



WOIC2026

13th ANNUAL
WORLD OPEN INNOVATION CONFERENCE

Call for Academic Papers

(Please refer to the Call for Best Practice Submissions for best practice presentations)

13th Annual World Open Innovation Conference (WOIC 2026)

Location: Kaunas University of Technology - Santaka Valley, Kaunas, Lithuania

Dates:

November 3, 2026: Doctoral Consortium

November 4 and 5, 2026: Main Conference

November 6, 2026: Local Visit (optional)

www.worldopeninnovation.com

The World Open Innovation Conference (WOIC) brings together academia, practice, and policy to discuss the latest findings, trends, and tools in open innovation. Open innovation refers to “a distributed innovation process based on purposively managed knowledge flows across organizational boundaries” (Chesbrough & Bogers, 2014), and it has proven to be a key driver in harnessing inflows and outflows of knowledge to improve innovation success (Chesbrough et al., 2024).

This year’s conference is hosted by Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) in Lithuania, a context with a strong digital technologies industry and a vibrant ICT and startup ecosystem. Such environments highlight how innovation increasingly unfolds through distributed innovation among firms, startups, universities, and other actors. Against this backdrop, WOIC invites reflection on how open innovation continues to evolve in both research and practice. Rather than focusing solely on organizational boundaries, contemporary discussions increasingly emphasize the complexity of navigating multiple, overlapping technological, institutional, digital, and organizational boundaries within fragmented and interdependent ecosystems. This raises important questions about how organizations manage knowledge flows across such systems and how openness ultimately translates into innovation outcomes and value capture.

Submission Guidelines for Academic Papers: Extended Abstracts & Full Papers

Research has so far exposed many attributes of open innovation (Dahlander et al., 2021; Randhawa et al., 2016), and it has been used in varied contexts, ranging from individual to organizational to ecosystem and to national levels of analysis (Bogers et al., 2017; Majchrzak et al., 2023). For example, there has been attention for the impact of the open innovation model on R&D professionals and their work (Lifshitz-Assaf, 2018), management in open innovation projects (Ter Wal et al., 2017), open innovation within high-tech & low-tech industries as well as large organizations and small-medium

enterprises (Badir et al., 2020; Remneland, 2020), the human side of open innovation and human resource management (Engelsberger et al., 2022, 2023; Bogers et al. 2018), value creation and capture through open innovation (Bez & Chesbrough, 2021; Majchrzak et al., 2023), addressing societal challenges through open innovation (Bertello et al., 2022; Chesbrough 2020; Radziwon et al., 2022), and the creation and untangling of relationships on firm, technology and individual levels as innovation processes open and close over time (Zobel, 2017, Holgersson et al., 2022).

This year, we invite submissions that explore open innovation across multiple levels—from individual behaviors and team dynamics to organizational strategies and inter-organizational collaborations—and across a variety of contexts, including large corporations, SMEs, and diverse innovation ecosystems. We welcome submissions of both *traditional research papers* and those with *a managerial or policy orientation*. From the accepted submissions, we will select two academic award winners: one prize for the best student paper and another for the best emerging scholar paper (see the Academic Awards below).

Authors must first submit an extended abstract. Depending on the stage of the research, submissions may follow one of two options.

Completed research: Authors submitting completed research should provide an extended abstract describing work that has already been conducted (e.g., data collected and analyzed), rather than research that is only planned. Both empirical and conceptual papers with theoretical and/or managerial implications are welcome. Authors whose extended abstracts are accepted will be required to submit a **full paper upon registration** (please see the *Call for Academic Papers – Important Dates* section for deadlines). During the submission process, authors must also provide **three to five short statements highlighting the managerial relevance of their paper for practitioners attending the conference** (maximum 100 characters, including spaces, per statement). Submissions that do not meet these requirements will be routinely rejected.

Research ideas: As a new option this year, authors may submit extended abstracts presenting **early-stage research ideas**, including projects for which data collection is planned or currently underway. In the submission form, authors should indicate that their abstract should be treated as a **research idea**. Please note that extended abstracts designated as research ideas will **not be** considered for regular academic paper presentations. Instead, authors may be invited to deliver a short pitch or present a poster. Research ideas will also not be considered for the Best Paper Award or the RTM special issue. Authors submitting research ideas are **not required to submit a full paper upon registration**, but they may update and further develop their research idea.

Please refer to the **Important Dates** section below for the submission deadline.

Both the extended abstract and the full paper must follow the required structure, consisting of:

- short abstract
- introduction
- theoretical or conceptual background
- methodology (if empirical paper)
- results
- discussion and contributions
- limitations
- references

The word limits for submissions are as follows:

- extended abstracts (1,500-3,000 words, including all text in body, tables, figures, references, etc.);
- full papers (max.10,000 words, including all text in body, tables, figures, references, etc.).

During the submission process, authors can choose one of the “open innovation topics” (see *possible topics for submissions* below) that best fits their submission. These topics will be used in the review

process and design of the conference program. We aim to group papers based on their topic and stage of development. Please note that any paper not related to Open Innovation will be considered out of scope and rejected. All submissions to WOIC will undergo a two-stage review process to ensure fair, transparent, and rigorous evaluation. In the first stage, every submission will be reviewed by the WOIC Editorial Board. In the second stage, submitting authors and co-authors will be invited to serve as reviewers, helping to evaluate each submission according to a structured checklist based on the following criteria:

- theoretical background and development,
- potential contribution to open innovation research,
- methodological rigor,
- managerial implications for practice or policy,
- clarity of writing,
- fit to open innovation.

