

University of Valencia leads the European project AI-SECRET to boost digital and creative innovation through artificial intelligence

A European consortium of 23 partners from 12 countries launches in Valencia the AI-SECRET project, an initiative aimed at promoting advanced digital skills and human-centered innovation. The **University of Valencia**, through the research group **Econcult**, coordinates the new European project **AI-SECRET**, an initiative funded under the **Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL-2024-ADVANCED-DIGITAL-07)**.

With a total budget of **7.2 million euros in European co-funding**, the four-year project aims to train a new generation of professionals capable of harnessing the potential of **artificial intelligence (AI)** to drive Europe's **digital, ecological, and social transitions**.

The **Kick-off Meeting** of the project will take place in Valencia from **29 to 31 October 2025**, hosted by the **University of Valencia** and the **Biblioteca Valenciana**. Over these three days, representatives of the 23 European partners will meet to establish the operational and strategic foundations of the project, share experiences, and define the first steps of joint work.

The University of Valencia and Econcult: European leadership in cultural and digital innovation

The **University of Valencia**, through the research group **Econcult**, assumes the scientific coordination of the project under the direction of **Professor Pau Rausell** of the Department of Applied Economics. Econcult, known for its extensive track record in cultural policy, innovation, and sustainability, provides a comprehensive vision that integrates economic research, creativity, and social development. From the Faculty of Economics and other departments such as Psychology, Digital Humanities, Communication, and Electronic Engineering, the University of Valencia team will work on the design of teaching methodologies, impact assessment, and knowledge transfer in AI applied to culture, education, and social innovation.

The project also involves the **Regional Ministry of Education, Culture, Universities, and Employment of the Generalitat Valenciana**, which will support the creation and consolidation of a **pan-European network on the creative use of artificial intelligence**, called **AISTEAM**, with its virtual headquarters hosted by the Generalitat. This network will act as a meeting, learning, and innovation platform for institutions, companies, and professionals across Europe.

Artificial intelligence as a tool for Europe's triple transition

The **AI-SECRET** project directly contributes to the **European Commission's Digital Decade Objectives**, which aim to reach **20 million ICT specialists by 2030**, while ensuring digital inclusion and gender equality. In addition, the initiative aligns with the strategies of the **European Green Deal** and the **New European Bauhaus**, integrating AI within a framework of creativity, sustainability, and social responsibility.

The training programme foresees the design and implementation of **two annual editions of an online Master's degree on Artificial Intelligence for Creativity**, supporting Europe's triple transition. The model is structured around **micro-credential modules**, enabling flexible and tailored learning for different professional profiles. It will also promote **summer and winter schools, workshops, networking events, internships, and mentoring**, reinforcing the project's practical and collaborative approach.

AI-SECRET has also received the **STEP label** from the **European Commission**, acknowledging the excellence and strategic relevance of the proposal within Europe's technological priorities.

A European alliance of 23 partners across 12 countries

The **AI-SECRET consortium** brings together **23 partners from 12 European countries**, including universities, research centers, innovative SMEs, public institutions, and cultural organizations.

From **Spain**, participants include the **University of Valencia (coordinator)**, the **University of Murcia**, the **Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV)**, **Inspiring Futures Europe**, **Culturalink**, **CINK Venturing**, **Promoción de la Ciudad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria S.A.**, and the **Regional Ministry of Education, Culture, Universities, and Employment of the Generalitat Valenciana**.

Among international partners are **Cognito S.R.L.**, **TÜV Thüringen Italia S.R.L.**, and the **University Gabriele d'Annunzio of Chieti-Pescara (Italy)**; **Hochschule Wismar (Germany)**; **THE FACTORY IKE / JOIST Innovation Park (Greece)**; **Region Värmland (Sweden)**; **Laurea University of Applied Sciences (Finland)**; **KEA European Affairs and The Lisbon Council (Belgium)**; **INESC TEC (Portugal)**; **Ecole Supérieure d'Art et Design Grenoble-Valence (ESAD-GV)** and **Relais Culture Europe (France)**; **NTNU – Norwegian University of Science and Technology (Norway)**; and the **Razvojna Agencija Grada Prijedora (PREDA) (Bosnia and Herzegovina)**.

This diverse and interdisciplinary network is designed to generate **broad, cross-border impact**, setting a **new European standard for AI education**.

