

Conference Rationale

The question “*Why should I care?*” points to a profound moral, spiritual, and social challenge in contemporary societies. Across the globe, communities shaped by religious traditions, cultural narratives, and ethical frameworks are confronted by polarization, indifference, social fragmentation, and humanitarian crises. Ongoing conflicts such as those in Ukraine and Israel–Palestine, political and social unrest in regions such as Iran and Venezuela, and deep societal divisions in countries including the United States underscore the urgency of rethinking care, responsibility, and moral imagination in complex and pluralistic contexts.

Religions have historically played a central role in shaping moral sensibilities through doctrine, ritual, and ethical praxis. They have inspired compassion, sustained practices of solidarity, and offered frameworks for responding to suffering and vulnerability. At the same time, secular philosophical, ethical, and social-theoretical perspectives provide indispensable insights into what it means to respond responsibly to the other in diverse societies.

This conference offers an interdisciplinary platform to explore the ethical, theological, philosophical, and social dimensions of care. It invites scholars to reflect critically on how religion, culture, and society intersect to cultivate—or hinder—concern for others at local, national, and global levels. Contributions drawing on philosophy, theology, cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, and related disciplines are particularly welcome.