



## **Annual Conference**

**January 8-11, 2019**

**Stellenbosch University, School of Public Leadership (SPL)**

**Cape Town, South Africa**

**CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS**

### ***“Knowledge for Policymaking: From Practice to Theory”***

The dominant mode of “framing” the development problematic is not a neutral process, though it often masquerades as such. In essence, it proposes problem-setting narratives that link accounts of policy problems to implicit or explicit proposals for action so as to facilitate the normative leap from “is” to “ought.” These narratives are the medium through which dominant actors impose their view of reality on others, suggest certain social agendas and practices, and criticize or even demonize alternative social arrangements. Frequently, these narratives serve to maintain and further entrench hierarchies of power.

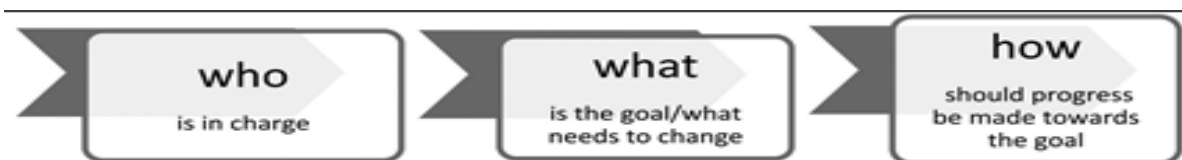
The “normative” public administration-type approach to knowledge formation and policy change is via deductive reasoning, i.e. beginning with a theory or “model” and then crafting a hypothesis and “testing” whether reality adheres to this model. This is often called the “top-down approach,” which begins with the hypothesis and then tests it against specific cases, leading to a confirmation of the original theory, and almost inevitably arriving at a conclusion that “reality” is wrong. In many such instances, the principal features of our received “correct” theory are restated with great ceremony and aplomb. We then decry “reality” (real-world practice) as wrong or deficient and say that compliance to the model would ensure optimum outcomes and results. For example, the failure to implement a policy is often blamed on the weakness or absence of “political will,” which then must be enhanced in order to achieve desirable outcomes. But the deconstruction of “political will,” some say, is an escape hatch for planning elites and policy wonks to invoke when intentions and projects fail. This is a political-academic conceit better replaced by political *interest* – by which is meant society’s capacity to organise, make, and implement decisions in a context of contested social relations. This has deep sociological roots and political agendas that “political will” will have to address in an often confrontational and/or conflictual manner.

The problem with this deductive reasoning is that it evades assessing “power” and neglects any serious interrogation and engagement with the deep social fault-lines of race, gender, class, caste, ethnicity, etc. Moreover, it is often apolitical, operating within the confines of a “monoeconomics” which assumes that there are no structural distinctions between nations termed “developed” and “developing.” Indeed, the culture of domination and control that inheres in the economic and political institutions of many post-colonial states is exacerbated when organisations seeking legitimacy adopt what they understand to be the successful practices of other organisations. The uncritical transfer and adoption of ideas, practices, and policies postpones (in the long run) decisions on sensitive structural questions and dilemmas. In this context, “politics” and “policy making”

frequently come to underwrite vested interests coalescing around an elite discourse coalition whose members share an ensemble of ideas, concepts, categories, and models, via which a development problem is politically framed and given social meaning.

Deductive approaches to policy making are not innocent in their entrenchment of so-called “value-free” ideas, concepts, and models. For instance, all agree that “good governance” and the associated “anti-corruption” regime is essential to development, yet history demonstrates that “cronyism” and “bad policies” (amongst others factors), can, under certain political conditions, be compatible with heightened levels of productive investment and dynamic growth. Indeed, the Western anti-corruption project is viewed by some as a scheme to make the world safer for international capital and “getting everyone on board.” The moral appeals and transparency pressures have become standard elements of the anti-corruption gift. But, critical analysts say, we need to understand who packs this gift, how it is “wrapped,” how it is sent, and how it is opened. We then need to study what the recipients do with its contents. Gift-giving, it is said, is always a combination of social obligations and hidden agendas, a tangled web of morality and conspiracy.

