P05 / Implementing Policy Innovation in Government: Challenges for Policy Workers, Labs, and Leaders

Topic : POLICY FORMULATION, ADMINISTRATION AND POLICYMAKERS

Chair : Kathy Brock (Queen's University)

Second Chair : Andrea Migone (Simon Fraser University)

Third Chair : Michael Howlett (Simon Fraser University)

Fourth Chair : Adam Wellstead (Michigan Technological University)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Much attention in governments in recent decades has been devoted to policy innovation in the public sector in recent years. This includes modernizing governments by developing effective and forward-thinking public service renewal strategies, developing an innovative, agile and resilient workforce, and adopting new digital, data and communications technology and techniques (Small and Jansen 2020; Clarke 2019; Longo 2022; Clarke and Dubois 2020). While some progress has been made to varying degrees in different countries, the overall progress has been relatively modest when measured by OECD surveys such as the OECD Digital Government Index, internal reports to governments such as the Report of the Clerk of the Privy Council or Budget officer reports, and academic studies (Roy 2017; Lindquist 2022). In some cases, attempts to innovate have led to major fiascos in implementation or serious problems with system replacement and integration (Cooper and Turgeon). The results have been mixed at best with a workforce that is divided or ambivalent or disaffected (particularly the new professionals (Migone, Brock and Howlett, 2023)) by the discrepancy between the promises and results.

This panel will comprise papers that examine the challenges posed by implementing policy innovation in government on three levels united by the following research questions:

1. What are the most prevalent challenges to implementing policy innovation in governments in recent years, using policy labs, digitalization, big data techniques and artificial intelligence?

2. What policy implementations tools are the most effective to date and why?

3. Is the policy innovation implementation agenda as defined by government achieving the agile, effective workforce required in the current policy world to deal with new and transformative policy issues and crises (ex. COVID-19), or is it over-promising and under-delivering with the result of a disillusioned new professional cohort that is quiet quitting, disillusioned or resigned?

While this panel cannot provide full or complete answers to these questions, it can begin to explore some of the embedded difficulties in transforming the policy environment to ensure that effective policy techniques are being implemented in governments that equip the current and future generations of policy workers to deal with more complex and intransient policy problems. The analyses will make a direct contribution to the literature on policy innovation and implementation and policy worker recruitment and retention (Bason 2010; Bessant 2005; Brown and Toze 2017; Cristofoli et al. 2022; Ertas 2015; Howlett et al. 2018; Mergel 2016; Ng et al. 2016; Cox and Rigby 2013; Wu et al. 2017).

FORMAT: Onsite

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Migone, Andrea, Kathy Brock and Michael Howlett. 2023. "Deepening Digitization: Recruitment Challenges for Canadian Public Administration in the Areas of Digitalization and Modernization." In Routledge handbook of Public Administration in the Digital Era. Edited by Sarah Giest, Ian Roberge and Thomas Klassen. Routledge: Forthcoming 2023.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

Much attention in governments in recent decades has been devoted to policy innovation in the public sector in recent years. This includes modernizing governments by developing effective and forward-thinking public service renewal strategies, developing an innovative, agile and resilient workforce, and adopting new digital, data and communications technology and techniques (Small and Jansen 2020; Clarke 2019; Longo 2022; Clarke and Dubois 2020). While some progress has been made to varying degrees in different countries, the overall progress has been relatively modest when measured by OECD surveys such as the OECD Digital Government Index, internal reports to governments such as the Report of the Clerk of the Privy Council or Budget officer reports, and academic studies (Roy 2017; Lindquist 2022). In some cases, attempts to innovate have led to major fiascos in implementation or serious problems with system replacement and integration (Cooper and Turgeon). The results have been mixed at best with a workforce that is divided or ambivalent or disaffected (particularly the new professionals (Migone, Brock and Howlett, 2022) by the discrepancy between the promises and results.

This panel calls for papers that examine the challenges posed by implementing policy innovation in government on three levels united by the following research questions:

1. What are the most prevalent challenges to implementing policy innovation in governments in recent years, using policy labs, digitalization, big data techniques and artificial intelligence?

2. What policy implementations tools are the most effective to date and why?

3. Is the policy innovation implementation agenda as defined by government achieving the agile, effective workforce required in the current policy world to deal with new and transformative policy issues and crises (ex. COVID-19), or is it over-promising and under-delivering with the result of a disillusioned new professional cohort that is quiet quitting, disillusioned or resigned?

The panel is especially interested in case studies, survey research and empirical analysis of recent policy

innovation implementation initiatives that have succeeded or faced challenges and the associated experiences of new professionals and policy leaders.

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Session 1

Tuesday, June 27th 13:30 to 15:30 (KHW360)

Exploring Facets and Process Dynamics Of Public Sector Innovation: a Comparative Study of Canada and UK

Emre Cinar (University of Portsmouth)

Recruiting for Change: New Recruits and Innovation in the Canadian Public Sector

Andrea Migone (Simon Fraser University)

Kathy Brock (Queen's University)

Michael Howlett (Simon Fraser University)

(Virtual) Results-based culture & governmental efficiency: The moderating role of IFMIS in public sector institutions

Joseph Chirwa (Northern Arizona University)

What defines experimental culture in governments? A study of innovation units in Asia

Sreeja Nair (National University of Singapore)

What is successful policy experimentation?

Kate Mattocks (Dalhousie University)

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Session 2

Tuesday, June 27th 15:50 to 17:50 (KHW360)

Discussants

Andrea Migone (Simon Fraser University)

Michael Howlett (Simon Fraser University)

The goals and means of policy innovation labs: A global review through the lens of policy design

Nora Ottenhof (Toronto Metropolitan University)

Sarah Giest (Leiden University)

Ishani Mukherjee (Singapore Management University)

Anat Gofen (Hebrew University)

University-based Policy Innovation Labs: A Policy Actor, a Pedagogical Tool, or Both? A case study of the Queen's School of Public Studies Policy Lab (QSPS-PIL)

Adam Wellstead (Michigan Technological University)

Kathy Brock (Queen's University)

What’s Going on In There?: The Work of Canadian Government Policy Labs

Nora Ottenhof (Toronto Metropolitan University)

Bryan Evans (Toronto Metropolitan University)

Stuck in the Middle: How Policy Innovation Labs reconcile between user centric approach and global sustainability expectations?

Esti Hoss Golan (Reichman University)

Anat Gofen (Hebrew University)

Adam Wellstead (Michigan Technological University)

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Session 3

Wednesday, June 28th 08:00 to 10:00 (KHW360)

Discussants

Michael Howlett (Simon Fraser University)

Kathy Brock (Queen's University)

Digital technologies as an incentive for future decentralization

Inke Torfs (Universiteit Gent)

Programme for Improvement of the Business Environment in the Municipality of Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Tamiris Resende (Prefeitura Municipal de Belo Horizonte)

Implementation of an e-file system in the German justiciary. Results of a nationwide survey of district courts

Nicolai Dose (University of Duisburg-Essen)

Pushing innovation in cities? Lessons from Urban Labs across the world

Iryna Kravchuk

Karol Olejniczak (SWPS University)