

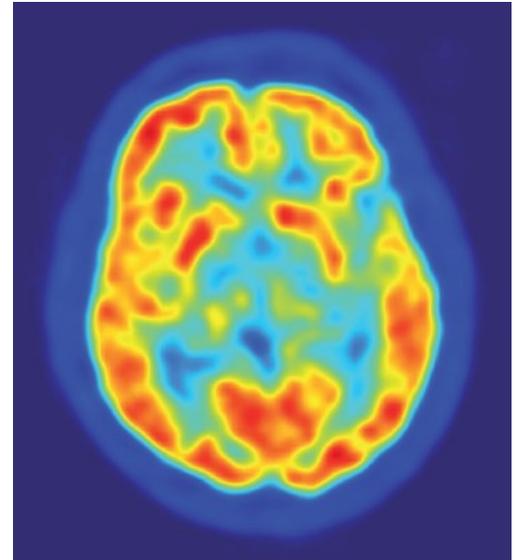


# **Society, Religion and Technology Project**

Helping the church to engage with  
ethical issues in science

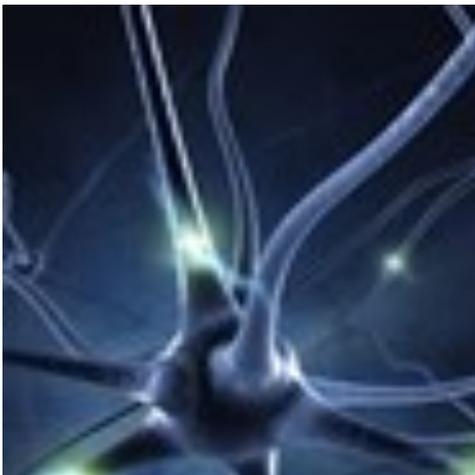
**The Society, Religion and Technology (SRT) Project** has covered a wide variety of topics in its 45 year history; these have ranged from stem cells to synthetic biology, and from economics to environmental issues.

The SRT Project was set up in 1970 by the Church of Scotland to examine the implications of new and emerging technologies. It seeks to stimulate ethical understanding by engaging with those working in research, industry, government, NGO's and many other organisations. Its expert working groups provide a forum for multi-disciplinary interaction between scientists and specialists in ethics, theology, sociology, ecology, risk and other fields, to look together at wider dimensions of emerging technologies. Bringing insights from Christian ethics, it has built up a reputation for the quality and balance of its work on complex and vital issues of our times, from North Sea Oil in the 1970's to cloning, neuroethics and synthetic biology today. The SRT Project also acts a catalyst of public debate on current issues and promotes practical environmental action through the Eco-Congregation programme.



### **SRT Project's Aims**

- To foster an informed understanding in society of the issues confronting it as a result of emerging technologies; to bring a voice of balance into complex issues.
- To engage with scientists and technologists to reflect on ethical, environmental and societal implications of their work; to promote ethics teaching to science students.
- To respond with considered judgment to Government and national bodies on technology and environmental issues, and to be active in their European and global dimensions.



The SRT Project is currently led by two staff, **Dr Murdo Macdonald (Policy Officer)** and **Karen Hunter (Project Coordinator)**, who are based at the Church of Scotland offices in Edinburgh. The work is overseen by a committee of 12 people, which is currently chaired by Dr Caroline Cowan. In addition, experts in specific areas are consulted in relation to particular issues.



## Some issues covered by the SRT project in recent years....

### **General Assembly 2017**

**Borders, Benefits and Biomedicine:** Surveillance and Social Justice

### **General Assembly 2016**

**Energy Issues and Fuel Poverty**

### **General Assembly 2015**

**Transplantation:** Opting in or presumed consent for organ and tissue donation?

### **General Assembly 2014**

**Striving together:** Celebrating competitiveness in sport

**Families and the Church in the 21st Century:** The meaning of kinship bonds

### **General Assembly 2012**

**Neuroethics:** Who has the right to see what you're thinking? What about manipulating people's brains?

**Sustainable Agriculture:** How do we reconnect with where our food comes from?

**Ethics and economics:** What has happened to ethics in economics?

### **General Assembly 2011**

**Suicide among young men:** How should the church respond?

**Mental health issues:** Mental health friendly churches.

**Ethics and the Internet:** How has the Internet changed the way we interact?

### **General Assembly 2010**

**Synthetic Biology:** Should we create artificial life forms?

### **General Assembly 2009**

**End of Life Issues:** Caring for carers.

In the past we have also looked at many other issues, including:

Food, medicine, IT, communications, transport, Nuclear power, GM food, cloning and stem cells, genetic information, animal research, mobile phone masts, food miles, climate change, ethical finance.....

**Dr. Murdo Macdonald** graduated B. Sc. in Genetics at the University of Glasgow, Scotland, and gained his PhD in molecular biology from the University of St Andrews, Scotland. He spent 20 years involved in postdoctoral research in various institutions. For more than half of that time he was engaged in research on leprosy in a number of countries, including India, Ethiopia and Nepal. His work in this area has been published extensively. In March 2008 he returned to Scotland to take up the position of Policy Officer with the SRT Project. He is married to Rachel, a doctor, and they have three young children, Priya, James and Keziah.

**Karen Hunter** worked in financial services for 22 years, including roles in customer service, market research and project management. She joined the SRT Project in 2010, supporting the Policy Officer in all aspects of the SRT Project work and since 2015 has also led on work to promote Credit Unions.

**For more information, contact:**

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