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*Call for Papers*

# Improving Education through Accountability and Evaluation

## Lessons from Around the World

*Istituto Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema Educativo di Istruzione e Formazione (INVALSI)  
University of Maryland School of Public Policy (UMD)  
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)*

**Rome, Italy**  
October 3-5, 2012

The main web page for the conference is:  
[http://www.invalsi.it/invalsi/ri/improving\\_education](http://www.invalsi.it/invalsi/ri/improving_education)

Around the world, school teachers and administrators, scholars and researchers, government officials, and the general public are seeking to improve the quality of education. In recent years, two of the most prominent themes have been: (1) using performance measures to hold school systems, administrators, and teachers accountable for results, and (2) conducting different kinds of evaluations to identify and test promising approaches and programs able to improve student outcomes. Much can be learned from these efforts, with lessons applicable in many countries.

In an effort to collect, analyze, and share these lessons, the Istituto Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema Educativo di Istruzione e Formazione (INVALSI), the University of Maryland School of Public Policy (UMD), and the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) will hold a conference in Rome, Italy, October 3-5, 2012. The conference is designed to attract a worldwide audience, including academics and professionals from universities, think tanks, school systems, government agencies, and the private sector.

Papers are solicited on all aspects of research, evaluation, and policy associated with improving the quality of education through accountability processes and program evaluation. Papers will be presented in topic-oriented panels with presenters and discussants. The conference agenda is broad. Possible topics for papers include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *School accountability through performance monitoring:* Possible topics include high stakes testing, value-added models, performance-based funding for schools, the use of administrative and survey data, and qualitative methods of performance monitoring.
- *Improving teacher and administrator/supervisor quality:* Possible topics include teacher recruitment and retention, teacher preparation and professional development, merit pay, and other financial or career incentives.
- *Promising innovations inside and outside the classroom:* Possible topics include curriculum changes, the use of new technology, student and family incentives, active participation in education, and making and measuring skill development from a life cycle perspective.
- *Building and interpreting scientific evidence:* Deciding “what works” for whom and why through the systematic accumulation of knowledge, demonstration, and evaluation findings. Possible topics include identifying impacts (attributing causation through randomized and various natural experiments, including pipeline, interrupted time series, and regression-discontinuity designs), generalizing findings, identifying measurement problems, and learning from large-scale reforms and/or the injection of large amounts of additional funding.
- *Translating research results into practice:* How to build public and political support for evidence-based improvements in educational systems. Possible topics include matching proposed education reforms to labor market objectives, identifying obstacles to reform, and deciding the best ways to proceed.

**Program co-chairs:**

*Dr. Paolo Sestito*

Commissioner, Italian National Institute for Educational Evaluation (INVALSI)  
Director, Research Department, Bank of Italy

*Prof. Douglas J. Besharov*

School of Public Policy, University of Maryland (UMD)  
Chair, International Activities Committee (APPAM)  
Coeditor, International Policy Exchange Series, Oxford University Press

**Post-conference publication:** Papers from the conference will be considered for publication in the Oxford University Press Series on “International Policy Exchange Series.” Information about the series is available at: [http://www.umdcipe.org/international\\_policy\\_exchange\\_series/aboutseries.html](http://www.umdcipe.org/international_policy_exchange_series/aboutseries.html).

**Language:** Please note that English will be the official language of the conference. Abstracts, papers, and presentations are expected to be delivered in English.

**Schedule:**

20 Mar. 2012	Submission of proposal abstracts begins
16 Apr. 2012	Conference registration begins
15 June 2012	Deadline to submit proposal abstracts
15 July 2012	Proposal status notifications
5 Sept. 2012	Papers due for distribution
28 Sept. 2012	Program available online
2 Oct. 2012	Welcome dinner for paper presenters, panel chairs, and panel discussants

**Deadline for abstract submissions:** 15 June 2012.

**Abstract submissions:** After 20 March, please submit abstract proposal online through the INVALSI website by clicking [here](#).

**Registration:** After 16 April, please register through the INVALSI website by clicking [here](#).

For additional information, please contact: [Improving\\_education@invalsi.it](mailto:Improving_education@invalsi.it).

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