

# INTERPRETIVE POLICY ANALYSIS CONFERENCE 2021

**Panel Title:**

*P31 - Grounded Normative Theory and Public Policy*

**Panel Convenors:**

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In this panel, we discuss Grounded Normative Theory (GNT) as an approach to advance public policy making. GNT builds on grounded theory approaches “involves the direct engagement with and incorporation of empirical research into the development of normative arguments in political theory” (Ackerley et al. 2018, p. 2). With this, GNT aims to overcome the shortcomings of abstract normative theorizing. This means that GNT is a problem-driven, situated approach that reconciles theoretical-normative claims with explanatory empirical research in examining values in their realization. It does so by acknowledging the normative content of localized practices and lived experiences of often marginalized populations, in concrete situations, driven by specific goals and questions. GNT draws on a strong emancipatory vision, which engages in struggles for (epistemic) justice and solidarity.

In this panel we aim to apply GNT to policy inquiry. While traditional policy research strives to be normatively neutral, we believe that GNT is a strategy to bring out, and make productive use of, the normative contestation that is often underlying policy issues. We aim to show how the practices and experiences of particular (peripheral) social groups can inform the formation, design and implementation of a just, solidaristic public policy, and welcome papers exploring these issues.