

IFKAD
International Forum on Knowledge Asset Dynamics

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IFKAD 2027

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.: 43

Beyond the Agentic Hype: Purpose, Responsibility and Risk in Human-Agent Organisations

Description

Artificial intelligence has entered a third phase. Following the automation of repetitive tasks and content generation, organisations are now beginning to implement systems that pursue objectives, chain together decisions, utilise external tools and act upon their environment without continuous human supervision. Once these systems begin to act rather than merely support human decision-making, questions of purpose, organisational design, knowledge ownership and accountability become central (Chalmers et al., 2026; Humberd & Latham, 2026). From the perspective of knowledge resources, agentic systems do not merely utilise organisational knowledge: they increasingly hold it. Routines are co-produced by humans and agents; organisational memory is distributed across systems that are frequently updated or retrained. These are becoming central issues for knowledge management and research.
Emerging evidence suggests that organisations are experimenting rapidly with agentic AI, while the distinction between genuinely agentic systems and conventional AI-enabled workflows remains blurred (PoliMI, 2026; Gunpowder, 2026). This gap makes governance and measurement—not adoption alone—the central empirical challenge. This track therefore directly engages with IFKAD 2027's theme, "The Ecology of Knowledge in the AI Era", by examining how human and artificial agents jointly create, retain, mobilise and govern organisational knowledge.

In particular this track addresses four challenges that the literature has begun to identify:

- The attribution and circulation of responsibility. Leonardi (2025) demonstrates that attributing agency to a system is a performative rather than a descriptive act: it redistributes power and responsibility. The consequence is a paradox with direct implications for governance: the more autonomous a system appears, the less people feel responsible, regardless of the control they actually exercise and the formal authority they hold.
- When does a system become an agent of the firm? Humberd and Latham (2026) identify the threshold not in a technical capability, but in the joint occurrence of information asymmetry, divergent risk preferences and potential conflict of objectives, the classic conditions of the agency problem. This reformulation calls for a systematic re-examination of monitoring and incentive mechanisms.
- Purpose as architecture. In agentic contexts, organisational purpose could be translated into constraints, metrics and policies upon which machines can act, since in the absence of an explicit compass, agents optimise what is easily measurable. However, if purpose is whatever is computable, anything that resists calculation risks ceasing to be considered a purpose. This is a problem of governance, and a legitimate object of study.
- Measurement. Cognitive and attributional risks – excessive delegation, automation bias, asymmetric attribution of blame, de-skilling – require relational measures of human-agent interaction patterns and a unit of analysis situated at the level of the socio-technical system rather than at the level of the individual, an area in which current risk-measurement techniques remain underdeveloped (Madkour et al., 2026).

Indicative Topics

- How do organisations design, document and review the translation of purpose into machine-executable constraints, and who holds this decision-making power?
- Which governance configurations support meaningful human oversight, and when does oversight degenerate into symbolic compliance?
- How does delegation to agents affect the creation, retention and measurement of human and structural capital?
- What distinguishes reversible delegation from irreversible delegation, and what organisational capabilities are required to regain control?
- How do boards of directors and oversight functions adapt when the entity they are tasked with safeguarding is continuously learning and acting?
- What role do accountability structures play in determining whether the use of agents strengthens or erodes human agency at work?
- How do human and artificial agents jointly create, retain and reshape organisational knowledge, and what governance mechanisms are required to preserve the diversity and resilience of the resulting knowledge ecosystem?

Keywords

Agentic AI; knowledge ecology; human–AI collaboration; AI governance; accountability; organisational purpose; knowledge risk

Organizers

Michele Rubino – University LUM Giuseppe Degennaro, Italy
Stella Lippolis – University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy

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**