



UNIVERSITY OF  
BUCHAREST  
VIRTUTE ET SAPIENTIA

*25<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress*  
BUCHAREST 11–14 September 2024

# The Art of Communication

Bridging the Future and Past of  
Strategic Communication in a New Technological Ecosystem

call for papers

## ABOUT EUPRERA ANNUAL CONGRESS

### **The European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA)**

is an autonomous organization with over 550 members across 50 countries, with a vision of advancing academic research and knowledge in the field of strategic communication. To achieve this vision EUPRERA organizes a highly regarded Annual Congress in collaboration with a prestigious academic institution in Europe. The Annual Congress is an opportunity to exchange knowledge, explore innovative methods, and disseminate latest research outcomes.

The silver jubilee (25<sup>th</sup>) of the Annual Congress will be hosted by the Faculty of Letters, Department of Communication Sciences of the University of Bucharest in Bucharest, Romania.

## THE ORGANIZING INSTITUTION

With a rich history of over 150 years, the University of Bucharest is a dynamic and inclusive academic milieu characterized by creativity, innovation and pragmatism, and known for its student-centered approach.

The University has over 19 faculties, 97 undergraduate programs, 215 master's programs, 9 didactic masters programs, 21 doctoral schools, a school for interdisciplinary doctoral studies, over 50 centers and 9 research units. It has over 34,000 students and provides a strong ecosystem constantly working to ensure the highest quality of education and skills enabling them to integrate easily into the evolving labor market.

The University of Bucharest is part of the CIVIS network. CIVIS is a European Civic University formed by the alliance of 11 leading research higher education institutions across Europe: Aix-Marseille Université, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, University of Bucharest, Université libre de Bruxelles, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Sapienza Università di Roma, Stockholm University, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, University of Glasgow, Paris Lodron University of Salzburg and University of Lausanne.

The Department of Communication Sciences, Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest is the first academic institution providing courses in the field of public relations, advertising and strategic communication, founded in the post-communist Romania, after 1989, and one of the first schools of communication in South-Eastern Europe. The Department of Communication Sciences provides on a multidisciplinary perspective on communication in relation with cultural studies, history of mentalities and anthropology, as well as a strong focus on the current practices in the field of strategic communication, public relations, advertising, marketing and branding and consumer behavior research.



# CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Academics, PhD students and practitioners are invited to submit papers and panel proposals related to the congress theme: ***The Art of Communication. Bridging the Future and Past of Strategic Communication in a New Technological Ecosystem.***



## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Alexandra Crăciun, Prof. Ph.D. (chair)

Alina Cosma, Assist. Lect. Ph.D. (c)

Cristina Bogdan, Assoc. Prof. Ph.D.

Mircea Sava, Lect. Ph.D.



# THE CONGRESS THEME

The XXV EUPRERA Congress invites academics, researchers, and professionals in the field of communication to an interdisciplinary discussion on Public Relations (PR) and strategic communication in relation to the emergence of a new technological ecosystem that is set to revolutionize the way in which the field is conceived.

AI-powered chatbots, voice assistants, and natural language processing (NLP) tools are increasingly being used in PR and communication to create personalized engagement, optimize communication strategies, and facilitate crisis management.

The recent emergence of Generative AI models, such as ChatGPT have dramatically changed the perception of AI and its potential, bringing back the idea of media as an extension of men" (Mc Luhan, 1964) or man as an extension of media within a "tautist" universe (Sfez, 1991). While the importance of human touch in communication is continuously discussed in the academic literature (e.g., Rodriguez-Salcedo et al., 2023), the application of generative AI models into the field of PR and Strategic Communication raises questions about its impact on the future of the discipline.

For instance, fictionality, previously confined to the field of art, is now part of the daily life. *Superapps, metasocieties, influencers, cryptonomics, AI and gaming* operate an alternative iconography in the field of public communication, where the classical binary oppositions between real and unreal, between true and false - gradually fade. An alternative digital imaginary, which integrates fiction into daily life is provided by super-platforms such as *Tik Tok, Instagram, Netflix*.

It is therefore important for scholars and practitioners in PR and Strategic Communication to reflect on the role of AI and to ensure a controlled adoption of this technology in the field.

EUPRERA congress in Bucharest welcomes theoretical, empirical, and applied research on the congress theme and is looking forward to stimulating discussions in different thematic areas: PARAGONE, PASSEPARTOUT, ICONOGRAPHY, TROMPE L'OEIL, SGRAFFITO and an additional OPEN TRACK, PERSPECTIVE.

Interested authors should submit short-length, full-length papers, or panel proposals in one of the track options. Abstract submissions will not be reviewed and will be automatically disqualified.





