



CIDDD NEWSLETTER

NEWS FROM THE CONSORTIUM OF INTERNATIONAL DOUBLE DEGREES



THE CIDDD PODCAST

Hello Everyone, the Consortium of International Double Degrees is excited to announce our new podcast *Degrees without Borders*. In this podcast, we discuss various topics in international collaboration and exchange. Our first episode, titled “The Benefits of Double Degrees” focuses on the benefits and challenges of completing a double degree in an increasingly globalized world. The episode includes interviews with two of our 2024 double-degree scholarship winners. It can be used to promote double degrees in your institution. [Click here to listen the first episode.](#)

The podcast is co-hosted by Jana Blštáková from Slovakia, José Adrián Calcáneo Damián from Mexico, and Yoav Wachsman from the USA. We aim to produce four episodes per year – one per season. We hope to share this podcast with the international offices around the globe so they can use it to keep their staff and students informed about vital topics in global education and exchange.

Podcasts offer a convenient and engaging way to consume information. People can listen and learn while multitasking. I typically listen to podcasts while commuting to work or when working out. Podcasts create a more personal and immersive experience through storytelling and conversational formats, fostering deeper connections with the audience. Additionally, they are easily accessible across multiple platforms and available on demand.

I hope you enjoy our podcast and share it with your network. Contact me if you have suggestions for future episodes or want to participate in.

Yoav Wachsman

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CIDD Winter Workshops 2025

Empowering Students with GenAI: A Research-Informed and Practical Introduction

February 11th, 2025

In the first part of the CIDD Winter Workshops 2025, the **Senior Lecturer, M. Ed., Eija Kjelin**, and **Principal Lecturer, PhD (Ed.), Merja Alanko-Turunen** from Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, Finland, held an online workshop on Empowering Students with GenAI. There were about 60 participants in this research-informed and practical introduction. The presenters explored how GenAI is transforming learning and teaching in higher education, the strategies and real-world applications for integrating GenAI tools effectively into teaching and learning, and the role of GenAI in enriching the learning experience. The participants were engaged in the presentation through live polls, discussions, and questions.

GenAI has created a huge shift in reshaping individuals, organizations, and society. It is changing work, and it has innovation and societal impact. Collaborating with AI has become a core skill, and we need to be able to adapt to it and focus on our learning. The aim is to use GenAI effectively and ethically, but to be able to do so, one needs first to master the basic skills. As GenAI has become one of the tools that students use regularly, educators should focus on empowering the students so that they will use AI as a tool to support their own learning instead of using AI to do the work for them. The educators have the responsibility to create a safe environment where the students can feel empowered. It is important to emphasize critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability to guide students to use AI as a learning partner and ask deep and meaningful questions.

The presenters introduced two different approaches to AI in higher education. The first approach was “the AI traffic lights”. The idea of the traffic light model is to visually demonstrate in which assignments or tasks using AI is allowed, prohibited, required, or must be reported. The second approach was the “AI menu”. The idea of the menu model is to highlight the different opportunities of AI and give examples of different situations or tasks in which the AI could be used. The difference between these two approaches is that the traffic lights model focuses more on the restrictions and rules, while the menu model focuses on the opportunities of AI.

As a rapidly developing tool, AI brings many opportunities but also challenges. For example, it is an effective tool for engagement, can be used to personalize learning, and can be used to support students with learning disabilities. On the other hand, the use of AI can boost metacognitive laziness, and cognitive offloading, and grow the use of shadow IT among students. We need to acknowledge the rapid development of AI and the changes it brings, and stay curious to learn how to use it to boost our learning. We are all together in this learning journey, both the students and the educators.



CIDD Winter Workshops 2025

Should AI-Generated Avatars replace corporate trainers? February 12th, 2025

In the second part of the CIDD Winter Workshops 2025, **Joe Winslow, Ph.D.**, Professor of Instructional Technology and Chair of the Educational Studies Department at Coastal Carolina University, USA, introduced the participants to the fascinating world of AI avatars. In the presentation, he raised the question of whether AI-generated avatars could replace corporate trainers in the future. Over 30 participants participated in this interactive session.



GenAI video technology is highly developed and rapidly evolving. Many applications offer the possibility to create videos with either an already-made or a customized avatar. The presenter had created an avatar of himself who talks and acts like him. The participants had the opportunity to compare a video of the presenter speaking and his avatar speaking, and it was almost impossible to recognize which one was the real person and which was AI-generated.

