# ECIS 2012, Barcelona

Conference Theme: Information Systems and Global Welfare

# Track chairs, Research Methods

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# Track Descriptions

## 1. A 200 word description

Research methods are an area of interest in all research. They are particularly contested in areas like information systems that draw from different reference disciplines. Research methods have important implications for what can be observed, how data can be analysed and what types of theoretical or practical outcomes a piece of research will have. The 2012 ECIS conference has the theme of information systems and global welfare. This combination of possible issues that combine technology, individual and organisational use and global economic issues raises particularly complex issues for research. It requires specific attention to research methods. The research methods track therefore welcomes submissions that combine an attention to diverging aspects, such as individual and global, social and technical or economics and justice.

## 2. A longer description of the track,

Research methods are an area of interest in all research. They are particularly contested in areas like information systems that draw from different reference disciplines. Research methods have important implications for what can be observed, how data can be analysed and what types of theoretical or practical outcomes a piece of research will have. The 2012 ECIS conference has the theme of information systems and global welfare. This combination of possible issues that combine technology, individual and organisational use and global economic issues raises particularly complex issues for research. It requires specific attention to research methods.

The field of information systems has a long history of discussing research methods and different streams of research compete for attention and legitimacy. Discussions of research methods therefore not only need to concentrate on the functional adequacy and internal consistency of particular approaches but need to be contextualised in a broader context. Research methods contain assumptions about what can and should be measured, which type of output is desirable and what social uses research can have.

A continuing discussion of research methods is important to preserve the dynamics of research methods. At the same time, there is no perfect research method. As McGrath (1981) remarked, “Methodological discussions should not waste time arguing about which is the right strategy, or the best one; they are *all* lousy”. In this spirit we would like to use this track to further the discussion and engage with different views on what constitutes appropriate research methods in information systems.

The research methods track therefore welcomes submissions in the following areas:

* Methods that combine an attention to diverging aspects, such as individual and global, social and technical or economics and justice.
* Recent developments in established research methods such as:
  + Action Research Method
  + Case Study Research method
  + Critical Research
  + Design Science as Research Method
  + Ethnography as Research Method
  + Experimental Research Method
  + Grounded Theory as Research Method
  + Survey Research Method
  + Theoretical Research Methods
  + Quantitative Research Methods
  + Qualitative Research Methods
* Novel research methods from other disciplines
* Relevance of data analysis: methods / techniques for the choice of research methods
* The nature of research
* Research paradigms: Comparing / contrasting

# References

McGrath, J. E. (1981). Dilemmatics: The study of research choices and dilemmas. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *25*(2), 179-210.