

Guidelines and Criteria for the Submission of Short Papers at EGOS Colloquia

Short papers should focus on the main ideas of the later full paper, i.e. they should explain the purpose of the paper, theoretical background, the research gap that is addressed, the approach taken, the methods of analysis (in empirical papers), main findings and contributions. In addition, it is useful to indicate clearly how the paper links with the sub-theme and the overall theme of the Colloquium, although not all papers need to focus on the overall theme. Creativity, innovativeness, theoretical grounding and critical thinking are typical characteristics of EGOS papers.

Your short paper should comprise **around 3,000 words** (inc. references, appendices, and other material).

Submission deadline for short papers for the (main) 42nd EGOS online Colloquium hosted by the University of Bergamo, July 9–11, 2026:

- Tuesday, January 7, 2026, **12:00 CET**

The deadline is unchangeable and therefore **extensions can not be granted!**

Formatting your short paper

Your short paper should comprise **around 3,000 words**, according to the following format:

- Font: 12 pt, Arial or Times New Roman
- Margin left/right: 2.5 cm
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Use APA style for your citations

Do not use capital letters in your paper's title, unless they are proper nouns (e.g. "London", "Thomas"), quoted titles, or if it is the first word after a colon or hyphen. For example: *Mark Twain's "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn": Summary, analyses, and quotations*. Do not write your title in ALL CAPS.

Please **state your name** (and that of your co-author/s, if applicable) + affiliation + email at the top of your short paper (because no [single/double blind] peer review).

Short papers should be submitted as a **pdf or docx file**. Please do not upload txt files!



Steps prior to uploading your short paper

- To upload a short paper, you must be a **registered user** on the EGOS website.
If you have never been an EGOS member, never uploaded a short paper for one of the previous EGOS Colloquia, or never attended an EGOS Colloquium before, you need to **register on the EGOS website**. Click [here](#) and follow the instructions. Once you have an EGOS member number and password, please **log in to the member area “MyEGOS”** and follow the instructions for uploading your short paper listed below.
- If you are an active (or former) EGOS member, **log in to “MyEGOS”** using your email [or your EGOS member number] and your password.

Uploading your short paper

You can **only upload one short paper** with your EGOS member number! If your short paper is co-authored and you have already submitted a (single-authored) short paper to another sub-theme, then your co-author (one of your co-authors, respectively) has to upload this co-authored short paper by using their EGOS member number. Please note: You may only appear as **co-author in a maximum of TWO further short papers!**

- In the MyEGOS section of the website, click on **Submit your short paper**.
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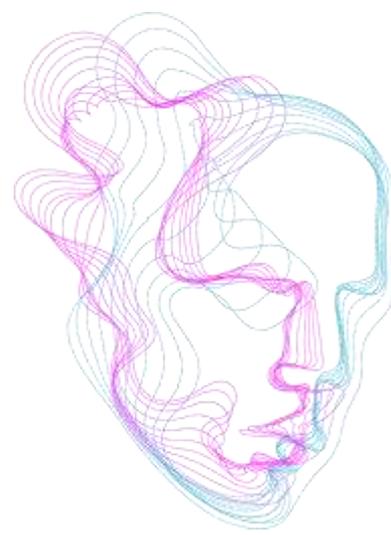
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Sub-theme 44: Reconciling Systems Theories and Approaches to Organization Studies



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Call for Papers

Scholars are rediscovering the role of systems theories and approaches in reframing, reorienting and recasting how organizations embed in societies and ecologies (Bansal et al., 2021; Jarzabowski et al., 2022). Flourished across scientific disciplines such as ecology, engineering, and social sciences since the 1950s, systems theories help consider ‘the whole’ in complex social, ecological and organizational phenomena rather than the sum its parts (von Bertalanffy, 1972). This holistic perspective is important to make sense of the non-linear, nested, interdependent and emergent patterns that repeat over time, and at different scales, in the entangled social, ecological and organizational processes that we study (Dentoni et al., 2021). By making sense of these patterns, systems approaches support organization scholars, and the actors as they engage with, to cocreate forward (Sharma et al., 2022) in addressing the complex social problems of our times (Dorado et al., 2025) and shaping social transformation processes towards ecologically thriving futures (Waddell et al., 2015; Waddock, 2023; 2024).



