AiSECRETT Creativity and AI for the Triple Transition

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Mission, Vision and Values, grounding the Training Strategy

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Abstract:	This document defines the conceptual and pedagogical foundations of the AI-SECRETT training strategy, framing artificial intelligence as a socio-technical infrastructure shaping creativity, knowledge and governance. It advances a human-centred, critical and European approach to AI, aligned with the digital, ecological and social dimensions of the Triple Transition. The proposed training programme aims to develop AI-augmented creative professionals capable of combining technical skills, ethical awareness and critical thinking, while strengthening European technological sovereignty, cultural diversity and sustainable innovation.
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Executive Summary

This document establishes the conceptual, ideological and pedagogical foundations of the AI-SECRETT training strategy, positioning artificial intelligence not as a neutral technological tool but as a socio-technical infrastructure that reshapes knowledge production, creativity, economic value and governance.

It responds to the current context of rapid diffusion of AI—particularly large language models—characterised by high expectations, limited public understanding and increasing concentration of technological power. The document challenges techno-solutionist narratives and instead advocates for a critical, human-centred and European approach to AI, one that recognises its embeddedness in power relations, data economies and cultural systems.

At the core of the framework lies the concept of the **Triple Transition**—the intertwined digital, ecological and social transformations shaping contemporary European societies. AI is understood as a relational force within this process, capable of both enabling innovation and reinforcing structural inequalities. The document therefore calls for a shift from viewing AI as a problem-solving tool to understanding it as an infrastructure that must be actively governed to ensure sustainability, social justice and democratic accountability.

A central concern is **European technological sovereignty**, framed not merely as industrial autonomy but as the capacity to maintain democratic control, epistemic plurality and cultural diversity in a context where AI infrastructures are largely dominated by non-European actors. In this regard, the document aligns with strategic initiatives such as the Eurostack and emphasises the importance of open-source ecosystems, data commons and interoperable systems.

Within the cultural and creative sectors, AI is presented as both an opportunity and a source of tension. While it can expand creative possibilities and lower barriers to innovation, it also raises significant risks related to labour displacement, cultural homogenisation and the appropriation of creative work. The training strategy therefore aims to balance experimentation with critical awareness, equipping professionals to engage with AI in ways that enhance rather than undermine creative autonomy.

The vision of the AI-SECRETT training programme is to develop a **European reference master's degree** that integrates technical knowledge, critical understanding and ethical responsibility. The programme is designed to train "AI-augmented creative professionals" capable of co-creating with AI systems, rather than passively using proprietary tools. It explicitly rejects the formation of dependent users of external technologies and instead promotes strategic autonomy, technical literacy and critical engagement.

This vision is operationalised through three interrelated strategic pillars:

- **Digital Transition**, focusing on critical and technical understanding of AI as an infrastructure, including its governance, limitations and applications.
- **Ecological Transition**, addressing both the environmental impacts of AI systems and their potential to support sustainable and regenerative practices.
- **Social Transition**, emphasising ethics, inclusion, creative rights and the role of AI in shaping equitable and democratic societies.

Across these pillars, the programme promotes a pedagogical model grounded in human-centred creativity, collaborative intelligence, critical AI literacy and real-world problem-solving. Learning is conceived as interdisciplinary, experiential and socially embedded, combining technical training with reflective and ethical capacities.

Ultimately, the mission of AI-SECRETT is to contribute to the formation of a new generation of professionals capable of navigating and shaping the complex interactions between AI, creativity and the triple transition. By aligning technological development with European values—such as openness, sustainability, cultural diversity and democratic governance—the project seeks not only to respond to current challenges, but to actively influence the future trajectory of AI in Europe.

Acronyms & Definitions

Acronym	Definition
AI-SECRETT	AI Supported and Enhanced Creativity for the Triple Transition
AI-STEAM	Artificial Intelligence – Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics Community of Practice
CDV	Communication, Dissemination and Visibility Plan
DEP	Digital Europe Programme
DoA	Description of Action
EC	European Commission
GA	Grant Agreement
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
M	Month (of project implementation)
RTO	Research and Technology Organisation
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
UVEG	Universitat de València (Project Coordinator)
UMU	Universidad de Murcia (WP7–9–11 Lead)
IF.E	Inspiring Futures Europe (WP11 Partner – Innovation & Exploitation)
CDV Commission	Cross-partner governance body for Communication, Dissemination & Visibility activities
AI Act	Regulation establishing harmonised rules on Artificial Intelligence in the EU
Digital Decade Policy Programme (2030)	EU policy framework to achieve digital targets for skills, infrastructure, and public services by 2030
Triple Transition	The concurrent digital, green, and social transformations underpinning Europe's sustainable development strategy
WP	Work Package
…	…

Why this document?

