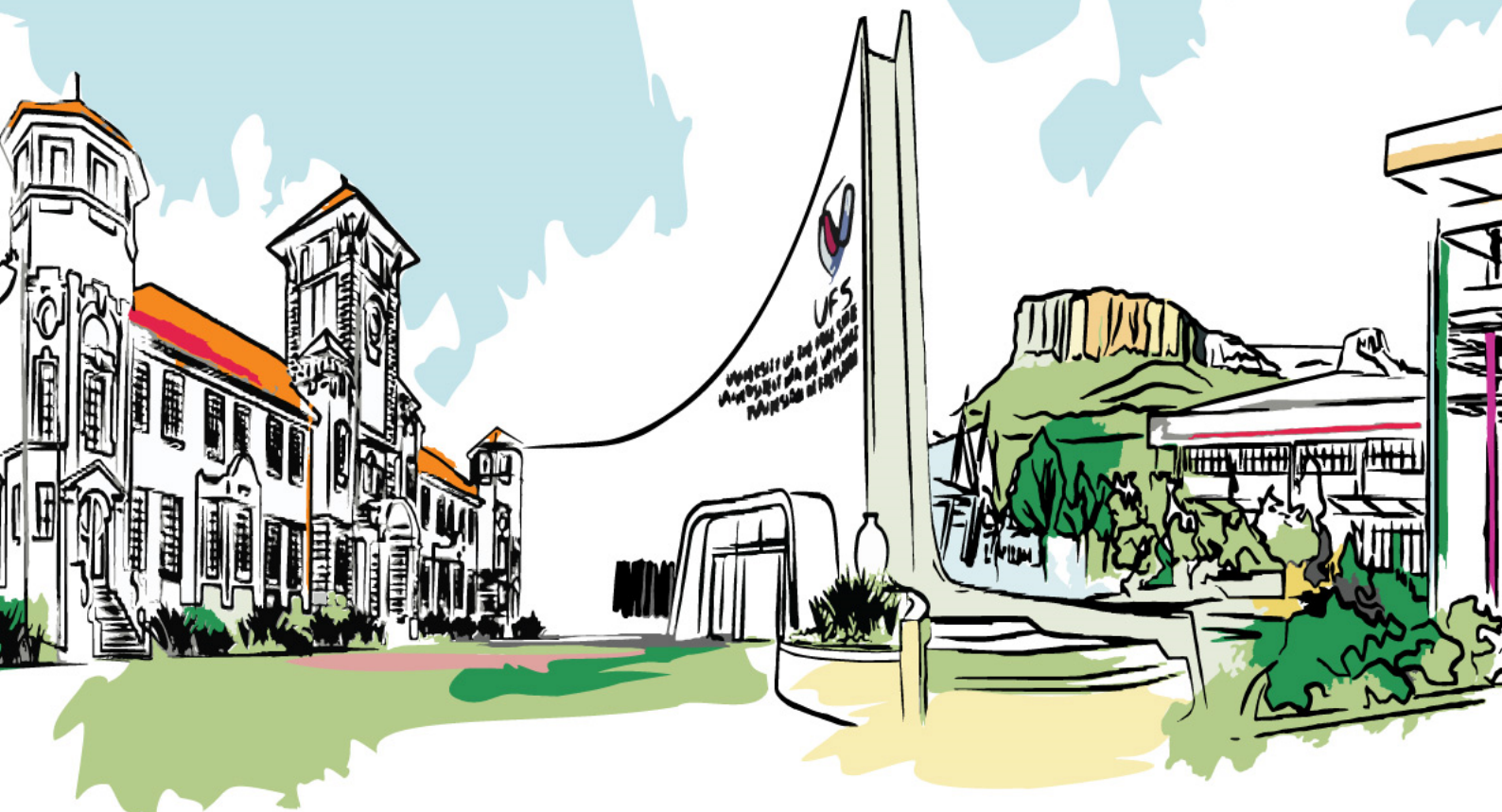


IASIA 2024 CONFERENCE

1-5 July **Bloemfontein**
South Africa

Alternative Service Delivery
and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness

CALL FOR PAPERS



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IASIA2024

The IASIA 2024 Conference will be held in Bloemfontein, South Africa, from July 1 to 5, 2024, under the theme **"Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness."**

The Annual Conference of the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) will be organized in close cooperation with the University of the Free State (UFS) and will feature plenary sessions on contemporary public governance themes, special panels/forums, sessions of the IASIA Working Groups, and a PhD seminar.

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them" (Albert Einstein, 1946). This quote by Einstein is more relevant than ever in our challenging times, marked by a multitude of complex problems. The COVID-19 pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the Israel-Palestine conflict are among the prominent issues, with far-reaching socio-economic and political consequences. Additionally, climate change and the push toward renewable energy contribute to challenges such as the loss of biodiversity, pollution, deforestation, and related environmental issues. Geopolitical tensions, including territorial and trade disputes, are on the rise among countries and regions, leading to increased complexity. Political instability in various regions has resulted in forced migration and displacement of people. The escalating threats of cyberattacks and concerns about the impact of artificial intelligence on the future workforce are also growing. According to the United Nations (2022), the global evolution of technology and digital government has irreversibly transformed government dynamics. There is a pervasive lack of trust in public institutions at all levels, with increasing corruption, decreasing transparency, and public services failing to meet the needs, expectations, and priorities of populations, communities, and citizens.

Several authors, such as Gunn (1978), Lipsky (1980), Grand (1981), and Hudson (1993), have highlighted and analyzed the crises experienced by governments since the 1980s. During this period, many developing countries were compelled to review their public spending and implement structural adjustment plans. New visions, priorities, and strategies affected the delivery of public services. Leadership, resource availability, and capacity constraints also influenced public service delivery. Simultaneously, the needs of citizens and communities underwent profound changes, with citizens expecting more from governments while governments had to produce more with fewer resources, often failing.

In the context of global, national, regional, and societal challenges, it was anticipated that traditional forms of government would take complete responsibility for solving problems by defining public purposes, mobilizing resources, and deploying them through government agencies efficiently. However, traditional forms of government have frequently failed to produce the services required by citizens and address increasingly complex problems. Government failure leads to ineffective outcomes, inefficiency, and a realization that citizens would be better off under a different regulatory environment. In 2024, citizens' frustration with government performance is at an all-time high, suggesting that governments have become less efficient in 'doing the things right' and effective in 'doing the right things,' hindering the functioning of government departments and service delivery. Consequently, service delivery remains a significant challenge, prompting global protests by frustrated citizens.

