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UMWELTBILDUNGSZENTRUM



Online lecture series | Ringvorlesung

The Anthropocene

University of Vienna, summer term 2025

Public lectures on Tuesdays, 5:00-7:00 pm (CET & CEST)

online via ZOOM and hybrid

Abstracts

An interdisciplinary online lecture series on the Anthropocene with national and international speakers of various disciplines examine from different perspectives.

Special thanks for supporting this lecture series go to



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Introduction

The lecture series "The Anthropocene" was hosted during the summer term 2025 at the University of Vienna, as a cooperation event of the Vienna Anthropocene Network (VAN), the UNESCO IGCP 732 project and the Department of Geology of the University of Vienna, together with the Forum Anthropocene, the Hohe Tauern National Park (Carinthia) and the kärnten.museum, funded by EKUZ, the 1st European Climate and Environmental Education Center.

Designed as an interdisciplinary, open online lecture series with national and international speakers from the natural sciences and the humanities, an attempt was made to explore the Anthropocene from different points of view. Prominent speakers this year included Colin Summerhayes (Cambridge University's Scott Polar Research Institute, UK; AWG), Jan Zalasiewicz (University of Leicester, UK), Emanuele Bardone (University of Tartu, Estonia), Alex Damianos (University of Kent, UK), Shasha Liu (Ludong University Yantai, China) und Katharina Kinder-Kurlanda (University of Klagenfurt, Austria).

The focus of this year was on Alternative Intelligence, as well as several contributions dealing with Introduction and the future nature and extent of the proposed Anthropocene epoch.

The topic of "Alternative Intelligence" is also the focus of this year's 8th Anthropocene Forum at the Bios Nationalparkzentrum in Mallnitz, Carinthia.

Bringing together the humanities and the sciences, the Vienna Anthropocene Network (VAN) comprises scholars from geology, geography, the life sciences, history, philosophy, literary and cultural studies, anthropology and a range of area studies.

<https://anthropocene.univie.ac.at>

The international Forum Anthropocene serves as a platform, which addresses the transdisciplinary topic of the Anthropocene with a special focus on globality, urbanity and rural areas.

<https://www.forum-anthropozäen.com>

Drawing on this broad interdisciplinary base, we will explore new perspectives on nature, culture, society and technology that the Anthropocene urgently calls for.

In order to reach as many participants as possible, the lecture series was once again held via the online platform Zoom.

Another highlight in 2025 was the financial support for students to participate in the 8th Forum Anthropozän, held from June 12–14 at Bios Nationalparkzentrum, Mallnitz, Carinthia.

All other participants (students and interested public) of the lecture series had the opportunity to follow the online panel discussion of the ZEIT-Gespräch without any additional costs.

Again, recordings of almost all lectures are available on the webpage of the Forum Anthropozän.

Programme

The Anthropocene presents challenges to all academic fields. Drawing on this broad interdisciplinary base, the lecture series will explore new perspectives on nature, culture, society and technology that the Anthropocene urgently calls for.

11.03.25

englisch

Introduction to the Anthropocene

Jan Zalasiewicz, University of Leicester, UK
Eva Horn, University of Vienna, VAN, Austria
Michael Wagreich, University of Vienna, VAN, AWG
Sabine Seidler, Forum Anthropocene

18.03.25

englisch

The Future Nature and Extent of the Proposed Anthropocene Epoch

Colin Summerhayes, Cambridge University's Scott Polar Research Institute, UK; AWG

25.03.25

englisch

A Nuclear Anthropocene

Friederike Frieß, BOKU University, Austria

01.04.25

englisch

Coastal management in the Anthropocene - Nature-based Solutions in China

Shasha Liu, Ludong University Yantai, China

08.04.25

englisch

Critiques of the Anthropocene. Philosophical perspectives on a new human(ist) epoch

