

**8th International Conference on
Rethinking Clusters 2025
in New Geopolitical and Sustainability Dynamics: Exploring
Emerging Markets**

November 23th-26th, 2025

University of Vale do Itajaí (UNIVALI), SC, Brazil

Call for Papers

The Recent geopolitical conflicts have heightened the importance of assessing how, and to which extent, geopolitical risk affects global value chain and the distribution of Foreign Direct Investment.

In response, Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) are reshaping their strategies to mitigate these uncertainties through nearshoring, friendshoring and backshoring. While such responses are not entirely new, they have gained considerable interest from academics and practitioners, particularly due to the new developments in the recent global context.

These strategic adjustments are reshaping local economic activities and industry agglomeration, potentially triggering new development cycles and dynamic shifts in regional clusters.

However, the impact on emerging economies presents unique challenges. Emerging economies have different experiences and patterns of regional/industrial cluster developments when compared with the cases of Europe or the United States. Regional clusters in emerging economies are relatively unstable. Their development and competitiveness are constrained by the macroeconomic and institutional pressures of the home country. A more in-depth approach of the emerging economies regional cluster can advance our understanding of the location and proximity, and how multinational strategies and sustainability can shape the regional cluster dynamic.

The ability of clusters to adapt to this new landscape will define their role in economic and social development, requiring an understanding of cluster dynamics and a commitment to cross-disciplinary collaboration. This approach enables clusters to respond to the demands of a rapidly changing world and lead the transition to a more sustainable and resilient future.

Join us at the University of Vale do Itajaí for the eighth edition of our international conference, building on the rich discussions established in the last edition of the event held in Padova. This year, we will discuss the need to rethink clusters from the perspective of geopolitical dynamics and the necessity for sustainable strategies.

Local Organizers Committee

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Conference themes include, but are not limited to:

1. The sustainability of places: industrial districts, clusters, regions, and ecosystems
2. The transformative power of artificial intelligence, big data, block-chain, and Industry 4.0
3. Culture, creativity, and tourism and their effects on sustainable development of places
4. Innovation ecosystems and networks: agents' positions, structure and dynamics
5. Smart cities, urban development, peripheries and marginal areas
6. Inequality mitigation, social innovation, and wellbeing: organizations, individuals, and communities
7. Exploring the dark side of innovation: the unexpected outcomes of the socio-technological progress
8. The rise of hostility: how do populism, nationalism, conflicts, and terrorism change economies and places
9. Global value chain and sustainable local development
10. International Entrepreneurship and innovation in places
11. Competitiveness and innovation in industrial districts, clusters, regions, and ecosystems
12. Exploring Geopolitical Shifts: Strategies for Enhancing Cluster Resilience and Sustainability

Organizational matters

The conference is scheduled to be held at the Postgraduate Program in Administration at the University of Vale do Itajaí on November 24th-26th, 2025.

Prospective contributors are encouraged to submit their extended abstracts or full papers to the <https://www.rethinkingclusters.org/> starting from June 15th until July 31st, 2025. Extended abstracts should have a minimum of 500 words and a maximum of 2,500 words, allowing for the inclusion of figures, tables, and/or images that do not count towards the word limit. Full papers should not exceed 10,000 words, inclusive of the abstract (150 words), tables, references, figure captions, and endnotes. Notification of acceptance for extended abstracts/full papers will be communicated by August 31st, 2025.

Participants interested in organizing special sessions within the conference are invited to contact the local organizers by July 1st, providing a session description and a list of participants. Notification of acceptance for special session proposals will be communicated by July 31st.

About the event location

The event will be held at the University of Vale do Itajaí, located in the state of Santa Catarina, in the southern region of Brazil. For international participants, the easiest way to reach Itajaí is by taking a direct flight from São Paulo (Guarulhos) to Navegantes (20 km) or Florianópolis (90 km). The area of the event is coastal, and the weather in November ranges from 20° to 25°, with various places of stunning nature to explore. Accommodation and transportation options will be available on the event website.

Details regarding registration and fees are as follows:

- Participation fee: early registration €150 (before September 15th, 2025) and €200 (from September 16th onwards).
- Reduced fee for PhD students and young scholars (within 5 years from the PhD degree): €100
- Reduced fee for participants from low and middle-income countries (non-OECD1 and non-OECD2 countries as defined by the World Bank): €70
- Reduced fee for students from low and middle-income countries (non-OECD1 and non-OECD2 countries as defined by the World Bank): €35

The participation fee covers the reception, as well as coffee breaks.

Registration starts on August 15th, and all pertinent information will be available on the conference website. We look forward to your participation in this intellectually stimulating event.

PhD candidates and young scholars' session

On the first day of the conference (Nov 24th), we reserved a special program exclusively for master's and PhD candidates and Young Scholars. The Paper Development Workshop (PDW) was designed to support young researchers by providing them with the necessary skills and insights for scientific research. Its main aim is to guide these scholars through the intricate process of writing, submitting, and revising papers for prestigious international journals. The PDW intends to assist young researchers in aligning their work with the latest trends and challenges across various management fields.

This dedicated day offers too, a unique opportunity to participate in a specialized workshop on research methods on cluster analysis. Attendees will engage in discussions about potential advancements in their ongoing projects, exploring cutting-edge methodologies such as experimental research design, social network analysis, natural language processing, and geographical information systems in an informal and interactive setting.

Don't miss this chance to enhance your research skills and connect with fellow PhD candidates and Young Scholars.

Update – Online PDW Opportunity for PhD Students

We are pleased to announce that the conference will include a **dedicated online Paper Development Workshop (PDW) session**, exclusively for PhD students. This additional session aims to enable the participation of a small number of students who are unable to travel to Brazil, ensuring broader accessibility while maintaining the in-person character of the event. Selection will be based on the **quality of the submitted work** and a **well-justified need for remote presentation**. Interested candidates must select this option at the time of submission, which will be available starting **June 15th**.

Important Dates:

Special session proposal deadline	July 1 st , 2025
Submission deadline	July 31 st , 2025
Notification of acceptance	August 31 st , 2025
Early registration deadline	September 15 th , 2025
Registration deadline	October 10 th , 2025

Conference dates:

- Welcome Reception November 23rd, 2025
- Rethinking Clusters: November 24th-26th, 2025
- Organizing Committee Meeting: November 27th, 2025

Visit the website: <https://www.rethinkingclusters.org/>

Local organizer



Co-organizers



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