

Title: e-Government Transformation and Public Sector Evaluation

Track: E-Government (SIGe-Gov)

Chair(s):**Tony Elliman**

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Theme:

This mini-track focuses on the need to better understand the nature of how to assess public sector (e-Government) projects. Central government evaluation practice follows the traditional literature by being mainly volumetric or cost-based, with coverage offering only vague notions of benefits to the citizen. However, the public sector lacks the market dynamics open to the private sector and notions of “value” are inevitably different. Now, with the emphasis on service transformation, an understanding of the citizen as the key stakeholder becomes even more critical. These distinctions from the private sector are particularly evident within e-Democracy projects where many might regard increased participation and reduced costs as indicators of success.

Public sector IS evaluation needs approaches that recognize these differences. Captured by enthusiasm and the potential for change, politicians and governments around the world followed this have energetically pursued national e-Government agendas and significant changes have been achieved. The worldwide expenditure in this “project” has been vast. However, most of it has been spent on development and delivery of systems rather than research or evaluation.

Concern over the performance of public sector information systems deployment, at both a tactical and operational level, is high. Thus, the agenda has now shifted to one that seeks transformation of the way government works. Although improvements in efficiency are high on the benefits agenda, e-government projects seek the greater level of efficiency and effectiveness that can be achieved by reengineering and streamlining procedures. Exactly what constitutes greater effectiveness remains a difficult notion to quantify.

As yet the literature has few, in-depth evaluations of public sector IS projects. With many government bodies now taking stock of what has been achieved there are lessons to be learned by both by Government IT Professionals and the IS community at large.

Possible Topics include:

- Assessing and measuring transformation.
- Notions of “value” within the public sector
- Evaluation methods and strategies adapted to the public sector
- Assessments of e-Government or transformation projects or services
- Assessments of e-Participation exercises
- Comparative evaluation of e-Government services
- Citizen and stakeholders views of public sector projects
- Studies of project selection and approval processes
- Experience transferring evaluation methods from the private sector

List of potential authors/researchers:

As indicated above the numbers of researchers looking reflectively at e-Government projects is increasing. However, most of the evaluation work is being done outside the IS community by government departments themselves, consultants or academics in economic or political disciplines. We would seek to get cross-disciplinary contributions both from these disciplines and from practitioners.

Previous and related mini-tracks.

This mini-track is an off-shoot of the very successful "IS Evaluation" mini-track and was first offered in Acapulco. It maintains a close link by having one chair in common with that track. The motivation for creating a separate mini-track was to focus at least one session a year on the distinctive needs of the public sector. For the past four years it has attracted sufficient submissions to support a full session of 3 papers each year.

This mini-track proposal is also complemented by other e-Government related themes supported by colleagues at Brunel. Where good papers are received that cross boundaries between the tracks the chairs may arrange for them to be reviewed or presented in one of the other tracks to achieve a good range of interesting sessions within the final programme.