

Call for papers for the interdisciplinary conference on:

The Ethical, Legal, and Social Aspects of Cognitive Enhancement Strategies

- Conference date:** **August 24–26, 2021**
(planned time frame: 2pm-7pm CET, 8am-1pm EDT, 12am-18pm UTC)
- Location:** **Cologne, Fritz Thyssen Foundation (Germany) & online**
- Submission deadline:** **May 12, 2021**
- Organizers:**
- Dr. Sebastian Sattler (University of Cologne, Germany)
 - Prof. Dr. Guido Mehlkop and Floris van Veen (University of Erfurt, Germany)
- Keynote speakers:**
- Prof. Dr. Barbara Sahakian (University of Cambridge, USA)
 - Prof. Dr. Saskia Nagel (RWTH Aachen University, Germany)
 - Prof. Dr. Amelia Arria (University of Maryland, USA)
 - Prof. Dr. Martin Schütte (Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Germany)

Certain prescription drugs, transcranial magnetic stimulation, brain-computer interfaces, and even genetic modifications are all discussed as forms of potential cognitive enhancement. Cognitive neuroenhancement as a specific strategy can be defined as the improvement of brain functions with medications or other treatments when not medically necessary. This phenomenon has attracted increased media interest in recent years and is hotly debated in the public, professional, and scientific literature. It is often assumed that because of growing performance demands and the pursuit of success and perfection, an increasing number of people are turning to enhancement strategies (such as caffeine tablets, methylphenidate, or amphetamines) to improve their ability to concentrate, memorize, learn and make decisions.

Thus, in light of globalization and digitalization with increasing competition and pressure for greater performance, proponents for cognitive enhancement view these strategies in a way similar to how they view education: the strategies are tools to foster the intellectual, technological, economic, and cultural wealth of nations. Opponents criticize the use and subsequent achievements as unauthentic and unfair, especially when access to the means of enhancement is restricted. This is accompanied by the fear that such technologies have a negative impact on social equality and threaten our evolution as a species or jeopardize significant cultural practices.

This interdisciplinary conference aims at:

- a)** discussing new technological possibilities of cognitive enhancement;
- b)** engaging in a debate about ethical, legal, and social issues associated with it;
- c)** presenting empirical studies on the prevalence, willingness to use, and procurement strategies;
- d)** exploring drivers and hurdles of usage and procurement strategies as well as associated beliefs about risks and moral concerns; and
- e)** deliberating visions regarding legal norms and the regulation of enhancement technologies as well as prevention of health-endangering usage.

We invite scholars from various disciplines such as sociology, psychology, philosophy, medicine, law, and the political sciences. The three-day program will include keynote lectures by renowned scholars on the current possibilities and limits of enhancement, its ethical dimension, etiology of usage, and prevention. We will offer travel grants for selected junior researchers as well as an award for best poster. Online participation will be possible.

Information about abstract submission, fees, and grants:

Please **submit your abstract** via e-mail to: enhance.conference@wiso.uni-koeln.de

Please use our **abstract style sheet** ([LINK](#)). Deadline: **May 12, 2021**

Conference fee (*not applicable for online participation*): €45 regular and €20 for (Ph.D.) students

Travel grants for young scholars: Please check our website for more information:
<https://enhance-project.uni-koeln.de/en/conference/call-for-papers>

Please do not hesitate to contact us via e-mail should you have any questions:
enhance.conference@wiso.uni-koeln.de

We are looking forward to your abstracts and to an enriching conference!

The ENHANCE team