



# Public Relations and the Power of Creativity

Strategic Opportunities, Innovation and Critical Challenges



Hosted by London College of Communication, University of the Arts London (UAL)  
at Chelsea College of Arts, London, 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> October 2017

The European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) is an independent organisation that aims at stimulating and promoting innovative knowledge and practices of strategic communication, organisational communication and public relations across Europe. Each year, it organises an annual highly regarded academic Annual Congress in partnership with a selected university.

The European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) is an autonomous organisation with nearly 500 members from 40 countries interested in advancing academic research and knowledge in strategic communication. Several cross-national and comparative research and education projects are organised by affiliated universities, and a highly regarded academic congress is staged each autumn at varying locations. At the congress, recent research results are presented, based on peer-reviewed papers and panel sessions; PhD students also have the opportunity to continue the experience through the PhD Seminar, which follows the Annual Congress. The congress is a major event to exchange research insights and to start collaborations in this specific field in Europe.

More information: [www.euprera.org](http://www.euprera.org) or email: [info@euprera.org](mailto:info@euprera.org)

## Call for contributions



Academics, PhD students and practitioners are invited to submit papers and panel proposals related to Congress themes.

## Dates for submission of anonymous papers and panels for peer review



Deadline for abstracts: 24 February 2017

Feedback on abstracts: 11 April 2017

Deadline for full papers: 23 June 2017

Feedback on full papers: 24 July 2017

Deadline for final version of full papers: 1 September 2017

All abstracts and papers to be submitted in English.

Abstracts: 8000 words, excluding tables and figures

Full Papers: Between 30,000 and 40,000 characters, including blanks, excluding pictures and tables

## Publication of papers

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There are two opportunities for authors who have successfully submitted and presented papers at the Congress: a special issue of the Journal of Communication Management and a Congress book that is a part of a book series published by Emerald.

## PhD seminar

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This will take place on 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017 following the Congress and is dedicated to young researches. It is chaired by Professors Øyvind Ihlen, Prof. Dr. Sabine Einwiller and Dr. Jens Seiffert. More information and how to apply is available on the Congress website.

## Awards

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During the Congress the following awards shall be presented:

EUPRERA Best Paper; Emerald Professional Impact; EUPRERA Best Reviewer; EUPRERA PhD Award for Excellent Doctoral Thesis; EUPRERA Master Thesis Award for Excellence

## Local organiser

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# A World in Crisis: The Role of Public Relations



In his 1992 book, American political scientist Francis Fukuyama confidently declared that the fall of the Berlin Wall had signaled “the end of history” as Western values of liberal democracy, free markets, and open society had triumphed and therefore would henceforth be adopted by the rest of the world. What an illusion! Less than twenty years into the 21st century, the list of countries one does not associate with a liberal democratic system (China, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Turkey, the Philippines...) has been growing as does their apparent influence over global affairs. Even the USA, considered the leader of globalism in the 20th century, appears to have embraced protectionism and economic nationalism typified by the slogan “America first!” A combination of political and technological creative destruction appears to be making societies progressively less open where individuals are voluntarily ceding control over their privacy to government and corporations (such as Amazon, Apple, Facebook and Google) to the levels that George Orwell, the author of dystopian novel 1984, couldn’t even imagine). The world appears to be in a permanent crisis. Trust in authorities and institutions is falling while at the same time organizational appear to be making optimistic promises of their commitment, engagement, and even enthusiasm. What is going on? Public relations has always been involved in sense-making and reflection, relationship management and storytelling. How much has it contributed to the present VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous) state of affairs and what is its role in the near future? These are questions we think we need to discuss during the 25th anniversary of the International Public Relations Research Symposium – BledCom 2018.

The following are a few of the many topics subsumed in this theme: a world in turmoil and the role of public relations; crisis management; crisis communication; corporate crisis

communication; government and public crisis communication; non-profits – their role in today’s world; communication and the erosion of trust in (public) authorities; agnotology, fake-news, post-truth and post-democracy; communication and (corporate, political, social) sense-making; journalism and media in crisis?; social media and their role in creating the present state of affairs; strategic communication in a VUCA world.

## Call for Abstracts and Panels

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We invite abstracts that are between 500 and 800 words (including title and keywords) with up to 5 references. Please use the following guidelines to present your abstract and kindly supply the word count at the end of the submission.

Please note that as has been the norm in the past, BledCom welcomes ALL papers that are relevant to public relations and communication management beyond papers that discuss the conference theme.

## Format for the Abstract

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Introduction and purpose of the study (and research question if there is one) – helps summarize the purpose and rationale of your study. Literature review – Helps place your work in context with the existing body of knowledge. Methodology – Define the main method used for gathering data including sample size, and state the rationale for using this method. Results and conclusions – Helps summarize the answers to the research questions while also outlining the implications of the results. Also summarize the limitations of the study and offer suggestions for future research. Practical and social implications – Offer the potential implications both for practice and society. Also provide us with 3 to 5 keywords that highlight your study. Abstracts should come as blind copies without author names and affiliations, who are to be identified on a separate cover page. Please use the suggested headings to structure the abstract. A list of literature is not necessary, but if it is provided it is included into the word count.

Panel proposal are also welcome. The proposal should describe the title and focus of the panel, name of the chair of the panel, and names of every member of the panel and title or focus of each presentation.

## Deadline

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Both paper abstracts and panel proposals should be submitted via email to [bledcom@fdv.uni-lj.si](mailto:bledcom@fdv.uni-lj.si) no later than 1 February 2018. Decisions will be made by 1 March 2018. Full papers of no more than 6.000 words will be due by 1 September 2018.

## Program Committee

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Dejan Verčič, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Ana Tkalac Verčič, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Krishnamurthy Sriramesh, Purdue University, USA

The Program Committee will be guest editing a special issue of *Public Relations Review*. Papers presented at BledCom 2018 will be considered for publications in the special issue.

