

# Institutions and Public Policy: CBPS 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations

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March 16-17, 2023, BANGALORE

## Call for Papers

The [Centre for Budget and Policy Studies](#) (CBPS) is a non-partisan, non-profit independent public policy research institution based in Bangalore. For the past two and a half decades, we have been working in the areas of [education](#), [gender](#), [governance](#), [health](#) and [sanitation](#), focusing on research, evaluation and evidence-based policy making engaging with issues of equity, justice, empowerment, democracy and accountability.

To celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023, CBPS is hosting a 2-day conference titled *Institutions and Public Policy* on March 16-17, 2023 in Bangalore. In that respect we invite young scholars (40 or below): students, independent researchers, academics or public policy practitioners to submit abstracts related to their original research or comprehensive review on any of the following four themes.

## Theme 1: Public space and gender violence

Access to public spaces, viewed as a physical, cultural, economic and social space is crucial for the functioning of democratic processes. Especially for people in marginalised communities, they are often the source of informal labour, shelter, and food. At the same time, public spaces, especially for women, are spaces of exploitation, discrimination and violence. The experience of violence is not only restricted to experiences of violence, but also the fear of it. These experiences and fears not only affect a person's sense of self, but also has implications for accessing basic public utilities such as education, health, sanitation, and livelihoods.

In this context, we will explore the various dimensions of public space, the diversity of gender violence perpetrated within these public spaces, the gendered use of public spaces, the laws and rights that govern public spaces, the manner in which rurality and urbanity influence various experiences within public spaces, the relationship of masculinity in defining public spaces, the influence of public spaces on citizenship of marginalised groups, strategies employed by social groups to utilise the potential of public spaces, public spaces as spaces of resistance, leisure, and joy, and the institutional process / impact of public spaces. The focus of this theme largely lies in exploring the nature, definition and relationship between public spaces and gender violence

## Theme 2: Education as a public good

When education is administered as an empowering process by which children learn to question, to think and to act, it has the potential to be truly transformative. In fact, the

notion of education as a public good is based on the foundational principle that the State has the primary responsibility in providing and funding educational opportunities to all. But we all know that this principle is being increasingly diluted and challenged by the current trends of privatisation and marketisation of education. In the light of increased polarisation of social values, the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on educational outcomes, as well as the changes in educational policies, we have to understand the governance of education as a public good in this changing context.

Here, we will explore the aspects of diversity and pluralism in education, importance of or changing processes of value-based education, inclusion of critical thinking pedagogies and curricula, addressing or challenges of teacher autonomy and independence, incorporating equality in education, the promise, use and failures of ICTs in education, the impact of privatisation of schooling and the proliferation of training centres, the progress, gaps and options for improving access to education, understanding new and old forms of inclusion and exclusion within education, the reframing of education as lifelong learning processes, the pitfalls, challenges, and potential of institutional autonomy and accountability, mapping quality, equity and inclusion, and the importance of integrative education among others.

### Theme 3: Public finance and governance

A central aspect of governance that is often simultaneously overstudied and overlooked is public finance. While 'budgets' are often a central site of popular and public discourse, the structure and processes of public finance are largely ignored. Understanding governing institutions and actions, decision-making in the government, the fiscal health of various governing bodies, the flow of funds and the political economy of the budget is central to democratic processes and practice. The importance of budget as a crucial tool for analysing and assess the functioning of various levels of government cannot be understated. Moreover, the manner in which governing mechanisms are able to translate the political manifestos into priorities within the government is central to the foundational principles of democracy and accountability. Governance, in other words, is closely linked with functions, funds and functionaries, all of which are the central to public finance and governance.

