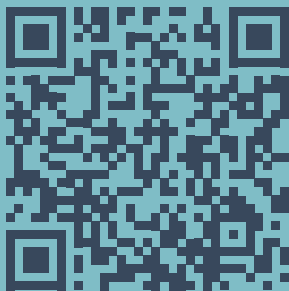




Ph.D. in Philosophy

Call for
Applications
2025-2026

Deadline for
Applications:
31 May 2025



The Institute of Philosophy of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, v. v. i., calls for applications for Ph.D. studies for the academic year 2025-2026.

Ph.D. study programmes are offered in **Systematic Philosophy** in cooperation with Comenius University in Bratislava and in **History of Philosophy** in cooperation with with the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice.

Please address your inquiry directly to the instructor responsible for the topic.

Contact information can be found on the list of topics in this brochure and on the Institute's website (see the QR code).

Ph.D. Study Topics 2025-2026

I. Systematic Philosophy In cooperation with Comenius University, Bratislava

Democracy Adjourned:

Uncertainty as a Characteristic of Society in an Environmental Crisis

The student will elaborate a problem analysis of the concept of political democracy in the epoch of the Anthropocene with reference to the tradition of critical theory of society and the theory of post-democracy, aversive democracy, simulation democracy and other ways of addressing the problem of democracy.

Full-time study

Prof. PhDr. Břetislav Horyna, Ph.D. (e-mail: filohory@savba.sk)

The Absurd in Contemporary Philosophy:

Neutrality, Absence of Meaning, Hopelessness, Tragedy

In the French philosophical tradition, the theme of the absurd is still present today and has been introduced by phenomenological thinkers such as E. Levinas (the notion of *il y a*) and M. Blanchot (the notion of neutrality). More recently, this style of thought has been revived by thinkers such as A. Comte-Sponville (the notion of hopelessness), Clément Rosset (idiocy) and Marcel Conche (the tragic), among others. However, similar elements can also be traced in thinkers who do not make them the centre of their thought (despair in C. Romano). The dissertation will be an examination of conceptions of this tendency, with the intention of presenting an interpretation of the primarily negatively connoted terms that will serve as a starting point for a “positive” understanding of them (the idea of tragic wisdom in Conche is an example).

Full-time study

Mgr. Róbert Karul, Ph.D. (e-mail: Robert.Karul@savba.sk)

Moral Responsibility

Debates around Moral Responsibility belong among the most widespread and relevant in philosophy. The aim is to present novel arguments within the dichotomies in existing debates about moral responsibility and/or to present arguments for new ways of focusing on relevant problems. The use of analytic methods should lead to a model of arguments within a formal system. The special focus of the research should be at the influence of modern technologies (AI etc.).

Full-time study

Ing. Mgr. Miloš Kosterec Ph.D. (e-mail: milos.kosterec@savba.sk)

Transparent Logics

In the field of hyperintensional context analysis, several transparent logics have emerged. The goal is a constructive comparison of existing solutions and a systematically grounded selection of one of these systems to address relevant issues in the analysis of hyperintensional contexts.

Full-time study

Ing. Mgr. Miloš Kosterec Ph.D. (e-mail: milos.kosterec@savba.sk)

Modal Logics and Contextual Reasoning

In the thesis the student will focus on the philosophical and mathematical investigations into non-classical logics that can be used to analyze the syntactic and semantic behavior of modal notions in specific contexts, such as deontic reasoning, temporal reasoning, epistemic reasoning and doxastic reasoning.

Full-time study, Part-time study

Matteo Pascucci, Ph.D. (e-mail: filomapa@savba.sk)

Normative Reasoning and Applications

This research topic concerns the analysis of fundamental notions involved in everyday problems of normative reasoning, including ethical rules, moral values, deterministic vs. non-deterministic systems and theories of action. Moreover, it concerns the development of logical and computational tools for assisted reasoning in the normative domain, based on a formal representation of those notions

Full-time study, Part-time study

Matteo Pascucci, Ph.D. (e-mail: filomapa@savba.sk)

The Dynamics of Negation in Social Conflict

The phenomena of conflict and enmity are traditionally conceived of as undesirable, temporary and derived. The aim of the research is to continue a minority stream of thinking and explore these phenomena as constitutive parts of the composition of social relations. Fundamental oppositions of enmity and friendship, of that which is alien and that which is our own, can be understood as hierarchical and power-based structures. Simultaneously, they are, however, a necessary precondition for our orientation in the social world. By means of the movement of dialectical negation they represent the basis for creation and development of social identity.