We're living in a moment where the massive introduction at a consumer scale of large language models (LLMs) has created great expectations and public interest in what artificial intelligence (AI) technologies can achieve. Nonetheless, comprehension of how these models really work is limited and claims about its real capacities are often exaggerated. Moreover, the equalisation of AI to LLM, obscures the wide range of underlying technologies that have been developed in recent years, such as Machine Learning and Natural Language Processing.

Artificial intelligence is not a neutral or purely technical innovation, but a socio-economic and epistemic infrastructure shaped by power relations, ownership structures, and mechanisms of value extraction. Contemporary AI systems do not merely process information; they mediate how knowledge is produced, how reality is represented, and which perspectives are rendered visible or marginal. In practice, the development and deployment of AI systems tend to concentrate economic rents, control over data, and epistemic authority in a small number of corporate actors, often detached from the communities that generate the data and bear the social costs.

AiSECRETT explicitly recognises these dynamics and rejects tecno-solutionist narratives that frames AI as an inevitable or benevolent remedy for complex social and creative processes. Instead the project commits to fostering AI practices that challenge extractive models, promote fair value distribution and agency. This includes strengthening collective, open and decentralised alternatives aligned with diverse public interests in Europe, and supporting forms of AI development that enhance democratic control, epistemic plurality and cultural autonomy rather than narrowing them.

In education, the use of AI, particularly LLMs, has sparked significant debate. On one hand, AI has a disruptive impact on traditional teaching methods, which can generate a productive tension for change and innovation. On the other hand, critics highlighted the potential risks to student performance if AI tools are misused[1]. Similarly, AI has been a controversial topic among creative professionals. Some perceive it as a tool that can democratise knowledge and can expand their creative capabilities, whether others denounce the unlawful appropriation of their work and point towards the risks of cultural homogenisation[2] that LLM models and their inherent biases can produce.

Considering these facts, our purpose should be to contribute to incorporating AI tools to different sectoral realities from a responsible and meaningful point of view. This requires moving beyond an exclusive focus on large language models, which represent only a narrow and historically contingent expression of artificial

[1] Nataliya Kosmyna, Eugene Hauptmann, Ye Tong Yuan, Jessica Situ, Xian-Hao Liao, Ashly Vivian Beresnitzky, Iris Braunstein, and Pattie Maes. "Your brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of cognitive debt when using an ai assistant for essay writing task." (2025). https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2506.08872

[2] Chayka, K. (2025). Filterworld: how algorithms flattened culture. Random House.

intelligence, and instead engaging with a broader ecology of computational approaches and techniques. These should be understood not as generic problem-solving tools, but as situated infrastructures that can support, reshape, or constrain human-led creative, design and innovation processes. In complex real-world contexts, the challenge is therefore not to delegate creativity or decision-making to AI systems, but to critically integrate selected AI techniques in ways that augment human judgment, collective intelligence and social responsibility... As a forward-looking European project, AiSECRETT must step ahead of the hype and contribute to develop a comprehensive training programme that is aligned with European values and that contributes to strengthen technological sovereignty in Europe in line with the priorities established by the European Commission and the European Parliament[3]

Therefore, the aim of this document is to open up a critical discussion that can produce a vision to guide the AiSECRETT project. To this end, it is crucial to come to terms with what AI actually is, understand the basics of its underlying technologies, and both its capabilities and limitations. Similarly, contradictions between AI, creativity and the triple transition have to be exposed, in order to come up with a series of guidelines for the project. This document is the first step in this process, which has been complemented by discussions and training sessions by experts on the topic [4].

AI and the Triple Transition.

The Triple Transition refers to the intertwined transformation of digital, environmental and social systems that is currently reshaping European societies. Rather than treating digitalisation, environmental sustainability and social responsibility as separate policy domains to be balanced ex post, AI-SECRETT adopts a relational understanding: these dimensions are mutually constitutive and continuously co-evolve. Artificial intelligence does not simply “impact” each sphere independently; it actively reorganises the relations between them, generating both new capacities and new tensions.

