

## Awards for best research papers in public relations: EUPRERA honours academics and practitioners from Europe

**EUPRERA Annual Congress 2023**  
Charles University Prague (20-23 Sept.)

Prague, September 22, 2023 – On the occasion of its annual congress, the European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA), a body of academic institutions, researchers, and senior professionals in the field of public relations and strategic communication with 550 members from 51 countries, has awarded authors for their excellent research and the best reviewer for their contribution.

**EUPRERA Best Paper Awards** were given to the authors of the three papers with the highest rankings in a two-stage, blind peer-review process performed by a scientific committee of renowned international scholars, headed by Chiara Valentini. The three winning papers are:



*I want what you want!*  
*Understanding the Impact of Public*  
*Interest Arguments*  
*in Lobbying and Public Affairs*

by **Ketil Raknes** and **Øyvind Ihlen**

This paper significantly contributes to the realm of public affairs by providing valuable insights into how politicians and lobbyists in Norway use the concept of public interest to advocate for or against energy and environmental issues. The paper is well-constructed, rigorous and well argued. It offers a comprehensive, relevant, and coherent theoretical framework that thoroughly examines the utilization of “topos” in the communicative interactions of these influential social actors. The theoretical framework is highly valuable

in that it can be used to analyze a diverse set of advocacy initiatives beyond the ones in focus in this study. Overall, this study constitutes a significant advancement in the understanding of lobbying and rhetoric within the political sphere and offers a theory-driven tool to dissect the quality of argumentations of those in power and the role of communication in affecting democratic processes.



*Sustainable Engagement with  
Digitalization Challenges in  
Strategic Communication:  
Introducing the VUCA Radar*

by **Peter Winkler, Jannik  
Kretschmer, and  
Philip Wamprechtsamer**

This paper explores the frequently used, yet ambiguously defined concept of VUCA, aiming to provide a conceptual and empirical analysis that sheds light on its impact on strategic communication and outlines effective responses to its challenges. The study is backed by qualitative data gathered in Austria. A commendable aspect of this research is the authors' intention to enhance our comprehension of VUCA while contributing to the theoretical understanding of current public relations in both internal and external environments. To aid professionals in navigating complex and volatile situations, the paper introduces a valuable tool called the VUCA RADAR. Overall, the study stands out as an intriguing, innovative, pertinent, and ambitious contribution to the field.



*Trend Research in Communication  
Management: Introducing an  
Interdisciplinary Approach  
based on Futures Research  
Methodology*

by **Ansgar Zerfass, Daniel  
Ziegele, Sünje Clausen, and  
Stefan Stieglitz**

This paper proposes an integrative approach for future research in public relations and communication management. The methodological approach integrates insights from research developments in society, management, and technology and integrates insights from professionals. There is a nice dialectical engagement between theory and practice-based experiences which positions this work as one highly commented for its practical implications and contribution in expanding our knowledge for conducting formative research. Overall, the paper suggests an innovative integrative methodological perspective that can become an important practical toolkit for professionals and their research efforts in identifying key trends.

### Special recognition to the best reviewer

**EUPRERA Best Reviewer Award** recognizes the work done by the reviewer because it is an essential contribution to the quality and success of the annual congress. This year's winner is:

**Melissa A. Johnson,**  
North Carolina State University

Dr. Johnson's review stands at an exceptional level of quality. Her feedback is thorough, comprising in-depth and comprehensive comments, along with practical suggestions that

effectively aid authors in enhancing their papers. Notably, her constructive and encouraging remarks prompt authors to introspect on their arguments and research decisions.

Moreover, the review exhibits attentive feedback and a profound respect for diverse academic cultural traditions and perspectives, making it truly commendable.



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