As a consequence of failed governance, citizens, communities, and private businesses are taking a more prominent role in transforming their environments for greater success, improved living conditions, and enhanced service delivery. In this context, alternative options for service delivery are gaining prominence and being implemented, as governments move away from traditional or conventional approaches where the government is solely responsible for all services. Alternative

service delivery provides an opportunity for governments to rethink and restructure public services by focusing on innovation, flexibility, responsiveness, and collaboration while being cost-effective and attuned to citizens' needs. Cooperation and collaboration among different government sectors strengthen inter-governmental relations and resource sharing, both horizontally and vertically, based on "the Whole of Government" and "the Whole of Society" approaches. Alternative service delivery involves partnerships outside of the government, including private companies, organizations, Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), to provide services traditionally solely provided by the government. Within alternative service delivery, concepts like co-creation, co-production, social innovation, re-engineering, redevelopment, deregulation, outsourcing, semi-autonomous agencies, shared services, and complexity reduction are prominent. Involving volunteers and the community is integral to alternative service delivery, with examples including citizens fixing their roads, implementing community patrols for safety, and collaborating on park maintenance and infrastructure improvement, contributing to the community and country's well-being. This alternative form of service delivery, although interesting and innovative, raises implications where the government could be viewed as a facilitator and regulator with reduced responsibilities, capacity, and powers.

The 2024 IASIA conference aims to bring together academics, researchers, students, and practitioners to discuss the main conference theme, "Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness." Relevant aspects such as the new environment and context of the public sector, the increasing challenges and complexity of government, the frustration of citizens and communities, the need for increased societal responsibility, as well as the importance of alternative service delivery, will be evaluated. The conference will promote research that develops diverse methodological, disciplinary, and cross-national perspectives concerning service delivery, its causes, and dynamics, and build the capacity to respond creatively to these challenges, maximizing opportunities to strengthen democracy and render sustainable services for the benefit of all in society. Alternative service delivery is the overarching approach to providing services using novel, non-traditional methods effectively, efficiently, and cost-effectively while maintaining or improving service levels and involving various stakeholders.

Key research questions impacting the conference theme include:

1. What is the rationale and consideration behind the transformative dynamics observed in terms of public governance, the public sector, and public service delivery?
2. Should traditional forms of government be reviewed and adjusted to meet current needs?
3. What is the role, function, implications, and context of alternative service delivery within the current space and time?
4. Within the context of alternative service delivery, what is the role of government: a facilitator or a regulator?
5. What alternatives can be considered to keep public services running?
6. How can sustainable societal responsiveness be enhanced and promoted?
7. What legislative, institutional, and organizational arrangements facilitate alternative public service delivery?
8. How can aspects of centralization, devolution, decentralization, collaboration, co-creation, co-production, social innovation, redevelopment, deregulation, outsourcing,

- semi-autonomous agencies, shared services, and complexity reduction promote alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness?
9. What are the current challenges, best practices, and new models regarding alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness?
 10. Which service delivery programs, activities, and mechanisms can be strategically utilized to achieve government's service delivery objectives, either directly by the government or in cooperation with other sectors such as the private sector or communities?
 11. How can local communities and individual citizens support alternative service delivery arrangements and promote sustainable societal responsiveness?
 12. Which innovative approaches could be implemented to address demanding, turbulent, and complex public sector institutions and environments?
 13. What types of networks, contexts, or ecosystems might support inclusive, effective, and sustainable forms of service delivery?
 14. How do globalization and the global economy impact service delivery and create the need for alternative options relevant to service delivery?
 15. How can new technologies be rendered more inclusive and act as a catalyst towards alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness?
 16. Can dialogue between differing epistemologies and non-Western ways of knowing contribute to strengthening the rendering of services and widening opportunities for participation?
 17. What action-oriented approaches to research help widen participation in service delivery to facilitate mechanisms that increase transparency and trust?
 18. How can alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness support the achievement of the SDGs?
 19. Is there potential to improve/innovate the public service through investment in training, capacity building, and peer learning?
 20. How can women and the youth positively influence all the changes and transformations in the field of the public sector and public service delivery?
 21. What best practices can support research on alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness?
 22. How can sensemaking be added to alternative service delivery innovation based on what customers and other stakeholders experience as valuable in their lived experiences, and what are they willing to co-create?
 23. What evidence-based case studies of alternative service delivery, especially in empirical contexts, can be useful in support of alternative service delivery innovation?

[Visit IASIA2024 website](#)

This conference offers a unique platform for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to discuss the challenges and opportunities in advancing government and governance for a changing world, with a focus on "Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness."

Among the spaces available for these activities, we will count on:

- Plenary sessions.
- Special panels/forums and
- Permanent and ad-hoc Working Group sessions.

The IASIA2024 Conference will be in person. All Plenaries will be transmitted by streaming; Panels/Parallel and Working Groups' sessions will be face-to-face.

We would like to invite you to submit your abstracts, in English, on the focus areas of the different permanent IASIA working groups, detailed below, as well as the main conference theme:

#	Working Group name	Position	Name
I	Education and Training in Public Administration	Project Director	Blue Wooldridge
		Co-chairpersons	Hendri Kroukamp
			Ludmila Gajdosova
II	Ethics and Culture in the Public Sector	Project Director	Pregala Pillay
		Co-chairpersons	Najat Zarrouk
			John-Mary Kauzya
III	Public Sector Reform	Project Director	Randhir Auluck
		Co-chairpersons	Wang Manchuan
			David Ferraz
IV	Subnational Governance and Development	Project Director	Cristina Rodriguez-Acosta
		Co-chairpersons	Amitava Basu
			Marco de la Cruz
V	Gender, Diversity and Equity	Project Director	Laila El-Baradei
		Co-chairpersons	Enaleen Draai
			Leticia Godinho
VI	Public Sector Governance, Leaderships and Management	Project Director	Juraj Nemec
		Co-chairpersons	Liesel Lues
			Yingchun Sun
VII	Public Policy, Decision-making and Policy Implementation	Project Director	Michiel S de Vries
		Co-chairpersons	Christina Andrews
			Henry Wissink
VIII	Public Sector Human Resources Management	Project Director	Liza van Jaarsveldt
		Co-chairperson	Jelena Lagger
IX	International Dimensions of the Public Administration	Project Director	Adrian Velazquez Vazquez
		Co-chairpersons	Frank Naert
			Ruben Dario Echeverri
X	Public Administration in Fragile and Conflict-affected States	Project Director	Tamer Qarmout
		Co-chairperson	Rabeh Morrar
Conference theme track: "Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness"		Project Director	Liza van Jaarsveldt
		Co-chairpersons	Mareve Biljohn
			Christa de Wet
PHD Seminar		Project Director	Michiel DeVries
		Co-chairpersons	Hendri Kroukamp
			Kambidima Wotela

