

UAE Government Summit 2015 SMART POLICIES FOR PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION

Round Table Report

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at the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government



Introduction

The following report details the proceedings of the round table event, titled 'Smart Policies for Public Sector Innovation' on the 8th of February, which was organized by the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government as part of the 2015 UAE Government Summit.

This round table session served as a platform for academics from public policy institutions, practitioners from government based entities and members of the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government's research and teaching faculty to discuss how 'smart' policies could be implemented and utilized by public sector organizations. This discussion was driven by three questions: 1. What constitutes 'smart' policy? 2. What are the skills needed to successfully implement these policies? 3. What can academic institutions – specifically schools of government – do to support decision makers who implement these policies?

Participants included academics from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (National University of Singapore), Carnegie Mellon University Australia, NYU Shanghai, the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs (Syracuse University in New York) and Columbia University; as well as practitioners from both private and public sector entities such as Microsoft and The Executive Council of the Government of Dubai.

Round Table Discussion

The roundtable was initiated with a brief introductory note from Dr Ali Al Marri, who emphasized the importance of innovation and how it should positively influence governmental policy making. Ultimately, he said, that if governmental agencies fail to innovate, then they are at risk of stagnating.

Dr Bassem Younes followed Dr Ali by further emphasizing the importance of innovation. He claimed that this was fundamental to establishing a clear definition of what was meant by the term 'smart'.

The structure for the discussion was defined as follows: each panel member would be invited to discuss their views on each of the three questions raised regarding 'smart' policy. This would be followed by a more interactive 'open discussion'.

1. What constitutes 'smart' policy?

Louise Beehag spoke about her experience as Director of Executive Education at Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. She stated that public policy schools need to innovate to stay relevant. Questions surrounding 'smart policy' are very close to the heart of schools of government in general; addressing how best to implement such policy is one of the fundamental reasons that such institutions exist.

Forums such as this roundtable event – which enables individuals from academic and practice orientated backgrounds to interact with one another – are becoming increasingly relevant to discussions surrounding how to implement 'smart' policy.

Professor M. Ramesh, Head of the Department of Asian and Policy Studies and the Hong Kong Institute of Education stated the importance of bringing focus to the discipline of smart policy, which can often be quite broad.

The main focus regarding 'smart' policy should be on effectiveness i.e. policies implemented should focus on 'getting the job done.' When practitioners and academics attempt to construct 'smart' policies, they often try to embellish what such policies should amount to. For example, they often speak about how smart policy should be 'highly efficient' and 'environmentally friendly'. Whilst these are undoubtedly goals that we should ultimately aim to achieve, implementing new governmental policies in the first place is often difficult to achieve. As such, precedence should be given to implementing policies that are first and foremost both achievable and sustainable. Only then should we look to add to such policy.

Innovation is not simply about the end goal, it is also about the process. However, when it comes to focusing on 'process', we are entering unfamiliar territory, which may not necessarily be a bad thing. There is more than one way to go about being 'smart'. This is evidenced by international government ratings based on responsiveness and effectiveness. The governments of Scandinavian countries all rank within the top five in the world in terms of responsiveness. In sharp contrast, Singapore ranks outside of the top one hundred. However, Singapore's government is ranked as one of the most effective in the world. The point of this is that by focusing on its government's strengths, different nations can go about effectively implementing smart policies in completely different ways and can still ultimately be successful. It is vital that governments focus on their strengths, rather than abstract principles of what they think they should aspire to.

In most instances, there is no central governmental body that can go about implementing such change. So perhaps the most effective way of initiating such smart policy would be to decentralize and democratize 'smart' services.

Dr Julian Sloan spoke of her research projects at Columbia University in collaboration with Peking University. She opted to diverge slightly to focus on looking at 'smart' policy from a strategy perspective.

Policy should support strategy. The best way of looking at exactly how policy can serve strategy would be to look at context. In order for a policy to be 'smart', it should be inclusive, innovative and based on inquiry. It should be inclusive as it should serve to bring in all aspects involved in policy making, including individuals who are not particularly experienced in this field, but are capable of contributing valuable and new ideas. It should be innovative as it needs to provide ways of looking at constructing and implementing policy that have not previously been thought of, but could potentially be preferable to the way we currently go about things. Lastly, it should be based on inquiry because we need to ask questions about policy making. Doing so allows us to fully grasp the underlying premise behind policy making. By gaining this understanding, we are better positioned to examine how best to improve policy.

