



Broad Area Announcement (BAA)

The FORUM on democracy 501(c)(3)

Seeks Innovative Thinking and Practice to Re-discover, Re-think,
Re-imagine and Re-build the American Experiment*

“Policymaking, Governing & Thinking AS IF Democracy Matters”

Do you or your organization have ideas and examples
of a different order of thinking and design about the shifting
landscape of policy, governance, and citizenship?

Four Panels

Abstracts by 04 July 2023

Selection 01 August 2023

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

In partnership with the Policy Studies Organization’s Dupont Summit, December 1, 2023, Hybrid Conference, Washington, D.C., **The FORUM on democracy** will present the Track on "Policymaking, Governing & Thinking AS IF Democracy Matters." The focus is on the theory (methods and processes), practical tools, and case studies that impact the health or decline of democratic institutions.

This Track by **The FORUM on democracy** updates the concepts of democracy, governance, and policy to respond to 21st century challenges and needs in the design of change. In this conference we will explore policy that recognizes the role of the genius of the People, collective intelligence, and self-governance in a democratic form of governance. We seek guideposts, guardrails, and considerations of the unique demands of policy formulation in the design of better governance.

What are the considerations for the ultimate test of both survival and the supposed “Blessings of Liberty” in our experiment in democracy? The ultimate test of policy is recognition and alignment between our policy levers and desired consequences within accelerating emergent realities. Policy in this conference looks at the long-term consequences of the design of policy and the design of better governance by whether democracy survives or not.

**See attachment 2*

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Four panels reflecting whole systems thinking in the design of our institutional habitat comprise this track. For each of the following panels, we seek papers (in person or virtual).

Re-discovery

Panel One: Re-discovery of the genius in the original design of the American experiment and its revolution in the ways the founding generations thought and fought.

- What was the revolution of ideas and processes that made a difference (the good, the bad, and the ugly) and which have endured over time?
- How did the Founders re-define the relationship between the Nation and the State where Nation is a conversation between the People and the Nation while the State provides the administrative functions of a governance.
- Beyond voting in representatives (a republic), what was so unique about the tenets of democracy and role of the Citizen in self-governing?
- What were the experimental hypotheses in overcoming colonialism and what can be transferred to countering authoritarianism?
- What is the relevance of America's fight over oppression and tyranny of the mind to today's abuses of power?

Re-thinking

Panel Two: Seeing and mapping the current dynamics of the American experiment.

- What can a whole system description of current dynamics of the American experiment reveal?
- What does policy creation in a democracy mean?
- What is driving decay in America?
- How can one conduct a differential diagnosis of current self-reinforcing patterns that undermine democracy in government, business, and community?
- What would socio-political therapeutics look like embodied in new ways institutions and nonprofits engage in revitalizing democratic precepts and activities?

Re-imagining

Panel Three: Re-imagining the American experiment — tools, methods, and processes of constructive socio/political/economic therapeutics.

- Over the past two hundred and fifty years what have we learned about complex social change from the original design and how policies, ideas, experience, and the sciences create a learning nation?



- This conference has a SPECIFIC interest in the past seventy years of the emergent integrative approaches embodied in cybernetics (machines and living systems), systems that bridge the gap between the environment and our models of reality and help us design effective change strategies.
- What are the possibilities and limits of change in the ecology of interactions between human society and its institutions? What would this Political Ecology look like?

Re-building

Panel Four: Re-building the American experiment in democracy.

- How can we redefine the relation of the Nation and State to strengthen democracy?
- How can we revitalize Citizenship as the fourth branch of government in a democracy in government, business, and local affairs?
- What is the case for or against American exceptionalism in governance?
- We are searching for innovative ways to describe our current condition in America and laying the groundwork to counter future challenges by identifying solutions and demonstrated ideas which can rebuild our democracy.

