



ACADEMIA EUROPAEA

BARCELONA

BUILDING BRIDGES 2025

36th Annual Conference of Academia Europaea
Barcelona, Wednesday 15 - Friday 17 October 2025
(All times listed as CET)

Main venue:

Barcelona Biomedical Research Park (PRBB), Doctor Aiguader 88, 08003 Barcelona

<https://www.prbb.org/?l=en>

Location: <https://goo.gl/maps/z3abq4WSSMt7tBDV8>

Tuesday 14 October 2025

08:30–15:30 Geological trip to Montserrat Mountain (optional).

17:00–19:00 Academia Europaea Board Meeting (closed session). Venue: Royal Academy of Sciences and Arts of Barcelona. La Rambla, 115, Barcelona.

Wednesday 15 October 2025 – Annual General Meeting and Class Meetings

Rooms: Auditorium, Marie Curie, Charles Darwin, Ramón i Cajal, Rita Levi-Montalcini

08:30–09:00 Check-in for Class meeting participants at PRBB registration desk

09:00–11:00 Class meetings (A1, A2, B, C) and YAE meeting

Class A1 – Welcome and brief self-presentations by new members

Class A2 – Welcome and brief self-presentations by new members

Class B – Welcome and brief self-presentations by new members

Class C – **09:00–09:15** Introduction to Class and its sections

09:15–11:00 Welcome and short introductions by participating new members

11:00–11:20 Coffee break for Class C

11:00–11:30 Coffee break for Class A1, A2 and B

11:30–13:00 Continuation of Class meetings and Hub managers closed session

Hub managers closed Session: Meeting of AE Hub managers (Rosalind Franklin room)

Class A1: Welcome and brief self-presentations by new members, continued.

Discussion: The Humanities and the Humanities Class. Challenges and prospects.

Class A2: "Rethinking Social Science in an Age of Rupture: Viable Futures for Democracy, Prosperity, and Sociality within Ecological Limits".



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This session invites Class A2 members to reflect critically on the role of the social sciences in addressing today's defining challenges. Rather than only diagnosing crises, how can our disciplines actively shape alternative futures?

Rob van Tulder, MAE, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Growth and beyond: Social innovation, sustainable prosperity, and global public goods

Jonathan White, MAE, London School of Economics, London, United Kingdom

Democratic resilience and climate breakdown

Chris Hann, MAE, Max Planck Institute, Halle, Germany

Neoliberal economy, involuntary mobilities, and the populist threat

Antje Wiener, MAE, University of Hamburg, Germany

From ruptures to a new global order

Class B: Brief presentations by new members continue

Class C: Highlight talks from new members in each section

Introductions by the Section Chairs

11:20 -11:45 Julia Vorholt, MAE, ETH Zurich, Switzerland

Establishing causality: Opportunities of synthetic communities for plant microbiome research

Chair: Ray Dixon, MAE, John Innes Centre, Norwich, United Kingdom

11:45-12:10 Jiri Friml, MAE, ISTA, Vienna, Austria

Rewriting the Rules of Plant Signalling: The Surprising Role of cAMP

Chair: Crisanto Gutierrez, Centro de Biología Molecular Severo Ochoa, Madrid, Spain

12:10-12:35 Monica Di Luca, MAE, University of Milan, Italy

Dynamic synapses and the long arm to the nucleus

Chair: Balázs Gulyás, MAE, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden

12:35-13:00 Milan Chytrý, MAE, Masaryk University, Czech Republic

Biodiversity loss in European vegetation.



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Chair: András Báldi, MAE, Centre for Ecological Research, Institute of Ecology and Botany, Vácrátót, Hungary

13:00–14:00 Lunch

14:00–16:00 Continued Class sessions and YAE Meeting

Class A1:

14-16 Linguistics section workshop.

14-16 Film, Media and Visual Studies workshop.

14-15 All other A1 sections [session in common] The Humanities and the Humanities Class. Challenges and prospects, continued.

Class A2:

14-15 Coffee & Conversations. Informal discussions- at thematic tables followed by brief reporting from each group.

Joint session of Classes A1 and A2

15-16 Discussion on the 5th EU Freedom/Letta Report.

