Prototypes for Humanity unveils 2026 Short Papers Platform, bringing together 52 researchers from 27 countries to address global challenges

- Prototypes for Humanity and ICD (Investment Corporation of Dubai), unveil the programme for the 2026 edition of the Short Papers Platform, delivered through a new strategic partnership and bringing together professors and researchers from 49 universities across the world.

- Building on its 2025 inaugural year, the 2026 edition features 53 selected short papers spanning seven strategic themes, reflecting priorities from Dubai's innovation agenda and global research trends: Wellbeing and Human Performance; Infrastructures and Cities; Autonomous Systems and Advanced Manufacturing; Environment, Sustainability and Energy; Mobility and Logistics; Socio-Economic Empowerment, Digital Economies and Future Markets; and Open and Speculative.

- Research presented through the programme explores emerging solutions and approaches to critical global challenges, from urban heat and industrial decarbonisation to supply-chain resilience, future computing, education, clinical AI and the environmental impact of generative AI, reflecting the breadth of academic research and its potential for practical application.

- Invited researchers will convene in Dubai from 17–20 November 2026 to present and discuss their work, fostering exchange between academia, industry and decision-makers. The papers will subsequently be formally published in the Short Papers Platform Conference Proceedings in early 2027.

- As the strategic partner of the Short Papers Platform, ICD will award a USD 50,000 prize to one of the papers presented at the conference to support the next stage of development towards implementation.

Dubai, UAE, 27 October 2026 — Prototypes for Humanity today announced the programme for the 2026 Short Papers Platform, bringing together professors and researchers from 49 universities across the world to present research addressing some of today's most pressing global challenges and offering tangible pathways to solutions. Held in strategic partnership with ICD (Investment Corporation of Dubai), the 2026 programme spans seven research themes, connecting academic expertise with areas of strategic relevance to Dubai and the wider global research and innovation community.

The Short Papers Platform was launched in 2025 as part of Prototypes for Humanity's growing research and publications activities, mobilising academic knowledge towards urgent challenges facing industry and society. The 2026 edition invited a global network of academics from more than 1,000 universities to submit abstracts, with more than 700 received through the international call. From these, 52 researchers were selected to develop their work into short papers for presentation in Dubai and subsequent publication in the Short Papers Platform Conference Proceedings in early 2027. Structured around real-world challenges rather than traditional academic disciplines, the programme connects academia with industry and the public sector, enabling research to inform industry priorities, innovation planning and applied outcomes.

Tadeu Baldani Caravieri, Managing Director of Prototypes for Humanity, said: "Our mission is to accelerate the translation of university research into applied solutions. The Short Papers Platform creates a structured conduit for academics to share emerging research and connect their expertise with the R&D and innovation priorities of leading organisations. This year's programme brings together an

exceptional breadth of research across institutions, disciplines and geographies, creating new opportunities for collaboration and practical application. We are privileged to advance this work in partnership with ICD, with a shared commitment to translating academic knowledge into tangible outcomes."

As part of the programme's ongoing commitment to research translation, ICD will award a USD 50,000 prize to one project selected from the papers presented at the conference. The award recognises academic work with strong potential for practical application, identified through engagement with ICD industry experts, and will support the winning project's next stage of development towards implementation.

Douraid Zaghouani, Chief Operating Officer at ICD, said: "Our strategic support of The Short Papers Platform strengthens the connection between academic research and real-world application. Anchored by a diverse portfolio of companies, ICD are uniquely positioned to help translate ideas into scalable solutions and long-term innovation. This partnership reflects our commitment to advancing Dubai's economic and social development through knowledge, collaboration and forward-thinking initiatives."

This year's programme highlights how interdisciplinary and multi-method approaches, drawing on the distinct strengths of different fields, can offer fresh perspectives and novel solutions to complex global challenges. Across the seven themes, the 53 selected papers span a wide range of research areas and methods, with highlights including:

Infrastructures and Cities explores new approaches to more resilient, sustainable and responsive urban environments. Professor Hamid Norouzi of the City University of New York will present research using high-resolution thermal mapping to better understand extreme heat at neighbourhood level, providing cities with more precise data to inform heat mitigation and climate adaptation strategies.

Research under Environment, Sustainability and Energy examines new approaches to decarbonisation, resource efficiency and climate resilience. Dr. Santiago Zapata of the University of Manchester will present research into chemical looping technologies that can capture industrial carbon emissions and convert them into useful resources, exploring how emissions from carbon-intensive industries could be transformed from waste streams into valuable inputs.

