

3rd International Conference on Digital Transformation and Management (ICDTM'26)

Hammamet, Tunisia, 22nd-23rd May 2026

Call for Papers

Sustainable Digital Transformation in the Public Sector: Imperatives, Challenges, and Public Value Creation

The RIGUEUR Laboratory of the University of Manouba, Tunisia, and the ESCE International Business School Paris, OMNES Education, France, are pleased to invite you to submit your paper proposals for the International Conference on Digital Transformation and Management (ICDTM'26), which will be held in Hammamet on May 22nd–23rd, 2026. This conference aims to bring together a wide range of academic and professional participants around the latest developments and innovations in the fields of sustainable digital transformation and public management.

Conference Objectives

ICDTM'26 aims to create a unique platform for reflection and action around sustainable digital transformation in the public sector. The goal is to promote interdisciplinary research, experience sharing, and co-construction of innovative solutions to support public administrations in their sustainable digitalization strategies.

By bringing together researchers, practitioners, public decision-makers, and digital governance experts, the conference offers a privileged space to analyze strategies, discuss challenges, and explore levers for public value creation linked to digital transformation. It will also aim to identify best practices that promote performance, transparency, citizen participation, and the sustainability of public policies.

This conference will emphasize the nexus between sustainable digital transformation and public management, aiming to enhance institutional capacities and foster the development of an international network of scholars and practitioners dedicated to promoting a more agile, accountable, and equitable public sector.

ICDTM'26 encourages contributions that highlight innovative, inclusive, and ethical approaches to addressing public management challenges in the digital age, while placing societal and environmental value creation at the heart of transformation strategies.

Conference Theme

The digital transformation of public administrations is now a strategic priority, profoundly redefining their organizational processes and relationships with citizens (Mergel et al., 2019; Fischer et al., 2021; Savchenko et al., 2024). This occurs within a context characterized by mounting external pressures driven by rapid technological advancements, evolving organizational environments, and increasing expectations from citizens and stakeholders. (Mergel et al., 2019).

The integration of digital technologies facilitates a reconfiguration of work processes, communication channels, and service delivery mechanisms, while simultaneously enabling the emergence of innovative governance models. Rather than seeking to renovate the economic foundations of public administration, this dynamic primarily aims to modernize managerial practices and enhance citizen satisfaction (Meijer, 2015; Mergel, 2019). Through e-government technologies, administrations can optimize their processes, improve service quality, and establish more interactive relationships with citizens, while supporting necessary change management (Mergel et al., 2023).

This evolution also leads to a reexamination of organizational structures, work practices, and managerial approaches to meet the demands for transparency, agility, and inclusion (Ferraris et al., 2020; Wuttke et al., 2025). Beyond the organizational dimension, digitalization transforms administrative culture and stimulates citizen participation through co-design and co-delivery of public services (Mergel et al., 2019). It thus paves the way for modernization, organizational innovation, and public value creation, while imposing new responsibilities in

terms of accountability, protection of fundamental rights, and renewal of policy frameworks (Cave et al., 2021; Savchenko et al., 2024).

The legitimacy of public organizations now depends on their ability to ensure equitable access to services, protect user rights, and anticipate the negative effects of digitalization

(Latupeirissa et al., 2024; Distel & Lindgren, 2023; Liao, 2024; Mergel et al., 2018, 2021, 2024). This transformation also requires the evolution of skills and expertise within human resources (Malik & Al-Toubi, 2018). The main challenges are to provide effective, transparent, and inclusive public services that generate real public value and tangible societal benefits (Mainardi, 2024; Valle-Cruz, 2025).

Despite its promises, digital transformation in the public sector faces many obstacles: resistance to change (Ikwuanusi et al., 2024), cybersecurity and data protection risks (Wirtz et al., 2022; Cave et al., 2021), and sustainability and governance challenges, particularly regarding surveillance, privacy, and the digital divide (Wirtz et al., 2022; Cave et al., 2021). Understanding these effects is essential to anticipate, regulate, and maximize the social benefits of digitalization while minimizing its risks to democracy and inclusion (Latupeirissa et al., 2024). Public actors must ensure equitable access to digital services and prevent the marginalization of vulnerable populations (Bataev et al., 2022). Without appropriate governance, digitalization risks exacerbating inequalities and undermining institutional legitimacy.

These challenges highlight the need for public governance that reconciles technological innovation with democratic responsibility. Beyond broad modernization, digital transformation reshapes public governance by raising technological, organizational, and societal issues. It transforms public value creation, citizen participation, and institutional legitimacy (Mergel et al., 2023; Haug et al., 2023; Wuttke et al., 2025). To address these issues, administrations must rethink their coordination mechanisms, work practices, and

managerial approaches to meet growing demands for transparency, efficiency, and inclusion (Ferraris et al., 2020; Wuttke et al., 2025).

