



# PhD in INGEGNERIA GESTIONALE / MANAGEMENT ENGINEERING - 39th cycle

**PNRR 118 TDA Research Field: EXPLORING AND TESTING BARRIERS, FACILITATORS  
AND SOLUTIONS TO OUTCOME-BASED CONTRACTING'S INTEGRATION IN PUBLIC  
SERVICE GOVERNANCE**

**Monthly net income of PhDscholarship (max 36 months)**

**€ 1450.0**

In case of a change of the welfare rates during the three-year period, the amount could be modified.

## Context of the research activity

**Motivation and objectives of the research  
in this field**

Outcome-based contracting (OBC) emerges as a promising approach to financing pluralist models of governance for public services, in which government agencies, private sector entities, non-profit organizations, and communities collaborate to provide and manage public services (FitzGerald et al., 2023). OBC represents a shift in the commissioning approach for public services and infrastructure: rather than focusing on specific activities, or services delivered (outputs), OBC centers around defining the desired outcomes to be achieved (De Pieri et al., 2022). In OBC, there exists a range of financing solutions. These include tapping into capital markets to attract private investments that align with public value objectives, utilizing upfront payments from the state to catalyze projects, and sometimes even blending these financial strategies to optimize resource allocation (McHugh, 2013). Partnerships between stakeholders from different sectors, public, private and third sector, have been cited as one of the key advantages of OBC programs. However different kinds of governance could be developed around OBC: outcomes can be used to define priorities between stakeholders and design relevant interventions, agree on responsibilities and what counts as success, or be integrated in the decision-making process (Bovaird and Davies, 2011). On the other hand, perverse incentives are not new to OBC, including mission drift, marketization and



	<p>bureaucratization (Mair and Rathert, 2021).</p> <p>While a considerable body of literature explores the characteristics and functioning of these new OBC models, the impact of such models on coordination across public-private actors remains under researched (FitzGerald et al., 2023). Understanding how different stakeholders collaborate and interact within the context of OBC is crucial to unlocking the full potential of these financing models.</p> <p>The aims of this PhD research is to explore these issues by investigating what works, for whom and why in outcome-based contracting (OBC) for public service design and delivery: coordination and relational mechanisms between public and private actors need further investigations and insights. These can inform policymakers and practitioners about best practices, enabling them to design and implement outcome-based contracting models that effectively address societal needs, improve service outcomes, and foster greater collaboration among diverse stakeholders for a more equitable and sustainable future.</p>
<p><b>Methods and techniques that will be developed and used to carry out the research</b></p>	<p>This research will be conducted through a mixed-method approach by employing the following techniques:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Policy and evidence analysis to theorize barriers and facilitators to OBC's integration in public service governance and understand not only what works but also the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors that influence the success of OBC initiatives.</li> <li>2. Case Studies: this method would involve collecting qualitative data through interviews, document analysis, and observations to understand the complexities of OBC implementation, the interactions between stakeholders, and the outcomes achieved. Comparative case studies will be employed to identify common patterns, challenges, and success factors across different contexts, so to design a solution for better integrating OBC in public service governance across policy environments and contexts.</li> <li>3. Experimental survey: to test a solution to better integrate OBC in public service governance by designing a small experimental (randomized) intervention based on</li> </ol>



	the identified barriers and facilitators from the case studies and realist synthesis study. This intervention may include capacity-building workshops, policy guidance, stakeholder engagement strategies, or other relevant approaches to promoting OBC integration in public service governance.
<b>Educational objectives</b>	<p>a) Understand and critically approach how public services are managed and funded and the transformation they are undergoing based on different policy environments and contexts of intervention;</p> <p>b) Gain knowledge about different paradigms of public policy innovation to solve sustainability and social challenges;</p> <p>c) Acquire research skills to explore and develop solutions for public policy and societal challenges;</p> <p>d) Apply the understanding to real-world cases</p>
<b>Job opportunities</b>	<p>a) Academic researcher</p> <p>b) Research professional in national and international think-thanks, research institutes and public institutions,</p> <p>c) Policy advisor in national, international, and non-governmental organizations</p> <p>d) Public officer</p>
<b>Composition of the research group</b>	<p>1 Full Professors</p> <p>1 Associated Professors</p> <p>2 Assistant Professors</p> <p>1 PhD Students</p>
<b>Name of the research directors</b>	Irene Bengo, Mario Calderini

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<b>Additional support - Financial aid per PhD student per year (gross amount)</b>	
<b>Housing - Foreign Students</b>	--
<b>Housing - Out-of-town residents (more than 80Km out of Milano)</b>	--



Scholarship Increase for a period abroad	
Amount monthly	725.0 €
By number of months	6

National Operational Program for Research and Innovation	
Company where the candidate will attend the stage (name and brief description)	
By number of months at the company	0
Institution or company where the candidate will spend the period abroad (name and brief description)	
By number of months abroad	6

Additional information: educational activity, teaching assistantship, computer availability, desk availability, any other information
Teaching assistantships in the field of public-private partnerships for sustainability, impact measurement and management and social innovation will be offered. Laptop and shared desk availability will be offered.