



# What if High Technology Falls under Monopoly Control after Contact with Extraterrestrial Civilisations?

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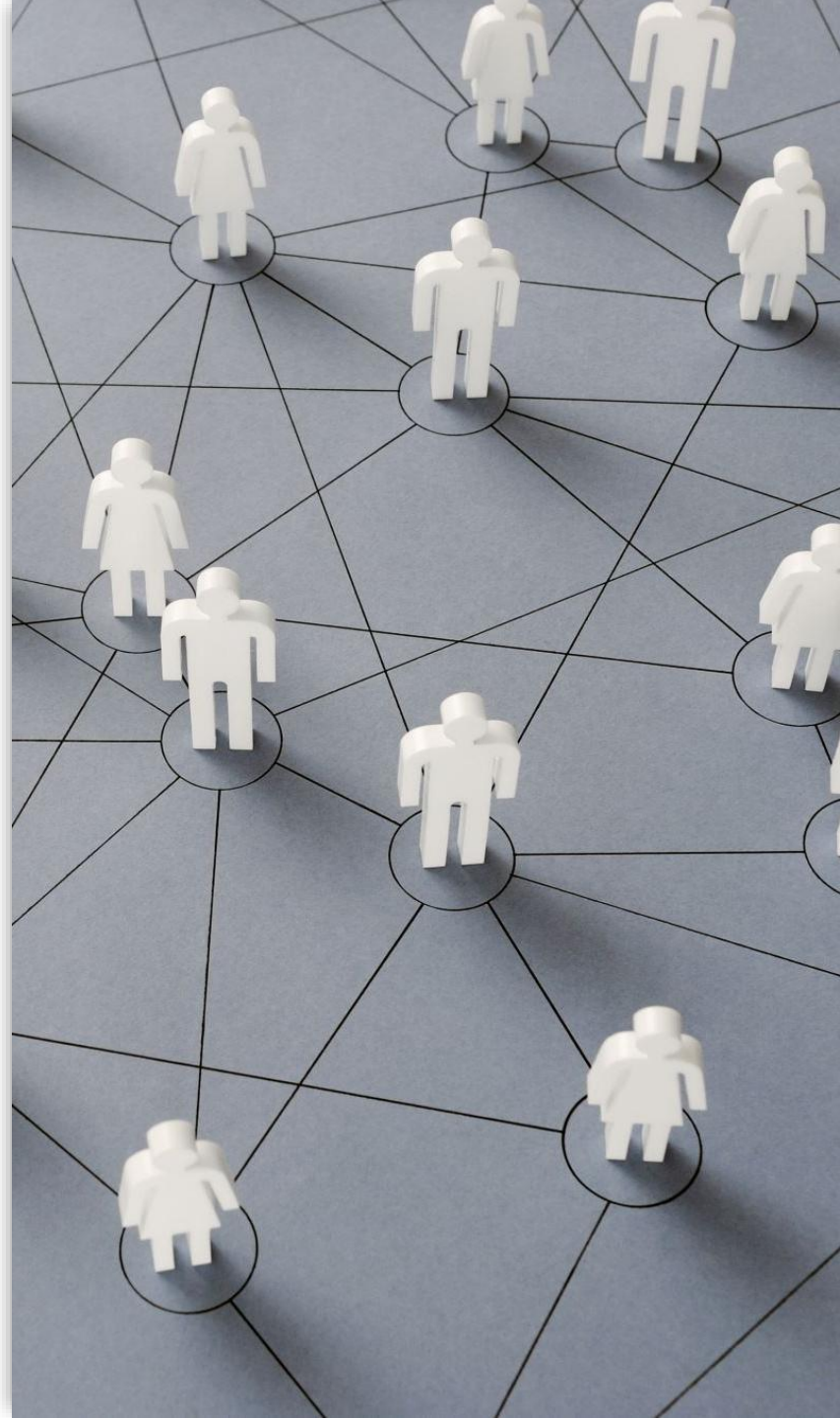
Symposium Grounding the SETI and  
UAP Debate

Durham, 24 April 2025

# Introduction

## Contact, Impact, Response

- Post-contact scenario: humans survive and gain revolutionary tech.
- Core dilemma: Who will control it?