Ralf Gisinger, University of Vienna, Austria

29.04.25

start 18:00

deutsch

hybrid event

kärnten.museum und Forum Anthropozän laden zur VV

Künstliche Intelligenz & Atomkraft: Ein ethisches Dilemma im Anthropozän

Univ.Prof. Dr. Oliver Vitouch, Institut für Psychologie, Universität Klagenfurt, Univ.Prof.in Dr.in Katharina Kinder-Kurlanda, Digital Age Research Center/Universität Klagenfurt, Univ. Prof. Dr. Michael Wagreich, Institut für Geologie/Universität Wien, Patricia Lorenz, GLOBAL 2000/Friends of the Earth Europe, Dr. Dipl.-Ing. Reinhard Draxler, Vorstand/KELAG-Kärntner Elektrizitäts-Aktiengesellschaft und Dr.in Claudia Dojen, Abteilung Erdwissenschaften/kärnten.museum.
Moderation: Dr. in Sabine Seidler & Wolfgang Giegler

Kärnten.museum Klagenfurt, Carinthia

06.05.25

englisch

Two tools for learning (about) Culture/Nature

literacy. The CNL MOOC and the CNL CustomGPT

Emanuele Bardone, University of Tartu, Estonia

13.05.25

englisch

Dehumanizing the Anthropocene: AI as social bullshitter

Robert Braun, Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS), Austria

20.05.25

englisch

Anthropocene Angst: Epistemic diplomacy in times of climate crisis

Alex Damianos, University of Kent, UK

27.05.25

englisch

Education in the Age of AI: Critical Thinking as a Key Competence for the Anthropocene

Frano-Petar Rismondo & Erika Unterperntinger, University of Vienna, Austria

03.06.25

englisch

AI, ethics & the Anthropocene

Katharina Kinder-Kurlanda, University of Klagenfurt, Austria

12.06.25

start 14:30

englisch + deutsch

hybrid event

AI. Alternative Intelligenzen. Auf der Suche nach neuen Ideen und Wegen. Wer übernimmt das Kommando?

8. FORUM ANTHROPOZÄN/ ZEIT-Gespräch
Panel discussion with
Matthias Horx, Katja Wengler, Sebastian Lehner, Diethard Mattanovich, Eva Vonau, Jakob Wössner
Moderation Fritz Habekuß/ DIE ZEIT

Bios Nationalparkzentrum, Mallnitz, Carinthia



Organizer: University of Vienna, Department of Geology & Vienna Anthropocene Network

1. European Climate and Environmental Education Centre / Hohe Tauern National Park (Carinthia) & Forum Anthropocene

Photo credits of anthropogenic influence along the Danube River after the massive flooding in 2024: Diana Hatzenbühler, University of Vienna

1st Lecture

11 March 2025

A recording of this talk is available at
the Forum Anthropozän webpage
<https://vimeo.com/1077709177>

Anthropocene: An Introduction

by Jan Zalasiewicz, Michael
Wagreich, Eva Horn & Sabine
Seidler

Introduction to the Anthropocene

by Jan Zalasiewicz (University of Leicester, UK), Sabine Seidler (Forum Anthropozän), Michael Wagreich & Eva Horn (both VAN, University of Vienna)



Jan Zalasiewicz is Emeritus Professor of Paleobiology at the University of Leicester. A field geologist and palaeontologist, he has taught Earth history to undergraduate and postgraduate students, researched into fossil ecosystems across half a billion years of geological time (including of the Anthropocene), and written many technical studies and popular science works.

He has written books such as *The Earth After Us*, *The Planet in a Pebble* and *Geology: A Very Short Introduction*.



Sabine Seidler studied economics and communication sciences. Doctoral studies in philosophy/group dynamics. Several years of teaching experience in project management. Quality Auditor Diversity Management. Focus on diversity resilience innovation. Since 2016 Chairwoman of the association ProMÖLLTAL Initiative for Education, Culture, Economy and Tourism. Founder of the international Forum Anthropozän with the Hohe Tauern National Park. Lead in development of KLAR! and KEM.



Eva Horn is Professor of German Studies and, together with Michael Wagreich, founder and director of the Vienna Anthropocene Network.

As a cultural historian and literary scholar, she is specifically interested in the aesthetics of the Anthropocene and in the genealogy of the Anthropocene thought. She is reconstructing the rich and diverse tradition of thinking about the planetary and the relation between earth history and human history in philosophy, fiction, historiography, and the arts.



Michael Wagreich, Univ. Prof. Dr. is Professor of Geology at the Department of Geology, University of Vienna, with interests and publications in sedimentology and stratigraphy.

