

*Call for Papers*  
**Action in Language, Organisations and Information Systems**  
**The 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference – ALOIS\*2008**  
**5 – 6 May 2008, Venice, Italy**

*An event hosted by the University of Trento in collaboration with Research Network VITS and the Italian Chapter of the Association for Information Systems.*

### **Background**

The complexities of the organisational practice of information systems put demands on research and knowledge as well as on practice. There are many conceptual approaches aiming at describing and explaining these complex phenomena. Where do we find the promising ones? Some approaches emphasise the action concept. Without acknowledging actions, it seems difficult to create good scientific descriptions and explanations. Although such approaches may have differing theoretical perspectives, they have a unifying interest in the action concept and its explanatory power. Examples of such approaches are activity theory, actor network theory, structuration theory, conversation analysis, and language/action theory. There may be other approaches with theoretical influences of more or less explicit action orientation, such as social phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, soft systems theory, critical social theory, hermeneutics, social semiotics, socio-pragmatism, situated cognition theory, practice theory and affordance theory. Together with this interest in action comes an interest in the many related issues, such as knowledge, language, communication, social interaction, social institutions, coordination, artefacts, power, and values.

The purpose of the ALOIS conference series is to bring together researchers and practitioners with an interest in action-theoretic approaches for understanding information systems and their relations to organisations. Interest in this area also recently manifested itself in the form of a special issue of *European Journal of Information Systems* on the ALOIS topic (Vol 15, Issue 1, 2006). Building on the four successful ALOIS conferences in 2003 ([www.vits.se/alois2003](http://www.vits.se/alois2003)), 2004 ([www.vits.se/alois2004](http://www.vits.se/alois2004)), 2005 ([www.alois2005.ul.ie](http://www.alois2005.ul.ie)) and 2006 ([www.vits.se/alois2006](http://www.vits.se/alois2006)) we now arrange the 5<sup>th</sup> International ALOIS Conference. The aim is to create a fruitful meeting between different research traditions with action-theoretic affinities. We hope that researchers and practitioners coming from different traditions will benefit from this attempt of crossing borders and elaborating syntheses.

### **Topics of Interest**

As for the previous four conferences in the series, the area of ALOIS\*2008 is rather broad. Unifying is an interest in the action concept as a primary tool for interpretation, description and explanation. The list below, which presents broad sub-topics, should not be seen as exhaustive. We emphasise contributions concerning the interplay between information systems and organisational issues. The name of the conference also includes 'language'. This is because of the decisive role language has for information systems and interaction in organisations.

For the purpose of cumulative growth, we encourage authors to relate their submissions to one or more previous ALOIS papers:

ALOIS\*2003, <http://www.vits.org/?pageId=161>

ALOIS\*2004, <http://www.vits.org/?pageId=37>

ALOIS\*2005, [http://www.alois2005.ul.ie/ALOIS\\_2005\\_Proceedings\\_Web.pdf](http://www.alois2005.ul.ie/ALOIS_2005_Proceedings_Web.pdf)

ALOIS\*2006, <http://www.vits.org/?pageId=317>

*EJIS* Special Issue, <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/ejis/journal/v15/n1/index.html>

Non-exclusive list of possible topics:

<p><i>Organisational studies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action within pervasive technologies</li> <li>• The social interaction in business processes</li> <li>• Action and communication in organisational coordination and collaboration</li> <li>• Negotiation and exchange processes in electronic commerce</li> <li>• Pragmatics of knowledge management</li> <li>• Management and strategy of organisational change</li> <li>• IS usage as language games</li> <li>• IS usage, organisational actions, and organisational effects</li> <li>• Pragmatic evaluation of information systems</li> <li>• Social software and Web collaborations</li> <li>• Pragmatics of open innovation</li> </ul> <p><i>Design methodologies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Actability” as a design-criterion</li> <li>• Learning in IS development</li> <li>• User-designer interaction in IS development</li> <li>• Activity-based design</li> <li>• Acting inside an interface: the design-challenges of pervasive computing.</li> <li>• IS, action, and innovation</li> <li>• The practices of requirements engineering</li> <li>• Action-oriented information modelling and database design</li> </ul>	<p><i>Theory and method</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theories of actions and activities</li> <li>• The notion of “actability”</li> <li>• Action and physical space</li> <li>• Action-oriented theories of language and communication</li> <li>• The technology-society relation in Actor-Network Theory</li> <li>• Research strategies and methods for pragmatic studies</li> <li>• Action research methods and action-oriented research frameworks</li> <li>• Practice epistemologies</li> <li>• Action-oriented theorisation of IT artefacts</li> <li>• Comparison between different action-theoretic positions</li> </ul> <p><i>Language and communication</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work-practice languages and IS development</li> <li>• Communicative and instrumental actions in organisations</li> </ul>
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### Conference Format

