



OPEN TALK, VASP - EVLP

26 November 2015

14:30 hrs.

Fermion

Speaker:

Professor Mukunda P. Das

Department of Theoretical Physics, Research School of Physics and Engineering
The Australian National University, Canberra, ACT 6201, Australia
(*Short Term visitor, VASP, EVLP*)

Topic:

Right and Wrong in the Conduct of Science

Abstract:

Science, in particular physics, is a collective enterprise and is so because it is itself, a fruit of the exquisitely social nature of human living. So it is inevitable to encounter ethical issues in the natural sciences, since the contest of differing interests and views is perennial in its practice, indeed essential to its momentum. The crucial ethical question always hangs in the air: How is the truth best served? In this talk we describe some ethical aspects of our own discipline of physics: their cultural context and the bounds which they delineate for themselves, sometimes in transgression. We argue that the minimalist ethic espoused in science, namely loyalty to truth, is a bellwether for the much wider, more problematic, and more vital consequences of ethics – and its failure – in human relationships at large.