Current research topics are environmental change and paleoclimate. Since 2012, he is a member of the Anthropocene Working Group, the international group of experts investigating the significance of the term "Anthropocene" as a new geological era strongly influenced by humans

Sabine Seidler (Forum Anthropozän) and Michael Wagreich (VAN, University of Vienna) gave an overview of the contents and objectives of the lecture, including a short introduction of what the term Anthropocene stands for. Further the scope of the Forum Anthropozän and the Vienna Anthropocene Network (VAN) were illustrated.

Following the opening session, Jan Zalasiewicz and Eva Horn presented their respective fields of research, connected to the Anthropocene.

Anthropocene: An Introduction

by Jan Zalasiewicz (University of Leicester, UK)

Human civilization has grown around the stable shorelines and climate, and amid the diverse biosphere of, the last ten millennia or so of the Holocene Epoch: the latest of many interglacial phases of the Quaternary Ice Age, and the one that created the world we live in.

The growth of human civilization has brought that stability to an end. With the explosion in both human numbers and energy use since the Industrial Revolution have come sharp and large-scale changes to landscape, biosphere and climate. These rapid and large-scale changes have led to the suggestion that we are now living through the beginning of a new epoch, the Anthropocene: an interval of geological time dominated by overwhelming human impacts. The term was proposed little more than two decades ago by Paul Crutzen, the Nobel Prize-winning atmospheric chemist, and has since been widely used – and sharply debated.

Formalization of the Anthropocene on the Geological Time Scale was recently rejected by the International Commission on Stratigraphy. But the term and concept continue to be used and its processes are, in reality, changing the geology of our planet, bringing in changes that are significant in a deep time perspective. These include physical changes most strikingly represented by the explosive growth of the 'urban stratum', the refashioning of sand, clay and limestone into our buildings, foundations and transport systems. Biological changes include the ongoing mass extinction event and the effect of invasive species, while human-made 'anthroturbation' is as extraordinary as anything in the fossil record. Chemical changes include the reshaping of the Earth's natural carbon, phosphorus and nitrogen cycles, with their associated climate and biological impacts. Indeed, some of the planetary changes, such as

the rapid growth of the technosphere, are wholly new within Earth's 4.5 billion-year history.

The combined transformation is of a scale to leave a signal, in strata now forming, that will persist for many millions of years, but that have already taken the planet outside of the baseline conditions of the Holocene Epoch, and in several respects out of those of the Quaternary Ice Ages as a whole.

It is bringing changes, too, to the world of research and scholarship, triggering many new trans-disciplinary connections, projects, networks and institutes. As conditions of the Anthropocene intensify, these will become ever more important as means to help understand, and navigate, our rapidly changing planet.



1st lecture

Anthropocene: An Introduction

by Jan Zalasiewicz, Michael
Wagreich, Eva Horn & Sabine
Seidler

11 March 2025

A recording of this talk is available at the
Forum Anthropozän webpage
<https://vimeo.com/1077709177>

What is the Anthropocene?

By Eva Horn (VAN, University of Vienna)

Originally coined by the natural sciences, the concept of the Anthropocene has rapidly gained traction in the humanities and social sciences. It has unleashed an array of debates as well as critical disciplinary self-reflection in many academic fields.

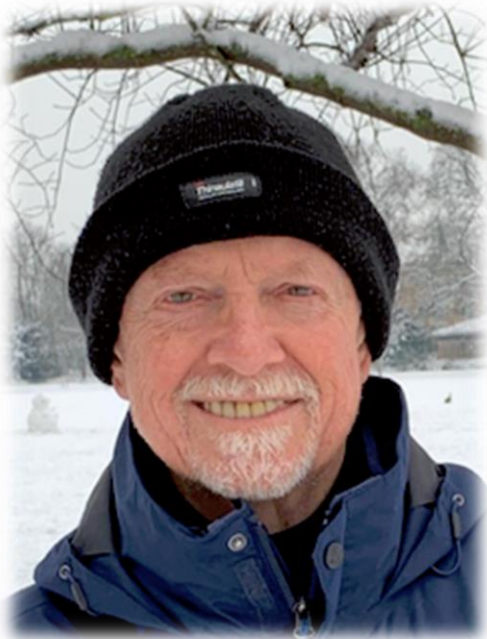
The Anthropocene not only calls for new perspectives within the fields but also for a dialogue across disciplinary and epistemological boundaries.

