

### Call for Papers

#### Informality and Innovation in the Global South

Special Issue of the Journal [Science, Technology, Development](https://www.openscience.fr/Science-Technologie-Dveloppement)  
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#### Overview

Innovation in the Global South often challenges conventional frameworks used to analyze techno-scientific dynamics. While public policies tend to promote formalized models drawn from Northern experiences, field realities reveal a much more complex and diverse landscape. In many Southern contexts, innovation is embedded within informal practices, driven by unconventional actors such as grassroots inventors, community-based groups, informal entrepreneurs, and networks of indigenous or local knowledge.

Far from being marginal, these informal innovation ecosystems represent creative responses to local economic, social, and environmental challenges. They embody practices of resilience, resourcefulness, and transformation that are often overlooked by mainstream innovation indicators. Informality, long associated with precariousness, is also a fertile ground for experimentation, skill development, and solution-making tailored to contextual needs (World Bank, 2022; Thiam, 2018; Njifen, 2014).

In an era marked by ecological, digital, and social transitions, there is a growing need to better understand these forms of innovation, their drivers, trajectories, and the extent to which they are acknowledged (or excluded) by institutions and policies.

#### Suggested Topics (non-exhaustive)

- Innovation dynamics in informal economies
- Knowledge and grassroots innovation
- Gender, youth, and informality in innovation processes
- Digital innovation in unregulated spaces
- Institutions, regulations, and recognition of informal innovation
- Knowledge circulation and learning outside formal systems
- Informality and innovation policy in the Global South
- Methodologies for studying informal innovation

### References

Fu, X. (2020). *Innovation under the Radar: The Nature and Sources of Innovation in Africa*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316869482>

Fu X., Zanello G. (2020, November, 20), Innovation under the Radar as a Response to Constraints, Economics, Business, DOI:10.1017/9781316869482.005Corpus ID: 229409828

Njifen, I. (2014). L'informalité : un nouveau paradigme de développement et d'intégration «par le bas» en Afrique. *African Development Review*, 26(S1), 21-32.

Thiam, O. (2018). Le secteur informel en Afrique de l'Ouest : Enjeux et perspectives. *Management & Sciences Sociales*, 25(2), 118-129. <https://doi.org/10.3917/mss.025.0118>

World Bank (2022), *The Long Shadow of Informality: Challenges and Policies.*, Banque Mondiale.

### Submission Guidelines

We invite researchers to submit an extended abstract (between 3,000 and 4,000 characters including spaces) in English or French. Each proposal must include:

- A title
- Author name(s) and institutional affiliation(s)
- A clearly defined research problem
- Objectives of the paper
- An overview of the methodology
- Expected or observed results
- Bibliographic references

### Important Dates

- Deadline for abstract submission: June 15, 2025
- Notification of acceptance: July 10, 2025
- Deadline for full paper submission: September 15, 2025
- Publication date of the special issue: December 2025

### Contact and Submission

Proposal must be sent through the following link <https://forms.gle/F4ifVjW2hakupz8s8>