**Digital Governance and Us:**

**Theory and Multi-Method Examination of**

**Human-Machine-Organization Interactions in Public Service**

**Abstract**

In recent decades, the world has been experiencing extensive digital transformation, a process often described as the fourth transformative industrial revolution in human history. This revolution, enriched with technological innovations and information society platforms, has dramatically altered many aspects of modern life, triggering both philosophical discourse on and empirical research into the long-term implications and future directions. Governments and public administrations are also playing a major role in this revolution when it comes to confronting the major challenges of regulations, various biases and barriers related to digital transformation, and the changing civic and political culture. This research proposal seeks to rectify major missing links in the digital governance puzzle, both theoretically and empirically. We suggest conceptual, epistemological, methodological, and empirical developments based on an integrative human-machine-organization perspective. Knowledge from various perspectives such as digital technology and information systems, human behavior, and organizational studies is consolidated into a coherent model and a set of propositions. In broad terms, they suggest that (1) digital governance transformation is increasingly affecting public policies, strategies, and managerial practices, and (2) human interfaces (i.e., stakeholders’ perceptions of the Digital Governance Footprint (DGF) and their Mental and Emotional Models (MEMOs)) mediate the relationship between digital governance transformation and public organizations’ outcomes, performance, and public values. To support our arguments, a multi-method analysis is suggested, based on a process-tracing strategy, comparative case studies, surveys, survey-experiments, and lab experiments. In the simplest terms, the goal of our ambitious five-year project is to use state of the art theories and methods to unveil the rising centrality of digital governance in citizens’ lives, and to explain how human-machine-organization relationships are becoming dominant in this process.