Chairs: Genoveva Martí, MAE, Chair Class A1 and Björn Wittrock, MAE, Chair Class A2

The discussion will be introduced by Thomas Sturm, MAE, (ICREA and Autonomous University of Barcelona). Comments by Janez Potočnik, former EU commissioner of science and research (2004-2010) and for the environment (2010-2014).

Class B: Artificial Intelligence Workshop with presentations by

Metin Sitti, MAE, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey

ML for Small-Scale Soft Robot Design and Control

Lionel Briand, MAE, LERO, University of Limerick, Ireland

Automated Testing and Safety Analysis of Deep Neural Networks

Rachid Guerraoui, MAE, EPFL, Lausanne, Switzerland

Towards a Safe AI

Erol Gelenbe, MAE, IITIS-PAN, Poland

Random Neural Networks: Parametrization and Learning for Cyberattack Detection

Class C: 14:00-14:25 Csaba Szabo, MAE, University of Fribourg, Switzerland

NO, CO, H₂S, CN: the growing family of mammalian gaseous transmitters



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Chair: Balázs Gulyás, MAE, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden

14:25- 14:50 Stefan M. Pfister, MAE, German Cancer Research Center, Heidelberg, Germany

Molecular tumor classification - translating discoveries into patient benefit

Chair: Péter Hegyi, MAE, Translational Medicine at University of Pécs, Budapest

14:50- 15:55 Future activities and planning; membership and task force topics. Open discussion related to views of the section chairs and potential reform of sections; overview of the membership, including missing candidates and emerging/underrepresented fields; the potential for new task force topics and involvement of YAE.

15:55-16:00 Closing remarks

16:00–16:30 Coffee break

16:30–17:00 Special lecture (Auditorium)

Chair: Björn Wittrock, Director AE College of Excellence and Class A2 chair

Philippe Aghion, MAE, Collège de France, Paris ; Erasmus Medal winner 2021

Should we fear AI?

17:00- 19:00 Annual General Meeting (includes Hub presentation and SAPEA report)
Auditorium

19:00–20:00 Welcome reception (Terrace of PRBB, indoors if it rains)



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Thursday 16 October 2025 – Plenary Sessions and YAE meeting

Rooms: Auditorium and Rosalind Franklin Room (for press and additional meetings)

08:30–09:00 Check-in for conference participants not attending Class meetings

09:00–10:30 Opening of Plenary Conference

- Don Dingwell, MAE, President of Academia Europaea
- Jaume Bertranpetit, MAE, Director of the Barcelona Knowledge Hub
- Janez Potočnik, former EU commissioner
- Erasmus Medal Winner 2025

Laudatio by János Pach, MAE, Rényi Institute of Mathematics, Budapest & EPFL, Lausanne

Lecture by László Lovász, MAE, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

10:30–11:00 Coffee break

11:00–13:00 General Sessions by Class B: Exact Sciences

Chair: Paolo Papale, MAE, Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia, Italy and Class B chair

- Hans Oerlemans, MAE and Balzan prize winner 2022, Utrecht University, The Netherlands
The role of glaciers in the evolution of the Earth
- Licia Verde, MAE, University of Barcelona, Spain
Precision cosmology: threading a needle from the other end of the Universe
- Eugenio Coccia, MAE, Rector of the Gran Sasso Science Institute, Institute for High Energy Physics, Barcelona, Spain
Gravitational Waves: from the Einstein prediction to the Einstein Telescope

13:00–14:00 Lunch

14:00–15:00 Sydney Brenner Memorial Lecture

Laudatio by Kathryn Lilley, MAE, University of Cambridge, UK

Lecture by Markus Ralser, Charité, Berlin, Germany

15:00–17:00 General Sessions by Class C: Life Sciences

Chair: Eva Kondorosi, Biological Research Centre, Hungary and Class C chair

- Dennis Lo, MAE, Vice-Chancellor and President, Li Ka Shing Professor of Medicine at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK).
Non-invasive Prenatal Testing and Cancer Detection: From Dream to Reality



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- Jens Stougaard, MAE, and winner of the Adam Kondorosi Academia Europaea Prize for Advanced Research 2025, Aarhus University, Denmark

Genetics of nitrogen-fixing root nodules in legumes

- Mart Saarma, MAE, President of the Estonian Academy of Science, University of Helsinki, Finland

Presentation on neurogenerative diseases

17:00–17:30 Coffee break

17:30–18:30 Welcome to New AE Members (elected 2025), coordinated by Àlex Fidora, MAE, ICREA, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain

18:30–19:00 Networking with drinks

20:00 President's Dinner with closing remarks and announcement of Building Bridges 2026 at Cangrejo Loco Restaurant Port Olímpic: Moll de Gregal, 29, Local 4, Barcelona. 10 minutes walk from PRBB.



