

Our Members at a Glance

Interview with Paula Schommer*

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Paula Chies Schommer, an active member of the GPSA Knowledge Platform, is enriching the debate and practice on SAcc in Brazil by bringing the Platform's debates and experiences to it.



Paula is Professor and Researcher at the Public Management Department in the State University of Santa Catarina in Southern Brazil. Paula joined the Knowledge Platform to learn and participate in the latest debates and trends on social accountability (SAcc) and to bring those to the Brazilian academic field. In the last years, Paula has coordinated research projects on citizen engagement, social control, co-production of public services, public management, and social accountability. The Platform's knowledge Exchange activities are useful for enriching Paula's and her colleagues' research work at the university and for enhancing her students' knowledge on accountability. .

Paula considers that Brazil has a lot of experience to offer on SAcc, particularly on social participation, social control and citizen engagement. However, language and conceptual barriers limit the possibility of bringing Brazilian researchers and practitioners' experience to the Platform. This is because many Brazilian researchers do not produce materials related to accountability in English (articles, books, videos, blogs, etc.), and because students do not always speak this language. Additionally, SAcc does not have an exact translation in Portuguese –Paula and her colleagues have called it “co-production of control” in their research, but this term is not common in Brazil. For this reason, Paula and her colleagues at the university seek to become a bridge between Brazilian researchers and the larger international SAcc community and are committed to enrich the theory and practice on this theme in Brazil. An example of their work is the Blog of the Politeia Research Group from the State University of Santa Catarina that they have launched on Co-production of Public Good: Accountability and Management: <http://coproducaopublica.blogspot.com.br/> (in Portuguese).

* This interview was done by Janet Oropeza Eng, Coordinator of the Knowledge Management Area at Fundar, Centre for Analysis and Research.