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## *Call for papers: What I wish I knew when I started planning - lessons for the early years*

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**Date:** 28 and 29 November 2019

**Venue:** TBC; will be close to OR Tambo Airport, Gauteng

**Cost:** No cost for registration or catering (lunch and tea).

Planning education does not stop when one leaves university, and many of the most valuable skills and lessons are learnt in the workplace. The early years are particularly important, as young planners are often confronted with some of the more gritty realities of the job, such as dealing with politicians and the public. Young planners also have to make sense of and apply regulations which are often poorly constructed and out of date. Consequently, many young planners may feel unprepared and ill-equipped to deal with the realities of the workplace, especially in smaller municipalities or companies<sup>1</sup>.

This conference intends to be a place for older planners to share their experience and the lessons they wish they knew when they started, as well as a space for younger planners to share their experiences. We are especially interested in papers that focus on solutions and successes.

We are calling for abstracts of 200–400 words, with submissions due by **2 September 2019**, emailed to **Professor Verna Nel** - [NelVJ@ufs.ac.za](mailto:NelVJ@ufs.ac.za) (any enquiries can also be directed to this email), or Stuart Denoon–Stevens ([DenoonStevensSP@ufs.ac.za](mailto:DenoonStevensSP@ufs.ac.za)). We will select the most promising abstracts and request a written submission, 2,500–3,000 words in length, due by **28 October 2019**. The written submission should provide the basis for the conference presentation.

In each submission, we request that you detail the issue to which you are responding, your personal story, and the lessons you believe this has for planners who are still in the early years of their careers. We welcome submissions of a practical as well as of an academic nature.

We intend to gather the best of these contributions and compile a free publication to share with candidate planners and recent graduates. We believe that this will allow us to provide young planners with inspiration and insight regarding some of the more common problems.

The focus of this conference will be on presenting and discussing these stories. If you are not able to attend physically, we can arrange for a pre-recorded submission.

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<sup>1</sup> Taşan-Kok, T. and Oranje, M. eds. 2017. *From Student to Urban Planner: Young Practitioners' Reflections on Contemporary Ethical Challenges*. Routledge.

Some ideas for submissions are:

- Power and politics
- Making planning pro-poor
- How to make public participation work
- Finding inspiration when times are tough
- Learning in practice
- How to cope with everyday frustrations
- Knowledge and skills needed for creating good settlements
- Making theory work
- Learning land use management
- Finding mentors and support
- Which qualities employers desire in young employees
- The qualities of a great boss or mentor

Note that these are only suggestions; please feel free to propose any topic related to the broader theme of this event.