

Please send in your paper or register to attend by April 26, 2019.

There is no cost to attend this pre-conference. All interested attendees are, however, required to register. It is encouraged, but not required, to submit a paper. Continue reading for a description of the call for papers.

Research, Evidence, and Democratic Governance of the Media Sector:

A Media Development Working Group Pre-Conference

6 July

Complutense University of Madrid

Organizers

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Conference Overview

The hopes and anxieties created by the spread of digital communication technologies have rekindled debates about media regulation, protections for freedom of expression, privacy, journalistic business models, and the role of the media in sustaining democratic deliberation. At the same time, much of the power to *govern* the media space itself has shifted to the corporations that control the infrastructure of the internet. In this environment, the development of media in general, and journalism in particular, that serves human rights, democracy, pluralism and that is driven by the needs and interests of citizens will require concerted, strategic action by local activists, reform-minded governments, and their international allies. This work involves activism and consensus-building to defend the basic values of pluralism, but also specialized and technical efforts to formulate policies, design regulations, and implement programs that promote plural

media systems. To be effective, this action must be supported by learning, evidence, and knowledge.

In this context, this proposed pre-conference would explore two interlocking questions related to how researchers can engage with other actors to shape media systems for the better:

- How can we theorize and understand what it means to democratically govern the media sector?
- What is the role of research, evidence, and knowledge in supporting democratic governance of the sector?

This pre-conference aims to stimulate a vibrant discussion between different notions of democratic governance of the media sector, and different approaches to research, evidence, and knowledge. The pre-conference will involve both scholars and practitioners to explore not only the conceptual aspects of this debate, but also the practical challenges of conducting research and building knowledge in the interest of media development.

How to participate: To register, please fill out this [form](#), or email Nicholas Benequista at NickB@ned.org.

If you are interested to present a paper or case study, please be in contact for more information or send your contact details and an abstract of 300-500 words to NickB@Ned.org. We are inviting papers and presentations from scholars and practitioners on the following topics.

- Normative theories on “democratic governance of the media sector:” These papers should offer concepts that can guide the efforts to build *political processes* and *institutions* (conceived of broadly) that can govern a media sector in the interest of citizens.
- Case studies on research and knowledge co-creation: These case studies should highlight lessons learned about how to conduct research (from different institutional standpoints) that contributes to democratic governance of the media sector, or provide conceptual tools for understanding the role of different kinds of knowledge in media development.

The pre-conference will also provide an opportunity for participants to plan and plot research collaborations and proposals that can implement the lessons highlighted in the discussion.