Guidelines and Deadlines

Expected format of the Abstract, Final Paper, and Oral presentation

A format and structure of a paper should reflect its category – either research paper, theoretical paper, or a case study. Authors are requested to follow relevant academic standards in this regard. The oral presentation should focus on research questions and findings and their limits, **the length of the presentation is expected to be app. 15 minutes max.** The use of appropriate visual technological aids, such as PowerPoint, is encouraged, but is not a requirement.

Papers should have a clear conceptual basis and meet research methodological standards. Papers can be based on empirical research or case studies. For single-site case studies, an effort should be made to identify the relevance of the findings to other contexts, thereby introducing a comparative international dimension.

All academic papers are welcomed – quantitative, qualitative, case studies, literature reviews, etc. The value-added, goals, research methods, and findings (and their limits) must be explicitly formulated.

You are requested to follow the proposed structure for the final paper:

- The topic and **purpose of the envisaged paper.**
- The **design/methodology/approach applied** needs to be provided.
- The **main findings** need to relate to the conference and working group theme.
- What are the **practical implications**, also for the broader audience?
- Please indicate the **originality/value** for the broader audience.

Abstract length: 500 words.

Full paper length: 3000 – 8000 words

Please take note that all abstracts that do not adhere to the proposed structure will be sent back for revision. Also, presenters will not be allowed to present if they have not registered on the ConfTool System successfully and submitted a full paper before the conference.

Submitting an abstract. Kindly follow the structure provided.

Title: What is the title of your presentation?

Abstract (500 words in total)

1. **Problem statement (200 words):** What is the problem you address? and **Purpose:** What is the aim of the paper?
2. **Methodology (100 words):** What method(s) did you use to research this problem?
3. **Findings (100 words):** What are the main findings from this research?
4. **Proposal (100 words):** What are the proposals to address the problem?

5. **References:** Add three references supporting your paper.
6. **Keywords:** Add three keywords relevant to your paper.

Here is an example.

Title: Can public service leaders save the public service amidst a VUCA environment

1. Problem statement

Undoubtedly, 2020 and 2021 were some of the most uncertain and challenging years of the recent decade. COVID-19 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine are the first that comes to mind, with far-reaching socio-economic and political consequences. Other socio-political landscape challenges include geopolitical tensions between countries and regions, consistent high occurrence of poverty and inequality and an increasing presence of cybersecurity and artificial intelligence, which have become critical global concerns that public service leaders must deal with.

2. Purpose

Public service leaders are expected to navigate a complex and challenging landscape. Volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environments have primarily intensified demands on public service leadership. The paper aims to address public service leadership challenges and propose ways of ensuring effective, efficient, and economical service delivery.

3. Methodology

This paper applied a qualitative research approach, using a phenomenology research design to position public service leadership within a VUCA environment, ensuring effective, efficient, and economical service delivery. Although Phenomenological research will not necessarily provide definitive explanations about the phenomena, it does raise awareness and increases insight.

4. Findings

When reflecting on the national and international landscapes, the question may be asked why there is such a high expectation from the public service and its leaders. The answer is straightforward. Over centuries, the public service and its leaders have been tasked with and liberally resourced toward being the critical pillar in ensuring and maintaining citizen well-being by realizing and implementing the necessary systems and processes. Although there may be many collaborators, partners, and even leaders to ensure citizen well-being in collaboration with the public service – it cannot release the latter from its responsibility. Should an environment exist where the public service has an underrepresented portfolio in citizen well-being and service delivery, the outcome will likely be a decline in resourcing, power and societal cohesion. In other words, in cases where public service institutions and leadership underperform, they will probably lose support and power.

5. Proposal

Public service leaders have no other option but to work across political, cultural, and social divides to build a more just and equitable society and ensure that all South Africans have access to the resources and support they need to thrive. Traits such as inclusiveness, cohesiveness,

justness, and shared understanding underpin the ability of public service leaders to unite rather than divide.

6. References

Lues, L. 2021. The role of political Leadership in a dynamic and changing human resource environment, In: van der Westhuizen, E.J. ed. Human Resource Management in Government: A South African perspective on theories, politics and processes. Cape Town: Juta and Company. pp. 381-408.

Lues, L. 2021. Has public Leadership as we know it reached the end of its shelf life? Exploring leadership styles in the 21st century. Teaching Public Administration, 39(2): 175-191.

Roberts, M. 2023. 5 global issues to watch in 2023. United Nations Foundation. <https://unfoundation.org/blog/post/5-global-issues-to-watch-in-2023/>

Sarkar, A. 2016. We live in a VUCA world: The importance of responsible leadership, Development and Learning Organizations, 30(3): 9–12.

7. Keywords

Public service, leaders, VUCA

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Alternative Service Delivery
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Calendar

April 30th 2024	Abstracts Submission deadline
April 15th to May 15 th , 2024	Authors' notification
May 30th, 2024	Final papers submission deadline

Submission Instructions

Please create an account here: <https://www.conftool.org/iasia-conference-2024/>

- Go to "Your submissions" and select a working group or track.
- Please follow the specific instructions given in the call-for-papers.
- If prompted, add an attachment.

Registration

- Participation in the conference is conditional upon the payment of registration fees.
- The conference fees will be communicated soon on the conference website.
- The registration fee covers participation in the conference, reception, and dinner.

Best Paper Awards

Potential presenters should note that the "best papers" submitted to a Working Group will be considered for publication in the International Review of Administrative Sciences and will also qualify for nomination for the prestigious Pierre DeCelles Award.

Open Access

Participants can opt-in for the Open Access program of IAS by clicking the option on the ConfTool System.

Contact: info@iasia-conference2024.org

IASIA Working Group I: Education and Training Programme: aligning missions and quality.