Another thing that we need to consider when trying to implement 'smart' policy is as follows: do policy makers – and by extension decision makers – have the cognitive ability to make smart policy decisions? That is to say, are policy makers intellectually equipped enough to fully grasp the complexity of such decisions. Good policy making should take into account both short and long term consequences, it is fundamental that the individuals tasked with implementing these policies fully understand this.

In order to successfully move forward, we need to ask the following question: are we complacent in allowing 'smart' policy to flow in the domain of strategic planning, or are we going to change things? Answering this question adequately will allow us to gain clarity with regard to future policy making.

Dr Scott Fritzen associate Professor of Social Science, NYU Shanghai, addressed the issue of insuring that 'smart' policy is fully integrated.

We need to present an idea of smart policy as one which is fully integrated. That is to say, 'smart' policy is not policy that should be designed in isolation. To do so, the following factors need to be taken into account. Firstly, we need to look at our list of our policies and prioritize them. Doing so will allow us to balance our approach and come up with the most appropriate and effective solutions. Secondly, certain political capabilities will be needed in order to affect notable change. Lastly, operational capabilities will also be required to link different parts of government to ultimately form a more cohesive 'governance system'. Doing so is important, as it is not enough to just look at the building blocks of 'smart' policy, it is fundamental to give appropriate attention to the glue that holds it all together.

In order to effectively train future policy leaders, any public policy school or school of government should take the aforementioned three factors into account when devising their respective curriculums. They are all personal capacities that should be inculcated in future leaders. It is also important for governments to look at their respective weak points so that practitioners can develop minimal competencies in those areas so that the government's overall goals do not suffer as a result of these weak links.

Dr Abdul Aziz Istaitieh, Strategy and Policy Advisor for The Executive Council of the Government of Dubai (TEC) examined the role of ‘smart’ policy from a practitioner’s point of view.

It is important to consider that practitioners often look at ‘smart’ policy from a completely different perspective than academics. Building on previous discussions, the ‘integration of smartness’ is vital. The goal of this integration is achieve the maximum outcome with the minimal input possible. There are a lot of logical reasons to try to make things ‘as smart as possible’; however, there are often a lot of issues surrounding the practicality of implementing this policy. From a practitioner’s perspective, if policy is not implemented properly, it can often cost you your job.

Daniel Nelson, International Program Manager, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University in New York addressed the issue of clearly defining what we mean by ‘smart’.

There is no clear definition of what ‘smart’ really is in the context of public policy. It is easy to sound smart by constantly using the term ‘smart’, but what does this ultimately achieve? Sometimes, the main appeal of discussing ‘smart’ policy is limited by the constraints of the past. As such, it may be time to try and rescue the term ‘smart’ by not making it synonymous with ‘technology’. Making things smart should ultimately be a discussion about making things easier for citizens. These may at times involve the use of technology, but it does not necessarily have to.

Every institution has its own ways of looking at the term ‘smart’ within the realms of their respective local contexts. This is necessary; however, it is also just as important to have a more universal definition of the term. This homogeneous view of ‘smart’ policy can be used as a foundation that can then be applied to relevant cultural contexts and altered accordingly.

Open Discussion

The following key themes were discussed when the floor was opened for discussion:

Distinction between ‘pressures’ and ‘tensions’ in government: There is a clear distinction between the pressures and the tensions that are faced in government. This is best conveyed by looking at the following example: In recent years, the rate of suicide in prisons in the United Kingdom has increased. The obvious solution to try to reduce suicide rates would be to employ more guards so that prisoners can be monitored more closely. However, the reality is that the government does not have enough financial resources to employ more guards. The solution, although seemingly insensitive, is highly pragmatic. It involves analyzing the times of day where the highest rates of suicide occur and employ more guards to monitor prisoners at these specific times. This is a good example of resolving humanitarian pressures whilst also negotiating financial tensions. This kind of approach needs to be employed universally, as we need to construct mechanisms that allow adequate interplay between these issues without causing too much conflict.

Thinking about ‘smart’ policy from perspectives that are normally excluded from this discussion: It is important to look at ‘smart’ policy from every possible perspective in order to construct a truly holistic view. This includes looking at it from a design, historical, cultural and aesthetic point of view.

