Proceedings of the

21st European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship

ECIE 2026

17-18 September 2026

Hosted By

ISCTE-IUL University Institute of Lisbon, Portugal

Edited by

Prof. Florinda Matos and

Prof. Pedro Sebastião

About the 21st European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 2026

The European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ECIE) is a prominent academic conference that has been held annually for 21 years. The conference serves as a vital forum for scholars, researchers, entrepreneurs, and practitioners to explore the latest trends, research findings, and practical applications in the fields of innovation and entrepreneurship. ECIE is committed to advancing the understanding of how innovation and entrepreneurship drive economic growth, competitiveness, and societal progress.

ECIE is recognized for its rigorous peer-reviewed conference proceedings, which ensure that the research presented is of high academic quality and practical relevance. The Proceedings of the 21st ECIE, 2026 includes academic research papers, PhD research papers and Master's research papers as well as work-in-progress papers, which have been presented and discussed at the conference. The proceedings are of an academic level appropriate to a research audience including graduates, post-graduates, doctoral and post-doctoral researchers. All papers have been double-blind peer reviewed by members of the Review Committee.

Aims and Scope

The primary aim of ECIE is to foster a comprehensive understanding of innovation and entrepreneurship by bringing together, from around the world, diverse perspectives from academia, industry, and policy-making. The conference seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice, offering insights into the processes that fuel innovation and entrepreneurial ventures. ECIE encourages the exploration of new ideas, the development of innovative business models, and the identification of best practices that can be applied across different sectors and regions.

The scope of the conference is broad and interdisciplinary, encompassing a wide range of topics related to innovation management, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and the role of technology in driving business growth. ECIE also emphasises the importance of education and training in fostering entrepreneurial skills and mindsets, as well as the role of policy and government in supporting innovation and entrepreneurship.

Topics Covered

ECIE covers a diverse array of topics that reflect the dynamic and evolving nature of innovation and entrepreneurship. The call for papers asked for contributions that considered the following topics. In addition, the committee welcomed papers on a number of specialist mini-tracks which can be seen at the end of this list.

Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- Strategies for creating social value in business.
- Case studies of successful social enterprises.
- The role of entrepreneurship in addressing social and environmental challenges.

Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)

- Innovative approaches to integrating NBS in business and urban planning.
- The impact of NBS on community resilience and environmental sustainability.
- Cross-sector collaborations for implementing NBS.
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Responsible Business Practices

- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and its evolving role.
- Integrating sustainability into core business strategies.
- Balancing profitability with social and environmental impact.

Digital Transformation in Business

- Leveraging digital tools for enhanced innovation and efficiency.
- Digital platforms for scaling social enterprises.
- Opportunities and challenges of digital transformation in traditional industries.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Entrepreneurship

- AI-driven business models and innovation.
- Ethical considerations of AI in society.
- The role of AI in supporting social entrepreneurship and addressing social issues.

Innovation in Sustainable Development

- Entrepreneurship's role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Green technologies and sustainable business practices.
- Fostering a circular economy through innovative ventures.
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Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and Social Impact

- Building supportive ecosystems for social entrepreneurs.
- Regional approaches to fostering innovation and social entrepreneurship.
- The impact of universities and research institutions on social innovation.
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Public-Private Partnerships and Cross-Sector Collaboration

- The role of government, private sector, and NGOs in fostering innovation.
- Models of collaboration for tackling social and environmental challenges.
- Financing mechanisms for social enterprises and innovative projects.
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Future Trends in Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- Emerging trends shaping the entrepreneurial landscape.
- Technology-driven changes in entrepreneurship.
- Preparing the next generation of entrepreneurs for socially responsible innovation.

Measurement and Evaluation of Social Impact

- Metrics for assessing social and environmental value.
- Tools and methodologies for impact measurement.
- Reporting and accountability in social enterprises.

Mini Tracks

Experts in the field proposed mini tracks on the following topics. Papers accepted on these topics after the double-blind peer review process were presented as mini tracks at the conference and are also published in these proceedings.

- Academic Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Dynamics
- Technology Transfer Processes and Innovation Systems
- Beyond Profit: Rethinking Business Models for a Sustainable Future
- Women in Intelligent Systems and Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurial Ecosystems and the Role of Education in Fostering Sustainable Startup Growth
- Brain-Driven Entrepreneurship: Cognitive Performance, Learning Design, and the Future of Entrepreneurial Education
- Entrepreneurial value creation through university–industry collaboration

- Interorganizational Relationships for Innovation and Sustainability
- Innovation and Resilience in Supply Chains

The programme from the 2026 conference can be downloaded from here and full details about the conference can be seen from the conference website: https://www.academic-conferences.org/conferences/ecie/ecie-programme/

ECIE Preface

These proceedings represent the work of contributors to the 21st European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ECIE 2026), hosted by ISCTE-IUL University Institute of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal on 17-18 September 2026. The Conference Co-Chairs are Prof. Florinda Matos and Prof. Pedro Sebastião from ISCTE-IUL University Institute of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal.

