

SPECIAL ISSUE INTRODUCTION

Gustavo Piga and Khi V. Thai*

Driven by demand for further control over public spending and more efficient acquisition processes, procurement has become a key public function. Significant technological changes, international trade and global competition have forced governments and public institutions to extend policy interests beyond cost minimization, and to pursue new challenges including innovation, competition, transparency and reforms. Further, policy makers have become aware of the role of public procurement for many other socio-economic purposes. Crossing both economics and business, public procurement has raised the interest of practitioners directly involved in the management of purchases and with academic researchers to answer key questions, explore new issues, and to discuss an extensive range of topics.

The first International Public Procurement Conference (IPPC1), held in Fort Lauderdale (Florida) in 2004, brought together academics and professionals from many countries to share best practices and to discuss critical issues. The fertile mixture of experiences, interests and contributions that emerged in that first event represents an important basis upon which to build the 2nd International Conference of Public Procurement (IPPC2). The 2nd

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Conference aims at extending and deepening the topics of major interests that arose from IPPC1, by selecting theoretical, empirical, practical and institutional contributions on a variety of topics.

This special issue is a collection of selected papers presented at the 2nd International Public Procurement Conference, September 21-23, 2006, in Rome, Italy. Organized by the Public Procurement Research Center, and hosted by the University of Rome "Tor Vergata," Italy, the conference was sponsored by the following organizations:

- Curtin University of Technology Business School (Australia);
- Florida Atlantic University;
- The National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc.;
- U.S. General Services Administration; and
- The World Bank Procurement Policy and Services Group.

There were eighty papers submitted for presentations at the conference. Through a peer review process, eight papers were selected for publication in the *Journal of Public Procurement*, eight papers for publication in *Rivista di Politica Economica*, twenty-one papers for publication in this book, and the remaining forty-two papers for publication in *Proceedings of Advancing Public Procurement: Practices, Innovation and Knowledge Sharing* (CD-Rom).

As the *Journal of Public Procurement* has limited space in each issue, the eight selected papers are published in two consecutive issues, Issue 3, Volume 5 (2006), and Issue 1, Volume 7 (2007).

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