Addressing public expectation: People have different expectations regarding participation these days. It relates to the following three factors: 1. Decentralization on a global level. 2. Participation in terms of context. 3. Conceptual strengths. We need to address these three factors in order to make smart policy more relevant.

‘How Smart is Smart?’ We need to work with people to understand what we think of as smart from a cultural context, this can be done, for example, by looking at things from a design perspective. When we design things, we need to ask whether this design has achieved the ‘smart effect’ and whether it is durable. It needs to be responsive to the problem at hand. It also needs to incentivize those who are affected by it. It should positively encourage both those who are incentivized by it and those who initially are not. Lastly, it should not be proud or arrogant.

It is important to also allow for room for failure: When it comes to smart policy, we are on a learning curve. We need to recognize this and not shy away from it.

How value-neutral do we want ‘smart policy’ to be? This value ranges across cultures around the world. Does it have to be grounded in a set of values that we believe in? Or is it just a means to an end?

2. What are the skills needed to successfully implement smart policies?

Dr. Thomas Lehr, Director of the European School of Governance, posited that the key to smart policy making lay in cognition, specifically in the development of the cognitive capabilities necessary to manage a rapidly changing policy environment. By combining simple cognitive efforts with information technology, it is possible to develop an effective framework for collective planning and policy making. Examples of this include efforts (by the School) in Libya to develop a tourism strategy that integrated stakeholders' input and provided a platform for complex discussion, as well as an initiative in Europe to create local safety strategies by collecting data at the local levels and using the wisdom of the crowds to interpret and structure it.

Overall, the framework for creating smart policies consists of three steps:

1. Integrating stakeholders in the process
2. Working at the local level
3. Giving stakeholders the tools to deal with the complexities at hand

Schools of government can play an advisory role to government agencies in this process, as well as help trickle down the process to the local level.

Dr. Emil Bolongaita, Executive Director of Carnegie Mellon University in Australia, emphasised that the skills needed to develop smart policies are varied. These include:

- Analytical skills and the capacity to draw from different disciplines
- Listening skills (both to what is and isn't being spoken). Technology can be useful in this case, especially big data, for pinpointing the needs of constituents
- Intelligence, in terms of identifying and anticipating both opportunities and points of resistance
- Communication skills, to articulate the policies in an appropriate and sensitive manner
- Capacity for alliance building
- Sound judgment, which can only come with experience and failure
- Implementation skills, including managerial acumen and entrepreneurial skills
- Humility
- Adaptability and the ability to adjust the course as needs arise

Brenton Caffin, Director of Innovation Skills at Nesta spoke about the overlap between public sector innovation and smart policy. They both require a balance between head, heart and hands in that the analytical and academic aspects of innovation and policy making (i.e. the head) should be tempered with emotional sensitivity (the heart) and aligned with the experimentation and implementation phase of policymaking (the hands).

Skills required to develop and implement smart policies include:

- **Looking for sources of inspiration:** which can range from exploring people through ethnographic research to getting evidence-based data, with the focus being on finding a better ways of doing things.
- **Creating:** which can take several forms such as experimentation, testing, piloting and co-creating and co-designing with citizens
- **Leading:** which has several facets, including advocacy, alliance-building, constructing a narrative, creating support and motivating people
- **Enabling:** which goes one step beyond alliance-building, by creating systems that allow people to exercise their own judgment when it comes to implementing their policies
- **Scaling:** which aims to scale up policies and embed them more broadly in the relevant environment

Dr. Dahle Suggett, Director at PTR Consulting, outlined the three key areas in the public sector arena that are creating pressure when it comes to the development of smart policies, namely:

1. The problems and issues arising are increasingly complex and the current structures, frameworks and terminologies in place are too rigid to tackle them.
2. There are increasing demands by citizens to engage with government.
3. There is a constant challenge for government to demonstrate efficiency and productivity in its operations.

She further highlighted two sets of skills required to be able to address these issues:

Foundation skills:

- Evidence-based decision-making: Big data alone doesn't necessarily provide easy answers. Knowing how to utilize data and make sound judgments and sophisticated decisions based on the data is key.
- Strategic thinking and planning: Training and organizing public departments to be able to think and plan strategically is a vital part of smart policymaking.
- Communications and relationship building: Connecting with all stakeholders involved is an integral step in the policymaking cycle

Advanced skills:

- Leadership skills
- Skills around co-design and collaboration
- Policy and strategy implementation skills

Dr. Ashraf Hassan AbdelWahab, Professor of Computer Engineering at the Electronics Research Institute, pointed out the importance of addressing policy, political and implementation issues when creating smart policies. As such, the required skills for government officials to accomplish this are:

- Being analytical and goal-oriented
- Being open and inclusive to other inputs and opinions; government doesn't always have the solution and involving other stakeholders, especially citizens, is important.
- Taking risks and being unafraid of failure
- Being more responsive, more collaborative and allowing citizens to co-design services.
- Implementing change management, specifically towards a "one government", one stop-shop approach to providing services.

