Call for Papers: WOLAS Conference Series (WCS) 2026 - Rights in the AI Race | Istanbul University | 4–5 December 2026

By:

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WOLAS Conference Series (WCS) 2026 seeks to foster critical dialogue on AI governance, international law, regulation, accountability, and the future of protecting human dignity in an era of rapid technological transformation.

Topic: Rights in the AI Race

Venue: Istanbul University

Dates: 4–5 December 2026

How does one regulate a booming technological sector with worrying ramifications for human rights? Legal and regulatory frameworks struggle to catch up with the latest developments in Artificial Intelligence, creating a

widening gap between technological capability and legal oversight. This mismatch leads to intrusion into the boundaries of legality across multiple domains. AI's recent rise ignored and violated IP rights, its unparalleled use in data technologies is a challenging encroachment into individual and social lives, and its active and potential uses in military technologies are alarming.

On the flip side, AI, as a general purpose technology presents a competitive terrain, one that is dominated by two prominent actors, namely China and the US. This competition is driving the securitization of AI supply chains, pressuring other states to position themselves within an emerging technological order. Amid this backdrop, legal responses are being shaped by corporations and governments to take part in the global AI race and protect individuals and societies.

This begets a critical question for law. Can legal frameworks both streamline technological development and offer individual and social protection? Does the protection of human rights limit technological expansion, or are legal frameworks being reconfigured to allow innovation at the expense of social and individual rights?

Expecting an interdisciplinary collective, WOLAS Conference Series (WCS) 2026 invites scholars and experts from germane fields of law, social sciences and technology to ponder and converse over the potential legal implications of the AI race for "human" rights.

Themes:

1. Autonomous Weapons, Future Wars and Human Rights

2. Politics and Technology: Grappling AI Race's Implications in the Global Order

3. Privacy as a Long-standing Human Right and AI Race

4. Public Surveillance, Dataveillance and AI Governance: Individuals and Society

5. Digital Colonialism and the Rise of AI Platforms

6. AI Integration in Military: Building Humanitarian Decision Systems Decision Systems

7. Liability Regimes, Norms and AI Products

8. IP Theft in AI Development: Power and the Future of IP

9. Access to Compute Power as a Global Good

Conference Format

In person. Panels will feature 3–4 presenters and a moderator. Each presenter will have 15 minutes. The conference language is English.

Abstracts Submission

Submit an original, relevant abstract of up to 300 words by **12 October 2026** via the conference website here: Abstract Submission

Costs

There is no participation fee. Limited funding is available for travel and accommodation for selected papers.

Important Dates

12 October 2026 — Application Deadline

20 October 2026 — Notification of Acceptance

30 October 2026 — Confirmation of Participation Deadline

See the following link for the call for papers and to submit your abstracts by **12 October 2026**: WCS Conference Series

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Provided by Afronomicslaw