In this context, the human dimension of digital transformation is crucial. Understanding the trajectories, motivations, resistances, and appropriation strategies of citizens, public agents, and decision-makers is essential for leading socially legitimate and sustainable change (Wilson & Mergel, 2022; Latupeirissa et al., 2024). An actor-centered approach promotes inclusive change strategies, better alignment between technology and governance, and broader acceptance of innovations (Mergel et al., 2019).

Digital transformation also highlights new issues related to sustainability, inclusion, innovation, and organizational agility, while encouraging the development of public-private partnerships (Distel & Lindgren, 2023; Liao, 2024; Mergel et al., 2018, 2021, 2024). However, many organizations still struggle to concretely integrate sustainability principles into their e-government projects, often limiting themselves to formal compliance without tangible effects on organizational or social performance (Norström et al., 2022; Thomas & Sankar, 2024).

Supporting this transformation requires new managerial skills, a culture of agility, and organizational learning mechanisms capable of reconciling performance and sustainability (Distel & Lindgren, 2023; Liao, 2024). Public decision-makers must also promote policies based on equity, citizen empowerment, and personal data protection—essential conditions for public legitimacy (Latupeirissa et al., 2024; Wirtz et al., 2022).

Finally, public-private partnerships play a central role in implementing digital public services. By combining technological expertise and private sector resources with the public service mission, they promote more effective and sustainable transformation (Ma et al., 2023; Catala et al., 2025). Several studies highlight the positive impact of these partnerships on the relationship between governance and digital transformation: good governance is a prerequisite for successful transformation, which in turn can enhance private sector performance (Maheshwari et al., 2024; Casprini & Palumbo, 2022).

In line with ongoing reflections on the modernization of the public sector in the digital age, this call for papers aims to bring together theoretical and empirical research on the digital transformation of the public sector, viewed as a lever for sustainability, innovation, and public value creation.

Submissions may adopt a critical, comparative, or interdisciplinary approach, combining theoretical contributions on digital transformation dynamics with empirical analysis based on field data, case studies, conceptual analyses, or feedback from experience.

The objective is to analyze the conditions, strategies, obstacles, and effects of digital transformation in public administrations by examining its technological, organizational, human, and societal dimensions.

Contributions may address, but are not limited to, the following thematic areas:

- Impacts of digital transformation on the public sector
- Sustainability, inclusion, and social cohesion in digital public services
- Public, social, and economic value creation
- Collaborative, agile, and public governance
- Ethical issues, transparency, and data protection
- Adoption of emerging technologies and development of digital platforms
- Public-private partnerships: opportunities, governance, and sustainability
- Responsible artificial intelligence in public administration
- Knowledge management and organizational learning
- Transformation of processes, professional practices, and public management

Researchers, practitioners, public decision-makers, and digital development actors are invited to submit papers that contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics of digital transformation in the public sector and its implications for governance, sustainability, and public value creation.

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Submission

Submissions (in English or French) should follow standard academic formatting conventions and demonstrate clear theoretical contributions, methodological rigor, and practical implications.

There are no particular paper requirements, but they should not be too long (indicatively, no more than 10,000 words).

The first page must include the following information:

- Title of the paper
- Name(s) of the author(s)
- Institutional affiliation of each author
- Abstract (max 250 words)
- Keywords

Please indicate the thematic axis under which your submission falls.

Submissions must be made exclusively through this mail address:

laboratoire.rigueur.iscae@gmail.com

Important Dates

- **Deadline for submission of full papers** : March 30, 2026
- **Notification of acceptance** : April 20, 2025
- **Final submission and registration deadline** : April 30, 2026
- **Conference date and location**: Hammamet, Tunisia, May 22–23, 2026

Publication and Networking Opportunities

Selected papers (written in English) will be proposed for publication in specialized journals partnered with ICDTM'26, notably the [Journal of Intelligent Information Systems Management](#). The conference will also offer numerous networking opportunities, enabling participants to establish lasting collaborations.

A special issue will be edited and published in an indexed international journal (FNEGE, ABS, Web of Science). Further details will be communicated to participants to ICDTM'26.

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Registration Fees

The registration fees cover one night’s accommodation at the conference hotel, three coffee breaks, two lunches, one dinner, and the conference pack. The fees are set as follows:

	Tunisian Residents (TND)	Non-Residents (EUR)
Faculty members and professionals	650	450
Students/PhD candidates (not holding a permanent position) *	450	300
Additional accompanying person**	310	150
* In a double room, single room supplement: 100 TND (30 EUR)		
** Without the conference pack		

Contact

For any questions regarding the submission of proposals or the call for papers, don't hesitate to get in touch with Prof. Samiha GHARBI and Prof. Slim HADOUSSA at the following address: samiha.gharbi@iscae.uma.tn & slim.hadoussa@gmail.com

For any questions regarding financial matters, please get in touch with Ms. Héla FOURATI, Treasurer of the Tunisian Association for Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship (@MIE), at the following address: atmie2023@gmail.com

