



**CONCORDi 2025**

10<sup>th</sup> European Conference on  
Corporate R&D and Innovation

# Call for Papers

Conference Announcement

Strategic Technologies  
and Industrial Policy  
for **Competitiveness**  
and **Sustainability**

**24 - 26**  
**September 2025**  
*Seville, Spain*

In cooperation with



# Strategic Technologies and Industrial Policies for Competitiveness and Sustainability

## Conference Announcement

### Background and Highlights

The biennial European Conference on Corporate R&D and Innovation (CONCORDi) is a science-for-policy forum that brings together leading academics, policymakers, and industry experts to discuss current and future EU policy challenges arising from frontier research on corporate R&D, innovation, and industrial dynamics. CONCORDi conferences have been organised by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) in Seville since 2007 (for more information, see [here](#)). In 2025, and in collaboration with the OECD, the JRC-Seville will host the 10th anniversary edition of CONCORDi, which builds upon the previous conferences' legacy and continues to foster dialogue between the scientific community and policy makers.

The global economy is witnessing widespread geo-political tension and uncertainty. This context has exacerbated international technological competition, paving the way to the emergence of technological sovereignty and strategic autonomy as frameworks guiding innovation policy goals by governments (Edler et al., 2023; Amaral-Garcia et al., 2024). While caught in the technological contest between US and China (Godinho & Simões, 2023), the EU is rethinking its competitiveness (Draghi, 2024) to create the conditions for European firms to enhance their performance in strategic high-tech sectors, where they are less innovative than global leaders (Moncada-Paternò-Castello & Grassano, 2022; Bergeaud, 2024; Fuest et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the EU must strengthen its competitiveness while delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Against this backdrop, industrial policy tools have gained momentum also in the EU, particularly in supporting firms' innovation (Bloom et al., 2019) – for instance via R&D tax incentives (Dechezleprêtre et al., 2023; OECD, 2023) – and fostering decarbonisation (Altenburg & Rodrik, 2017). The increased number of subsidies, and the growing data produced by the assessment of industrial policies (Juhász et al., 2023) has allowed academics to better understand the potential of industrial policies to support competitiveness and prosperity.

However, the endeavour of supporting innovation for both competitiveness and sustainable development is not without challenges. For example, implementing industrial policies requires coordination efforts and acceptance within a single market (Fontana & Vannuccini, 2024). Moreover, the diffusion of strategic technologies can disrupt labour markets and employability of the workforce, particularly in smaller firms (Bessen et al., 2025).

Given this multifaceted context, academic contributions to CONCORDi 2025 should aim at disentangling the complex relationship between strategic technologies, industrial policy and their roles in shaping the future competitiveness of firms and economies, while ensuring environmental and social sustainability. The conference will explore how strategic technologies can act as catalysts for sustainable transitions, contribute to asserting strategic autonomy, mitigate economics and social vulnerabilities, and open future development opportunities within a comprehensive policy framework.

In line with “The Future of European Competitiveness” (known as the *Draghi-Report*), CONCORDi 2025 will address the urgent need for concrete and ambitious actions to elevate and direct private investment in strategic

technologies; address technological vulnerabilities and autonomy; and leverage the Green Deal for business opportunities. This within a coherent green industrial and trade policy setting tailored to a variety of strategic sectors, in a context of rising international competition. In support of the “Act, Align, Accelerate” report, known as the *Heitor-Report*, the conference will also provide insights for transformative industrial and innovation policy agendas to promote competitive excellence and foster industrial competitiveness without losing sight of key societal challenges, including climate change and inequality.

## Call for Papers

We invite submissions of original research papers that align with one or more of the following thematic areas:

### Technological change and diffusion

- **Strategic technologies and industries:** Research identifying and analysing industries anticipated to be significantly influenced by strategic technologies, including digital technologies, biotechnology, and clean technologies.
- **Technology diffusion and knowledge spillovers:** Contributions on the diffusion of knowledge, firms' absorptive capacity, technology transfer, knowledge spillovers, and risk mitigation related to the unintended consequences of strategic technologies.

### Strategic technologies and the labour market

- **Skills demand and labour market dynamics:** Insights into education and training policies, identification of skills, skill mismatches, and employment patterns driven by the development and adoption of strategic technologies.
- **Strategic technologies and regional disparities:** Research unpacking the spatially uneven implications of strategic technologies on labour markets.

### Financing innovation and the role of large superstar firms

- **Financing of technologies and young companies:** Studies on the financing of strategic technologies, as well as best practices in public-private partnerships, venture capital, start-up and scale-up finance, government grants, and other funding mechanisms to support innovation.
- **Large companies:** Investigations into large companies' influence on strategic technology development and adoption, including open innovation strategies, venture building, market power considerations, and competition concerns.

### Industrial policies

- **Industrial policy evaluation:** Evaluations of industrial policies' impact on strategic technologies, the economy, and well-being, including trade-offs and policy mixes.

- **Industrial policy design:** Formulation and proposal of targeted industrial policies that foster the development, adoption, and scaling of strategic technologies.
- **Technologies in trade and geo-politics:** Analyses of global industrial policies' effects on EU's strategic positioning, including technology sovereignty and trade competition.