ECIE is now a well-established event on the academic research calendar and now in its 20th year the key aim remains the opportunity for participants to share ideas and meet the people who hold them. The scope of papers will ensure an interesting two days. The subjects covered illustrate the wide range of topics that fall into this important and ever-growing area of research.

The opening keynote presentation is given by Prof. Soumodip Sarkar, from the University of Évora Portugal, who will be speaking about "Vernacular AI: The Bottom-up Domestication of Innovation."

The second day of the conference will open with an address from António Bob Santos, ISCTE-IUL University Institute of Lisbon, Portugal on the topic of "Innovation-Oriented Public Policies for a Sustainable AI-Driven Future."

With an initial submission of 276 abstracts, after the double blind, peer review process there are 96 Academic research papers, 16 PhD research papers, 2 Masters papers, 1 Non-Academic paper and 5 work-in-progress papers published in these Conference Proceedings. These papers represent research from Albania, Australia; Belgium; Brazil; Canada; China; Colombia; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Egypt; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; India; Indonesia; Ireland; Israel; Italy; Japan; Latvia; Lithuania; Malaysia; Mexico; Morocco; Netherlands; Nigeria; Norway; Oman; Pakistan; Philippines; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Saudi Arabia; Slovakia; South Africa; Spain; Taiwan; The Netherlands; Tunisia; Turkey; UAE; UK; Uruguay; USA and Vietnam.

We hope you enjoy the conference.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in this event.

Prof. Florinda Matos and Prof. Pedro Sebastião
ISCTE-IUL University Institute of Lisbon, Portugal
September 2026

Biographies of Chairs and Keynote Speakers

Conference Co-Chairs



Florinda Matos is a Professor of General Management at ISCTE Business School, ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon, and an associate research fellow at DINÂMIA'CET – IUL – Centre for Socioeconomic and Territorial Studies, where she leads several international projects, including the CoVE Future Skills Factory. As the editor of several journals and books, she has authored numerous works on knowledge and intellectual capital management, resilience, sustainability, and digital transformation. She is a distinguished conference chair for numerous conferences in the fields of intellectual capital, knowledge management, and innovation. Additionally, she is the Founder and President of ICAA – Intellectual Capital Association and serves as Portugal's ambassador for The New Club of Paris.



Pedro Sebastião is a Full Professor at ISCTE-IUL and President of AUDAX-ISCTE, leading national and international initiatives in innovation and entrepreneurship. A researcher at the Institute of Telecommunications, his work covers the low-altitude economy, drone and unmanned systems communications, stochastic processes, IoT, and efficient communication systems. He has supervised numerous theses, authored over 200 publications, and led or evaluated more than one hundred R&D projects. He has also developed several postgraduate and doctoral programs, supported technology-transfer initiatives and startup creation, and previously worked in defence industries and at Nokia-Siemens. He holds a PhD in Electrical and Computer Engineering from IST – University of Lisbon.

Keynote Speakers



Prof. Soumodip Sarkar has a distinguished international career. He holds a Masters and PhD in Economics from Northeastern University and is Full Professor at the University of Évora and researcher at CEFAGE-UE. His academic leadership has included serving as Vice-Rector, where he led initiatives in technology transfer and entrepreneurship. He is currently Executive President of the Alentejo Science & Technology Park (PACT), where he is an active practitioner and promoter of entrepreneurial ecosystems. Through PACT, he has overseen partnerships and innovation projects in sectors such as energy, AI, aerospace and healthtech. Prof. Sarkar's research focuses on how innovation emerges and scales under constraints, at the intersection of human adaptability, institutions and technology. His work appears in leading journals. His leadership portfolio covers governance, innovation scaling and inter-institutional coordination, including multi-stakeholder investment programmes and strategic partnerships with corporations and governments. He has authored influential books, supervised numerous PhD candidates, and was recently awarded a European project to design an immersive AI-based learning lab. He is also a past Fellow ((2015 2025) at the Asia Center of Harvard University. Prof. Sarkar has played key roles in academic evaluation and accreditation, serving as Chair of the Social Sciences 2 panel of the Lithuanian Science Council (2014–2018), as a member of the Portuguese university evaluation agency A3ES, and as an evaluator for the CEEMAN international accreditation board.



