

Sixth Coffee Talk at the University of Passau:

An inspiring meeting with our Fellows

1st July 2025

On 1st July 2025, the sixth PCIAIS Coffee Talk was held at the University of Passau, bringing together our current fellows, faculty members, and guests for an engaging afternoon of academic dialogue. Each fellow offered a concise



Group photo with all participants

Photo: University of Passau

presentation of their ongoing research, sparking interest and thoughtful discussion across a range of disciplines. From AI - Learning Machine Systems to Catholic Theological themes, the diversity of topics highlighted the richness of our research community. The event once again proved to be a valuable space for interdisciplinary exchange, with stimulating conversations that extended well beyond the presentations. We look forward to seeing how these discussions continue to develop in the next months!



Discussion of interdisciplinary research fields

Photo: University of Passau

Prof. Dr. Hedwig Eisenbarth: *AI-based Modelling of Emotion to Understand (Criminal) Behavior*

Host: Prof. Dr. Susanne Mayr (Chair of Psychology and Human-Machine Interaction)

Prof. Dr. Eisenbarth explores how algorithms used in social media platforms, such as Meta, predict human emotional states. Her research investigates whether AI can detect and correctly interpret human emotions through various behavioral and physiological indicators in the context of criminal law. She highlighted the complexity of human emotions and the importance of cultural fit in this context.

Dr. Joshua Furnal: *Transforming Identities and Traditions in European Catholic Systematic Theology: A Comparative Study of the Eschatology of Søren Kierkegaard and Karl Rahner*

Host: Prof. Dr. Markus Weißer (Chair of Dogmatic Theology)

Dr. Furnal presented his research on the eschatological perspectives of Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard and German theologian Karl Rahner. His research explores central themes in Christian theology such as mortality, hope, and ultimate destiny. In his talk, he highlighted the continued societal relevance of these shared themes in philosophy and theology in light of the growing existential questions emerging today in response to global political and environmental challenges.

Prof. Dr. Bettina Kemme: *Legal and Reproducibility Aspects of Sustainable Data Science Systems*

Host: Prof. Dr. Stefanie Scherzinger (Chair of Scalable Database Systems)

Prof. Dr. Kemme is working on the legal and technical challenges of sustainable data systems. Her research focuses on privacy concerns in data-sharing platforms and the development of energy-efficient data infrastructures. In addition, she is contributing to strategies for reproducible research, aiming to create reusable prototypes that support transparency and consistency across research labs. She highlighted the complexity in balancing different language barriers across multiple disciplines such as computer science and law.

Prof. Dr. Claudia Sadowski-Smith: *Government, Diaspora, and Advocacy Responses to Refugee Migration: Ukrainian Migration to the United States and Germany, 2014-2024*
Host: Prof. Dr. Karsten Fitz (Professorship for American, Cultural and Media Studies)

Finally, Prof. Dr. Sadowski-Smith presented her research focus on global migration trends. For her second stay in Passau as a PICAIS Fellow she will examine Ukrainian refugee migration to Germany and USA. In particular, she will focus on government policies and the role of advocacy and diaspora organizations, particularly after Russia's 2014 invasion and the 2022 war. She emphasized the challenges posed by recent shifts under the new U.S. government administration, including the termination of many programs and the revocation of key initiatives.



Networking between the attendees

Photo: University of Passau