

Call for Abstracts

Progress under Pressure

3 July 2026 — University of Lucerne

Submission deadline: 28 February 2026

Email: ppe-conference@unilu.ch

Dear students,

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the 1st PPE Conference, which will be held at the University of Lucerne on 3 July 2026. The conference is a student-led project and aims to bring together PPE students as well as students specializing in one of the three disciplines.

'Progress under Pressure' addresses what we perceive as one of the most significant and urgent challenges of our time. Progress is commonly understood as a movement towards an improved state. While there is an ongoing debate about whether humanity is continually striving towards such a state, we nonetheless continue to use the idea of progress as a normative guideline for designing many assumptions, models and systems. However, the many intersecting and growing crises of our time are putting this normative principle of progress under increasing pressure. Ideas, paradigms and methods from all three PPE fields can help us rethink the meaning of human progress and recalibrate our assumptions, models and systems accordingly.

The call for submissions invites contributions that address issues such as (but are not limited to):

- Can we still believe in progress-based models while destroying nature, the foundation of human reproduction?
- Can we speak of systems that lead to progress when global conflicts increase, inequalities rise, and democracies collapse?

- Are we entering an era of regress – and can we claim that certain forms of progress itself are responsible for today's crises?
- What are the dominant narratives about progress and whom do they benefit or marginalize?
- What is the vision of the improved state toward which we should progress?
- How can philosophical perspectives clarify the meaning(s) of progress and evaluate whether assumptions, models, and systems align with it?
- How can political science reexamine whether existing institutions are still capable of managing contemporary crises – and what reforms are necessary?
- How has economics tied progress to GDP growth – and how can progress be redefined beyond it, such as through capabilities or human flourishing?

Submission Guidelines

Submission: Abstract

Deadline: 28 February 2026

Notification: 30 April 2026

Length: Maximum of 300 words

Format: PDF file

Language: Submissions in English are preferred, but contributions in German are also accepted

File names: LastName.FirstName.Abstract.pdf

Presentations: Max. 15 Minutes

Email: ppe-conference@unilu.ch

For questions and clarifications, contact us via e-mail.