



## Engineering Project Organization Conference 2018

### Conference Announcement and Call for Papers

## Engineering Project Organization Conference (EPOC) 2018

### EPOC 2018 – (RE)ORGANIZING IN AN UNCERTAIN CLIMATE

[www.epossociety.org/EPOC2018](http://www.epossociety.org/EPOC2018)

**June 25-27, 2018 – Brijuni, Croatia**  
**Extended Abstracts Due: December 4, 2017**

**Sponsored by the Engineering Project Organization Society ([www.epossociety.org](http://www.epossociety.org))**

In 2018, the Engineering Project Organization Society will host the 2018 conference from June 25-27 near Pula, Croatia on the island of Brijuni. We aim to make EPOC 2018 a unique conference that will bring together scholars and practitioners from different research traditions including engineering design, project management, innovation, and organizations. Attendees will have the opportunity to present research findings; have in-depth exchanges on emerging research, and network at the highest-level of the academic community. Our shared system-level goal is to further our collective understanding of engineering projects as a form of organizing. In so doing, we aim to advance the debate on organizational mechanisms necessary to design and govern these enterprises, and how and to what extent their performance can be traced back to organizing.

We see modern-day capital-intensive project-based organizations as complex phenomena that conflate a unique set of attributes: long gestation and delivery periods, complex product and organizational architectures, intense needs for coordination and cooperation across heterogeneous actors, and heightened uncertainties in requirements and goal formulation. This suggests that traditional project management research must be re-visited to better incorporate conceptualizations of projects as dynamic, adaptive, and evolving organizations that attempt to unify participants with conflicting goals all of whom want to create and appropriate individual value in addition to creating collective value. Therefore, today's project leaders (including project directors, project managers, and elected leaders) need new skills and conceptual frameworks to cope with emerging disputes, conflicting interests, evolving requirements, and changes in the external environment. Better-equipped leaders will be able to adapt their project organizations over time in order to achieve the higher-order goals behind the organizations.

With this backdrop, we invite researchers to attend EPOC 2018 and to present papers. We will entertain conversations that will range from discussing how project management can be re-conceptualized to discussing ways to extend organization and management theory to make it relevant to the phenomena at the heart of our conference. This will create opportunities to debate emerging scholarly ideas about new forms of organizing and governing complex, pluralistic systems, the meaning of performance in these complicated institutional settings, and the role of innovation. We also invite researchers to discuss innovative project delivery approaches and organization structures through a systems perspective. Additionally, we invite researchers to unpack the 'how' of modern complex project management practice by providing innovative insights on the management of work processes and practices unfolding in real world dynamic complex systems.

As in the past, we encourage authors to bring in social and organization science perspectives and grounded empirical experience and observations into the study of project organizations. This broad approach to project organization research has always framed the EPOC conferences and continues to frame EPOC 2018. Recently, our community identified several Grand Challenges, or ambitious goals that address global problems, as a means of guiding future research efforts. To reflect these goals, the overall theme for the conference this year is **(Re)organizing in an Uncertain Climate**. Papers are invited but are not restricted to the following Grand Challenge areas, many of which align with EPOC tracks in the past:



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- **The New Project Manager:** Research on enhancing the education, experience and decision-making capability of inter- and intra-firm actors, as well as developing their competencies in boundary spanning and leadership roles;
- **Project Networks:** Research on the various organizational networks found on engineering projects, including supply chain, communication and collaboration networks, and how they may be leveraged to improve short and long-term performance;
- **Innovation and Growth Strategies:** Research on organizational processes and culture that thrive in complex or uncertain project environments, including organizational learning, knowledge management and agile collaboration;
- **Systems Integration:** Research on concepts, methods and tools with a holistic perspective on product or organizational design, and those that link project value to the broader surrounding context including the sociological, economic, environmental, and political dimensions;
- **Lifecycle Value and Governance:** Research on managing and executing a long-term, lifecycle-focused vision for engineering project organizations.

