



Lingnan 嶺南大學
University 香港 Hong Kong

Public Lecture of Vincent Woo Distinguished Visiting Scholars Programme 2025-2026

SUBTLE MOTIVATORS: HOW TO INFLUENCE OTHER HUMANS WITHOUT BEING PUSHY

Speaker

Professor Lars Tummers

Chair Professor of Public Administration and
Organizational Science, Utrecht University

Senior Lingnan Scholar

Lingnan University Institute for Advanced Study

Date: 26 November 2025

Time: 2:00PM- 3:15PM

Venue: LBY G02, G/F, B.Y. Lam Building
Lingnan University



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Abstract

Whether you are leading a research team, designing public policy, or just trying to get a colleague to reply to your email, you know the frustration of requests that go unanswered. Complaining rarely helps. It only makes people dig in. What if there were subtler ways to shift behavior?

In this talk, based on my upcoming book, I explore “subtle motivators”: kind, evidence-based strategies that make people more likely to say yes. These include nudges, but also broader approaches such as personal stories and giving people autonomy.

Drawing on decades of behavioral research and my own field studies, I will show how subtle motivators work not only in everyday life, but also in organizations and in public policy.

Biography

Prof Lars Tummers is Chair Professor of Public Administration and Organizational Science at Utrecht University, the Netherlands, and a Senior Lingnan Scholar at the Lingnan University Institute for Advanced Study (LUIAS). He has previously held fellowships at the University of California, Berkeley, the City University of Hong Kong, and the University of Oxford.

His research focuses on public management, leadership, and behavior change. Together with colleagues, he is developing the interdisciplinary field of Behavioral Public Administration, which links psychology and public administration.

ALL ARE WELCOME

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