Project Director: **Prof. dr. Blue WOOLDRIDGE**
Virginia Commonwealth University (United States)

Co-chairpersons: **Prof. dr. Hendri KROUKAMP**
University of the Free State (South Africa)

Ms. Ludmila GAJDOSOVA
NISPAcee (Slovak Republic)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introduction

The theme of the 2024 IASIA Conference, "Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness," explicitly necessitates IASIA participants to address one of the most significant paradigms influencing the goals and consequences of Public Administration for the past approximately 50 years. Whether identified as Alternative Service Delivery Services, New Public Management, Delegation of Service Delivery, Contracting Out, or similar terms, these strategies swiftly emerged as the predominant theme in Public Management, commencing in the 1980s. Privatization, accelerated by influential neoliberal politicians such as Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, rapidly expanded as nations introduced reforms to apply private sector techniques—managerialism—and achieve cost reductions through increased competition, as promised by the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm. The previously prevailing notion that state control was essential to provide certain services, considering the profit-maximizing behavior of private firms, underwent a reorientation towards market liberalization policies favoring less government (Parker, 2006). These novel strategies were purported to deliver goods and services in a more economical, efficient, responsive, and effective manner.

The extent to which these new privatization strategies achieved their goals seemed to vary by the sector of government services. For instance, in a recent study in the field of Information Technology (IT), an as-yet-unpublished paper (a draft can be obtained from the WG I Project Director) by Wooldridge and Duggan, 2019 found that although the prevalence of IT privatization is undeniable, research on theoretically derived determinants of outcomes in public administration is relatively scarce. The public sector IT research reveals a scarcity of successful IT privatization examples and minimal, if any, actualized cost savings. In one study of privatized IT services across fifty US states, the authors observed that privatization has achieved neither the goals advocated by public managers nor the decreased service costs originally envisioned.

Another study found that eighty percent of IT privatization efforts in the public sector ran behind schedule, and the proportion deemed successful ranged between only 15 and 30 percent. Furthermore, it is not solely on Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness performance criteria that IT privatization has been critiqued. A recent study on Equal Employment Opportunity complaint processing found that IT privatization led to less emphasis on equity and discrimination.

Other drawbacks to public sector IT privatization that have been noted include reduced quality of service, communication challenges with the vendor, loss of control, and overestimation of private sector capabilities by the public sector. Considering these conflicting findings, the following questions could be explored in submitted proposals. (Obviously, other submissions that contribute to the mission of Working Group I are encouraged).

Questions to consider:

1. What competencies do participants/students at Schools and Institutes of Administration (SIA) need to choose/design/implement/monitor and evaluate effective, efficient, equitable, and responsive Alternative Service Delivery Strategies for a specific public service?
2. What are effective instructional strategies for transmitting these competencies?
3. What are specific experiences encountered in preparing participants/students for these responsibilities?
4. What new/additional research is needed to meet the requirements of question 2?

IASIA Working Group II: Public Sector Ethics and Culture.

Project Director: **Prof. dr. Pregala PILLAY**
University of Stellenbosch (South Africa)
Dr. Najat ZARROUK
IASIA and African Local Government Academy (ALGA) of UCLG Africa
(Morocco)

Co-chairpersons: **Dr. John-Mary KAUYA**
Stellenbosch University (Uganda)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introduction

Ensuring Accountability and Ethical Conduct in Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them" (Albert Einstein, 1946). Similarly, in a situation where it is increasingly imperative to apply alternative service delivery mechanisms involving a multiplicity of actors and stakeholders in intricately networked partnerships and collaborative arrangements with the public sector, private sector, civil society, as well as community-level organizations participating in a loosely organized manner, we cannot continue to depend on accountability and ethics patterns designed for running traditional public service bureaucracies.

With public trust in public institutions at an all-time low, and corruption within governments on the rise as transparency decreases, the delivery of public services fails to meet the needs, expectations, and priorities of populations, communities, and citizens. How will public governance revamp and ensure accountability, integrity, public service professionalism, and ethical behavior? This challenge is amplified as societies continue attempting to bridge the gap between government performance and people's expectations and demands in service delivery in terms of policy, organization, governance, budget allocation, operating, location, time, cost, accessibility, and adaptability to the needs (urban-rural, rich-poor, persons with disabilities, minorities, ...).

Alternative service delivery mechanisms, including public-private partnerships (PPPs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), do provide services that had hitherto been provided solely by the government. Co-creation, co-production, social innovation, deregulation, semi-autonomous agencies, shared service delivery, etc., are prominently applied in alternative service delivery.

Useful as they are as responses to the failure of government in service delivery, these alternative ways further complicate accountability, ethics, and professionalism, which were already complicated anyway.

During the 2024 IASIA Conference, Working Group 2 on Ethics and Public Service Culture will focus on the challenges, policies, strategies, and tools for ensuring accountability and ethics in the context of alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness.

In this respect, academics, researchers, students, and practitioners are invited to propose papers addressing the following questions:

1. Should accountability and ethics in the delivery of public services be reviewed in light of alternative service delivery?
2. What alternative accountability arrangements would be put in place to ensure accountability and ethical conduct in the context of alternative service delivery?
3. How should professionalism in the public service be redefined and enforced in light of the changed and changing dynamics, including alternative service delivery and societal responsiveness?
4. What legislative, institutional, and organizational arrangements need to be devised and operated to ensure professionalism, accountability, ethics, and integrity while facilitating alternative service delivery?
5. What capacities need to be developed in the public services to sustain effectiveness and responsiveness in operating alternative service delivery?
6. What kind of best practices can be shared to serve as a source of inspiration?

IASIA Working Group III: Public Sector Reform.

Project Director: **Dr. Randhir K. AULUCK**
University of Westminster (UK)
Prof. dr. David FERRAZ
ISCTE-IUL (Portugal)

Co-chairpersons: **Dr. WANG Manchuan**
China Society of Administrative Reform – CSOAR (China)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introduction

The Public Sector Reform Working Group seeks to examine and explore models of public administration and management that foster a progressive, resilient, and well-functioning public sector. It aims to strike a balance between meeting statutory obligations, public expectations, efficiency, social equity, and sustainability in the face of globalization, complexity, and ambiguity. This necessitates new approaches that consider the needs of all stakeholders, including citizens, communities, and businesses, as well as place-level configurations and infrastructure.

