

Guest Editorial

Rethinking information systems in the public sector: Bridging academia and public service

This section of Information Polity consists of papers presented during the workshop “Rethinking Information Systems in the Public Sector: Bridging Academia and Public Service”. The workshop was held on 8 June 2014 in Tel Aviv, Israel, in conjunction with the European Conference on Information Systems (ECIS 2014), and it is part of the activities of the Special Interest Group for eGovernment (SIGeGov) of the Association for Information Systems (AIS).

Mission

The mission of the AIS Special Interest Group for eGovernment (SIGeGov) is to promote quality and relevance in eGovernment research and to highlight the relevance of research on Information Systems (IS) in the public sector within the AIS community. The SIG focuses on the challenges of public sector IS policy, implementation, and management, and aims at providing a shared forum for Information Systems researchers, students, and practitioners interested in this field of study.

To promote these goals, the SIGeGov aims at bringing together the communities of public sector IT researchers in the IS field and of practitioners to tackle emerging trends in the field of eGovernment. SIGeGov workshop events in conjunction with the main IS conferences have now been successfully carried out for a number of years (Phoenix, AZ 2009; St. Louis, MO 2010; Shanghai 2011; Orlando, FL 2012; Milan 2013), and can be considered a well-established forum for public sector IT researchers within the IS field. As of 2014, the SIGeGov has 70+ members from 29 countries around the world.

Papers

The two papers selected from the workshop focus on the themes of innovation policies, and open government data policies.

The article “What Happens Next? A Survey of the Afterlife of Innovation Contests”, by Gustaf and Elea Juell-Skielse, Anders Hjalmarsson, Paul Johannesson, and Daniel Rudmark, focuses on the rationale and design of innovation contests, where ideas and prototypes, often based on the open data concept, are evaluated, e.g. by an expert jury, and a winner is selected, to stimulate the development of new service ideas and prototypes. The authors outline the different characteristics of innovation contests, and highlight the generalized absence of support by organizers in the post-contest phase. Findings identify new challenges for innovation policies, forcing us to rethink the way governments can stimulate innovation in digital services.

The article “Compliance with Open Government Data Policies: An Empirical Evaluation of Italian Public Administrations”, by Andrea Maurino, Blerina Spahiu, Gianluigi Viscusi, and Carlo Batini, focuses on the implementation of Open Government Data (OGD) policies. The authors present and discuss a framework to monitor the degree of compliance with OGD policies, and apply it to a sample of local public administrations.

The presentation of these articles in a special section of the journal aims at enriching the debate over the need to rethink the role of information systems in a changing public sector, and to stimulate a dialogue between research and practice in the area of e-government. It is our hope that this joint initiative by Information Polity and the AIS Special Interest Group on eGovernment (SIGeGov) can serve as a useful forum for this purpose.

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<http://aisnet.org/members/group.aspx?id=89758>

Reference

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