

**Immediate Release**

## Publication Showcases Global Practices for Engaging the Public in Making Laws and Policies

### The GovLab at the NYU Tandon School of Engineering Publishes *CrowdLaw Catalog*

BROOKLYN, New York, Monday, July 16, 2018 – The Governance Lab at the NYU Tandon School of Engineering has launched the *CrowdLaw Catalog*, a compendium of real-world examples from 39 countries and six continents demonstrating how legislatures, parliaments, city councils, and public bodies around the world are leveraging technology to involve more people in the process of making policies and laws. CrowdLaw is the process of using public participation to improve the quality, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the lawmaking and policymaking process at every stage.

The new, online *CrowdLaw Catalog* features a growing repository of 100 cases of participatory lawmaking at work, at various stages, from problem spotting to evaluation, including 41 samples at the regional and local level and 59 samples at the national level, including 88 samples using the Internet and 12 samples using mobile technologies such as Interactive Voice Response Systems (IVRS), and SMS-based tools.

The GovLab developed the catalog to help those seeking to start new or improve existing CrowdLaw projects and to encourage civic leaders to learn from one another. For example, Better Reykjavik is a platform for citizens to present their ideas on issues regarding city services and operations. vTaiwan is an on- and off-line portal bringing together citizens, scholars, government and elected officials, business leaders, civil society organizations, and others to help lawmakers govern. Decide Madrid is an online portal for citizens to propose, deliberate, and vote on municipal policies and to ensure the transparency of government proceedings.

The *CrowdLaw Catalog* is the most comprehensive collection of available cases sourced from around the world. The new resource is part of the *CrowdLaw* research initiative The GovLab launched in late 2017 and includes a digital platform for original research, reports, articles, and blog posts; case studies; frameworks and recommendations for designing initiatives; selected readings; and video content from online conferences and a

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recent convening of CrowdLaw experts at the famed Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center in Bellagio, Italy, thanks to generous support from [The Rockefeller Foundation](#).

“For the public to care about civic engagement beyond the ballot box, people need meaningful, actionable ways to participate in how laws and policies are made that ultimately affect them,” said [Professor Beth Simone Noveck](#), director of The GovLab. “CrowdLaw is a step in the right direction; it’s responsive to data, harnesses collective intelligence, and uses technology to give the public a more meaningful role and pathway to managing how they’re governed.”

The new portal includes brief descriptions of each of 100 CrowdLaw cases to date (with links to additional resources), and is searchable by four criteria:

- **Level - what level of government is involved?**
  - Searchable by national, regional, and/or local government level
- **Stage - what stage of the law or policymaking process does participation take place?**
  - Searchable by problem identification, solution identification, drafting, decision-making, implementation and/or assessment
- **Task - what materials are people being asked to contribute?**
  - Searchable by ideas and proposals, expertise, opinions, evidence and/or actions
- **Technology - what is the platform?**
  - Searchable by web, mobile and/or offline

“As a think- and do-tank, a great deal of our focus is on applied research to improve lives through more effective governance,” said Professor Victòria Alsina, senior fellow at The GovLab, research professor at New York University, and faculty associate at the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business & Government at the Harvard Kennedy School. “When we surveyed the landscape for tools to help people become more involved in lawmaking and policymaking, we didn’t find what we needed and created the *CrowdLaw Catalog* to help fill the gap.”

CrowdLaw enables the public to become collaborators and co-creators in public decision-making. And current and prospective catalog users are encouraged to share additional CrowdLaw cases to the compendium.

The catalog, available online at [catalog.crowd.law](#), joins a growing roster of CrowdLaw research and resources developed by The GovLab. Later this year, the center will publish a compilation of in-depth case studies about the burgeoning discipline and a detailed playbook with instructions on how to start, run, maintain, and measure a CrowdLaw project.

To learn more about the practice of CrowdLaw and The GovLab’s CrowdLaw initiatives, visit [crowd.law](#) or contact [crowdlaw@thegovlab.org](mailto:crowdlaw@thegovlab.org).

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#### ***About The Governance Lab***

*The Governance Lab’s mission is to improve people’s lives by changing the way we govern. Our goal at The GovLab is to strengthen the ability of institutions — including but not limited to governments — and people to work more openly, collaboratively, effectively, and legitimately to make better decisions and solve public*

*problems. We believe that increased availability and use of data, new ways to leverage the capacity, intelligence, and expertise of people in the problem-solving process, combined with new advances in technology and science, can transform governance. We approach each challenge and opportunity in an interdisciplinary, collaborative way, irrespective of the problem, sector, geography, and level of government. For more information, visit [thegovlab.org](http://thegovlab.org).*

***About the New York University Tandon School of Engineering***

*The NYU Tandon School of Engineering dates to 1854, the founding date for both the New York University School of Civil Engineering and Architecture and the Brooklyn Collegiate and Polytechnic Institute (widely known as Brooklyn Poly). A January 2014 merger created a comprehensive school of education and research in engineering and applied sciences, rooted in a tradition of invention and entrepreneurship and dedicated to furthering technology in service to society. In addition to its main location in Brooklyn, NYU Tandon collaborates with other schools within NYU, one of the country's foremost private research universities, and is closely connected to engineering programs at NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai. It operates Future Labs focused on start-up businesses in downtown Manhattan and Brooklyn and an award-winning online graduate program. For more information, visit <http://engineering.nyu.edu>.*

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