

Call for papers

Reputation and brand management in Scandinavian municipalities

As a result of the global proliferation of branding and reputation management, Scandinavian municipalities have become the arena for activities that involve the definition and implementation of a coherent brand identity and/or reputation platform. The evidence of these activities comes in the form of visible outputs such as municipal brand statements, slogans, core values, taglines, reputation seminars, communication strategies, reputation audits, and so on. The intensity of these activities can be assumed to have increased dramatically in Scandinavian municipalities over the last decade.

Municipal and local government research, however, has largely neglected reputation and brand management efforts. Building on the 2013 *International Research Society for Public Management (IRSPM)* IRSPM panel on public sector reputation (“Reputation management in the public sector: Strategies, processes, and effects”), this call for papers intends to summon contributions that focus specifically on Scandinavian municipalities and their strategic efforts to build a municipal brand and/or create a favorable municipal reputation. We therefore welcome manuscripts that address how these processes unfold in practice as new forms of governance, how they are designed as strategies, and the effects they have on the workings of local democracy.

Relevant questions include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- (1) Are reputation and brand management associated with reforms; are they integrative powers, do they create and intensify differences?
- (2) How do municipal organizations implement reputation and brand management into practice: what is the content projected by the municipalities and what is the relation to identity, history and culture, how/ do they involve citizen and key stakeholder groups?
- (3) Do these activities have implications for municipal governance, identity and democracy and broader trust in local governments?
- (4) To what extent does municipal reputation and brand management distinguish between the development of place branding and organizational branding strategies? Are they the same or do they imply different approaches?
- (5) What is the role of municipal identity in branding and reputation management strategies?
- (6) Which are the main challenges associated with the increasing use of municipal performance units, which seek their own independent reputation, for the development of a favorable overarching municipal reputation/brand?

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Dead-line for submission: March 31, 2014

Submit your manuscript in accordance with the SJPA author guidelines, see sjpa.gu.se, mark your submission “Reputation and brand management”

Questions/Information: For additional information regarding the special issue, please contact Hilde Bjørnå at hilde.bjorna@uit.no