António Bob Santos holds a PhD in Economics from ISCTE-IUL and is currently a Board member of the Agency for Research and Innovation, E.P.E. (AI2). Between 2021-2022, Antonio was the Executive Coordinator of the "Impulso Programs" at the Directorate-General of Higher Education. He joined the Board of Directors of National Innovation Agency, between 2018-2021, as well as the Executive Administration of Fund for Innovation, Technology and Circular Economy. Since 2001 he has collaborated with several governmental structures in Innovation Policy area, the Technological Plan, the Digital Agenda, the Lisbon Strategy, the National Reform Plan and the National Program for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. António Bob Santos was a manager of innovation projects at UMIC responsible for the conception of the b-ON, OTIC and Excellence Centers programs, and at CEiiA - Center for Engineering and Product Development, in Smart Cities area. António Bob Santos is the author of several academic articles in scientific publications and opinion articles in innovation, technology and digital.

Mini Track Chairs



Paul Coyle is the Director of the Entrepreneurial Mindset Network, a global community of practice, with members in 107 countries, and special interest groups for the application of the entrepreneurial mindset in business, education, healthcare and social entrepreneurship. The Network's vision is that everybody, not just entrepreneurs, can benefit from having an entrepreneurial mindset including employees in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. An entrepreneurial mindset enables each person to make their unique contribution to the world. Paul is an expert in the entrepreneurial mindset, innovation, entrepreneurship, leadership and organisational change.



Marco Lamas is a Post-Doc in Education (Entrepreneurship), with a PhD in Education (Entrepreneurship) and Bsc in International Relations. He is a Senior Professor at the Polytechnic Institute of Management and Technology in Porto, Portugal where he Leads the Business and Innovation LAB (BIL). He is a founder member of SHINE - Scaling Higher Education Innovation for Europe (https://shine-project.eu/) and he is recognized as an EntreComp Practitioner.

Dr. Victor (Vik) Pérez, is an educator-researcher-practitioner whose work has shaped the emergence of brain-driven entrepreneurship, integrating neuroscience, technology, innovation, and education. He serves as Editor-in-Chief of the forthcoming World Encyclopedia of Neuro-Entrepreneurship (World Scientific Publishing) and is the creator of the WNYLE Method, an award-recognized, brain-based approach to cultivating the entrepreneurial mindset. Dr. Pérez also developed Cognitive Performance Music (CPM), a neuro-algorithmic intervention designed to enhance focus, motivation, and reflective learning. His book Entrepreneurship and Neuroscience: Researching Brain-Driven Entrepreneurship (Routledge) articulates the conceptual foundations of this field, while his forthcoming Mastery of Emotions in Entrepreneurship Education (MEE) (Edward Elgar) explores its affective dimension.He is the founder of the international research networks BRANET and INNOMUSIC Global, which connect scholars and creators advancing this new frontier.



Alexander Matrosov supports early-stage academic entrepreneurial teams by advising, sparring, and coordinating their initial steps toward market-oriented development. His work focuses on helping researchers and entrepreneurial teams identify opportunities, shape preliminary value propositions, and align their activities with realistic commercial pathways. Acting as a mediator between academic groups and industry stakeholders, he facilitates structured experimentation, early customer exploration, and opportunity evaluation. His practical experience across multiple radical innovation cases contributes to understanding how collaborative, cross-sector processes enable entrepreneurial value creation within university–industry ecosystems.



Dr. Thao Kim Nguyen is a Lecturer in Management and Director of the International Business Master's Program at the School of International Business and Marketing. Her research interests include interorganizational relationships, innovation strategies, and sustainable business practices. She has published and presented work on innovation ecosystems, firm innovation, and firm competitiveness development in international contexts



Carlos Miguel Oliveira has a Ph.D. in Management. He is a Coordinating Professor and Director of the School of Management at ISLA – Polytechnic University of Management and Technology. He is editor-in-chief of the Management in Review Journal and a collaborating member of CEOS.PP – Centre for Organisational and Social Studies. In recent years, he has published several articles in journals and conferences. He is a reviewer in some journals in the management area..



Outi-Maaria Palo-oja is Head of the Growth and Commercialisation (GroCo) Research Group at LAB University of Applied Sciences. She specialises in innovation management, research commercialisation, and university–industry collaboration. Her work examines technology transfer, co-creation, and critical sensemaking in innovation ecosystems. With extensive experience in national and international research collaborations, she is an expert in qualitative and interpretive methods. Her recent publications focus on AI in innovation management, science commercialisation, and societal entrepreneurship within academic–industry partnerships.