Some key questions raised regarding AI-generated video production were whether AI video production is faster and cheaper than traditional video production and what the impacts of AI-generated videos on student learning are. A traditional instructor video is expensive as it requires a lot of different technologies. It is also not a smooth process, as many retakes are needed. It also requires many working hours, as it takes 2 hours for every 5 minutes of a traditional instructor video. As for making an AI-generated instructor video, it takes approximately 15 minutes for every 5 minutes of the video. There are different applications available, with tools that enable you to create a high-quality instructor video within just a few minutes.

A study was conducted at Coastal Carolina University, comparing the outcomes of a real-person and an AI-generated instructor video. There was no significant difference in the post-test achievement results between the students who had seen the real person and the AI avatar. The students found that both videos were effective and relevant, and the AI avatar was perceived as a human. Nevertheless, in the open feedback, many students mentioned preferring instructor videos recorded by a real person instead of an AI avatar.

At the end of the presentation, the presenter introduced the participants to “AI-Joe”, his AI-generated avatar, which looks and acts like him. The presenter had a live discussion with the avatar during the presentation. He mentioned that he is using the avatar also in teaching, by letting the students interact with him. It is extremely fascinating, what different tools and innovations AI has made possible, and it is interesting to see where it goes in the future.

CIDD General Assembly 2025



The CIDD is excited to announce that the next General Assembly will take place in Brescia, Italy, at the [University of Brescia UNIBS](https://www.unibs.it/en/university/about-us/vision-and-mission). It will be held in the historical venues of the University on June 9-11, 2025.

The University of Brescia is a young university with strong roots in one of the richest and most innovative areas in Europe. It contributes to the sustainable development of the territory in search of a balance between industrial development, environmental sustainability, and quality of life. The University is a “free learning community” that expresses its social responsibility by committing itself to promoting a peaceful and open society through the inclusion and integration of its many diverse groups. To learn more about Unibs University and its vision, visit <https://www.unibs.it/en/university/about-us/vision-and-mission>. To learn more about Unibs rankings, visit <https://www.unibs.it/en/university/about-us/ranking>.

Brescia is very well connected to a number of airports, namely:

- Villafranca Valerio Catullo Verona Airport, 50 km from Brescia, www.aeroporto.verona.it
- Orio al Serio il Caravaggio Bergamo Airport, 60 km from Brescia, www.milanbergamoairport.it/en/
- Milano Linate Airport, 80 km from Brescia, www.milanolinate-airport.com
- Milano Malpensa Airport, 100 km from Brescia, www.milanomalpensa-airport.com
- Venezia Marco Polo Airport, 180 km from Brescia, www.veniceairport.it

Brescia, the city of the Mille Miglia car race ([1000 Miglia 2025 – 1000 Miglia](https://www.1000miglia.it)), Italian Capital of Culture 2023, is a wonderful place to walk around, with its main squares its cathedrals, and its Castle.

The city of Brescia and its province also boasts three UNESCO World Heritage sites: [Discover the UNESCO site of the city of Brescia - Brescia Tourism](https://www.brescia-tourism.com/en/unesco).



Moreover, there is a unique, complex and exciting museum system consisting of:

- the [Santa Giulia Museum - Fondazione Brescia Musei](#) and the [Brixia Roman archeological area - Fondazione Brescia Musei](#), UNESCO sites since 2011
- the [Pinacoteca Tosio Martinengo - Fondazione Brescia Musei](#)
- the [Luigi Marzoli Arms and Armor Museum - Fondazione Brescia Musei](#)
- the [Museum of the Risorgimento Lioness of Italy - Fondazione Brescia Musei](#)
- Visit <https://www.bresciamusei.com/> to discover all current and future events.

Brescia has a rich culinary tradition. Brescia has specialties for all palates, even the most refined, since its territory has more than 10 starred restaurants, serving typical products such as spiedo, casoncelli, oil, truffles, lake fish, cheeses, caviar, and fine wines, which are known all over the world. For more information about things to do and places to see, visit:

