

IFKAD
International Forum on Knowledge Asset Dynamics

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22nd International Forum on Knowedge Asset Dynamics

University of Basilicata, Matera, Italy

The Ecology of Knowledge in the AI Era

CALL FOR EXTENDED ABSTRACTS - IFKAD 2027

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Special Track n.: 22

The Centrality of TRUST in Knowledge-Based Ecosystems in the AI Era

Description

Trust can be understood as the willingness to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations about another party's intentions or behavior (Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). Therefore, trust is a fundamental basis for engagement in relationships and collaboration (Wang et al., 2014).

There is broad recognition in Knowledge Management (KM) and Intellectual Capital (IC) literature that trust supports knowledge creation, sharing, collaboration, and knowledge-based value creation (Rutten et al., 2016; Holste & Fields, 2010; Inkinen et al., 2017; Cabrilo et al., 2024). Yet, despite this recognition, trust has rarely been positioned at the centre of KM and IC research. It has more often been examined as a contextual condition, relational driver, or supporting variable rather than as a fundamental element of knowledge-based value creation.

This gap becomes increasingly important as artificial intelligence (AI), particularly generative AI and autonomous AI agents, transforms the nature of knowledge work and reshapes the structures, actors, and flows through which knowledge is created, exchanged, validated, and used. Knowledge-based ecosystems are becoming more dynamic, interconnected, complex, and AI-enabled (Kianto et al., 2025), challenging established assumptions about who or what can be trusted, how trust is established, and measured, where trust resides and how trust circulates within an ecosystem.

At the same time, trust may not reside exclusively in individual trustor–trustee relationships. It can also be understood as distributed across actors, practices, technologies, and institutions within an ecosystem (Ho & Caals, 2024). This perspective opens an important avenue for research on trust circulation and trust infrastructure (Fujii, 2026; Ho & Caals, 2024) and the institutional, technical, and social arrangements through which trust can be established, maintained, transferred, verified, and reproduced across interconnected actors.

From this perspective, asking whether an AI system can simply be declared "trustworthy" is insufficient. Trust in AI-enabled knowledge ecosystems may depend on infrastructures that support verifiability, recordability, auditability, provenance, transparency, and accountability. Importantly, trust infrastructure should not be understood merely as a technical feature. It can also be conceptualised as an institutional and socio-epistemological arrangement that enables actors to assess, negotiate, and sustain trust across complex knowledge relationships.

This mini-session invites interdisciplinary conceptual, theoretical, and empirical contributions that place TRUST at the centre of knowledge-based ecosystems in the AI era, examining ecosystems at different levels, including teams, organisations, cities, nations, regions, and societies. The central question of this mini-session is therefore not simply whether trust matters, but how the nature, mechanisms, and infrastructure of trust are changing in AI-enabled knowledge-based ecosystems.

The guiding question of IFKAD across many editions has been: How do organisations generate, govern, and grow wealth through knowledge? This mini-session seeks to extend this question by examining the role of trust in enabling, governing, and sustaining open and healthy knowledge ecosystems in increasingly AI-enabled environments.

Indicative Topics

- How is the nature of trust changing in AI-enabled knowledge-based ecosystems?
- How can trust be conceptualised as a central mechanism of knowledge-based value creation rather than merely a contextual or relational condition?
- How does trust circulate among humans, AI systems, autonomous AI agents, organisations, institutions, and other ecosystem actors?

- What mechanisms enable the establishment, transfer, maintenance, verification, and reproduction of trust across interconnected actors?
- What constitutes trust infrastructure in AI-enabled knowledge ecosystems?
- How can trust infrastructure be conceptualised beyond technology to include institutional, social, organisational, and socio-epistemological arrangements?
- How do generative AI and autonomous AI agents reshape traditional trustor–trustee relationships?
- How does trust influence human–AI knowledge sharing, collaboration, learning, and innovation?
- How do trust and distrust affect the acceptance, use, and governance of AI-generated knowledge?
- How do institutional and regulatory arrangements shape trust in AI-enabled knowledge ecosystems?
- How do cultural, national, disciplinary, and institutional contexts influence trust formation and circulation in AI-enabled ecosystems?
- What are the consequences of trust asymmetries, trust gaps, or misplaced trust within AI-enabled knowledge ecosystems?
- How do trust and distrust evolve dynamically as humans and AI agents repeatedly interact and learn from one another?
- How can trust contribute to the resilience and sustainability of knowledge-based ecosystems facing technological, institutional, and geo-political disruption?

Keywords

Trust; AI-Enabled Knowledge Ecosystems; Human–AI Collaboration; Knowledge Management; Responsible AI

Organizers

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Guidelines and Requirements

Researchers wishing to contribute are invited to submit an EXTENDED ABSTRACT (in MS Word format) of min 500 and max 1000 words, not later than **22 JANUARY 2027**. All submission must be done via dedicated form on our website. The abstract should address theoretical background, research objective, methodology, and results in terms of expected contribution to Knowledge Management theory and practice.
Authors are required to follow the guidelines and templates available on IFKAD website: www.ifkad.org

Important Dates

22 January 2027 – Extended Abstract Submission Deadline
19 February 2027 – Acceptance Notification to Authors
16 April 2027 – Early-Bird Registration & Payment Deadline
23 April 2027 – Full Paper Submission Deadline
28 May 2027 – Regular and PhD Students Registration & Payment Deadline
12 June 2027 – Conference Program Release
28-30 June 2027 – Conference sessions *(to be considered as 3 full working days)*

Please note that all above indicated dates are **CUT-OFF** deadlines. There will not be an extention to any of these.

Further Information

For any information related to the conference and/or any special track, please see the event website at www.ifkad.org or contact the conference manager at **info@ifkad.org**