

THE AI INSTITUTE / OPERATING INTELLIGENCE

EXECUTIVE AGENDA · 16 AUG / 2026

Three AI Decisions Before Friday



A research-heavy week should change what leaders test, what they require from suppliers and what they fund next.

Boards, C-suite and senior management

Research period: August 2026 – August 2026

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PUBLICATION RECORD

An Institute thesis and decision framework

A research-heavy week creates value only when leaders convert emerging capability into named tests, operating controls and funding decisions rather than adding more items to an undifferentiated watchlist.

WHAT LEADERS SHOULD TAKE FROM THIS PAPER

- 01

By Monday, choose no more than three emerging capabilities that could materially change a customer, cost or risk decision.
- 02

By Wednesday, require each shortlisted capability to survive the real workflow, including interfaces, permissions, memory and disclosure.
- 03

By Friday, fund only the tests with a named owner, regional operating boundary and a result that can change the plan.
- 04

Keep conference papers and preprints on the watchlist until production evidence justifies broader claims.

Research method

This executive agenda reviews the official IJCAI-ECAI and UAI 2026 programmes, the newest available arXiv AI release batch and current European Commission guidance. It selects a coherent development direction and translates it into a non-technical operating cadence for leaders.

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How to use this brief

Start with the decision and use the framework to challenge the current plan. Figures retain their original populations and definitions. Institute analysis is labelled, and limitations are recorded before the references.

Do not let a busy research week become a longer reading list

Two major AI research gatherings occupy the coming week. IJCAI-ECAI runs in Bremen through 21 August, while the Conference on Uncertainty in Artificial Intelligence begins its tutorials on Monday, holds its main programme from Tuesday to Thursday and closes with workshops on Friday. Their programmes span human-centred AI, robotics, health, reasoning and uncertainty.¹²

For executives, the useful signal is not the number of papers or announcements. It is the concentration of attention around a practical question: can an AI system behave reliably when it leaves a benchmark and enters a real operating path? The newest public research points to failure at interfaces, during long-running work and through procedures retained for later use.³⁴⁵⁶

The management response is a three-date agenda. Monday is for selection. Wednesday is for operating proof. Friday is for capital and ownership. Everything else can remain on the watchlist.

The executive rule — emerging capability earns attention; only a decision-changing test earns resources.

02

MONDAY 17 AUGUST

Choose what is worth testing

Ask each business leader to nominate one capability that could change a material decision within the next two quarters. That might be an agent handling a longer workflow, a system operating closer to the edge, or a tool that turns policy intent into a testable configuration. Then reduce the portfolio to the three strongest cases by customer value, operating leverage or risk reduction.

Do not promote a capability because several papers or conference sessions mention it. Conference selection establishes research interest, and a preprint establishes that an experiment was reported. Neither establishes production reliability, demand or return. The shortlist should state the current constraint, the smallest useful test and the result that would justify expansion.

Use a common selection card so different business units do not win attention by using different language. Record the decision at stake, the affected customers or employees, the value at risk, the data and access required, the person who can stop the test and the date when the result will be reviewed. A capability without an accountable buyer is still research. A capability without a decision trigger is still observation. This discipline also gives smaller markets and business units a fairer test: they can show material local value without pretending their conditions represent global demand.

Test the workflow, not the headline score

A new preprint called QuoteBench reports that the same underlying answer can perform differently when an interface or parser changes how instructions are carried into action. Another evaluates long-horizon agents and finds that similar final results can conceal different bottlenecks in the work. A third reports that reusable agent procedures can carry unsafe behaviour into later tasks. A fourth explores turning security intent into a testable configuration while routing unresolved cases to review. These are early research results, but together they identify a sensible assurance boundary: the complete path. ⁴⁵⁶⁸

For each shortlisted test, name the interface, permission boundary, retained memory, human decision and failure response. If the system produces content for the European market, verify that applicable notices, marking and labelling survive the actual customer journey; selected EU transparency duties have applied since 2 August. A supplier statement or laboratory score is not a substitute for observing the configured service. ⁷

The result should be legible to an operating owner: what became faster or better, what failed, who intervened and which regional condition changed the answer.

Fund, hold or stop—with an owner beside every decision

Close the week with three possible outcomes. Fund a bounded test when the commercial or operating upside is material and the team can measure it. Hold when the direction is promising but the organisation lacks data, specialist capacity, supplier access or legal clarity. Stop when the proposed result cannot change a customer, capital, workforce or risk decision.

Regional differences belong in the decision, not in an appendix. European disclosure duties, local data and sector rules, infrastructure availability, language coverage and institutional capacity can turn one global idea into several operating designs. Australia offers a useful comparison because secure-deployment guidance remains guidance rather than a substitute for the EU's applicable duties.

By Friday, the board should not receive a paper summary. It should receive a portfolio change: three tests at most, a named accountable owner for each, a date for the result and a clear condition for scale. That is how research becomes strategic advantage without making the organisation chase every development.

EXHIBIT / THE THREE-DATE EXECUTIVE CADENCE

MON	WED	FRI
Select Choose up to three capabilities tied to material decisions. Institute agenda	Verify Test interfaces, permissions, memory, disclosure and intervention. Research and policy watch	Commit Fund, hold or stop with an owner and decision trigger. Institute agenda

One watchlist does not mean one operating assumption

Before approving the Friday decision, ask where the test result is allowed to travel. A strong result in one language, sector, infrastructure environment or legal role may justify a second test elsewhere; it does not justify calling the capability globally proven.

Keep one group watchlist, but attach a regional operating note to every funded test: the affected market, customer population, law, provider dependency, language coverage and institutional capacity. This preserves global ambition while making local implementation visible to the people who carry the risk.

RESEARCH RECORD

Method and limitations

Method

This executive agenda reviews the official IJCAI-ECAI and UAI 2026 programmes, the newest available arXiv AI release batch and current European Commission guidance. It selects a coherent development direction and translates it into a non-technical operating cadence for leaders.

Limitations

Conference programmes indicate research attention, not commercial adoption. The cited arXiv papers are new v1 preprints and do not establish production performance. EU obligations depend on role, system and use case; this publication is not legal advice. Comparable production evidence across regions remains limited.



Sources and limitations

Source facts link to the original publication. Institute analysis reconciles definitions and turns the material into a management proposition. Frameworks are decision aids, not claims of universal causality. Read every important statistic with its population, date, definition and caveat.

Research cutoff: 16 August 2026. Review cycle: six months, or earlier after a material change in the underlying facts, standards or policy.

REFERENCES

Evidence behind the thesis

01	IJCAI, IJCAI-ECAI 2026
Official programme and dates for 15–21 August 2026 in Bremen.	
02	AUAI, UAI 2026
Official dates for tutorials, main conference and workshops from 17–21 August 2026.	
03	arXiv, recent Artificial Intelligence submissions
Official repository listing; newest available batch is 14 August 2026 with mixed review status.	
04	arXiv, QuoteBench
New v1 preprint submitted 13 August 2026; interface and command-path evaluation, not peer reviewed.	
05	arXiv, Beyond Final Scores
New v1 preprint submitted 13 August 2026; experimental evaluation of long-horizon agent processes.	
06	arXiv, Practice Makes Unsafe
New v1 preprint submitted 13 August 2026; experimental work on persistent agent skills.	
07	European Commission, transparency Code of Practice FAQ
Official explanation of Article 50 application from 2 August 2026 and the voluntary code's role.	
08	arXiv, TopoIntent
New v1 preprint submitted 13 August 2026; synthetic and held-out network-topology evaluation, not production proof.	

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Make the decision.
Then measure what changes.

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