

PRESS RELEASE

“The Human Factor of AI Implementation” – An International Conference Sets New Standards for the Global Dialogue on Humanity and Artificial Intelligence

Kloten/Baar, 8–9 November 2025 – The sunlit theatre of the International School of Zug and Luzern was filled with an atmosphere of anticipation and curiosity. More than three hundred guests from around the world gathered to discuss one of the most urgent questions of our time: How can artificial intelligence be implemented in a way that serves humanity – and not the other way around?

What awaited the participants was unlike any typical technology conference. There were no product pitches, no marketing messages, and no corporate showcases. Instead: open conversations, honest questions, and shared doubts. “We wanted to create a safe space – a place where fears, uncertainties, and hopes about AI can be expressed without judgment,” explained Prof. Dr. Michael Gerlich, the scientific director of the conference and one of the world’s leading social scientists in the field of human–AI interaction.

Barry Dequanne, Director of the International School of Zug and Luzern, and Prof. Dr. Bert Wolfs, Academic Dean of SBS Swiss Business School, opened the conference with powerful remarks on the centrality of humanity in an age of artificial intelligence. Both stressed that technological innovation only represents true progress when it is accompanied by ethical responsibility, empathy, and education. In a world increasingly shaped by algorithmic decision-making, humanity must remain at the centre – as the designer, not the spectator. Their words set the tone for two days of intense exchange on how human values and AI development can be brought into balance.

Over the course of two days, more than forty international experts from academia, business, technology, and the arts engaged in lively discussions with the audience about the societal, psychological, and ethical implications of artificial intelligence. The aim was not to present definitive answers, but to find them together.

From Efficiency to Meaning

In his keynote “*Why Implementing AI is Not as Simple as It Seems*”, Prof. Gerlich addressed the fundamental relationship between humans and machines: “As societies, organisations, and individuals, we should not ask what else AI can do for us, but what it should do – and what must remain the responsibility of human beings.” He warned that implementing AI without reflection risks creating more problems than solutions: “Simply saying ‘Use AI at home and in your company’ leads to more confusion than clarity.”

This spirit guided the entire event. Nicole Gibson, former Australian Mental Health Commissioner and founder of the *Love Out Loud Foundation*, carried this ethical thread into her keynote “*Preserving What’s Human.*” She cautioned against the commercialisation of human emotion: “We must protect the use of data that reflects our emotions – and ensure it is not exploited for commercial gain.”

Tey Bannerman of the United Kingdom, a pioneer of human-centred AI strategies, added: “The greatest innovation AI can deliver lies not in the algorithm, but in the human being who uses it responsibly. Human intelligence remains the missing link in AI.”

Global Perspectives, Tangible Proximity

Rarely have so many leading thinkers convened in such an interactive format. Alongside Gibson, Bannerman, and Gerlich, the debates featured Henry Wang (Singapore), Web3 visionary and founder of the SmartMesh Foundation, and Daniel Verloop (Netherlands), developer of *EduGPT*. Wang emphasised: “A solution for truly human-centric AI lies in decentralisation. Control over data must return to its users.”

Verloop demonstrated how education systems can respond to the challenges of *cognitive offloading* – the growing tendency to outsource critical thinking to machines. “EduGPT was designed to support people in thinking, not to think for them,” he noted.

A film crew accompanied Nicole Gibson and the conference for a planned Netflix documentary – a clear signal that the topic extends far beyond academic discourse and into wider society.

Six Panels – Six Perspectives on the Future of Humanity in the Age of AI

All six panels shared a common vision: rediscovering what it means to be human in a digital age.

The first panel, “*Redefining Human Work*”, explored the future of work. It examined how automation transforms skills and expertise, and how companies can avoid a new form of digital Taylorism. Young participants voiced a clear desire for purpose and creative freedom rather than mere efficiency.

The second panel, “*Human Expression Reimagined*”, addressed AI’s impact on creativity. Artists, musicians, and educators debated whether generative AI expands artistic potential or erodes authenticity. The discussion revealed how notions of originality and embodiment are being redefined in the era of co-creation with machines.

The third panel, “*AI’s Double Edge*”, exposed the technology’s dual nature – from medical breakthroughs to cybercrime, climate innovation to weaponised misinformation. It became evident that AI’s future will depend less on technical capability than on ethical governance.

The fourth panel, “*Belonging or Breaking Apart?*”, examined identity, inclusion, and the risk of social fragmentation. The conversation highlighted how algorithmic systems can both unite and divide societies, prompting the question of how to design AI that fosters equity rather than exclusion.

The fifth panel, “*Losing Our Minds?*”, delved into misinformation, mental health, and the erosion of critical thinking in an age of generated content. Psychologists, educators, and media experts discussed how cognitive resilience can be strengthened. Gerlich’s research on cognitive offloading was frequently cited as a central reference point.

The final panel, “*Responsible AI or Just Good PR?*”, investigated the power structures behind AI’s development. Economists, lawyers, and tech entrepreneurs debated whether “ethical AI” represents genuine moral commitment or convenient branding. Transparency, governance, and public accountability emerged as defining themes.

The Next Generation as an Active Voice

A defining feature that set *The Human Factor of AI Implementation* apart from other international conferences was the deliberate inclusion of students from SBS Swiss Business School and the International School of Zug and Luzern. They did not merely listen but participated as equal contributors in all six panels. Their perspectives – shaped by digital experience yet grounded in a healthy scepticism toward technology's limits – added unexpected depth to the discussions. Many experts described the exchange with this generation as one of the most inspiring elements of the entire weekend. In a time when AI increasingly shapes our future prospects, this intergenerational dialogue proved that the next generation not only wants to use AI but to understand, shape, and align it with human values.

Workshops as Living Dialogue

Parallel to the panels, four practice-oriented workshops invited participants to co-create tangible solutions – from ethical decision-making models and AI-enhanced education to responsible leadership strategies. Students worked side by side with international executives, researchers, and developers.

“What made this format truly special was its proximity,” said one participant. “CEOs met students, philosophers met programmers – without hierarchies, but with genuine curiosity and mutual respect.”

A Beginning That Resonates

The response to the conference was overwhelming – both intellectually and emotionally. Many participants described the weekend as a turning point in their perception of AI: a shift from fascination or fear to responsibility and active engagement.

Gerlich concluded: “We have reached a moment where technology and humanity must be recalibrated. This conference was not an ending, but the beginning of a global conversation – a spark meant to be carried forward.”

Several follow-up projects and collaborations with international partners are already being planned.

What began in Baar was more than a conference. It was a call – for courage, for humanity, and for the understanding that the future is not programmed but co-created.

For more information about the speakers and the conference:

<https://www.sbs.edu/cscfs/2025-conference-the-human-factor-of-ai-implementation/>

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