

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MANAGEMENT OF INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Conference Theme

PARALLEL TRANSFORMATIONS:

Responding to the AI Revolution and Global Crises through innovation and Entrepreneurship

Special Track Proposal

Track Title <i>Please provide a concise and engaging title for the proposed track</i>	Innovation under Competing Demands: Tensions, Trade-offs and Paradoxes in the Age of AI
Track Description <i>Please provide a detailed description of the proposed track (approximately 800–1,000 words), outlining:</i> • Motivation and relevance of the track; • Key research challenges and emerging issues addressed • Track's contribution to the conference theme • Examples of topics and research questions that would fit within the track	The adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in organizations brings to the surface demands that pull in opposite directions. For instance, Algorithmic speed sits uneasily with the slower deliberation that innovation often requires. In addition, decisions to automate a task compete with decisions to augment the judgement of the people who perform it. Gains in efficiency are rarely distributed evenly, and what benefits one group of stakeholders may impose costs on another. Furthermore, objectives that firms pursue simultaneously, such as growth, employment stability, and environmental performance, are affected differently by the same technology. These are not minor difficulties of implementation but recurring features of AI adoption, and they are the subject of this track. Research on organizational tensions provides a vocabulary for examining them. Tensions serve as an umbrella term for interdependent demands that pull against one another (Putnam, Fairhurst, & Banghart, 2016). Trade-offs are decidable: one demand is advanced at the expense of another, and a choice can be made and acted upon (Van der Byl & Slawinski, 2015). Paradoxes, by contrast, can be understood as persistent contradiction between interdependent demands that is undecidable, since every available choice contradicts the premises on which the decision rests (Smith & Lewis, 2011; Berti & Cunha, 2023). Undecidability separates the two concepts, and the separation matters, since a trade-off problem calls for a decision while a paradox calls for continuous management. The premise of this track is that AI adoption makes such tensions salient, and that whether they prove decidable varies with the level of analysis and with the stakeholder involved. By lowering the cost of search, analysis, and iteration, AI modifies the conditions under which demands compete, so that questions previously settled through allocation may cease to be so, while demands previously compatible may become irreducible. The same applies across actors. What a management team settles as an optimization problem may be experienced as a persistent paradox by the employees who implement it, and as neither by the stakeholders who absorb its consequences. Accordingly, the track invites contributions that examine these dynamics across three levels of analysis. Contributions that question this premise are equally welcome. Individual and team level: human-AI configurations. This area concerns when organizations substitute AI for human judgement in innovation activities, when AI is better used to augment it, and how managers, employees, and entrepreneurs experience these choices (Raisch and Krakowski, 2021; van den Broek, Sergeeva, and Huysman, 2021). Organizational level: search, routines, and ambidexterity. Organizational learning research has long treated exploration and exploitation as competing demands on the same limited resources (March, 1991; O'Reilly and Tushman, 2013). Gupta, Smith, and Shalley (2006) noted that whether the two lie at opposite ends of a continuum or are orthogonal to each



other is an empirical question rather than a premise, and AI bears directly on it, since it can extend the search for novelty and strengthen the refinement of what already exists at the same time (De Fano, Schena, and Russo, 2025). Evidence points in two directions. Hybrid human-AI problem solving can broaden the range of search outcomes (Raisch and Fomina, 2025), while substituting machine learning for human decision making can reduce the diversity of organizational routines and deepen the myopia of learning (Balasubramanian, Ye, and Xu, 2022). This area therefore concerns how AI reshapes the micro foundations of exploration and exploitation, and which structural and leadership arrangements support established firms and new ventures under resource constraints.

Stakeholder and inter-organizational level: the distribution of value and risk. Firms with strong capabilities for balancing exploration and exploitation may be more, rather than less, exposed to the destabilizing effects of automation on stakeholder relations (Hiebl and Pielsticker, 2023). This area therefore concerns who bears the costs of AI-driven innovation, who captures its benefits, and who decides (Freeman, 1984). It also concerns the conditions under which actors have the agency to respond, since paradoxes are generative when undecidability prompts actors to reconsider the frames that produce vicious circles, and pathological when a lack of agency or resources traps them within those circles (Berti and Cunha, 2023; Berti and Simpson, 2021).

Furthermore, for each level a transversal domain can be applied. Specifically, it concerns how AI-enabled innovation relates to sustainability-oriented innovation, and how firms address the relationship among economic, social, and environmental objectives (Chen et al., 2026). The distinction outlined above is particularly consequential here, since treating a conflict among these objectives as a win-win, as an optimization problem, or as a paradox leads to different courses of action (Van der Byl and Slawinski, 2015).

By connecting these three areas, the track offers a broad but coherent perspective on the parallel transformations that define the conference theme. Rather than treating AI adoption as a matter of efficiency and technological progress, it approaches innovation as a field of competing demands that firms, entrepreneurs, and their stakeholders address together, and it connects innovation management and entrepreneurship research with scholarship on stakeholder theory, organizational learning, and sustainability.

Examples of topics and research questions include, but are not limited to:

- Does AI expand or narrow organizational search, under what conditions, and which organizational designs help firms address the resulting demands?
- When do organizations favor automation over augmentation in innovation activities, and with what consequences for the groups involved?
- How do new ventures build AI-enabled innovation capabilities under resource constraints?
- Which competing demands in AI-enabled innovation can be settled as optimization problems, and which prove undecidable?
- How does AI reshape the distribution of value, risk, and decision-making power across stakeholders?
- How does AI-enabled innovation relate to sustainability-oriented innovation, and how do firms address conflicts among economic, social, and environmental objectives?
- Which theoretical perspectives, including paradox theory, stakeholder theory, and organizational learning, best account for these dynamics?