The Working Group III aims to contemplate and identify new visions, priorities, and models of administration and reform that positively impact the delivery of public services in these ever-evolving environments. Public institutions, public service leaders, and decision-makers encounter numerous competing challenges at both operational and strategic levels. Adapting to constantly changing environments and demands in a new technological context, such as AI and Big Data, is a major challenge, requiring new ways of working and new systems of governance and accountability.

Public service leaders and practitioners must navigate dynamic, shifting, and complex situations, including changing public perceptions and demands, statutory responsibilities, technological innovation, demographic shifts, social movements, and environmental issues. They must balance explicit and implicit competing interests and values and respond to the needs and expectations of diverse communities, citizens, and stakeholders.

The shifting paradigms within global governance, technological advancements, and increasing fiscal pressures and constraints underscore the imperative for a groundbreaking shift in Public Administration reforms. This necessitates the conceptualization of cutting-edge models, frameworks, and leadership methodologies that emphasize sustainable development and social equity. To effectively address these multifarious and dynamic challenges, it is essential that reforms are rooted in pioneering theoretical constructs and robust research. This will enable public service leaders, policymakers, and practitioners to skillfully navigate the complexities of their roles and effectively respond to the prevailing and emerging, intricate and evolving challenges within the public sector ecosystem.

This Working Group III serves as a pivotal platform for scholars and practitioners alike to share their research insights and perspectives within these critical areas. While contributions that address specific questions are encouraged, we also welcome submissions that extend beyond these parameters, encompassing a broader spectrum of relevant topics and discussions that consider the following questions.

Questions to consider:

1. What are the new models and approaches to public administration reforms that can help administrations to provide 'alternative service delivery' that enhances Sustainable Societal Responsiveness?
2. What strategies and mechanisms are or can be implemented to ensure Sustainable Societal Responsiveness, fostering a balance between technological advancements and societal well-being, democratic values, and equitable access to resources and opportunities?
3. What innovative models and structures are being developed or can be proposed to enhance the adaptability and responsiveness of public administration? How do they or should they incorporate artificial intelligence, big data, and automation in decision making?
4. What regulatory frameworks, accountability measures, and transparency mechanisms have been established to safeguard democratic principles, data privacy, and equitable access to resources and services?
5. What frameworks or methodologies can be employed to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of public administration reforms in achieving sustainable development and social equity goals?
6. How can public administration reforms address the digital divide and ensure equitable access to technological advancements and services?
7. How can public administration models adapt and transform to address the ethical dilemmas arising from the escalating influence of multinational technological companies on public governance?

IASIA Working Group IV: Sub-National Governance and Development.

Project Director: **Prof. dr. Cristina RODRIGUEZ-ACOSTA**
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), New York, United States of America

Co-Chairpersons: **Prof. Amitava BASU**
Center for Environmental Management & Participatory Development, New Delhi (India)

Dr. Marco DE LA CRUZ
Researcher at KU Leuven Public Governance Institute (Belgium)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introductory Paragraph:

In the post-COVID-19 era, governments must adopt a new operating model based on the uncertain environment we now inhabit. The response to the pandemic has underscored the need for a change in many government orthodoxies, deeply held beliefs about how things should be done. Examining and challenging these beliefs could lead to significant improvements. Presently, governments are endeavoring to transform their operations, recognizing that the old normal will not work effectively.

Questions to consider:

In this backdrop and under the broader context of the conference theme, Working Group IV invites papers from the perspective of sub-national government to address the following issues:

Digital/Virtual Technology in Governance

COVID-19 posed a test of whether work could continue in a virtual environment. The experiment not only pushed operating protocols, policies, and infrastructure to their limits but also mainstreamed concepts such as telework, telehealth, and online learning. Are telecommuting and digital applications becoming the norm in government office work, with physical meetings becoming exceptions? Are there any experiences or research on how successful these applications have been?

New Means of Public Service Delivery

COVID-19 forced governments to provide public services differently. Many governments are contemplating enabling citizens to access public services from their homes without visiting any government offices and without having to navigate the maze of brokers and middlemen. What are the evolutionary changes in public service delivery methods? How can we measure citizens' satisfaction with these initiatives? Has their involvement with their local/regional authorities increased? What about accountability? Is the information provided by subnational governments sufficient, and are citizens using it to hold subnational authorities accountable?

Speedy Responses to Changes

The realities of COVID-19 stress the need for quick government action and rapid adjustment to public feedback. Traditionally, policymakers and regulators draft new rules and regulations in response to market developments, spending months and sometimes years in drafting and obtaining public comments. Finally, after multiple iterations and deliberations, the final regulation emerges. What has been the progress to expedite the response to market developments and public feedback? What kind of experiences and/or best practices are there with agile government at the subnational level? Are there lessons learned that could be useful and adaptable across different legal/cultural frameworks?

Quality infrastructure governance and domestic resource mobilization have intrinsic value for COVID-19 relief, recovery, and adaptation efforts. These are two critical elements for resilient governance. What has been the experience in enhancing service delivery and sustaining government revenues?

Paper Guidelines Papers on the above themes should have a clear conceptual and theoretical basis and meet research methodological standards. The papers can be based on empirical research and/or case studies. For single-site case studies, every effort should be made to identify the relevance of the findings to other situations, thereby introducing a comparative international dimension.

IASIA Working Group V: Gender, Diversity and Equity.

Project Director: Prof. dr. Laila EL-BARADEI
American University in Cairo (Egypt)

Co-Chairpersons: Prof. dr. Enaleen DRAAI
Nelson Mandela University (South Africa)

Dr. Leticia GODINHO
Fundação João Pinheiro (Brazil)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introductory Paragraph:

In the realm of Alternative Service Delivery (ASD), the intersectionality of gender, diversity, and equity is gaining recognition as a critical factor in achieving sustainable societal responsiveness. As societies evolve, the need to develop and implement public services that are not only efficient but also inclusive and equitable becomes paramount.

This involves acknowledging and addressing the diverse needs of individuals across various societies, identities, and backgrounds, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and responsive society. The exclusion of specific groups, genders, or individuals from public services has been a historical and pervasive issue in many societies, stemming from deep-rooted gender biases, cultural norms, and systemic barriers. Therefore, recognizing the unique challenges faced by specific groups or individuals is fundamental to constructing gender-inclusive alternative service delivery models.

