The Global Economic Governance Programme](#) was established at [University College](#) in 2003 by its Director, Professor Ngaire Woods, to foster research and debate into how global markets and institutions can better serve the needs of people in developing countries. At Oxford, the Programme is directly linked to [Oxford University's Department of Politics and International Relations](#) and [Centre for International Studies](#). Further information about GEG projects on global governance of finance, trade, migration and health can be found [here](#).

Launch of Oxford Expert Taskforce on Global Knowledge Governance

The University of Oxford's Global Economic Governance Programme has launched an independent [Expert Taskforce on Global Knowledge Governance](#) to propose a set of principles and options for the future of global knowledge governance.

In launching the initiative, the Taskforce's [Honorary Advisors](#) emphasised the scope of global knowledge governance challenges at hand. Professor Rubens Ricupero, former Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), observed that "in our knowledge-intensive economy, access to information and to knowledge has become the difference between prosperity and poverty, and between domination and liberation. The needs of the vast majority of the world's population demand that we take knowledge governance seriously".

Scholar, economist and writer Jacques Attali highlighted that "how knowledge is created, accumulated, shared and governed in a globalised world determines the extent and nature of inequality." His views were echoed by Nobel Laureate Sir John Sulston, who underlined that "an important part of the ownership of science lies in the international rules and mechanisms that govern knowledge, for which the existing arrangements are unsatisfactory and urgently need review."

The Taskforce will be led by a small, core team of experts participating in a personal capacity, supported by several distinguished [Honorary Advisors](#). The Taskforce will consult widely, interviewing a diversity of academics, policy experts, and stakeholder communities around the world. The report will be peer-reviewed by a group of leading international scholars working on the intersection of issues covered in the study. The findings of the Taskforce will be published in late 2010 and presented to governments, relevant international organizations, stakeholders and academics working to shape how the future of global knowledge governance unfolds.

A more detailed overview of the taskforce is available [here](#).

For Enquiries:

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Global Economic Governance Programme

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Expert Taskforce on Global Knowledge Governance

The Challenges Facing Global Knowledge Governance

Knowledge plays a central role in empowering societies to address the multiple, political, economic and social challenges they face. With globalisation, revolutions in communications and information technologies (ICT), and a myriad of scientific advances, knowledge has become an increasingly important factor in achieving innovation, growth and competitiveness and in sustaining cultural creativity.

The ability of people to harness knowledge is, however, dependent on the structure of knowledge ownership. At present, intellectual property (IP) rules are the predominant tool for regulating the creation, diffusion and use of knowledge – and related goods and services. However, the unprecedented strengthening of IP rules in the past two decades has been the source of profound tensions. Indeed, current arrangements for global knowledge governance face a range of challenges, including:

- A complex and expanding patchwork of multilateral, regional and bilateral regimes, institutions, processes and rules, both intergovernmental and private;
- Developing country demands for greater voice and for rebalancing the global IP system;
- Multiplying calls from stakeholders for greater transparency, accountability and participation;
- A proliferation of global policy debates with an IP dimension – ranging from debates on climate change, food security, the internet and innovation to those on how to expand access to affordable medicines, knowledge, and education and on traditional knowledge; and
- Ongoing debates on how best to stimulate innovation and creativity and to share their benefits, and on the appropriate balance between proprietary knowledge and the public domain.

Aware that the contest over the scope and distribution of IP rights – and appropriate governance arrangements - is set to intensify, Oxford University's Global Economic Governance Programme has convened an independent Expert Taskforce on Global Knowledge Governance to propose a set of principles and options for reform.

The Expert Taskforce on Global Knowledge Governance

Launched in November 2009, the taskforce will publish its report in late 2010. The taskforce's work will address the following questions:

- What are the most critical current and emerging global trends and challenges relating to knowledge generation, access and use? What are the issues that matter most to different kinds of stakeholders?
- How effective are the current arrangements for global knowledge governance in facing these challenges? Are they adequate for responding to emerging trends and future challenges?
- What are key principles that should guide reform of global knowledge governance and what are the options for reform?

The taskforce is led by a small, core team of experts participating in a personal capacity, supported by several distinguished Honorary Advisors. The work of the taskforce will include consultations and interviews with a diversity of academics, policy experts, and stakeholder communities around the world. The report will be peer-reviewed by a group of leading international scholars working on the intersection of issues covered in the study.

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