Open Discussion:

The following key themes were identified during the open discussion:

Additional elements to smart policymaking: Although a comprehensive set of skills required for smart policymaking has been put forth, there are still other important elements that come into play when creating smart policies. Taking the social perspective into account is one of them. Social skills are just as important – if not more important – than leadership or strategy skills, especially when it comes to handling pressing social issues. Another important element in the policymaking cycle is using critical reflective processes. With complex problems, especially those that have no precedent on which to fall back for guidance, these kinds of processes can prove very useful. Lastly, breaking boundaries and encouraging innovative, individualistic thinking rather than 'group thinking' prevalent in many government offices is key.

The importance of locally-driven policy: Attracting people with the right attributes and competencies to be leaders in the public sector is no easy task, and for the most part – in Singapore for example – the pool has been limited to top academic candidates. While this may have initially been effective, citizens ended up feeling distanced and disconnected from their government. To avoid this possible sense of alienation and government 'elitism', it's important to integrate local stakeholders into the policymaking process. They often have the required knowledge and expertise

to deal with the issue at hand, which government can extract and structure, and they should be involved at the implementation stage as well.

Identifying bundles of resources rather than skills: While the requisite skills are vital to smart policymaking, another approach could be identifying ‘bundles’ of resources: the political, administrative and analytical. The political bundle requires building trust among constituents, while the administrative bundle needs coordination between different agencies across the policymaking and implementation cycle. The analytical bundle, lastly, should be coupled with an ethical, humanitarian and practical stance if it is to be effective.

Taking risks: Although risk-taking has been repeatedly identified as an important skill for smart policymaking, it drew further discussion because of its complex nature. Risk aversion is often the result of an absence of the courage needed to take action on a glaring problem, and is exacerbated by the capacity for denial and negligence within government agencies. Providing government officials with the skills to be innovators and risk-takers can rectify this, and researchers can play a vital role in supporting, preparing and educating leaders in public policy.

3. What can academic institutions – specifically schools of government – do to support decision makers who implement these policies?

Dr. Kenneth Paul TAN, Vice Dean of Academic Affairs and Associate Professor at the National University of Singapore’s Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy tackled the third question by bringing the conversation down to a more descriptive “on the ground” level, where he discussed the importance of pedagogy in the learning process and how to create teachable moments through pedagogy.

At Lee Kuan Yew, three features of pedagogical applications exist with special emphasis placed on creating conditions where skills and competencies of students are conveyed, namely: diversity, interdisciplinarity and interface between theory and practice.

A highly diverse student body can both be a blessing, as well as a curse, as dealing with students at different levels can be challenging. The use of peer learning at Lee Kuan Yew capitalizes on this diversity, maximizing learning in two ways; first, it allows for the range of backgrounds to come to the fore and second, it creates collisions between students who are able and less able and puts them in one team. Students not only learn that they cannot always be part of the “A” team, but they also gain skills and strengths in teamwork, negotiation, and dealing with difference.

Interdisciplinarity is achieved through the heuristic process of team teaching, where two to three professors from different disciplines teach courses simultaneously. This hybrid and mixed teaching approach brings in different points of view from various disciplines in the classroom, underscoring academic civility and teaching students how to approach difference. Furthermore, academically inclined professors are joined by practitioners for example, in one particular course, a political science professor taught a course jointly with a former ambassador. This is reinforced through case teaching and problem based learning, where students are encouraged to work together to solve real life problems.

The practical approach to learning allows students to question the more academic solutions addressed in the classroom in real life. Students are required to partake in study trips and internships in which they are encouraged to examine the interface between theory and practice.

Louise Beehag, whose work focuses on Executive Education at Lee Kuan Yew, where approximately 1000-2000 civil servants are trained annually, raised the important question of how we can drive practical outcomes among civil servants. She added that for the most part, executive education is often unrecognized, despite the fact that it has countless benefits.

