

22ND INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP FORUM CONFERENCE
FIRST EDITION

ENTREPRENEURSHIP, VALUES, AND WELLBEING IN THE AGE OF AI

14-15-16 September 2026
Istanbul, Türkiye



The IEF investigates, imbibes, inculcates, informs and innovates together with diverse groups of stakeholders in the arena of entrepreneurship, innovation, economic and social development.

Prof. JAY MITRA

Founder,
International Entrepreneurship Forum





At this year's conference, we explore how the rapid diffusion of AI across economic, organisational, and social systems

... is reshaping the nature of entrepreneurship, the values that underpin entrepreneurial action, and the well-being of individuals and societies. When we think of AI, our default position is about the technology. However, AI is now embedded in decision-making, production, and creative processes, there appear to be possibilities for unprecedented opportunities which paradoxically generate profound ethical, psychological, and societal challenges. It is perhaps a moot question whether AI creates contexts too. Or is it the context in which think, live, work, and play today that spawn technological creations that can overreach human capability and control?

Besides AI, the escalating frequency and severity of conflicts and wars worldwide are compounding the uncertainty that influences entrepreneurial endeavour. Together, these forces — technological disruption, geopolitical instability, the fragmentation of institutions, climate change, and the polarisation of communities — are converging to create an environment of heightened complexity, placing entrepreneurial exchange and well-being under growing, multidimensional pressure. But how productive is entrepreneurship today?

Through the six key themes, the conference calls for a values-driven, wellbeing oriented entrepreneurial future, integrating technology, ethics, inclusion, resilient development, and human flourishing. We will do so in the only location where different worlds converge - Istanbul to engender broader yet insightful appreciation of our complex, entrepreneurial times.



The International Entrepreneurship Forum

What makes us special? Operating for two decades with conferences and workshops hosted across the globe, we set our footprint in Europe, Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and Asia Pacific. We distinguish ourselves with our creative ‘out of the box’ approach to thinking about and exploring diverse forms of new ideas generation, venture formation, citizen engagement and economic, personal and social value creation. The IEF is a regenerative and evaluative space for individuals and organisations across societies.



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ABOUT THE IEF

History

The IEF was founded in the United Kingdom at the turn of this millennium in 2001. A global mind-set informed the first conference in Naples, Italy. Post-conference in the island of Capri we concluded that so much had already been researched, so many policies on start-ups and early-stage growth had been formulated, so many conferences and seminars held, and so much money was awash all around the globe. We talked about new combinations and even sustainability and values. But what was missing was being entrepreneurial in our thinking about crossing borders, disciplines and silos, and engaging in entrepreneurship as new forms of recombination with multiple perspectives facilitating productive change. Perhaps the beginning of this century offered hope in creating something different.



