CALL FOR PAPERS

T02P14 - IT-Mediated Platforms and the Public Sector: Applications of Sharing Economy, Blockchains and Crowdsourcing

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Panel Chair: Araz Taeihagh, NUS

Abstract submission deadline: 30 January 2019

Platforms significantly increase the ease of interactions and transactions in society. In the public sector, platforms are a way to improve public service delivery and solve increasingly "wicked" problems that characterize societies today (Head 2008; Hautamäki & Oksanen 2018; Janssen & Estevez 2013; Layne & Lee 2001; Bertot et al. 2010). Aided with information technology, public agencies can derive insights from a critical mass of citizens through platforms and improve citizen participation, transparency, policy design, and political legitimacy (Prpić et al. 2015; Taeihagh 2017; Voorberg et al. 2015; Bason 2010; Needham 2008; Christensen et al. 2015).

Platforms will transform public sector innovation, but how they are implemented and managed can introduce various risks. Platforms can diminish accountability, reduce job security for individuals, widen the digital divide and inequality, undermine privacy, and can be manipulated by crowds (Taeihagh 2017b; Loukis et al. 2017; Hautamäki & Oksanen 2018). Fragmentation among multiple platforms and the difficulty of attracting sufficient of citizen participation may also undermine platforms' effectiveness (Hautamäki & Oksanen 2018; Janssen & Estevez 2013). Furthermore, countries without strong governance mechanisms and property rights to attract the required capital investments may face challenges in building platforms (Taeihagh 2017b). Currently, studies have yet to evaluate the extent to which platforms improve public service outcomes (Voorberg et al. 2015).

More recently, governments have experimented with blockchain-enabled platforms in areas such as e-voting, digital identity and storing public records (Cheng et al. 2017; Swan 2015; Wolfond 2017; Hou 2017). Blockchain's distributed, open and immutable nature offers many benefits for governments, including greater transparency, reduced corruption, greater efficiency and increased citizen participation (Ølnes et al. 2017). However, governments need to mitigate blockchain's emerging risks such as security vulnerabilities, privacy concerns, and conflicts resulting from governance challenges (Li et al. 2017; Trump et al. 2018; Mattila & Seppälä 2018). Also, more research into the organisational changes in the public sector to accommodate blockchain-enabled applications and platforms is required (Ølnes et al. 2017).

This panel welcomes papers that explore IT-mediated platforms' implications for the public sector. Key research questions to be addressed are:

- Theoretical, conceptual or empirical studies that evaluate the effects of IT-mediated platforms on public service delivery and analyse how these platform activities affect the perceived political legitimacy of governments.
- Examining the different types of challenges and risks that arise from adoption/implementation of IT-mediated platforms for public service delivery and the governance strategies to address these risks.
- Analysis of the roles of different actors in influencing policy outcomes through participation in platforms and at different stages of policy making.
- Theoretical and conceptual analysis of how IT-mediated platforms contribute to policy learning to improve public service delivery.
- Examining the different types of platform governance structures in blockchain, their risks and unintended consequences (e.g. coordination challenges), and the organisational, administrative and institutional changes in the public sector to accommodate blockchain-enabled platforms.
- Single and comparative case studies across different countries, sectors and types of IT-mediated platforms (e.g. blockchain, sharing economy, crowdsourcing

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I hope you will join us for a stimulating set of presentations at ICPP4.

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