PARLIAMENTARY TRIANGLE PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

The Emergence of Civic Enterprises:
Social Innovation, Governance and Democratic Renewal in a Neoliberal World

DATE: Monday 3rd April, 2017
TIME: 5.00pm for a 5.30pm start
VENUE: Old Parliament House, Members’ Dining Room 2

HOSTED BY: Centre for Change Governance at the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis (IGPA), University of Canberra

SPEAKER: Prof. Hendrik Wagenaar

Hendrik Wagenaar is a Professor in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the University of Sheffield. He is internationally renowned for his research on participatory democracy and local governance, practice theory and interpretive policy analysis, including projects on urban governance, prostitution policy, social welfare, policy implementation and the (unintended) consequences of public policy making.

Professor Wagenaar has extensive experience working with local policy makers on funded research projects, including the Department of Education, Culture and Welfare in The Hague, a project examining study innovations in social service delivery to frequent offenders, and a comparative study of prostitution policy in the Netherlands, Austria and Sweden. These projects have been conducted in close collaboration with city officials, citizens and stakeholders in order to better understand how governance can be made more responsive and democratically inclusive.

Hendrik’s recent publications include Meaning in Action: Interpretation and Dialogue in Policy Analysis, which was published by M.E. Sharpe in 2011, and Practices of freedom: Decentred governance, conflict and democratic participation (co-edited with Steven Griggs and Aletta Norval), which was published in 2012 by Cambridge University Press. Professor Wagenaar completed his PhD in the Department of Urban Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and has been working at the University of Sheffield since November 2011. He is currently a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Change Governance at the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, University of Canberra.

ABOUT:

Social innovations, such as the civic enterprises that are the subject of this lecture, are generally defined by their ability to satisfy community needs, to reconfigure social relations, and by their ability to empower or politically mobilise peripheral groups (Moulaert et. al, 2013, 2). To be called innovative they must suggest alternatives to dysfunctional practices and institutions (Unger, 2015). According to these criteria civic enterprises in the domains of energy, neighbourhood renewal, and social care can be called successful. However, civic enterprises emerge and operate in an environment of major change in governance and public administration that compel us to interpolate the innovative nature of civic enterprises.

Using research on civic initiatives in the realm of social care, I want to demonstrate the precarious quality of these initiatives against the background of these transformations of the administrative order. Whilst community needs are usually met (although sometimes at a limited scale), the judgment on the reconfiguration of social relations, empowerment and political mobilization is more ambivalent.

Do the political innovations of civic enterprises, such as the cooperative, scale up to the administrative state or, conversely, does involvement with the state compromise cooperative ideals and practices? Are civic enterprises a form of democratic renewal along the well-known dimensions of franchise, scope and authenticity? This lecture will engage with these crucial questions as well as others.

THIS EVENT IS FREE TO ATTEND. FOR CATERING AND PLANNING PURPOSES PLEASE EMAIL: UCIGPA@CANBERRA.EDU.AU TO RSVP