

CALL FOR PAPERS

Minding the Rights and Fabric of Mind: The Ontological, Ethical and Legal dimensions of Neurotechnologies

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Madrid, Spain)

September 8-9th, 2025

The rapid development of neurotechnologies is beginning to have a profound impact on many aspects of life, as they are increasingly used for therapeutic, wellness and entertainment purposes. These technologies offer remarkable possibilities across various fields, with both promising benefits and significant risks. The ability to record and intervene in brain activity—given the widely accepted view that the brain is the material basis of the mind—raises complex philosophical, ethical, and legal questions. In principle, decoding the brain and modifying it could provide direct means of reading and manipulating minds. Hence the idea that minds (and brains) may require special ethical and legal protection. This has led to growing discussions on the need for special ethical and legal protections for the mind and brain, giving rise to the debate on *neurorights*—safeguards aimed at protecting cognitive liberty, mental privacy, mental integrity, and psychological continuity—accounting for the normative ground of this protection. Within this debate, it is assumed that interferences with the mind differ from mere bodily interventions, granting the mental sphere a special status that warrants specific safeguards. However, this assumption has not been fully articulated, analyzed, or critically examined on an ontological level of analysis, as the discussion has been predominantly shaped by ethicists and legal scholars. Different mental ontologies and views of the mind (functionalism, reductionism, enactivism) may impact the nature and scope of neurorights.

Therefore, we are pleased to announce a call for papers for an upcoming workshop focused on the philosophical, ethical, and legal implications of neurotechnologies, with a particular emphasis on ontological questions about the nature of the mind, personal autonomy, and neurorights. As neurotechnologies advance, they raise critical challenges to our understanding of cognition, agency, and personal identity, particularly when combined with AI systems that play an increasingly central role in their development. The integration of AI into neurotechnologies brings about additional and unique ontological and ethical concerns, particularly regarding cognitive enhancement, cognitive diminishment, cognitive liberty, sense of self, decision-making, responsibility and the potential for manipulation of mental states. How do these technologies challenge and reshape traditional notions of selfhood and autonomy? How should ethical frameworks evolve to safeguards individual rights, such as privacy and mental integrity, in light of these developments? This workshop aims to explore these concerns from a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives, addressing how AI-powered neurotechnologies can affect our notions of autonomy, privacy, agency, and the human experience itself.

Invited speakers (confirmed)

Marcello Ienca (Technical University Munich)

Jan Christoph Bublitz (University of Hambourg)

Sofia Bonicalzi (Università Roma Tre)

Submission Guidelines:

If you are interested in presenting your work in this workshop, please submit an **abstract of 500-750 words** along with **5 keywords** and a **short bio** of maximum of 300 words. 4-5 papers will be accepted for 45 minutes presentation in the workshop.

Proposal must be sent to jesus.vega@uam.es before June 15th. Acceptance will be communicated before July 6th, 2025. The organization of the event will provide participants with accommodation in Madrid during the workshop, but cannot cover travel expenses.

For further information, please don't hesitate to send an email to Jesús Vega-Encabo (jesus.vega@uam.es).

Organising committee

Jesús Vega-Encabo (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain)

Beatriz Gregoraci Fernandez (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain)

Guido Cassinadri (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Italy)

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