

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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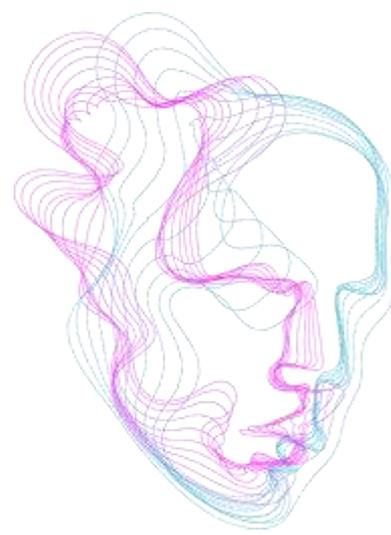
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Sub-theme 46: Reframing Inter-Organizational Relations in the World of the Fourth Industrial Revolution: From Technological Partnerships to Digital Ecosystems



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Call for Papers

Organizational scholars have long emphasized inter-organizational relationships (IORs) as essential tools for addressing societal challenges and fostering innovation. In today's hyper-connected and rapidly evolving environment, IORs are more vital and omnipresent than ever because they enable organizations to share resources, mitigate uncertainties, and tackle issues beyond their capacity.

The ongoing Fourth Industrial Revolution (Schwab, 2017) – powered by technological advancements in their capacity to make autonomous decisions and act smartly, for example, artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, big data, and Internet of Things (IoT) – is transforming IORs in several ways. On the one hand, technological advancement is overcoming longstanding barriers and offering new opportunities in traditional IORs, either dyadic or multiparty partnerships; on the other hand, novel collaborative forms such as digital ecosystems have emerged with both transformative opportunities and intricate challenges.



While research has started to acknowledge the “global connectivity” (Autio et al., 2021) and “technological embeddedness” of IORs (Cepa & Schildt, 2023), the mechanisms by which digital technologies redefine the scope, modes, and meanings of collaborations remain unclear (Lumineau et al., 2023; Volberda et al., 2021).

This sub-theme aims to foster interdisciplinary dialogue on the role of inter-organizational collaboration in the digital age, focusing on the strategic opportunities, contributions to societal challenges, and the emerging constraints and paradoxes of collaborating across boundaries for the adoption of new technologies. Research often focuses on the enterprise level to understand the affordances and constraints of new technologies, while inter-organizational relations have been largely understudied. We are concerned with both changes in traditional IORs including both dyadic and multiparty relations and with more novel forms of organization afforded by technological advancement, such as digital ecosystems. We thus invite researchers to explore how emerging technologies reshape traditional and new forms of collaboration across boundaries.

Rethinking traditional IORs

Emerging technologies may offer solutions to long-standing IOR challenges, such as misalignment of goals and incentives, power asymmetries, unclear governance structures, lack of trust, and data-sharing concerns, but we have just started to understand when and how this happens. AI agents trained using big data offer unprecedented capabilities for automating decision-making and streamlining operations not only within but also across organizations (Bailey et al., 2022; Kazantsev et al., 2023). Blockchain enables secure, transparent, and traceable transactions, potentially reconfiguring trust and lowering collaboration costs under certain conditions (Lumineau et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2022). Digital twins and IoT sensors facilitate real-time coordination between involved parties, minimizing costly errors and delays.

Yet, these advances bring new challenges such as lack of flexibility, opacity and power imbalances. Blockchain, while fostering trust, may introduce rigidities that stifle adaptability in nuanced negotiations. IoT requires significant infrastructure investments, which are often inaccessible to resource-constrained organizations. Rapid advancements in AI and big data may lead to power asymmetries in favor of digitally advanced firms, exacerbating data monopolization and marginalizing smaller players. Additionally, cybersecurity vulnerabilities and governance disputes remain pressing concerns for all types of IORs.