To enable multiple independent assessments, all papers will be reviewed by multiple reviewers. Authors who serve as reviewers will receive a conference discount in recognition of their contribution. Accepted submissions will be compiled and shared with all conference participants to support discussion and knowledge exchange. Authors whose papers are accepted for the conference are expected to act as a discussant for at least one academic paper session. Please note that at this moment there is no plan to have an open-access publication of the paper in a proceeding format. For any submission-related queries, please e-mail the WOIC Academic Team (woic-academic-team@tue.nl).

“Rule of One”

Multiple submissions by the same author are allowed; however, each author may present only one paper at the conference. Any additional papers must be presented by a different co-author. Please consult with your co-authors before submission to coordinate who will present each paper. Presenters of accepted academic papers must register for the conference before the registration deadline; otherwise, their papers will not be included in the main conference program.

Possible Topics for Submissions

Besides specific submissions related to the conference theme, the conference generally seeks original research on a wide range of topics related to open innovation that contribute to a better multi-level understanding of open innovation. For example, we welcome submissions related to the following themes:

- *Open innovation behavior and cognition, e.g.,*
 - Individual-level attributes and behaviors associated with OI (e.g., identity, commitment, motivation, resistance to change, communication and learning)
 - Microfoundations of OI and related topics
 - The human side of OI, and the role of human resource management
- *Open innovation strategy and design, e.g.,*
 - Formal and informal organizational structures for OI
 - Project-level attributes related to OI strategy and design (e.g., project complexity)
 - Nature and outcomes of entrepreneurial opportunities that OI can enable to enact
 - Combinations of “open” and “closed” strategies
 - Intellectual property mechanisms and strategy
 - Business model innovation
- *Open innovation communities and users, e.g.,*

- Leveraging knowledge produced by individual users with different abilities and motivations
- How to sustain different forms of OI communities
- Alignment between organizations and communities of innovation
- *Open innovation ecosystems, e.g.,*
 - How new network forms combine value creation and value capture
 - Interactions between heterogeneous actors in innovation ecosystems (and their governance)
 - Governance of digital platforms
 - Crowd-based search and financing
- *Open innovation policy & governance, e.g.,*
 - The design, implementation, and effects of policies for OI
 - New forms of democracy and collaborative public management (e.g., cities, governments)
- *Open innovation and technology*
 - Technology-driven OI (use of OI for Big Data, AI, deep-tech innovation)
 - Emerging technologies for OI practices
 - Technology, digitization, and OI
 - Human and AI agency and OI
- *Open innovation and grand challenges*
 - OI and sustainability
 - Mission-driven open innovation and experimental spaces for addressing societal challenges.
- Creating multidimensional value through OI
- OI and the circular economy
- Integrating ESG criteria into OI Processes
- *New metrics or methodologies for studying open innovation*
 - Performance metrics of OI
 - Engagement metrics of OI
 - New methodology to unpack OI
 - OI failure and abandonment
- *Open innovation in context*
 - Service vs product innovation
 - SME vs Big corporate OI
 - International OI
 - Industry specific OI (e.g. health OI)
- Openness and data
 - Open data
 - Open sources
 - Open science
 - Open access
- *Related topic areas in this rapidly expanding field, e.g.,*
 - OI and entrepreneurship
 - OI and standardization
 - OI in different contexts (e.g., services, SMEs, international business)
 - Linking OI to broader theories of management or economics

Academic Awards: Awards for Best Paper by a Student and Emerging Scholar

The conference will present awards for the best student paper and the best emerging scholar paper. To be eligible, the lead or sole author must be a student enrolled during 2026 or an emerging scholar who earned their PhD between 2021 and 2026. Only full paper submissions qualify for these awards. Additionally, the eligible author must present the paper at the conference. At the time of submission, authors will be asked to indicate whether they are eligible for either of these awards. Finalists for the awards will be honored during the conference and on the WOIC website. Each award winner will receive a plaque and a free entry to next year's WOIC for themselves and one other person.

Special Section in Research-Technology Management

Research-Technology Management (RTM) will publish a special section on "Open Innovation" with selected papers from this conference. *To be considered for the special section, authors must submit a full paper upon registration (see announced deadlines).* The submitted extended abstracts

will be shortlisted based on the above-mentioned criteria, after which the full papers will be reviewed for possible consideration for the special section. Authors who aim for the special section are encouraged to submit high-quality research in line with [RTM's aims and scope](#).

Authors of papers selected for the RTM special section will be notified by November 16th, 2026, and given the opportunity to improve their manuscripts before resubmitting them by the end of the year. The RTM editors will pre-screen these papers, inviting selected authors to revise their manuscripts based on the provided feedback. Authors of the papers invited to RTM will be asked to format their revised manuscripts according to the [style of RTM](#). Although the intention is to publish the (most of) the selected papers, note that being invited to submit to RTM does not guarantee publication of the article. If you have any questions, please contact Marcus Holgersson (marhol@chalmers.se).

Doctoral Consortium

The call for the Doctoral Consortium will be announced separately. Please stay tuned to the WOIC website and social media platforms for updates.

Important Dates for Academic Papers

- March 16th, 2026: Call for Academic Papers launch.
- April 20th, 2026: Submission website opens.
- May 4th, 2026: Submission deadline for extended abstracts and full papers.
- July 6th, 2026: Notification of acceptance for academic paper submissions.
- September 4th, 2026: Registration deadline for accepted academic paper submissions.
- September 4th, 2026: Deadline for Early Bird Registration.
- September 1st, 2026: Full paper (updated) submission for awards.
- November 3rd, 2026: Doctoral Consortium.
- November 4th–5th, 2026: Main Conference Dates.
- November 6th, 2026: Local Visit (optional).
- November 16th, 2026: Notification of invitation to *RTM* special section.
- December 31st, 2026: Deadline for submission to *RTM* for selected papers.

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