

GESDA: Third Villars Anticipation Workshop

Planeterized Humanity: Rethinking identity, society and governance in a technology-driven world

March 12, 2025

Geneva, Switzerland - As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, digital platforms and virtual reality are reshaping human identity, social relations and governance structures. This transformation is at the heart of the third Villars Anticipation Workshop, organized by the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA), which will take place from 24 to 26 March 2025 at the Villars Palace, Switzerland.

Addressing GESDA's fundamental questions

Based on the Science Breakthrough Radar's Scientific Platform 4 ("Science and Diplomacy"), the Villars Anticipation Workshop will focus on our human relational state, guided by GESDA's fundamental questions: our relationship with ourselves ("who we are as humans"), our relationship with each other ("how we can live together as societies"), and our relationship with the planet. Focusing on the concept of "Planeterized Humanity", the workshop will explore how AI and digital technologies are redefining human interaction, the nature of global communities, and models of governance in the future.

Key workshop sessions

The workshop will anticipate developments in the social sciences and humanities over the next 5, 10 and 25 years through three key sessions:

- Session 1: Phenomena - Exploring how digital technologies and AI are transforming human identity and relationships. Topics include AI-enhanced cognition, new forms of kinship with artificial agents, and the rise of virtual communities replacing traditional social structures.

Session 2: Tools and conceptual frameworks - Exploring the methods and technologies needed to understand and model socio-technological evolution. Experts will discuss advances in digital ethnography, planetary-scale data analysis, and transdisciplinary approaches to studying human behavior in a technology-driven world.

- Session 3: Openings and Future Research Areas - Examining how social and governance systems need to adapt to the rapid evolution of human-technology interactions. This session will explore innovative governance models, ethical considerations and strategies for fostering global cooperation in a highly networked society.

Digital companions and knowledge networks

Two examples illustrate this evolution of the human-machine relationship that will be discussed.

- AI is making it possible to create "companions" to provide companionship and conversation to the elderly and socially isolated. Designed with advanced emotional intelligence, these digital entities provide not only assistance but also a genuine connection, raising ethical questions about the future of human-machine relationships.
- Digital platforms such as Prolinnova or Acaté Amazon Conservation enable Indigenous communities to share their ecological knowledge on a global scale, from sustainable agriculture to water conservation. By combining ancient wisdom with modern tools, these networks offer innovative solutions to environmental challenges.

Participants and expected results

The Villars Anticipation Workshop will bring together leading academic researchers in the social sciences and humanities, ensuring a strong interdisciplinary and global diversity. The aim is to anticipate the research breakthroughs expected in the field over the next 25 years. Key outputs will include:

- A Radar Deep Dive 2025 report to be published in the annual GESDA Science Breakthrough Radar®.
- Sessions at the 2025 Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipation Summit, where policymakers and experts will assess actionable insights from the workshop.

The Villars Anticipation Workshop is being organized with input from leaders of the Kyoto Institute of Philosophy (KIP), the AI & Humanity Lab at the University of Hong Kong, and MIT's Global Humanities Initiative, aiming to identify concrete areas for collaboration in the field of Planetary Humanized Humanity.