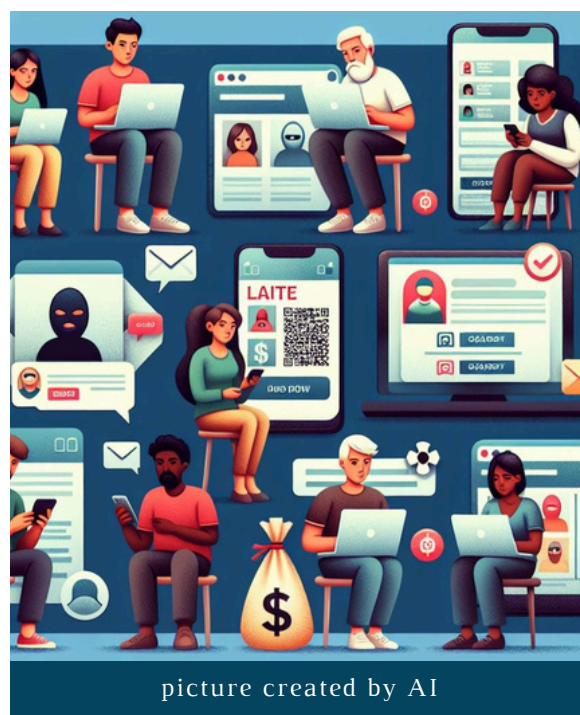
- <https://www.bresciatourism.it/en/>
- <https://www.bresciatourism.it/en/visit-brescia/city-of-brescia/>
- <https://www.comune.brescia.it/>

The University of Brescia graciously agreed to host the event. The assembly will follow a similar format to Valencia, Karlstad, and The Hague, which recently hosted the event. It will include optional social activities on June 9 (late afternoon/evening) and morning and afternoon meetings on June 10, followed by a social dinner on the same day and workshops on the morning of June 11.

While the CIDD will stream the official meeting, we heartedly recommend you to attend this meeting in person so you do not miss the fun. The assembly will cost 200 Euros to attend, and each CIDD member is welcome to send multiple representatives. The deadline to apply for the assembly is April 11, 2025, by completing the [registration form](#). Each attendee must complete a separate form.

Preventing Scams in Academia

Internet and email scams impact every industry, including academia. Staff, faculty, administrators, and students are targeted by increasingly sophisticated scams that exploit trust, urgency, and a lack of awareness. These scams have evolved beyond the classic Nigerian prince emails and now use tactics such as impersonation, phishing, and AI-generated messages to deceive victims. Scams are so prevalent today because of the scale at which they can be executed. In the past, con artists had to work in person, but now they can send thousands of fraudulent emails in seconds. Technology, particularly artificial intelligence, has also made scams more convincing.



Scammers can generate fake emails identical to official university communications, tricking recipients into handing over personal information, like their passwords, sending money to criminal organizations, and allowing malware to take control of the computer system or data. The rise of cryptocurrency has made things worse, as scammers can demand payments in Bitcoin or other digital currencies, which are difficult to trace and nearly impossible to recover once sent. Cybercriminals are hard to catch and are often located in Russia, China, or North Korea, where they are safe from extradition.

Academia has become a prime target because universities store vast amounts of sensitive data, including financial records, research findings, grades, and personal details of students and faculty. Phishing scams involve fraudulent emails urging users to verify their accounts, reset their passwords, or confirm personal information. When victims click the link, they are directed to a fake website that steals their login credentials. These emails often look like they were sent from the President's office or IT department.

Administrators and staff members who have access to funds are often targeted by scammers using the president scam. Scammers send an email that looks like it came from the employee's supervisor requesting a payment urgently be wired to a fake account. These scammers often use a similar address to the supervisor's email, have the organization's logo, and include details about the organization, which make the email seem legitimate. Employees might be too busy to verify the details in the email or feel pressured to send the money to not upset their boss.



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Scammers also target students by offering them fake jobs and requesting personal details or upfront payments for fake background checks. International students are often targeted by immigration scams. They receive threatening calls or emails claiming they owe money to immigration authorities and risk deportation unless they pay immediately, often via untraceable payment methods like cryptocurrency or gift cards. Similarly, tax scams have targeted .edu email addresses, with fraudsters pretending to be the IRS and tricking victims into submitting their details through fake refund forms.

Even professors and researchers are not safe. Researchers may send money to fake journals or to websites that look like legitimate journals. Others have been victims of cryptocurrency investment scams, where fraudsters posing as investment firms convince them to deposit money into fake trading platforms.

