

Collaboratory Week 2013— Policy into practice

Collaboration is essential in facilitating innovation in organisations

Questions such as how to rethink public management systems, how to secure a higher degree of civic engagement and in which how experiments in governance can travel were a key focus of this year's collaboration/laboratory – Collaboratory - Week. The week's events were organized by the Public-Private Platform in partnership with our friends and colleagues at the innovation unit MindLab.

Several hundred researchers, civil servants and business managers participated in the events, generating new energy and insights into the potential for change and innovation in the public sector. You can read much more about the different events over the next few pages.

Academic Director at the Platform Carsten Greve commented afterwards:

Professor Rod Rhodes, Charles Leadbeater and Geoff Mulgan gave astonishing examples of how the public sector facilitates change in collaboration with both companies and social organisations. Collaboration was underlined as a key competency when facing the challenges of innovation and in relation to thinking out of the box. Engaging new actors in the public and building bridges between different agendas in our complex society are both important tasks for the Public-Private Platform.

Read the CBS Observer article [Danish] [here](#).

See all pictures from the Collaboratory Week at our [Facebook group](#).



Get inspired...

Meet:

[Rod Rhodes](#)

[Charles Leadbeater](#)

[Geoff Mulgan](#)

And read about their presentation on the next pages.

Research seminar with Professor of Government Rod Rhodes

On 21st May, Professor Rod Rhodes visited the CBS Public-Private Platform before the start of the Collaboratory Week to give a research seminar on “how do things work around here” for CBS researchers. As citizens, why do we care about the



everyday life of ministers and civil servants? We care because the decisions of the great and the good affect all our lives for good or ill. For all their personal, political, and policy failings and foibles, they make a difference. So, we want to know what ministers and bureaucrats do, why, and how. *Rod Rhodes is Professor of Government at both the University of Southampton (UK); and Griffith University (Brisbane, Australia); and Emeritus Professor of Politics at the University of Newcastle (UK). Previously, he was the Director of the UK Economic and Social Research Council's 'Whitehall Programme' (1994-1999).*

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Professor Rod Rhodes: Leaders do not always know best

On May 22, 2013, the distinguished Professor of Public Management, Rod Rhodes, gave a public lecture on “Political Anthropology and Civil Service Reform”. The lecture was one of the events during the Collaboratory Week 2013 organized by the CBS Public-Private Platform and MindLab.

Rod Rhodes, who was recently awarded the 2012 International Research Association for Public Management and Routledge Prize for Outstanding Contributions to Public Management Research, talked about the main characteristics of public sector reform over the past decade. More specifically, he gave examples from previous fieldwork done in the UK government, and based on this some very good stories were told.

Rhodes’ fieldwork concerns the study of public administration and public sector reform, and he vividly shared his experiences from having had access to ministers and senior civil servants in three UK government departments. The



findings from this fieldwork have also resulted in the book “Everyday Life in British Government” (Oxford University Press 2011) that uncovers exactly how the British political elite thinks and acts. Moreover, he is the author or editor of some 30 books including “The State as Cultural Practice” (with Mark Bevir, Oxford University Press 2010).

Rhodes has witnessed and explored the world through the eyes of ministers and permanent secretaries. From this he revealed that beliefs and practices are important in creating meaning in politics, policy making and public-service delivery. These beliefs and practices are embedded in traditions, rituals and languages.

During the exciting lecture Rhodes delivered five lessons from his ethnographical research in the UK government: 1) Coping and making sure that there are no surprises for the minister throughout the day; 2) Internal reorganizations do not work in the public sector; 3) Storytelling is important when developing reforms; 4) Change can be difficult because civil servants believe that their current

practice works — and they love their routines; 5) The controlling approach that “leaders know best” is wrong. In fact, the bottom knows best.

At our [website](#) you can watch the entire public lecture and Rod Rhodes’ presentation.