Founded 2001

22
conferences
worldwide



13 countries

across **5** regions
Asia, Africa, Latin
America, Europe,
and Middle East



More than

5000
delegates
over the years



Around

100 prestigious
guest speakers

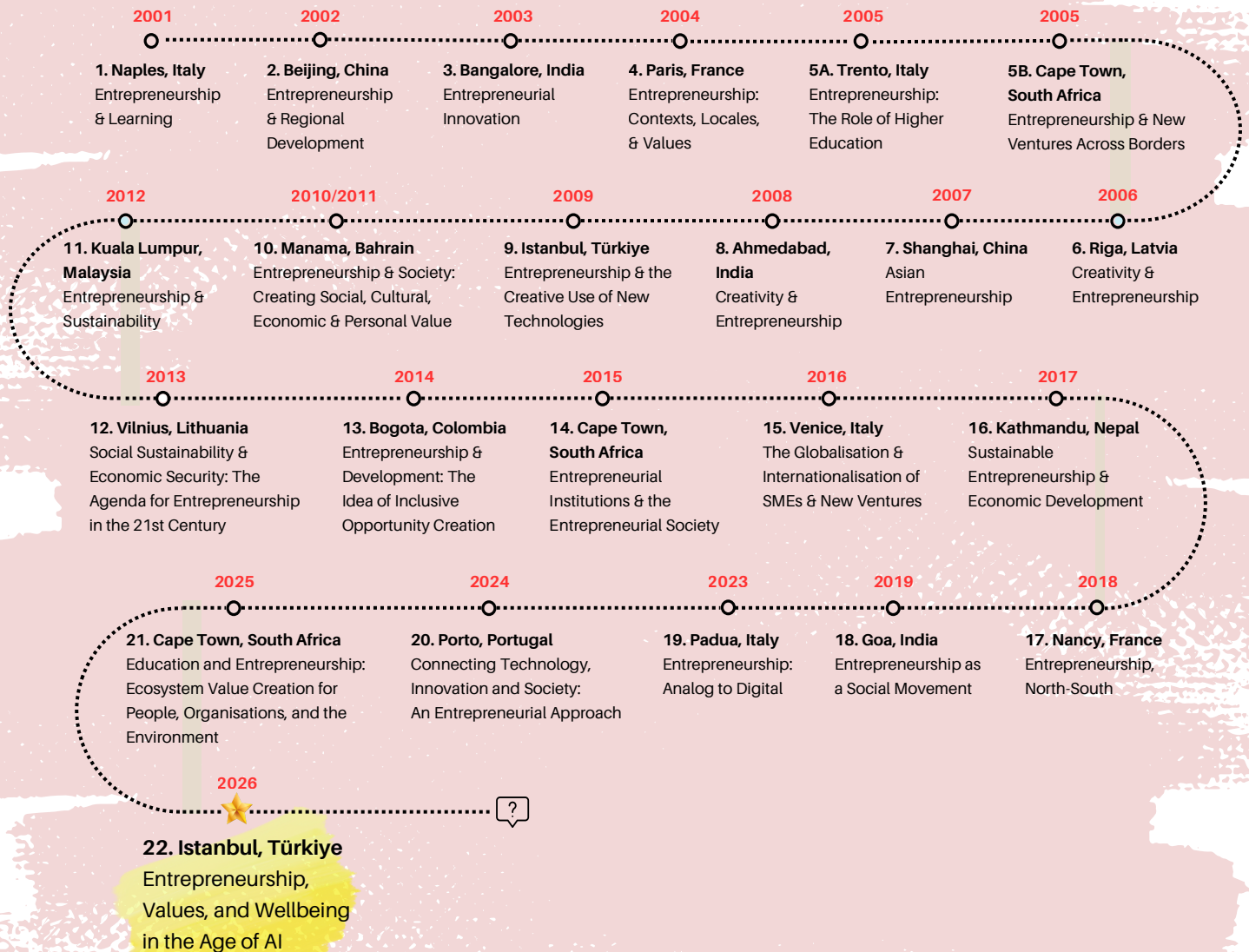
from around the world



80 partners &
networks
worldwide

publishers, media,
educational and research
institutions, industry players,
and government agencies

OUR JOURNEY



CONFERENCE ORGANISATION



Prof. Jay Mitra
Founder and President, IEF, UK;
Research Fellow, Leuphana University, Germany



Dr. Ahmet Murat Fiş
Associate Dean and Entrepreneurship Program Chair,
Özyeğin University, Türkiye

CURATION

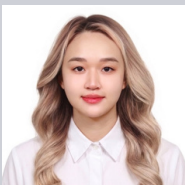
MANAGEMENT



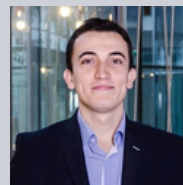
Holly Tam Bui
Conference and Research
Project Manager
IEF, UK



Dr. Bochra Idris
Assistant Professor of
Entrepreneurship
Özyeğin University, Türkiye



Celina Le
Marketing and Research
Associate
IEF, UK



Süha Soydan
Entrepreneurship Support
Programs Manager
Özyeğin University, Türkiye

CONFERENCE PARTNERS AND ORGANISERS (updating)





CONFERENCE VENUE

Özyeğin University

Founded in 2007, **Özyeğin University (ÖZU)** is a leading non-profit, research-oriented university located in İstanbul, Türkiye. It is consistently ranked among the **top 10 universities in the Entrepreneurial and Innovative University Index (TÜBİTAK)** and placed within the **top 400 globally in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2024**, reflecting its strong commitment to innovation, research excellence, and societal impact.

