

“DEVELOPING ACTIVITY THEORY IN INFORMATION SYSTEMS (DATIS) WORKSHOP

ECIS 2026, Milan, Italy

Ancillary Workshop

14 June 2026

IMPORTANT DATES AND TIMES

- Deadline for 500-word short paper/long abstract submission: Monday 27 April 2026
- Notification of acceptance: Authors to be notified within 10 days of submitting paper
- Date and time of the workshop: 14 June 2025, 9am – 5pm.

SUBMISSION DETAILS

- Short papers/long abstracts to be emailed to Paul Kelly (p.kelly@essex.ac.uk)
- Please include the words “Milan DATIS workshop” in the email subject line.
- Accepted short papers/long abstracts will be circulated prior to the workshop.
- Submission is not required for attendance and participation at the workshop.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Developing Activity Theory in Information Studies (DATIS) workshop is to provide a forum for Information Systems (IS) researchers, who use Activity Theory, or are interested in learning about it for their work and research. We welcome new IS researchers, Postgraduate and PhD Students, IS practitioners from industry, and established scholars of IS and Activity Theory. Our workshop and community have been growing in recent years and participants will find the workshop to be a welcoming and stimulating community experience.

In recent decades the use of Activity Theory has developed in the field of Information Systems (IS) (Allen et al., 2013; Dolata et al., 2023; Karanasios 2018; Malaurent and Karanasios 2020; Kelly, 2018; Li et al., 2019; Simeonova et al., 2024), as well as adjacent fields such as Human Computer Interaction (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 2006; Kuutti, 1996; Nardi, 1996), Information Studies (Allen et al., 2011; Spasser, 1999; Wilson, 2008), Organization Studies (Engeström 2000; Jazrabkowski 2003; Blackler, 2011) and Communications (Spinuzzi, 2012; 2014).

Building on Activity Theory’s contributions in these fields, our workshop aims to:

- Strengthen the global community using Activity Theory in IS and related fields.
- Provide opportunities for researchers to share insights and dilemmas, reflect, and receive community feedback to help them develop their work.
- Provide opportunities and support for scholars, particularly PhD students and Early Career Researchers (ECRs), who are exploring Activity Theory as a new field of enquiry, and developing their own contributions to Activity Theory and IS.

DATIS 2026 will feature a keynote speech from renowned Activity Theory researcher Professor Stan Karanasios, with a focus on the future development of Activity Theory in IS research (Engeström 2024, Spinuzzi 2025). It will also feature presentations, opportunities for participation in our global community development, and a social event following the workshop.

FURTHER INFORMATION

We especially encourage short paper presentations that speak to the ECIS 2026 theme of “Reimagining Digital Technology for Business, Management, and Society”. This means contributions will likely emphasize technological, as well as business, organizational, cultural, ethical, and/or political aspects of IS, all concerns central in the historical development of Activity Theory (Karanasios et al., 2022).

As such, the DATIS workshop provides a unique opportunity to bring together Early Career Researchers (ECRs), Senior Researchers, and professionals working with Activity Theory, who focus on diverse IS areas, such as:

- Information System Design, Use, Implementation and Impacts
- Business and Management Information Systems
- Artificial Intelligence Design, Use, Implementation and Impacts
- Education Information Systems and Technologies
- Health Information Systems and Technologies
- Information Systems and Society
- Global Development and Information Systems
- Public Sector and Information Systems
- Information Systems Theories in relation to Activity Theory
- Information Systems Research Methodologies
- Information Systems Practice and Professional concerns
- Reimagining Information Systems and Activity theory for the future

Since its inception in 2016, the workshop has been hosted annually at conferences around the world, including the European Conference on Information Systems (2017-2024), the Association for Information Science and Technology Annual Meeting in 2016, and the Wuhan International Conference for EBusiness in 2025.

In recent years, DATIS has also featured keynote speeches from distinguished scholars such as Emeritus Professor Bob Galliers from Bentley University, Professor Julien Malaurent from ESSEC Business School, Professor Stan Karanasios from the University of Queensland, and Emeritus Professor Bonnie Nardi from the University of California, Irvine.

FORMAT

Full Day Workshop, In person.

References

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ORGANIZING CHAIRS

Dr Stan Karanasios s.karanasios@uq.edu.au

Dr Karanasios is a Professor at University of Queensland. His research focuses on the interaction of technology and organizations and society and is heavily influenced by Activity Theory. His work has been published in *Information Systems Research*, *MIS Quarterly*, *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, *Information Systems Journal* and other leading Information Systems outlets.

Dr Paul R Kelly p.kelly@essex.ac.uk

Dr Paul R Kelly is a Lecturer in the Organisation Studies and Human Resource Management Group at Essex Business School, University of Essex, UK. His work focuses on information systems, global development, and impact evaluation, using activity theory and perspectives on power relations. He has published in the *Information Systems Journal*, *Organisation Studies*, and the *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*.

Dr Wei Zhang wei.zhang@umb.edu

Dr Wei Zhang is a Professor of Information Systems at College of Management, UMass Boston. Currently, his research focuses on the innovative and strategic use of IS. His research has been published in *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, *Information Systems Journal*, and other Information Systems outlets.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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