



Innovations in public services

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1 Special Issue: INNOVATIONS IN PUBLIC SERVICES

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5 Guest Editors: John Burns¹, Irvine Lapsley², Peter Miller³

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10 The primary focus of this special issue is on the role of accounting in framing and shaping the everyday
11 experiences of citizens, managers and policy makers in public services' delivery. The role of accountants
12 in such settings has grown significantly over recent decades; indeed, today's accountants embody one of
13 the central forms of expertise shaping management practices, organisational processes and regulatory
14 mechanisms in multiple organisational settings. Equally, the potential impact of accounting, and calculative
15 practices more generally, has an increasingly extensive reach. There is substantial evidence of the
16 influence of accounting work in, for instance, central and local government, hospitals, higher and further
17 education. Such influence within the sphere of the State continues despite debates over the status of
18 professional accounting expertise and critiques of the provenance, uniqueness and usefulness of
19 accounting. This special issue offers a collection of papers which extend our understandings of the
20 intermingling of accounting practices and bureaucratic procedures, in the context of reforms to and within
21 public service organisations. This is a research arena which may yield rich insights into the role of
22 accountants and calculative practices in the shaping of social and economic life. We would like to thank all
23 the authors who have contributed to this special issue, and the reviewers who have kindly offered their
24 valuable time and expertise to challenge and improve the papers.
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