Knowledge Futures: AI, Technology, and the New Business Paradigm

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**IFKAD 2025
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NAPLES, ITALY**

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS – IFKAD 2025

Special Track n.: 45

Thematic Area: Business Model and Technology

Advancing Business Model Innovation through Technological Integration in Agri-Food Systems

Description

In a world increasingly marked by complexity and rapid change *(Forliano et al., 2022; Sunder & Prashar, 2023)*, addressing multifaceted challenges becomes crucial. These challenges encompass a broad spectrum of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) issues, highlighting the interconnectedness of ecological concerns, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and water scarcity, with social, geopolitical, and governance dimensions *(Sandberg et al., 2023)*. The pressing need for conservation and regeneration of natural resources adds urgency to these challenges *(Bresciani et al., 2022; George et al., 2015)*. In this intricate landscape, agri-food systems play a pivotal role due to their significant environmental impact and their potential for transformative change *(De Bernardi & Azucar, 2020; Fabietti et al., 2016)*. As a result, there is a growing demand for innovative paradigms that integrate sustainability and regeneration as core principles within these systems *(Felicetti et al., 2023)*.

The transformation of agri-food systems towards greater sustainability and resilience is increasingly being driven by Business Model Innovation (BMI), with emerging technologies serving as key enablers *(Mancuso et al., 2023)*. The integration of digital tools such as IoT, big data analytics, AI, and digital platforms, is reshaping agri-food business models to support nature-centric and regenerative practices. These technologies enable real-time monitoring, resource optimization, and data-driven decision-making, allowing businesses to innovate their value propositions, enhance efficiency, and transition towards practices that balance economic viability with environmental stewardship.

The push for more sustainable business practices is not just a response to market dynamics but is also driven by recent regulatory frameworks that emphasize the need for transparency and accountability. The recent European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS), alongside the guidelines from the Task Forces on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) and Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), underscore the importance of integrating sustainability considerations into business strategies and operations *(Chua et al., 2022; EFRAG, 2020)*. These frameworks call for a re-evaluation of strategic and operational resource management, emphasizing the need for a twin transition – sustainability and digitalization – to meet growing environmental and societal demands *(Rehman et al., 2023; Tashman, 2021)*. By adopting emerging technologies, agri-food businesses can meet these

regulatory requirements more effectively while also advancing innovation that exceeds mere compliance, driving toward holistic value creation.

The agri-food sector represents an ideal context for exploring the intersection between technology and business model transformation. From supply chain transparency to precision agriculture and stakeholder engagement, emerging technologies are crucial for driving systemic change. Cross-sector collaboration is also vital, as partnerships between different industries can provide new insights and shared resources that enhance the ability to address complex sustainability issues. To address these wicked problems, intersectional and systemic approaches to knowledge co-creation, bridging various disciplines and sectors, are increasingly required *(Dentoni et al., 2022; Schiuma et al., 2012)*. Adopting an ecosystem perspective is thus fundamental to foster collaboration and innovation. In this sense, new figures such as circularity brokers, specialized actors that facilitate the transition towards sustainable practices by connecting different stakeholders and ensuring the flow of resources, information, and expertise, may play a crucial role in creating regenerative and sustainable value networks *(Ciulli et al., 2020; De Bernardi et al., 2023)*. Hence, digital platforms serve as tools that enable these interactions, supporting data sharing, stakeholder engagement, and the effective implementation of circular and sustainable initiatives *(Thomas & Ritala, 2022; DiVito et al., 2021)*.

Accordingly, this track aims to explore how emerging technologies are being applied to drive BMI in agri-food systems. Contributions should emphasize how emerging technologies are used to reimagine traditional practices, support sustainable growth, and foster collaborative ecosystems that balance profitability with environmental and social responsibility. In conclusion, this track seeks to examine how the integration of emerging technologies can foster BMI in the agri-food sector, emphasizing sustainability as a driver of growth. By focusing on technology-enabled transformation, the track aims to inspire new approaches that create more resilient, sustainable, and innovative agri-food systems.

Keywords

Agri-Food Systems, Business Model Innovation (BMI), Emerging Technologies, Sustainability, Ecosystem Collaboration, Regenerative Practices

Organizers

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Special Track details published on IFKAD website ››

Guidelines

Researchers wishing to contribute are invited to submit an **EXTENDED ABSTRACT** (in editable format) of **min 500 and max 1000 words** not later than **31 JANUARY 2025**, using the submission procedure available on the website. The abstract should address theoretical

background, research objective, methodology, and results in terms of expected contribution to Knowledge Management theory and practice. Authors are required to follow the guidelines for both extended abstracts as well as full papers available on IFKAD site: www.ifkad.org

Important dates

31 January 2025	*Extended Abstract submission deadline*
24 February 2025	*Acceptance notification to authors*
20 April 2025	*Early-Bird registration cut off*
02 May 2025	*Full paper submission deadline*
31 May 2025	*Registration deadline*
2-4 July 2025	*Conference sessions*

For further information

For any information related to the event, please see the event website at www.ifkad.org or contact the conference manager at info@ifkad.org