EPOC 2018 will focus on these themes over 2 1/2 days. Each of the sessions within these themes will be limited to 3-4 speakers followed by 30 minutes of open discussion. The extended discussion periods will emphasize the debate and exchange of knowledge and ideas among the participants. The conference format will once again have morning sessions with free afternoons to encourage free time, social and intellectual exchange, followed by invited evening speakers and activities. Submissions that are viewed as relevant and of high quality, but not able to be accommodated within our available sessions, will be grouped into poster sessions.

**EPOC 2018** will incorporate three opportunities for researchers to participate in the conference as follows:

- 1) **Conference-Length Papers.** These are intended to be traditional conference papers that are still in the data gathering or exploration stage, and searching for their key contribution. Papers will be 3000 – 5000 words and the authors are expected to make a brief presentation to share the key ideas before opening the floor for discussion.
- 2) **Journal-Length Papers.** These are intended to be papers that are nearly ready to submit to a journal or already in the reviewing process. Papers will be 7500 - 10000 words and the authors are expected to make a lengthier presentation to share the key ideas and inform the ensuing period of discussion.
- 3) We also plan to have a special **Theoretical Lenses Plenary** Session. For this session we invite researchers to submit well developed papers that either propose to: i) significantly extend mainstream management and organization theory through the empirical study of engineering projects; ii) provide novel theoretical frameworks through which engineering projects can be studied; or iii) wholly theoretical papers that combine extant theory in new forms relevant to make sense of our focal phenomena

The Proceedings will be available online. *Authors will retain the copyright but the papers can still be cited as conference proceedings papers.* The best papers from the conference will be invited to be included in a future issue of the Engineering Project Organization Journal.

### Conference Specifics – “(Re)organizing in an Uncertain Climate”

**The conference will start at 4:00 pm (16:00) on June 25 and end after dinner on June 27.**



## Engineering Project Organization Conference 2017

**Event Registration** site will be active by **mid-November, 2017**. A Registration link will be emailed once it is live, or you will also find the link on the Conference website:  
**[www.epossociety.org/EPOC2018](http://www.epossociety.org/EPOC2018)**

EPOC 2018 is being held at the Brijuni National Park resort in Croatia. This conference venue provides be a unique opportunity for delegates and families to combine a rich research experience with plenty of opportunities to network at the highest academic and practitioner levels, and time to enjoy themselves and have fun. The location allows for afternoon bike riding, hiking, boating, snorkeling and other family activities to unwind and engage in conversation. The conference dates allow for a very family-friendly atmosphere due to the regional attractions, Midsummer timing and weather.

### **Conference Fee**

The conference fee is all-inclusive, including conference, lodging, and meals. The **€1,200** for private room. See Website for additional lodging options and student rates.

### **Deadlines**

Submission Instructions are on the conference Website  
Website: [www.epossociety.org/EPOC2018](http://www.epossociety.org/EPOC2018)

***Extended Abstracts due Monday 4 December, 2017***

***Include the following sections:***

Research Problem Statement or Purpose, Brief Research Methodology and Approach, Key Findings, and Implications (1250-1500 words total)

***Jan 8: Abstract Notification***

***Apr 1: Full Papers Due***

***May 15: Final Paper Due***

**To submit your contribution,  
please register on the EPOC 2018 online submission management system:  
<https://www.conftool.com/epoc2018/>**

All Questions regarding the conference can be sent to [Paul.Chinowsky@Colorado.edu](mailto:Paul.Chinowsky@Colorado.edu) and you will be directed to the correct committee member. Paul Chinowsky and Anita Ceric are serving as the Conference Chairs while Iva Kovacic and Bryan Franz are serving as the Technical Co-Coordinators.

To indicate your **intent to submit an abstract** for the conference, we would ask you to register on the conference management system as early as possible, and no later than December 4, 2017.  
**<https://www.conftool.com/epoc2018/>**