As an entrepreneurial research university, ÖZU addresses global challenges through interdisciplinary research while fostering a transformative educational environment. The university supports students' academic, social, and cultural development, equipping graduates with the skills, global outlook, and adaptability required in an evolving world. With **seven faculties, three graduate schools, and a range of specialised research centres**, ÖZU maintains a dynamic academic ecosystem that encourages collaboration between academia, industry, and policy. Innovation and knowledge transfer are central to ÖZU's mission. Its Technology Transfer Office facilitates research funding, industry

partnerships, and the management of intellectual property, while initiatives such as the **Start-up Factory accelerator programme** support the development of high-potential entrepreneurial ventures.

Özyeğin University (OZU) Campus

The 22nd IEF conference will be hosted at **ÖZU's Çekmeköy Campus**, a modern and tranquil setting on İstanbul's Asian side. Set across 220,000 square metres, the campus offers a peaceful, nature-integrated environment designed to enhance focus and collaboration. Awarded Türkiye's first **LEED Gold Certificate**, it combines sustainability with cutting-edge infrastructure, including modern classrooms, high-tech laboratories, a **350-seat auditorium**, a comprehensive library, and extensive sports and recreational facilities. Its carefully designed spaces create an environment conducive to both intellectual exchange and informal networking, making Özyeğin University an ideal venue for meaningful dialogue, knowledge exchange, and international collaboration at IEF 2026.

CONFERENCE VENUE (CONT.)



AB3-150 Zeynep Alp Koseoglu Auditorium - Law School,
Özyeğin University, where all Panel Sessions are hosted



Cafeteria Zone



The interior atrium of the Çekmeköy Campus,
Özyeğin University



An aerial view of Özyeğin University

CONFERENCE VENUE (CONT.)

Özyeğin Entrepreneurship Society (OzU ES)

Founded in 2014, Özyeğin Entrepreneurship Society (OzU ES) is the official entrepreneurship club of Özyeğin University and **one of the largest and most active** student organisations on campus, with more than **1,500 members**. The Society is dedicated to inspiring and supporting the next generation of leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs by promoting creativity, initiative, problem-solving, and leadership.

Through workshops, speaker events, networking opportunities, and entrepreneurship-focused programmes, OzU ES introduces students to the entrepreneurial ecosystem and connects them with founders, investors, and business leaders. Its flagship initiatives include the **Girişimcilik 101/102/103/104 Entrepreneurship Series**, **Meet the Founder**, **BrandTiES**, **NetworkES**, and **Coffee TalkES**.

During the 2025–2026 academic year, OzU ES reached more than **1,000 participants** across eight events and programmes, while further strengthening its links with entrepreneurs, start-up founders, investors, and corporate partners.