This means going beyond a one-size-fits-all approach and designing services that consider the specific needs and experiences of women, the disabled, the youth, elderly individuals, the marginalized in society, as well as those with different socio-economic backgrounds. At its core, inclusive and equitable ASD aims to break down traditional barriers, ensuring equal access to and benefit from public services. Embracing diversity ensures that public services are responsive to the varied needs of a multicultural society, promoting an environment where all individuals feel valued and represented while building a more just and sustainable society.

Gender, diversity, and equity are not only ethical and societal imperatives but also at the core of this working group. By prioritizing gender, diversity, and equity, ASD initiatives can contribute to the development of resilient, inclusive, and sustainable communities that thrive during complexity while addressing challenges that affect them.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can alternative service delivery models be planned and designed to address the specific needs and challenges faced by different genders by ensuring equity?
2. How have communities adopted alternative service delivery strategies and tools, strategies that highlight the quest for gender parity, and inclusivity of marginalized groups?
3. How can alternative service delivery processes be redesigned to address the specific needs and challenges faced by marginalized individuals in any society?

4. What role does public participation play in ensuring diversity, equity, and societal responsiveness?
5. What steps can be taken to ensure that the design and implementation of services are inclusive and responsive to the diverse requirements of women, the disabled, the youth, elderly individuals, the marginalized in society, as well as those with different socio-economic backgrounds?
6. What new sets of competencies are needed by women, marginalized groups, civil servants, and leaders in support of alternative service delivery and societal responsiveness to ensure diversity and equity?
7. What are some best practices in government and civil society for fostering diversity, equity, and inclusivity regarding alternative service delivery?
8. What are some good practices adopted by civil society around the world in ASD that cater to the specific needs of women, the disabled, the elderly, and the marginalized?
9. To what extent and in what ways can the use of IT enhance ASD for the benefit of diversity, equity, and inclusivity?

IASIA Working Group VI: Public Sector Governance, Leadership and Management.

Project Director: **Prof. dr. Juraj NEMEC**
Masaryk University Brno (Czech Republic)
Prof. dr. Liezel LUES
University of the Free State (South Africa)

Co-chairpersons: **Prof. dr. Yingchun SUN**
Chinese Academy of Governance (China)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introductory Paragraph:

The core thematic area of Working Group VI is governance and leadership, with continued interest in public management and its subfields. The complexity of the environment and its impact on the rendering of public services since 2020 has been unforeseen. Public sector leaders, governance, and management structures face several critical challenges associated with the current "poly-crisis" environment. Public sector departments, leaders, and managers operating in this rapidly changing and dynamic environment require significant re-planning, teamwork, bold leadership, and innovative management practices. The focus needs to be on developing public sector leaders and managers with an agile character and innovative skills, changing the leadership culture while supporting communities to become independent thinkers, with the capacity to understand and promote alternative service delivery arrangements. Alternative service delivery relies on the cooperation and collaboration of different actors inside and outside the government. Such a complex environment requires specific skills from public sector leaders and managers to promote alternative service delivery concepts like co-creation, co-production, social innovation, re-engineering, redevelopment, deregulation, outsourcing, semi-autonomous agencies, and shared services.

We invite papers and proposals that focus on the future of public sector governance, leadership, and management, especially from the perspective of alternative service delivery. Papers focusing on sustainable societal responsiveness towards alternative service delivery are also welcomed.

Questions to Consider:

Possible research questions include, for example, issues like:

1. What is expected from public sector leadership and management to ensure the success of alternative service delivery?
2. What needs to change around public sector governance and management to achieve effective and efficient cooperation of all service delivery actors?
3. How will governments plan for and adapt to alternative service delivery?
4. What best leadership, governance, and management practices can support research on alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness?
5. What types of leadership, governance, and management might support inclusive, effective, and sustainable forms of service delivery?
6. Are the future public servants ready to make bold leadership decisions, make innovative suggestions, and become the leaders we need?
7. Can accountable, responsive, sustainable, and resilient governance systems be built to ensure a successful leadership transformation?

IASIA Working Group VII: Public Policy, Public Decision-making, and Policy Implementation.

Project Director:

Prof. dr. Michiel S DE VRIES
Radboud University (The Netherlands)

Co-chairpersons:

Prof. dr. Christina ANDREWS
Federal University of São Paulo (Brazil)

Prof. dr. Henry WISSINK
University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introduction:

As the leadership of the working group, we welcome papers aligned with the overarching theme of the IASIA Annual Conference 2024. While we encourage submissions on the topic of the working group, we always seek contributions closely aligned with the general conference theme, which delves into the examination of policies and public decisions that foster alternative service delivery approaches and sustainable societal responsiveness within the public sector. The contemporary public governance landscape is marked by escalating inequalities and the looming specter of heightened political divisiveness and instability. In light of these challenges, it is imperative to scrutinize how the ideologies, personal agendas, and aspirations of politicians and decision-makers manifest in global and national public policies. The conventional reliance on democratic principles and good governance necessitates a complementary focus on the behavioral aspects and the moral underpinnings of our approach. As we navigate towards the achievement of sustainable development goals, it becomes paramount to consider the ethical dimensions of our actions, ensuring equity, human rights, dignity, and prosperity for all.

Key Focus Areas for Working Group VII:

- Exploring and Evaluating Innovative Models for Alternative Service Delivery
- Best Practices in Responsiveness in Public Decision-making and/or Implementation
- Promoting Social Equity and Inclusiveness in Public Service Delivery
- Utilizing Digital Solutions for Responsive Governance
- Changes in Public-Private Partnerships for Sustainable Service Delivery

We invite the submission of abstracts through the ConfTool System. Clearly indicate the chosen focus area, articulate the research question, and provide relevant keywords. Include the author's name, affiliation, contact information, and a brief biography to facilitate the seamless review process. Your insights and contributions are pivotal in advancing our understanding and shaping the discourse on the dynamic interplay between public policy, decision-making, and implementation for a resilient and responsive public sector.

IASIA Working Group VIII: Public Sector Human Resources Management.

