

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS:

International Conference

Babeş-Bolyai University, Faculty of History and Philosophy,
Department of Philosophy, Cluj-Napoca are pleased to announce the:

1st POSTHUMAN STUDIES CONFERENCE (PSC)

PHILOSOPHIES OF TRANSHUMANISM.

Original Transhumanism, Classic Transhumanism, and Euro-Transhumanism:

Human Enhancement, Technology, Ecology, and Co-Evolution

20-21st June, 2025

Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

For more details regarding the CFA, please access the following link:

<https://www.posthumanstudies.org/projects/posthuman-studies-conference-series-psc>

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Prof. Dr. Stefan Lorenz Sorgner, John Cabot University, Rome, Italy

CONFERENCE DESCRIPTION

Transhumanism is among the most prominent philosophical and cultural movements of the 21st century. It supports the use of advanced technologies to improve and enhance human well-being. Nevertheless, within this broader interpretation of transhumanism, we can identify a variety of schools of thought that rest on different philosophical foundations. For instance, original transhumanism affirms the ethical use of technology to radically extend human capabilities, improve physical and cognitive performance, and make boundless progress. Thereby, human experiences can be enhanced through biotechnological innovation and artistic expression. Classic transhumanism found its philosophical roots in Enlightenment philosophy and the various forms of utilitarianism, libertarianism, and autonomy. Julian Huxley coined the term “transhumanism” in 1951. Contemporary transhumanism can be traced back to the influential ideas of FM 2030, along with Max More and Natasha-Vita More, whose approach best represents original

transhumanism. Classic transhumanism is often associated with Nick Bostrom's and David Pearce's versions of transhumanism. Challenging aspects include the affirmation of long-termism. In addition, many classic transhumanist schools have a negative utilitarian form of effective altruism. Other transhumanists, such as Ray Kurzweil, embrace a utopian version of life span in the paradigm of "silicon-based transhumanism". He envisions the pursuit of digital immortality in a future shaped by technological singularity. The term Euro-transhumanism was coined by Stefan Lorenz Sorgner in 2022. The prefix "Euro" does not imply a Eurocentric ideology. Instead, it serves to highlight the continental philosophical tradition that includes the legacies of thinkers such as Heraclitus, Nietzsche, Spinoza, Heidegger, Foucault, Deleuze, and Vattimo who between them have shaped the philosophy of Euro-transhumanism. Euro-transhumanism highlights the significance of technological progress in improving human well-being. It adopts a pragmatic perspective on enhancements grounded in a realistic, naturalist, and "carbon-based" view of human existence rather than a "silicon-based" utopian ideal. The goal of Euro-transhumanists is to address current existential challenges, which sets them apart from the long-term outlook often associated with classic transhumanist agendas. It further supports the importance of developing fluid social-democratic forms of liberalism that rest on ethical nihilism when it comes to the decision-making processes surrounding emerging technologies. In this order of ideas, Euro-Transhumanists propose a contextual hermeneutic approach to ethics with regard to human enhancement and co-existence with technology in the process of permanent becoming.

Questions relating to Human Enhancement Technology, Ecology, and Ethics

- Can enhancements such as genetic modification, AI integration, or cybernetic implants be considered a "natural" part of human evolution?
- At what point does enhancing the human body or mind undermine our humanity?
- Is it possible to ensure equitable access to enhancement technologies across different socioeconomic groups?
- If we have the power to eliminate aging or to extend our lifespan, are we morally obligated to do so?
- How might enhancements redefine human rights, and would enhanced beings need new rights?
- How can emerging technologies affect human relationships, sex and reproduction?
- Should governments interfere in emerging technologies and human enhancement procedures?
- Will the lines between "natural" and "artificial" humans dissolve, and what will this mean for future societies?
- Could enhanced humans develop new forms of art, creativity, communication, or cultural expression?
- Could transhumanism provide eco-social perspectives with regard to environmental crises?
- Are AI technologies, AGI, robots, etc. existential risks?
- Do present generations bear an ethical obligation towards a future that remains uncertain?

The conference aims to bring together researchers, philosophers, humanists, and original, classic, and Euro-transhumanists in order to foster open and innovative discussion. We encourage participants to share their insights on the philosophical, social, existential, ethical, and political dilemmas posed by transhumanism(s), particularly in relation to human enhancement, emerging technologies, ecological concerns, existential threats, society, etc.

