# P03 / Expertise and Evidence in Public Policy

**Topic :** Policy Design, Policy Analysis, Expertise and Evaluation

**Chair :** Brian Head (University of Queensland, Australia)

**Second Chair :** Erik Baekkeskov (University of Melbourne)

**Third Chair :** Justin Parkhurst (London School of Economics and Political Science)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The ‘evidence-based policy’ movement has argued that systematic use of best-available evidence is the major route to improved policy and program outcomes. While supporting the laudable goals of public policy effectiveness, skeptics point to the highly selective and politicized use of evidence in much policymaking.

Scientific expertise can clearly play important roles in many policy debates, and there is international interest in the relationship between expert knowledge and the concerns of policymakers, public managers and issue-advocates. Increasing efforts within the policy bureaucracy have focused on promoting more evidence-informed policies and evaluations within specific policy areas (e.g. education, healthcare, social welfare, crime reduction). In the academic sector, theories about science-led or expert-informed policy-making continue to be developed and debated. Academic researchers have also attempted to develop conceptual schemas to facilitate comparisons across cases and countries. Researchers are tackling more systematically the puzzles about how expertise and research are utilized in different policy areas, and across different policymaking processes and institutional settings.

The interplay between use of expert evidence and the institutional settings of decision-making provides a range of opportunities and constraints for ‘taking evidence seriously’ in policy development and program review. The obstacles and constraints to greater adoption of expert knowledge are well-known. These include the politicized context of policy debates and governmental commitments, the search for political compromises, mismatches between the cycles of policymaking and scientific discovery, low awareness of evaluation findings on the part of public officials, and ineffective communication by researchers and other experts. In response to these challenges, various “bridging” and “brokering” strategies have emerged to promote closer linkages.

This panel provides a forum for developing and sharing case studies and comparative research experience concerning the relationships between expertise, research, policy and practice. These issues run across many different policy problems, institutional settings, and national boundaries.

Papers are welcome on any topic that aims to enhance our conceptual and/or empirical understanding of how research claims are mobilized and how expertise is utilized in public policy settings. Some relevant questions might include:

1. What can policy scholars offer to practitioner groups in policymaking and policy advocacy? Policy theories claim to provide frameworks and heuristics that are helpful for policymakers. What kinds of insights and lessons for policymakers can be offered by the scholarly research sector?

2. How do the relationships between research expertise and policymaking differ across policy issues, sectors or countries?

3. What strategies are used to promote or embed expertise in policy processes?

4. How does policy design seek to incorporate evidence and experience from implementation practice and program evaluation?

5. What frameworks, theories or conceptual models are useful for these analyses?

## CALL FOR PAPERS

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Abstract proposals should be submitted before 15 January 2017 through the conference website at www.icpublicpolicy.org

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## Session 1

Thursday, June 29th 10:30 to 12:30 (Manasseh Meyer MM 2 - 2)

**Trends in evidence-informed policymaking: political and institutional limitations**

Brian Head (University of Queensland, Australia)

**Is Designing Evidence-based Evaluation for Deliberative Democracy Possible?: An Impossibility Result and the Proposal of the Issue-specific Theories of Deliberation**

Ryota Sakai (Chuogakuin University)

**Nudges and evidence based policy: Fertile ground?**

Colette Einfeld (Australian National University)

**Science-Led Policy-Making: is actual evidence-based policy best explained by epistemic consensus or by national ideational trajectories?**

Erik Baekkeskov (University of Melbourne)

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## Session 2

Thursday, June 29th 13:30 to 15:30 (Manasseh Meyer MM 2 - 2)

### Strengthening the expert review process: a case study of the WHO's global malaria programme

Bianca DSouza (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)

Justin Parkhurst (London School of Economics and Political Science)

### Experiment-based policy making in France: political use of science and practices-based knowledges

Agathe Devaux-Spatarakis

### Inquiring with evidence: how contemporary public inquiries bring evidence to policy

Sue Regan

### The Big Bad Wolf's View: The Evaluation Clients' Perspective on Independence of Evaluations

Susanne Hadorn (FHNW University of Applied Sciences and Arts )

Lyn Pleger (Center of Competence for Public Management, University of Bern)