

“e-Planning” Seminar at DUSP, MIT

DUSP Seminars on Technology and the City have contributed to understanding the urban planning implications of modern information and communication technologies (ICT). The new Seminar / Speaker Series on “e-Planning” builds on this experience and focuses on the new challenges and opportunities for ‘e-planning’ as the reach of ICT extends far beyond the automation of traditional tasks.

Towards a research agenda on e-Planning

1. In the last few years, e-government efforts have become fashionable both in the US and abroad.

Initially, we saw a multitude of independent initiatives towards improving the use of ICT in public services and public administration, mostly focused on using the Internet to facilitate information access and automation of services. More recently, the trend has been toward centralization and consolidation of e-government efforts and, in some cases, a restructuring of the agencies involved.

We are now beginning to observe the emergence of central plans and central authorities, or even multi-national regional plans and agencies, which reach far beyond the traditional government IT branches, and are developing e-government strategies and policies touching all sectors in society and all branches of government.

2. Examples of this are: the “e-Government Task Force for Ibero-American Countries”, created at the level of central ministries at the VII Ministry Summit of the 21 Ibero-American countries (September 2002); the “e-Europe” initiative, launched by the European Commission in 1999, and adopted as policy by the European Council Summit in Lisbon, March 2000, requiring “public administration at all levels to use new technology to give public access to information for all citizens, promoting, at the same time, on-line interaction among citizens and public administration” (e-Europe 2002 Update, 2000).

3. In the USA, there are no less significant investments, reflected for instance in the NSF-funded “Digital Government” program and the US Federal government’s restructuring efforts (the Vice President Gore’s ‘Reinventing Government’ project and the ‘E-Government Initiatives’ of the current Office of Management and Budget).

4. As expected, these “e-Government” efforts are impacting planning and setting the agenda for what might be called ‘e-Planning’. Such a trend is forcing planners to look beyond the (relatively) simple and obvious examples of service automation or public access to government information.

One leading example is the “e-planning Group” fostered by Scottish Executive (September 2001). In his document “e-Planning: Turning the Organization Inside Out”, Peter Thorpe writes:

“The ‘Modernizing Government’ Agenda has set a target for Planning Departments, like other Government organizations, to ensure that 100% of their dealings with the public are capable of being undertaken electronically by 2005. This places the onus on Planning Authorities to rethink the way that their services are organized and delivered” (Thorpe, P. University of Exeter, Planning Summer School 2001, UK)

In effect, will the centralized services move beyond efficient publishing and broadcasting in ways that promote meaningful dialogue among citizens and public/private interests? Shouldn’t e-planning differ from e-government in that improved planning processes might involve many partners and *less* government?

5. This evolution raises many new questions that go beyond re-shaping services.

The trend towards a more central role of technology in Government and in Planning has come, somewhat paradoxically, as the technologies have greatly enhanced the prospects for disaggregated, spatial analyses and decentralized, community level planning.

Reduced cost and improved technology has stimulated the rapid expansion of detailed, disaggregated data about land use and ownership, geography, infrastructure, environmental conditions, etc. along with new, sophisticated analytical tools and visualization techniques to make the best use of them.

6. This dual trend poses new intellectual challenges at community/neighborhood as well as city/global levels, and it raises research questions on a breadth of issues, with emphasis on Public Participation, Privacy, Security and Freedoms, Institutional reform, and Environmental Planning. Furthermore, its study requires considerable knowledge and understanding of ICT’s potential, not only of hardware and software, but also of powerful analytical tools, data mining, and communication strategies.

7. Technology is bringing to the table a new wealth of data and parameters, at multiple levels, that were not available to planners before. Besides the well known issues of data filtering and evaluation, how does this data availability impact planning processes, levels and scope? How does it relate to the emergence of “neighborhood planning”? Can ICT facilitate **de**-centralization of urban revitalization and development efforts? Will it enable new forms of measuring the “performance” of a City, and of City Plans? Will these measures benefit ‘outside’ regulators and funders or ‘inside’ residents and community organizations?

8. Technology is also the focus of attention in a world troubled with increased levels of insecurity and conflict / competition. How can Planning and IT contribute to a better grasp of the trade-offs among issues of security, human rights and freedoms? What are the new threats to privacy posed by the level of detail and accuracy of data collected in planning procedures and policy implementation?

9. Technology is facilitating citizen access to information at levels never experimented before. But this new trend towards government centrality, and IT business consolidation, may inform citizens without empowering them.

What forms of public participation in decision-making are sought, enabled or deterred by the new policies? Are current technology development policies favoring citizen participatory models, or pushing back citizens to a consumer role?

10. Technology is rapidly changing the public administration landscape. How is it impacting institutions and regulations? Is the new technology challenging the current institutional and regulatory framework for plan-making and urban development? What are adequate paths towards institutional and regulatory reform?

11. New challenges in Planning, with or without an “e”, cannot be understood separated from the challenges faced by the people that embody it. What is the role of a planner in this new scheme, between e-Government oriented policies and increased citizen pressure towards interactive planning? What new technology and analytical skills and competencies are required for the new generation of planners? How can we improve our current school curricula to correspond to these new requirements?

