



# WOIC2026

13<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL  
WORLD OPEN INNOVATION CONFERENCE

## *Call for Best Practice Submissions*

*(Please refer to the Call for Academic Papers for research paper presentations)*

**13<sup>th</sup> Annual World Open Innovation Conference (WOIC 2026)**

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

### Dates:

November 4 and 5, 2026: Main Conference

November 6, 2026: Local Visit (optional)

[www.worldopeninnovation.com](http://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 tradition of collaboration between academia and industry. 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 boundaries — technological, institutional, digital, and organizational — within fragmented and interdependent ecosystems. In this context, WOIC provides a timely platform to explore how organizations manage knowledge flows across such ecosystems and how they translate openness into innovation outcomes and value capture.*

### **Call for Best Practice Submissions: The Aim in Brief**

WOIC 2026 aims to bridge research and practice to drive meaningful impact. We warmly invite open innovation professionals to share their most effective approaches, projects, methods, and insights with a diverse audience of peers, policymakers, academics, and nonprofit leaders.

In an era marked by rapid change and complexity, Best Practice sessions spotlight how organizations are using open innovation to adapt, collaborate, and build resilience. By showcasing real-world applications, these sessions foster cross-disciplinary exchange, spark new ideas, and encourage the validation, scaling, and cross-pollination of impactful collaboration models.

Best Practices are a vital part of the conference, offering concrete, action-oriented examples of how open innovation is implemented across industries and sectors. What makes WOIC truly unique is the way it actively brings together academics and practitioners—not just side by side, but in real exchange, designed to make these two worlds work together.

Alongside academic paper presentations and industry challenge sessions, Best Practices play a central role in creating this dynamic, making WOIC a space where ideas are not only discussed, but applied and challenged in practice—and this approach has proven to work remarkably well.

### **WHY should you submit a best practice?**

Presenting a Best Practice at WOIC 2026 is a unique opportunity to contribute to the global conversation on open innovation. By showcasing your work to an international community of open innovation leaders, researchers, and policymakers, you can:

- Receive valuable feedback and visibility from an engaged, multidisciplinary audience including both practitioners and academics.
- Position your organization as a front-runner in the open innovation community.
- Spark new collaborations with open innovation scholars and industry experts across sectors and geographies.
- Inspire other organizations and help scale meaningful solutions around the world.

### **Possible Topics for Submissions**

Besides specific submissions in relation to the conference theme, the conference more generally seeks best practices on a wide range of topics related to open innovation that illustrate how to design, manage, and navigate collaborative activities within and across organizations and ecosystems.

*Previous Best Practice topics have included:*

- Building cities rooted in open innovation principles
- Revitalizing research communities
- Democratizing access to finance
- Developing cross-country collaboration networks
- Embedding open innovation processes in large firms

In general, we welcome submissions that are related (but not limited) to the following themes:

- *Open innovation behavior and cognition*
  - How you motivate employees or partners to engage in open innovation
  - How you deal with resistance, fear of knowledge leakage, or “not invented here” attitudes
  - Practices used to encourage learning, collaboration, and openness across teams
  - How HR policies, incentives, leadership behavior, or training support open innovation
- *Open innovation strategy and design*
  - How open innovation activities are organized in your organization (teams, roles, processes)
  - How you design and manage specific open innovation projects or programs
  - Decisions on when to open up innovation—and when not to
  - How you combine open and closed innovation approaches in practice
  - How you handled intellectual property in collaborations
  - How open innovation contributed to new or changed business models

