

Reframing Organisation Research with Networks and Simulation-Informed Inference

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Workshop Overview

Organisation studies increasingly confront phenomena that defy purely empirical or purely theoretical treatment: the interplay of formal and informal structures (Gulati & Puranam, 2009; Soda & Zaheer, 2012), the co-evolution of human and technological actors (Orlikowski & Scott, 2008), and emergent dynamics from complex interdependencies (Gokpinar, Hopp & Iravani, 2010). Network analysis and computational simulation offer powerful lenses for investigating these phenomena (Harrison et al., 2007; Davis, Eisenhardt & Bingham, 2007), yet their adoption in mainstream organisation research remains limited and often disconnected from empirical grounding.

This workshop invites scholars at all career stages to develop research that uses network-based and simulation-informed methodologies to *reframe* how we study organisations. The workshop engages with the Colloquium theme “Reframing Organisations in the More-than-Human Society” by positioning computational models, network structures, and algorithmic artefacts as non-human actors that actively shape organisational processes. Formal task architectures (Sosa, Eppinger & Rowles, 2004), informal communication patterns (Lovejoy & Sinha, 2010), and simulation environments (Davis, Eisenhardt & Bingham, 2009) are not mere analytical tools but constitutive elements of how organisations function, adapt, and innovate.

Thematic Focus and Scope

The workshop welcomes papers that engage with, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- **Formal and informal networks in organisations:** How do structural properties of task-dependency and communication networks shape performance, innovation, and adaptation? (e.g., Sosa et al., 2004; Gokpinar et al., 2010; Soda & Zaheer, 2012)
- **Simulation-informed inference:** How can agent-based modelling, system dynamics, or other computational approaches be calibrated with empirical data to generate and test organisation theory? (e.g., Davis et al., 2007; Harrison et al., 2007)
- **Empirically grounded computational modelling:** How can statistical network models (e.g., ERGMs, stochastic actor-oriented models) be integrated with simulation? (e.g., Lusher, Koskinen & Robins, 2013; Stadtfeld, Takács & Vörös, 2020)
- **More-than-human organising:** How do non-human elements—algorithmic decision-makers, product architectures, digital infrastructures—shape organisational networks? (e.g., Orlikowski & Scott, 2008)
- **Multilevel and multiplex networks:** How can multilevel perspectives illuminate the interplay between micro-level interactions and macro-level outcomes? (e.g., Gulati & Puranam, 2009)
- **Methodological innovation:** Novel combinations of network analysis, machine learning, and simulation for organisation research (e.g., Lovejoy & Sinha, 2010; Davis et al., 2009).

Workshop Format

The workshop follows an interactive paper development format over a half-day session (approx. 4 hours):

- **Opening framing presentation (30 min):** Scene-setting on methodological frontiers in network-simulation research for organisations.
- **Paper presentation and feedback rounds (2–3 hours):** Each accepted paper presented by the author (15 min) followed by tailored developmental feedback from the convenor and structured peer discussion (15–20 min per paper).
- **Closing synthesis (30 min):** Collective reflection on cross-cutting challenges, publication strategies, and collaborative opportunities.

All participants are expected to have read submitted papers in advance and contribute constructively to discussion.

Who Should Attend?

Doctoral students, early-career researchers, and established scholars developing papers that use network analysis, computational simulation, or combined approaches in organisation and management research. Topics including organisational design, new product development, inter-organisational collaboration, innovation networks, and the sociomaterial dynamics of technology are particularly welcome.

Application Process

To apply, please submit a short abstract (approx. 500 words) **by email to m.jafarisonghori@qub.ac.uk** including: (1) your research question and context; (2) the network-based and/or simulation methodology employed or envisioned; (3) the current stage of the paper and type of feedback sought; and (4) the intended contribution and target journal(s).

Key dates:

- **31 March 2026:** Hub registration deadline – register for the QBS Belfast Local Hub by this date.
- **15 April 2026:** Abstract submission deadline – email your abstract to m.jafarisonghori@qub.ac.uk.
- **30 April 2026:** Notification of acceptance for presentation.
- **24 June 2026:** Extended abstract (1,000–1,500 words) or working paper due from accepted presenters.

Please note: *If your abstract is not accepted for presentation, you are still welcome to attend the workshop and participate in the discussion; however, you will not be allocated a presentation slot or receive tailored feedback on your working paper.*

References

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- Orlikowski, W. J., & Scott, S. V. (2008). Sociomateriality: Challenging the separation of technology, work and organization. *Academy of Management Annals*, 2(1), 433–474.
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