North-South Knowledge Networks Towards Equitable Collaboration Between

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Since the 1990s, internationalisation has become key for institutions wishing to secure funding for higher education and research. For the academic community, this strategic shift has had many consequences. Priorities have changed and been influenced by new ways of thinking about universities, and of measuring their impact in relation to each other and to their social goals. Debates are ongoing and hotly contested.

In this collection, a mix of renowned academics and newer voices reflect on some of the realities of international research partnerships. They both question and highlight the agency of academics, donors and research institutions in the geopolitics of knowledge and power. The contributors offer fresh insights on institutional transformation, the setting of research agendas and access to research funding, while highlighting the dilemmas researchers face when their institutions are vulnerable to state and donor influence.

Offering a range of perspectives on why academics should collaborate and what for, this book will be useful to anyone interested in how scholars are adapting to the realities of international networking and how research institutions are finding innovative ways to make North–South partnerships and collaborations increasingly fair, sustainable and mutually beneficial.

International co-operation has ushered in a new era as vast shifts in social, political, economic and financial terrains are unfolding in the world. This book comes at an opportune time as the old paradigms, models and practices of international co-operation – ineffective, incoherent, and inequitable as they have been – are fracturing.


A timely interrogation of North–South research collaborations in a context of scarce resources, elucidating power and knowledge asymmetries while fortifying the importance of international academic co-operation.

— Katri Pohjolainen, Senior Research Advisor, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

The predicaments of international collaboration in knowledge production are thoughtfully confronted in this volume. As much as there are constraints, political choices also emerge as key to creating more equitable possibilities.

— Suren Pillay, Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape