

Join the Helmholtz ELLIS PhD Program in AI

Opportunities for Helmholtz Principal Investigators

The Helmholtz ELLIS PhD Program in AI is a new scheme that offers Helmholtz Principal Investigators the opportunity to connect with the ELLIS network, one of Europe's leading AI research communities, and to jointly supervise outstanding doctoral researchers in collaboration with internationally renowned AI experts.

The program integrates existing doctoral positions with ELLIS' excellent AI researcher network and "bring your own funding" model and combines it with Helmholtz's mission-driven, data-rich research environments.

Training, networking, and mobility opportunities provided through HIDA, Helmholtz AI and the entire Information and Data Science Framework complement this program.

Participate in the Helmholtz ELLIS PhD Program in AI

Researchers employed by or officially affiliated with a Helmholtz Center may participate in the program as supervisors.

Within the program, Helmholtz PIs can:

- act as main supervisor or co-supervisor
- jointly supervise doctoral researchers with AI researchers from the ELLIS network
- host research secondments (minimum six months)
- provide doctoral researchers with access to HIDA training, networking opportunities, and mobility funding for research stays of one to six months at partner institutions (subject to available funding)

Doctoral researchers also benefit from participation in the ELLIS doctoral community, including summer schools, doctoral symposia, unit activities, and research networks.

Expand your opportunities by becoming an ELLIS Member

The pan-European AI network ELLIS aims to secure lasting international leadership of AI made in Europe by connecting top researchers in this field. Please, consider applying to join ELLIS.

As an ELLIS Member, you can:

- become eligible to co-supervise ELLIS doctoral researchers
- host research secondments of ELLIS PhD students
- join a European AI research network and increase the international visibility of your research
- establish collaborations with AI researchers across Europe and participate in ELLIS' scientific activities and community events
- build a pathway towards future nomination as an ELLIS Scholar or ELLIS Fellow

Membership is open throughout the year through self-nomination or nomination by an existing ELLIS member.

Participation in the 2026 ELLIS recruitment round

- Researchers who are not yet ELLIS Members are encouraged to apply for membership before September 2026.
- ELLIS Fellows, Scholars and Unit Members are eligible to participate directly in ELLIS recruitment rounds.
- ELLIS Members may co-supervise doctoral researchers, host research secondments, and actively contribute to the ELLIS community.
- Researchers who have joined the ELLIS community by September 2026 will receive the annual ELLIS registration invitation for the October 2026 recruitment call.

Timeline

August 2026	Become part of the ELLIS community (e.g. as an ELLIS Member).
September 2026	Eligible researchers receive the annual ELLIS registration invitation.
October 2026	Central PhD application portal opens.
31 October 2026	Application deadline.
January–March 2027	Interviews, offers and recruitment decisions.

Further information

ELLIS

www.ellis.eu/members/become-member
membership@ellis.eu

HIDA

www.helmholtz-hida.de/en
hida@helmholtz.de