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**With more than 70 events in one week, the Aristotle Innovation Forum  
transforms Thessaloniki into a hub of academic excellence and  
innovation**

Thessaloniki, 3/3/2026

The Aristotle Innovation Forum (AIF) was presented today, Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at a Press Conference held at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and Innovation (CIRI) of Aristotle University, marking the launch of a new institutional initiative with a strategic and international orientation.

AIF aims to become an annual reference point for innovation, technology, and artificial intelligence, building meaningful bridges of collaboration between academia, industry, entrepreneurship, and society. Leading scientists, researchers, entrepreneurs, and market executives will gather in Thessaloniki from May 17 to 23, 2026, to present innovative ideas and discuss the challenges and prospects of rapid technological advancement.

At the Press Conference, the Rector of Aristotle University, Professor Kyriakos Anastasiadis, emphasized that AIF *“constitutes a national necessity at the academic level, is designed as an annual point of reference, and aspires to establish itself as a call for meaningful dialogue, a hub of convergence between science and production, and a platform that empowers young people and their ideas.”* As he underlined, *“we do not simply seek a successful event, but an institution that will operate every year as a compass for developments.”*

The Rector stressed that innovation does not confine itself to start-ups, but extends across health, education, sustainable development, the humanities, and democracy in the era of artificial intelligence. *“Knowledge without application is not enough, and application without knowledge is a risk,”* he noted, highlighting the role of the University not as an observer, but as an active shaper of public dialogue during a period of profound technological and socioeconomic transformation.

Special reference was made to the transition from the phenomenon of brain drain to organized talent circulation (brain circulation), with the University seeking to function as a hub for value return and for networking the Greek diaspora with the international scientific community.

The Vice-Rectors who participated in the Press Conference were: Research and Innovation, Professor Ioannis Rekanos; Academic Affairs and Development, Professor Nikolaos Maggioros; and International Relations, Outreach, Lifelong Learning and Student Welfare, Professor Iakovos Michailidis. The Rector's Advisor, Giannis Stavrou, also took part.

The curtain will rise on Sunday, May 17, 2026, with the Opening Ceremony at the Thessaloniki Concert Hall, marking the beginning of a week featuring more than 70 main and parallel events.

The core of the activities will take place at Pavilion 16 of the Thessaloniki International Fair, where the main panels and keynote speeches will be hosted. Some of the thematic sections of AIF include: "European Universities and Institutional Transformation," "Quality Teaching and Student-Centered Higher Education," "Sustainability and Green Transition in European Universities," and "Political Philosophy and Artificial Intelligence: Who Owns the Future?" Among its objectives is to highlight the transformation of universities in the era of artificial intelligence.

Particular emphasis is placed on the role of AI in health and medicine, through events such as the "Medical Innovation Forum," "Artificial and Emotional Intelligence in Patient Care," and presentations by internationally renowned research centers. Within the same framework, discussions on bioethics, organ donation, and longevity highlight the relationship between technology and humanistic values.

The philosophical and theological dimension of artificial intelligence will be explored in sessions such as "Thinking Machines, Praying Humans: AI Through the Lens of Orthodox Theology" and "From Aristotle to Late Modernity – Dilemmas, Ethical Alignment, and Regulatory Frameworks for AI," underscoring the connection between classical thought and contemporary technological challenges.

The program also includes interventions such as the speech by former Prime Minister and former President of the Council of State Mr. Michalis Pikramenos, as well as the keynote address by former NASA astronaut Julie Payette. In parallel, Dr. Adam Fenech will elaborate on the visualization of the "invisible" threats of climate change.

A distinct thematic pillar focuses on brain drain and brain circulation, featuring panels on the Greek diaspora and the international networking of Greek scientists, as well as a special event titled "Women of the Diaspora in the Age of AI." Student mobility, micro-credentials, and new flexible learning pathways are also at the heart of AIF, highlighting the new European landscape in higher education.

More information: <https://aristotleforum.auth.gr/>

Photos attached.

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*We kindly request that this event be published, broadcast, and covered by the media.*