

Dear all,

We are delighted to announce the third edition of the SACRU Summer School, “*Intelligence and Consciousness: Conceptual and Ethical Challenges for Research in the Age of AI*”, which will take place at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago de Chile from (19 to 23 October 2026).

Bringing together Ph.D. students from across the SACRU network, this intensive one-week program will explore some of the most pressing conceptual, ethical, and societal questions raised by the rapid development of Artificial Intelligence.

Through lectures, workshops, and interdisciplinary discussions, participants will examine how AI is reshaping key areas of contemporary life and research — from health and biomedical innovation to democratic participation, legal rights, and artistic and creative practices. The program will also address the increasingly blurred boundary between biological and synthetic life, while reflecting on the unequal distribution of AI’s risks and benefits across the Global North and Global South.

In this context, the initiative also responds to the call of Pope Leo XIV’s *Magnifica humanitas*, which invites us to place the human person at the center of technological and scientific development. This perspective challenges us to advance research that not only fosters innovation, but also incorporates a deep ethical reflection, oriented toward the respect for human dignity, social justice, and the common good—especially in a global context marked by rapid transformations driven by artificial intelligence.

At the heart of the Summer School lies a fundamental question: how can researchers engage responsibly with technologies that are already influencing societies, institutions, and everyday life? AI systems are never neutral; they reflect choices about what to optimize, whose knowledge and data to prioritize, and which values embed into technological systems. Developing critical and ethical tools to navigate these challenges is therefore an essential task for the next generation of researchers.

The Summer School will conclude with participants collaboratively drafting a *Declaration of Human-Centric AI*, articulating shared principles to guide future research and innovation in this field.

Please find attached the draft programme and further information. Universities are kindly invited to use this material for the internal selection of participating students, according to the procedures they consider most appropriate.

Important Information

- **Programme:** One-week intensive programme from 19 to 23 October 2026, at the UC Chile Campus in Santiago de Chile — accommodation provided from 18 to 23 (included).
- **Course title:** “*Intelligence and Consciousness: Conceptual and Ethical Challenges for Research in the Age of AI*”
The detailed draft program is attached (AND MIGHT CHANGE)
- **Scientific Directors:**
 - Prof. Claudia Prieto Vasquez, Professor of Engineering at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
 - Prof. Pablo Barceló Baeza, Professor of Engineering at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
- **Eligibility:** The program is intended for Ph.D. students. As this is a multidisciplinary initiative, candidates from all academic fields are welcome.

Programme Fee – €390

The participation fee includes:

- Accommodation in a twin-share room at a hotel close to UC Chile University, from the night prior the beginning of the School, October 18, to the last day of the conference 23 October, included.
- Breakfast and lunch on working days
- Welcome and farewell dinners
- Cultural visits and activities
- One-week Santiago public transport card

Participation and Funding

- Participation is limited to **18 Ph.D. students** (maximum 2 students per SACRU partner institution).
- Ph.D. students will pay the participation fee directly to UC Chile (additional details will be shared in due course)

- Participants are responsible for their own travel, airfare, and visa costs. **EVERY STUDENT SHOULD COME WITH HEALTH INSURANCE** (coverage of minimum USD 30,000, covid-19, and repatriation).

SACRU will provide travel support as follows:

- **1,200 Euros** for each oversea student (UCP, ACU, Boston College, Sophia, URL, UCSC)
- **400 Euros** for each Latin American student (PUC Rio, Javeriana)
- **No travel and accommodation support** will be provided for Chilean students.

These funds will be transferred by SACRU to the respective home universities upon receipt of a debit note (this process will be managed after the final recruitment of students).

Selection Deadline

- Candidates should be selected by **(July 13)**.

For further inquiries, please contact the SACRU Secretariat at sacru.alliance@unicatt.it **AND** Catalina Musica Gerstmann Bernal (catalina.ge@uc.cl), head of Strategic Partnerships, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.

Thank you very much for your attention and support.

Kind regards,

SACRU Secretariat