

Trent University Co-Launches First Canadian Association for the Philosophy of AI

Country-wide network of experts led by Trent University, University of Lethbridge professors examining and informing ethical, social, and human implications of AI

As the federal government makes headway on its Pan-Canadian Artificial Intelligence Strategy focused on commercialization, standards, and talent, two Canadian scholars have launched the first and only Canadian Association for the Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence (CAPAI) to address a long-standing gap in Canada's AI landscape: a coordinated, national forum for philosophers working on artificial intelligence.

"While Canada has strong communities of researchers working on AI from technical and policy perspectives, there was no dedicated space for philosophers of AI to connect. Networking and collaboration that once happened in isolation can now take place in a more organized, systematic, and efficient way," says Dr. Martina Orlandi, a co-founder of CAPAI and an assistant professor in the new AI degree programs at Trent University Durham Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

Co-founded alongside Dr. Nicholas Dunn, assistant professor of Philosophy at the University of Lethbridge, CAPAI brings together scholars and their work examining both foundational questions, such as the nature of intelligence, cognition, and decision-making, and urgent ethical and social concerns, including AI's impact on labour, healthcare, bias, surveillance, and democracy.

"AI is accelerating faster than institutions and policies can keep up, and philosophers have an important role to play in helping articulate the values and principles that should guide how these technologies are designed and deployed. Without that clarity, we risk allowing innovation to outpace reflection," said Dr. Dunn.

While much of the interest in AI applications has been focused on efficiency and automation, both scholars emphasize that the increase in AI adoption and the ways platforms are being used are raising deeper questions about human identity and well-being. Researchers are increasingly focused more on how AI is implemented in the social sphere.

"Our jobs, our struggles, and our decision-making are deeply tied to how we understand ourselves. As AI systems begin to replace or reshape these activities, we're forced to ask whether a life made easier by technology is necessarily a more fulfilling one," says Professor Orlandi. "When we see people using AI chats as therapists or entering into relationships with AI personas, what does that say about our well-being today and do we fully understand the consequences of those interactions?"

Since launching earlier this fall, CAPAI has 14 members and has introduced a national website and online speaker series, with plans for in-person meetings and public engagement. The association also aims to make Canadian research in the philosophy of AI more accessible to students, policymakers, and the broader public through its website, ensuring philosophical insight becomes a foundational part of Canada's AI conversation rather than an afterthought.

Trent University Durham GTA's interdisciplinary approach to teaching and research has made it a natural home for CAPAI, particularly following the launch of its Artificial Intelligence programs, offering both a Bachelor of Arts (another Canadian first) and Bachelor of Science degrees. These degrees reflect Trent's broader commitment to examining AI as a technical and science field, as well as a relevant field in the humanities.

In the classroom, this approach translates into critical engagement with real-world questions. Prof. Orlandi's research examines the ethical implications of outsourcing decision-making in healthcare contexts, including organ transplantation, while student discussions increasingly focus on emerging concerns such as deepfakes and the societal value (or lack thereof) of certain AI applications.



As a result of October's Bootdrive, the Pickering Professional Firefighters recently presented the Ajax Pickering Hospital Foundation with a cheque for \$10,000!

These proceeds will be used to help fund equipment for our surgical program, including new operating tables and surgical instruments.

Thank you to the firefighters for your ongoing support, and thank you to everyone who puts some money in their hats... it all adds up to doing something impactful

Easier access to wheelchair-friendly taxis coming to Oshawa

Oshawa residents will soon find it easier to book wheelchair-accessible taxicabs thanks to an amendment to the City's [media-manager/media-pages/by-law-library/vehicle-for-hire/]Vehicle-for-Hire By-law 31-2022, with a newly-established intermunicipal exemption aimed at expanding service options for people with mobility needs.

The City of Oshawa, along with several neighbouring municipalities have approved an intermunicipal exemption that allows wheelchair-accessible taxicabs licensed in any Durham municipality to pick up passengers in any participating municipality, including Oshawa, and transport them to any destination. The following municipalities have currently approved an intermunicipal exemption: Oshawa, Ajax, Clarington, Pickering, Uxbridge and Whitby.

The new exemption aims to increase the availability of accessible transportation by giving drivers more opportunities to accept fares across the region. Under the new rules, the exemption applies only to wheelchair-accessible taxicabs and vehicles must hold a valid taxicab licence from a participating Durham Region municipality while continuing to meet all safety and accessibility standards. Trips must begin in a municipality that has adopted the exemption.

The change reflects a shared regional commitment to improving mobility and reducing barriers for residents who rely on accessible transportation.

GREAT NEWS FOR PICKERING

A 4 unit, 35 storey towers is being proposed for Pickering along 1095 Kingston Rd.

The plan is to build four residential towers at 1095 Kingston Rd., in Pickering.

A public meeting to discuss a developer's plan to build four residential towers to replace an existing plaza in Pickering is scheduled for Jan. 19.

The meeting, which will be held virtually, will discuss the proposed towers, a part of two buildings at 1095 Kingston Rd. They will reach 35 storeys high, bringing 1,429 housing units to the neighbourhood.

A one-storey commercial unit on the property currently houses a number of businesses, including Ashley HomeStore, Tasco Appliances, Tile House and PartSource.

It says the purpose of the meeting is to inform the public and collect feedback. No final decisions will be made at the meeting, city officials say.

The meeting will be live streamed and available on the city's HTML Agenda or the archived video available on the city's website.

An information report will be posted by Jan. 8 as part of the meeting agenda.

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