

Call for Papers: **Changing the World through Megaprojects**
Conference Name: MeRIT (Megaproject Research Interdisciplinary Team) Conference and Workshop 2023
Conference Date: November 9th-10th, 2023
Location: Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore – Cremona Campus - Via Bissolati, 74, 26100 Cremona CR (Italy)
Website: <https://convegni.unicatt.it/merit>

Introduction

We are pleased to announce the Call for Papers for the upcoming MeRIT Workshop dedicated to exploring the theme of "Changing the World through Megaprojects." This workshop aims to bring together researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and industry experts to share insights, exchange ideas, and discuss the transformative potential of megaprojects in shaping our world.

Background

Megaprojects, characterized by their large-scale, capital-intensive nature and significant societal impact, are human-designed social tools that have become increasingly prevalent in various domains such as infrastructure development, urban planning, transportation, energy, defense, and technology to produce science (Cerić et al., 2021; Schindler et al., 2019; Söderlund et al., 2017, Miller and Lessard 2000; Gil & Pinto 2018). Provided their purpose is defined to go beyond a self-financing logic that disregards distributional concerns, these project-based enterprises can create positive change in the social, economic, and environmental fabric of societies, while attending to constraints on planetary resources and other grand societal challenges. With their potential to shape landscapes, boost economies, allow for human self-actualization, and address pressing global challenges, megaprojects foster opportunity to create and distribute value (Gil et al., 2021; Gil 2023). But megaprojects are far from being linear, sequential enterprises to be delivered by a supply chain as implicitly assumed by a legacy of social norms, regulations, and early scholarship (Morrow, McDonnell, and Arguden 1988, Flyvbjerg, Berzelius, and Rothengatter, 2003). Rather, megaprojects need to be seen as ‘wicked’ enterprises that impact materially large numbers of stakeholders and stimulate ideological opposition (based on perceived negative externalities) as well as well ideological support (based on perceived positive externalities). This nascent and more nuanced understanding of what a megaproject is refutes questionable claims that have traced megaproject stereotypical behavior (delays, budget blowouts, scope creep) to agency and capability problems. But emergent thinking also raises the fundamental question as to how the governance of stakeholders can be reconciled with the management of the supply chain while upholding norms that define ‘success’ by ability to stay on target. This puzzle points us to ask ‘who is in and out’, and ‘who gets what’ in a megaproject – canonical questions that point to ways to further our understanding of value creation and distribution.

Conference Themes

The conference seeks contributions from researchers and practitioners across diverse disciplines (organization, sociology, law, marketing, engineering, ...) and sectors of economic production (public, private, nonprofit), with a focus on the following themes related to megaprojects:

1. Purpose Beyond Financial Goals
 - o Stakeholder enfranchisement and participatory planning
 - o Social inclusivity and equity in megaprojects
 - o Cultural preservation and heritage management
 - o Job creation and economic development
 - o Tackling today’s grand challenges through megaprojects

- Value creation and Distribution through megaprojects
- 2. Governance and Policy:
 - Business-government (or public-private) collaborations in megaproject delivery
 - Legal and regulatory frameworks for megaprojects
 - Risk management and project governance
 - Financing models and investment evaluation methodologies
 - Ethical considerations in megaproject implementation
- 3. Sustainable Megaprojects:
 - Innovations in sustainable design and construction
 - Environmental impact assessment and mitigation strategies
 - Renewable energy integration in megaprojects
 - Water and waste management solutions
 - Social and economic sustainability considerations
- 4. Technological Advancements and Digitalization:
 - Digital technologies in megaproject planning and execution
 - Building information modeling (BIM) and virtual reality applications
 - Artificial intelligence and machine learning in megaprojects
 - Smart cities and IoT-enabled infrastructure
 - Data analytics for project management and optimization

Selected papers, presented by authors during the workshop, will be published by [Springer](#) (Scopus and WoS indexed).

References

- Cerić, A., Vukomanović, M., Ivić, I., & Kolarić, S. (2021). Trust in megaprojects: A comprehensive literature review of research trends. *International Journal of Project Management*, 39(4), 325-338.
- Flyvbjerg, B., Berzelius, N., and Rothengatter, W. (2003). *Megaprojects and Risk: An Anatomy of Ambition*, Cambridge University Press
- Gil, N., and Pinto, J. K., (2018). Polycentric organizing and performance: A contingency model and evidence from megaproject planning in the UK," *Research Policy*, 47(4), 717-734.
- Gil, N. and Fu Y., (2022). Megaproject performance, value creation, and value distribution: an organizational governance perspective," *Academy of Management Discoveries.*, 8(2), 224-251.
- Gil, N. (2023). Cracking the megaproject puzzle: A stakeholder perspective?", *International Journal of Project Management*, 41(3), 102455.
- Merrow, E. W., McDonnell, L. M., and Arguden R. Y. (1988). *Understanding the outcomes of megaprojects*. Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation.
- Miller, R. and Lessard, D. R. (2000). *The strategic management of large engineering projects: Shaping institutions, risks, and governance.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Schindler, S., Fadaee, S., & Brockington, D. (2019). Contemporary megaprojects: An introduction." *Environment and Society*, 10(1), 1-8.
- Söderlund, J., Sankaran, S., & Biesenthal, C. (2017). The past and present of megaprojects. *Project Management Journal*, 48(6), 5-16.

Submission Guidelines

We invite researchers, scholars, industry professionals, policymakers, and other interested individuals to submit original, high-quality research papers, case studies, or review articles addressing the conference themes. All submissions should follow the guidelines provided on the conference website at the link available on the section “call for papers” on the conference’s website <https://convegni.unicatt.it/merit>

Important Dates:

- Paper Submission Deadline: October 1st, 2023
- Notification of Acceptance: October 10th, 2023
- Camera-ready Paper Submission: October 31st, 2023
- Registration deadline for authors: Nov 4th, 2023.

We look forward to receiving your contributions and fostering meaningful discussions on how megaprojects can change the world for the better. Join us at MeRIT workshop to share your insights, collaborate with like-minded professionals, and contribute to shaping a sustainable and prosperous future through transformative projects.

For further inquiries, please contact: **merit@unicatt.it**