

THE IMP FORUM IN JBIM and  
Centrimark – Research Center for Marketing in collaboration with  
the Department of Economics and Business Management (SEGESTA)  
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan  
Invite you to participate in the  
**IMP Forum Seminar March 26-27, 2026**

Dear Colleagues,

We have the pleasure to invite you to the IMP FORUM SEMINAR hosted by the Research Center for Marketing – CENTRIMARK and the Department of Economics and Business Management (SEGESTA) at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan. The seminar will start at noon on March 26<sup>th</sup> and will end at lunch on March 27<sup>th</sup> 2026.

There is no fee for the seminar. Coffee breaks and light lunches will be provided. Participants have to cover their own travel and accommodation costs. Further information about Hotels, venue and transportation will be provided.

The aim of the seminar is to discuss papers on empirical research and/or related conceptual and methodological issues; concerning exchange, interaction and networks. The papers will be discussed in one general and one special track. The special track is titled “The Transition to a Sustainable Economy: Where Do We Stand, and What Can IMP Do Next?” (cf. call for papers).

The ambition with the seminar is twofold: to share and confront ideas among the participants (authors/reviewers) but also to enhance the quality of the review process and thus of the final papers that will be published in THE IMP FORUM in JBIM. Please keep in mind that the IMP Forum seminar is meant to be a complementary platform to the IMP Conference which means you are free to bring to the seminar works presented or to be presented at the annual IMP Conference.

**Important principles of the IMP FORUM SEMINAR:**

- *It is the paper that is in focus and the key issue is how to develop the quality of the paper.* Every author will, during a session of 45 minutes dedicated to the paper, get comments from experienced IMP researchers and hand-on suggestions for how to develop the paper.
- Every paper submitted will be attributed two reviewers. *The first reviewer has a central role for each session. The first reviewer starts the session, presents the paper and the review.* The second reviewer continues before the floor is opened for the author and the other participants (hence, the author does not present the paper).

- *Every participant (author)* will be reviewer on at least one paper and there are two reviewers to each paper. But we expect all participants to read all the papers in their track to make the discussions productive.

**Deadlines and schedule for the IMP Forum Seminar:**

- 31 October 2025 – submission of extended abstract for the general or special track (1-2 pages)
- 7 November 2025 – notification of abstract acceptance
- 9 March 2026 – submission of papers
- 12-25 March 2026 – reviews preparation (every participant will be asked to review and act as discussant of 1-2 papers)
- 26-27 March 2026 – IMP Forum Seminar

Following the seminar all authors will receive the two written reviews and will be asked to revise the paper according to reviewers' comments before submitting the paper to IMP Forum in JBIM (<https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jbim>).

In order to take part in the seminar, please send the abstract to the following e-mail address:  
[antonella.larocca1@unicatt.it](mailto:antonella.larocca1@unicatt.it)

***Welcome to send in abstracts to THE IMP FORUM Seminar 2026!***

Best Wishes,

IMP Forum Seminar Organizing Team

Antonella La Rocca, Chiara Cantù, Annalisa Tunisini, Matteo Dominidiato

## THE IMP FORUM in JBIM

Call for papers to the special track on

*The Transition to a Sustainable Economy: Where Do We Stand, and What Can IMP Do Next?*

Over the past three years, publications related to the IMP Forum in *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, as well as papers presented at the annual IMP Conferences in 2024 and 2025, have demonstrated a clear thematic focus, reflected in the frequent use of the keywords “network(s)” and “sustainable/sustainability.” The title of the forthcoming IMP Conference in 2026, “*Building a Sustainable World Through Business Relationships and Networks*,” further confirms the community’s strong interest in this relevant, intricate, and complex phenomenon, which can broadly be described as *the transition to a more sustainable economy*.

The IMP community began to recognize the potential of the IMP approach for studying this phenomenon some time ago (e.g., Baraldi, Gregori & Perna, 2011; Frostenson & Prenekert, 2015). Momentum increased some years later, notably with a special track at the IMP Forum Seminar in 2019 entitled “*Business and Sustainable Development*.” This coincided with the emergence of a research stream addressing sustainability-related processes from a business networks perspective (e.g., Chakrabarti, Henneberg & Ivens, 2020; de Abreu et al., 2020; Keränen et al., 2021; Tura, Keränen & Patala, 2019). The topic has been taken up at the IMP Conferences in 2020, 2024, and 2025, as well as at the IMP Forum Seminar in 2023, and has become the focus of a dedicated Special Interest Group (SIG) established in 2022. An increasing body of research has since emerged, addressing various aspects of sustainability (e.g., Cantù & Tunisini, 2023; Dessaigne, 2024; Dominidiato et al., 2024; Harrison et al., 2023; Runfola et al., 2025; La Rocca & Dal Molin, 2024; Vellesalu, Hjelmgren, & Lind, 2025). This line of inquiry remains dynamic, as reflected in the substantial number of contributions presented at the most recent IMP Conference (2025).

Much of this work has examined, from a business network perspective, the driving forces of sustainability transitions and, in particular, the inherent tensions, barriers, and paradoxes that may delay—or, in some cases, even undermine—the success of related initiatives. While empirical research on this phenomenon is still in its early stages, the insights developed so far suggest the need for broader reflection and integrative analysis. We therefore encourage authors not only to submit ongoing or developing studies, but also to revisit and extend past findings in order to clarify where we stand today and to identify the next steps for advancing this research area from theoretical, societal, and policy perspectives.

Accordingly, with this call for papers, and the related discussions it seeks to foster during the seminar, our ambition is to further advance research on this topic by: (1) systematizing the knowledge produced thus far by the IMP community and connecting it with other relevant streams of research and perspectives; (2) developing new or revised IMP frameworks and models that more accurately capture the phenomenon under study; (3) identifying unexplored research areas or overlooked intervening processes (e.g., technological transformation or other ongoing inter- or intra-organizational changes); and (4) proposing novel empirical investigations and/or methodological approaches to deepen our understanding.

## References

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- Cantù, C., & Tunisni, A. (2023). A circular innovation strategy in a supply network context: evidence from the packaging industry. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 38 (13), 220–238.
- Chakrabarti R., Henneberg S., Ivens B. (2020). Open sustainability: Conceptualization and considerations. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 89, 528–534.
- de Abreu, M. C. S., Ferreira, F. N. H., Proença, J. F., & Ceglia, D. (2020). Collaboration in achieving sustainable solutions in the textile industry. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 36, 1614–1626.
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