Against this backdrop, this conference is meant to query the limitations and deficiencies of deductive reasoning, suggesting instead an alternative inductive approach: starting from making specific observations about practice (**who** is/was in charge; **what** is/was the goal or what needs to change; **how** should progress be made towards the goal) and only then to broader generalisations and theories.



This “bottom-up” approach insists that we begin from specific observations (**who, what, how**) and then measures patterns and regularities, and

furnishes tentative hypotheses towards a general conclusion or theory – hence the title of this conference. Inductive reasoning has the capability to challenge established thought, by arriving at paradigm-shifting generalisations from specific instances or cases, albeit with the possibility of going right or wrong, i.e. spotlighting both good and “bad” practice.

This bottom-up approach embedded in the analytical/interrogative frame of **who-what-how** is referred to in the literature as Homegrown Development (HGD), a development framework that is initiated, crafted and implemented by a country with attention to unique local imperatives such as socioeconomic structures, histories, and characteristics. It is contextual and does not, by its nature, presuppose commitment to any ideology, procedure, or policy prescription. It implies the absence of external conditionality in any form, but asserts the freedom to borrow, accept, or reject inputs from external sources. This means the HGD can be market-based or involve significant state direction and intervention. It can involve broad participation from stakeholders, including civil society, or be more rooted in the parliaments or legislatures as directing democratic institutions.

In sum, the HGD approach is based less on *episteme* – a system of discourses rooted in logic and rationality but disembodied from context – but in *techne* (knowledge), embedded in practice and gained through turbulent but necessary processes of critical engagement within communities and nations.

This conference welcomes proposals for papers that will be grouped around three principal sub-themes:

1. Mainstream Approaches to Policy and Policymaking: Strengths and Deficiencies
2. Homegrown Development (HGD): What is it and How Can It Provide an Alternative Development Agenda?

### 3. Actionable Knowledge for Policymaking: From Practice to Theory

#### Part I: Definitions

#### Part 2: Case Studies

We ask for abstracts of presentations of approximately twenty minutes no later than September 15, 2018. Submissions should be sent to Robin Lewis at [robin@worldviewglobal.com](mailto:robin@worldviewglobal.com) and to Paul Currie at [pcurrie@sun.ac.za](mailto:pcurrie@sun.ac.za).

The conference host, the School of Public Leadership (SPL) at Stellenbosch University, will provide accommodation and meals during the two-three days of the conference. This includes faculty from IDPPA member-schools who may also chair a panel rather than present a paper. Each IDPPA member-institution will receive from SPL one round-trip air ticket to Cape Town, while other participants will be responsible for their own travel to the conference.

Members of the SPL Program Committee are:

Johan Burger, Professor and Director, SPL ([apjb@sun.ac.za](mailto:apjb@sun.ac.za))

Paul Currie [Conference Papers] ([pcurrie@sun.ac.za](mailto:pcurrie@sun.ac.za))

Rosslyn Abrahams [Flights, Accommodation, Shuttles, Conference Logistics]  
([rpa@sun.ac.za](mailto:rpa@sun.ac.za))

Lorraine Gerrans [Mobile Session in Cape Town and Closing Dinner]  
([lgerrans@gmail.com](mailto:lgerrans@gmail.com))

## ABOUT SPL

The School of Public Leadership is one of three schools in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences of Stellenbosch University. The University has been celebrating its centenary in 2018. It has ten faculties: AgriSciences, Economic and Management Sciences, Medicine and Health Sciences, Engineering, Military Sciences, Arts and Social Sciences, Science, Education, Law and Theology. It is among South Africa's leading tertiary institutions based on research output, student pass rates and rated scientists, and is recognised internationally as an academic institution of excellence.