Under Mobility and Logistics, researchers are exploring how advances in technology and new sources of data can help build more resilient and efficient transport and supply-chain systems. Dr. Yijing Li of King's College London will present research using satellite imagery to identify and predict climate-related disruption to global supply chains, helping organisations better anticipate risks to critical transport and logistics networks.

Autonomous Systems and Advanced Manufacturing considers how emerging technologies are reshaping the way people interact with machines and digital environments. Dr. Erick Guadalupe Ramírez Cedillo of Tecnológico de Monterrey will present ORION, a physical AI system that teaches workers to operate new industrial equipment. ORION writes its own training sessions for each machine, demonstrates every step on the hardware, and uses EEG to track how hard the learner is concentrating, adjusting the pace as it goes. The aim is to cut training cycles that can take around six months per type of equipment.

Research within Socio-Economic Empowerment, Digital Economies and Future Markets examines how technological, economic and societal change is reshaping economies and opportunities worldwide. Dr Hammed Musibau of Adelaide University will present a new international framework for measuring

education quality and its relationship with economic growth, moving beyond conventional measures of school enrolment and attainment to better understand how education contributes to long-term economic development.

Under Wellbeing and Human Performance, researchers are developing new approaches to healthcare, diagnostics and clinical decision-making. Dr. Munib Mesinovic of the University of Oxford will present research into trustworthy clinical AI for intensive care, examining how AI systems can support clinicians in high-stakes environments while addressing the questions of reliability, transparency and uncertainty that are critical to their safe use in patient care.

Finally, Open and Speculative examines emerging questions around technology and its wider implications for society and the future. Tushar Kanade of Harvard University will present *The Library of Babel Has a Power Bill*, research examining the environmental and economic implications of generative AI and developing a framework to quantify the often-invisible energy consumption associated with AI-generated content.

The invited researchers will convene in Dubai from 17–20 November 2026, with the Short Papers Platform taking place alongside the annual Dubai Future Solutions – Prototypes for Humanity Summit, bringing academic research into direct dialogue with industry, government, investors and the wider innovation community.

To view the full list of papers selected for presentation at the 2026 Short Papers Platform, click **here.**

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Notes to Editors
For press information please contact

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About Prototypes for Humanity

Prototypes for Humanity, an initiative of Art Dubai Group, is a global platform supporting the translation of research and innovation into real-world impact. The programme identifies promising research-led solutions from universities and academic institutions worldwide, connecting them with industry, government and investors to support piloting, venture development and implementation.

Through platforms including the annual Dubai Future Solutions – Prototypes for Humanity exhibition, the Venture Programme and the Short Papers Platform, Prototypes for Humanity supports students, professors and entrepreneurs working across critical global challenges, helping accelerate solutions from research to practical application. By fostering collaboration across academia, industry and the public sector, the programme reinforces Dubai's position as a global hub for innovation and applied research.

The annual Dubai Future Solutions – Prototypes for Humanity exhibition is held under the directives of His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the UAE, Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Dubai Future Foundation (DFF), and with the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture and Arts Authority. It is supported by strategic partners the Dubai Future Foundation and the Hussain

Sajwani – DAMAC Foundation, alongside founding partner Dubai International Financial Centre. The exhibition is held each year at AREA 2071, Emirates Towers, and showcases the top 100 innovations submitted by students and professors enrolled at universities across the world, driving community improvement, entrepreneurship and market expansion.

For more information, please visit: www.prototypesforhumanity.com

Investment Corporation of Dubai

ICD (Investment Corporation of Dubai) is the principal investment arm of the Government of Dubai. It was established in May 2006 by Decree (11) of 2006 and mandated with the consolidation and management of the Government of Dubai's portfolio of commercial companies and investments. ICD also provides financial and strategic oversight to portfolio companies to maximise value for the long-term benefit of the Emirate of Dubai.

ICD's portfolio comprises some of Dubai's most recognised companies and represents a cross-section of vital economic sectors that the Government of Dubai has deemed strategic for the continued development and growth of the Emirate of Dubai. The sectors include financial services, transportation, energy and industry, real estate and construction, hospitality and leisure, retail, and other holdings. In addition to supporting the development and growth of our existing portfolio companies in Dubai, our international investment focus aims to achieve diversification through fund commitments and co-investment across asset classes.

For more information, please visit: http://www.icd.gov.ae/