Abstract:
This panel will be dedicated to technology hypes, considering digital platforms and digital methods, to foster understanding their nature, analysis, content, and power. Hype shall be transformed from a buzzword to a reflected term and applicable working concept.

What is at stake? False claims and inappropriate exaggerations (hypes & alarmism) about technological possibilities may prompt malicious action (e.g., poor health decisions, misdirected investments and resources, failure to pursue other solutions) and, more generally, jeopardize trust in science. On the other hand, there are versatile situations in technology development that demand un-accuracy, exaggeration, and visionary scenarios to orient research activities, to enable critical discourse on relevance and affectedness of methods and findings, to coordinate actions beyond disciplines and academia, and ultimately, to motivate (political) initiatives, e.g., for, in, or against technoscientific capitalism.

We want to give the opportunity to deconstruct and assess the impact of existing hypes along the lines of technology development narratives, thereby assessing multifold aspects, detangling interdependencies, and revealing underlying principles. Given the power of social media across cultures and recent possibilities of digital methods, there is a demand to examine and revise conceptual scrutiny and tools for analyzing hypes, differentiating between lofty tech talk or mature market entries calling for assessment and (de-)regulation. In this regard, the question remains of how stakeholders and researchers should deal with potential hypes and accompanying phenomena – when should they keep their heads down or take advantage? Or even counter ironically or artistically?

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