SPL is unique in the South African context with its combination of Public Governance, and the Environment and Sustainability as strategic foci. These three foci also provide the rationale of the three postgraduate programmes in Public Policy and Management, Environmental Management, and Sustainable Development, with a combined enrolment of more than 500 students.

SPL's "Learning for Sustainable African Futures" slogan focuses its efforts on serving public value in an African context. The SPL as an academic school provides a space for a wide range of disciplines. The diversity of these disciplines is reflected not only in the different degree and diploma programmes, but the content of the modules of each degree programme. The unique combination of progressive governance, development and conservation implied by the focus areas and the subsequent initiatives through the various programmes, centres – amongst others, the Centre for Complex Systems in Transition (CST), the Anti-Corruption Centre (ACCERUS) and the Centre for Local Governance (CLG) – and strategic partnerships such as the partnership with the Stellenbosch-based [Sustainability Institute](#) are contributing to a high degree of visibility in the public and development sectors.

## **MEMBERS**

- Fundação Getulio Vargas [FGV] - Rio de Janeiro, BRAZIL
- School of Public Policy and Management [SPPM], Tsinghua University - Beijing, CHINA
- School of Global Affairs and Public Policy [GAPP] American University in Cairo [AUC] - Cairo, EGYPT
- School of Government and Public Policy [JSGP] O.P Jindal Global University - Delhi, INDIA
- School of Government, Tun Abdul Razak University [TARSOG] - Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA
- Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration [RANEPA] - Moscow, RUSSIA
- School of Public Leadership [SPL] Stellenbosch University - Cape Town, SOUTH AFRICA
- Environment, Development, and Sustainability Program [EDS], Chulalongkorn University - Bangkok, THAILAND
- Sabanci University School of Public Policy/Istanbul Policy Center [IPC] Istanbul, TURKEY
- Universitas Gadjah Mada [UGM] Faculty of Social and Political Sciences [membership pending] Yogyakarta, INDONESIA

## **ABOUT IDPPA**

The International Development and Public Policy Alliance (IDPPA) was inaugurated in 2012 to connect scholars and practitioners in major emerging economies to collaborate in the areas of research, teaching, and policy action. The member-institutions are all graduate schools offering high-quality master's degrees taught in English that offer rigorous training

in global development and public policy analysis for the next generation of policy-makers.

IDPPA held its first Annual Conference, “Life in the New Global Cities,” in July 2013 in Beijing, with co-sponsorship of a wide range of global organizations in diverse sectors: UN Habitat, OECD, Urban China Initiative, McKinsey & Company, Columbia University, and Brandeis University. Participants from more than a dozen countries presented papers on five themes: Productivity, Infrastructure Development, Equity and Social Inclusion, Sustainability, and Quality of Life.

In November 2014, IDPPA presented a panel at a conference held in Istanbul entitled “Public Policymaking in a Globalized World,” hosted by the Sabanci University/Istanbul Policy Center and the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung. Contributions from all IDPPA member-institutions were focused on the teaching of global public policy; the conference proceedings are now available in a volume co-published by Routledge/Taylor & Francis and the Social Science Press (Delhi), Robin J. Lewis (ed.), *Public Policymaking in a Globalized World*.

The second Annual Conference of IDPPA took place 22-24 November 2015 in Delhi, hosted by the School of Government and Public Policy of O.P. Jindal Global University. The theme was “Beyond the Washington Consensus: Public Policy and the Future of Development Assistance.”

The third Annual Conference was held in Moscow 13-15 October 2016, under the auspices of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA). The conference was entitled “Models of Development: Perspectives on Policy Futures.”

The fourth Annual Conference was in Rio de Janeiro from 23-27 October 2017, hosted by the Fundacao Getulio Vargas (FGV) and was entitled “Beyond Economics: The Stockholm Statement and Setting Global Priorities.” The conference was preceded by the first-ever IDPPA Student Workshop (“Paradigm Shift: Redefining the Study of Global Public Policy”), featuring panels and presentations by master’s students from more than a dozen countries.