From a dynamic and relational perspective, AI must therefore be analysed as part of a shifting web of digital–green–social relations, characterised by processes of negation, preservation and elevation. The relevance of AI for the Triple Transition lies not only in its functional applications, but in how it reconfigures infrastructures, power relations, resource flows and forms of agency across these domains.

- **Digital–Social relations.** AI-driven digitalisation reshapes how people access knowledge, participate in decision-making and exercise autonomy. Assistive

[3] Report on European technological sovereignty and digital infrastructure. European Parliament (2025). https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-10-2025-0107_EN.html

[4] We had the following webbinars 23/01/2026 *Shaping AI Education for Creative Professionals Mission, Vision and Values. Open technologies & ethics* por Jordi Mas. 26/01/2026 *AI, Culture and Creativity,* by Pier Luigi Sacco27/01/2026 *AI Skils* Webinar AI Secrett - LEADSx2030 Brendan Rowan, Pau Rausell, Marta Mortati, Gianluca Carlo Misuraca, 9/03/2026 Debating MVM series. Pier Luigi Sacco, Scientific Co-Director of the project, Valeria Pica, Angelo Romagnoli

technologies such as text-to-speech, translation, transcription or image description can expand inclusion and lower barriers to participation. At the same time, productivity-oriented automation and algorithmic management systems reconfigure labour relations, bureaucratic processes and professional autonomy. These transformations are not neutral: closed-source platforms, opaque models, targeted advertising and behavioural manipulation can reproduce or deepen inequalities, shifting epistemic authority and control away from users and communities. From a relational perspective, the key issue is not access alone, but who governs digital infrastructures, whose knowledge is encoded, and how human agency co-evolves with algorithmic systems.

- **Digital–Green relations.** AI is increasingly positioned as an instrument for environmental optimisation, from energy efficiency and logistics to resource management and emissions monitoring. While such applications can contribute to reducing waste and improving efficiency in specific contexts, they also generate significant ecological pressures of their own. Large-scale AI systems rely on energy-intensive computation, rare earth extraction, and rapidly obsolescing hardware, producing rebound effects, rising electricity demand and growing e-waste. Seen relationally, digitalisation does not merely act upon the environment; it participates in redefining what counts as "nature" through datafication, metrics and models, while simultaneously drawing on material and ecological resources. The challenge is therefore not optimisation alone, but whether AI-enabled systems contribute to regenerative socio-ecological configurations or lock in new extractive dependencies.
- **Green–Social relations.** The environmental transition is inseparable from questions of justice, labour, care and social cohesion. AI systems increasingly mediate this relation by shaping access to energy, mobility, public services and risk management. However, environmental gains achieved through AI may externalise social costs if data extraction, labour exploitation in data labelling, or uneven exposure to ecological harms are ignored. A relational approach reframes social responsibility not as compensation for "losers" of the green transition, but as an integral dimension of socio-ecological transformation, where distributive, procedural and epistemic justice determine the legitimacy and durability of change.

Across these relational fields, AI introduces moments of **negation** (destabilising existing modes of work, governance and resource use), **preservation** (maintaining essential social functions such as care, access, coordination and rights), and the potential for **creative elevation**—new configurations that could not emerge within digital, green or social domains taken in isolation. Whether AI contributes to such creative transformations depends on how its infrastructures are designed, governed and embedded in collective decision-making.

In this sense, AI-SECRETT approaches the Triple Transition not as a checklist of technological benefits and risks, but as a singular, dynamic process in which AI acts as a powerful relational force. The task is not to deploy AI to "solve" digital, environmental or social challenges separately, but to critically engage with how AI reshapes their interconnections—and to steer these transformations towards more just, sustainable and democratically governed futures.

AI and European Sovereignty

Beyond economic dependency, artificial intelligence increasingly functions as a system of governance and epistemic mediation, shaping how decisions are made, rights are allocated, and knowledge is accessed. When AI systems are used to classify, predict, and recommend at scale, they influence public administration, cultural visibility, and democratic deliberation itself. The concentration of these capacities in a small number of non-European, largely private actors raises structural risks for the European Union as a political community founded on democratic accountability, pluralism, and the protection of fundamental rights. European digital sovereignty is therefore not only a technological or industrial objective, but a prerequisite for preserving democratic agency, epistemic diversity, and public control over the infrastructures that increasingly organise social life.

