

CALL FOR PAPERS

24th South African Association of Public Administration and Management (SAAPAM) Annual Conference

in collaboration with the

University of Venda (UniVen), Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), National School of Government (NSG), Department of Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME), the Public Service Commission (PSC), and the Public Service Education and Training Authority (PSETA)

Date: 22-26 September 2025

**Venue: Premier Hotel, Thohoyandou,
Limpopo Province**

Theme: Building State Capacity: Prospects and Challenges



SAAPAM
SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION
OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
AND MANAGEMENT



University of Venda
Creating Future Leaders



The challenge of building the capacity of the state has long been recognized and debated in authoritative literature in Public Administration discourse in developing countries like South Africa. Among other things, the process of building state capacity requires that state institutions at all levels be capacitated to ensure that they can effectively respond to the development challenges of the country. Yet, the incapacity of state institutions continues unabated. In 2014, the National development Plan laid bare this challenge when it argued that the main challenge of building capable and a developmental state lies in the “unevenness in capacity that leads to uneven performance in local, provincial and national government. This is caused by a complex set of factors, including tensions in the political-administrative interface, instability of the administrative leadership, skills deficits, the erosion of accountability and authority, poor organizational design and, low staff morale” (NDP, 2014). A decade later, the questions arise: How has the state capacity improved? And what is the efficacy of the efforts put forward by the government to effectively build the capacity of the state? What has been the role of the institutions of higher learning, in particular schools and departments of Public Administration, in helping to enhance the capacity of the state to fulfill its constitutional obligations?

Building state capacity in the modern era is augmented by the synergetic sharing of ideas within groupings in the international community. South Africa’s inaugural assumption of the rotating presidency of the Group of 20 (G20) between 1 December 2024 and 30 November 2025 presents opportunities for the utility of diplomatic partnerships in state capacity building. With its agenda being premised on promoting economic and financial stability, the G20 theme informs the economic stability of state capacity building. The economy being the backbone of attaining better standards of living for communities creating of employment opportunities and addressing inequality, which continue to bedevil the South African state, the nexus between the bloc and capacity building and sustenance is indelible. South Africa’s tenure of the presidency of the bloc presents a great opportunity for South African institutions to both lead and learn from this epoch of state building in the evolution of the state. Being a developmental state, South Africa has an opportunity to equally develop its economic capacity as an anchor for all other pillars of development. Thus, how can South Africa take advantage of this tenure of its presidency of the G20 to build its state capacity? Which lessons can scholars and practitioners of state capacity building derive from blocs and groupings in the context of the G20? Which prospects lie in actively sustaining and participating in blocs for continued improved of state capacity for South Africa?

In view of the above, the South African Association of Public Administration and Management invites academics, practitioners and policy makers to the 24th Annual conference under the theme: ***Building State capacity: Prospects and Challenges***. To make sense of the above theme and to enable rigorous discussion, the following sub-themes are formulated:

- Monitoring and evaluation interventions of government performance
- The G20 presidency and economic capacity building for the South African state
- Diplomacy and active global citizenry for state capacity building
- Rekindling the developmental state for capacity building
- Sustainable development and state capacity building
- Globalisation, regionalisation and state capacity building
- Intergovernmental coordination and collaboration
- Decentralization
- Municipal support and the role of the SALGA
- District Development model
- Strengthening internal controls for improved audit outcomes
- Accountability, oversight and consequences management in the public sector
- Stakeholder Management in public sector projects
- The implications of state capture and procurement challenges in the Public sector
- Public infrastructure management and development

- Socio- economic transformation and development
- Enhancing Politics-Administration interface
- Theory-practice interface
- Role of institutions of higher learning in state capacity Building

The National Board of the SAAPAM, in collaboration with the University of Venda (Univen), Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), National School of Government (NSG), Department of Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME), the Public Service Commission (PSC), and the Public Service Education and Training Authority (PSETA), invite you to the 24th Annual Conference to be held in Premier Hotel, Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province. Two types of contributions will be **considered during this conference**:

Firstly, Panel discussions

The panel discussions will allow a group of researchers, academics and thought leaders in Public Administration and Governance, as well as broader Social Science disciplines to make submissions on their ideas related to the conference theme. In essence, presenters will have a dedicated session to present and interrogate their ideas and/or research findings with some of the top scholars in South Africa.

Secondly, individual submissions

These are normal individual submissions which are required to focus on any of the conference sub-themes. In this case, research papers, opinion pieces or ideas will be considered.

Conference edition of the Journal of Public Administration for 2025

Completed papers which adhere to the editorial guidelines of the Journal of Public Administration will be subjected to the normal triple-blind peer-reviewing process. The final decision to include a paper in the conference edition rests with editors, once the peer-reviewing process is finalised. Only papers submitted by the **due date will be considered for publication in the conference edition.**

Books

Completed papers which adhere to the editorial guidelines will also be considered for a series of books that will be published by the Association.

Conclusion

The conference will commence with a postgraduate seminar for those delegates who are registered for their Master's and Doctoral degrees. An experienced facilitator will present some of the key considerations for masters and doctoral students in Public Administration.