Project Director: **Prof. dr. Liza Van JAARSVELDT**
University of South Africa (South Africa)

Co-chairperson: **Dr. Jelena LAGGER**
CAFRAD - Centre de Formation et de Recherche Administrative pour le
Développement based at the University of Bath (UK),

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introductory Paragraph:

Against the backdrop of unprecedented global challenges, the IASIA 2024 Conference explores the theme "Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness," underscoring the indispensable role of proficient human resources within public organizations. As the dynamics of public service shift under the influence of current phenomena and internal administrative pressures, a purpose-driven approach to human resource management (HRM) that recognizes the human workforce as the primary asset across global public organizations becomes imperative. Identifying limitations in extant management practices within the complex current context is a vital starting point for gaining meaningful insights into public HRM theory and practice. Such insights are deemed critical for endowing public organizations with the capabilities to effectively address stakeholder needs and achieve strategic objectives. In the context of an ongoing global transformation, Working Group VIII advocates for dialogues that center on the indispensable contributions of a resilient, committed, and adaptable public workforce. These discussions are an open forum to deliberate on how contemporary challenges can be navigated with a well-defined purpose, thereby fostering a culture of excellence in the public service. In the pursuit of understanding the intricacies of alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness within our changing global context, the Working Group actively encourages a variety of contributions. This includes original research papers, case studies, and evidence-based studies from around the world that align with the conference theme and present innovative perspectives.

Questions to Consider:

1. What transformative dynamics are influencing public sector human resource management in terms of recruitment and capacity building to face the current challenges of service delivery?
2. Should traditional human resource management approaches be revisited and adapted to meet the evolving needs of the public sector?
3. What role does human resource management in the public sector play as a facilitator or regulator within the realm of alternative service delivery?
4. How can sustainable societal responsiveness be integrated into human resource management practices in the public sector?
5. How can public sector employees maintain a high degree of professional relevance and value in a transforming context?

6. In what ways can centralization, devolution, decentralization, collaboration, and co-creation be enhanced by public sector human resource management departments in support of alternative service delivery?
7. What are the current challenges, best practices, and new models in public sector human resource management?
8. How can human resource management departments within the public service support sustainable societal responsiveness?
9. How can new technologies be harnessed as a driver for innovative human resource management and sustainable societal responsiveness?
10. What best practices exist in support of human resource management within a complex environment focused on alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness?

IASIA Working Group IX: International Dimensions of Public Administration.

Project Director:

Prof. dr. Adrian Velazquez Vazquez
University of La Verne (United States)

Prof. dr. Frank Naert
Ghent University (Belgium)

Co-chairpersons:

Prof. Ruben Dario Echeverry
Universidad del Valle (Colombia)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introductory Paragraph:

In today's world, governments face an environment of increased uncertainty and lack of stability as the rate of change and complexity of challenges increase. In many instances, traditional forms of government have failed to produce the services required by citizens and to solve increasingly complex problems being experienced. In this regard, alternative options for service delivery are becoming more prominent and being implemented.

Alternative service delivery provides the opportunity for governments to rethink and restructure the public services they deliver by focusing on being more innovative, flexible, responsive, and collaborative while being cost-effective and responsive to the needs of citizens. This trend towards alternative service delivery also has an important international component as solutions to contemporaneous problems involve an increasing number of international commitments.

Problems of climate change, economic development, public health, gender equality, defense and security, environmental preservation, poverty eradication, migratory movements, and other areas increasingly show features of global public goods that must be addressed by committing to international collaboration.

Parallel to these commitments, countries' own participation in new multilateral governance systems has gained relevance, where shared public policies, international mediation, and global conflict resolution are often discussed, designed, and put into action.

Consequently, a close convergence is paramount between the actions of national public administrations, organized civil society, and even global governance systems. However, the design and implementation of governmental action frequently fail to consider relevant international dimensions of multilateral organizations and civil society sensitivities. The objective of Working Group IX is to explore the forms and spaces that such convergence generates.

Of special interest are contributions that analyze innovative approaches to these challenges, taking into consideration the problems and goals articulated in the SDGs, as well as studies involving the design and implementation of collaborative governance practices with inclusive and cooperative components, with lessons of broad applicability at the international level.

Questions to Consider:

To achieve this objective, suggested research questions to explore in this Working Group include:

1. How have governance practices going beyond national levels contributed to dealing with alternative service delivery schemes?
2. What lessons can be learned from supranational governance systems in the context of alternative service delivery schemes?
3. How can international actors and governments implement processes and apply solutions to get closer to the achievement of the SDGs in this context?

Former participants who wish to continue the lines of inquiry established in previous IASIA conferences are also encouraged to submit their work. Practitioners and pracademics interested in participating in WG activities can submit annotated and exhaustive PowerPoint presentations for consideration. Selected manuscripts from this conference will be considered for future publication in IAS/IASIA periodicals.

IASIA Working Group X: Public Administration in Fragile and Conflict-Affected States.

Project Director: Dr. Tamer QARMOUT
Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (Qatar)

Co-Chairperson: Dr. Rabeh MORRAR
Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (Palestine)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introductory Paragraph:

Fragile and conflict-affected states are characterized by ongoing conflict or civil unrest, an absence of the rule of law, disputed international legitimacy, and weak or absent governance institutions. Limited access to public services remains a defining feature of states affected by fragility and conflict (FCA), where the state, due to insufficient political will or capacity to provide public safety and essential services, falls short in delivering essential services like health, education, and water to the impoverished. In some instances, segments of the population may not view the state as a legitimate provider of security and justice. Persistent violence, widespread corruption, biased budget allocations favoring specific ethnic or religious groups, along the marginalization of women and minorities, can exacerbate social insecurity and erode the principles of fair and inclusive service delivery systems. Enhancing service delivery, particularly for marginalized and economically disadvantaged citizens, holds the potential to fortify civic participation, restore trust in governmental institutions, contribute to long-term state legitimacy, improve societal resilience and recovery, and diminish the likelihood of recurring conflict by tackling its underlying structural roots. The challenges inherent in such environments necessitate innovative and adaptive approaches to public service delivery, from conventional models to alternative service delivery, to not only address immediate needs but also foster enduring societal empowerment and inclusivity. Moreover, linking governance reforms and changes in service delivery increases the likelihood of achieving enduring social and political transformations over the long term.

In this panel, we invite academics, researchers, and practitioners to submit papers related to the following questions:

Questions to consider:

1. How can alternative service delivery models be designed and implemented to overcome challenges in fragile and conflict-affected states?
2. What role can technology play in innovating service delivery mechanisms to ensure accessibility, efficiency, and inclusivity?
3. In what ways can public services be designed to be more responsive to the diverse needs of communities in fragile and conflict-affected states?
4. How can the concept of societal responsiveness contribute to the sustainability of public service delivery in these challenging environments?
5. What strategies and partnerships are effective in fostering collaboration between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and international actors for improved public service delivery?

