

IRSPM 2019: Design-led approaches to renewing public management and governance

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Shrinking resources, discontented electorates and complex problems of the last decade have prompted the public sector to look for new ways of governing, and developing and delivering public services. In this effort, design has been heralded as a central concept because of its people-centeredness that in a co-productive or co-creative way bridges the gap between public policies, services and citizens' needs and expectations, and environmental challenges (Thorpe & Gamman, 2016; Thomas & Grace, 2008; Junginger, 2014; Mulgan, 2014, Sangiorgi, 2015). Consequently, all kinds of living labs, policy experiments and other ways of 'learning-by-doing' are rapidly gaining popularity in public administration (Gascó, 2016), in order to co-create value with involved stakeholders and in particular service users to strengthen the people-orientation in public policy and services and collectively solve complex challenges (Oosterlaken, 2009; Tromp, Hekkert, & Verbeek, 2011). Although the notion of public administration as a design science is certainly not new (Simon, 1971; Miller, 1984; Shangraw & Crow, 1997; Meyer, 2005), there is much that we do not know about the application of design thinking to public policy, governance, management and services. Further, the contribution of design as a co-production strategy within public sector contexts needs further debate (Bason 2010, 2017).

Hence, this panel is dedicated to explore the principles, methodological underpinnings, challenges and practices of applying design-oriented approaches to the field of public policy and governance. In particular, within the scope of the IRSPM theme, the panel seeks to explore how design-led approaches contribute to realising ambitions around the co-creation and co-production of public services. Concretely, this panel aims to:

- Enhance the methodological rigor and relevance of design methodologies in public management and policy environments;
- Offer theoretical and empirical explorations of the conditions that support the effective application and integration of collaborative design-led approaches within public sector and government;

- Explore and evaluate the value and impact of labs and design-led approaches to value creation in public service delivery and policy making (health care, culture, education, social interventions, transportation, safety etc.);
- Identify and discuss limitations and routes for improvement of design-led approaches for the innovation of public service provision and wider institutional change.

This panel welcomes both conceptual and empirical papers. These may include papers reporting on living labs, public sector innovation labs, policy labs, and design experiments at different levels of the public sector system, including also simulations and testing of prototypes. Also, we might expect theoretical papers that lay the foundations or the theoretical frames for better integration, relevance and value of design-led approaches for public administration and public management. Finally, besides traditional paper presentations, we welcome contributors who wish to demonstrate a working prototype illustrating how this was developed and tested.