Having given some examples of specific projects at Lee Kuan Yew, she emphasized on some of the important features of executive education. She characterized it as being market driven and non-rigid, which can act as a neutral and independent platform for the cross fertilization of ideas. These types of programs help to drive the market and allow for new ways of solving problems to emerge. It also provides a wide network of activities for both professors and practitioners and exposes them to what happens on the ground.

Mariam Allam, from the OECD echoed the importance of practical examples for students. She referred to the OECD experience, whereby in the majority of evaluations on any training programs, students requested more practical examples from real life experiences.

This encouraged the OECD to launch a global network of schools of public policy which aims to link policy dialogue with capacity building. Members of this network meet twice annually and are offered an online platform which shares

OECD's best practices, identifies partners, and provides OECD material that can be incorporated into the curricula of schools of public policy.

Professor Sabine Junginger, fellow at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin, spoke about how design applications can be taught in schools of government, and how design thinking can increase innovation through a process of thinking, testing, exploring, validating and presenting solutions.

Through an example of one assignment she gave to her students, she raised four main challenges facing design courses: 1) courses are electives and not part of the core curriculum; 2) courses are offered at the worst time of the year when the second year students are actively finishing their theses; 3) classrooms are not equipped for design work; and 4) teamwork and collaboration are rendered difficult due to competitive nature of the programs.

She then offered some solutions to overcome existing challenges such as the integration of design education much earlier in the curriculum; creating appropriate spaces for design work; and creating a safe environment for students to carry out their work. She also stressed the importance of offering opportunities for team work and to finding alternative student ranking evaluations, which she believes has a negative impact on student engagement, collaboration, and learning.

Open Discussion

Dr. Ali Al Marri, concluded the third session by bringing in the experience of the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government in linking practice to vision. Working as a platform for knowledge, the school engages public officials as both speakers in school events and workshops, but also as trainers in executive education and guest lecturers in the MPA program.

The school also fosters partnerships with both public and private sector institutions, particularly through joint research projects, and the embedding of best practice case studies in the core curriculum. Furthermore, the school supports local government initiatives through a number of projects and activities, the most recent involved a focus on smart government, innovation forums, and design thinking labs.

LUNCH BREAKOUT SESSIONS

The following topics were discussed during the lunch breakout sessions:

1. Knowledge development and sharing:

A distinction should be made between transparency and knowledge development. This should be driven by:

- An openness that is partly run by private firms from big data and data mining;
- Pressure for getting better insights;
- Infrastructure, which has to be in place as the model has to be shared.
- A need to foster an environment of transparency and reduce competitiveness.

2. Developing Practitioner-Oriented Programs:

The following are the main themes emerged during the breakout session:

- There are different 'levels' of programs – with different requirements - that need to be taken into consideration: Master's level and short courses/executive education.
- Courses should reflect the real world by being diverse and multidisciplinary; classroom dynamics are important, especially in terms of presenting different perspectives from different countries.
- A 'global' approach to developing programs is best, utilizing global methods but localizing them to relevant needs and requirements.
- A feedback cycle is necessary to re-evaluate and fine-tune programs, especially to remove any obstructions at the structural level.
- Collaboration with other schools and academic institutions can help with the cross-fertilization of ideas.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Dr Ashraf Hassan Abdelwahab

Dr. Ashraf Abdelwahab is a professor of computer engineering, at the Electronics Research Institute (ERI), Cairo, Egypt. He received his MSc. in 1988, Faculty of Engineering, Cairo University in Artificial Intelligence, and in 1992 he received his Ph.D. in Machine Learning and Evolutionary Algorithms. He has published over 60 technical papers in National, and International journals and conferences in the areas of Evolutionary Algorithms, Machine Learning, and Data Mining. Beside his research activities, Dr. Abdelwahab used to teach Computer Science courses in Egyptian and American universities. Currently, Dr. Abdelwahab is on a sabbatical leave from ERI. Dr. Abdelwahab joined Microsoft in December 2012 as the Corporate Affairs Manager, Egypt & North Africa, and starting September 2014, he moved to Dubai as the Corporate Affairs Manager for Egypt and Gulf.

Louise Beehag

Louise Beehag is Executive Director and Head of Executive Education at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore. In this role she oversees the development and delivery of around 50 executive training programmes each year for around 2000 government officials, corporate and not for-profit professionals. Prior to joining the LKY School, Louise was responsible for driving strategic projects in state and local governments in Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Economics and Social Sciences and First Class Honours in Human Geography from the University of Sydney, Australia.