# Scientific Background: What Do Scientists Think?

- A 2025 survey:
    - 86.6% of astrobiologists and 88.4% of other scientists agree that basic ET life likely exists
    - 67.4% (astro) and 58.2% (others) believe complex/intelligent life likely exists
- => Broad consensus

# Why This Matters Now

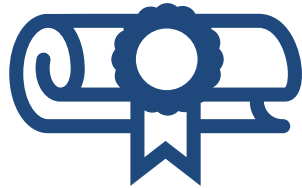


Scientists take contact seriously.



We must anticipate not just the event, but its aftermath.

# Existing Legal Debates: A Narrow Focus

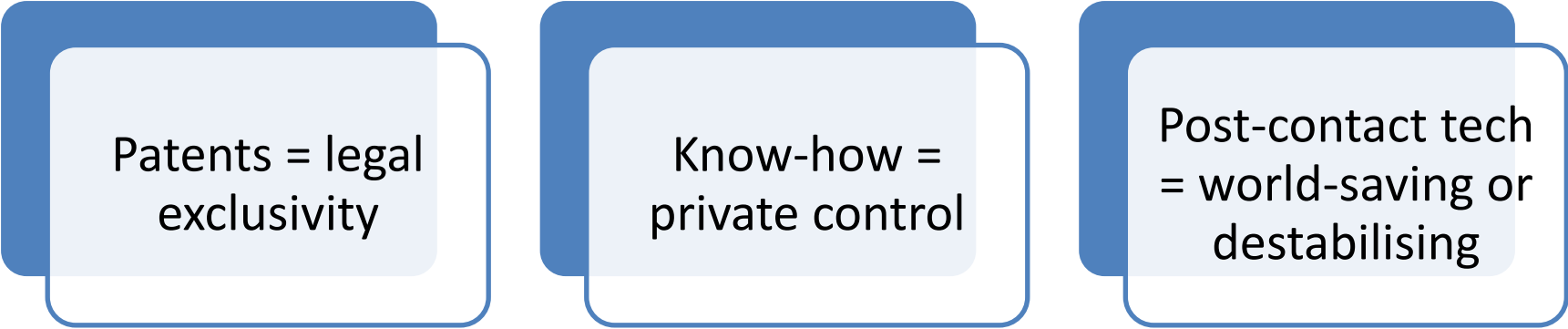


Legal scholarship focuses on international law and human rights.



Intellectual property (IP) law is largely overlooked.

# Why IP Could Decide Humanity's Future



Patents = legal  
exclusivity

Know-how =  
private control

Post-contact tech  
= world-saving or  
destabilising

# Monopoly vs Public Interest

Tension: incentive vs equity

Solutions:  
compulsory licensing,  
patent waivers, tech  
commons

# COVID-19 as Analogy



Global push for  
vaccine IP waivers



Resistance from  
states & pharma



Post-contact  
scale: far greater



# Inequality in Access to EI Tech

- Asymmetries in access:
    - States
    - Corporations
    - Elites
- => Risk of deepened  
global inequality



# The Chinese (Asian) Perspective

- State-led S&T model
- Centralised Governance and National S&T Plans
- Heavy Public Investment in Strategic Technologies
- Sovereignty Over Knowledge
- Implications: Asia's rising influence will play a critical role in determining whether humanity opts for competitive containment or cooperative sharing.

# Rethinking IP Frameworks

- **TRIPS/WIPO framework is insufficient**
  - TRIPS is state-centric and protects existing power structures
  - TRIPS' emergency flexibilities are inadequate
  - WIPO's mandate is too narrow and politically constrained
- **Need emergency IP protocol for post-contact tech**

# Building Equitable Tech Sharing Models

- **Establish a Global Emergency IP Protocol**
  - Draft a UN or WIPO-led treaty for ETI-derived technologies: 1) Automatic waivers for existential, survival-critical tech. 2) Access & Benefit Sharing Model after Nagoya Protocol; 3) TRIPS flexibilities.
- **Create a Multilateral Tech Governance Body**
- **Mandate Open Science & Technology Transfer**
- **Include Civil Society in All Frameworks**

# Conclusion

- From likelihood to preparedness
- We must decide how, with whom, and under what rules we share post-contact technologies