Effectuation 2026-Conference Invitation & Call for Papers

Effectuation theory and practice continue to inspire a global community of researchers, educators, and practitioners who study, teach, practice, and support entrepreneurship under uncertainty. Building on ten years of lively and highly interactive gatherings, we invite you to join us for the 11th Effectuation Conference on November 15-17, 2026, hosted by the University of Antwerp (Antwerp, Belgium) and co-branded with ECSB.

As we mark a quarter-century since Saras Sarasvathy's Academy of Management Review article "Effectuation and Causation," this year's conference theme is:

"Effectuation: The Next 25 Years"

The theme is intended less to constrain what participants submit and more to orient keynote and plenary conversations—and to provide shared prompts for pod discussions—as we take stock of the past 25 years of scholarship, pedagogy, and application and consider where effectuation can go next. Among others, we will explore questions such as:

- What are the most important open research questions for effectuation research over the next 25 years?
- Where should effectuation theory expand, sharpen its boundaries, or integrate with other perspectives in entrepreneurship scholarship—and where should it remain distinct?
- What new settings (ecosystems, corporations, the public sector, NGOs, …) require new constructs or principles—and which core ideas travel well?
- Where do effectuation and other pedagogies overlap, complement, or contradict (e.g., design thinking, lean startup, the business model canvas, discovery vs. creation, …)?
- How can we better connect effectuation scholarship on interaction and stakeholder commitments with practical approaches that entrepreneurs—and educators—can actually use?
- What is the role of effectuation in public policy, entrepreneurship support, and ecosystem development—what can it realistically deliver?
- How does effectuation operate inside established organizations (intrapreneurship, innovation units, public agencies), and what changes when commitments are bureaucratic or political?

We provide a description of each of the elements of this conference, followed by a daily agenda, with updates available on the conference website: www.effectuation.org.

In the tradition of Effectuation Conferences in past years, the format will offer plenary sessions as well as small group research and practice "pods" where your submissions can be developed into full-fledged research articles, teaching materials, and cases. We will also enjoy the "effectual dinner" - the centerpiece of the social activities accompanying the conference.

Pod Work and Submission Types

A significant part of the Effectuation Conference is dedicated to pod work. Around 4-5 hours of the conference will be spent in stable breakout groups, allowing participants to work together in depth.

Pods are designed as interactive working formats, not as presentation slots. Submissions are therefore not treated as finalized contributions, but as starting points for shared exploration, reflection, and learning within a pod.

When preparing your submission, please select the pod type that best matches your contribution. Your submission should make clear what you would like to explore with others and how your work can contribute to collective learning during the conference.

Research Pod

If you're looking for rigorous feedback, sharper framing, or a chance to stress-test your argument and contributions, submit an academic paper (**max 30 pages**) or an extended abstract (**7–10 pages**). Accepted submissions are placed in a **Research Pod** designed to help you move the work forward through focused, interactive discussion.

This pod is a good fit for **research-in-progress**, **conceptual pieces**, **empirical studies**, **methodological innovations**, **replications/extensions**, and **theory-building** that engages effectuation and benefits from intensive peer exchange prior to publication.

Your submission should consist of a self-standing research paper or extended abstract with your research question and motivation; theoretical framing that reflects how the work connects to (or advances)

effectuation research; and approach (data/setting/method or conceptual logic). *Optionally (if helpful):* add a short note at the end indicating the kind of feedback you would find most useful. You can raise these during the pod live discussion.

Effectuation Doctoral Research Alliance Pod (EDRA)

If you're a doctoral researcher looking to strengthen your dissertation, sharpen your theoretical positioning, or get targeted guidance on research design and next steps, submit an abridged version of your doctoral project (**3–7 pages**). If accepted you become member of **EDRA** —a supportive, international community of doctoral researchers and effectuation scholars who work together to develop doctoral work that meaningfully engages effectuation theory and practice.

This is best suited for doctoral projects at any stage—early idea formation, proposal development, data collection, analysis, or writing—so long as the dissertation uses effectuation centrally or embeds it as a key theoretical lens.

In the context of the conference, you willIf accepted, you will become a member of **EDRA** and participate in dedicated EDRA doctoral sessions during the conference, along with **two pre-conference online sessions** designed to strengthen your work and build cohort cohesion.

Your submission should be an abridged doctoral proposal describing your research question and motivation; how effectuation informs your framing; key concepts and intended contribution; your research design (setting/data/method) and current stage; and any early findings or planned analyses (as appropriate to where you are).

Optionally (if helpful): include a short note on the type of input you most need at this stage.

Teaching Pod

If you're looking for thoughtful input on your pedagogy, want to strengthen an exercise or session design, or would like to test whether others can adopt what you've built, submit a **3–7 page** description of a teaching practice or learning design you have used (or are planning to use). Accepted submissions join a **Teaching Pod** where peers help you refine the activity, clarify learning objectives, and strengthen delivery and debrief practices.

This pod is a good fit for **classroom exercises**, **session plans**, **course or module designs**, **assignments and rubrics**, **experiential formats**, **facilitation scripts**, **assessment approaches**, or **teaching tools/templates**—anything that helps learners practice effectual action, interaction, commitments, and learning under uncertainty.

Your submission should be a self-standing description of the teaching practice or learning design (exercise, session plan, assignment, module, course element, tool/template), including the context of use (audience/level), learning objectives, step-by-step plan, timing/materials, and how the activity is facilitated and debriefed.
Optionally (if helpful): include a brief "feedback focus" note (e.g., what you want to strengthen, adapt, or pressure-test).