- *Open innovation communities and users*
  - How you involved users, customers, startups, or external experts in innovation
  - How you attracted, motivated, and retained participants in innovation communities
  - How you align community contributions with organizational goals
- *Open innovation ecosystems*
  - How you collaborate with multiple partners across an innovation ecosystem
  - How roles, responsibilities, and value sharing were defined among partners
  - How you govern platforms, partnerships, or innovation networks
  - Experiences with crowdsourcing, open calls, or crowd-based financing
- *Open innovation policy & governance*
  - How policies or regulations affected your open innovation activities
  - How you worked with public organizations, cities, or governments on open innovation
  - Governance structures used in public–private or multi-stakeholder initiatives
  - Lessons from implementing open innovation in regulated or public-sector contexts
- *Open innovation and technology*
  - How you used open innovation in AI, data-driven, or deep-tech projects
  - Digital tools or platforms that support collaboration and knowledge sharing
  - How technology enabled faster, broader, or more effective open innovation
  - Challenges when faced combining new technologies with open innovation practices
- *Open innovation and grand challenges*
  - How open innovation was used to address sustainability or societal challenges
  - Experiences with mission-driven or purpose-oriented innovation initiatives
  - How you balance economic, social, and environmental goals
  - Open innovation practices supporting circular economy or ESG objectives
- *New metrics or methodologies for open innovation*
  - How you measured the success of open innovation initiatives
  - KPIs or indicators used to track participation, engagement, or outcomes
  - Tools or frameworks used to evaluate and improve open innovation efforts
  - What you learned from experiments, pilots, or failed initiatives
- *Open innovation in context*
  - Differences in how open innovation worked in services versus product development
  - How open innovation was adapted for SMEs or large organizations
  - Experiences with open innovation across countries or cultures
  - Industry-specific open innovation practices (e.g., health, manufacturing, digital)
- *Openness and data*
  - How you shared or used open data in innovation projects
  - Experiences with open-source initiatives
  - How you balance openness with control, security, or competitive concerns
  - Practical lessons from managing data and knowledge openness

- *Related topic areas in this rapidly expanding field, e.g.,*
  - How open innovation supports startup creation or scaling
  - Experiences linking open innovation to standards or industry norms
- Open innovation in different organizational or institutional settings
- Lessons that connect open innovation to broader management or economic challenges

### **Submission process**

To be considered for inclusion in the conference program, we invite individuals and teams to submit an application via our dedicated submission portal by June 30, 2026.

*Please note: the submission portal will open on April 20, 2026.*

You may choose one of the following formats:

1. **PowerPoint Presentation** – maximum of 10 slides
2. **Word or PDF Document** – maximum of 2 pages

### **Each submission must include:**

- The name(s) of the participating organization(s)
- The name(s) of the presenter(s) (if accepted)
- A concise description of the Best Practice to be presented

*Please carefully review the detailed instructions available on the submission portal. Submissions that do not adhere to the stated guidelines will be automatically disqualified.*

### **Evaluation Criteria, Selection Process, and Awards**

Submissions will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Originality and Uniqueness
- Collaboration and Engagement
- Relevance to the Open Innovation Community
- Demonstrated Results and Evidence (*bonus points awarded*)
- Scalability and Replicability (*bonus points awarded*)

Each year, we receive several dozen best practice submissions, all of which undergo a rigorous evaluation process conducted by our dedicated jury, as outlined above. Due to the limited number of available presentation slots, only a selected group of submissions can be invited.

If you are invited, you will have the opportunity to present your work at the WOIC conference. In general, each Best Practice session at WOIC 2026 will consist of a 10-minute presentation followed by a 10–20-minute interactive discussion. Presenting your work will also offer you the chance to win the award for the *Best Open Innovation Practice*, which will be selected based on the abovementioned criteria.

### **Additional Information**

- Conference registration is mandatory for all Best Practice presenters.
- The ‘Rule of One’ (one presentation per person) does not apply to Best Practice submissions. However, if multiple submissions are accepted, a separate presenter is required for each.
- In the case of limited session capacity, priority will be given to presenters not participating in the Academic Track.

## Call for Best Practice - Important Dates

- April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026: Submission platform opens.
- June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026: Deadline to submit your Best Practice.
- July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026: Notification of Acceptance for a Best Practice presentation at WOIC
- August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026: Deadline to confirm your participation in the WOIC 2026.
- September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026: Deadline to register to the conference (Early Bird price).
- September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026: Deadline to register to the conference (if you are presenting your Best Practice at WOIC 2026)
- October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026: Deadline to send your Best Practice presentation for feedback (optional)
- October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026: Deadline to send your Best Practice presentation slides
- November 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup>, 2026: Main conference days
- November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026: Post-conference visit (optional)

## References

- Chesbrough, H., & Bogers, M. 2014. Explicating open innovation: Clarifying an emerging paradigm for understanding innovation. In H. Chesbrough, W. Vanhaverbeke, & J. West (Eds.), *New Frontiers in Open Innovation*: 3-28. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chesbrough, H., Radziwon, A., Vanhaverbeke, W. & West, J. 2024. *The Oxford Handbook of Open Innovation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press