

Workshop on Ancient Wisdom for Modern Challenges

July 6-8, 2022 | Athens, Greece



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Workshop on Ancient Wisdom for Modern Challenges

Agenda

The Workshop on Ancient Wisdom for Modern Challenges will take place from July 6th – 8th, 2022, in Athens, Greece. International scholars of philosophy, policy science, behavioral science, and other interdisciplinary fields, will meet at the famed Academy of Athens to explore how ancient philosophy can inform our modern understanding of ethics and well-being, and thereby help to address some of the world's most pressing challenges, including climate change, shifting geopolitics, and rising inequalities.

Wednesday, July 6th

9:30 am - 10:00am

Words of Welcome

1. Christos Zerefos, General Secretary of the Academy of Athens
2. Kostas Bakoyannis, Mayor of Athens
3. Jeffrey Sachs, President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and University Professor at Columbia University

10:00 am - 11:30 am

Launch of the SDSN Global Climate Hub – Pre COP 27 Event

Chairs: Jeffrey Sachs; Phoebe Koundouri, Professor at AUEB and DTU, Co-Chair of SDSN Europe; and Maria Cortes-Puch, Vice President of Networks at SDSN

The launch will include presentations on the mission and approach of the SDSN Global Climate Hub by Professor Jeffrey Sachs and Professor Phoebe Koundouri, a presentation on the governance of the Hub by Maria Cortes-Puch, and speeches by Ministers and officials from the Greek government.

1. Christos Stylianidis, Minister for the Climate Crisis
2. Christos Dimas, Deputy Minister for Research and Technology
3. Konstantinos Aravossis, Secretary General for Forestry, Ministry of Environment and Energy

Welcome speeches from:

1. Dimitris Bourantonis, Rector of Athens University of Economic and Business
2. Ioannis Emiris, President and General Director ATHENA Research Center

Welcome speeches from our gold sponsors presented by Prof. Koundouri:

1. Panos Laskaridis, President, Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation
2. Eleni Andreadis, ESG Executive Director, Sani/Ikos Group

11:30 am - 12:00 am

Coffee Break

12:00 am - 14:00 pm

Session I: The Ethics of AI in the Digital Age

Co-chairs: Yannis Ioannidis, Professor of Informatics at the University of Athens, and Timos Sellis, Director of the Archimedes Research Unit on AI

Digital technologies and artificial intelligence make possible new forms of services that can accelerate human wellbeing. E-education, E-health, and E-commerce are all in active development. Yet the digitalization of society also threatens us with new kinds of instability: fake news, loss of privacy, cyberwarfare, psychological addictions, unemployment, and other potential harms. How can the world best achieve the high promise of the Digital Age while avoiding its potential dangers and pitfalls?

1. Xue Lan, Dean of Schwarzman College, Tsinghua University (Virtual)
2. Bing Song, Vice President of the Berggruen Institute
3. Barbara Hammer, Professor of Machine Learning, Bielefeld University
4. Ioannis Emiris, President of ATHENA RC
5. Pericles Mitkas, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at AUP, President of the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education

14:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Lunch

8:00 pm – 11:00 pm

Dinner at the City Hall of Athens

Thursday, July 7th

9:30 am – 11:30 am

Session II: Overview of Ancient Philosophy

Co-Chairs: Bryan van Norden, Chair in Philosophy at Vassar College, and Stelios Virvidakis Professor of Philosophy at the University of Athens

Ancient philosophers, including Aristotle, Confucius, and others, recognized that human thriving depends on the cultivation of human excellence, including knowledge, respect for culture, the search for truth, and the pursuit of social harmony. This session will give context on the roots of ancient thought and trace its evolution throughout history.

1. Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, Former Chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Vatican
2. Tao Jiang, Chair of Religion Department and Director of Center for Chinese Studies, Rutgers University
3. Erin Cline, Distinguished Professor in Interfaith Studies & Dialogue, Georgetown University
4. Giulia Bonasio, Professor of Ancient Philosophy, Durham University
5. Wenjin Liu, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Princeton University
6. Maria Protopapas-Marneli, Research Director, Academy of Athens
7. Chloe Balla, Professor of Ancient Philosophy, University of Crete
8. Demetra Sfendoni-Mentzou, Professor Emerita of Philosophy of Science, President of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies at ATh

11:30 am – 12:00 pm

Coffee Break

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Session III: The Contemporary Relevance of Ancient Wisdom

Co-Chairs: Katja Vogt, Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University; Demetra Sfendoni-Mentzou, Professor Emerita of Philosophy of Science, President of the Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies at ATh

The world faces unprecedented challenges, including pandemics, climate change, and shifting geopolitics. Yet we also face unprecedented opportunities to end poverty, achieve global cooperation, overcome prejudices, and increase wellbeing. How can ancient philosophy inform our path forward, while helping us increase well-being and flourishing around the world?