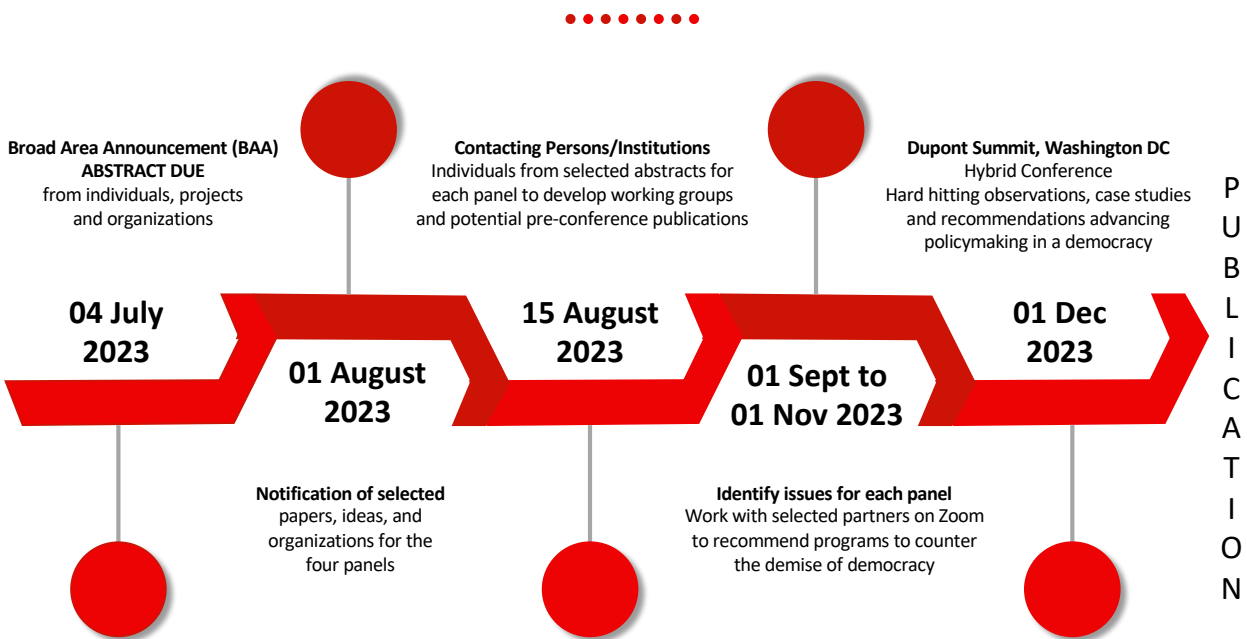
PROCESS FOR ABSTRACTS AND PRESENTATIONS (LOGISTICS)

- **Guidelines for abstract submission can be found in Attachment 1.**
- The whole systems/whole intelligence approach to overcome "Linear Thinking in a Curved Universe" is creating a tool shed of different order methods, processes, and technologies along with current and future "Outposts of Innovation and Experimentation" to stabilize, REVITALIZE and rebuild the American experiment.
- The intent of **The FORUM on democracy** is to expand our network with like-minded individuals and organizations, leading to a broadening series of meetings and publications, built on the results of this conference and publications with high level practitioners in community, domestic and international arts of governance. We tentatively title the series of meetings in 2024 "Democracy on the Edge."
- We are developing a conference process which goes beyond academic publications to deployment of new foundations for policy making.
- Proposal abstracts are due by 04 July 2023 and will be peer reviewed with responses by 01 August 2023.
- We will contact individuals/organizations August 15-30, 2023 to arrange Zoom meetings for each panel to integrate ideas and presentations within and between panels; Zoom meetings will take place during September and October, 2023.

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- Four panels will be finalized by 30 October 2023, with fully selected papers in draft form. We are not necessarily looking for completed research or projects, but significant insights and questions raised in pursuit of Better Governance through Design of the whole system.
- After 01 December 2023, recommendations will be made around the nature of the problem(s) and contributions to policy creation in a democracy. We will continue the process to encourage wider conversations among an audience receptive to ideas presented at the Dupont Summit not only through a publication but also a series of publications and conferences.
- We intend to publish the papers selected for the conference presentations and others that advance different thinking. The subsequent selected papers will be published and featured on **The FORUM on democracy** website and portal.

