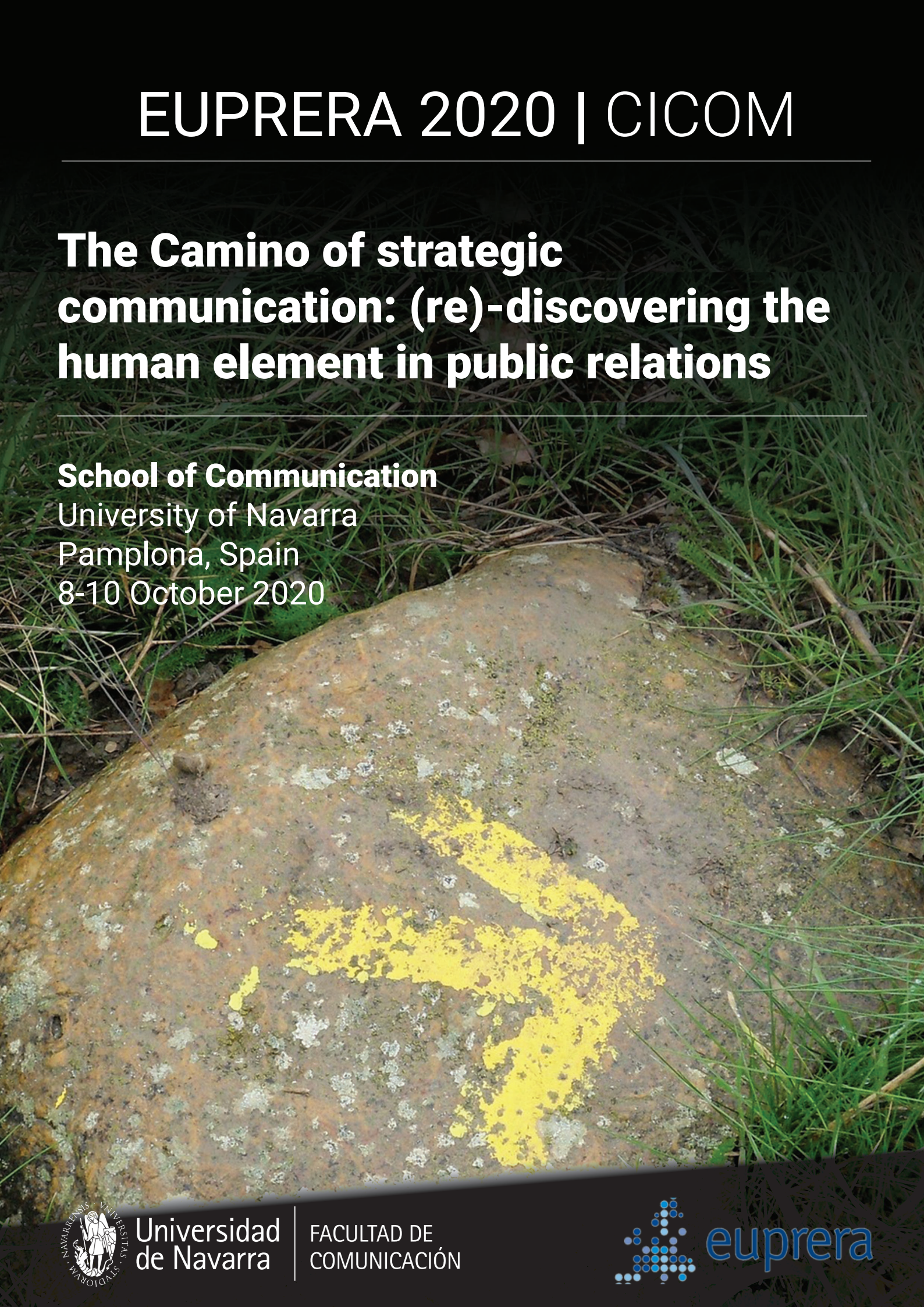
EUPRERA 2020 | CICOM

The Camino of strategic communication: (re)-discovering the human element in public relations



School of Communication
University of Navarra
Pamplona, Spain
8-10 October 2020

Universidad de Navarra | FACULTAD DE COMUNICACIÓN

euprera

CALL FOR PAPERS

EUPRERA

The European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) is an autonomous organization with nearly 500 members from 40 countries interested in advancing academic research and knowledge in strategic communication. In order to spread new methodologies and research results, EUPRERA organises a highly regarded annual congress each autumn in collaboration with a selected university or college in Europe.

