



ISCHIA 1 - 27 september 2026

XII ED
ITION



FREEDOM

Can We Be Free Together?

For over a decade, the **IN-Philosophy Festival** has transformed the island of Ischia into a living laboratory of thought, a crossroads where philosophy, science, art, and community converge. Founded and directed by philosopher Raffaele Mirelli, the Festival has become an international point of reference for its ability to combine academic rigor with strong public engagement, restoring philosophy to its original public and dialogical vocation.

Over the course of its eleven previous editions, the island has hosted philosophers, scientists, writers, artists, psychologists, theologians, and intellectuals such as Vito Mancuso, Erri De Luca, Amalia Ercoli Finzi, Vittorino Andreoli, Umberto Galimberti, Massimo Cacciari, Aldo Cazzullo, and many other scholars from Italian and international universities. Each year, hundreds of participants – academics, students, and citizens – turn the island into a shared space of reflection, where philosophy is experienced in the open air, facing the sea.

Promoted by InSophia APS, in collaboration with the Department of Cultural Heritage Sciences of the University of Salerno (DISPAC), the University of Toronto Mississauga (Department of Visual Studies), the Italian Philosophical Society, HETA – Center for Psychological Treatment and Distress, Dora News – Psychology and Beyond, the “A. Canova” High School of Treviso, the “G. Buchner” High School of Ischia, Filosofia in Movimento, Gazzetta Filosofica, the La Mortella Gardens of Ischia, the Friends of Gabriele Mattera, under the High Patronage of the European Parliament, and with the patronage of the Campania Region, FISP (International Federation of Philosophical Societies), the “G. Sadoul” Cultural Circle, and the PIDA International Architecture Award.

After exploring themes such as Time, Universes, Artificial Identities, and Happiness, the 2026 edition addresses **Freedom** as a radical and shared question: “**Can we be free together?**”

This question cuts across disciplines and languages, inviting the academic and cultural community to reflect on a **new planetary humanism** capable of embracing the world we have built and of looking toward the future with confidence.

THE PLACES OF THOUGHT

The **IN-Philosophy Festival** takes place in some of the most representative and evocative locations on the island of Ischia – spaces where nature, art, and knowledge intertwine, and where philosophy encounters beauty and life.

- ➔ The **La Mortella Gardens** host the **opening evening** of the Festival, featuring the traditional **classical music concert** and the **inaugural lecture**, in a dialogue of sound, words, and landscape that marks each edition with harmony between art and thought.
- ➔ The **Aragonese Castle**, finally, becomes the **evening stage** for major public encounters, where philosophy, science, and art engage in dialogue by the sea, illuminated by the symbolic power of the site.

Each space of the Festival is part of a single experience: **thinking together**, on an island that transforms knowledge into encounter and reflection into life.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

Today, as always, freedom unfolds on levels that rarely coincide: the **individual** level, marked by the desire for self-determination and authenticity, and the **collective** level, which calls for solidarity, participation, care, and – more than ever – education. We live in a season in which the “I” demands space, while the “we” becomes fragile, scattered, often loudly proclaimed yet rarely lived or truly listened to. The difficulty of convergence lies at the very heart of our time: how can one remain faithful to oneself without losing the sense of community? How can personal freedom be preserved without turning into privilege or isolation? And how can collective freedom be defended without becoming imposition or control?

Every authentic freedom is both a political act and an ethical gesture. Political, because it concerns the construction of shared spaces and the possibility of speech; ethical, because it requires responsibility toward others, recognizing their dignity and vulnerability. Freedom, if not grounded in justice, degenerates into tyranny if not measured against ethics, it is reduced to arbitrariness. To be free means to choose within the world, not outside of it: to inhabit the polis, to transform thought into responsibility and dissent into dialogue.

In an age of polarization and indifference, freedom returns as a practice of presence: the capacity to remain in the world with awareness, to act without dominating, to oppose without destroying. Politics and ethics thus rediscover their common root: encounter, and the recognition of the other as a condition of one’s own existence.

Yet contemporary freedom is also measured in its digital dimension, where promises of connection intertwine with risks of dependency and homogenization. The digital sphere is the new horizon of presence and identity: a space in which freedom multiplies and contradicts itself. **The network promises unity but often produces isolation; it amplifies voices but flattens meaning. It is the place where freedom is exposed and sold,** where the individual, in attempting to assert themselves, risks becoming a commodity.

And yet, we cannot withdraw from this sea – we must learn how to navigate it. Like a modern Ulysses, contemporary humanity is called to pass through digital sirens without being consumed by them, rediscovering awareness as its guiding course. **The task is not to flee technology, but to educate ourselves to its proper measure, restoring humanity to the infosphere and breath to the mind. Humanism** becomes our compass: the tension that keeps us steady in the vast ocean of connections, reminding us that every click is an act, every image a language, every word a risk and a possibility.

To be free today means to inhabit complexity without renouncing depth; to safeguard distance as a space for thought; to recognize that freedom is not a solitary right, but a shared practice. We live in an age of “diffusions” – biological, cultural, technological – in which everything spreads, yet little endures. To be free means to learn how to dwell: to rediscover the value of limits, silence, and presence.

Freedom is not a possession, but a **shared movement**, a fragile balance between the right to say “I” and the ability to remain “we.” Perhaps it is here that the deepest meaning of being human today is at stake: in the **impossible yet necessary convergence** between personal and collective freedom, between the individual who affirms themselves and the community that receives them. Freedom is not a good to be safeguarded, but to be renewed every day.

It is not born in the silence of the self, but in the shared breath of the community.