### Submission of Extended Abstracts

Researchers are invited to submit high-quality extended abstracts on empirical and/or theoretical work. Abstracts should not exceed 2000 words and be sent by **31 March 2025**.

Please use the link below to submit your extended abstract via the conference submission platform ex-Ordo (you will need to register your credentials first):

[SUBMIT YOUR ABSTRACT](#)

All submissions will be subject to a double-blind peer review process by at least two independent reviewers. Authors will only be informed about acceptance or rejection of their contribution. It is anticipated that between 50 and 70 extended abstracts will be accepted for an in-person presentation at the conference. Additionally, 5-10 submissions will be selected for poster presentations. Authors of posters will have the opportunity to discuss their research during the conference coffee breaks.

### Format of the Submission

- Extended abstract (2000 words max)
- Reference list (500 words max)
- Authors may upload one figure or table that illustrates key findings. No more than one exhibit per submission will be considered during the selection process.
- Suggested structure:
  - Motivation and short background
  - Methodology
  - Results (please refrain from discussing expected results, and include only a discussion of key results of the analysis)
  - Conclusion and implications for policy (a detailed discussion on policy implications will be mandatory for the conference presentation)

### Important Dates

- **Opening of submissions for extended abstracts:** 3 February 2025
- **Closing of submissions for extended abstracts:** 31 March 2025
- **Opening of registration:** 26 May 2025

- **Announcement of selected extended abstracts:** 30 May 2025
- **Registration deadline and authors' submission of full papers:** 25 July 2025
- **Conference:** 24 - 26 September 2025.

## Registration

Conference registration will open on 26 May 2025, with no fees required. The authors of the accepted extended abstracts will need to take care of travel and accommodation costs for the duration of the conference and will be required to submit a full paper by 25 July 2025. More details about the registration process will be provided later to authors selected for the conference. A very limited number of travel reimbursements is reserved for early career researchers, subject to approval by the JRC.

## Best Science-for-Policy Paper Award

The Scientific and Steering Committees will grant an award for the best scientific paper that embodies innovative and policy-relevant research within the conference's scope. In addition to the quality and originality of the scientific contribution, the evaluation will include aspects related to the relevance of the paper to current policy challenges, the logical connection between the policy recommendations and the research findings, and the extent to which the paper offers guidance for policymakers.

## Organising Committee

- Bernardo Caldarola – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Ramón Compañó – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Hugo Confraria – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Clemens Dornick – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Asunción Fernández Carretero – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Aurélien Genty – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Fernando Hervás – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Alina Mangea – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Francesco Rentocchini – European Commission, JRC-Seville and University of Milan, DEMM
- Carla Sciarra – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Lysann Siegl – European Commission, JRC-Seville
- Alexander Tuebke – European Commission, JRC-Seville

## Collaborating Organisation

- OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)

## Confirmed Keynote Speakers

### **James Bessen** – Boston University

James Bessen is an economist and technologist. Bessen serves as Executive Director of the Technology & Policy Research Initiative at Boston University. He has also been a successful innovator and CEO of a software company. Bessen studies the major economic impacts of technology on society. His latest book, *The New Goliaths* (Yale 2022), argues that major firms' investments in proprietary software systems have allowed them to increase their dominance of industries, slowing aggregate innovation, and raising income inequality.

### **Mercedes Delgado** – Copenhagen Business School & MIT

Mercedes Delgado is Associate Professor of Strategy and Innovation at Copenhagen Business School (CBS), and a Research Affiliate at MIT. Delgado examines the role of regional industry clusters in job creation, innovation, entrepreneurship, inclusivity, and resilience. Delgado has developed new methods for defining and mapping industry clusters and the supply chain economy. Her recent work also explores the organizational and locational drivers of the inventor gender gap.

## Scientific Committee

**Antonin Bergeaud** – HEC Paris Business School, Department of Economics, Paris, France

**Erik Canton** – European Commission, Directorate-General for Research & Innovation, Brussel, Belgium

**Carolina Castaldi** – Utrecht University, Chair of Geography of Innovation, Utrecht, Netherlands

**Chiara Criscuolo** – International Finance Corporation (IFC), Paris, France

**Antoine Dechezleprêtre** – OECD, Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), Paris, France

**Francesca Lotti** – Bank of Italy, Structural Economics Directorate, Rome, Italy

**Pietro Moncada-Paternò-Castello** – Université Libre de Bruxelles, Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management, Brussels, Belgium

**Frank Neffke** – Complexity Science Hub, Vienna, Austria

**Milena Nikolova** – University of Groningen, Faculty of Economics and Business, Groningen, Netherlands

**Lucia Piscitello** – Polytechnic of Milan, Milan, Italy

**Maria Savona** – University of Sussex, Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU), Brighton, United Kingdom and LUISS University, Department of Economics and Finance, Rome, Italy

**Mercedes Teruel** – Universitat Rovira i Virgili (URV), Faculty of Business and Economics, Department of Economics, Tarragona, Spain

## Additional Details

- For detailed guidelines for the call for papers and registration process please visit our ex-Ordo webpage: <https://concordi2025.exordo.com/>
- For more information about the conference please visit the conference website: <https://iri.jrc.ec.europa.eu/concordi-2025>

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