1. Matthew Walker, Professor of Philosophy, Yale-NUS College
2. Lisa Raphals, Professor of Chinese and Comparative Literature, University of California Riverside
3. JeeLoo Liu, Chair of Philosophy Department, California State University Fullerton
4. Richie Davidson, Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry, Founder and Director of the Center for Healthy Minds, University of Wisconsin
5. Nikitas Pittis, Professor of Economics, University of Piraeus
6. Anna Schriefl, Professor of Philosophy, Humboldt University of Berlin
7. Harry Platanakis, Professor of Political Theory, University of Athens
8. Filimon Peonidis, Professor of Philosophy, ATh

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Lunch

7:00 pm – 11:00 pm

Dinner at the Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation

The dinner will include a debate with Professor Platias and Professor Sachs, on the doctrine of prudence in political leadership a guided tour of the Incunabula exhibition at the Laskaridis Foundation, and cocktails in the garden

Friday, July 8th

9:30 am – 11:30 am

Session IV: Climate Change, Ethics, and Education

Co-chairs: Andreas Papandreou, Professor of Economics at the University of Athens, Co-Chair of SDSN Greece, and Nicolaos Theodossiou, Professor of Civil Engineering at AUTH, Chair of SDSN Black Sea

In our era of climate breakdown, we must rethink humanity's relationship with nature and facilitate a just transition to carbon neutrality. This session will illustrate how societies can work together to develop climate education, inclusive green pathways, nature-based solutions, resilient communities, and inspire regenerative growth around the world.

1. Christos Zerefos, General Secretary of the Academy of Athens
2. Katja Vogt, Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University (Virtual)
3. Yumi Suzuki, SNSF Research Fellow, University of Bern
4. Ram Fishman, Professor of Public Policy, Tel Aviv University
5. Zacharias Scouras, Professor of Biology, AUTH
6. Konstantinos Katsifarakis, Professor of Civil Engineering, AUTH
7. Anastasia Zabaniotou, Professor of Chemical Engineering, AUTH
8. Dionysia-Theodora Avgerinopoulou, Member of the Hellenic Parliament, New Democracy Party

11:30 am – 12:00 pm

Coffee Break

12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Session V: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Education

Co-chairs: Niki Kerameus, Minister of Education, and Jeffrey Sachs

What enduring lessons can philosophy teach us about the importance of education in society? The next generations of students face formidable challenges in their lives and learning. The COVID-19 pandemic has had serious effects on learning and childhood development, and climate anxiety and other mental health struggles afflict rising numbers of youth around the world. How can we make education more accessible and ensure that students and their teachers are well-equipped for the future?

1. Niki Kerameus, Minister of Education
2. Bryan van Norden, Chair in Philosophy, Vassar College
3. Cathay Liu, Professor of Philosophy, Yale-NUS College
4. Fr. James Dominic Rooney, Professor of Philosophy, Hong Kong Baptist University
5. Sofia-Eleftheria Gonida, Professor of Educational Psychology and Human Development, AUTH

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Lunch

3:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Session VI: Global Ethics for the 21st Century - Towards the 2023 Symposium

Co-Chairs: Jeffrey Sachs and Phoebe Koundouri

This session will focus on the intersections between philosophy, global affairs, human rights, multilateralism, and other key questions for the *Aristotle-Confucius Symposium on Ethics for the 21st Century*, which will take place in 2023.

1. Speakers from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (TBD)
2. Anna Sun, Professor of Religious Studies, Duke University (Virtual)
3. Robin Wang, Professor of Philosophy, Director of Asian Pacific Studies, Loyola Marymount University
4. Petros Mavroidis, Professor of Foreign and Comparative Law, Columbia Law School
5. Panagiotis Thanassas, Professor of Philosophy, University of Athens
6. Nikolaos Paraskevopoulos, Former Minister of Justice, Transparency, and Human Rights
7. Athanasios Platias, Professor of Strategy, University of Piraeus
8. Garry Jacobs, President, World Academy of Art and Science

8:00 pm – 11:00 pm

Guided Tour and Dinner at the Goulandris Natural History Museum

Saturday, July 9th

10:00 am-1:00 pm

Guided Tour to the Acropolis and the Acropolis Museum (for those confirmed) - Tour sponsored by [Sani/Ikos Group](#).