



First call for papers

Humanities in Crisis

Kodolányi University

“The humanities continue to be an integral part of the much- uttered phrase Since Time Immemorial, carrying the message—We have lived. We live. We continue.” (Winona Wynn, Assiniboine/Sioux Tribe, professor at Heritage University)

When	November 20-21, 2025
Where	Kodolányi University, Budapest, Hungary
Abstract Deadline	April 30, 2025
Notification Due	May 30, 2025
Paper Submission	January 15, 2026

There may be a growing feeling that the humanities are becoming increasingly irrelevant to study in the face of modern scientific and technological progress. The humanities may even be downgraded in terms of their economic value. However, they cannot be called useless or irrelevant vocationally, and the advantages of a humanities education clearly extend well beyond securing employment. Humanities graduates benefit from their studies in all areas of their lives—from civic involvements to familial responsibilities to religious affiliations and beyond. In *Permanent Crisis*, Chad Wellmon lays out the following argument. We tend to understand the humanities under broad, theoretical definitions: the humanities are a set of disciplines that serve intellectual, cultural, and social functions in studying “the human.” However, the modern humanities serve a more specific, concrete purpose in the academic world.

Wellmon writes at the end of *Permanent Crisis*: “The humanities as institutionalised between the 1930s and 1950s remained largely intact and served analogous institutional and social functions.” Those institutional and social functions are a counterbalance against the natural sciences. Social trends and societal needs continually result in shifts in perceptions about the importance and relevance of the humanities, but the humanities continue to serve this structural role. Wellmon says, “The permanent crisis is precisely that: the possibility of multiple crises, sometimes overlapping, but always historically specific and contextual.”

Within the humanities, there is a crisis in the education of speaking and writing, too. In *What can automation tell us about agency?* Carolyn Miller (2007) states that “the death of the agent” (p. 143) signifies a crisis in rhetoric. Since teachers educating young people in expressing themselves fulfil an important role, as they prepare students to “perform their citizenship” (Hauser, 2004, p. 62, in Miller 2007, p. 144), this problem cannot be ignored in the time when LLMs (large language models) increasingly, and often illicitly, take over academic tasks (such as essay writing) from students.

Crisis, however, may be a force to new beginnings: for instance, to creating and building new channels that are an outlet for new forms of expression in education, the arts, media, literature, film, social sciences and linguistics. For instance, novels may be adapted to film, and filmic representations may influence novel writing. Likewise, people may become more aware of the value of soft skills such as the highly complex competence of working with foreign language texts even in the era of AI-powered translation software and text generators, seeing that the human touch is inevitable.

Relevant areas include but are not confined to the following topics:

- the perception of humanities amongst young people planning or involved in their higher education;
- the economic status of educators working within the humanities;
- world views typically developing via art and humanities education, such as reading literature, creating art (including writing), and understanding art, as threatened or dramatically changed by AI;
- soft skills and cognitive development, meeting in the teaching of academic writing, potentially threatened by AI;
- exploiting AI in teaching and sciences;
- new forms of education (literary studies as a requirement for students in sciences and engineering as a counterbalance);
- humanities sustained in the arts; storytelling, in its power to inform about the human condition, its power to heal, and its power to uncover truths;
- crisis in artistic representation;
- the power of humanities helping people through crisis – activating artists, writers, poets, and creative thinkers;
- satirical depictions of the humanities in literary works (e.g., the campus novel);
- worldwide disparagement of Humanities as fields producing little if any societal benefits, let alone economic ones;
- a global diminishing of attention span and growing anxiety in young generations, parallel with increasing internet and social media use, which seems to replace reading as a form of accessing information and keeping in touch with the world;
- the possibility, the existence, and changes of literature in a world in which reading has proportionally diminished or at least occupies a different place than it did even two decades ago;
- a shift in cultural representations: a shift of production and artistic representation from reading to films and series, from written text to oral-visual (multi-media) discourse, from a more time-consuming and immersion-requiring activity to a swift and perhaps less engaging form, which requires different skills to process;

- internet troll activity as a scene of extremely low-register, politically biased, and uncontrolled self-expression spreading as practices, which Humanities and general education could possibly help decrease.

All professionals within the humanities are invited, especially from the following disciplines:

Literary theory
Discourse analysis
Applied linguistics
Descriptive linguistics
Intercultural rhetoric
Cultural theory
Language teaching

Researchers are invited to submit a short bio (150 words) and abstracts of their papers on original and unpublished research work by April 30, 2025 to humanitiesincrisis@gmail.com. Abstracts should be written in English and should not exceed 250 words excluding title and keywords. Please observe the Guidelines for abstracts, given on the webpage: <http://www.freesideeurope.com/submissions>. The abstract is in the following format:

- Title of contribution
- Author name(s) and surname(s)
- Institutional affiliation
- Email address
- ORCID number (if there is one)
- A 250-word abstract followed by a list of five to eight keywords.

Submitted conference papers will be peer-reviewed and evaluated for their originality, language perspective, and correctness, relevance of topic and presentation quality. Manuscripts must be 5000-7000 words.

A conference volume will be published online in *Freeside Europe Online Academic Journal*. Each publication will receive a DOI number.

The conference is planned to be a mainly on-site personal event but with an option of online participation. Further information is to be provided in the second cfp later.

We are looking forward to your contribution!

The Organizing Committee

Dr. Viktória Albert,
Dr. Ágnes Harasztos,
Dr. Judit Szitó,
Dr. Péter Tamás