Perhaps the most genuine question remains the same: **can we be free together?**

THEMATIC SESSIONS (GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS)

Proposals may address the theme of freedom from an interdisciplinary, theoretical, or applied perspective. The following sessions outline the main areas of inquiry of the Festival and are open to contributions from philosophers, scientists, artists, psychologists, sociologists, historians, economists, theologians, legal scholars, and researchers in contemporary culture.

Aim of the Thematic Sessions

The **IN-Philosophy Festival** invites scholars, researchers, and professionals from different fields of knowledge to contribute original reflections on the theme of **Freedom**, in its multiple theoretical, practical, and symbolic articulations.

The aim is to foster dialogue among disciplines and perspectives which, although differing in method and language, share a common need to question freedom as a human, social, and epistemic experience.

The proposed thematic sessions are not intended as rigid limits, but as horizons of inspiration through which each author may orient their contribution. **Sessions will take place** in Ischia **from 24th to 26th September**.

I. Origins and Figures of Freedom

Prometheus, Ulysses, and the Origins of the Free Act

Myth as the root of human freedom: disobedience, journey, and knowledge.

→ *Ancient philosophy, comparative mythology, classical literature.*

Law and the Soul

Between Socrates and Augustine: inner freedom and moral responsibility.

→ *Moral philosophy, theology, law.*

The Word that Liberates

Literature as an act of emancipation: from Dante to Primo Levi.i.

→ *Literature, linguistics, philosophy of language.*

II. Polis and Power

Political Freedom and Fragile Democracy

From Arendt's thought to polarized societies.

→ *Political philosophy, social sciences, communication studies.*

Economy and Freedom

Market, labor, inequality: the ethics of money.

→ *Civil economy, philosophy of work, sociology.*

Architecture of Freedom

Space as right and symbol: open cities, borders, and squares.

→ *Architecture, urban studies, public aesthetics.*

III. Body, Care, and Freedom

The Liberated Body

Identity, gender, and desire as practices of emancipation.

→ *Psychology, gender studies, neuroscience.*

Freedom in Fragility

Autonomy and care, health and dignity: the freedom of vulnerable bodies.

→ *Bioethics, philosophy of medicine, clinical psychology.*

Art as Disobedience

From painting to theatre, creation as a political gesture.

→ *Visual arts, aesthetics, art history.*

IV. Digital Freedom and New Horizons

Digital Humanism

Restoring meaning to the infosphere: consciousness, AI, and freedom of thought.

→ *Philosophy of technology, computer science, AI ethics.*

Surveillance and Autonomy

Data, algorithms, and new forms of control.

→ *Cyberlaw, digital sociology, political philosophy*

Educating for Presence

Freedom and education in the connected society.

→ *Pedagogy, learning psychology, media education.*

V. Freedom and the World

An Ecology of Freedom

Inhabiting without dominating: freedom as a measure of the Earth.

→ *Philosophical ecology, anthropology, environmental sciences.*

The Island and Elsewhere

Freedom as belonging and departure: insular thought.

→ *Geophilosophy, Mediterranean anthropology, philosophy of landscape.*

To Migrate, to Host, to Remain

The right to move and the duty to welcome.

→ *International law, geopolitics, ethics of hospitality.*

VI. Freedom and Imagination

Cinema and the Freedom of Vision

From neorealism to digital worlds: images that liberate or imprison?

→ *Film studies, media studies, visual aesthetics.*

Literature and the Memory of the Self

Writing in order not to disappear: freedom, censorship, and testimony.

→ *World literature, philosophy of narration, psychoanalysis.*

Faith, Science, and the Future

Between determinism and grace: freedom as responsibility toward the world to come.

→ *Theology, philosophy of science, future ethics.*

HOW TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS

Languages: Italian, English

Paper proposals (minimum 3,000 and maximum 4,500 characters, including spaces; Times New Roman, font size 12, single spacing), accompanied by a bibliography and a CV, as well as a brief autobiographical note (please specify current institutional affiliation or, if not currently in an academic position, the institution where the

most recent course of study or research was completed), must be submitted by 15 April 2026, 11:59 p.m., to:

info@inphilosophyfestival.it (please CC: direzione@inphilosophyfestival.it).

Please send the short biography in a separate file (maximum 1,000 characters, including spaces). Files must be submitted in *.doc or *.odt format, NOT *.pdf (Times New Roman, font size 12, single spacing).

Failure to comply with the formal guidelines will result in exclusion.

Each paper will have 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of discussion. Papers may be presented in Italian or English. Panel proposals are also welcome.

ITA/ENG *.doc / *.odt

Times New Roman / 12 pt / single-spaced

REPORT	BIO
min 3,000	max 1,000
max 4,500	

TO → info@inphilosophyfestival.it
CC → direzione@inphilosophyfestival.it

DEADLINE → 15/04/2026 h 11:59 pm

PANELS

Each panel must consist of 3 or 4 papers on a common theme. The panel coordinator, who may also be one of the speakers, is responsible for introducing and moderating the discussion. Panel proposals must include the abstracts of each paper (maximum 3,000 characters each) and a general introduction of no more than 3,000 characters.

PUBLICATION

As in previous years, a selection of contributions will be published in the official proceedings of the Festival.

A registration fee will be required for speakers. Accommodation options on the island during the Festival week will also be provided.

SELECTION

The ability to communicate research knowledge to a broad audience is a key criterion for selection. Proposals will be evaluated by the Scientific Committee.

+ INFO

For further information, please contact the Festival's organizational secretariat or scientific direction at:

- info@inphilosophyfestival.it
- direzione@inphilosophyfestival.it

The Festival website also provides full information on proposal submission, including the Summer School of Humanities and the Young Thinkers Festival.

www.inphilosophyfestival.it

Facebook: [inphilosophyfestival](https://www.facebook.com/inphilosophyfestival)

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