

Call for papers
DIME conference - Organizing for Networked Innovation
Organized by
Politecnico di Milano
Department of Management, Economics, and Industrial Engineering
April 14-16, 2010

The notion that companies can improve their innovative performance by utilizing the knowledge residing in networks has become prominent in innovation studies. In particular, the trend towards open innovation has resulted in firms experimenting new ways of interacting and networking with external organizations and individuals. However, there is still limited knowledge concerning how firms can fruitfully exploit the potential inherent in their networks. Two main gaps emerge in the literature on boundary-spanning relationships, dealing with how companies should: (i) manage external interactions in order to access relevant knowledge; (ii) design their internal structures and managerial practices to properly absorb and leverage this knowledge. Moreover, there is a need to attend to how our increased knowledge about how innovation networks work can be used by firms to benefit from informal, intra-organizational networks and communities.

Innovation networks pose considerable challenges to scholars in economics, management and organisation science as in such a framework, organizing innovation initiatives through traditional hierarchical structure and mechanisms have limited, and probably even detrimental effects.

The conference intends to be an opportunity for collecting and discussing theoretical and empirical contributions on organizing for networked innovation.

We welcome theoretical and empirical contributions related to the following themes of the conference.

THEME A. Theoretical and empirical foundations of networked innovation

- How can different levels of analysis be addressed and integrated, namely individuals, teams, companies, and whole networks?
- How can different theoretical lenses (e.g. those provided by agency theory, transaction cost economics, the information processing stream, social network theory, resource- and competence-based perspectives) be combined and integrated so as to provide fresh insights into the organization of networked innovation?
- Which are the challenges posed by the interaction with peculiar agents such as communities of users and developers, university star scientists, new technology-based firms, other companies in international alliances and acquisitions?
- Are there peculiar structural characteristics that shape the way firms organize for network innovation?

THEME B. Designing firm organization for networked innovation

- Which organizational structures are most suitable for managing boundary spanning relationships? How do they relate and interact with characteristics of the external partners?
- Which managerial practices should companies adopt in order to design their internal organisation so as to properly acquire, assimilate and take advantage of knowledge generated by external sources? Which are the roles of intensive vertical and lateral communication, compensation schemes rewarding employees for knowledge sharing, and increasing delegation of decision rights to selected employees?
- Is there any incompatibility between the organizational structure and mechanisms of different actors in innovation networks? Are there any synergistic effects?

- How can multinational enterprises organize their internal networks so as to benefit from their external networks? Are there any specific organizational challenges involved in the interaction of cross-border intra- and inter-firm networks?
- How can innovation activities in informal, intra-organizational networks be facilitated and supported by management when the use of formal hierarchical power is not applicable? How can management simultaneously attend to both formal organizational structures and informal networks, and what types of incentives and control mechanisms can be applied in these dual settings?
- What organizational architectures and practices are best suited to allow firms to benefit from the increasing development of “markets for ideas”? What role does the licensor play in organizing the licensee’s innovation activities?

THEME C. Networked innovation and performance

- Which is the impact of networking on firms’ economic and innovation performances? How does recourse to different organisational structures and managerial practices moderate the link between use of external knowledge sources and firm performance?
- What networks structures are most conducive to innovation? Do networks of different types or with various structural characteristics triggers different types of innovation behaviour?
- Are there any peculiar institutional aspects (e.g. relating to IPR protection) that shape the way firms benefit from networked innovation? Are there any industry-specific effects?

THEME D. Small firms and networked innovations

- How can small firms, both in traditional and high tech sectors, profit from networked innovation? What are their strengths and weaknesses along this path?
- Which are the challenges faced by small companies and start-ups in organizing for networked innovation? Are their most suitable internal organizational arrangements different from those of large firms?
- Do small firms experience difficulties in accessing national and international knowledge and innovation networks? Do these difficulties depend on structural and sectoral specificities?
- How can small firms manage the dichotomy between openness and protection of proprietary knowledge? How they can cope with appropriability hazards?

Confirmed key note speakers for the conference are **Georg von Krogh** (ETH, Zurich and Pillar) and **Phanish Puranam** (London Business School).

The conference will start in Milan at Politecnico di Milano on April 14th at 2PM. It will continue in Stresa (Verbania) on April 15th and 16th (Hotel La Palma).

Paper submission – DEADLINE EXTENSION

Participants who wish to present their research at the conference are invited to submit full paper (in PDF) not exceeding 10.000 words (all included) to Cristina Rossi Lamastra (dime.dig@polimi.it), no later than ~~January 8th 2010~~ **JANUARY 31ST 2010**. All submissions will be peer reviewed and the conference organizing committee will select the papers considering their novelty, academic quality and relation to the theme of the conference. The decision of paper acceptance will be given by ~~January 24th 2010~~ **FEBRUARY 16TH 2010**. Revised versions of accepted papers should be submitted no later than **APRIL 1ST 2010**.

Two special issues of international journals will follow the conference, hosting a selection of the presented papers. Specifically,

- **EUROPEAN MANAGEMENT REVIEW** will host a special issue on **Designing internal organization for external knowledge sourcing** (related to the Theme B of the conference)
- **INDUSTRY & INNOVATION** will host a special issue on **Organizing inter- and intra-firm networks. Which impact on innovation performance?** (related to the Theme C of the conference)

Moreover, we are investigating the possibility of another special issue related to open innovation & small business (Theme D).

DIME doctoral tutorial

A doctoral tutorial will be organized in conjunction with the conference. Please, see the attached leaflet for further information

CONFERENCE VENUE

Hotel La Palma
Corso Umberto 1° 33
28838 Stresa (VB), Italy
Tel 0039 0323 32401, Fax 0039 0323 933930
[Http://www.hlapalma.it](http://www.hlapalma.it), info@hlapalma.it

Registration

There is no conference fee, but registration is necessary. Participants will be asked to pay for their own travel and accommodation. Funds are available to cover travel and hotel costs for Ph.D. students. **Please, register by sending an email to Elena Belotti (elena.belotti@polimi.it) before ~~February 15th 2010~~ **FEBRUARY 25TH 2010****. She can assist you in arranging your accommodation. For other organizational aspects please send an email to dime.dig@polimi.it. PhD students who are interested in attending the conference are invited to send their CV, including a description of their research interests, to dime.dig@polimi.it.

Important dates

Paper submission: ~~January 8th 2010~~ **JANUARY 31ST 2010**

Notice for paper acceptance: ~~January 24th 2010~~ **FEBRUARY 16TH 2010**

Conference registration: ~~February 15th 2010~~ **FEBRUARY 25TH 2010**

Final paper submission: ~~March 15th 2010~~ **APRIL 1ST 2010**

For further information at <http://emma.polimi.it/emma/showEvent.do?page=862&idEvent=36>

The organizing committee

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