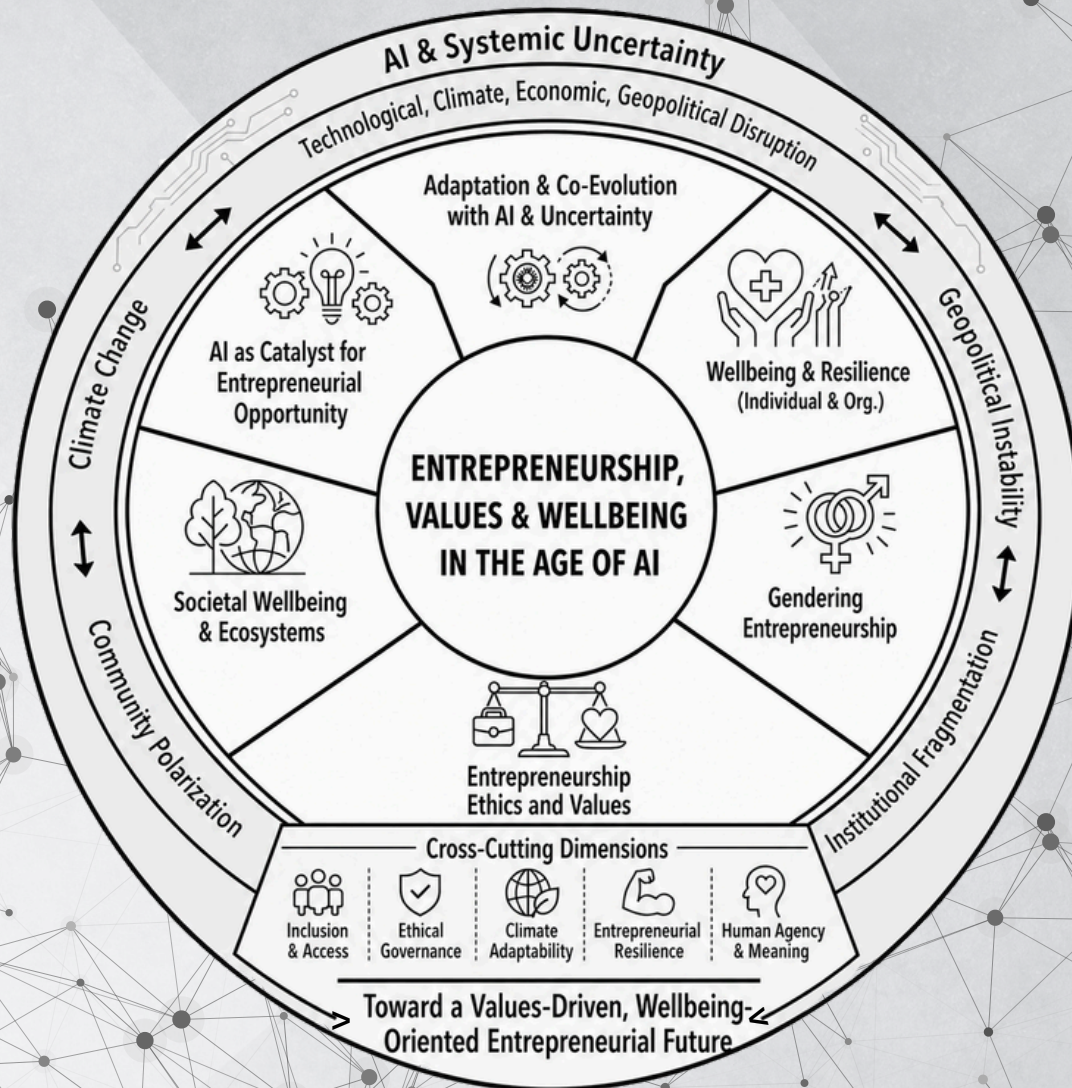
Serving as a bridge between students and the wider entrepreneurial ecosystem, OzU ES equips its members with valuable knowledge, practical experience, and professional connections that prepare them for future careers, ventures, and leadership roles.





CONFERENCE THEMES & FORMAT

The 22nd IEF conference discuss the key theme 'Entrepreneurship, Values, and Wellbeing in the Age of AI' with the format of **Panel Sessions** on 6 sub-themes below and their interdependencies.





SPEAKERS & PANELLISTS

Keynote Panel **TOWARDS A VALUES-DRIVEN AND ENTREPRENEURIAL FUTURE**



The Stakeholder Quartet of highly accomplished minds sets the scene with an open and energising discussion of the four pillars anchoring the conference—entrepreneurship, values, wellbeing, and AI. Their dialogue and insights should help to frame these domains not as isolated themes but as interdependent forces that can guide the six panel sessions that follow. Together, they aim to shape the future of entrepreneurship, innovation, economic and social development, and society. By weaving together practical insights, ethical considerations, human-centred priorities, and technological possibilities, the Quartet establishes a shared foundation for delegates, inviting them to explore how these pillars can collectively guide responsible, resilient, and values-aligned entrepreneurial practice in an AI-enabled world.

Panel Session 1

AI AS A TRANSFORMATIONAL CATALYST FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITY



Chair: Sergio Arzeni -
President, International
Network for SMEs (INSME),
Rome, Italy | Former Director
OECD, Paris, France



Didem Altop - General
Partner, Treeo VC | Board
Member | Company Builder |
Ecosystem Builder | Social
Innovator, Türkiye



Ambassador Dimitrios
Rallis - Secretary General,
Black Sea Economic
Cooperation, Türkiye



Barış Karakullukçu - AI
Transformation Advisor &
Ecosystem Founder | Scaling
Digital, Data & Venture Ecosystems
| Former CEO | Chair & Independent
Board Director, Türkiye



