

Panel 3
XV IRSPM Conference
Value, Innovation and Partnership
11th – 13th April 2011

Panel Title

Contemporary challenges for public sector human resource management

Chairs:

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Link to Journal Special Issue

Special Issue of *International Journal of Public Administration (IJPA)* - scheduled for early 2012

Panel Description

Public servants hold a critical role in delivering on government intentions through policy development and service delivery. Challenges for governments inevitably affect public employment. In this Call we highlight two groups of challenges, but we also invite scholars to examine other global, regional, national and sub-national challenges, especially as they relate to the IRSPM theme of 'value, innovation and partnership'.

A first group of challenges derives from the global financial crisis: the panel creates the opportunity to understand how public agencies are reacting as employers, and why. Issues might include:

- What is the balance between short-term cost-cutting and strategic capacity building?
- What lessons, if any, have been applied from previous experiences of retrenchment and employment reform?
- Are there innovative approaches (e.g. voluntary reduction of hours, career breaks?)
- How 'political' have employer responses been? What role have trade unions played?

A second group of challenges that tends to pull employers in a different direction is presented by changing labour markets. Some countries are experiencing labour shortages, partly due to ageing populations. Public services may struggle to attract and retain the right skills, particularly if they cannot compete with private sector pay and conditions. They must also manage the effects of a changing workforce profile, including ageing and cultural and linguistic diversity. Tight labour markets also give employees the power to demand better working conditions and greater work-life balance policies to meet their diverse needs. What does this mean for recruitment, job design, working conditions, capability, skills development and continuity?

We invite papers that address these and other contemporary challenges for public sector employment. **Queries** can be sent to any of the Panel Chairs. **Abstract submissions** should be sent to Linda Colley by 1 October 2010. Authors will be notified of the outcome by 30 November 2010.

Final conference papers, and also papers intended for the IJPA Special Issue (for the latter, see author guidelines at <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/journal.asp?issn=0190-0692&linktype=44>), should be sent to Linda Colley by 10 March 2011.