SUBMISSION OF AN ABSTRACT

Abstracts of between 250-350 words should be submitted on or before the due date: 31 March 2024

For submission and registration, follow the links hereunder:

Submission of an abstract and paper

<https://jopa.wemasoft.co.za/public/portal/events/submit-abstract>

Registration

<http://jopa.wemasoft.co.za/public/portal/events/register>

Papers submitted for possible publication in the conference edition of the *Journal of Public Administration (JOPA)* and book series should strictly adhere to the editorial policy requirements regarding specifications for manuscript submissions.

The submission date for full papers is 31 May 2025

In keeping with item 3 of the Editorial Policy of the *Journal of Public Administration*, all papers submitted by the due date shall be circulated anonymously to specialist referees for evaluation. It is only on the basis of the referees' reports that the Editor may either accept or reject any paper submitted for possible publication in the subsequent edition of the *Journal*. Except in special cases where prior permission has been obtained, papers should not exceed 8000 words.

Prospective contributors are specifically requested to ensure that the language and technical aspects of their contributions are of a high standard. In this regard, **proof of this effect would be required.**

Papers should be submitted electronically, typed in 1.5 line spacing,

12pt Times New Roman and accompanied by an English abstract of between 250 and 350 words.

Since papers are circulated anonymously for evaluation, the name and affiliation of the author(s) should be on a separate page. **Only the Harvard style will be accepted for references.**

By submitting a paper, authors certify that all co-authors are aware of the submission and consent to the presentation of the work. No author can submit more than two papers (sole or co-authored) for publication consideration. All submissions must be in *Microsoft Word*. The contact information for all authors should be included on the first page of the document.

Benefits of attending the conference

The conference provides access to the formal communication network with SAAPAM members, and **ample opportunity for networking and building bonds between practitioners, academics, researchers and other professionals in the discipline of Public Administration and Management.**

Important dates (must be received at our office by)

Submission of abstracts	: 31 March 2025
Notification of acceptance/non-acceptance	: 5 April 2025
Submission of full papers	: 31 May 2025
Final payment for registration	: 1 July 2025
Late payment for registration	: 31 July 2025
Event dates	: 22-26 September 2025

Presentation Equipment

Each conference room will be equipped with a computer and LCD projector.

How to register

Follow this <http://jopa.wemasoft.co.za/public/portal/events/register>

Please remember to attach proof of payment when you are not using payfast(eft)

Conference Fees

Deadline: 31 July 2025

Conference registration fees are not refundable or transferable. Conference registration fee of

R7000-00 per delegate (members)

R8000-00 per delegate (non-members)

R5500-00 per delegate (students; proof of registration for 2025 must be attached)

Please note that the conference fee does not include accommodation. The booking and payment of accommodation is a (separate) responsibility of the delegate.

Please note that this is a prepaid event.

Payment and registration are required by 31 July 2025

Payments can be made into the following Bank Account:

Name of the Bank:	Standard Bank
Account Holder:	SAAPAM
Account Number:	012580015
Branch Code:	01-15-45-15

Kindly scan and email proof of payment for the attention of Prof John Molepo at:

SAAPAM@tut.ac.za and copy MolepoJN@tut.ac.za.

www.saapam.co.za

GALA DINNER

The gala dinner will be held on 25 September 2025

Accommodation list

The Association has managed to negotiate a discounted rate. Kindly use the following code SAAPAM25 to the following hotels to receive a discount.

Venues	Rooms max Capacity	Contact details
Premier Hotel	120 Rooms Max	Email: conf.thy@premierhotels.co.za +27 15 161 0100 Website: https://www.premierhotels.co.za/thohoyandou/
Khoroni Casino Hotel	107 Rooms Max	Email: sales@khoroni.co.za reception@khoroni.co.za 015 045 0560 Website: https://khoroni.co.za/
2Ten Hotel	84 rooms (2Ten=34 rooms. MGB Hotel=50 Rooms)	Email: reservations@2tenhotel.co.za 015 963 0210 015 963 4500 Website: https://mgbhotel.co.za/
Porche Villa Hotel	31 rooms Max	Email: info@porche-villa.co.za 076 446 0322 Website: https://www.porche-villa.co.za/
Muofhe Graceland	50 Rooms Max	Email: gracelandmuofhe@gmail.com 015 962 4926 061 496 4926 Website :N/A
Golgotha Boutique Hotel	20 rooms Max	Email: golgothaboutiquehot@gmail.com 071 114 4282 Website: www.golgothaboutiquehotel.co.za
The Hill Hotel and conference	11 rooms max	Email: reservations@thehillhotel.co.za 015 575 1022 072 386 9925 Website: https://thehillhotel.co.za/

Naledzi Hotel and conference	24 rooms Max	Email: info@naledzihotel.co.za 079 964 1777 Website: https://www.naledzilodge.co.za/
Elephant & Thavhani Boutique Lodge	23 room Max	Email: info@elephantboutique.co.za 015 001 4152/ 076 872 2911 Website: https://www.elephantboutiquelodge.co.za/