Dr Emil Bolongaita

Dr Emil Bolongaita is the Executive Director of Carnegie Mellon University Australia and Distinguished Service Professor of Public Policy and Management. He teaches courses in policy analysis, international development, and governance and anti-corruption. Prior to joining CMU-A, Dr Bolongaita was the Unit Head of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) headquartered in Manila, Philippines. In this capacity, he led high-level initiatives for multilateral investments in the trade, energy and transport sectors of the ten member countries of the CAREC program. He received his PhD in Government and International Relations from the University of Notre Dame, USA.

Brenton Caffin

Brenton Caffin is Director of Innovation Skills at Nesta (UK). From 2009-2012, Brenton was the founding CEO of The Australian Centre for Social Innovation, and previously held executive positions with the South Australian Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Government Reform Commission and WorkCover. Brenton has degrees in economics and international relations and a Master of Public Administration from Flinders University, where his research focused on public sector innovation.

Dr Scott Fritzen

Scott Fritzen is associate provost and associate professor of social science at NYU Shanghai. Prior to joining NYU Shanghai, Fritzen served as associate dean and interim dean at NYU's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and as vice dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (National University of Singapore). He holds a PhD in public affairs and MPAs in public affairs and urban and regional planning from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University. His teaching and research center on two themes: professional policy education and public sector reforms in developing countries, with a particular interest in the challenges of corruption control and decentralization.

Dr Abdulaziz Istaitieh

Dr. Abdulaziz Istaitieh is an economic advisor in the Socioeconomic Development Department at The Secretariat of The Executive Council of the Government of Dubai (TEC). He is responsible for advising the Strategy Management & Governance Sector in the areas of strategy, policy and performance and to ensure proper alignment and harmony with Dubai's Strategic Plan.

Professor Sabine Junginger

Prof. Sabine Junginger, PhD links policy-making and policy-implementation with human-centered design and organizational design practices. She is a Fellow at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin and Member of the Advisory Board of Mindlab, a Danish Cross-Ministerial research unit. In addition, she serves on the editorial board of a new journal, Design, Economics and Innovation Quarterly (DEIQ, Elsevier) and previously served on the Advisory Board of DesignGov in Australia. She holds a PhD in Design from the School of Design at Carnegie Mellon University

(USA) as well as an MA in Design in Communication Planning and Information Design (also CMU). She is co-editor of The Handbook of Design Management (Berg 2011); The Highways and Byways to Innovation (Southern University of Denmark, 2014) and also of the forthcoming Designing Business (Bloomsbury, 2015).

Dr Thomas Lehr

Dr Thomas Lehr is Director of the European School of Governance. Dr Lehr studied economics with a specialization in industrial management and marketing at Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt (Germany) and Université Paris IX Dauphine (France). In his doctoral thesis he explored the internet's impact on printed newspapers from a marketing perspective. In 1998 he joined Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC), one of the leading Consulting, Systems Integration and Outsourcing companies worldwide, where he worked as program manager and business development executive. Dr Lehr is chairman of the board of the Parmenides Foundation, which is supporting interdisciplinary research on thinking. The foundation has an international faculty of more than 30 researchers from the fields of neurosciences, philosophy, neuroinformatics, cognitive psychology, linguistics, evolutionary anthropology.

Daniel Nelson

Daniel Nelson is the International Program Manager for the Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs of Syracuse University in New York. He is responsible for designing and developing the Maxwell School's Executive Education training programs and working with Maxwell's Executive Masters of Public Administration and Advance Certificate students. Mr. Nelson oversees the development of partnerships across schools on campus and Maxwell's extensive domestic and international partners.

Professor M. Ramesh

Professor Ramesh has served as the Founding Head of the Department of Asian and Policy Studies and Chair Professor of Governance and Public Policy at the Hong Kong Institute of Education; Professor of Social Policy at the University of Hong Kong and Chair of the Department of Government and International Relations at the University of Sydney. He has also held teaching positions at the University of New England and Victoria University of Wellington. Professor Ramesh has is the Co-Editor of Policy and Society as well as World Political Science Review and serves on the editorial board of several reputed journals.

