



The 5th edition of the International Conference on Applied Management Advances in the 21st Century was held virtually from 10 to 11 December 2025.

This conference was organized by the International Association for Development of the Information Society.

The International Conference on Applied Management Advances in the 21st Century (AMA21) seeks to provide a unique forum for presentation and discussion of the latest research developments and solutions for the current issues of the world economy. A global invitation was made to scholars, students, practitioners, organizations, government departments, policymakers and everyone interested in these subjects, to give their contribution.

The AMA21 2025 conference received 45 submissions. Each submission was reviewed in a double-blind review process by an average of four independent reviewers to ensure quality and maintain high standards. Out of the submissions received, 12 got blind referee ratings that published them as papers, which meant that the acceptance rate was 27%.

Extended versions of the best papers were selected to be published in:

❖ the IADIS International Journal on Computer Science and Information Systems

(ISSN: 1646-3692)



Besides the papers' presentations, the conference also included a talk by Dr. Melinda Jimenez Perez and a workshop by Professor Pedro Isaías and Professor Paula Miranda.

Talk:

CULTURAL HUMILITY AS A CATALYST FOR EMPLOYEE-DRIVEN ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION

by Melinda Jimenez Perez San Antonio, TX, USA

Abstract: This talk addresses the critical gap in current innovation and leadership scholarship by exploring how cultural humility can function as a strategic driver of employee-driven organizational innovation. In today's globalized, diverse, and dynamic workplaces, organizations increasingly depend on frontline insights and employee creativity rather than purely top-down structural initiatives. Yet many innovation efforts falter—not for lack of technology or ideas—but because the cultural and relational conditions necessary for inclusive idea generation remain unaddressed. Drawing on the literatures of cultural humility (Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998), psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999), and organizational culture and leadership (Schein, 2010), this talk argues that leadership practices grounded in self-reflection, openness to learning, and recognition of power dynamics lay the foundational conditions for innovation that emerges from employees' lived experiences and diverse perspectives. The aim of this conceptual work is to answer the question: How does cultural humility function as a leadership mechanism that enables and sustains employee-driven innovation? This investigation adopts a conceptual design grounded in practitioner-informed insights — not empirical interviews or surveys — drawn from leadership experience in community-based workforce and financial empowerment programs. These illustrative insights are employed to deepen theoretical understanding and to develop the Cultural Humility–Innovation Loop (CHIL), a model that identifies four reinforcing leadership dynamics: (1) reflexivity, where leaders examine assumptions and power barriers; (2) relational safety, where teams feel heard, valued, and empowered; (3) idea activation, where employees propose improvements based on contextual and cultural knowledge; and (4) shared ownership, where leadership collaborates with employees to implement and own innovation efforts. The loop emphasizes that cultural humility is an ongoing leadership process—not a one-time intervention—and that this process directly contributes to more robust, sustainable innovation. Applied illustrations enhance the model's practical resonance: for example, a workforce development program restructured its meeting facilitation to reduce hierarchical dominance and foster staff-driven redesign of service pathways; in a financial empowerment initiative, inviting frontline staff into decision-making surfaced latent operational gaps and triggered enhanced client outcomes. These examples underscore how cultural humility translates into innovation outcomes by shifting relational dynamics and distributing power. The talk's contributions are threefold: theoretically, it positions cultural humility as a leadership competency linked to innovation; conceptually, it introduces the CHIL model to articulate

the mechanism; practically, it provides guidance for embedding cultural humility in leadership development, meeting norms, and organizational practices. The work concludes with reflections on limitations—namely its conceptual nature—and recommends future empirical testing of CHIL across sectors and cultural contexts. Ultimately, this talk reframes organizational innovation not as a function of structure or technology alone, but as the outcome of culturally responsive leadership and inclusive relational practices.

Workshop:

DESIGN THINKING IN ACTION: FROM INSIGHT TO INNOVATION

Profs. Pedro Isaias (Universidade Aberta, Portugal) e Paula Miranda (Escola Superior de Tecnologia, IPS, Portugal).

Abstract: This workshop focuses on leveraging Design Thinking (DT), a human-centred and solution-oriented approach, to drive innovation, particularly within Higher Education (HE). DT functions as both a collaborative mindset and a methodology that guides multidisciplinary teams through five critical stages: Empathise, Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test. The framework employs a diverse set of tools across these stages. Across the workshop, participants will explore 15 DT tools through a blended approach that combines concise theoretical foundations with immersive, hands-on activities. Tools such as User Persona, Empathy Map, PEST Analysis, and Rich Picture are used in the Empathise stage to gain deep insights into user needs and context. In the Define stage, tools like Root Definition, Blue Ocean Strategy, and Buyer Utility Map support clear problem framing and opportunity identification. Ideation encourages the creation of diverse solution pathways using instruments such as the Business Model Canvas, 2x2 Matrix, and Opportunity Canvas. These ideas are then translated into tangible representations in the Prototype stage through Storyboards and Minimum Viable Products (MVPs). Finally, the Test stage validates assumptions and gathers evidence-based feedback using CSF Analysis and A/B Testing, enabling iterative refinement and data-informed decision-making that supports the creation of sustainable value.

The AMA21 2025 Book of Proceedings was published in hard copy by IADIS Press (ISBN: 978-989-8704-73-3).

Editors: Adriana Backx Noronha Viana and Pedro Isaiás

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Conference Program Chair

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