Systems theories and approaches hold particular potential in reframing organizations in the more-than-human society. For example, the intellectual tradition of Gaia conceiving the Earth as a living system (Waddock, 2011) and Fritjof Capra's notion of the 'web of life' (1996), but also indigenous traditions of co-becoming and of inseparability between nature and culture (Harris & Ashcraft, 2023), embed views that help us see organizations, societies and ecologies as part of a relational whole (Dentoni, 2024). By seeing themselves as integral part of nature, organizations and organization scholars can enact practices that perpetuate patterns of social-ecological destruction or, alternatively, that shift these patterns towards desirable forms of systems change (Westley et al., 2013).

Systems theories were once core to organizational theories of social change (Ackoff, 1974; Emery & Trist, 1965), and still have the potential of contributing to advance systems theories and approaches – not just borrowing from them. Our field has a range of valuable theoretical resources that could help deepen and extend systems approaches in several directions. For example, the study of processes as unfolding of interconnected practices (Langley et al., 2013), as well as theories on interconnected webs of paradoxes (Jarzabowski et al., 2022), polycentric governance (Patala et al., 2022), ecological sensemaking (Whiteman & Cooper, 2011) and multi-level institutional theories (van Wijk et al., 2019) – among others – can advance systems approaches in several theoretical, methodological and epistemological directions. For instance, in terms of theory development, organization scholars can deepen how organizations work across governance levels and socio-spatial scales to trigger and support desirable pathways of systems change. Methodologically, organizational scholars might advance participatory and/or action research processes that support empirical data collection and analysis. Epistemologically, organization scholars may advance novel interpretations of philosophy of science applied to systems thinking.

Therefore, this sub-theme calls all systems thinking scholars in our field to make contributions that reconcile systems theories and approaches to organization studies. We invite applications in a wide variety of topics – such as social problems (Mair & Seelos, 2021), resilience (Dorado et al., 2025) and transformation (Dentoni et al., 2025), social innovation (Colombo, 2024), social entrepreneurship (Savaget et al., 2025), social change (Waddell et al., 2020), or sustainability (Bansal & Desjardine, 2014) – and settings, including, but not limited to, the circular economy (Patala et al., 2022), regeneration (Albareda & Branzei, 2025), decolonization (Nurse et al., 2025), food security (Chatterjee et al., 2023), climate adaptation (Jarzabkowski et al., 2022) and mitigation (Burato et al., 2023), health policies (Angeli & Montefusco, 2020), or natural resource use (Baudoin et al., 2025) – that are relevant to the study of organizations.



This nexus of systems theories and approaches with organization studies calls for a variety of research topic and questions, which may include but not be limited to:

Theoretical and empirical questions:

- How do systems theories and approaches contribute to make sense of organizational processes that perpetuate complex social and/or ecological problems?
- How do systems theories and approaches help inform and enact processes of change, (dis)equilibrium and transformation across governance levels and socio-spatial scales?
- How do systems theories and approaches support organizations in remembering their past, and envisioning their future, in entanglement with society and ecology?

Methodological questions:

- How do (or should) organization scholars collect, analyze and theorize from empirical data to deepen, extend or apply systems theories that explain and address complex social problems?
- How do (or should) organization scholars ensure that systems-based approaches are rigorous, valid, and empirically sound?
- How do (or should) organization scholars define boundaries and choose theoretical frames in the study of nested organizational, social and ecological systems?
- How do (or should) organization scholars engage with participatory, experimental and/or action research approaches grounded on systems approaches?

Epistemological questions:

- How do (or should) indigenous views of life patterns flowing through more-than-human societies, and of humans as expressions of place, contribute to shape systems perspectives of organization studies?
- How do (or should) social constructionist, pragmatist and/or critical realist philosophies of science shape how organizational, social and ecological systems knowledge is understood or discovered?
- How do power structures and dynamics influence how systems knowledge and narratives of systems change are constructed in organizations?



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