6. How can cross-sectoral collaborations enhance the resilience of public service systems in fragile and conflict-affected states?
7. What governance structures and institutional frameworks are essential for building and sustaining effective public service delivery in post-conflict scenarios?
8. How can capacity-building initiatives contribute to strengthening public institutions in fragile states, ensuring their ability to provide essential services?
9. To what extent do citizen engagement and empowerment contribute to the effectiveness and sustainability of public service delivery in fragile contexts?
10. What innovative approaches can be adopted to promote active citizen participation in shaping public service policies and implementation?
11. How can we effectively measure the impact of alternative service delivery models and societal responsiveness in fragile and conflict-affected states?
12. What strategies can be employed to ensure the adaptability of public service delivery systems to evolving challenges and contexts?
13. What legislative, institutional, and organizational arrangements facilitate alternative public service delivery in fragile and conflict-affected states?
14. Should traditional forms of government be reviewed and adjusted to meet current needs in fragile and conflict-affected states?

IASIA Conference Theme Track: "Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness."

Project Director

Prof. dr. Liza Van JAARSVELDT
University of South Africa (South Africa)

Co-chairpersons:

Dr. Christa DE WET
North-West University (South Africa)

Dr. Mareve BILJOHN
University of the Free State (South Africa)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Introduction

Alternative Service Delivery (ASD) and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness are pivotal concepts in traditional governance aimed at optimizing the efficiency, effectiveness, and adaptability of public services while addressing the evolving needs of societies worldwide. As conventional service delivery models grapple with challenges in meeting the growing complexity and myriad demands of societies, governments consistently explore alternative approaches to ensure sustainability and responsiveness.

Alternative Service Delivery refers to innovative methods of delivering public services that deviate from conventional models. This may encompass public-private partnerships, outsourcing, digitalization, and collaboration with non-governmental entities. The goal is to optimize resource allocation, reduce costs, and enhance service quality. Moreover, ASD can increase flexibility, enabling governments to tailor service delivery while minimizing costs.

Sustainable Societal Responsiveness emphasizes the imperative for public services to adapt and respond effectively to the changing dynamics of society. Sustainability, in this context, goes beyond environmental concerns and encompasses the ability of a system to endure over time, meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Responsiveness underscores the importance of public services staying attuned to the evolving demands and expectations of societies.

The intersection of Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness is crucial for building resilient and future-ready governance systems. By leveraging alternative delivery models, governments can enhance their responsiveness to societal needs. For example, incorporating advanced technologies and data-driven approaches enables real-time monitoring and adjustments in service delivery, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively.

In practice, the successful integration of ASD and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness requires robust governance frameworks, stakeholder engagement, and a commitment to transparency. Governments must establish clear objectives, monitor performance, and regularly assess the impact of alternative service delivery models on societal well-being. Additionally, the involvement of citizens and civil society ensures that public services align with community values and expectations.

Within the pursuit of understanding the intricacies of alternative service delivery and sustainable societal responsiveness, this Track on the conference theme actively encourages a variety of contributions. This includes original research papers, case studies, best practices, and evidence-based studies from around the world that present innovative, interesting, and informed perspectives.

Questions to Consider:

1. What are the primary motivations for governments to explore alternative service delivery models?
2. How can public services be designed to be responsive to the changing needs and expectations of a diverse and dynamic society?
3. How can alternative service delivery models contribute to the long-term sustainability of public services?
4. What best practices and examples of alternative service delivery initiatives exist?
5. How does ASD contribute to cost-effectiveness and efficiency in public service provision?
6. What challenges might governments face when transitioning to alternative service delivery models, and how can these challenges be addressed?
7. In the context of public services, what does sustainability mean, and how does it extend beyond environmental concerns and the constant changing needs and expectations of societies?
8. What role does innovation play in achieving sustainable societal responsiveness, and how can governments foster a culture of innovation in public services?
9. In what ways do ASD and sustainable societal responsiveness complement and support each other in creating more resilient governance systems?
10. What governance frameworks or policies are necessary to ensure the successful integration of ASD and sustainable societal responsiveness?
11. How can citizen engagement and feedback be incorporated into the design and evaluation of alternative service delivery models to enhance societal responsiveness?
12. What is the future of ASD and sustainable societal responsiveness in a wicked, fast-changing, and complex world?

IASIA PhD Seminar

Project Director: Prof. dr. Michiel S DE VRIES
Radboud University (The Netherlands)

Co-chairpersons: Prof. dr. Hendri KROUKAMP
University of the Free State (South Africa)

Prof. dr. Kambidima WOTELA
University of the Witwatersrand (South Africa)

[Short bios and contacts](#)

Description and objective of the Seminar

The IASIA PhD Seminar provides young researchers with a unique opportunity to engage with an international and interdisciplinary research community. The PhD Seminar offers PhD students the occasion to present and discuss their research framework, methodology, and results with senior scholars and their peers and to share research problems and concerns. The Seminar provides them with a platform for discussion and with a first opportunity to confront their ideas with comments from an international community of scholars and practitioners. The chairs will provide an overview of the state of research in public affairs, public administration, and public policy generally, and related research methodologies.

Features and Format

Two plenary sessions are dedicated to the presentation and use of PA theory and methodology. The selected candidates can present their research framework, research question, and results. Presentations should be brief (10 mins) and supported by a PowerPoint. Each presentation is discussed with the chairs and the peers present at the session.

Submission of proposals

Depending on the stage of the thesis, candidates must submit the following:

- An abstract or a research proposal (first-year students)
- Table of Contents, a sample chapter as well as a bibliography – or other research paper (from the second year and on)

Important: All candidates must submit a Curriculum Vitae.

Selection conditions and other requirements

The candidates willing to present must be already enrolled in a PhD programme and have the agreement of their supervisor to attend the PhD seminar. Only accepted candidates can present their contributions and receive recommendations from the chairs. Nonetheless, the session is open to all PhD students attending the IASIA conference during which the PhD seminar is organized.

Full participation in the PhD seminar is required for the selected candidates. Only candidates who have attended all sessions are awarded a certificate of participation in the PhD seminar.

We are looking forward to hosting you in Bloemfontein!