



Call for Applications

“Dualism and Non-Duality in the Age of Artificial Intelligence”

In association with the *Udo Keller Stiftung Forum Humanum* and the *TRA 4 – Individuals, Institutions and Societies*, the *International Centre for Philosophy (IZPH)* of the University of Bonn is offering up to **5 *Forum Humanum fellowships*** to qualified doctoral and masters students from any department in the social sciences or humanities at the **University of Bonn** to participate at **two** events of the ***Institute for Philosophy and the New Humanities (IPNH)*** in **2026**: an event to be held at the ***University of Kyōto*** (Kyōto April 20-24) and an event to be held at the ***New School for Social Research*** (New York City, Sep. 21-25).

Since its inception in 2020, the IPNH has been committed to reformulating some of the most basic questions of the humanities in light of the ongoing transformation brought about by artificial intelligence. The so-called “AI revolution” has altered not only our social, political, and technological environments but also the very conceptual frameworks through which the humanities have historically understood the human being, nature, reason, and the world.

At the IPNH, we are convinced that the humanities can no longer merely comment on these transformations from the outside. Instead, they must take an active role in shaping new modes of understanding — combining historical-hermeneutic methods with advanced epistemological, ontological, and aesthetic theorizing. The aim is to create a new conceptual vocabulary capable of addressing the questions AI raises for selfhood, agency, interpretation, and the conditions of meaning.

In 2026, our annual *Udo Keller Forum Humanum* events will focus on the themes of dualism and non-duality – and on the ways in which the traditional oppositions structuring Western thought may no longer suffice to comprehend our entanglement with intelligent machines. Are the dualisms that underlie both classical and contemporary AI research – such as mind versus matter, code versus language, or artificial versus natural intelligence – still productive for understanding today’s world? Or do they conceal more than they reveal?

We invite applications from scholars who can contribute to exploring how such oppositions might be critically revised, overcome, or rearticulated. The relevant dualisms include, but are not limited to:

- human / machine
- software / hardware
- fiction / reality
- mind / matter
- subject / object
- artificial / natural intelligence
- animal / human
- individual / society
- language / code
- organic / inorganic
- reason / emotion
- sensibility / understanding
- natural / human sciences

Part I: Non-Duality – Kyoto, April 20–24, 2026

Hosted by Kyōto University, in cooperation with the Kyōto Institute of Philosophy and the Kyōto University Institute for the Future of Human Society

In Kyōto, we will focus on non-duality as a philosophical, cultural, and ethical orientation. How can we think AI without resorting to substantial dualisms? What can be learned from Japanese and broader Asian traditions of thought – Kyoto School philosophy, Buddhist epistemologies, Daoist ontologies, and process-relational metaphysics such as the recent We-Turn – that view reality as fundamentally interconnected and dynamic rather than as composed of separable entities? This leg of our programme is geared to approaches that engage with non-dual or relational approaches to AI and cognition. Areas of focus will include:

- Comparative studies between Asian philosophical traditions and contemporary AI theory.
- Post-humanism and the reconfiguration of human–machine boundaries.
- Process ontology, enactivism, and distributed cognition.
- The notion of hybridity: AI as a symbiotic, relational system rather than a discrete agent.
- Ethical and aesthetic implications of non-dual thinking for AI design and governance.

Part II: Dualism – New York, September 21–25, 2026

Hosted by The New School for Social Research, New York City

In New York, the focus will shift toward dualism and the enduring philosophical importance of differentiation, separation, and embodiment. The humanities have long been concerned with the specificity of human existence, arguing for and explicating the irreducibility of consciousness, intentionality, and meaning. Against current tendencies to ascribe autonomy or mental capacities to AI systems, we will revisit the philosophical grounds for distinguishing between artificial and actual intelligence. This event invites approaches that critically defend, refine, or transform dualistic frameworks. Areas of focus will include:

- Phenomenological and embodied accounts of intelligence.
- The role of materiality, finitude, and situatedness in cognition.
- Limits of simulation and computation as models of consciousness.
- Rethinking Cartesian, empiricist and Kantian dualisms in light of machine learning.
- The ontological and ethical boundaries between human, animal, and artificial agents.

Each event will consist of a series of workshops accompanied by keynote lectures by leading international scholars. IPNH co-directors **Markus Gabriel, Paul Kottman, Zed Adams and Yasuo Deguchi** will also present lectures.

The Forum Humanum scholarship will cover travel and accommodation costs, as well as provide a modest stipend for daily expenses. Applicants must therefore confirm that they are committed to traveling to **both** New York and Kyōto next year and, if necessary, are able to acquire visas on their own for the USA and Japan.

To submit an application, please send a) an up-to-date academic CV and b) a brief statement outlining your interest in the event in light of your current research project (max. 1 page),

combined into a **single document**, by **17.12.2025** to **Alex *Englander*** (E-Mail: alexeng@uni-bonn.de).