ALOIS\*2008 will be organised for participant interaction. All accepted papers will be given at least 30 minutes each for presentation and discussion. Some papers of special interest may be selected as target papers. These papers will get appointed discussants who will write and present commentary papers.

### How to Submit

Submit a full paper (max 7000 words) electronically to Pär Ågerfalk ([par.agerfalk@dis.uu.se](mailto:par.agerfalk@dis.uu.se)) no later than 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2007. Submissions should preferably be in PDF format. (Open Office, MS Word and RTF formats are acceptable but not preferred.) To facilitate double-blind review, please do not mention authors or affiliations in the paper.

### Important Dates

- Submission of full papers (max 7000 words): 15 January 2008
- Notification of acceptance: 20 February 2008
- Submission of revised papers: 1 April 2008
- ALOIS\*2008 Conference: 5–6 May 2008, Venice, Italy

### Publication

On-line proceedings will be freely available prior to the conference and printed proceedings distributed to participants at the conference (copyright remains with authors). A selection of papers will be considered for publication in *Systems, Signs & Actions – An International Journal on Communication, Information Technology and Work*, [www.sysiac.org](http://www.sysiac.org).

## Conference Organisation

### *General chair*

Gianni Jaccuci, University of Trento, Italy

### *Program chairs*

Pär J. Ågerfalk, Uppsala University, Sweden, and Lero – The Irish Software Engineering Research Centre

Mikael Lind, University College of Borås and Jönköping International Business School, Sweden

### *Organising chair*

Gianmarco Campagnolo, University of Trento, Italy

### *Program committee*

Mark Aakhus, Rutgers University, USA

Jens Allwood, Gothenburg University, Sweden

Jennie Carroll, University of Melbourne, Australia

Luigina Ciolfi, University of Limerick, Ireland

Rodney J. Clarke, The University of Wollongong, Australia

Elisabeth Davenport, Napier University, UK

Harry Delugach, University Of Alabama In Huntsvill, U.S.A

Brian Donnellan, National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland

Aldo de Moor, CommunitySense, The Netherlands

Owen Eriksson, Dalarna University, Sweden

Göran Goldkuhl, Linköping University, Sweden

Ola Henfridsson, Victoria Institute and Halmstad University, Sweden

Anders Hjalmarsson, University College of Borås, Sweden

Michael Hoffman, Georgia Institute of Technology, U.S.A

Jonny Holmström, Umeå University, Sweden

Keith Horton, Napier University, UK

Victor Kaptelinin, Umeå University, Sweden

John Krogstie, NTNU, Norway

Rickard Lindgren, Victoria Institute, Sweden

Kalle Lyytinen, Case Western Reserve University, USA

Wolfgang Prinz, Fraunhofer Institut, Germany

Peter Rittgen, University College of Borås, Sweden

Jeremy Rose, University of Aalborg, Denmark

Matti Rossi, Claremont Graduate University, U.S.A

Mareike Schoop, University of Hohenheim, Germany

Jonas Sjöström, Jönköping International Business School and Linköping University, Sweden

Andrea H. Tapia, Pennsylvania State University, USA

James Taylor, University of Montreal, Canada

Richard Vidgen, University of Bath, UK

Steve Walker, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

Hans Weigand, Tilburg University, The Netherlands

Boris Wyssusek, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

### *ALOIS steering committee*

Peter Bøgh Andersen, University of Aarhus, Denmark (co-chair)

Göran Goldkuhl, Linköping University, Sweden (co-chair)

Pär J Ågerfalk, Uppsala University, Sweden, and Lero, Ireland

Rodney Clarke, University of Wollongong, Australia  
Gianni Jaccuci, University of Trento, Italy  
Mikael Lind, University College of Borås and Jönköping International Business School, Sweden  
Markku Nurminen, University of Turku, Finland

### **Further Information**

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