

IFKAD 2026

21st International Forum on Knowledge Asset Dynamics
Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary

Intelligent Knowledge For Sustainable Organizations

CALL FOR EXTENDED ABSTRACTS - IFKAD 2026
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Special Track n.: 08

Managing Circular Economy through Knowledge Management to Drive Measurable ESG Outcomes

Description

In recent years, organisations have increasingly embraced the principles of the circular economy (CE) as a pathway to reducing waste, optimising resource use, and fostering more sustainable production systems (Huang et al., 2025). In contrast to the linear "take-make-dispose" approach, the CE paradigm seeks to preserve materials within the economic cycle for as long as possible, thus reducing dependence on virgin resources and promoting the decoupling of economic performance from environmental degradation (Pellegrino et al., 2025). In particular, the shift towards circular models is opening up new avenues for innovation, enabling the development of a wide range of products and services, the design of novel organisational frameworks, and the diffusion of sustainable consumption behaviours and cultures (Centobelli et al., 2020). At the core of this transition lies a set of "R-strategies", ranging from the well-known 3Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle), to the more comprehensive 10Rs framework (refuse, rethink, reduce, reuse, repair, refurbish, remanufacture, repurpose, recycle, and recover), enabling organisations to close resource loops by reintegrating materials into new value-creating processes (Abbate et al., 2024; Morea et al., 2023; Reike et al., 2018). As a result, CE is recognised as an effective approach not only for reducing environmental implications but also for promoting economic growth, competitiveness, organisational resilience, and legitimacy in a sustainability-focused global economy (Cerchione et al., 2025; Sgambaro et al., 2024).

However, turning circularity into tangible and measurable Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) outcomes requires more than technical adjustments or isolated initiatives: it relies on the ability to manage and leverage knowledge across organisational and sectoral boundaries. Knowledge Management (KM) plays a pivotal role in this context. Strategic KM capabilities, including knowledge coordination, creation, and dissemination, are crucial for developing greener industries, fostering eco-innovation, and supporting continuous business improvement (Eskiyerli and Dondrup, 2025). In particular, integrating KM processes, tools, and practices with CE principles can significantly boost resource efficiency (Baporikar, 2020), allowing organisations to map material and energy flows, identify resource-sharing opportunities, and disseminate best practices (Jørgensen and Scarso, 2023). Through digital transformation, KM facilitates circular strategies by offering advanced data collection, analysis, and knowledge exchange mechanisms (Mele et al., 2025). For instance, digital platforms can support real-time monitoring of resource flows, AI can optimise industrial symbiosis by matching supply and demand of by-products, and blockchain can ensure traceability and accountability across supply chains (Schöggl et al., 2023). These knowledge-driven mechanisms allow organisations to move beyond mere intentions and translate circular principles into measurable ESG outcomes. On the environmental dimension, they contribute to reducing emissions and waste, enhancing resource efficiency, and increasing recovery rates (Chatterjee et al., 2024). From a social perspective, they foster the creation of inclusive knowledge-sharing communities, cross-sectoral collaborations, and industrial symbiosis networks, enabling stronger stakeholder engagement and supporting the development of new skills essential for circular practices (Schlüter et al., 2022). Finally, in terms of governance, knowledge-enabled circular strategies improve transparency and accountability while providing the verifiable data required for robust ESG reporting, strengthening trust among investors, regulators, and society (Opferkuch et al., 2023).

Therefore, KM-enabled circular strategies promote sustainable growth in line with European Union regulations, such as the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS),

while also addressing stakeholder expectations. By linking CE and ESG through intelligent KM, organisations comply with regulatory requirements and strengthen their legitimacy and competitiveness in global markets, building ecosystems where sustainability is actionable and measurable. This integration enhances resilience by improving adaptability to resource and market pressures, drives innovation and efficiency, and aligns organisational practices with societal and regulatory demands (Eskiyerli and Dondrup, 2025). In doing so, organisations are better positioned to contribute to the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), embedding sustainability at the core of long-term value creation.

This track welcomes both theoretical and empirical contributions that investigate the integration of KM, CE, and ESG in diverse organisational contexts. We invite scholars to explore the role of knowledge processes, digital technologies, and collaborative practices in accelerating the transition towards circular models that create demonstrable ESG value.

Submissions may include (but are not limited to):

- Conceptual frameworks connecting CE practices, KM processes, and ESG outcomes;
- Digital platforms, AI, and data analytics supporting industrial symbiosis and circular ecosystems;
- Metrics and indicators, including life cycle approaches, to measure the environmental, social, and economic impacts of knowledge-driven CE initiatives;
- Taxonomies guiding institutions and organisations in transitioning to a sustainable economy;
- Multicriteria decision-making approaches to evaluate and prioritise KM-enabled circular strategies according to ESG criteria;
- Organisational leadership, culture, and competencies enabling knowledge-driven circularity;
- Case studies and surveys regarding the role of KM-enabled CE practices driving ESG transformation;
- Policy and governance perspectives supporting CE–KM integration for sustainability agendas.

The overall aim of this track is to stimulate debate on how circular economy initiatives can be effectively managed through knowledge processes and digital enablers to deliver concrete ESG outcomes. By bridging theory and practice, this track seeks to advance our understanding of how intelligent knowledge ecosystems can transform sustainability ambitions into measurable results, strengthening both organisational resilience and societal progress.

Keywords

Circular economy, knowledge management, digital transformation, sustainability, ESG

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Guidelines and Requirements

Researchers wishing to contribute are invited to submit an EXTENDED ABSTRACT (in doc/docx format) of min 500 and max 1000 words, not later than **31 JANUARY 2026**. 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

31 January 2026 – Extended Abstract Submission Deadline
24 February 2026 – Acceptance Notification to Authors
20 April 2026 – Early-Bird Registration & Payment Deadline
02 May 2026 – Full Paper Submission Deadline
31 May 2026 – Regular and PhD Students Registration & Payment Deadline
15 June 2026 – Conference Program Release
1-3 July 2026 – 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 extension 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