The University of Navarra (UN)

Universidad de Navarra (UN) has been a pioneer in offering Communication studies in Spain at university level, with the launching of its Degree in Journalism back in 1958. Since then, other undergraduate and graduate programs have followed thanks to this innovative spirit. Today the University offers 57 undergraduate degrees, 46 master's degrees and 23 doctoral programs at its 4 campuses (Pamplona, San Sebastián, Madrid and Barcelona) to over 11,000 students. The University of Navarra was founded in 1952 by St. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, the founder of Opus Dei. Since then, its mission has been the pursuit of excellence in teaching and research and a constant commitment to serve people and society as a whole. Our educational institution was ranked number three in the 2019 Times Higher Education's (THE) Europe Teaching Rankings. We are consistently at the top of Spanish ranks in each of the three undergraduate programs we offer and we are in the Top 100 of QS Media subject ranking.

The 22nd EUPRERA Congress will also become the XXXVI International Conference of Communication (CICOM) at the School of Communication, Universidad de Navarra.

Local Organizing Committee

- Natalia Rodríguez-Salcedo, Associate Professor (chair)
- Elena Gutiérrez-García, Associate Professor
- Mónica Recalde-Viana, Associate Professor
- María Jesús Yáñez, Assistant Professor

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Academics, PhD students and practitioners are invited to submit papers and panel proposal related to the congress theme: The Camino of strategic communication.

THE CONGRESS THEME

We live in evolving societies that undergo profound and rapid transformations. Artificial intelligence, machine learning, robots in the workplace and big data are opening transcendent questions around the future of mankind. At the same time, trust and reputation are at risk in our dynamic, disruptive and uncertain world. In this complex scenario, going back to the basics of public relations and strategic communication seems more important than ever before: people and relationships. People should always come first.

Despite the role of technology, the use of robots in communication or AI, there seems to be a massive need to create human-centred organizations. We need to build value-oriented societies based upon humanistic principles. In short, we need to rethink what it means to put the person at the centre of our decisions. How communication and public relations respond to these issues will determine the future of our field and practice. To address these challenges we attempt to revisit the relevance of people on the art and science of strategic communication, including education, professionalism, research and the practice of strategic communication.

On the one hand, we would like to explore how to put the organizational focus on people. Communication/PR enables us to increase our uniquely human capabilities such us creativity, empathy, innovation or connection. Likewise, there is a huge opportunity to become more meaningful, creative and collaborative workplaces. On the other, more than ever, there is a big opportunity to make our businesses and institutions genuinely human, real and approachable to our publics,

EUPRERA, 22nd Annual Congress

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even considering the important role of new technology. In other words, we would like to build more open societies through communication to establish relationships based on honesty and trust that create even more value for organizations and society.

Indeed, the role of communicators, PR professionals, researchers and educators is crucial to understand, analyse and promote a humanistic view of our profession. Discipline and practice are at a critical turning point to anticipate and develop the knowledge, skills, competences and capabilities to manoeuvre these innovations.

But why using the word Camino? The Route to Santiago is of the utmost importance in Navarra. The University has the privilege to be on the Pilgrim's way. Therefore, we invite practitioners and scholars to discuss and work together in order to ascertain the potential of human elements and values of the discipline and its strategic role on the future to come in the best possible scenario.

SUB-THEMES

I. **Ethics in communication/PR**
Digital transformation challenges us to create a new cultural ethos - customs, uses, habits - that considers technology as a tool at the service of professionals and not as an end in itself. We must reconsider that the virtual world takes its meaning from the real world.