“e-Planning” Seminar goals

The MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning has been at the forefront of the new thinking concerning the use of technology by planners and the impacts of technology on planning. Examples include our research on GIS web services, neighborhood information systems, and collaborative planning tools, and our use of these technologies to study urban spatial structure, community development, social capital formation, digital divide issues, and urban design methods. We must continue to provide leadership by fostering a research agenda on the next generation of problems facing “e-Planning”.

One goal for this Speaker Series Seminar is to advance the research on Planning and ICT at DUSP. The topic has long been the focus of the Planning Support Systems research cluster.

But the expanded ICT use and the far reaching implications of ICT choices and strategies have brought one or another aspect of ICT onto the agenda of all groups across DUSP.

The seminars are intended to facilitate dialogue across a broad cross-section of the department about some of the shared issues, methods, and implications of “e-planning”. By doing so, we also hope to stimulate debate about an e-planning research agenda among an international community of our peers, not only in Planning but also in closely-associated fields.

In consistency with these goals, the final product of the Seminar will be a Book on “e-Planning”, incorporating MIT-DUSP contribution to the new intellectual challenges we face today; and the “e-Planning” Speaker Series link to the International Conference on Public Participation and Information Technology (ICPPIT03), hosted by DUSP on the 10-12 November 2003, and co-organized with CITIDEP (Research Center on Information Technology and Participatory Democracy, and international non-profit).

Session Topics

- 1) Community level: **e-Community Planning**
- 2) City level: **Enhancing City Performance**
- 3) Global level: **The Fading Borders between Regional, National and Local Planning**
- 4) **Public Participation**
- 5) **Privacy, Security and freedoms in the e-World**
- 6) **Urban Modeling and Urban Design**
- 7) **Environmental Planning**
- 8) **Institutional Reform**

Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Urban Studies and Planning

MIT-DUSP Seminar / Speaker Series on

e-Planning:

Fall 2003

Fridays, 12-14 PM, Room 3-401

chair: Pedro Ferraz de Abreu (pfa@mit.edu)

with an International Conference on Public Participation and Information Technologies

(ICPPIT03)

co-chairs:

Pedro Ferraz de Abreu (pfa@mit.edu)

Joseph Ferreira Jr. (jf@mit.edu)

<http://web.mit.edu/dusp/uis/e-planning/>

<http://web.mit.edu/uis/icppit03/>

ICPPIT03 Topics

T1) **PP-IT and Globalization** (e.g., PP-IT in security vs. freedoms/human rights trade-off; emigration, mobility and development policies; global climate and environmental change; IT development strategies in a global market with near-monopoly dominance in key ICTs, public interest and public role in alternative IT development/business models, open source movement);

T2) **PP-IT in e-Government** (e.g., PP-IT in citizen governance vs. government service automation strategies, new threats to privacy and freedom of choice, new democratic models and expressions, e-democracy, role of NGOs, use of IT by grassroots, IT and social exclusion);

T3) **PP-IT in e-Planning** (e.g., PP-IT in urban and neighborhood planning, natural resource management, environmental impact assessment and monitoring, stakeholder-based processes, at regional and local levels);

T4) **Public access to information**, its production and broadcast (e.g., citizen as consumer and as producer; technologies of knowledge and access, human-computer interfacing; metadata and public standards; rights and costs; info-exclusion);

T5) **PP-IT in Teaching, Education and the Arts** (e.g., PP-IT in distance learning, informal education, education for foreign/migrant communities, new tools and methodologies, participatory science, participatory learning of citizenship; PP-IT in social sciences and humanities).

Calendar

- Submission of abstracts: 22 September 2003
- Notification of authors: 4 October 2003 (early submissions had early notification)
- Early registration: 22 October 2003
- Submission of full papers: 6 November 2003
- Late registration: until conference date

Conference: 10, 11, 12 November 2003
ICPPIT Meetings: 9 and 12 November 2003

The organizing institutions

MIT-DUSP—Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

With the largest Planning faculty in the United States, the MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning has been at the forefront of the new thinking concerning the use of technology by planners and the impacts of technology on planning. Examples include DUSP research on GIS web services, neighborhood information systems, and collaborative planning tools, and the use of these technologies to study urban spatial structure, community development, social capital formation, digital divide issues, environmental policies and urban design methods.
(<http://dusp.mit.edu/>)

CITIDEP—Research Center on Information Technologies and Participatory Democracy

CITIDEP is a private, non-profit, international research institution with a multi-disciplinary network of 90 associates in 10 countries. Its headquarters are in Portugal. CITIDEP primary objective is to study participatory democracy, in particular through the research, development and demonstration of new information technologies, of its impacts, and of ethical, social, political and planning frameworks that enable participatory mechanisms in the information society.
(<http://www.citidep.net/>)

ICPPIT03 Secretariat

C/o. Sue Delaney
MIT Room 9-530
77 Mass Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139, USA
Tel: (617) 253 0779 / Fax: (617) 253 3625
email: sld@mit.edu and citidep@earthlink.net

