Introduction to the Emerging Topics Minitrack

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The e-Government Emerging Topics minitrack provides a home for incubating new topics and trends in e-Government research. E-Government as an academic field is evolving; new directions of research and practice are emerging while others are becoming accepted as foundational. However, the foundations of the field still need to be spelled out more explicitly and rigorously. This HICSS E-Government Emerging Topics minitrack includes papers that contribute to the evolution of e-Government research and to the clarification of the field. For the 2013 conference we received twelve high quality papers; six papers, introduced below, were accepted for presentation at the conference and will be presented in two sessions.

The paper Aspiration and Realization: The Smart City of Seattle, by Suha AlAwadhi and Hans (Jochen) Scholl, addresses the ambiguous concept of “smart city”. Interviews with Seattle officials about the concept of a smart city showed that while the concept as expressed by the officials was different from the literature, smart city projects matched their definitions to a high degree. The authors consider the question of whether smart city initiatives are a steppingstone to the greater urban space as a “smart city”.

Cyberactivism through Social Media: Twitter, YouTube, and the Mexican Social Movement “I’m Number 132 by Rodrigo Sandoval-Almazan and Jose Ramón Gil-Garcia, focuses on the growing importance of social media in Mexico in political and social activism. The authors note the role Twitter has played in government decision making and shaping relationships between government and citizens.

In their paper, Exploring the Influence of Contextual Distances on Transnational Public Sector Knowledge Networks: A Comparative Study of AIRNow-I Shanghai and the Hajj-MDSS Initiatives Mohammed Gharawi and Sharon Dawes outline the critical role Transnational Public Sector Knowledge Networks (TPSKNs) play in addressing global problems in the environment, public health and other areas that require knowledge and information sharing among nations. Nine contextual distances are compared through two cases, drawing lessons about how participants bridged the distances to achieve their goals.

In Making a City Smarter through Information Integration: Social Services and the Case of Angel Network in Mexico City, J. Ramon Gil-Garcia and Armando Aldama-Nalda present an analysis of a social services integration case in Mexico City outlining some of the challenges, limitations and important enablers of such efforts. Leadership from the mayor, they found, played the most important role and affected many of the technical, organizational, and institutional factors.

The paper Themes of Research on eGovernment in Developing Countries: Current Map and Future Roadmap, by Fathul Wahid presents a review of eGovernment research in developing countries published between 2005 and 2010. From a review of 108 papers, the authors mapped the papers into five main research themes: design/implementation, adoption, impact, evaluation, and context. The Impact of Smartphones on E-Participation, by Stefan Stieglitz and Tobias Brockmann focuses on the growing relevance of social media and mobile applications for public political discussions and of e-participation and the unique and important role that politicians play. Their study provides insight into the impact of the growing diffusion of smartphones among politicians on e-participation.

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