Full-time study, Part-time study

Prof. Peter Šajda, Ph.D. (e-mail: Peter.Sajda@savba.sk)

Philosophical Problems of Environmental Humanities

Environmental humanities seeks to integrate humanities and social science research into the causes and consequences of environmental devastation. To a large extent, it relies on environmental philosophy, or rather the problem of the relationship between man and nature, which is formulated from many perspectives in environmental philosophy. Thus, many methodological and argumentative problems of environmental philosophy are transferred to environmental humanities, which complicates the formation of the methodology of environmental humanities. The work aims to identify and analyze those concepts of environmental philosophy that play a decisive role in the formation of environmental humanities.

Full-time study, Part-time study

Doc. Mgr. Richard Štáhel, Ph.D. (e-mail: riaditel.fiu@savba.sk)

The Influence of the Concept of the Anthropocene on the Philosophical Theory of Democracy

The concept of the Anthropocene points out that even political subjects are ultimately dependent on bio-geo-chemical flows of material on a planetary scale. However, pre-Anthropocene concepts of democracy do not take this fact into account and at the same time work mainly with territorially defined entities, referred to as states. However, few of the industrialized states are able to reproduce their material and political existence only from the resources available to them within the internationally recognized borders of their territory. States must therefore secure the resources for their reproduction, as well as the sinks for emissions and other waste produced by this reproduction, outside their territory. This is done mainly by power-based, i.e. undemocratic means and methods, which in fact allow highly industrialized states to live at the expense of others. The aim of the work is to identify and analyze the influence that these phenomena have on the theory of democracy.

Full-time study, Part-time study

Doc. Mgr. Richard Štáhel, Ph.D. (e-mail: riaditel.fiu@savba.sk)

Control and Responsibility in the Context of Intelligent Technologies

The control over intelligent technologies is a complex phenomenon that leads to several difficult questions, challenges, and problems: are we destined to lose the control over intelligent technologies? Who should have control, and which form of control they should have? Which form of control is morally acceptable? How does the problem of responsibility relate to problems of control in the context of intelligent technologies? Does it make sense to speak of responsible control over intelligent technologies? The thesis will provide answers to these questions.

Full-time study, Part-time study

PhDr. Daniela Vacek, Ph.D. (e-mail: daniela.vacek@savba.sk)

Artificial Intelligence and Gaps in Positive Responsibility

According to some researchers, intelligent technologies lead to gaps in responsibility, others deny it. The research in this area has been focused primarily on responsibility for negative impact of artificial intelligence. The thesis will explore the terrain of responsibility for positive impact of artificial intelligence. It will also formulate solutions to any responsibility gaps that might appear in this area.

Full time study, Part-time study

PhDr. Daniela Vacek, Ph.D. (e-mail: daniela.vacek@savba.sk)

Impossible Worlds

This PhD project investigates impossibility, specifically the relationship between the nature question — what impossibility is? — and the extent question — what impossibility there is? Impossible worlds have proven to be a useful apparatus in this regard. Following in the footsteps of their possible ancestors, impossible worlds provide a scope of applications that address the aforementioned questions. The project delves into these applications.

Full-time study

Mgr. Martin Vacek, Ph.D. (e-mail: martin.vacek@savba.sk)

Worldly and Non-Worldly Hyperintensionality

Many philosophical problems are framed in terms of hyperintensional distinctions. Although these distinctions were initially introduced in a representational manner, various accounts treating hyperintensionality as a non-representational phenomenon have been developed. This PhD project builds on these accounts and will propose a novel worldly account of hyperintensionality.

Full-time study

Mgr. Martin Vacek, Ph.D. (e-mail: martin.vacek@savba.sk)

Phenomenological Analysis of Passivity

The goal of the dissertation will be to explore the issues of passivity, attention, and the capacity of recognition based on the phenomenological analysis elaborated by Edmund Husserl (in the relevant texts of Husserliana). The thesis will trace these concepts in analyses of passive syntheses and constitutions, how are they constituted by the pre-reflective givenness of the world that is part of subjectivity. This theme is also presented, for example, by P. Ricœur on the basis of Husserl's elaboration of the concept of the life-world, which figures as a background that modifies subjective acts. This topic has also been addressed by other phenomenologists, such as A. J. Steinbock, D. Zahavi and others. The elaboration of the dissertation presupposes knowledge of phenomenological philosophy and the ability to work with German primary sources.

