
**1st INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ON THE COGNITIVE, ETHICAL AND SOCIETAL
DIMENSIONS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

Alces 2026

Porto – Maia, Portugal

January 19-23, 2026

<https://aices.irdta.eu/2026/>

Co-organized by:

University of Maia

Institute for Research Development, Training and Advice – IRDTA
Luxembourg/London

Early registration: July 25, 2025

SCOPE:

Alces 2026 will be the first in a series of research training events aiming at updating participants on the most recent multidisciplinary discussions about the foundations, meaning, challenges and risks of AI.

The event will have a global scope along 3 thematic lines: cognition, ethics, and society. It will cover current debates about: AI and philosophy of mind; cognitive architectures; machine learning and cognitive development; large language models and visual information; robotics and embodied cognition; neuroscience-inspired AI; algorithmic bias and fairness; transparency and explainability; accountability and responsibility; privacy and surveillance; autonomy and control; AI impact on human values and social inequalities; the future of work and automation; governance, regulation and public policies; AI, human rights and democracy; AI and global development; information and AI education.

The event will consist of 13 courses, 2 keynote lectures, 1 round table, 1 symposium collecting short contributions from participants, and 3 open thematic debate sessions. Renowned academics and industry pioneers will lecture and share their views with the audience. The organizers are convinced that outstanding speakers will attract the brightest and most motivated students. Face to face interaction and networking will

be main ingredients of the event. It will be also possible to fully participate in vivo remotely.

ADDRESSED TO:

Graduate students, postgraduate students and industry practitioners will be typical profiles of participants. However, there are no formal pre-requisites for attendance in terms of academic degrees, so people less or more advanced in their career will be welcome as well.

Since there will be a variety of levels, specific knowledge background may be assumed for some of the courses.

Overall, Alces 2026 is addressed to students, researchers and practitioners who want to keep themselves updated about recent developments and future trends. All will surely find it fruitful to listen to and discuss with major researchers, industry leaders and innovators.

VENUE:

Alces 2026 will take place in Porto, the second largest city in Portugal, recognized by UNESCO in 1996 as a World Heritage Site. The venue will be:

University of Maia
Avenida Carlos de Oliveira Campos - Castelo da Maia
4475-690 Maia
Porto, Portugal

<https://www.umaia.pt/en>

STRUCTURE:

2 courses will run in parallel during the whole event. Participants will be able to freely choose the courses they wish to attend as well as to move from one to another.

Full live online participation will be possible. The organizers highlight, however, the importance of face to face interaction and networking in this kind of research training event.

All lectures will be videorecorded. Participants will be able to watch them again for 45 days after the event.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Georgios B. Giannakis (University of Minnesota), Kernel-driven and Learnable Self Supervision over Graphs

Ming Lin (University of Maryland), Socially Responsible and Trustworthy AI

PROFESSORS AND COURSES:

Ricardo Baeza-Yates (Barcelona Supercomputing Center), [introductory] Introduction to Responsible AI

Thomas Breuel (Nvidia Research), [introductory] Facts and Rules in LLMs

Carlos Castillo (Pompeu Fabra University), [introductory] Algorithmic Fairness in High-Risk AI Applications

Rachel Cummings (Columbia University), [introductory/intermediate] Differential Privacy beyond Algorithms

Alan Dix (Cardiff Metropolitan University), [introductory] AI for Social Justice

Brian D. Earp (National University of Singapore), [introductory] Credit, Blame, and Personalisation in Human-AI Cooperation

Elia Formisano (Maastricht University), [introductory/intermediate] Auditory Cognition in Humans and Machines

Marijn Janssen (Delft University of Technology), [introductory/advanced] Data and AI Governance - From Control to Trust

Marta Kwiatkowska (University of Oxford), [intermediate/advanced] Probabilistic Verification for Neural Networks

Christian Lebiere (Carnegie Mellon University), [intermediate] Computational Cognitive Models of Human-AI Teaming

Catherine Pelachaud (Sorbonne University), [introductory/intermediate] Interacting with Socially Interactive Agents

Linda B. Smith (Indiana University Bloomington), [intermediate] Toddlers and Machines: Insights into Efficient Learning

Paul Smolensky (Johns Hopkins University), [intermediate/advanced] Symbol Processing in Transformers and Other Neural Networks

SYMPOSIUM:

A half-day symposium will collect 10-minute voluntary presentations by participants on any of the 3 thematic areas of the event. A 1-page abstract containing the title, authors, and summary of the presentation must be sent to david@irdta.eu by December 19, 2025.

OPEN DEBATES:

A 3-hour open debate session will be organized for each of the 3 thematic areas of the school: cognition, ethics and society. Expressions of interest to lead the respective sessions will be accepted until October 19, 2025 at david@irdta.eu. A 2-page description must be sent including the topics to be debated as well as the structure, call for contributions and dynamics of the session.

SPONSORS:

Companies/institutions/organizations willing to be sponsors of the event can download the sponsorship leaflet from

<https://aices.irdta.eu/2026/sponsors/>

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

Samuel Anjos (Maia, social networks)
José Paulo Marques dos Santos (Maia, local chair)
Carlos Martín-Vide (Tarragona, program chair)
Santiago Montes (Tarragona, webpage)
Sara Morales (Luxembourg)
José Luís Reis (Maia)
Luís Paulo Reis (Porto)
David Silva (London, organization chair)

REGISTRATION:

It has to be done at

<https://aices.irdta.eu/2026/registration/>

The selection of 6 courses requested in the registration template is only tentative and non-binding. For logistical reasons, it will be helpful to have an estimation of the respective demand for each course.

Since the capacity of the venue is limited, registration requests will be processed on a first come first served basis. The registration period will be closed and the on-line registration tool disabled when the capacity of the venue will have got exhausted. It is highly recommended to register prior to the event.

FEES:

Fees comprise access to all program activities and lunches.

There are several early registration deadlines. Fees depend on the registration deadline.

The fees for on site and for online participation are the same.

ACCOMMODATION:

Accommodation suggestions will be available in due time at

<https://aices.irdta.eu/2026/accommodation/>

CERTIFICATE:

A certificate of successful participation in the event will be delivered indicating the number of hours of academic activities. This should be sufficient for those participants who plan to request ECTS recognition from their home university.

QUESTIONS AND FURTHER INFORMATION:

david@irdta.eu

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Universidade da Maia

Universidade do Porto

Universitat Rovira i Virgili

Institute for Research Development, Training and Advice – IRDTA,
Luxembourg/London