

Awards for best research papers in public relations: EUPRERA honours academics and practitioners from Europe Lund University (24-27 September)

Lund, September 26, 2025 – On the occasion of its annual congress, the European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA), a body of academic institutions, researchers and professionals in the field of public relations and strategic communication with 500 members from 40 countries, has awarded authors for their excellent research and the best reviewer for their contribution.

EUPRERA Best Paper Awards

The Awards were given to the authors of the three papers with the highest rankings in a blind peer-review process performed by experienced reviewers from the EUPRERA community, under the guidance of the Heads of the Scientific Committee, Martina Topić-Rutherford and Sarah Marschlich. The winning papers were selected for their conceptual contribution, methodological quality, and relevance to contemporary challenges in the field.

The three winning papers are:

The Diversity Washing Dilemma: How Diverse Corporate Self-Presentation and Product Communication Enhance Image and Credibility – And How Misalignment Can Backfire

by Sandra Mechler, Thomas Koch, Nora Denner



The study provides valuable insights into diversity communication and how it affects organisational credibility. By comparing self-presentation and product communication, it offers unique evidence on how diversity messaging shapes consumer perceptions and highlights the critical role of authenticity. Reviewers praised the work as “well-executed and highly relevant”, noting its clear structure, theoretical depth, and robust dual

experimental design. The paper investigates a strategic communication dilemma that is both timely and practically significant: how misalignment between corporate messages and reality can backfire.

Triangulating Narrative Alignment: An AI- and API-Driven Approach to Issue Detection Across Reddit, News, YouTube, and Brand Web Content

by Grazia Murtarelli, Stefania Romenti, Elanor Colleoni



This paper was described by the reviewers as *“focused on a really interesting issue, presenting an original approach and achieving relevant results”*. It is methodologically advanced and highly relevant for current strategic communication challenges. The reviewers highlighted its strong theoretical grounding and sophisticated combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The study contributes conceptually and

practically, bringing forward a scientifically and practically valuable tool for detecting narrative alignment in real time across digital platforms.

Ayn Rand in Tech Leadership: Critical Perspectives on Elon Musk’s Twitter Takeover and the Erosion of Communication and Stakeholder Principles

by Philipp Bachmann, Diana Ingenhoff



This paper *“problematizes the established normative assumptions of communication theory and calls for new, critical reflection”*. Reviewers noted its potential for interdisciplinary contribution and its relevance to ongoing debates in leadership and technology communication. The study advances critical PR research, offering a reflective and theoretically grounded perspective on communication, ideology, and stakeholder relations in tech

leadership contexts.

EUPRERA Best Reviewer Award

The Best Reviewer Award recognises exceptional dedication, quality, and collegiality in the peer-review process, key values that uphold the academic standards of the EUPRERA Congress. This year's winner is:

Michał Chmiel, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK



Michał Chmiel received five-star scores from the authors he reviewed. Reviewees praised his writing, insightful advice, and fairness, noting that his feedback was both supportive and highly constructive.

In addition to his review excellence, he also supported the Congress by reviewing a high number of papers at the last moment, helping the Congress run smoothly and ensuring that all participants received timely, high-

quality feedback. His reliability and collegial approach are deeply appreciated and reflect the values that make EUPRERA's review process both rigorous and supportive.

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