From such standpoints, traditional theories of organizational design, resource dependence,



power and institutional alignment must now contend with the implications of new technologies such as decentralized decision-making, automated trust mechanisms, and real-time data sharing (Annosi et al., 2020; 2021; Bailey et al., 2022, Hanisch et al., 2023; Lumineau et al., 2023; Ungureanu et al., 2019). Examining how inter-organizational practices and strategies are shaped by the affordances and constraints of new technologies is thus essential to understanding this changing landscape.

Understanding new possibilities for IORs and the rise of digital ecosystems

In addition to reshaping traditional IORs, emerging technologies are catalyzing novel forms of collaboration, many of which are embedded within digital ecosystems. These ecosystems often take the form of loose networks of diverse actors such as startups, multinational corporations, NGOs, governments or policymakers orchestrating a web of IORs (Autio et al., 2021; Gawer, 2022). When combined with the possibilities of new technologies, the diversity of resources pooled by such ecosystems promise an unprecedented increase of scale, scope and impact of inter-organizational collaboration in our societies. Platforms like Google Health and Microsoft Azure Health enable AI-driven data sharing for healthcare innovation, while blockchain-powered DeFi systems reshape financial collaboration by removing intermediaries. Smart city projects integrate IoT, AI, and big data for urban transformation, while initiatives like Global Forest Watch use big data analytics to monitor deforestation and provide real-time solutions for our environmental challenges.

However, the governance of these ecosystems poses significant challenges. Stakeholders often face misaligned goals, power imbalances, intellectual property disputes, and unclear data-sharing frameworks (Jacobides et al., 2024). In addition, technologies have limitations at this stage of development. For example, peer-to-peer systems, like those in blockchain ecosystems, introduce rising concerns about scalability, lack of shared standards, and disputes over decentralized governance (Wang et al., 2022; Ungureanu, 2025; Ungureanu et al., 2025). Importantly, the immaterial nature of digital technologies also raises questions about how to anchor these collaborations in meaningful physical or socio-economic contexts to ensure inclusivity and social and environmental accountability (Ungureanu, 2023). While some collaborations remain rooted in specific geographic or physical contexts, such as renewable energy projects or urban construction initiatives, others transcend boundaries, existing entirely in the digital realm (Backer, 2024).

In summary, digital technologies are fundamentally transforming IORs, not only by enhancing traditional dyadic and multiparty IORs, but also by catalyzing entirely new forms of loose collaborations within increasingly complex digital ecosystems. The extent to which traditional



IORs are gradually transforming into digital ecosystems is also a timely question waiting to be addressed. The undergoing transformation brings tremendous potential but also introduces trade-offs, challenges, and dilemmas that demand scholarly attention.

We encourage submissions addressing a broad range of questions spanning across the domains of organization, strategy, technology and innovation, institutional theory and organizational behavior. We welcome diverse methodologies, including qualitative research, quantitative modeling, comparative case analyses, and conceptual papers. Examples of questions (by no means limiting) are as follows:

- How do digital technologies redefine traditional IORs and mitigate their long-standing challenges?
- When and how do traditional IORs transform into digital ecosystems and with what consequences?
- What governance practices and processes are at play in technologically embedded IORs?
- How do the design and enforcement of contractual governance change in technologically embedded IORs?
- How do the form and process of relational governance change in technologically embedded IORs?
- How are emerging technologies shaping trust processes? How do different types of trust (technological, inter-personal, institutional) shape collaborations in the digital age?
- How can digital affordances (e.g., transparency, automation) mitigate inefficiencies in traditional IORs, and at what cost?
- How do emerging technologies requiring inter-organizational collaboration shape the business models of involved parties and their alignment?
- How do institutional contexts influence the adoption and scaling of emerging technologies within IORs?
- How does digital transformation shape the material (place-based) and immaterial (digital) dimensions of IORs?
- How do decentralized technologies like blockchain challenge or substitute traditional IOR frameworks?
- How do digital ecosystems address or exacerbate governance challenges such as trust, accountability, or power dynamics?



- What ethical and social dilemmas emerge in using digital technologies to address large-scale problems requiring cross-boundary collaboration (e.g., smart cities, environmental monitoring, healthcare)?

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