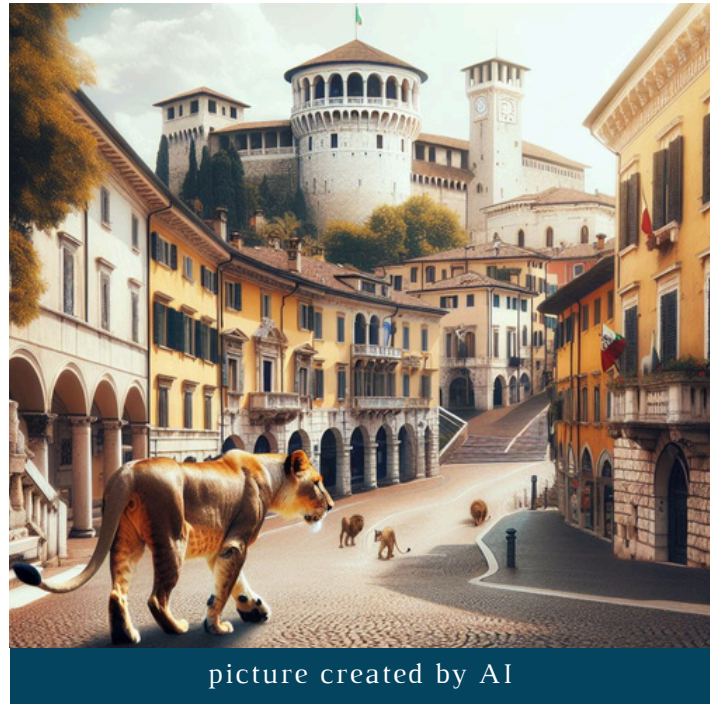
Many US universities were victims of large-scale scams. For example, the University at Buffalo reported multiple scams targeting faculty and students, including phishing attempts and fraudulent job offers. Similarly, Harvard University has warned about AI-enhanced scams that use deepfake technology to impersonate high-profile figures in academia. European universities have also been hit. One notable case involved Maastricht University in the Netherlands, which suffered a major ransomware attack in 2019. Hackers infiltrated the university's system and demanded a ransom in Bitcoin. The university had to pay to regain access to its research data and student records.

So, what can be done to prevent these scams? Awareness is key. Universities should provide training sessions for students and staff to recognize phishing attempts and fraudulent emails. Always double-check email addresses, especially if a message asks for money or personal information. When in doubt, contact the sender through a verified phone number or official website rather than replying to the suspicious email. Individuals should always look at the email address to ensure it isn't fake. Using multi-factor authentication (MFA) is another crucial step. Even if scammers steal login credentials, MFA makes it much harder for them to gain access to university accounts. Keeping software and systems updated also helps prevent security breaches. Universities should invest in cybersecurity measures such as firewalls and endpoint protection to prevent ransomware attacks like the one Maastricht University faced. Be skeptical of unexpected financial requests, particularly those involving gift cards, wire transfers, or cryptocurrency. Always verify a payment by phone or videoconference before sending it.

Ultimately, scams thrive on deception and urgency, but by staying cautious and informed, students and faculty can avoid falling victim. Universities must take this issue seriously, because as technology evolves, so do the scammers, and academia remains a lucrative target.

Brescia, The Lioness of Italy

The CIDO General Assembly will take place on June 10 and 11 in Brescia, Italy. Brescia, located in the Lombardy region of northern Italy, is rich in history, culture, and economic significance. Known as the “Leonessa d’Italia” (The Lioness of Italy) for its courageous resistance during the First Italian War of Independence, Brescia is where ancient heritage meets modern innovation. From its Roman ruins to its thriving industries, Brescia offers visitors a unique blend of the past and present.



picture created by AI

A Brief History

Brescia has a history that dates back over 3,200 years. Originally a settlement of the Cenomani, a Gallic tribe, it became a Roman colony known as Brixia. During Roman rule, it flourished as an important administrative and trading center. The city boasts remarkable Roman ruins, including the Capitoline Temple and Roman Theatre. These ruins are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. During the Middle Ages, Brescia became a prominent center under Lombard rule and later part of the Republic of Venice. During this period it experienced significant economic and cultural growth. In 1849, during the First Italian War of Independence, Brescia played a key role in resisting Austrian occupation. This valiant ten-day rebellion earned the city its title, “Leonessa d’Italia”.

Brescia’s Economy

Brescia is an economic powerhouse, particularly known for its contributions to the manufacturing and metallurgical industries. Companies such as Beretta, one of the world’s oldest and most famous firearms manufacturers, are based in Brescia. The city is also home to various industrial firms producing automotive components. The region is famous is known for its sparkling wines. Franciacorta is a crisp, complex red wine, while Prosecco is a fruity and floral white wine with notes of green apples.



