Panel for IRSPM 2019

<u>**Public service innovation: The third sector, social enterprise and community initiatives**</u>

Panel Co-Chairs: Kelly Hall (k.j.hall@bham.ac.uk), Jurian Edelenbos (edelenbos@fsw.eur.nl), Richard Hazenberg (Richard.hazenberg@northampton.ac.uk), Astrid Molenveld (molenveld@fsw.eur.nl), Madeline Powell, University of Sheffield (m.g.powell@sheffield.ac.uk), Hans Schlappa (h.schlappa@herts.ac.uk), Melinda Szocs (melinda.szocs@exeter.ac.uk), Sanna Tuurnas, (sanna.tuurnas@uta.fi), Yida Zhu (yida.zhu@ed.ac.uk)

The third sector, social enterprise and community initiatives are crucial to the delivery of public services in most countries around the world. These hybridised organisations are often conceptualized as being able to meet the needs of citizens more effectively than traditional public sector or private sector organizations due to their ability to meet unmet social needs with socially innovative approaches. Yet social enterprises and other third sector and community organisations are struggling to remain sustainable in their delivery of services, especially during a time of public service retrenchment. Whilst these organisational forms are often seen to offer a sustainable and innovative solution to the world's most pressing social problems, it is vital to examine what challenges they face, and how they respond/behave to these challenges.

Further, the growth in these organisational forms also creates new interfaces between citizens, communities, and governments through active citizenship and co-creation. In many countries, we see social enterprises and community initiatives being developed by citizens who take the initiative and responsibility to develop and implement public services, especially when they see traditional public services failing to respond to local needs. These relationships and interfaces are however not conflict-free as they entail many, often contradicting, motivations, values and institutional logics.

This panel seeks to explore these topics and invites contributions which range from the relationship between government and civil society, to challenges of organization and management in third sector and social enterprise organisations. The questions we are seeking to answer include:

1. Is there a role for social enterprise and the third sector in some of the most pressing social problems?
2. How can you conceptualize these efforts (i.e. social enterprises, co-production, citizen initiatives), and what do they mean for the roles of different actors (e.g. professionals, volunteers)?
3. Do social enterprises and other third sector organisations provide better outcomes in comparison with private for-profit and public providers when it comes to the delivery of public services?
4. How can such initiatives/social enterprises/third sector strive for sustainability (in terms of duration and independence)?
5. How do these initiatives relate to existing governmental institutions, and how are they kept accountable and autonomous (e.g. regulation, governance, accountability or management)?