Exposing the inadequacy of certain traditional disciplinary distinctions, the concept has forged unprecedented forms of cooperation and alliances between the disciplines. My talk will outline some of the challenges the Anthropocene poses for the humanities and social sciences, and sketch out research perspectives in these fields. It will also present a few recent, multi-disciplinary approaches to the Anthropocene.



The Future Nature and Extent of the Proposed Anthropocene Epoch

by Colin Summerhayes, Cambridge University's Scott Polar Research Institute, UK; AWG



Colin Summerhayes is an Emeritus Associate of Cambridge University's Scott Polar Research Institute. With BSc and MSc degrees in Geology, and a PhD in Geochemistry from Imperial College, London, Colin's research focused on how the combination of winds, currents, ocean life and ocean chemistry led to the formation of organic rich deposits on the seabed, and, in reverse, what organic rich deposits could tell us about past oceanic and atmospheric conditions and climate.

As a member of the Anthropocene Working Group (AWG) since 2014, Colin helped to ensure that the roles of the atmosphere, ocean and ice systems were appropriately considered in explaining the effects of global warming as it took hold in the mid-20th century. In 2018 he co-authored an AWG paper on the likely trajectories of the Earth System in the Anthropocene, and in 2024 he led the drafting of an AWG paper on how the Anthropocene climate was likely to develop over future centuries.

Human-forced climate change began accelerating from about 1970 onwards with steepening increases in greenhouse gases, ocean acidification, global temperature and sea level, along with ice loss. As a result, present climatic conditions are distinctly different from the formerly relatively stable climatic conditions of the past 11,700 years of what geologists call Holocene time. Continued emissions of greenhouse gases are leading to yet greater and more permanent divergence of the Anthropocene from the Holocene Earth System. How is this new novel climate state likely to develop and to last?

The evidence suggests that elevated global temperatures will persist for at least several tens of millennia, with expected levels of warmth within the next few hundred year reaching those typical of the early Late Pliocene 3 million years ago, at which time

Greenland was no longer ice-covered, Antarctica had lost about half of its ice, and global sea level had risen on average by 10-12 m or more.

We are also seeing substantial changes to Earth's biota, which we expect to continue with further warming, creating irreversible changes in ecosystems. These major projected perturbations are sufficient to justify the Anthropocene as terminating the Holocene Epoch.

A Nuclear Anthropocene

by Friederike Frieß, BOKU University, Austria



Friederike Frieß is a senior researcher at the Institute of Security and Risk Sciences, BOKU University, Vienna. She received her Ph.D. in physics from University of Technology, Darmstadt, Germany, in 2017 as a member of the Interdisciplinary Research Group for Science, Technology and Security (IANUS). Friederike is a board member of the International Nuclear Risk Assessment Group (INRAG) and the Research Association for Science, Disarmament and International Security (FONAS).

Friederike's current research focuses on the risks of nuclear technology, both civil and military. In addition to a possible nuclear future with new reactor technology and its implications for waste management, safety and non-proliferation, Friederike is interested in the legacy and social component of the historical military and civilian use of nuclear technology. She is working towards a world without nuclear weapons.

With the discovery and use of nuclear fission, mankind has produced radionuclides on an unprecedented scale. Many of these radionuclides, which have a harmful effect on living organisms, will continue to exist for many thousands or even millions of years. The lecture shows how it has been argued for the civilian use of nuclear energy that it is possible to isolate dangerous radionuclides from the biosphere - and how this has not been working. At the same time, atmospheric nuclear weapons tests still account for a large proportion of the radiation exposure of the population as a whole. Their prohibition by the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963 can also be seen as a success of the environmental movement.



Coastal management in the Anthropocene - Nature-based Solutions in China

by Shasha Liu, Ludong University Yantai, China



Shasha Liu obtained her PhD in 2018 from Beijing Normal University and conducted postdoctoral research at the Third Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources, China, in 2023. Currently, she is a full-time lecturer at Ludong University in Yantai, China, where she focuses on coastal geology, beach economy, beach legislation, and integrated coastal management. Her research addresses challenges in both natural and social aspects of coastal issues, including anthropogenic impacts on the coastal environment, climate change responses in coastal regions, sustainable coastal development, and legal improvements.