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Attractions in Brescia

Brescia is home to a wealth of historical and cultural landmarks, making it an excellent destination for tourists. Key attractions include:

- *Piazza della Loggia*. A stunning Renaissance square surrounded by elegant buildings, including the Palazzo della Loggia, the city's town hall.
- *Brescia Castle*. Perched on Cidneo Hill, this medieval fortress offers panoramic views of the city and houses museums, including the Museum of Arms.
- *Santa Giulia Museum*. A UNESCO-listed complex featuring archaeological finds, religious artifacts, and historical exhibitions spanning centuries.
- *The Roman Ruins*. The Capitoline Temple, built by Emperor Vespasian, and the Roman Theatre provide a glimpse into the city's ancient past.
- *Mille Miglia Museum*. Dedicated to the world-famous Mille Miglia vintage car race, this museum showcases classic cars and the race's history.
- *The Duomo Vecchio and Duomo Nuovo*. The Old Cathedral (Duomo Vecchio) and New Cathedral (Duomo Nuovo) reflect the city's architectural evolution and religious heritage.

Mille Miglia: The Legendary Race

The Mille Miglia is one of the world's most prestigious vintage car races. First held in 1927, the 1,000-mile race begins and ends in Brescia, taking drivers on a scenic journey to Rome and back. It attracts car enthusiasts from around the globe and showcases rare, historic automobiles.

Why Visit Brescia?

Brescia is a hidden gem. It offers a mix of history, culture, gastronomy, and natural beauty. Whether exploring Roman ruins, enjoying traditional Italian cuisine, or experiencing the excitement of Mille Miglia, visitors will find Brescia captivating. From its ancient origins to its innovative industries, Brescia is a city that seamlessly blends history, culture, and commerce. Whether you're a history enthusiast, a car lover, or a student seeking academic excellence, Brescia has something to offer. A visit to this remarkable city is a journey through time and tradition, making it an unforgettable experience.



The CIDDD Double Degree Scholarships 2025



CIDD DOUBLE DEGREE
SCHOLARSHIPS 2025

APPLICATION DEADLINE MAY 9

CALL FOR CIDD SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

The CIDD welcomes applications from students who are participating or have completed a double degree program during the 2024-2025 academic year. To be eligible, either the home or receiving institution must be a member of the CIDD. The applicant may be in any field and at any level.

The amount for 1st place is 1000€, 2nd place is 750€, and 3rd, 4th, and 5th place are 500€ each. The rewards will be paid using a wire transfer. Please note that the jury has the authority to determine the number of rewards to be granted based on the quality of the applications.

The deadline for the application is May 9, 2025. We will announce the winners during the General Assembly in June. Please send all the required documents, which are listed below, to the CIDD by emailing them to ciddassistant@gmail.com.

Students, to apply for a double degree scholarship, please submit:

- A completed application form, available in the CIDD website: <https://www.cidd.org/cidd-double-degree-scholarships-2025-call-for-applications/>
- A letter of motivation in English indicating why we should consider you for this scholarship and what you will gain from completing a double degree? 500 words limit.
- A letter of recommendation in English from either your home university or the receiving university confirming that you are enrolled and have a good GPA (Grade Point Average), and describing how you are performing in your studies.
- Link to a 3-minute video in English about your double degree experience. Please explain how you benefited from the double degree and what were the main outcomes and experiences. The video should be clear and engaging. You are encouraged to be creative. Please upload the video to YouTube and make it publicly accessible.

You do **NOT** need to submit your transcripts.

Do you want to see videos made by our applicants in 2024?

[Click here to access CIDD's YouTube channel](#)



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Haaga-Helia Summer School 2025



Join us in Summer 2025 for an unforgettable learning adventure at the Joint Summer School, co-organized by Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences (Finland) and the University of Ljubljana, School of Economics and Business (Slovenia). Set in Helsinki's dynamic metropolitan area, this program offers the perfect blend of academic excellence, cultural exploration, and international networking.

Experience Helsinki's vibrant summer while expanding your horizons!

When and Where

Location: Helsinki, Finland

Duration:

Two weeks in Summer 2025 from 2nd of June to 13th of June.

Who Should Attend?

This program is designed for bachelor's students eager to expand their knowledge, experience new cultures, and develop skills in applying AI to business challenges. This course has no prerequisites.

For all the information, please visit:

<https://www.haaga-helia.fi/en/haaga-helia-summer-school>



REGISTER HERE!