Tarik Celik - Founder,
Erigo Kreatif
Innovations, Türkiye



Nick Hixson - Founder
and Director, Hixsons
Limited, UK



Chair: Dr. Ganesh Natarajan -
Chairman of 5F World, GTT Data
Solutions, Lighthouse
Communities, EPPS & Honeywell
Automation India Ltd, India & USA



Prof. Ceyda Maden Eyiusta -
Department Head, Business
Administration, Ozyegin
University, Türkiye

INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANISATIONAL WELL-BEING AND ENTREPRENEURIAL RESILIENCE

Panel Session 2



Dr. Ela Ari -
Founder, Clinical
Psychologist, Act
Therapist, Organizational
Behaviorist, Türkiye



Ms. Mine Kocadağ - Founder /
Chief Happiness Officer,
Happy Work Studio, Türkiye



Dr. Rifat Kamasak -
Programme Director for
MSc Entrepreneurship
and Innovation,
University of Reading, UK

GENDERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE AGE OF AI - OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUSION, AND SUPPORT

Panel Session 3



Chair: Dr. Xiaohan (Hannah) Wen
- Ozyegin University, Türkiye



Dr. Uma Ganesh
Co-Founder of 5F World |
SkillsAlpha India | GTG
Private Ltd, India & USA



Ms. Hala Abdulkadar -
Founder of Technova, Türkiye



Dr. Aybike Mergen -
Ozyegin University, Türkiye



Ms. Ayça Atmaca -
Community & Partnerships
Manager, Arya Investment
Platform, Türkiye



Ms. Jane Kudat - Founder,
The Lemon Mind, Türkiye

ENTREPRENEURIAL ADAPTATION AND CO-EVOLUTION WITH AI, TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE, AND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL UNCERTAINTIES

Panel Session 4



Chair: Prof. Marcus Dejardin -
Professor of Economics,
Namur University, Belgium



Prof. Martin Obschonka - Head of the
Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Section, Amsterdam Business School,
University of Amsterdam, Netherlands



Mr. Roberto Santolamazza
- Director General, t2i
trasferimento tecnologico
e innovazione, Italy



Prof. Chux Gervase Iwu -
Professor & SBDG Chair in
Entrepreneurship in Higher
Education, University of the
Western Cape, South Africa



Ms. Marie-Therese Rezko
- Associate, Regional
Structuring & Sales
(CEEMENA & Asia),
Frontclear, Netherlands

Panel Session 5
**ENTREPRENEURIAL
ETHICS AND VALUES
IN THE AGE OF AI**



Chair: Prof. George Saridakis - Professor of Entrepreneurship and Small Business, University of Kent, UK



Prof. Yannis Georgellis - Professor of Global MBA and Masters in Global Business, SP Jain London School of Management, UK



Ms. Başak Ögütken - Chartered Accountant | Managing Partner | 20th term President of GYİAD, Türkiye



Prof. Melsa Ararat - Özyeğin University, Türkiye



Dr. Nick Litsardopoulos - Research Economist (Fellow), Institute for Employment Studies, UK

Panel Session 6

SOCIETAL WELLBEING AND THE BROADER ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM IN AN ERA OF UNPRECEDENTED UNCERTAINTY



Chair: Prof. Maksim Belitski -
Director, Henley Centre for
Entrepreneurship | Co-Founder,
Digital Leadership Forum,
Henley Fellow, UK HEA, UK



Prof. Jay Mitra - Founder, IEF, UK |
Professor and Research Fellow,
Research Centre for
Entrepreneurship, Leuphana
University, Germany



Ms. Mehru Öztürk - AI Steering Committee
Member, AI for Good Impact Initiative |
Investment Committee Member, Founder
One | General Manager, Türkiye
Entrepreneurship Foundation | Co-
Founder, The Good Factor, Türkiye



Dr. Adnan Veyssel Ertemel -
Associate Professor, Istanbul
Technical University | Director,
ITÜ Ginova, Türkiye



Prof. Piero Formica - Founder,
International Entrepreneurship
Academy | Professor, Maynooth
University, Ireland, and
University of Padova, Italy
(online attendance)