Timeline – Policy & Governance AS IF Democracy Matters Unique Opportunity to Form Zoom Based working Groups in Each of the Four Panels before 01 December Conference



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CONTEXT FOR THE CONFERENCE & QUESTIONS TO CATALYZE THINKING

The objective of this broad area announcement is to advance the whole living systems science of innovative policy studies and concrete experimentation. Thinking differently requires understanding the interactions, identities and ways of processing information when considering governance as a whole system. Whole systems thinking embeds/requires processes whose organization sees consequences beyond the specific problem. Most importantly, whole systems thinking requires a different lens through which to view that system and its environment.

Organizations are living cultures of conversations, ideas, and events. The presentations and subsequent publications are directed toward advancing the state-of-the-art and increasing knowledge of socio/political/cultural CHANGE, change in the development, training and practice focused on the health of the whole system of governance, including governments and those governed.

Founders of the American Experiment used the term "problematique" delineating understanding of the design of the system wherein the People would observe, orient, decide, and act. Concern of all political theory and practice is the organization of the parts and whole. America sought "Out of Many, One" or the union of individuals to do the work of a rethought nation-state.

America's War of Independence for Freedom was complemented by the necessary processes of the Constitution which was paradoxically a Declaration of Interdependence. The following are suggested questions to provide context and to catalyze your thinking.

What was the Original Design both for and against?

- Governing has changed from the intent, processes and design of the Founding Generation creating the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and Constitution and Bill of Rights of 1787. What can we learn from the American experiment; what can be learned from the past 250 years which can enhance or refute their assumptions; where is new thinking required about policy formulation in a democracy?
- A democratic Civitas requires the Art of Assembly, free speech, and redress of grievances. What are the responsibilities of governance at all levels of society? What are the current and future considerations considering the threats to these foundational ideas?
- We have a Bill of Rights; what is the Bill of Obligations implied in the democratic experiment?

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Dynamics of the Decline of Democracy

- New tools in systems, cybernetics, and design can contribute to a modern theory of government. How can we apply these tools to revitalize democratic institutions?
- Foreign policy alternates between power and empowerment. How does our foreign policy embody the principles and practices of a democracy?
- Current conceptions of problems and solutions are inadequate to the “problem behind the problem.” How do current solutions ignore the deeper systemic grounds of real solutions?
- Policy making undermines or benefits the health or decline of the meta-system of governance in a democracy. What are the principles, models, and deeper considerations which impact governance in a democracy?
- Organizations on the civic, business, and governmental levels can mitigate the decline of the American Experiment in democracy. What would be required; have these nonprofits and civic organizations lost sight of their mission to support the health of democracy?

Ways of Thinking, Leverage Points and Tools of Socio-Political Change

- We lack the metrics, assessment tools and leverage points to know whether we are strengthening or undermining our social fabric. How can you recognize success?
- Civic society and civic organizations have lost their voice. What policy initiatives would allow strengthening civil society through education and training today?
- “Better governance by design” may be a slogan, but what is a whole systems approach to a revitalized democracy?

Role of Self-Governance, Identity and Empowerment in the Fourth Branch of Government — The Citizen

- The task of a Citizen is to see beyond the immediate solutions on offer. What is the role of the Citizen in communities, business, and government?
- Governance in a democracy requires conversations/interactions between the government and the governed. How do we expand policy to look at the subtleties of the needed interrelationships of a viable democracy?
- The voices of the Citizen need to be recognized and heard in a democracy. What is the role of the media, civic and business groups, and technology in strengthening these voices?

**CLEVER GOVERNMENTS SOLVE PROBLEMS
INTELLIGENT GOVERNING AVOIDS THEM**

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Attachment 1

Abstract Submission Guidelines

Unique, Informative Title of the Paper

Full author name • University/Organization, Country • E-mail address with /at/

Structured Abstract

The structured abstract should summarize the content of your article or project description. As you write this abstract, keep in mind that the following questions will be asked if your submission is **selected to be part of the working groups leading up to the 01 December Dupont Summit (Hybrid) in Washington D.C.**

The structured abstract is divided into several important sections. The list below contains questions that should help you complete each section (i.e., keep the labels in bold and replace the questions with your own summaries).