AiSECRETT is a project that should align with the quest of the European Union for European digital technological sovereignty. In this sense, the Eurostack concept, put forward by professor Francesca Bria and others, reclaims the building up of sovereign AI, open-source ecosystems, green supercomputing, data commons, and a sovereign cloud[5]. But, how do current AI systems score in this regard?

- American dependency: The whole stack of mainstream AI products is currently controlled by the USA and China, introducing conflicts in areas such as privacy protection or political interference.
- Democracy: The centralisation of a source of truth is always problematic, and LLMs are de-facto a USA controlled source of truth.
- European alternatives: A few European companies have managed to develop relevant AI tools,[6].
- Open-source LLM models: The fine tuning of open-source models (such as versions of Mistral) can offer opportunities to build up European bespoke solutions to particular use cases.

AI, Creativity and Culture.

The infrastructures, models, and datasets that underpin contemporary AI systems shape which languages, narratives, aesthetic norms, and creative practices are amplified or marginalised. When creative tools are developed and controlled outside the European cultural, legal, and linguistic space, they risk embedding external value systems, reinforcing cultural homogenisation, and weakening the conditions for creative autonomy. Ensuring sovereign, open, and accountable AI infrastructures is therefore essential to protect Europe's cultural diversity, creative labour, and capacity for experimentation, and to enable AI to support creativity as a plural, situated, and

[5] Bria, F., Timmers, P., & Gernone, F. (2025). EuroStack–A European alternative for digital sovereignty. https://www.euro-stack.info/

[6] https://sifted.eu/rankings/ai-100-2025

socially embedded practice rather than as a standardised industrial output. At the same time, AI is not only transforming cultural production, but also the cognitive conditions under which creativity is exercised. The same tools can generate radically different effects, ranging from cognitive augmentation to cognitive atrophy, depending on the user's level of expertise, critical engagement, and epistemic orientation. This introduces a new "empirical puzzle": identical AI systems do not produce uniform outcomes, but amplify existing inequalities in cognitive and creative capacities

As anticipated in the introduction, the use and impacts of AI in the cultural and creative sectors remain highly contested, with significant scepticism coexisting alongside strong expectations regarding its creative potential. In this context, the training programmes developed within AI-SECRETT should not adopt a purely technological or optimistic stance, but rather address both the legitimate concerns associated with AI deployment—together with corresponding mitigation strategies—and the opportunities for enabling new forms of creative application across the economy.

This dual approach requires moving beyond an exclusive focus on outputs and instead engaging with the processes through which creative work is produced in AI-mediated environments. As AI systems increasingly standardise outputs—making them more homogeneous and widely accessible—they simultaneously obscure differences in underlying cognitive competences. Consequently, observable performance can no longer be considered a reliable proxy for creative capability. This shift calls for the development of new pedagogical and evaluative frameworks that prioritise process, critical reasoning and model-building as central dimensions of learning and assessment.

These are some of the areas that seem to deserve attention:

- Replacing risk: Many creative professionals feel that they are at risk of being replaced by AI (dubbing actors, writers, musicians, etc.), which generates a form of resistance that must be explicitly acknowledged. This perception is not only linked to labour substitution, but also to a deeper cognitive concern: the progressive delegation of creative reasoning itself. When AI is primarily used as a tool for task completion without active engagement, it may contribute to the erosion of individual creative capacities, particularly among those with lower levels of expertise. This reinforces anxieties within the sector, as the threat is not limited to employment displacement but extends to the potential degradation of creative skills and professional identity. At the same time, these dynamics can lead to increased concentration of power and value capture by technology providers, unless counterbalanced by alternative governance models. In this regard, emerging forms of worker-led AI governance (as seen, for example, in the case of

Hollywood writers) suggest that more balanced and potentially positive scenarios can also be constructed.[7].

- Homogenisation trends: AI models have been trained on datasets that are frequently skewed towards Western values or embed a range of societal biases. Many creatives worry that this may lead to a flattening of culture and the persistence of colonial cultural patterns. This tendency is further reinforced by the convergence of outputs generated through AI systems which, while lowering barriers to access, can reduce diversity in forms of expression unless it is actively counterbalanced through situated knowledge, cultural specificity and a critical use of these technologies.
- Limited creativity: AI techniques are designed to produce outputs based on statistical calculations derived from trained data. In this sense, they generate novelty primarily through the recombination of existing patterns—which can, in itself, be interpreted as a form of creativity—but they are not capable of creating ex nihilo. This highlights the importance of maintaining human creative agency as a process of model-building, interpretation and critical articulation. AI can expand the space of possibilities, but only when users engage with it as a partner in a reflexive process, rather than as a shortcut for cognitive outsourcing.