OUTLINE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

The conference programme is subject to minor changes

DATE & TIME	AGENDA
DAY 1 - 14 SEPTEMBER 2026	
09:00 - 10:00	Registration
10:00 - 10:20	Welcome and Opening Speeches
10:20 - 11:30	Keynote Panel: Towards a Values-Driven and Entrepreneurial Future
11:30 - 11:45	Coffee Break
11:45 - 13:00	Panel Session 1: AI as a Transformational Catalyst for Entrepreneurial Opportunity
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 15:15	Panel Session 2: Individual and Organisational Well-being and Entrepreneurial Resilience
15:15 - 16:30	Parallel Presentation Session 1
16:30 - 17:00	Coffee Break
17:00 - 18:15	Panel Session 3: Gendering Entrepreneurship in the Age of AI - Opportunities, Inclusion, and Support
18:15 - 18:30	Round Up and Close of Day 1
19:00 - 21:00	Cocktail Reception at the University Campus

DATE & TIME	AGENDA
DAY 2 - 15 SEPTEMBER 2026	
09:30 - 10:45	Panel Session 4: Entrepreneurial Adaptation and Co-Evolution with AI, Technological Change, and Economic and Social Uncertainties
10:45 - 11:15	Coffee Break
11:15 - 12:30	Parallel Presentation Session 2
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch
13:30 - 14:45	Panel Session 5: Entrepreneurial Ethics and Values in the Age of AI
14:45 - 16:00	Panel Session 6: Societal Wellbeing and the Broader Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in an Era of Unprecedented Uncertainty
16:00 - 16:30	Coffee Break
15:15 - 16:30	Parallel Presentation Session 1
16:30 - 17:15	Keynote Talk 2
17:15 - 17:30	Closing Presentations and Follow-Up Actions. End of Day 2
19:30 - 21:30	Conference Dinner (venue to be confirmed)

