

IFKAD
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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.: 30

Knowledge Risks within the Ecology of Knowledge

Description

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly becoming part of how organisations create, access, share, store and apply knowledge. AI-based tools can support employees and organisations in finding information, generating new knowledge, making knowledge available to others and supporting decision-making. They may also support organisational learning, help retain and reuse existing knowledge, and enable knowledge to be combined and applied in new ways. At the same time, the growing use of AI may create new knowledge risks or change the way existing knowledge risks arise and develop within organisations.

Knowledge risks refer to the likelihood and severity of impacts arising from knowledge-based activities that may affect organisational functioning at any level (Durst and Zieba, 2026). They may originate inside or outside the organisation, involve human, technological and operational dimensions, and produce positive or negative consequences. Human knowledge risks concern employees' expertise and knowledge behaviours. Technological knowledge risks concern the reliability of and dependency on AI systems. Operational knowledge risks concern how knowledge is retained, shared, protected and applied. Across these dimensions, AI may create opportunities by supporting knowledge preservation, access and use. It may also support knowledge creation, facilitate knowledge sharing across organisational boundaries and make expertise more accessible to employees. It may also create or amplify challenges. For example, organisations may face knowledge loss when employees increasingly rely on AI systems to perform knowledge-intensive tasks. AI may also affect knowledge sharing and knowledge hiding among employees, while the increased use of external AI systems may raise concerns about knowledge leakage and knowledge ownership. Other challenges concern misinformation, the reliability of AI-generated knowledge, the loss of critical expertise and increasing dependency on AI systems and the knowledge embedded in them.

Dealing with these knowledge risks is not necessarily straightforward. Knowledge risks are often connected to one another and may occur at the individual, team, organisational or inter-organisational level. A risk emerging at one level may contribute to the development of another risk elsewhere in the organisation. Their occurrence may also depend on technological, individual, organisational and institutional conditions. Consequently, understanding knowledge risks in the AI era requires not only identifying individual risks but also examining how they are related, under which conditions they occur and how they may develop over time. From an ecology of knowledge perspective, these relationships form part of a wider knowledge ecosystem in which human expertise, organisational routines, relationships, technologies and AI systems interact in the creation, sharing and use of knowledge. Changes in one part of this ecosystem may therefore affect other parts and shape the opportunities and knowledge risks that arise within organisations. A risk that disturbs one part of this ecosystem, such as a loss of tacit expertise or a narrowing of the sources from which knowledge is drawn, may unsettle the diversity and balance of which the ecosystem's health depends.

This also raises methodological questions. Existing research methods provide different possibilities for studying knowledge risks, but no single method may be suitable for addressing all aspects of these phenomena. Some methods may be useful for examining relationships between variables, while others can help identify combinations of conditions, analyse interdependencies between risks, explore causal structures or capture the views and experiences of organisational actors. Longitudinal and process-based approaches may examine how knowledge risks emerge, interact and develop over time. Multilevel methods may explain how risks originating at one level create or intensify risks at another. Qualitative approaches may examine how organisational actors recognise, interpret and respond to knowledge risks, evaluate AI-generated knowledge, assign responsibility and balance knowledge access with knowledge protection.

Against this background, the organisers of this track encourage academics and practitioners to share their findings and insights on how knowledge risks associated with AI can be identified, analysed, explained and managed. Particular attention is given to the methodological approaches that can help us better understand the complexity and interconnectedness of knowledge risks in AI-enabled organisations.
The track welcomes studies using established methods as well as studies developing, extending or combining methodological approaches. These may include structural equation modelling, configurational approaches such as fsQCA, interpretive structural modelling and its extensions, multi-criteria decision-making methods, social network analysis, experiments, longitudinal research, expert-based approaches, mixed methods, qualitative comparative approaches and computational methods. Qualitative and process-based studies may also use case studies, interviews, ethnography, critical incident studies, process tracing, action research and participatory research. Studies combining different methods to examine the same knowledge-risk phenomenon are also encouraged.
In addition, the track welcomes contributions addressing methodological issues related to the measurement of knowledge risks, construct development, expert judgement, validation, robustness and sensitivity analysis, reproducibility, comparison across organisational or national contexts, and the integration of qualitative and quantitative evidence.
The intention of the track is therefore not to favour a particular methodological approach, but to provide a platform for discussing how different methodological choices can contribute to a better understanding of knowledge risks within the ecology of knowledge in the AI era and support organisations in dealing with these risks.

Indicative Topics

- How does the increasing use of AI change existing knowledge risks and contribute to the emergence of new ones?
- How can knowledge risks associated with AI be identified and assessed at individual, team, organisational and inter-organisational levels?
- How to examine the link between knowledge risks associated with AI and other business risks
- How do organisational actors interpret and respond to knowledge risks in their everyday use of AI?
- Under what technological, individual, organisational and institutional conditions do particular knowledge risks emerge?
- What is the cost of doing nothing?
- How are different AI-related knowledge risks connected, and how can these interdependencies be examined?
- How can novel research methods contribute to the study of AI-related knowledge risks?
- What conditions would (novel) research methods need to have in order to investigate the dynamics of risks?
- How can different methodological approaches be combined to provide an improved understanding of knowledge-risk phenomena?

Keywords

Knowledge Risks; Artificial Intelligence; Knowledge Management; Research Methods; Organisational Knowledge

Organizers

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Follow this link to see the Special Track details on IFKAD website ››

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**