Marta Rosa holds a Master's degree in Social Studies of Environment and Sustainability from ISCTE – Lisbon University Institute. She is a research assistant at DINÂMIA'CET-ISCTE, working within the Innovation and Work Research Group. She is currently part of the European project CERERE (Cereals Resilience Revolution for Agile Supply Chain Management in the Mediterranean). She has also collaborated on the SocioDigital Lab's Strategic Project (Thematic Line 1), supporting dissemination efforts on regenerative territories and pathways towards carbon neutrality.



Sara Proença is a professor at the Polytechnic University of Coimbra (PUC), Portugal, and an integrated researcher at CERNAS – Research Center for Natural Resources, Environment and Society. She served as Director of the INOPOL Entrepreneurship Academy (2021–2025) and as Pro-President for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (2019–2021) at PUC. She holds a Ph.D. in Economics from ISEG–University of Lisbon, and a Master's and Bachelor's in Economics from FEUC–University of Coimbra. Her doctoral dissertation, Impact Assessment of Energy and Climate Policies: A Hybrid Bottom-up General Equilibrium Model (HyBGEM) for Portugal, received the António Simões Lopes Prize and was published by Almedina Editions. She has contributed to national and international R&D+I projects, published in peer-reviewed journals, and participated in numerous conferences. Her current research focuses on entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems, academic entrepreneurship, academia–industry collaboration, business model innovation, and applied economics.

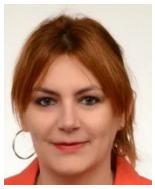
João J.M. Ferreira is a Full Professor at the University of Beira Interior (UBI), Portugal, where he also coordinated the Business Sciences Research Unit (NECE). He earned his Ph.D. in Management from



UBI in 2004, after attending the European Doctoral Programme in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain, in 1999. He has edited or co-edited several books on innovation and entrepreneurship and has published over 200 articles in leading international journals, including Business History, Regional Studies, Technovation, Journal of Business Research, IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management, Management Decision, R&D Management, and Technological Forecasting & Social Change, among others. He currently serves as Associate Editor for Management Decision and the Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development. His research interests span strategy, competitiveness, and entrepreneurship. According to Stanford University (USA), he is ranked among the top 2% of the most influential scientists worldwide in the field of business and economics.



Andreea Maria Gabriela MILITARU is a PhD candidate at the Doctoral School of Entrepreneurship, Business Engineering and Management, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest. She is currently ERASMUS+ KA131 HEI expert, and is an associate teaching assistant at the Faculty of Entrepreneurship, Engineering and Business Management (FAIMA). As a researcher, she has authored several articles on innovation systems and entrepreneurial behaviour and has participated in conferences on related topics. Andreea's ongoing research topic is improving innovation and technology transfer systems at the HEI level. She is passionate about mentoring her students and understanding the cultural dimensions of educational performance through visits to other universities and countries.



Ludmila Walaszczyk, PhD in Management Sciences, is a researcher in the field of sustainable development and business innovation, focusing on integrating environmental, social, and economic dimensions into business models. She is particularly interested in the role of digital technologies in supporting sustainability transitions, as well as methods for measuring and communicating triple bottom line outcomes – people, planet, and profit. Ludmila Walaszczyk conducts empirical research, case studies, and conceptual work to develop frameworks that guide the implementation of sustainable business models. Her goal is to understand how companies can remain competitive in dynamic markets while contributing to systemic socio-economic change.



Dr Souad Slyman is a Principal/Senior Lecturer and former Interim Deputy Head of the MOSI (Marketing, Operations, Supply Chain and Innovation) cluster. Her teaching and research span artificial intelligence, digital innovation, entrepreneurship, simulation technologies, and data-informed pedagogy. Her current work focuses on empowering women in intelligent systems and entrepreneurship, developing evidence-based frameworks for ethical AI, venture validation, and capability-building. She is Founder & CEO of AWEiSE (Acumenous Women Empowerment in Intelligent Systems & Entrepreneurship. She has led initiatives that enhance engagement, critical thinking, and employability in science and business education. Supervision and collaboration interests include responsible AI, technology-enabled entrepreneurship, learning analytics, and simulation for management education.

ECIE Review Committee

ECIE is fortunate to have a significant number of international experts in the field willing to review papers. Care is taken to ensure that a fully double-blind peer review process is followed, and reviewers are not selected if they have any research or organisational connection to the author/s.

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