Dr Julia Sloan

Dr. Julia Sloan is widely recognized for her pioneering work in the application of complex cognitive theory to everyday global strategic thinking practice. She is author of the definitive book, Learning to Think Strategically, Financial Times "Best Business Book of the Year," 2007. Her work draws upon more than two decades of research in Asia, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and North America. With relevance to leaders in the fields of business and policy, her work impels executives and public policy experts to expand their focus beyond a strategic planning model to a more expansive and complex notion of strategy that includes innovation and perpetual change. As a professor at Columbia University, Dr. Sloan has also been a faculty member at the Brookings institute and holds a Distinguished Faculty appointment at Central University of Finance and Economics in Beijing. She has guest lectured at institutions including Harvard University, Beijing University, India Institute of Management and Tokyo University. A resident of New York City, Dr. Sloan's educational background includes a doctorate from Columbia University, master's studies at Yale University and University of Alaska, and undergraduate studies at Kent State University.

Dr Dahle Suggett

Dr Suggett is a Public Policy consultant with experience at state and federal levels in government in Australia and in the private sector. She works across applied fields in the interest of high quality and innovative services for all citizens. Dr Suggett has a PhD in Public Policy from the University of Melbourne, a MEd from La Trobe University and a Bed and BA from Monash University.

Dr Kenneth Paul Tan

Dr Kenneth Paul TAN is Vice Dean (Academic Affairs) and Associate Professor at the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. In 2012, he was elected Chair of the NUS Teaching Academy, where he has been a Fellow since it was established in 2009. He has written widely on (1) principles of public policy and administration (focusing on meritocracy, pragmatism, and public engagement); (2) liberalization, democracy, and civil society; (3) Asian creative cities and the culture industry (focusing on film, television, popular culture, and theatre); (4) race, gender, and sexuality; (5) nation branding, soft power, and nation building; and (6) politics, society, and culture in Singapore. He has held visiting fellowships at the Australian National University, Georgetown University (on a Fulbright Fellowship), and Harvard University. He has a Ph.D. in social and political sciences at the University of Cambridge, which he completed in 2000. In 1994, he obtained a First Class Honours degree in the Joint School of Economics and

Politics at the University of Bristol on a Public Service Commission Overseas Merit (Open) Scholarship. He is a member of the Arts Advisory Panel of the National Arts Council (Singapore) and served on the committee of Our Singapore Conversation, a year-long national-level public engagement exercise that began in 2012. He is the founding chair of the Asian Film Archive's board of directors, sits on the board of directors of theatre company The Necessary Stage, and has composed music for some of its performances.

Dr Ali Al Marri

Dr. Ali Al Marri is the Executive President of the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government. Dr. Ali has a legal academic background. He obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Law and Police Sciences from Dubai Police Academy in the year 2000, and completed a Master's Degree in Law from the same institution in 2003. He then transitioned into the realm of Public Administration. Dr. Ali earned a Doctorate Degree in Leadership & Strategy from Bradford University in 2010, where he conducted an empirical study on a number of Government entities in Dubai.

Dr Bassem Younes

Dr. Bassem Younes is Director of Business Development and Strategic Alliances at the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government. He has an educational background in Civil Engineering where he attained a PhD and DIC from Imperial College London in 1990. Before joining the Mohammed Bin Rashid School Government in 2011, Dr Younes acted as a consultant to several higher education institutions in the UAE where he helped to develop processes and plans for licensure, accreditation and institutional effectiveness.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Faisal Alkhatib is an Associate Researcher at the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government. Faisal has an MA in Philosophy from the University of St Andrews where he developed specific interests in applied ethics, gender and equality, and technology and how these issues affect public policy. His current research at MBRSG focuses on technology and the various ways it influences society and governmental policy. He is currently running research projects concerning the ethical implications of using technology to improve governmental services; focusing, in particular, on the effects that such an approach will have on the privacy and security of members of society. He is also interested in how technology can be used to improve the standards of living and education in society. Prior to his role at MBRSG, Faisal worked for Microsoft, where he was responsible for running the company's piracy prevention program across the GCC.

Racha Mourtada is an Associate at Brunswick Group and a former Research Associate at the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government. She has an M.A. in Communication Policy Studies from City University and a B.S. in Biomedical Engineering from Boston University. Ms. Mourtada previously worked as a Researcher in the ICT division of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in Beirut, where she managed 'ICT for development' projects, organized international conferences and contributed to writing several UN reports and publications.

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