

## After EURAM 2026

### Navigating High Waters - Managing in an age of disruption<sup>1</sup>

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The 26th EURAM (The European Academy of Management) Annual Conference was held in Kristiansand, Norway, from June 16 to June 19. The conference theme was **“Navigating High Waters – Managing in an Age of Disruption”**.

This report provides brief information about the excellent research that received awards at the conference:

- The PMI Best Paper of the Project Organising Strategic Interest Group (PO SIG): Role of Project Governance in Shaping Social Value in Infrastructure Projects
- The Most Inspirational Paper of the PO SIG: Leading without leaders? The organizational limits of project leadership in bureaucratic contexts

### Speakers

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## Roksana Jahan Tumpa

Lecturer in Project Management at  
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### The PMI Best Paper of the PO SIG ( Role of Project Governance in Shaping Social Value in Infrastructure Projects)

This study explores how infrastructure projects create social value and, more importantly, how that process is governed. While social value—such as improving community wellbeing, creating local employment, supporting social inclusion, and delivering broader public benefits—is increasingly emphasized in infrastructure policy and practice, there is still limited understanding of how organizations actually govern and sustain these outcomes throughout a project's lifecycle. The researchers draw on stakeholder theory and social capital theory to argue that social value is not something that can simply be imposed through formal governance structures or contractual requirements. Instead, it is created through an ongoing process of negotiation, collaboration, and relationship-building among project stakeholders. In this view, project purpose is continuously shaped and reinterpreted as different actors interact throughout the project.

The study is based on 27 semi-structured interviews with Australian infrastructure professionals. The interview data were analyzed using an abductive approach and the Gioia methodology, allowing the researchers to develop theory directly from participants' experiences while linking the findings to existing governance literature.

The findings suggest that social value is developed through ongoing communication, shared decision-making, performance monitoring, and the integration of social objectives throughout the project lifecycle. Rather than viewing governance as a fixed set of rules or organizational structures, the study presents it as a dynamic and relational process in which stakeholders collectively interpret, negotiate, and implement the project's broader social purpose. This perspective highlights that effective governance depends not only on formal mechanisms but also on the quality of relationships and interactions across the project network.

Overall, the study argues that governance should be understood not only as a set of formal structures, policies, or contractual mechanisms, but also as a dynamic, communicative, and relational process. Through continuous dialogue, collaboration, and shared interpretation among stakeholders, governance actively shapes how social value is defined, implemented, and sustained across infrastructure project networks. This shifts the focus from governance as a static organizational structure to governmentality—the everyday practices and interactions that guide stakeholder behavior and enable the delivery of long-term social value.



Simon Bichon

Associate Faculty Dean - ESSCA School of  
Management

## Leading without Leaders? The Organizational Limits of Project Leadership in Bureaucratic Contexts

Why do so many projects struggle, even with a good project manager?

This simple question led me to spend three years in full immersion within a large public organization. What I found challenged a common assumption in project management. My research suggests that leadership does not begin when a project manager is appointed. It begins much earlier, with the organizational conditions that make it possible.

Over those three years, I observed that even the most capable project managers are often expected to deliver ambitious change without the authority, resources, or decision-making power needed to succeed. In other words, they are expected to lead without the organizational conditions that enable leadership.

My research suggests that the real question is not whether leadership is individual or shared. It is whether organizations create the conditions that make leadership possible in the first place. Before asking who should lead a project, organizations must first create the governance, strategic alignment, and legitimate authority that allow leadership to emerge. Otherwise, they risk expecting leadership where the conditions for it simply do not exist.

## About the Editor



**Ipek Sahra Ozguler**

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**Ipek Sahra Ozguler** graduated from the Istanbul University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Engineering and from Middle East Technical University with an MSc degree in Software Management. As a project manager, she has more than 10 years' experience in various areas such as portfolio management, program management, project management, software management, business analysis. She became a certified PMP in January, 2012 and a certified SCRUM Master in 2014.

She has managed a variety of projects across manufacturing, defence, FMCG (Cola Cola), insurance (Euler Hermes), audit (Deloitte), telecommunication, ICT and aviation sectors and gained broader insights. In addition, she has worked as international correspondent for the *PM World Journal* since 2014.

Ipek is the creator and editor of the highly acclaimed book, [The Perspective of Women Project Management Professionals](#), interviews with leading female PM experts and professionals around the world. The book was published in March 2020 and is available [here](#).

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To view other works by Ms. Ozguler, visit her author showcase in the PM World Library at <http://pmworldlibrary.net/authors/ipek-sahra-ozguler/>