# TRACK ONE

## INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

**PARAGONE** is a word of Italian origins that designates a comparison between different artistic media. The debate started in the Italian Renaissance in relation to Leonardo da Vinci's *Treatise on painting* which argued for the supremacy of sight, and to a letter by Benedetto Varchi that invited the artists to debate the question of the superiority of different forms of art.

While AI, ChatGPT and other natural language processing tools are blurring the distinctions between human and nonhuman communication, while PR, branding, advertising, content strategy and strategic communication are interchanging their tools, there is probably time to reconsider the specificity and the limits of our fields of communication.

This track welcomes papers regarding use of different platforms/tools, online and offline interactions, providing an interdisciplinary and intercultural reflection able to connect and compare knowledge from different areas of communication research, to identify best practices, as well as the new correlations among disciplines and areas of study.

# TRACK TWO

## THE FUTURE OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION: ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS AND IMPACT OF EMERGENT PR TOOLS

**ICONOGRAPHY**, literally "writing with images" in Greek, this notion refers to the study of the meaning of images, symbols, and motifs in art. Foreshadowed by Vasari, Cesare Ripa, and Bellori, the modern development of this field was connected to Aby Warburg and then to Saxl, Panovsky, and Schapiro.

Less researched, the iconography of contemporary communication ecosystem shapes our collective mentalities. Within transmedia storytelling, emerging within a fully digitalized environment where influencers replace experts

and AI/chatbots substitute humans, the current public communication iconography is complex, volatile, and difficult to classify.

This track welcomes papers that explore the future of PR and Strategic Communication, investigating the impact of AI. What are the challenges and opportunities that we may face in the coming years? How are human and AI generated communication blended? What new theories are necessary to explore the emerging communication paradigms?

# TRACK THREE

## LEARNING FROM THE PAST OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION: OLD THEORIES IN A NEW ECOSYSTEM

**PASSEPARTOUT**, meaning "pass everywhere", is a thin flat piece of paper placed between the canvas (image) and the frame that separates the piece of art from the glass; it also has a decorative function.

This track also aims to examine the challenges that arise when applying old communication theories to the new AI communication landscape. We welcome papers that discuss the limitations of existing theories and how they need to be adapted or expanded to accommodate AI-driven communication processes and outcomes.

Furthermore, we are interested in papers that explore how the new AI communication landscape can be used to test and refine existing communication theories.

We aim to stimulate a dialogue on how we can use the wisdom of the past to guide the development and application of AI in communication, while also exploring the unique opportunities and challenges that arise with this integration.



# TRACK FOUR

## COMMUNITY, COMMUNICATION, AND STAKEHOLDERS' INTERACTIONS IN THE NEW TECHNOLOGICAL ECOSYSTEM

**TROMPE L'ŒIL**, which means "tricking the eye", refers to an array of painting techniques, that create optical illusions of reality, such as perspective.

The emergence of this new technological ecosystem has revolutionized the way individuals interact and communicate with each other, and the way businesses can connect with their audiences. The aim of this track is to explore the impact of AI on communities, communication, interactions, and to investigate how companies can harness their potential for social good.

We invite papers that evaluate the role of communication in shaping communities and engagement in a new technological ecosystem, including the ways AI can facilitate the formation of communities and strengthen existing ones. We also welcome research on the use of AI in communication, on the strategies to enhance communication processes and outcomes, and about the means businesses can leverage on these emergence new social processes.

Additionally, we are interested in papers that examine how AI can be used to improve interactions between individuals and organizations. Finally, we welcome papers that address the social and cultural implications of the new AI communication landscape. This includes research on how AI can affect social norms, values, and beliefs, and how we can ensure that AI is used in a way that promotes social inclusion and diversity.

## OPEN TRACK

### CURRENT RESEARCH IN (STRATEGIC) COMMUNICATION AND PR.

**PERSPECTIVE** derived from the Latin *perspectus* to mean "clearly perceived", refers to the technique of making the two-dimensional forms look three-dimensional. Linear perspective provides the illusion of distance by using parallel lines that meet in a vanishing point, while

*atmospheric perspective uses different color tones to create the same illusion.*

This track welcomes theoretical, empirical, or applied contributions bringing forth novel insights on trends, challenges and innovations in PR, branding, corporate and strategic communication.

The University of Bucharest will be pleased to welcome you in the country of George Enescu and Constantin Brâncuși, to find out if the "art" of communication is still able to offer meaning in this new technological ecosystem, in a quest for trust, signification, and intimacy.