ICPPIT03 Location

The Conference will take place on the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology
77 Massachusetts Av., Cambridge, MA 02139, USA
Updated information on:
<http://web.mit.edu/uis/icppit03/>
<http://www.citidep.net/icppit03/>

ICPPIT03

International Conference on Public Participation and Information Technologies



MIT, Cambridge, USA
10-12 November 2003

PROGRAM

12 September 2003

Objectives

The International Conference on Public Participation and Information Technologies 2003 (ICPPIT03) aims at bringing together researchers and practitioners interested in the use of information technologies to support public participation, as well as researchers in fields related to participatory democracy models and information technology developments targeting public participation.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of its theme, ICPPIT03 is deliberately conceived as a meeting ground for people with very different backgrounds, from social sciences and humanities to planning and engineering. Papers on both theoretical and practical aspects of the Conference theme are welcome. All accepted papers will be published in a peer reviewed Conference Proceedings.

Program

Sunday 9 November 2003:

- Reception of participants and ICPPIT Task Force meeting

Monday, 10 November 2003:

- Opening session: Larry Vale, Director of DUSP-MIT; Joseph Ferreira, MIT Conference co-chair; Pedro Ferraz de Abreu, CITIDEP President; Charles Vest, MIT President (tbc). Keynotes.

- Paper presentation sessions, with panel

Tuesday, 11 November 2003:

- Paper presentation sessions and Round-table sessions, with panels of guest speakers

- Conference dinner

Wednesday, 12 November 2003:

- Paper presentation sessions

- Closing session with presentation of conclusions from panel chairs.

- ICPPIT Task Force meeting (afternoon)

Conference committees

Co-Chairs:

Pedro Ferraz de Abreu, MIT-DUSP, CITIDEP, USA; Joseph Ferreira Jr., MIT-DUSP, USA; João Joanaz de Melo, UNL-FCT-DCEA, CITIDEP, Portugal

Science committee

Bernard Marchand, IFU (Honoraire), U. Paris, France; Ceasar McDowell, MIT, USA ; Chantal Benoit-Barné, U. Montreal, Canada; Cristina Girardo, Colegio Mexiquense, Mexico; Diane Davis, MIT, USA; Anselmo Castro, UA, Portugal; Gary Marx, MIT (Emeritus), USA; João Joanaz de Melo, FCT-UNL, Portugal; José Portela, ESE-IPVC, Portugal; Joseph Ferreira Jr., MIT, USA; Laxmi Ramasubramanian, U. Illinois-Chicago, USA; Lia Vasconcelos, FCT-UNL, Portugal; Lucie Laurian, U. Arizona, USA; Luis Rionda, U. Guanajuato, Mexico; Pedro Ferraz de Abreu, MIT, USA; Prudencio Mochi, UNAM, Mexico; Ralph Gakenheimer, MIT, USA; Rui Ponte, AER, USA; Timothy Sieber, U. Massachusetts, USA; Timothy Wutrich, Universite Catholique de Lyon, France.

Organization committee

Ambrizeth Lima, Harvard U., CITIDEP, USA; Ceasar McDowell, Diane Davis, Joseph Ferreira Jr., Ralph Gakenheimer, MIT-DUSP, USA; Pedro Ferraz de Abreu, MIT-DUSP, CITIDEP, USA; Melvin King, MIT-DUSP (Emeritus), CITIDEP, USA; Rui Ponte, AER, CITIDEP, USA; Marie McHugh, CITIDEP, USA; João Joanaz de Melo, FCT-UNL, CITIDEP, Portugal; Timothy Wutrich, CITIDEP, France; Valerie Aillaud, IFU - U. de Paris, CITIDEP, France .

Lodging and travel

Lodging and travel information will be handled for the Conference by the ICPPIT Secretariat / MIT Conference Services. Further details will soon be posted at ICPPIT03 web sites. Check information at the MIT HOTEL DIRECTORY 2003:

<http://web.mit.edu/org/c/cao/www/hotels2003/boston2003.htm>

Conference fees

(lodging not included)

Type of participant	Registration until 22 Oct 03	Registration after 22 Oct 03
Professional	80 USD	110 USD
Student	40 USD	50 USD
MIT affiliate	free access 10 USD docs.* 30 USD social*	free access 15 USD docs.* 35 USD social*
CITIDEP member	free access 10 USD docs.* 30 USD social*	free access 15 USD docs.* 35 USD social*
Partner **	30 USD	35 USD

* Professional and student fees include conference access, documentation and social program; MIT and CITIDEP affiliates have free access to sessions (after 15 October, depending on seat availability), with optional payment for documentation and for social program

** Partners have access only to the social program

Students, MIT and CITIDEP affiliates must present proof of their status at the Conference.

More details at
<http://web.mit.edu/uis/icppit03/> or
<http://www.citidep.net/icppit03/>

Mode of payment

Payment can be made by bank check in US DOLLAR, payable to MIT, sent to ICPPIT03 secretariat at MIT. Alternative on-line forms of payment, including credit cards, is under consideration.

Further details will be posted at ICPPIT03 sites

Registration

All participants, including accepted authors, must register on-line, at
<http://web.mit.edu/uis/icppit03/registration.html> or
<http://www.citidep.net/icppit03/registration.html>