DATE & TIME

AGENDA

DAY 3 - 16 SEPTEMBER 2026

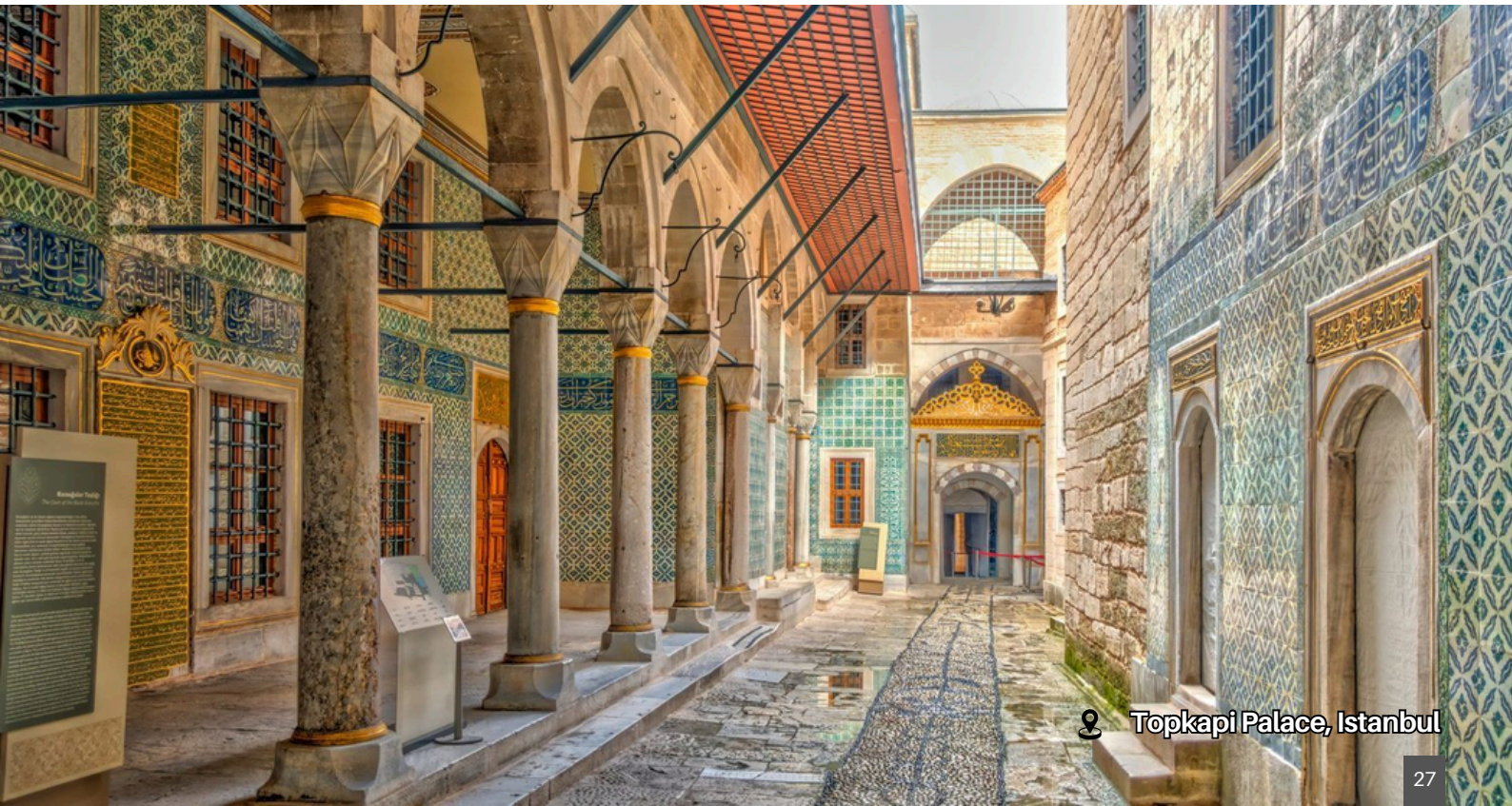
09:30 - 12:30

Industry Visits (Free and Optional)

Places are limited to 30 participants and must be reserved in advance. A separate registration link for this activity will be provided.

END OF CONFERENCE

Please note that no further programme activities are scheduled for the afternoon of Day 3.



 Topkapi Palace, Istanbul



SOCIAL PROGRAMME



The Grand Bazaar, Istanbul



Cocktail Reception by Le Cordon Bleu Istanbul

🕒 **7PM, 14 Sep 2026**



University Campus

Wrap up Day 1 of the IEF Conference in a relaxed and engaging setting. This is an opportunity to connect with fellow participants, industry leaders, and distinguished speakers, fostering meaningful conversations and exchanging ideas that will carry into a productive Day 2.

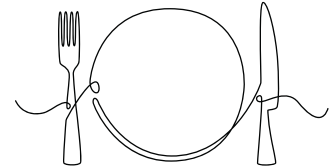
Conference Dinner

🕒 **7.30PM, 15 Sep 2026**



to be confirmed

Join us for the Conference Dinner as we bring the IEF Conference to a close in a relaxing setting, providing an opportunity for continued dialogue and networking. *Venue to be confirmed.*



Option 1: A Visit to Istanbul Technical University İTÜ Çekirdek Incubation Center (to be confirmed)

🕒 **9.30 AM, 16 Sep 2026**



İTÜ Arı Teknokent

A visit to İTÜ Çekirdek, the incubation centre of ITU ARI Teknokent and a UBI Global-recognised “World’s Best Incubator,” offers a valuable opportunity to experience one of Türkiye’s leading start-up and innovation ecosystems first-hand.

Option 2: A Visit to Teknopark Istanbul (to be confirmed)

🕒 **9.30 AM, 16 Sep 2026**



Teknopark Istanbul

A visit to Teknopark Istanbul, Turkey’s largest deep-tech science park, offers insight into a dynamic innovation ecosystem where industry, research, and entrepreneurship converge across sectors such as defence, aviation, and advanced technologies.

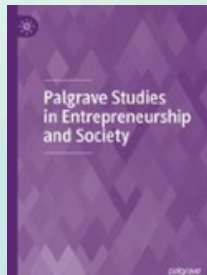
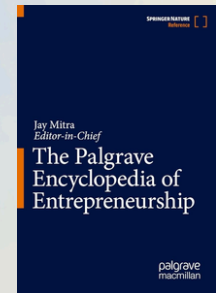
All activities are subjected to interest among delegates.

