

esade

Conference Program

European Scaleup Institute (ESI) 2026 Annual Conference

Mapping the Trajectory for Europe's Growth
Engines

May 22 – 23, 2026 | Barcelona





2026 Conference hosted by Esade Business School

Esade Barcelona Pedralbes Campus,
Building 3, Av. d'Esplugues 92-96, Barcelona



ESI Partners



DAY 1 | FRIDAY, 22 MAY

9:00–9:30: Registration & Morning Coffee

Location: Reception Desk

9:30–9:45: Welcome & Presentation ESI

Location: Floor A, Room A001

- Welcome by Prof. Lisa Hehenberger, Dean of Esade Business School
- Introduction by Prof. Dimo Ringov, ESI; Prof. Veroniek Collewaert, ESI

9:45–11:15: Paper Presentations Session 1: Conceptualizing and Measuring Scaling

Location: Floor A, Room A001

- **“Scalability and Scaling in Management Research: Toward a Process Model Integrating Fragmented Literatures”**
Justin J.P. Jansen (Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University) & Esther Tippmann (University of Galway)
- **“Quantifying and Decomposing Scaling”**
Daniel Blaseg (Esade), Johannes Roscher (McKinsey) & Bernd Skiera (Goethe University Frankfurt)
- **“Predicting the Size-Based Growth of Companies Across the Global Market”**
Ruyi Tao (Beijing Normal University), Jiang Zhang (Beijing Normal University), Veronica R. Cappelli (IESE Business School), Marcus J. Hamilton (University of Texas at San Antonio), Geoffrey B. West (Santa Fe Institute) & Christopher P. Kempes (Santa Fe Institute)
- **“The Internal Dimensions of Growing Organizations: Activity Scale, Scope, and Startup Performance”**
Constantin Prox (INSEAD/SKEMA)

11:15–11:30: Coffee Break

Location: Atrium Cafeteria Floor A

11:30–13:00: Paper Presentations Session 2: Building the Foundations – Organizational Architecture, Capabilities, and Human Capital for Scalability

Location: Floor A, Room A001

- **“When Do Entrepreneurial Ventures Hire? The Role of Performance Feedback and Employment Protection Legislation”**
Brecht Depreitere (Vlerick Business School), Veroniek Collewaert (Vlerick Business School) & Jeroen Neckebrouck (IESE Business School)
- **“Engineering Business Model Scalability: A Process Model”**
Erkko Autio (Imperial College Business School) & Llewellyn Thomas (University of Sydney Business School)
- **“The Hidden Work of Scaling: How Collective Toolmaking Recalibrates Coordination in Venture Transitions”**
Laure Marty (ESCP Business School)
- **“Scaling Under Threat: How Rigidity Responses Condition Scaling”**
Jakobus Cilliers (Esade) & Dimo Ringov (Esade)

13:00–14:00: Lunch

Location: Restaurant, Floor 2

14:00–15:30: Paper Presentations Session 3: Scaling Pathways – Business Models, Positioning, and Strategic Timing

Location: Floor A, Room A001

- **“The Enabling Role of Recombinant Business Model Innovation in Scaling”**
Ann-Sophie Kowalewski (IESE Business School) & Christoph Zott (IESE Business School)
- **“Beyond Optimal Distinctiveness: Explaining Divergent Venture Scaling Paths in Nascent Markets”**
Thomas Standaert (Ghent University), Xavier Walthoff-Borm (VLAIO, HOGENT and Ghent University), Elke Hubeau (Ghent University) & Petra Andries (Ghent University)
- **“Beyond ‘Scalable by Default’: A Multi-Level View on International Scaling of Digital Firms”**
Julia Baranova (Univali, Brazil), Irina Mihailova (University of Eastern Finland) & Dorota Piaskowska (University College Dublin)
- **“Timing the Ascent: Open-Source Software and the Decision to Start Scaling”**
Jabar Torkaman (Esade) & Dimo Ringov (Esade)

15:30–15:45: Coffee Break

Location: Atrium Cafeteria Floor A

15:45–16:45: Practitioner Panel

Location: Floor A, Room Jungle Room

Panel Members:

- Ana Maiques, CEO @ Neuroelectronics
- Bjorn Kijl, Co-founder & CEO, Kingfisher Capital
- Laure Marty, Operating Partner @ Quarkslab, Chief People Officer @ Swan & PayFit
- Elena Bou, Co-Founder, Board Member & Innovation Director @ InnoEnergy
- Marta Antunez, Investment Director @ Wayra, General Manager Spain @ Ulule, Co-founder and Co-CEO @ChicPlace

16:45–17:00: Coffee Break

Location: Atrium Cafeteria Floor A

17:00–17:20: ESI Scaleup Monitor Report

Location: Floor A, Room A001

- Prof. Dries Faems, ESI

20:00–22:30: Seaside Dinner

Location: [Restaurant Sal Mar](#), Pg. Marítim de la Barceloneta, Ciutat Vella, 08003, Barcelona

DAY 2 | SATURDAY, 23 MAY

9:30–9:45: Morning Coffee

Location: Atrium Cafeteria Floor A

9:45–11:15: Paper Presentations Session 4: Sensemaking, Framing, and Coordination in Scaling Ventures