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Friday 17 October 2025 – Plenary Sessions

Rooms: Auditorium and Rosalind Franklin Room (for press and additional meetings)

09:00–10:00 André Mischke Prize. Lecture by Agnieszka Wykowska, Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia, Geneva, Italy

Presentation by Scott Bremer, President of YAE, University of Bergen, Norway

Human-robot interaction: how robots can address societal needs

10:00–10:30 Coffee break

10:30–11:30 Masterclass by Jordi Savall: *Music as the First Language and Living History of the Human Being*

11:30–13:30 General Sessions by Class A1: Humanities

Chair: Genoveva Martí, MAE, ICREA, University of Barcelona, Spain and Class A1 chair

- Mark Steedman, MAE, University of Edinburgh, Scotland
Natural Language and Artificial Intelligence

- Johan Rooryck, MAE, Leiden University, The Netherlands
Towards Equitable Open Access Publishing

13:30–14:30 Lunch break

14:30–16:30 General Session by Class A2: Social and Related Sciences

Chair: Martin Kahanec, Central European University, Vienna, Austria

Panel Theme: Democracy, Prosperity, and Sociality within Planetary Boundaries

This high-level, interdisciplinary plenary brings together perspectives from the natural and social sciences and humanities to consider how societies can live well within planetary boundaries. Rather than seeing ecological limits as constraints, how might they serve as catalysts for democratic renewal, equity, and innovation? Transforming the way we live requires more than technological fixes—it calls for approaches that are culturally grounded, inclusive, and responsive to lived realities. Experiences such as vaccine uptake highlight the limitations of top-down strategies. Climate change, as an anthropogenic and socially embedded phenomenon, illustrates how well-intended actions can produce unintended consequences. Here, the social sciences play a critical role in shaping just and viable pathways forward.

- Guy Midgley, Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Planetary boundaries and the fragility of abundance

- Nebojsa Nakicenovic, MAE, Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), Laxenburg, Austria

The political economy of just transitions



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- Hartmut Rosa, MAE, University of Erfurt, Germany

Cultural narratives and social imagination

-Isabelle Anguelovski, MAE, ICREA, UAB, Barcelona, Spain

Designing institutions for transformations

16:30–17:30 Open session organized by the Young Academy of Europe (YAE)

Public trust in science and navigating political tensions

Public trust in scientists can help policymaking institutions to decide on the basis of available evidence, but we witness recent political hostilities towards research institutions, and academic freedom and integrity. Indeed, the boundary between science and politics has always been contested, with some seeking to harden this boundary, while others see it as more malleable. And at the same time, most people today trust scientists and agree that they should engage more in society. Against this background, this panel will host multiple perspectives on how scientists – as individuals and as a group - navigate social and political polarization on the role and organisation of science in Europe today. To the extent that scientists work within a politicised context, what affordances and strategies do they deploy to establish science's role in society and relate to political trends.

Moderator: Scott Bremer, president of YAE

Panelists:

1. Ruth Rodríguez-Martínez (SH), UPF, Barcelona, Spain
2. Anna Kuppaswamy (LS), YAE, University of Leeds, UK
3. Emilian Mihailov (SH) YAE, University of Bucharest, Romania
4. Marta Sánchez de la Torre, University of Barcelona, Spain

17:30–18:30 Art and Science Lecture by Marta de Menezes, Lisboa, Portugal

Art and Immunology – A Love Story

Introduced by Monica Bello, Art Curator, Barcelona

18:30–19:30 Farewell toast with glass of cava

Saturday 18 October 2025 – Optional Activity

10:00–15:00 Visit to the Spanish Winery Torres: <https://www.torres.es/en>