## EDUCATION TRACK

### PUBLIC RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION EDUCATION RESEARCH

**SGRAFFITO** comes from the Italian for "scratched" and refers to a technique used in painting that involves scratching through a layer of paint to expose what remains underneath. By covering a preliminary surface with another layer, artists can effectively scratch off the superficial layer in a way that will expose unique patterns or shapes.

The Education track welcomes papers focused on the challenges PR and strategic communication educators face in the current online and offline landscape. As some of the realities of the pandemic remain behind us, returning to class brings new transformations to the forefront, whether technological or human, imposed or desired, organisational or individual, systemic or in search of a (desirable?) pattern.

The Education track is closely related to the activities of the EUPRERA Education Network and to the Education Café, which proposed pedagogy-focused discussion topics that can represent a starting point for the submissions to this track, developed from a research-focused perspective: the transformation of experiences in the classroom, education and sustainability, curriculum development and course progression, wellbeing and social skills, education and genZ, inclusive assessment, diversity and equality in the professional and academic environment, teaching ethics, the integration of technology into PR education.

# SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

For the EUPRERA Annual Congress both conceptual, theoretical, and empirical works and different methodological approaches advancing public relations/ strategic communication discipline and profession are accepted.

## THREE TYPES OF SUBMISSIONS ARE POSSIBLE:

1. Short-length paper (double-blind review)

2. Full-length research paper (double-blind review),

3. Panel proposal.

**Short-length papers and full-length research papers** are competitive and will be selected based on a double-blind review process. **Please note, for the review process, cover page must be omitted (please check specific information below).**

Submitters of both short-length and full-length research papers are eligible for the Paper Development Workshop (PDW), if they opt for it. Full-length research papers are however given higher consideration as the PDW is meant to support the publication of completed works.

**Panel proposals** are not blind reviewed; the review process will be carried out by a separate committee who will evaluate these proposals based on a) the topic fit with the conference theme, b) contribution to debate on public relations/strategic communication issues, c) coherence and clarity of structure and thought of the panel as a whole, d) originality and innovativeness of ideas, and e) institutional and/or national diversity of the panel composition. All submissions must be prepared in MS Word or PDF file format, 12-point font size, double spacing with a 1-inch (25mm) margin on A4 page size.

**Please carefully read the following instructions: failing to follow them may result in an automatic disqualification.**

All submissions must be prepared in MS Word or PDF file format, 12-point font size, double spacing with a 1-inch (25mm) margin on A4 page size.

## 1. SHORT-LENGTH PAPERS

Short-length papers are intended for work in progress, offering the opportunity to present on-going research that has not yet reached completion at the time of the submission deadline. Short-length papers must allow reviewers to understand what the scientific contribution is and must comply with the submission criteria defined in the call for

papers. This means, they should clearly present the purpose of the research, main theoretical framework/ assumptions and if applicable research methods and preliminary and/or expected results. A clear statement of the contribution of the study for public relations/strategic communication theory and practice should be included too. Short-length papers have a scope of 2,500–3,000 words in length, inclusive of everything (abstract, keywords, references, tables, figure

legends etc.), and are stripped of all authors' identifiers. Short-length papers submitted with author(s)' name(s) and/or other identifiers will not be reviewed.

#### **A SHORT-LENGTH PAPER SHOULD CONTAIN:**

- A concise title
- Structured abstract (max. 250 words)
- Up to 6 key words
- Introduction
- Central elements of the literature review/theoretical approach (the study's major theoretical assumptions, concepts and questions must be clearly stated)
- Central elements of design/methodology/approach (it must be clear how the study is planned to be carried on, what sample/view, how data is collected and analyzed)
- Preliminary and/or expected findings/results (if data collection is not yet completed, please provide some overview of how far in the process you are and the next steps),
- Preliminary reflections/considerations on the main results and expected contribution
- List of cited references

## **2. FULL-LENGTH RESEARCH PAPERS**

Full-length research papers are considered finished research work, ready for publication.

Please note that for in-program and awards considerations, submitted full-length research papers must NOT have been previously presented, scheduled for presentation, published, accepted for publication, and if under review, must NOT appear in print before the conference.

Full-length papers have a scope of 6,000–8,000 words in length, inclusive of everything (abstract, keywords, references, tables, figure legends etc.) and are stripped of all authors' identifiers. Papers with author(s)' name(s) and/or other identifiers will not be reviewed.

#### **A FULL-LENGTH RESEARCH PAPER SHOULD CONTAIN:**

- A concise title
- Structured abstract (max. 250 words)
- Up to 6 key words
- Introduction
- Literature review/theoretical approach
- Design/methodology/approach Findings/results
- Discussion and conclusions
- Complete reference list

For specific formatting, please follow the author guidelines of the Journal of Communication Management ([emeraldgroupublishing.com/journal/jcom](http://emeraldgroupublishing.com/journal/jcom)).

