



School of Public &
International Affairs
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Call For Proposals

Spring Public Finance Research Conference on Current and Emerging Challenges to Fiscal Federalism and Decentralization

May 14-15, 2026

University of Georgia's School of Public and International Affairs
Athens, Georgia

In a federal system, the provision of public goods and services reflects ongoing negotiation among levels of government, each responding differently to citizens' demands. State and local governments, along with public agencies and institutions, must translate these demands into budgetary choices. Yet flow of fiscal resources is increasingly shaped by political forces, particularly in the allocation of funding across the different levels of government. These dynamics underscore fundamental questions in public finance: How effectively can decentralized governments match resources with citizens' needs? What innovations can state, and local governments pursue to improve the provision of public goods and services their constituents want and expect? This conference examines these challenges, advancing dialogue on fiscal federalism's evolving role in efficient and fair service provision.

The Public Finance Spring Research Conference is sponsored by the University of Georgia's School of Public and International Affairs, Department of Public Administration and Policy. We invite contributions that explore the fiscal and policy challenges facing governments at both national and subnational levels, in the U.S. and abroad. Submissions may draw on diverse empirical approaches but should speak to the central concerns of public finance and fiscal federalism or decentralization. Of particular interest are studies that generate actionable insights for policy makers and practitioners—especially those working in state and local governments—as they navigate pressing issues of budgeting, resource allocation, and financial management in an era of heightened intergovernmental complexity.

We highlight the following themes as suggested areas of focus, while welcoming submissions that extend beyond them:

- Intergovernmental fiscal disruptions
- Innovations in revenue policy
- Rural government finance
- Intersection between disaster response and budget management
- Financing infrastructure projects
- Behavioral and experimental public finance
- Governance issues in public finance



Deadline for proposals: January 30th, 2026

Proposal and Presentations Guidelines

We invite submissions that include the paper title, and an extended abstract (no more than two pages), author names, and contact information for the submitting author. We will notify accepted participants by February 20, 2026. We ask that authors share a full draft with discussants at least two weeks before the presentation. We may also invite participants to serve as discussants for other papers. Please send proposals to Dr. Felipe Lozano-Rojas (flozano@uga.edu).

The conference will provide about 35 minutes per presentation and discussions of about 7 to 10 minutes for each paper accepted. This allows presenters to introduce their work to an audience at a different level of depth.

Conference Support

We will reimburse up to \$700 in travel expenses (excluding hotel), and we will provide hotel accommodation separately for one author of each accepted paper. Meals will be provided during the conference.

Location & Schedule

We will host the conference in the Punaro Room at Baldwin Hall (355 South Jackson Street, 4th Floor, Athens, GA 30602, USA). The program will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 14, 2026, and will conclude at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, May 15, 2026. We will share registration, hotel, and travel details in early March 2026.