

# Biography



Jan Staman is managing director of the Rathenau Institute, the Dutch organization responsible for two related domains in science and technology: technology assessment – the evaluation of individual, mainly new technologies; and national science system assessment – the evaluation of the Dutch science and technology world as a whole. His special personal interest is how ethical and societal issues are processed in scientific and technological practice, in politics and in the creation of government policy. Jan Staman has a degree in Veterinary Medicine and in Law.

Most activities and decisions in science and technology are part of the normal internal procedures of the science and technology system, governmental and political decision making included. Contentious issues may arise when complex technological systems dysfunction and generate crises or scandals. They may also arise when new developments change or risk changing habits, norms and values in a revolutionary manner. Foresight, something that plays an important role in creating new directions in science and technology and mobilizing funds, is essential in handling both challenges. Technology assessment likewise. However, foresight is at the discretion of the policymaking process whereas technology assessment has a public deliberative character. Technology assessment and foresight should go hand in hand in the optimal co-evolution of science and society.