

New Directions for Intelligent Government in Canada

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The traditional "big-government/small-government" debates are ideological rather than content-driven. We do not necessarily need 'more government', but we do need 'more intelligent government', that is a government that recognizes there is a legitimate role for the state in social and economic policy and focuses on how to best play that role in a way that is effective without stifling innovation, creativity and private initiative. Whether it is government programming (ie., new spending programs versus targeted tax expenditures) or regulation (ie., how much, affecting who, what sanctions) there are choices to be made, but in all of these areas there is a role for governments to play that should be informed by solid analysis.

In his work as a public servant Ian Stewart brought this analytical focus to the role of the state. The editors believe that we need more of this approach as we move forward to deal with the challenges ahead. This workshop and the resulting volume will contain contributions from leading Canadian economists that discuss specific public policy issues and the role of an intelligent government in addressing them.

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