The themes related to public finance and governance, therefore, focuses on the institutional processes and structures that are related to public expenditure, fiscal policy, processes and structures of public finance, understanding the dynamism of urban and rural governance, the importance of decentralisation in governing, and the centrality of democratic processes in public finance and governance. More specific themes can include: autonomy in decision-making in institutional structures, relationship between local and administrative governing bodies, usage and management of citizen data, various challenges and strategies related to resource generation and service delivery mechanisms, the relationship between governance and decentralisation, and analysis of various planning budgetary and implementation processes.

## Theme 4: Health and social security

Understanding the functioning of public institutions and social security / protection systems is a central aspect of analysing public policies. These analyses provide an insight into the ways that public services and utilities such as health, water, sanitation, transportation is central to state-defined development goals. Through our understanding of the provisioning of these public service and social protection systems, we can understand the landscape of human, social, and infrastructural resource deficiencies as well as the implications of such deficiencies. Moreover, understanding public services and utilisation allows us to understand the role, importance and implications of unequal distribution of resources and social inclusion. The manner in which resilience and vulnerability is shaped by and corresponds to systems of social protection, social security and public services and therefore, they are often at the core of most public policy research.

In keeping with the centrality of this theme, we will explore aspects of nutrition, health care, public health, livelihoods, income security, poverty and migration in conversation with institutions and public policy. More specifically, papers can concentrate on: the impact, influence, and chimera of social protection schemes and policies, the perils and potential of migration, the vulnerabilities of informal labour markets, the influence of demonetisation and Covid-19 pandemic on precarious livelihoods, the impact and response of the healthcare systems, disaster preparedness and response, resilience and coping strategies of vulnerable populations, equity in social protection schemes, and decentralisation and accountability practices in public utilities and institutions.

### Potential questions and topic areas

Although not essential or mandatory, given that the focus of the conference is *Institutions and Public Policy*, it would be desirable if the papers are able to engage with one or more of the following questions:

- **Role of the public policy / research:** What is the role of evidence-based policy making in creating good governance practices? What are the rules, regulations and ethical principles of good public policy research practices? What are the challenges or relevance of public policy research in today's context?
- **Process of governance / Working with the government:** What makes a good social or economic policy? What are the innovations taking place in terms of policy planning and implementation processes? What are the challenges of governing any economic or social policy aimed at transforming social behaviour? What is the role of a good policy in democratising institutions and processes?
- **Interdisciplinary and diversity:** What are the potentialities created by engaging with interdisciplinary understanding [of a domain area]? How do we tackle diversity and complexity in public policy research and findings? What is the role of diversity and multiplicity in conceptualizing public policies or public policy research?

Other potential topic areas that can be focused upon in the context of the four themes are:

- Policy process and planning
- Comparative and integrative public policies
- Policy formulation and implementation
- The political economy of public policy
- Methodologies for evidence-based public policies
- Inequalities in public policy
- Ethics in public policy

#### Guidelines for submitting papers

- Abstracts should not exceed 450 words (including title, references etc.)
- Abstracts should be sent to [25years@cbps.in](mailto:25years@cbps.in) by 11:59 pm on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 with a title - Abstract for Institutions and Public Policy (Theme for which you are submitting the abstract)
- Please indicate the thematic area for which you are submitting the abstract in the body of the e-mail
- Please provide contact details in the email: Name, institution name (if affiliated), title (if any), email address, and phone number
- Once selected, a full-length paper of 6000 or less words should be submitted to [25years@cbps.in](mailto:25years@cbps.in) by 11:59 pm on or before 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

Abstracts will be peer-reviewed by the review committee in CBPS, and authors of selected abstracts will be invited to submit full papers in preparation for the conference. Selected participants will be provided room and board for the duration of the conference, and transportation expenses (equivalent to 2AC travel by rail) will be supported.

#### Important dates

- Last date for submission of abstracts: November 30, 2022
- Selection of abstracts: December 10, 2022
- Submission of first draft of papers: January 20, 2023
- Last date for submission of final papers: February 20, 2023

All inquiries related to this Call for Papers can be directed to: [25years@cbps.in](mailto:25years@cbps.in)