Location: Floor A, Room A001

- **“Mind the Gap: Internal and External Frames in Scaling Entrepreneurial Firms”**
Odhran McIntaggart (IE Business School, IE University), Christina Kyprianou (IE Business School, IE University) & Kieran Conroy (Queen’s University Belfast)
- **“From Out-of-Sync to In-Sync Scaling: A Process Model of Synchronisation”**
Vladimira Mihaylova (Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University), Tom J.M. Mom (Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University) & Justin J.P. Jansen (Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University)
- **“Frame-Driven Collision: How Scaling Frames Prevent Growth in Informal Markets”**
Kabir M. Joshi (Bayes Business School)
- **“Building Scalability as a Dynamic Capability in Digital Startups”**
Nicolaas van Disseldorp (Tilburg University)

11:15–11:30: Coffee Break

Location: Atrium Cafeteria Floor A

11:30–13:00: Paper Presentations Session 5: Scaling in Context – Decisions, Sustainability, Threats, and Wellbeing

Location: Floor A, Room A001

- **“Building Decision Capacity to Scale in High-Growth Ventures”**
Bisan Abdulkader (LUISS Guido Carli) & Fabrizio Germani (Strategic Analysis)
- **“Scaling of Sustainable Business Models”**
Yuanyuan Cheng (University of Eastern Finland) & Irina Mihailova (University of Eastern Finland)
- **“When Autonomy Backfires: Adverse Selection in Startup Recruitment”**
Saerom (Ronnie) Lee (The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania) & Reuben Hurst (Smith School of Business, University of Maryland)
- **“Sick Leave in Scale-ups: A Gender-Inequality Paradox”**
Mohamed Genedy (Stockholm School of Economics), Johan Wiklund (Syracuse University), Arnold B. Bakker (Erasmus University Rotterdam & University of Johannesburg) & Karin Hellerstedt (Jönköping International Business School)

13:00–13:05: Closing Remarks

Location: Floor A, Room A001

13:05–13:30: Aperitivo & Farewell Toast

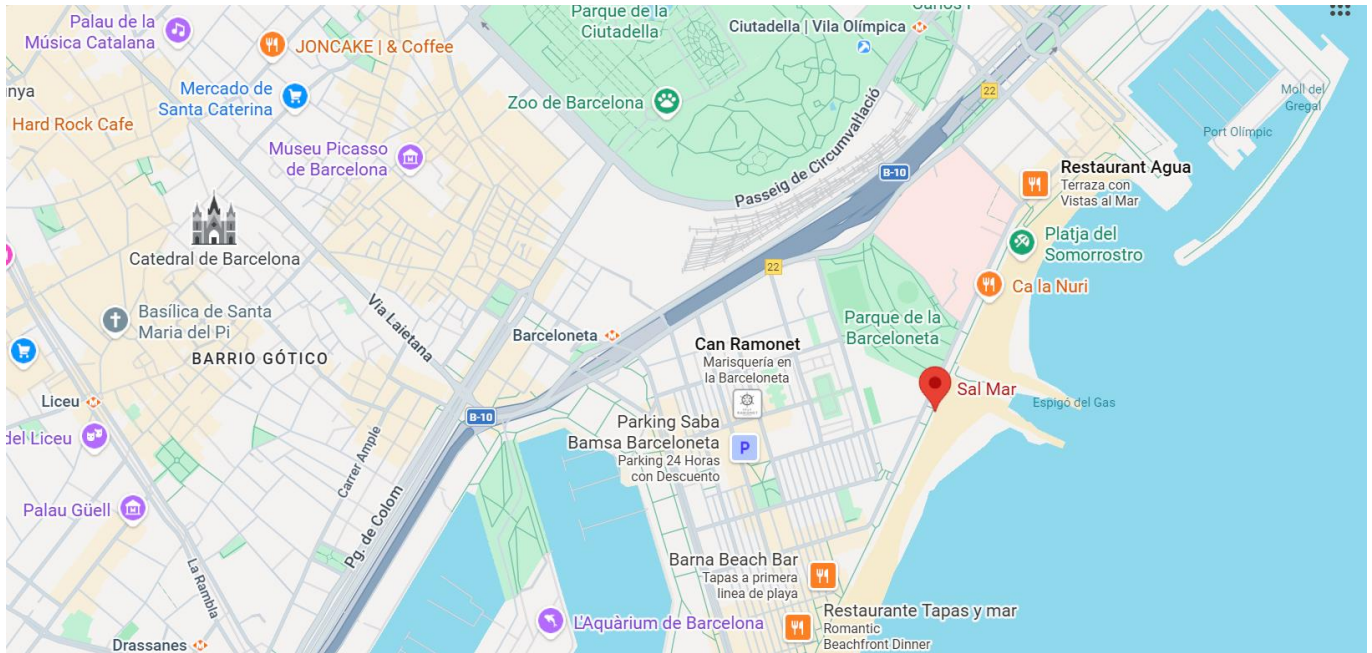
Location: Terrace, Floor 2

PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS

Wi-Fi access will be available throughout the conference via the Eduroam and “Esade Guest” networks.

On Friday, Day 1, at **13:50**, we will meet on the terrace for a **group photo**.

The **conference dinner** will take place at **Restaurant Sal Mar**, located at Passeig Marítim de la Barceloneta, (Barcelona). The restaurant is at beach level; please take the stairs or ramp down from the Passeig de la Barceloneta level.



After the conference, we will close with an aperitivo and a farewell toast. For anyone wishing to stay nearby for lunch afterwards, here are a few options close to the venue:

- Chandigarh Café, Av. d'Esplugues, 105, Barcelona
- Bistró Mató, Carrer del Bisbe Català, 10, Barcelona
- Jardí de l'Abadessa, Carrer de l'Abadessa Olzet, 26, Barcelona

