

## Miscellaneous

# Conference Report: SOPhiA 2025

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For 15 years, the annual Salzburg Conference for Young Analytic Philosophy (SOPhiA) has offered master's and doctoral students a rewarding introduction to the world of philosophy conferences and everything that goes with it. This year's event, SOPhiA 2025, featured a wide range of talks, plenary lectures, workshops, and a touch of holiday spirit in beautiful late-summer Salzburg.

## 1 Facts and Figures About SOPhiA 2025

The 15th edition of the Salzburg Conference for Young Analytic Philosophy, took place from 3 September 2025 to 5 September 2025 at the University of Salzburg (Austria). 165 master's and doctoral students from mainly European universities applied in advance to speak at the conference. After a double-blind review process, 120 of these were accepted, corresponding to an acceptance rate of approximately 73 %. Ultimately, 83 contributed talks were given at the conference in nine different sections: metaphysics, epistemology, logic & philosophy of mathematics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, philosophy of science, philosophy of religion, ethics, and political philosophy. In addition, there were three plenary lectures by the invited keynote speakers Ophelia Deroy (Munich), Stavros Ioannidis & Stathis Psillos (Athens), and David Lanius (Salzburg). Each slot for contributed talks consisted of 20 min for presentation and 10 minutes for Q&A. The plenary lectures of the keynote speakers lasted 90 min. The complete programme of the conference can be found at <https://sophia-conference.org/programme/>.

## 2 The First Day

The first item on the agenda was the opening, during which the chair of the local organising committee, Leonie Eichhorn, welcomed the participants and announced the winner of the SOPhiA 2025 Best Paper Award (more on this below). After that, Ophelia Deroy from Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich gave the first plenary

lecture entitled 'Reliabilism from the Inside Out'. In the afternoon and early evening, the first young philosophers gave their contributed talks in one of the parallel sections on metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of science, philosophy of language, and logic & philosophy of mathematics. After a busy but productive first day, the last talks ended at 6:40 p.m. and the day ended with an evening buffet, which gave participants the opportunity to get to know each other and exchange philosophical ideas.

### 3 SOPhiA 2025 Best Paper Award

And the winner is Sarah Köglspurger from the University of Fribourg! She was honoured for her paper entitled 'Attitudinal Obligations and the Control Problem,' which was selected from 15 other submitted papers. Congratulations! The jury consisted of Thomas Blanchard, Cord Friebe, Stavros Ioannidis, Maria Sekatskaya, Stathis Psillos, and Corina Strößner. The newly crowned winner opened the ethics section on the first day of the conference with her talk on the contents of her paper.

### 4 No Philocoffee, No Philosophy

Anyone who has ever attended a philosophy conference with a tight schedule knows that without a love of coffee, it is difficult to retain much love of wisdom for the late-evening talks. Knowing this, thankfully, each morning or afternoon, one member of the organising team was assigned to make coffee, which ensured a reliable supply throughout the conference. However, given the large number of participants, making coffee was certainly a full-time job. So while the participants' love of wisdom did not wane even during the last talks of the day, thanks to the great organisation and the coffee provided, one heroic member of the organising team, despite or perhaps because of their great dedication to coffee, was at times unable to indulge in the love of wisdom. As consolation and a thank you, let us say to them, freely adapted from Descartes: "Espresso, ergo sum!"

### 5 The Second Day

On the morning of the second day, contributed talks continued in the six parallel sections of the first day, with the difference that instead of the section on logic and philosophy of mathematics, there was now a section on philosophy of mind. Before the lunch break, De Gruyter offered a session on 'how to get your dissertation

published'. After the lunch break, the second plenary lecture of the conference took place. This time, Stavros Ioannidis & Stathis Psillos gave a lecture entitled 'Are Mechanisms Something More than Causal Pathways? Lessons from Chemistry and Biology'. In the late afternoon and early evening, three parallel workshops were on the programme. Zhitao Zhang & Alexander Gebharter (Marche Polytechnic University) organised the workshop 'Causal Inference in Science: Metaphysics and Methodology'. The workshop 'WORDS and other (Standard) Linguistic Entities' was organised by Thorben Petersen (RWTH Aachen University). Veronika Lassl, Piet Fritz Pankratz, Irmena Tsankova, and Eric Wallace (WFAP – Vienna Forum for Analytic Philosophy) were responsible for the workshop 'WAKE UP, SHEEPLE! A Graduate Workshop on Conspiracy Theories'.

## 6 Kaiserschmarrn!

No stay in Salzburg would be complete without sampling the hearty Austrian cuisine at least once. And so, on the evening of the second day after the workshops, several participants and organisers gathered in the beer garden of a restaurant serving traditional Austrian dishes. The Kaiserschmarrn is particularly recommended for dessert. It is a scrambled pancake, usually served with powdered sugar and jam. Although everyone was already quite full after the main course, the rich Kaiserschmarrn was the perfect way to round off the second day. Philosophy followed by good food. That's the life!

## 7 The Third Day

On the final day of the conference, contributed talks were again held in six parallel sections. The last ones were given in the early afternoon. In the late afternoon, the third and final plenary lecture marked the last philosophical item on the agenda. Salzburg's very own David Lanius brought the 15th SOPhiA to a dignified close with his talk entitled 'Deeper into Authoritarian Bald-Faced Bullshit'. The conference then came to an end with a cosy farewell dinner.

## 8 Chairing is Caring!

The idea behind SOPhiA is to give advanced students their first experience in the philosophy business. With this goal in mind, the organisers assigned a number of

participants the responsibility of chairing some of the contributed talks. The chairs ensured that the speakers kept to the allotted 20 min by holding up timecards and moderated the ten-minute Q&As afterwards. The organisers could be very satisfied with the chairs' contribution to keeping to the schedule. This is certainly not the case at all philosophy conferences. Luckily, SOPhiA's training of the younger generation bodes well for the future of philosophy conferences.

## 9 The Highlight of SOPhiA 2025

Given the numerous excellent talks, plenary lectures and workshop contributions, it is impossible to single out one presentation as the highlight of the conference. For this reason, the roof terrace of the event location in the University Park of the University of Salzburg deserves mention. Located in the middle of a basin, it offered a spectacular panoramic view of mountains and old castles in the best late summer sunlight. The walks to the roof terrace during the breaks between talks literally led to the highlight of SOPhiA 2025 and gave the conference a touch of summer holiday.

## 10 Thank You and See You Soon!

At this point, it's time to thank everyone who contributed to making SOPhiA 2025 such a great success. Thanks go to the participants, keynote speakers, and workshop organisers. Of course, the greatest thanks go to the organisers and hosts. Special mention should be made of the members of the programme committee Raimund Pils (chair), Gregor Greslehner, and Alexander Gebharder. The same applies to the members of the local organising team consisting of Leonie Eicchorn (chair), Benedikt Leitgeb, Florian Pointner, Selina Zauner, Mathijs Geurts, and Sarah Fischbacher. Thanks also go to the advisors Christian J. Feldbacher-Escamilla, Sebastian Krimpelmeier, and Stephen Müller. For their support, thanks also *Kriterion – Journal of Philosophy*, *ÖH Salzburg*, *StV Philosophie*, *State of Salzburg*, *City of Salzburg*, *Gesellschaft für Analytische Philosophie (GAP)*, *Verlag Karl Alber*, *FB Philosophie (GW)*, and *Brill Verlag*. Last but not least, here's some good news: a 16th SOPhiA is already being planned for next year. So all that remains to say is: "Thank you and see you at SOPhiA 2026!"