

Academic CV

Daria Zakharova

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Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method
London School of Economics and Political Science

Areas of Specialisation: Philosophy of AI and Computing, incl. Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, Philosophy of Mind, Cognition, Animal Sentience

Areas of Competence: General Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Biology, Bioethics, General Epistemology, Political and Moral Philosophy

Education

- 2022-present PhD in Philosophy, **London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)**. Advisors: Jonathan Birch and Alexandria Boyle
- 2023 Complexity-GAINs International Summer School, **Santa Fe Institute of Complexity**, University of Cambridge
- 2019-2022 MA in Philosophy, **Humboldt University Berlin** (Distinction).
Dissertation title: *Intelligence, Flexibility and Complexity: Dissolving Moravec's Paradox.*
Epistemology, philosophy of AI, philosophy of science / biology, behavioral economics.
- 2020-2021 Year Abroad, Philosophy, **King's College London**
Ethics of biotechnology, AI and society, philosophy of mind, cognition and perception, philosophy of science, scientific epistemology.
- 2019 Summer School in Mathematical Philosophy,
Munich Centre for Mathematical Philosophy
Philosophy of algorithms and simulations, modal logic, epistemic normativity.
- 2015-2019 BA in Social Anthropology and Philosophy,
Free University Berlin (First Class)
Epistemology, philosophy of science, philosophy of language, bioethics, utilitarianism, empirical research in social sciences.
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Publications

Forthcoming in: *Psychodiversity: Cognition and Sentience Beyond Humans*. Grant Ramsey (ed.).

Zakharova, D. and Jonathan Birch 2025. “Embodied vs. “Higher” Cognitive Explanations of Intelligent Behavior in *Portia* Jumping Spiders.” In:

Revise & Resubmit at *Biology & Philosophy*:

Zakharova, D. 2025. “The Epistemology of AI-Driven Science. The Case of AlphaFold”.

Workshops and Conferences (Invited)

- 2025 “Evaluating Consciousness in AI Systems” *Panelist*.
AI Consciousness and Welfare Workshop. **Google, NY, USA.**
- 2025 Artificial Consciousness Workshop. **PRISM and the Center for the Future of AI, Mind and Society, Florida Atlantic University.** London.
- 2025 Philosophy of Machine Learning Workshop. **Cluster of Excellence: Machine Learning for Science. University of Tübingen.**
- 2024 “The Arthropod Style of Cognition? Embodied vs. “Higher” Cognitive Explanations of Intelligent Behavior in *Portia* Jumping Spiders” Talk. Self-organization, Autonomy and the Bounds of the Self Workshop. **Universite Paris-1 Pantheon-Sorbonne.**
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Conference Presentations

- 2025 “Beyond Pearlman Creatures: Reafferent Mechanisms in the Evolution of Causal Learning” *Talk*.
Australasian Society for Philosophy and Psychology (ASPP),
Monash University, Australia. *Talk.*
- 2025 “Causal Agent Precursor: Reafferent Mechanisms in the Evolution of Causal Agency” *Talk*.
Nature of Intelligence: Bridging AI and Animal Intelligence (NIBAI) Workshop. **Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour (ASAB)** workshop, Sheffield. *Talk.*
- 2025 “Towards an Epistemology of AI-Driven Science. The Case of AlphaFold” *Talk.*

British Society for the Philosophy of Science (BSPS), Glasgow.

- 2024 “Epistemology of AlphaFold. A Trilemma” *Poster Presentation*.
Philosophy of Science Association (PSA), biannual symposium,
New Orleans.
- 2024 “Towards an Epistemology of AI-Driven Science. The Case of
AlphaFold” *Talk*.
Philosophy of Science Meets Machine Learning, **Cluster of
Excellence: “Machine Learning for Science”, University of
Tübingen**.
- 2024 “Invertebrate Minds” *Panelist*. With Jonathan Birch, Bryan Roberts,
Eli Leadbeater and Sam Beckbessinger, **LSE Festival**.
- 2024 “Knowledge Without Mental States. How AI-driven Science Advances
the Anti-Empiricist Account of Scientific Knowledge” *Talk*.
**Science and Epistemology, Hong Kong University of Science and
Technology**.
- 2023 “Simulation-Based Explanation of Intelligent Behavior in Portia Spiders:
A Marker of Consciousness?” *Talk*.
Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness (ASSC) 26,
NYU. (covered in the [Economist report on the ASSC 26](#))
- 2023 “Simulation-based vs. Embodiment-based Explanations of Intelligent
Behaviour in Portia spiders” *Poster presentation*.
**Inaugural Meeting of the Philosophy of Animal Minds and Behavior
Association (PAMBA)**, University of Madrid.
- 2021 “Knowledge without mental states: Aligning epistemology with
scientific practice in the age of AI” *Talk*.
Philosophy of Science Graduate Conference, LSE. *Talk*.

Public Philosophy, Impact and Outreach

- 2025 **Philosophy in Prison (NGO)**, teaching philosophy in prisons around
the UK.
- 2024 **VR educational immersive experience for school children “What’s
it like to be another animal?”**. Artistic and technical collaborator for
a two-day workshop, aimed at introducing children to the philosophy
of animal minds. In collaboration with Bristol Museum & Art Gallery.

Funded by the Institute of Philosophy Innovation Award (PI: Simon Brown).

- 2024 **Audio-visual immersive art installation “In Search of Spider Consciousness”, LSE Festival.** Creative lead, transmission of the philosophical content, presentation of the project at the LSE.
- 2024 **Blog article:** “Can seeing like a spider change policy and the future of AI?” on the connection between scientific research, art and philosophy, *The LSE Impact Blog*.
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Service

- 2025 **Co-organizer & chair:** *Artificial Consciousness and the Morality of Machines*, Workshop at the LSE (Philosophy & Government Departments). RISF grant, LSE.
- 2023-2025 **Co-organizer & host:** *Conjectures and Refutations*, seminar series in Philosophy of Science, LSE.
- 2023-2024 **Judge:** *Ethics Cup* (UK-wide national school competition in ethics).
- 2024 **Co-organizer & chair:** *ECR Workshop on Animal Minds*, Department of Philosophy, LSE.
- 2023 **Mentor:** Minorities in Philosophy (MAP).
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Teaching

- 2023-2025 **Graduate Teaching Assistant and Lecturer:** PH240 AI and Data Ethics, LSE.
- 2023-2025 **Graduate Teaching Assistant:** PH223 Mind and Metaphysics, LSE.
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Grants and Scholarships

- 2022-present PhD full academic studentship, Department of Philosophy, LSE.
- 2025 RISF Grant (LSE) for *Artificial Consciousness and the Morality of Machines* Workshop. Acting as a supporting researcher, co-organizer and co-host.
- 2024 LSE Grant for creating a display exhibit at the LSE Festival, paired with an interdisciplinary panel discussion “Invertebrate minds”, in collaboration with Jonathan Birch.

2019-2022 ELES academic scholarship for gifted students,
incl. a grant for a full academic year at the King's College London.

Other Projects & Volunteering

2020 Social and academic mentor for disadvantaged children,
a summer program by Shallom Rollberg (NGO) Berlin, Germany.

2014-2015 Tutor in German literature, Studienkolleg Hamburg, Germany.

2014-2015 Co-founder and moderator of the student film club,
Studienkolleg Hamburg, Germany.

2014-2015 Student representative for Humanities Course, Studienkolleg Hamburg,
Germany.

Language proficiency

English: Fluent

German: Fluent

Ukrainian: Fluent

Russian: Native speaker

French: A2

References

Available upon request