PUBLICATIONS OF CONFERENCE PAPERS: POTENTIAL JOURNALS AND MONOGRAPH CHAPTERS



'Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Emerging Economies' (JEIEE)

'The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Entrepreneurship'



'Palgrave Studies in Entrepreneurship and Society' Monograph Series

PUBLICATION ROUTES

ROUTE 1

Summative essays on specific topics addressing the sub-themes of the 22nd IEF conference for the Palgrave '**Encyclopaedia of Entrepreneurship**', subject to peer review (<https://link.springer.com/referencework/10.1007/978-3-030-68128-9>).

ROUTE 2

Standard refereed papers for publication in the '**Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Emerging Economies**', subject to peer review (<https://journals.sagepub.com/home/eie>).

ROUTE 3

Chapters in monograph as part of the Palgrave series '**Palgrave Studies in Entrepreneurship and Society**'. The title and themes of the monograph (in line with the theme and sub-themes of the conference) will be selected by the editor after the conference (<https://link.springer.com/series/17037>).

CONFERENCE HOTEL

Conference Hotel

The Marmara Pera

European Side / 4-star hotel

Address: Asmalı Mescit, Meşrutiyet Cd. No:15, 34430 Beyoğlu/İstanbul

<https://www.themarmarahotels.com/pera>

The Marmara Pera will serve as the main accommodation for the conference team and invited speakers.

- City View Superior Single Room: €140
- City View Superior Double Room: €150

*Rates include breakfast and exclude 10% VAT and 1% accommodation tax.

**Transportation will be provided between the conference hotel and Özyeğin University, where the conference will be held.

Booking Information

The hotel is accepting reservations from IEF delegates by email. To make a booking, please contact the hotel representative below and quote the reservation code “**IEF26**”.

Mrs Tugba Berk

Corporate Sales Supervisor

The Marmara Pera

tberk@themarmarahotels.com

Travel Logistics

For detailed information on travelling to Istanbul, reaching the campus, transportation during the conference, airports and airlines, and other practical arrangements, please visit:

<http://iefconference.org>

The Marmara Pera Hotel



The Marmara Pera is a stylish retreat in Istanbul's lively center, where art and history converge. With stunning views of the Golden Horn and the iconic Galata Tower, our hotel offers a chic experience blending culture and luxury.

Pera 77

"Pera 77, nestled in the artistic and historic heart of Istanbul, is a stage that pulsates with the energy of jazz... Celebrate life with good food, jazz, and world grooves."



Mikla Restaurant

Mikla, famed for its breathtaking vistas of Istanbul's skyline, is a culinary journey like no other. Prepared by the Michelin-starred Turkish-Scandinavian chef Mehmet Gürs, the daily-changing menu focuses on 'noble' Anatolian produce.

CONFERENCE FEES



GENERAL DELEGATES

- ◆ International Delegates **£300**
- ◆ Turkish Delegates **£100**
- ◆ Delegates from LMICs* **£100**



STUDENT DELEGATES

- ◆ International PhD Students **£100**
- ◆ International Master's and Undergraduate Students **£50**
- ◆ Students from Turkey and LMICs* **FREE**



ONLINE DELEGATES

- ◆ Applies to all online delegates **£50/ day**



OPTIONAL ITEMS

- ◆ Conference Dinner **£30**
- ◆ Industry Visits **FREE**



Registration Notes

- Conference fees for all registered delegates include: 2 x lunches, 4 x coffee breaks, the conference pack, the cocktail reception, only.
- Conference dinner is not included in the conference registration fee.
- All delegates are required to register for the conference.

* The list of low- and lower-middle-income countries (LMICs) is based on the World Bank classification.



HOW TO REGISTER?

Please see conference website

<http://iefconference.org> 

or scan the QR code



Contact us for more information

 contact@iefplatform.com

 <https://bit.ly/4blQeuK>

Global footprint

ASIA

CHINA

Beijing
Shanghai

MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur

INDIA

Bangalore
Ahmedabad
Goa

NEPAL

Kathmandu

EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST

ITALY

Naples
Trento
Venice
Padua

FRANCE

Paris
Nancy

LATVIA

Riga

TURKEY

Istanbul

BAHRAIN

Manama

LITHUANIA

Vilnius

PORTUGAL

Porto

AFRICA & LATIN AMERICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town

COLOMBIA

Bogota

“

Twenty-two amazing years as a platform for focused, combinatorial entrepreneurial thought, action and play around the world.

”