In the Anthropocene, human activities have induced profound and irreversible alterations to the Earth System, with coastal erosion and inundation emerging as critical natural hazards threatening human life and property. Adaptive responses traditionally rely on singular Nature-based Solutions (NbS)—whether hard structures, soft engineering, or vegetation. However, instances of multiple NbS being employed together are seldom studied, particularly in morphologically complex coasts. Our findings demonstrate that integrated policies and urban development strategies effectively drive coastline protection while necessitating nature-based approaches.

Case studies in China demonstrate that NbS can create a robust spatial ecological disaster mitigation system in complex and vulnerable coastal environments. We propose critical recommendations for successful long-term coastal restoration: sustained political commitment enhanced public participation in local economic growth, and advancement of NbS technologies. This research not only highlights China's commitment to environment governance but also provides practical paradigms for shoreline management applicable to coastal cities in China and other coastal nations worldwide.

Critiques of the Anthropocene. Philosophical perspectives on a new human(ist) epoch

By Ralf Gisinger, University of Vienna, Austria



Ralf Gisinger is currently a lecturer at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Vienna, teaching courses mainly in the fields of political philosophy, critical theory, philosophy of nature, French philosophy and ethics. He has been a DOC fellow of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and a research associate at the University of Vienna from 2021-2024, working on a research project on philosophy of nature and ecology with and after Deleuze/Guattari. In 2022/2023 he was a research fellow in Paris and Montreal with a Marietta Blau Fellowship and in 2024 awarded an excellence grant by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Although the epoch of the Anthropocene has been provisionally rejected by the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS) in March 2024, the concept of the Anthropocene has not only arrived, but its proliferation through the sciences, humanities, politics and arts seems to be without limits. Nevertheless, the success of the term coincides naturally with some ambiguity regarding its conceptual, scientific and political viability. Starting by summarizing some of the most controversial discussions (name, starting point, timeframe, causality, responsibility, implications), I will ask what the role could be that philosophy or the humanities should play in, for, towards or even against the Anthropocene.

Künstliche Intelligenz & Atomkraft: Ein ethisches Dilemma im Anthropozän

Univ.Prof. Mag. Dr. Oliver Vitouch, Institut für Psychologie, Abteilung für Allgemeine Psychologie und Kognitionsforschung/Universität Klagenfurt, Univ.Prof.in Dr.in Katharina Kinder-Kurlanda, Universitätszentrums Digital Age Research Center/Universität Klagenfurt, Univ. Prof. Dr. Michael Wagreich, Institut für Geologie/Universität Wien, Patricia Lorenz, GLOBAL 2000/Friends of the Earth Europe, Dr. Dipl.-Ing. Reinhard Draxler, Vorstand/KELAG-Kärntner Elektrizitäts- Aktiengesellschaft und Dr.in Claudia Dojen, Abteilung Erdwissenschaften/kärnten.museum.
Moderation: Dr. in Sabine Seidler & Wolfgang Giegler

Künstliche Intelligenz (KI) prägt zunehmend unseren Alltag – doch ihr enormer Energiehunger stellt die Gesellschaft vor neue Herausforderungen. In diesem Zusammenhang wird Atomkraft als mögliche, CO₂-arme Lösung diskutiert. Tech-Unternehmen setzen bereits auf Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), um den steigenden Energiebedarf ihrer KI-Systeme zu decken. Die Verknüpfung von KI und Atomkraft wirft dabei weitreichende ethische und ökologische Fragen auf:

- ✓ Sicherheit & Langzeitfolgen – Wie riskant ist der Einsatz von Atomstrom zur Unterstützung einer Technologie, die selbst kontrovers diskutiert wird?
- ✓ Nachhaltigkeit & Verantwortung – Wie können Institutionen, die sich der Nachhaltigkeit verpflichten, mit dieser Entwicklung umgehen?
- ✓ Moralische Abwägung – Inwieweit sind die Risiken für Mensch und Umwelt gerechtfertigt, um den Energiebedarf von KI zu decken?



Programm

Two tools for learning (about) Culture/Nature literacy. The CNL MOOC and the CNL CustomGPT

by Emanuele Bardone, University of Tartu, Estonia



Emanuele Bardone is Professor of Educational Technology at the University Of Tartu, Estonia, where he is also the director of the Centre for Educational Technology. His research interests include Critical Educational Technology, Futures Thinking, Education Futures, and Critical Studies of Artificial Intelligence and Education.

