

## Public Governance and Emerging Technologies: Values, Trust, and Compliance by Design

In the complex network society, public authority is no longer solely exercised in a unilateral manner but is increasingly also carried out through **governance networks** of public and private actors. Moreover, public actors are increasingly experimenting with **'disruptive' or 'emerging' digital technologies**, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, to innovate their public services and administrative decision-making procedures. In doing so, they frequently collaborate with private actors. However, the automatization by algorithmic systems, the networked nature of distributed technologies such as blockchain, and the data-driven use of AI in public governance proliferate hyper-connectivity and hyper-complexity. As a result, these technologies challenge important public values such as transparency and accountability. These evolutions have led to renewed attention for **public values, legal compliance, and trust**.

Emerging technologies are often portrayed as highly promissory, enshrined with the hope to transform established societal, economic, or governmental practices. These promises range from making processes more efficient and transparent to developing privacy-friendly 'data solutions.' At the same time, the use of networked and data-driven technologies to mediate the interaction between public actors and citizens challenges and transforms **public values** such as transparency, accountability, fairness, and trust. Public values of the rule of law do not necessarily align with values in network governance such as efficiency and scalability, resulting in value conflicts. Due to value conflicts and unclear legal norms citizens might experience vulnerability and uncertainty, negatively impacting the trust relationship with their government. Moreover, the increased use of complex network governance and opaque emerging technologies to exercise public authority may cause uncertainty for citizens in terms of legal protection. To ensure the **trustworthiness and legitimacy** of algorithmic public governance, it is thus important to identify and safeguard core public values and legal norms when designing and implementing technology as part of a broader socio-technical infrastructure. Therefore, **by design approaches** have been put forward to ensure **legal compliance**. On the one hand, stakeholders must be aware that technological design choices may have intended or unintended legal consequences. On the other hand, pursuing compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements informs and impacts technological design choices. In the public sector, not only well-known omnibus-legislation such as the GDPR must be complied with, but there are also specific legal norms applicable to the public sector, stemming from constitutional law and administrative law, such as the general principles of good administration (e.g., reason-giving and the duty of care), freedom of information and archiving legislation, and public procurement law.

The high hopes and strong expectations about emerging technologies are not to be taken for granted, not least in the public sector. We must acknowledge that the success (or failure) of using emerging technologies in public governance is to a large extent dependent on the choices that are made by crucial stakeholders in among others public administration, legislative and regulatory bodies, and tech companies. Operationalizing and implementing public values and legal norms when using emerging technologies in public governance may thus benefit from an **interdisciplinary approach** and qualitative research into successes and failures. Such an approach can inform the design of networked and data-driven technologies in public governance to translate and embed public values and legal rules in a way that considers observed experiences and the **perspective of end-users or citizens**.

These challenges demand academic and societal debates on the legal, social, and ethical implications of the use of emerging technologies in public governance. The conference aims to contribute to this debate by bringing together insights on emerging technologies, public values, trust, and compliance by design. The conference aims to **explore and offer guidance on how emerging technologies in public governance might proceed from a promissory idea to development and deployment in a legally, ethically, and socially acceptable way**.