Full-time study, Part-time study

Doc. Jaroslava Vydrová, Ph.D. (e-mail: Jaroslava.Vydrova@savba.sk)

Phenomenological Analysis of Literary Work

The dissertation will focus on the possibilities of using a phenomenological approach in the analysis of a literary text and, within this, on the analysis of imagination, attitude, perception, intentionality, the work of art, etc. This area of investigation is based on Husserl's phenomenology and is also developed in the works of several phenomenologists and literary scholars (M. Heidegger, M. Merleau-Ponty, P. Ricœur, R. Ingarden, J. Patočka, Z. Mathauser, F. Matejov and others), on whom the thesis can also selectively draw. The elaboration of the dissertation presupposes knowledge of phenomenological philosophy and the ability to work with German primary sources.

Full-time study, Part-time study

Doc. Jaroslava Vydrová, Ph.D. (e-mail: Jaroslava.Vydrova@savba.sk)

II. History of Philosophy

In cooperation with the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice

The Neo-Pyrrhonian Skeptical Tradition and its Representatives in the Second half of the 20th Century

The PhD student will work on the contribution of the most important figure of this tradition, the German philosopher Odo Marquard. The thesis will focus on Marquard's continuation of the tradition of Pyrrhic skepticism and its further development when applied to modern conditions, on the notion of a philosophy of history, and on the concept of ethics (morality) and anthropology

(habitualism, anthropology, homo compensator). On this basis, he attempts to confront his own attitudes to the questions posed by modern neo-Pyrrhonist skepticism: what shapes us; what we can influence; how we understand the political rules that govern society; whether we have the possibility of interpreting them in yet another way; how we move in constant conflict with multiplicity and unity, etc.

Full-time study, Part-time study

Prof. PhDr. Břetislav Horyna, Ph.D. (e-mail: filohory@savba.sk)

Kant's Treatise "On Perpetual Peace" and Contemporary Political Philosophy

The starting point of this thesis is a critical analysis of the philosophical and political context of Kant's treatise "Towards Perpetual Peace." The graduate will explain the relationship between Kant's political thought and transcendental philosophy, without the understanding of which the analysis of the concepts of Kant's political philosophy is impossible. Thus, the author will focus on some of the main problems of Kant's philosophy, which are hidden behind the terms freedom, law, the idea of law, the state, the state system, constitutionalism, liberalism, republicanism, cosmopolitanism, etc. The thesis will show how these main concepts of the philosophy of politics are formally and substantively defined by Kant himself and will compare Kant's understanding of them with their understanding in contemporary political contexts, in particular the European Union.

Full-time study, Part-time study

Prof. PhDr. Břetislav Horyna, Ph.D. (e-mail: filohory@savba.sk)

Philosophical Problems of Environmental Humanities

The aim of environmental humanities is to integrate environmental research carried out in various humanities and social sciences in connection with the knowledge base on the extent of anthropogenic devastation of the planetary system created by the Earth System Sciences. The methodological basis for the constitution of environmental humanities is environmental philosophy, which formulates the principles of internal coexistence of environmental humanities. The need for a holistic, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach to reflecting on the causes and consequences of anthropogenic devastation of the environment has been pointed out by several authors who are associated with the emergence of environmental philosophy, or rather social and political ecology. The work aims to identify key ideological initiatives enabling the establishment of environmental philosophy and to analyze their impact on the constitution of environmental humanities.

Full-time study, Part-time study

Doc. Mgr. Richard Štáhel, Ph.D. (e-mail: riaditel.fiu@savba.sk)

Existentialism in the Age of Nihilism

A key theme in the existentialist movement of both the 19th and the 20th centuries was that of nihilism or meaninglessness. The existentialists argued that there was no intrinsic value in anything and that any truth claim about values was always based on irrational, ideological, or self-deceived argumentation. They were thus reluctant to argue for the value of anything at all. This undermined their attempts to create a theory of ethics, which by its very nature depends on the assumption of values and claims about what is right or wrong. Is it possible to resolve this problem in the existential tradition? There is clearly a strong ethical or even moralizing element in the works of many existentialist authors, such as Kierkegaard and Sartre, but can this be made into a genuine and consistent theory of ethics given the basic principle of nihilism and meaninglessness? Does this dilemma still exist today in the 21st century, which has also been regarded as an age of nihilism?

Full-time study, Part-time study

Prof. h.c. Jon Stewart, Ph.D., Dr. habil phil. et theol (jon.stewart@savba.sk)

Is the Philosophy of History Possible Today?

While the philosophy of history was a thriving field in the 19th century, it has become increasingly insignificant in contemporary philosophy. Today both the postmodern and the analytic theories reject the idea of progress or meaning in history, which was central to traditional theories. Is it possible to do philosophy of history without these ideas? Is the philosophy of history still a viable field in philosophy today or should it be regarded as an antiquated paradigm?

Full-time study, Part-time study

Prof. h.c. Jon Stewart, Ph.D., Dr. habil phil. et theol (jon.stewart@savba.sk)