Valencia, a space for innovation and European cooperation

The inaugural sessions of the project will be held in two emblematic venues of Valencia: the **Faculty of Economics of the University of Valencia** (Avinguda dels Tarongers, s/n) on **29–30 October 2025**, and the **Biblioteca Valenciana, Sant Miquel dels Reis** (Avinguda de la Constitució, 284) on **31 October 2025**. These venues symbolize the connection between **knowledge, culture, and innovation**, three key pillars of the AI-SECRET project.

During three days, representatives of the European partners will participate in plenary sessions, thematic workshops, working meetings, and institutional presentations to define the consortium’s joint strategy and the first training and communication activities.

Institutional attendance and European support

The presentation event of **AI-SECRET** will feature the participation of leading institutional representatives at regional, national, and European levels. During the **inaugural session**, scheduled for **31 October 2025** at the **Biblioteca Valenciana, Sant Miquel dels Reis**, speakers will include **Daniel McEvoy Bravo, Regional Secretary for Education**, together with the **Regional Minister for Education, Culture, Universities and Employment of the Generalitat Valenciana** (to be confirmed), as well as representatives from the **European Commission** and the **European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA)**. Academic authorities such as **Dr Francisco Muñoz, Dean of the Faculty of Economics**, and members of the management teams of the participating universities will also attend. Their presence underscores the institutional commitment to fostering a **European ecosystem of innovation, education, and research in artificial intelligence**, with Valencia as a driving hub for collaboration across Europe.

Kick-off Meeting Agenda

University of Valencia, Faculty of Economics · Meeting Room (First Floor)
 29–30 October 2025 · 9:00–17:00
 Biblioteca Valenciana, Sant Miquel dels Reis
 31 October 2025 · 9:00–13:00

AI-SECRET Kick-off Meeting Agenda

University of Valencia, Faculty of Economics · Meeting Room (First Floor)
 29–30 October 2025 · 9:00–17:00
 Biblioteca Valenciana, Sant Miquel dels Reis
 31 October 2025 · 9:00–13:00

Wednesday, 29 October

- 09:00** · Arrival and registration of participants
- 09:30** · Institutional welcome
- 09:45** · Project overview — *Pau Rausell, University of Valencia (UEG)*
- 10:00** · Introduction by HaDEA — *Diego López del Río, Project Officer*
- 10:30** · Presentation of VALGRAI — *Ana Cid, Manager*
- 10:50** · Coffee break
- 11:20** · Presentation of partners (5 minutes each)
- 13:00** · Lump sum funding rules and consortium management — *Pablo Aller and Francesco Castiglione*
- 13:30** · Lunch at the Faculty of Economics canteen
- 14:45** · Communication and dissemination (WP7) — *Juan Miguel Aguado, University of Murcia*
- 15:15** · Workshop: Gender approach in AI-SECRET — *Dr. Laima Gerlitz, Hochschule Wismar*
- 16:00** · European Network of Regions — *Óscar Gonzalvo, Generalitat Valenciana*
- 16:45** · Management and governance (WP8) — *Francesco Molinari, Project Manager*
- 17:30** · Closing of the session

Thursday, 30 October

- 09:00** · Wrap-up of previous day — *Paula Simó & Marcia Jadue, UVEG*
- 09:30** · Presentation of Work Package 1 — *Gianluca Misuraca, IF.E*
- 11:30** · Coffee break
- 12:00** · Communication and dissemination activity plan (WP7) — *Juan Miguel Aguado, UMU*
- 13:00** · Work Package 1 activity plan — *Gianluca Misuraca, IF.E*
- 14:00** · Lunch
- 15:30** · Parallel meetings WP1 (IF.E, INESC, UVEG, LC) and WP7 (UMU, INESC)
- 17:00** · Closing of the day
- 20:30** · Official dinner — *Bombas Gens Digital and Immersive Art Center (Av. de Burjassot 54-56, Valencia)*

Friday, 31 October

- 09:00** · Opening video and institutional addresses

- *Daniel McEvoy Bravo, Regional Secretary for Education*

- *Regional Minister for Education, Culture, Universities and Employment* (tbc)
- Other authorities

09:30 · AI-SECRET Project Overview — *Pau Rausell, UVEG*
09:50 · Good practices in AI for Education and Vocational Training at the local level
10:15 · Coffee break
10:45 · International good practices in AI
11:30 · Launch of the **AI STEAM Network**
11:45 · Roundtable: *AI and Education — Challenges and Opportunities*
12:45 · Q&A and closing session
13:30 · Music performance and lunch
14:00 · Group photo and farewell

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