During the lecture, two innovative tools will be presented to explore CultureNature Literacy (CNL): the CNL MOOC and the CNL CustomGPT. These tools are designed to support pre-service teachers, educators, and anyone interested in deepening their understanding of cultural sustainability and envisioning hopeful futures. Both the MOOC and the CustomGPT were developed as part of the CultureNature Literacy (CNL): Curricular Key Competences for Shaping Europe's Future in the Anthropocene project, funded by Erasmus+ (KA220-HED).



Dehumanizing the Anthropocene: AI as social bullshitter

By Robert Braun, Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS), Austria



Robert Braun studied philosophy of arts and history, he completed his PhD in philosophy in 2002 and his Habilitation in 2021. He is senior researcher at the research group Science, Technology and Social Transformation at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna, and associate professor at Masaryk University, in Brno. His research focus is the ontological politics of technology transitions, responsibility in innovation, political ontology (of mobilities), and Anthropocene violence. His last book, *Post-Automobility Futures* (with Richard Randell), is published by Rowman & Littlefield in 2022. Among his books *Corporate Stakeholder Responsibility* (CEU Press, 2019) has been selected as one of three best books of 2019 by the European Management Academy (EURAM). He is co-editor of the *Journal of the Knowledge Economy* (Springer) and currently editing a special issue of the *Journal of Responsible Technology* (Elsevier). He has published, inter alia, in *History and Theory*, *Science, Humanities and Social Sciences Communication*, *Journal of Responsible Innovation*, *Mobilities*, *Mobility Humanities and Transfers* and many others; he is a member of the Society for the Philosophy of Technology.

This talk traces the genealogy of the Anthropocene to the birth of the 'Anthropic condition': the violent struggle between a world that is fixed, populated with numerable beings in neat causal spatio-temporal ordering and fuzzy many-worlds of various entanglements, becomings, and matterings. The story begins with the invention of a technology: that of the Greek alphabet as a radical, universalist and hegemonic apparatus and ends with the newest manifestation of technopower: GenAI. The talk suggests that GenAI is a 'social bullshitter' that dehumanizes the Anthropic condition: it aims to provide alphabetized certainty to bring the flow of becoming under techno-political control (called 'the real'). An alternative, Robert suggests, is the ontological politics of destitution grounded in quantum (social) theory.



Anthropocene Angst: Epistemic diplomacy in times of climate crisis

By Alex Damianos, University of Kent, UK



Alexander Damianos is a lecturer and researcher in law at the University of Kent Law School. He is the author of the forthcoming book *What was the Anthropocene?*, which asks why the Anthropocene Working Group's proposal for a formal Anthropocene unit of the Geologic Time Scale was rejected by the Subcommission on Quaternary Stratigraphy. The book inquires into the authority of the Subcommission to reject the AWG's proposal, given the overwhelming evidence of anthropogenic change to Earth systems dynamics; and examines the implications of the proposal's rejection for the future of geosciences under conditions of climate crisis. He holds a PhD in Law from the London School of Economics & Political Science.

This talk examines the recent decision of the Subcommission on Quaternary Stratigraphy of the International Commission on Stratigraphy (SQS ICS) to reject the proposal of the Anthropocene Working Group (AWG) to formalise the Anthropocene as a unit of the Geologic Time Scale. Amidst rapidly unfolding climate crisis, what does this decision suggest about the role of geoscientific expertise in society today? Taking Niklas Luhmann's assertion that "anxiety is the modern a priori", I examine the rhetoric of both the AWG and the SQS ICS, to explore how the Anthropocene formalisation effort articulated a normative program on the register of geoscientific expertise.

This dynamic, I argue, emerged less from the intentions of either expert group than from the interplay between popular investment in the Anthropocene and the interpretive gap between geological data and its sociocultural meaning. Ultimately, the paper considers how the formalisation process itself shaped the positions of both proponents and skeptics, offering insights into contemporary configurations of scientific authority and public discourse.