II. **Innovative communication/ PR approaches: new and old trends (Practice)**
The technological and humanistic challenges in which our contemporary society is involved, requires a profession – and its practitioners - to be focused on innovative manners that improve relationships with publics, and guide the social conversation. Traditionally, functional, postmodernist and critical approaches in PR/ communication literature are aiming to find responses to the challenges. This track aims to meet a research agenda that shows new trends: how collaborative networks with a broad range of stakeholders are built, how communication enhances organisational decision-making process; what new practitioners' leadership roles are being enacted; or what key indicators are being put into practice for the communicative constitutive organisations.

III. **New curricula for the future of education and training development (education)**
While mastering communication technologies, channels and multiple media platforms are constantly underlined in the curricula, the human dilemmas that the future will bring us are overlooked. How to sensitize students to the humanistic values in order to exercise professional judgement and high standards based on honesty, ethics, commitment and responsibility become challenges for the higher education and training of PR and communication.

IV. **Competencies and capabilities for a new professionalism landscape (Professionalism)**
The human element is at the centre of the new scenario that artificial intelligence is depicting. Also, the rapid transformations and societal expectations regarding emerging values (diversity, sustainability, purpose-driven organisations, etc.) confront organisations and practitioners to tackle and reshape the relational and dialogical approaches. How is the profession refurbishing its new and old competences? What are the new models or research approaches that are emerging regarding practitioners' competencies and capabilities? What characterizes proficient practitioners that contribute to agile organisations? What are the specific professional capabilities that may contribute to enhance proper dialogical and listening approaches, underlying the human element of the profession and professionalism?

V. **History and theory of public relations**
What is it in the past that we can apply nowadays to reinforce the human values of strategic communication? We might find some light in

CALL FOR PAPERS

the past, going back to where the profession started or just rediscovering classic theories including rhetoric, community, or other European social theories.

VI. **Open track - current communication/PR research**
EUPRERA 2020 also welcomes research that sheds new light on contemporary challenges in the broad domain of PR and strategic communication. We encourage the submission of original contributions ranging from theoretical and empirical building on quantitative or qualitative methods. Other human elements of strategic communication not covered in the previous topics can also be encompassed in this final track.

Dates for submission of anonymous papers and panels for peer review

- Deadline for abstracts: February 29th, 2019
- Feedback on abstracts: April 15th, 2019
- Deadline for full papers: 30 June, 2019

All abstracts and papers to be submitted in English. Abstracts: 800 words. Full papers: 30,000-40,000 characters, including blanks. Guidelines for panel proposals and full papers on the congress website.

Publication of papers

A special issue of Journal of Communication Management
A congress book (part of a book series published by Emerald)

OUTLINE OF PROGRAMME

The EUPRERA'S PhD Seminar

The Seminar will be held right before the Congress as usual. More details about dates and programme will be given soon. The aim of the seminar is to provide an international setting where doctoral students within public relations and strategic communication can present their ongoing work, get feedback from experts and peers and establish a valuable network for the future.

Thursday 8 October, 2020

- Congress starts in the morning
- Keynote speaker (1) (plenary session)
- Papers presentation (parallel sessions)
- Lunch
- Parallel panel sessions
- Spanish wine (reception)

Friday 9 October, 2020

- Parallel panel sessions
- Lunch
- Keynote speaker (2)
- EUPRERA Hour (awards, projects, networks)
- EUPRERA General Assembly

Saturday 10 October, 2020
Social activities: a bus will take you on a half day trip. Enjoy a visit to one of Navarra's most international wineries, Bodegas Otazu; a guided tour to enjoy Olite's medieval Palace architecture and whimsical towers and lunch at Parador de Olite, with a fabulous location in the same 15th-century castle.

AWARDS

During the congress the following awards are presented:

- EUPRERA Best Paper
- EMERALD Professional Impact
- EUPRERA Best Reviewer
- EUPRERA Master Thesis Award for Excellence – deadline for applications February 27, 2020

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