



Sheffield
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Call for Papers for the inaugural annual conference of Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute (SPERI)

Halifax Hall
University of Sheffield
16-18 July 2012

The Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute (SPERI) seeks to develop and take to a new level the work of the longstanding Political Economy Research Centre (PERC) first established in the Department of Politics of the University of Sheffield in 1996. The aim is to establish as quickly as possible a world-leading research centre devoted to the exploration of the political economy of growth in a changing global world order. Its 1st Co-Directors are Professors Colin Hay and Tony Payne and the Chair of its Advisory Board is Professor Andrew Gamble of the University of Cambridge.

The British Growth Crisis: The Search for a New Model

The central lesson for Britain of the global financial crisis is the need to develop a new, and different, model of growth to that whose frailties it so cruelly exposed. That is the animating vision which has led to the creation of SPERI. We invite papers for its inaugural annual conference on the general theme of 'The British Growth Crisis', situating Britain in a comparative and global context. The aim of the conference is to provide a context in which alternative strategies and models of growth for the British economy can be proposed, debated, evaluated and assessed by academics and policy-makers alike.

The conference will open on Monday 16th July 2012 with introductory plenary talks from **Andrew Gamble** (University of Cambridge) and **Linda Weiss** (University of Sydney).

A day of panels on Tuesday 17th July will conclude with a pre-dinner talk and a conference dinner.

Further plenary sessions will be held on Wednesday 18th July. The first will feature presentations by **Nicola Phillips, Helen Thompson & Robert Wade**. The second will gather together speakers from a range of **influential think-tanks** with an interest in economic policy issues.

We now invite papers and proposals on the following general themes:

Getting what went wrong right

- Is the global financial crisis and Britain's peculiar exposure to it merely the latest episode in a long-standing process of relative (and perhaps now absolute) economic decline? Did the onset of the 'great recession' in Britain in fact predate the global financial crisis, pointing to peculiar systemic weaknesses which the crisis merely compounded and reinforced?
- What is the appropriate language to describe the crisis through which we are living? Has the crisis, such as it is, led to a paradigm shift in economic policy and, if not, under what conditions might such a paradigm shift arise? How should we gauge the nature of the response to date and what are its likely consequences?
- How should one understand the determinants of growth in an open globalising world economy? What are the basic requirements of a growth model in such a context? How should we think of national models and strategies in a context of long-standing

and profound economic interdependence and in the emerging conditions likely to follow the global financial crisis?

- Was there a distinct British model of capitalism that the global financial crisis has exposed or is Britain better seen as having developed a variant of a more general 'liberal' or 'Anglo-liberal' market economic model? Either way, when did this distinctive model date from, how has it been sustained over time and what were its sources of systemic weakness?

And doing something about it

- What credible growth strategies and supporting models can be envisaged for Britain and to what extent are they being taken up by policy-makers today? How should we characterise the Coalition's response and that of the Opposition? Can the old growth model be resuscitated – and at what risk?
- What can be the basis of future British economic growth and what implications might this have for a nascent new model of British capitalism? What could/should be the contribution of services (including financial services) and manufacturing to such a model?
- How might Britain compete in the world economy today? What pattern of comparative advantages does it possess and in which sectors? What function might be envisaged for the labour market and what is the appropriate regulatory regime to govern the labour market? What role exists for in-migrant workers within the EU context?
- How can future economic growth be rendered sustainable – both over time and environmentally? Are there trade-offs here and how might they be negotiated? Is there a future for Britain in green technology/green industries? Or have others got there first?

- How was the previous growth model gendered and on what model of the domestic division of labour, finance and debt did it rely? What assumptions did it make about family structure and what implications did it have for inter-generational and inter-gender transfers? How might a sustained reflection on such issues inform considerations of potential new growth models?
- What kind of state structure would be needed to shape and support an emergent the new British model of capitalism and the kind of new growth strategies such restructuring might facilitate? Can the British state become, in any sense, a 'developmental state'? Are there European or indeed non-European models on which it might usefully draw?
- How should Britain position itself internationally to support its economic aims? What type of role should Britain seek to play within the EU and globally?
- What lessons can be drawn from the success of other models and to what extent can these be transposed to the British case? What can be learnt from comparative analysis? How might Britain position itself in an international political economic order typically characterised in terms of the rise of the BRICs?
- What scenarios can be built for the developmental trajectory of the British economy in the years ahead and what are the likely points of contingency selecting between different pathways?

Please send all abstracts to s.boswell@sheffield.ac.uk before 31 January 2012.

Lunch, dinner and refreshments are all included in the full conference package.

To register and for more information please visit the SPERI website:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/speri