Education in the Age of AI: Critical Thinking as a Key Competence for the Anthropocene

by Frano-Petar Rismondo & Erika Unterpertinger, University of Vienna, Austria



Erika Unterpertinger is a writing and higher education expert at the Center for Teaching and Learning at the University of Vienna. She has a background in comparative literature and explores the chances and pitfalls of AI on academic teaching and writing when she is not working on her Ph.D., in which she explores students' processes of 'discovery' in the writing process.



Frano-Petar Rismondo is a higher education expert and writing scholar at the Center for Teaching and Learning (University of Vienna). His work focuses on the intersection of AI and higher education, as well as scientific research and academic writing. With expertise in pedagogy and academic development, he explores innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

AI-supported tools are reshaping education: by offering adaptive content, automated feedback, and data insights, Large Language Models like Chat-GPT amplify both opportunities and challenges in learning. However, this requires a number of skills: students must analyse and evaluate AI-generated outputs, recognize bullshit (Frankfurt, 2005; Hicks et al., 2023), they need to be aware of ethical aspects of using and being confronted with AI as well as metacognition to navigate AI-mediated information landscapes. Educators can foster these skills through inquiry-based,

interdisciplinary projects that leverage AI technologies while emphasizing argumentation and problem-solving. This lecture explores how and why critical thinking empowers learners to become thoughtful, responsible agents capable of tackling complex, real-world issues in an era of AI.

AI, ethics & the Anthropocene

By Katharina Kinder-Kurlanda, University of Klagenfurt, Austria



Katharina Kinder-Kurlanda, is a Cultural Anthropologist and Professor of Digital Culture and Head of the Digital Age Research Center at the University of Klagenfurt. She works interdisciplinary in Digital Humanities, Science and Technology Studies, Sociology of Technology and Internet Research. Her research interests are algorithms and AI in everyday life and work, knowledge production, fair AI, datafication, data ethics and computer games.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is often perceived as a monolithic, opaque technology - an image that greatly simplifies its diverse forms and social effects. This lecture sheds light on three central topics: First, the often oversimplified portrayal of AI as an autonomous system and the question of who benefits from its use (cui bono?). Secondly, the need for integrative, responsible technology development based on principles such as reflexivity and participation.

Thirdly, the complex challenges of "Good AI", which focuses on social justice and fair working conditions. The aim is to understand AI critically and reflexively as a socio-technical phenomenon, the use of which in a just society is always also a question of the distribution of power and responsibility.



12th lecture

AI. Alternative Intelligenzen. Auf der Suche nach neuen Ideen und Wegen.

Zeit-Gespräch 8. Forum Anthropozän

12 June 2025

A recording of this talk is available at the Forum Anthropozän webpage

www.forum-anthropozan.com

AI. ALTERNATIVE INTELLIGENZEN. Auf der Suche nach neuen Ideen und Wegen.

ZEIT-GESPRÄCH im Rahmen des 8. FORUM ANTHROPOZÄN, organisiert von Sabine Seidler

Wie kann Künstliche Intelligenz (KI) im Sinne von Klima, Umwelt und Gesellschaft verantwortungsvoll genutzt werden? Diese Frage stand im Mittelpunkt des **8. Forum Anthropozän**, das vom 12. bis 14. Juni im Nationalpark Hohe Tauern stattfand. Unter dem Leitthema „AI – Alternative Intelligenzen: Neue Ideen und Wege in der Klimaökologie“ diskutierten internationale Fachleute über Potenziale, Risiken und gesellschaftliche Verantwortung im Umgang mit KI.

Zum Auftakt der dreitägigen Veranstaltung im BIOS Nationalparkzentrum Mallnitz fand ein ZEIT-Gespräch statt, moderiert von Journalist Fritz Habekuß. Auf dem Podium: Klimaforscher Sebastian Lehner (Geosphere Austria), Biotechnologe Diethard Mattanovich, IT-Rechtsexpertin Eva Vonau, Bildungsexpertin Katja Wengler (DHBW Karlsruhe) sowie Zukunftsforscher Matthias Horx. Gemeinsam diskutierten sie die Rolle von KI in Wissenschaft, Bildung, Recht und Ethik.



Sabine Seidler, Initiatorin Forum Anthropozän



ZEIT-GESPRÄCH, Forum Anthropozän 2025

Ankündigung: Das 9. Forum Anthropozän findet vom 11.-13.06.2026 im Haus der Steinböcke in Heiligenblut statt.