We welcome conceptual, empirical, and simulation-based contributions, using qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, grounded in diverse institutional and geographic contexts. We particularly encourage submissions that bridge two or more of these areas, or that connect organizational choices with their consequences for stakeholders.

Keywords

*Please provide 4–6 keywords that best characterize the proposed track.
Separate keywords using a semicolon (;)*

Artificial Intelligence; Organizational Tensions; Paradox Theory; Stakeholder Theory; Sustainability-Oriented Innovation



References <i>Please include the key references supporting the relevance and positioning of the proposed track</i>	Balasubramanian, N., Ye, Y., & Xu, M. (2022). Substituting human decision-making with machine learning: Implications for organizational learning. <i>Academy of Management Review</i>, 47(3), 448–465. Berti, M., & Cunha, M. P. e. (2023). Paradox, dialectics or trade-offs? A double loop model of paradox. <i>Journal of Management Studies</i>, 60(4), 861–888. Berti, M., & Simpson, A. V. (2021). The dark side of organizational paradoxes: The dynamics of disempowerment. <i>Academy of Management Review</i>, 46(2), 252–274. Chen, M., M. Cristofaro, R. Pandey, H. Almugren, and A. Papa. (2026). Why Sustainability-Oriented Resources Translate Differently into Sustainable Performance and Durable Advantage: A Socio-Technical View of Green Innovation Ambidexterity. <i>Business Strategy and the Environment</i> 1–14. De Fano, D., Schena, R., & Russo, A. (2025). Harnessing AI ambidexterity for competitive advantage: The role of dynamic capabilities in digital innovation ecosystems. <i>European Journal of Innovation Management</i>, 29(2), 490–504. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-11-2024-1404 Freeman, R. E. (1984). <i>Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach</i>. Pitman. Gupta, A. K., Smith, K. G., & Shalley, C. E. (2006). The interplay between exploration and exploitation. <i>Academy of Management Journal</i>, 49(4), 693–706. Hiebl, M. R. W., & Pielsticker, D. I. (2023). Automation, organizational ambidexterity and the stability of employee relations: new tensions arising between corporate entrepreneurship, innovation management and stakeholder management. <i>The Journal of Technology Transfer</i>, 48, 1–33. March, J. G. (1991). Exploration and exploitation in organizational learning. <i>Organization Science</i>, 2(1), 71–87. O'Reilly, C. A., & Tushman, M. L. (2013). Organizational ambidexterity: Past, present, and future. <i>Academy of Management Perspectives</i>, 27(4), 324–338. Putnam, L. L., Fairhurst, G. T., & Banghart, S. (2016). Contradictions, dialectics, and paradoxes in organizations: A constitutive approach. <i>Academy of Management Annals</i>, 10(1), 65–171. Raisch, S., & Fomina, K. (2025). Combining human and artificial intelligence: Hybrid problem-solving in organizations. <i>Academy of Management Review</i>, 50(2), 441–464. Raisch, S., & Krakowski, S. (2021). Artificial intelligence and management: The automation–augmentation paradox. <i>Academy of Management Review</i>, 46(1), 192–210. Smith, W. K., & Lewis, M. W. (2011). Toward a theory of paradox: A dynamic equilibrium model of organizing. <i>Academy of Management Review</i>, 36(2), 381–403. van den Broek, E., Sergeeva, A., & Huysman, M. (2021). When the machine meets the expert: An ethnography of developing AI for hiring. <i>MIS Quarterly</i>, 45(3), 1557–1580. Van der Byl, C. A., & Slawinski, N. (2015). Embracing tensions in corporate sustainability: A review of research from win-wins and trade-offs to paradoxes and beyond. <i>Organization & Environment</i>, 28(1), 54–79.
Track Chairs <i>Please identify between 2 and 5 Track Chairs. For each Track Chair, provide:</i> • Full Name • Affiliation • Country • Email address • Research interests (optional)	Domenico De Fano, LUM Giuseppe Degennaro University, Italy, defano@lum.it Sabrina Fiore, LUM Giuseppe Degennaro University, Italy, fiore.phdstudent@lum.it Angeloantonio Russo, LUM Giuseppe Degennaro University, Italy, russo@lum.it Rosamartina Schena, LUM Giuseppe Degennaro University, Italy, schena@lum.it
Short biography of each organizer <i>Please provide a short biography for each Track Chair (maximum 200 words per biography)</i>	Domenico De Fano is a Researcher in Management at LUM Giuseppe Degennaro University, Italy. His research focuses on innovation management, digitalization, sustainability, consumer behaviour, artificial intelligence, and digital innovation ecosystems. Sabrina Fiore is a PhD Student in Economics and Management of Sustainability and Innovation at LUM Giuseppe Degennaro University, Italy. Her research focuses on



	corporate sustainability, organizational learning, and the organizational implications of artificial intelligence. Angeloantonio Russo is Full Professor of Management and Vice-Rector for Research and Sustainability at LUM Giuseppe Degennaro University, Italy. His research focuses on corporate sustainability, corporate social responsibility, stakeholder management, and sustainable business strategies, particularly in relation to organizational change and innovation. Rosamartina Schena is Associate Professor of Management at LUM Giuseppe Degennaro University, Italy. Her research focuses on corporate sustainability, innovation, sustainable business models, and digital transformation, with particular attention to how firms respond to environmental, technological, and societal change.
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