Venice, Island of San Giorgio Maggiore

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Global Health and Artificial Intelligence: ground rules to guide the revolution

***The three-day international symposium “Global Health in the Age of AI” at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice has come to a conclusion.***

Artificial intelligence tools are already a reality in healthcare treatment. It is now possible and indeed necessary to accompany the adoption of AI in healthcare beyond the emerging phase of sudden change**.** **We now need to identify ethically sustainable lines of development to guide this revolution, while gaining the trust of citizens.**

This is one of the first ‘milestones’ that emerged during the three-day “Global Health in The Age of AI” symposium promoted by the Fondazione Giorgio Cini on the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore, in Venice, from 7 to 9 November 2024.

**The symposium brought together over forty world experts in the fields of ethics, health and artificial intelligence, led by Luciano Floridi**, Professor and Director of the Digital Ethics Center at Yale University and Full Professor at the Department of Legal Studies at the University of Bologna.

Now the experts involved will work to define the programmatic aspects of AI regulation, so as to foster and promote a more conscious and thus ethical use of artificial intelligence in its application to the field of global health. **The reflections that emerged will in fact form the basis of a ‘consensus paper’ coordinated by Luciano Floridi and Jessica Morley** (researcher at the Digital Ethics Center at Yale University) – **to** **be presented over the coming months** – with the aim of contributing to and guiding the decisions of international governments on this issue with information and practical guidance.

“There are a few key points that describe the challenge of the advent of AI in the sphere of health. One of the first is the **‘revolution of relationships and expectations’.** We are thinking here of the relationship between patients and doctors and the predictive ability that precise data analysis now makes possible. We can either proceed by updating old balances or, on the contrary, revolutionising the system,” states Luciano Floridi. “The orientation of the encounter was clear from the outset. Not only was it an important scientific meeting of the highest level, but also and above all **a platform for proactive ideas, visions and proposals capable of having a concrete impact**. It is now universally acknowledged that a profound revolution is taking place in the field of health, globally. And this disruption, this reshuffling of the cards has been taking place for some time now and on a very large scale, encompassing all sectors. **It is no different from the advent of electricity, which, we might recall, only reached GP surgeries around a hundred years ago.** This also speaks volumes about the acceleration the sector has been experiencing since the arrival of AI. It is therefore essential to understand how to control and regulate it, in order to make the most of this great opportunity.”

**“The symposium was intended to constitute an initial moment, on a global level, for the management of this novelty**,” Luciano Floridi continues, “through the papers given and the materials and articles proposed, as well as the experiments undertaken and the examples of hospitals that have already deployed the technology in the field. The symposium thus represents an attempt to absorb the epochal transformation in a project-based manner. What now follows is the **fundamental and necessary transition to the more proactive and programmatic design phase.** In the ‘consensus paper’ which we will define and present over the coming months, we will provide a picture of the current situation on which to build recommendations for the future. **Any contribution we imagine is one that can be practically deployed by policy makers, legislators and decision makers,** in short all those who are called upon to take key decisions,” Floridi concludes.

**Gianfelice Rocca**, President of the Fondazione Cini, underlines: “From an exclusively defensive stance, we fail to grasp the potential of this technology that may be of service to all humanity. In this drive towards the future lies the commitment of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, an island of thought and reflection capable of making a concrete contribution to the issues of contemporary humankind. **Europe is entering a new phase: the end of the post-war world order.** **And the development of AI for Health fits into this increasingly polarised context**. The Symposium, structured according to a method that facilitates interaction and the sharing of free thinking, proved to be an experience of intercultural encounter and dialogue. A source of hope for the future.”

In addition to the speakers, thanks to the call for papers launched by the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, **twelve young researchers** selected from over a hundred candidates from various countries around the world – including Italy, the USA, Uganda, Ghana and Germany – took part in the Symposium, bringing their views and reflections on a theme that represents a genuine challenge for our times. The grant winners also had the chance to participate and debate on the panels, to meet experts and discuss with them the issues they deemed to be of greatest interest.

**The Symposium on AI and Global Health was the first event in a new cultural programme** undertaken bythe Fondazione Giorgio Cini with the aim of intensifying interdisciplinary dialogue with a scientific focus of great international standing.

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