PROPOSED TOPICS

Possible topics include (but are not limited to):

- Philosophies of Transhumanism—antagonisms and convergences between original transhumanism, classic transhumanism, and Euro-transhumanism.
- Philosophical foundations and the future directions of original transhumanism (Max More, Natasha Vita More) and classic transhumanism (Nick Bostrom, David Pearce, Ray Kurzweil, etc.).
- Philosophical foundations and the future developments of Euro-transhumanism (postmodern philosophy, existentialism, critical theory, Nietzsche, Spinoza, Heidegger, Foucault, Vattimo, Sorgner).
- Classic transhumanist long-termism and effective altruism perspectives on existential risks, the sixth mass extinction, the environment, and the posthuman.
- Euro-transhumanism environmental ethics, technology, co-evolution, and co-existence.
- Original, classic, and Euro-Transhumanist approaches with regard to factory farming, lab-grown meat, veganic food and agricultural systems, etc., and the environment.
- Buddhism or dukkha? Suffering, pain, and happiness in original, classic, and Euro-transhumanism.
- Euro-transhumanism perspectives on the impact of current emerging technologies on culture and society (digital data, biotechnologies, robotics, nanotechnology, cyborg technologies, AI technologies, etc.).
- Classic transhumanist ethics relating to human enhancement and digital immortality (cognitive enhancement, moral enhancement, physical enhancement, mind uploading, whole-brain emulation, etc.).
- Original, classic, and Euro-transhumanist ethical perspectives on human health and lifespan, reproduction, aging, and physical rejuvenation.
- Original, classic, and Euro-transhumanist approach to art, creativity, cultural expression etc.

ORGANIZERS

Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania, the Department of Philosophy of the Faculty of History and Philosophy, the Posthuman Studies Research Group (PSRG) of the Center for Applied Philosophy (CAPH) of the Department of Philosophy, Posthuman Studies Association (PSA), and Lect. Dr. Aura Elena Schussler.

ABSTRACT PROPOSALS

We invite participants to submit abstracts of around 250-300 words and up to 5 keywords, including the name(s) and affiliation of the presenter(s), and contact information, together with a short author(s) bio (100 words), in English in MS Word format to: Aura Schussler (aura.schussler@ubbcluj.ro).

*** While the conference is planned as an in-person event, we are also open to accepting a limited number of online presentations.**

DATES AND DEADLINES

Submission deadline: 25th March, 2025

Notification of acceptance: 5th April, 2025

Date of conference: 20-21 June, 2025

CONFERENCE FEES

100 Euros (early bird – till 30th April)

150 Euros (later 1st May– till 15th May)

* The registration fees are the same for both in-person and online presentations.

PUBLICATION

The best papers from the Conference will be published in an essay collection of the *Posthuman Studies* book series (Lect. Dr. Aura Schussler, Series Editor), within the Trivent Transhumanism imprint. Each paper should be between 5,000 and 7,000 words. All papers will undergo a peer-review process.

If you have any questions regarding the conference and submissions, please contact: Aura Schussler (aura.schussler@ubbcluj.ro).

If you find yourself interested in these topics, please take a moment to explore the following collections:

- Schussler, A. E. & Balistreri, M. (Eds.). (2024). *Metahumanism, Euro-Transhumanism and Sorgner's Philosophy—Technology, Ethics, Art*. Trivent Publishing. <https://trivent-publishing.eu/home/170-318-metahumanism-sorgner.html#/27-cover-paperback>
- Sorgner, S. L. (2009). Nietzsche, the Overhuman, and Transhumanism. *Journal of Evolution and Technology*, 20, 29–42. <https://jetpress.org/v20/sorgner.htm>
- Sorgner, S. L. (2022). *We Have Always Been Cyborgs: Digital Data, Gene Technologies, and an Ethics of Transhumanism*. Bristol University Press. <https://bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/we-have-always-been-cyborgs>
- M. More & N. V. More (Eds.). (2013). *The transhumanist reader: Classical and contemporary essays on the science, technology, and philosophy of the human future*. WileyBlackwell. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/book/10.1002/9781118555927>

CONFERENCE CHAIR:

Lect. Dr. Aura Elena Schussler (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

ORGANISING & SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:

Lect. Dr. Aura Elena Schussler (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)

Prof. Dr. Yunus Tuncel (New School University, New York, NY, USA)

Prof. Dr. Evi Sampanikou (University of the Aegean, Department of Cultural Technology and Communication)

Prof. Dr. Maurizio Balistreri (University of Tuscia, Viterbo, Italy)

Prof. Dr. Manuel Andreas Knoll, (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU), Germany)

Dr. David Roden, member of the Posthuman Studies Research Group (PSRG)

CONTACT INFORMATION

For submissions or questions, please contact conference chair Aura Schussler at aura.schussler@ubbcluj.ro.