Paper type: Which type of inquiry do you follow? Choose from the following:
Applied or Theoretical Research, Case Studies, Design of Civic initiatives/interventions relevant to Policy Governance and Thinking in a Democracy.

Preferred Track: Select one of the following:

Re-discovery Panel One: Re-discovery of the genius in the original design of the American Experiment and its Revolution in the ways the Founding Generations thought and fought.

Re-thinking Panel Two: Seeing and Mapping the current dynamics of the American Experiment.

Re-imagining Panel Three: Re-imagining the American Experiment - tools, methods, and processes of constructive socio/political/economic therapeutics.

Re-building Panel Four: Re-building the American Experiment in Democracy.

Approach: From which disciplines or practice areas does your approach derive?

Please explain in detail "What makes your paper address the issue of Policy, Governance and Thinking in a Democracy?"

Context: What is the current situation in your work about the topic of your paper/project? Why is it a problem in your domain and larger environment/context at this moment?

Problem: At which level of systemic change (explicit, implicit, and embedded) do you want to solve?

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Method: What is the approach to the topic and what is the theoretical or subject scope of the paper? How are the objectives achieved? What is the main method used for the research or assessment of impact?

Results: What are the conclusions in the course of the argumentation or case study? What is the solution to the problem(s) or problems behind the problems (problematique) you pose above?

Implications: What is the value of the paper? For whom are your insights beneficial? What do you suggest for future research? Are there identifiable limitations in the research process? What outcomes and implications for practice, applications and consequences are identified? What changes to practice should be made because of this paper or project?

Core content: What is the connection between policy in a democracy? Does the paper link to systemic or design issues? Could it bring progress to the conversation between the Nation (citizens) and the State (governing institutions) that improve one or both sides of the interactions? Do you argue in favor of a new governance perspective?

Key Words: What are the up to ten most important concepts and notions in the paper or your initiative? Which aspect of a democratic society and its institutions are central in your paper? Please provide a careful mix of general and more specific keywords (in alphabetical order).

Suggested length: 200-400 words

Each panel is 70 minutes, including time for questions

Each panel will have at least 2 presenters

Abstract Submission Deadline is 04 July 2023

Please submit your abstract to one of the following contacts:

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Optional but recommended: Future directions

In this optional section you may provide and discuss a list of research topics, initiatives for policy directions that citizens in communities, business, or government could use to tackle by funding agencies, citizen groups, nonprofits, or government communities – “What could be done next?”



Attachment 2

Policy Studies Organization ipsonet.org

The Policy Studies Organization (PSO) is a publisher of academic journals and book series, sponsor of conferences, and producer of programs. It seeks to disseminate scholarship and information to serve those making and evaluating policy. It was founded as an outgrowth of the American Political Science Association, for those in a variety of fields who were interested in how public policy and organizational policy were being studied and discussed.

The Policy Studies Organization – a related society of the of the [American](#), [Midwest](#), [Southern](#) and [International](#) Political Science Associations, as well as of the [International Studies Association](#) – grew out of a concern that there was a distance between research and practice in policy. In other words, research knowledge had to be effectively disseminated and had to reach those who actually set policies. This was not a call for any sort of strict utilitarianism, but simply a feeling that much good could be done by bringing together people who felt that policies (and not just government policies, but policies of companies, of universities, and indeed of all kinds of institutions) should be informed policies.

The FORUM on democracy theforum.us.org

The FORUM on democracy is a non-profit (501(c)(3), non-partisan organization created to enable Conversations of Change in communities, business and government to revitalize the American Experiment in Democracy.

Founded by a group of individuals with government and academic backgrounds. we have been studying and discussing the state of America: "How did we come to this state of affairs?" and "Are there ways to right our ship-of-state?" One of our main concerns is the lack of communication between our leaders and those they lead. The Founders believed in the wisdom of the American people and in the idea that their voice must be heard and heeded by those in power. Today, that voice is not being heard.

Our mission is to “rediscover, rethink, reimagine and rebuild the American Experiment by starting citizen conversations that achieve common ground.” We are working to build community-level forums — both online and in-person — where citizens with diverging views can safely participate in conversations, share their opinions, and find a measure of common ground as a step toward change.