Applied Effectuation Pod

If you are applying effectuation in real-world settings and want structured peer reflection on your practice, submit a **3–7 page** practice description (implemented or work in progress). Accepted submissions join an **Applied Effectuation pod** designed to help you make sense of what you are doing, refine your approach, and surface transferable insights through dialogue-oriented discussion.

This pod is a good fit for effectuation applications in **start-ups**, **established organizations** (e.g., intrapreneurship, innovation units), **entrepreneurship support programs**, and **policy-making** contexts. We are looking for contributions that go beyond "success stories" to reflect on constraints, trade-offs, surprises, and learning so that others can adapt what you have learned to their own settings.

Your submission should be a self-standing practice description outlining the context and objective; the stakeholders involved; what you did or plan to do (practices, tools, routines, or intervention design); what changed or you expect to change (commitments, decisions, learning, outcomes, unexpected turns); and what the case suggests about applying effectuation in practice.

Optionally (if helpful): include a brief "learning focus" note highlighting what you most want peer input on (e.g., next steps, alternative approaches, dilemmas, or how to translate your practice into research or teaching materials).

Showcase / Live Demonstration Pod

If you want to *show something*—a tool, format, artefact, intervention, exercise, game, or practice others can learn from, adopt, or build on—submit a **3–7 page** showcase description. Accepted submissions join a **Showcase Pod** where you'll get help clarifying what your audience can take away, strengthening the underlying logic, and improving how the contribution can travel to other contexts.

This pod is best suited for **community-ready artifacts** and practice-based contributions, such as:

- a **toolkit, template, canvas, or facilitation format**
- a **workshop or intervention design** (education, incubation, policy, consulting, community programs)
- a **course or program component** you want others to replicate
- a **digital resource** (light prototype, platform feature, dataset/tool pipeline) that supports effectual action
- a **physical artifact** (boardgame, card set, experiment kit, story cubes, workbook)

Your submission should be a description of the tool, artifact, or practice-in-action you want to showcase, including what it is, who it is for, how it is used, the context where it was developed or applied, and what a user/participant would do.

Optionally (if helpful): add a short "feedback focus" note (e.g., clarity, transferability, positioning, design improvements).

TL;DR (Summary Table)

Pod	Best for participants who want to…	Submit	What you get in the pod
Research	Strengthen a paper, sharpen framing, stress-test argument/contribution	Full paper (max 30 pages) or extended abstract (7–10 pages)	Rigorous, interactive workshop feedback to move the manuscript forward

Pod	Best for participants who want to…	Submit	What you get in the pod
Effectuation Doctoral Research Alliance (EDRA)	Develop dissertation work with a dedicated doctoral community	Abridged doctoral proposal (3–7 pages)	Cohort-based development + focused feedback on your project + two pre-conference online sessions
Teaching	Improve a teaching practice, exercise, session, or course design	Teaching practice/design description (3–7 pages)	Design feedback on learning objectives, facilitation, delivery, and debrief
Applied Effectuation	Reflect on real-world application of effectuation (startup, corporate, policy, support orgs)	Practice description (implemented or WIP) (3–7 pages)	Peer reflection to refine practice, surface learning beyond success stories, and translate insights
Showcase / Live Demonstration	Share a tool, artifact, game, format, intervention others can adopt	Showcase description (3–7 pages)	Help clarifying takeaways, strengthening logic, and improving transferability/adoption

Review, Acceptance and Participation

All submissions are reviewed by members of the Effectuation community and the program team, with attention to fit with the conference purpose, potential for collective learning, and meaningful engagement with effectuation theory and/or practice. The review process is developmental rather than purely selective: we explicitly welcome work in progress, emerging ideas, and practice-based contributions that can benefit from interactive discussion.

Acceptance guidelines: In general, we accept submissions that (1) clearly connect to effectuation (theory, teaching, or application), (2) provide sufficient substance to support a rich pod conversation, (3) offer clear potential for collective learning (e.g., a research puzzle, practical implications, conceptual tension, or transferable insight), and (4) are shared in a spirit of reciprocity and iteration.

Participation: Acceptance implies a commitment to actively participate in the conference. Accepted submissions are discussed live in small pods (rather than presented in a traditional lecture format), and at least one author must attend to contribute to the pod discussion and peer feedback process. If space permits, co-authors are also welcome to attend and participate in the pod discussions. Prior to the conference, pod participants receive the set of submissions assigned to their pod and are expected to read them in advance, prepare comments, feedback and suggestions for improvement.

All submissions should be sent via the submission form on our conference page (www.effectuation.org). Authors may send multiple types of submissions but note that you can only attend one pod throughout the entire conference.

Questions and inquiries should be sent to the organizers at conference@effectuation.org.

Information & registration

Registration fee (accepted authors) = 250 EUR; ECSB members enjoy a reduced rate of 220 EUR; doctoral students accepted to the Effectuation Doctoral Research Alliance = 150 EUR.

Participants are responsible for their own travel and accommodation. To keep the interactive and community atmosphere of the previous conference, acceptances will be limited to 75 participants (or space limitations)

Recommendations for hotels & travel will be published here soon.

Important deadlines

Paper submission: May 15, 2026

Author notification: July 31, 2026

Registration opens: August 15, 2026

Registration closes: September 30, 2026

Conference logistics and submission instructions can be found at https://www.effectuation.org/
https://effectuation.org/2026-effectuation-conference

We hope our intense, but rewarding program encourages you to come join us. We look forward to seeing you in Antwerp!

The Organizing Committee

(Tiago, Katrin, Jim, Eddy, Rene, Michael)