## **3. PANEL PROPOSALS**

Panel proposals should focus on current issues and debates in the public relations/strategic communication field. Proposals with clear discussion statements that contribute to advance our understanding of important professional and disciplinary questions and issues are preferred.

A panel should consist of 1 chairperson, 4-5 presentations (maximum), and (mandatory) 1 respondent. Nobody should take two roles. Authors of presentations ideally represent various organizations and countries/cultures.

#### **A PANEL PROPOSAL SHOULD CONTAIN:**

- A concise title
- Up to 6 keywords
- 800-word rationale including a clear statement of the relevance to public relations/strategic communication discipline/profession
- Clear presentation of the panel key questions/issues, and how each presentation contributes to address the panel key questions.
- Method of delivery, e.g., the modality of panel discussion and eventual audience interaction
- List of panelists with names, affiliations, and bios Panelists' presentation titles and max. 200 word-abstracts
- Overall statement of participation from the organizer declaring: "I have received signed statements from all intended participants agreeing to register for EUPRERA Annual Congress and participate in the panel."

Failing to follow the panel proposal guidelines and formatting instructions requirements will automatically disqualify the proposal.





## ACCEPTED SHORT AND FULL-LENGTH PAPERS

Authors of either paper formats accepted for presentation in the EUPRERA Annual Congress are expected to submit a final, clean version of their work before the conference. The final, clean version of their work should include a cover page with all authors affiliations and contact details. Based on reviewers' feedback, revisions and adjustments are possible also in the full-length papers.

The final version will be made available to conference participants for a limited period of time, if authors have opted "yes" during the submission process, or otherwise the final version will be simply stored in the Annual congress system – not publicly available.

## BEST PAPER AWARDS AND PUBLICATIONS

Original, not yet published full-length research papers are eligible to compete to one of EUPRERA Annual Best Paper Awards. However, the Scientific Committee will retain the right to consider the most innovative and solidly conceptualized structured short-length paper that show strong research potential and clear indications to be completed by the time of the conference for the Best Paper Awards.

AUTHORS OF SELECTED  
CONTRIBUTIONS  
WILL BE INVITED TO SUBMIT  
THEIR WORK TO:

**a special issue** of the  
**Journal of Communication  
Management** (publication conditional  
upon the double-blind peer review  
process of the journal)

**a book** (edited collection),  
part of the **Advances in Public  
Relations and Communication  
Management series**,  
**published by Emerald**  
(publication conditional upon a  
peer-review process by the editors)

## OTHER AWARDS

EUPRERA Best Reviewer

**EUPRERA Master Thesis  
Award for Excellence**

deadline for applications:  
**27 February, 2024**. For more information  
and how to apply, please visit [euprera.org](https://euprera.org)



## IMPORTANT DATES/DEADLINES

**March 15**

submission deadline

**May 28**

feedback to authors

**June 25**

full programme release

**August 25**

submission of final full paper

## DEADLINES FOR REGISTRATION

**August 7**

end of early-bird registration period

**August 31**

end of registration period

## MONDAY 9 SEPTEMBER — WEDNESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

### PHD SEMINAR

PhD seminar will be held before the congress formally begins. The aim of the seminar is to provide an international setting where doctoral students in the fields of public relations and strategic communication can present their ongoing work, get feedback from experts and peers, and establish a valuable network for the future. More information on the seminar and on how to apply can be found on [www.euprera.org/phd-seminar](http://www.euprera.org/phd-seminar).

### 11TH SEPTEMBER WEDNESDAY

- Paper development workshop
  - Activities from the Education Network
  - Congress starts late afternoon
    - Keynote speaker
    - Evening reception
- 

### 12TH SEPTEMBER THURSDAY

- Keynote speaker
  - Paper presentations
    - Panels
  - EUPRERA project collaboration proposals
    - Gala dinner
- 

### 13TH SEPTEMBER FRIDAY

- Paper presentation
  - EUPRERA Hour (awards)
  - EUPRERA 2025 Congress presentation
  - Activities from EUNES European Network of Emerging Scholars
    - EUPRERA General Assembly
    - Congress ends late afternoon
- 

### 14TH SEPTEMBER SATURDAY

- Social programme



BUCHAREST

11–14 September 2024



euprera

25<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress

# The Art of Communication

Bridging the Future and Past of Strategic  
Communication in a New Technological Ecosystem

Department of Communication Sciences, Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest, Romania



UNIVERSITY OF  
BUCHAREST

VIRTUTE ET SAPIENTIA



© University of Bucharest

Photo credits: AI Generator, Shutterstock, University of Bucharest