

News and Announcements

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<http://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/ojs/index.php/cjlg>

The annual **Conference of the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration** (IASIA) will take place from 14-18 July 2008 in Kampala, Uganda on the theme of “Enhancing Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity in Public Service Delivery: challenges, opportunities and good practices”. More information can be viewed at the conference website:

www.iasiisa.be/schools/aeconf/kampala/kampala-index.php

The **Technical Working Group of the Caribbean Forum of Local Government Ministers** has started working on developing a Regional Policy for Local Governance in the Caribbean. Cognizant that in the Commonwealth Caribbean the structures and practices of local governance differ from country to country, it is hoped that a regional policy will at least formalize a broad framework within which local governance can be implemented in the region.

It is anticipated that the draft of this regional policy will be completed by November 2008. For more information contact Dr. Bishnu Ragoonath, Senior Lecturer in Government, Department of Behavioural Sciences, The University of the West Indies. Weblink:

http://cflgm.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=65&Itemid=95

UKZN/Democracy Development Programme - National Conference On Local Government Financing And Development. The School of Public Administration of the University of Kwazulu – Natal in collaboration with the Democracy Development Programme (DDP) will be hosting the fourth national local government conference in Durban on the 11 and 12 August 2008. The Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza on the Durban beachfront and the theme this year is “Local Government Financing and Development in South Africa”. The South African Government has introduced a futuristic policy and legislative framework for local government financing and development. The country is currently in the second decade of local democracy and it is now opportune to critically examine the impact of the new legislative and policy frameworks on local government financing and development and more specifically financial viability and sustainability.

The Conference will focus on *inter alia*:

- municipal financial viability;

- intergovernmental fiscal relations;
- indigent management;
- creativity and innovativeness in generating new sources of revenue;
- public accountability; maladministration/fraud and corruption;
- local economic development;
- municipal services partnerships;
- accessing donor and grant funding; and
- municipal valuation and property rating and supply chain management.

The presenters/speakers are high ranking officials from national, provincial, local government and non governmental organizations and senior consultants. The target audience for the Conference are senior municipal functionaries; academics; researchers and non - governmental organizations. It is anticipated that approximately 200 delegates will attend the Conference. Conference website: www.ddp.org.za/events-1/5th-national-annual-local-government-conference

The **New Zealand Political Studies Association** annual conference and post graduate research meeting will be held at Massey University (Auckland) 28-29 August 2008. The conference theme is: MMP: An Evaluation. Keynote Speakers include the Hon. Peter Salmon, Chairman, Royal Commission on Auckland Governance, and Prof. Marilyn Waring, Professor of Public Policy, Auckland University of Technology. A call for papers was extended to 1 May. Contact Dr. Andy Asquith, Department of Management and International Business: a.asquith@massey.ac.nz

The **Australian Local Government Association** (ALGA) has launched the Constitutional Recognition Website. They write: “Recognition in the Australian Constitution is one of the most important challenges facing local government today. It is an issue that we need to manage properly if we are to maximise our chance of success. Today, ALGA launched a special website dedicated to constitutional recognition. The website provides a range of material for councils including fact sheets, technical resources, a copy of the Australian Constitution and a CD with materials in electronic format. Over the next few months Councils are asked to consider this important issue and provide feedback regarding their ideas, aspirations and desired outcomes. ALGA President Cr Paul Bell said that, with the backing of the Rudd Government, there has never been a better time to achieve one of local government's most important goals: ‘Having local government recognised in the Australian Constitution has been at the forefront of debate in successive National General Assemblies of Local Government and remains one of the main objectives of ALGA. We, as local government, have never been in a better position to steer this issue forward.’”

Weblink: www.alga.asn.au/constitutionalrecognition includes links to fact sheets on the issue.

The **Local Government Association of South Australia** has drawn on global best practice to produce a handbook that is designed to improve the way councils engage their local communities. The handbook incorporates a framework developed by the International Association of Public Practitioners, a body founded in 1990 with the aim of promoting values and best practices to involve communities in government and industry decisions which affect their lives. Joy Baluch, President of South Australia's Local Government Association, says local government in the state is increasingly looking to world's best practice models in its operations and dealings with people. Mayor Baluch says councils are finding that public meetings are not always the best way for them to achieve community input into annual programs and budgets or long-term planning. She says other techniques such as undertaking surveys and establishing panels and focus groups are more appealing to communities, particularly those with young people who are accustomed to responding via mobile phones or the internet.

For further information: www.lga.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=1324

The **UTS Centre for Local Government, Sydney Australia** has been commissioned by the Commonwealth Secretariat to undertake research into local government systems and legislation in a number of Pacific island countries. This will involve a review of existing local government Acts or equivalent legislation, convening a regional workshop to discuss good practice principles, and action research projects in three or four countries. The research will be closely linked to the Commonwealth Local Government Forum's *Pacific Project*, which the Centre is also assisting. It will be carried out in cooperation with Local Government New Zealand and other regional partners. A Regional workshop was held in Suva, Fiji Islands, on 15 November 2007. Please follow this link www.clg.uts.edu.au/research/paclocgov.html to view a Background Paper and documents that comprise the 'Index of Pacific Country Local Government Legislation'. Full documentation of the project will be progressively added to this link over the next few months.

And also from the Centre, each year we run a series of seminars by visiting international practitioners and academics related to local government and governance. The most recent presentation was by Tony Jackson (University of Dundee, Scotland) who, in "Policies for Economic Development: What Works?" used recently released data to query current government policy frameworks regional economic development in the UK. To view his presentation and other UTS CLG past events, go to: www.clg.uts.edu.au/event/index.html

The **United Nations Development Programme Oslo Governance Centre** has launched the 'Democratic Governance Training Referral Service' to assist

country offices in identifying providers of training services in democratic governance. The service combines a helpdesk for handling training enquiries with an online database of training institutions. It is designed for development practitioners on the ground, who are interested in identifying institutions that can provide relevant training in various regions. The database profiles institutions from across the world that offer professional training services for development practitioners and government officials wishing to enhance their knowledge and develop their skills in various areas of democratic governance. Institutions are searchable by subject expertise, region, language, and keyword. Information on the background of staff, pedagogical approach, and available services is also available. The Training Referral Service can be accessed at <http://www.undp.org/oslocentre/resources/trs.html>. The service is meant as a 'live' tool and will be regularly updated. If you would like to recommend additional training providers for inclusion in this database, please send an email to training@oslogovcentre.org