The Vision of AI SECRETT Training Programme.

AiSECRETT envisions a future in which artificial intelligence is governed as a democratic infrastructure rather than deployed as a purely technical or market-driven solution. This implies moving beyond narrow notions of “ethical AI” focused on compliance or individual responsibility, towards collective forms of governance that ensure transparency, accountability, and public oversight. In this vision, AI systems are designed and deployed in ways that preserve democratic agency, support pluralism, and enable citizens, workers, and cultural actors to actively shape the technological trajectories that affect their lives

In line with its understanding of artificial intelligence as a socio-technical infrastructure with profound implications for creativity, rights and governance, AiSECRETT acknowledges the relevance of AI labelling practices as a means to support transparency, accountability and informed agency. In the context of creative and cultural work, AI labels are not conceived as mere compliance mechanisms, but as instruments that make visible when, how and to what extent AI systems intervene in processes of creation, modification or dissemination of content. By integrating AI labelling into its training approach, AiSECRETT seeks to foster critical awareness among creators, learners and audiences regarding the provenance, conditions and implications of AI-mediated outputs, thereby reinforcing the capacity to exercise

[7] Grohmann, R., Rocha, A. C., & Guilherme, G. (2025). Worker-led AI governance: Hollywood writers' strikes and the worker power. Information, Communication & Society, 1-19

rights related to authorship, data use and creative autonomy. In this sense, AI labelling is approached as a pedagogical and ethical practice aligned with European values and democratic principles, rather than as a purely technical or regulatory requirement..

The training programme that has to be designed within the AiSECRETT project should aim to train creative professionals that are capable of designing, developing, and applying AI solutions that contribute to human, social, and environmental progress in an ethical, sustainable, and equitable manner. The programme should embrace the challenge of integrating the three dimensions of the triple transition and guide technological development towards a fairer and more resilient European model aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The vision is therefore to design a master programme that becomes an international reference in comprehensive AI education from a humanistic perspective, that promotes technology in the service of the common good.

What we SHOULD NOT do:

- Train creative professionals as mere users of others countries technology that they do not fully understand. We are not here to create consumers for ChatGPT, Claude or DeepSeek.
- Underestimate the importance of addressing doubts and risks, in favour of AI wishful thinking (which may actually be rejected by many creative professionals).
- Accepting a passive role in a competitive race, neglecting our capacity to influence the course of future events and shape the mind of new professionals.
- Ignore the essential limitations of the technology (replication, limited context windows, scalability, etc.)

What we SHOULD do:

- Focus on the techniques (machine learning, algorithm design, etc.), not only on the final tools addressed to general consumers (LLMs).
- Prioritise training on open-source models and European alternatives, that can contribute to the Eurostack strategy.
- Prioritise training in off-line and lightweight models, which are efficient for simpler tasks and offer substantive gains in terms of sustainability and customise capacity.
- Design a critically informed programme, meaning that both positive and negative aspects of AI should be equally covered (for instance, covering measures against creative theft by AI).
- Embed an explicit understanding of AI as a strategic infrastructure, including its implications for democratic governance, epistemic authority, and cultural autonomy in Europe.
- Train professionals to critically assess dependency risks, lock-in effects, and long-term path dependencies associated with non-European AI stacks and cloud infrastructures.

- Promote data commons, interoperable systems, and public-interest AI architectures as viable alternatives to proprietary, centralised platforms.
- Encourage collective and institutional approaches to AI governance, including public, cooperative, and sector-led models, rather than focusing exclusively on individual optimisation and productivity gains.

Three Common Strategic Pillars for the AI SECRETT Training Program.

AiSECRETT proposes the development of a Master's of Continuing Education Degree in European, Sustainable and Ethical Artificial Intelligence for Creativity and the Triple Transition, with values strongly aligned with the Eurostack principles and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).The programme responds to a forward-looking agenda that calls for **interdisciplinary education, advanced digital skills, and learning environments capable of translating scientific and technical insight into responsible social and cultural practice**.

The vision of the Master's programme is to become an **international reference in applied AI education from a creative and humanistic perspective**, promoting open, sovereign, and sustainable technologies in the service of the common good. Across contemporary research and practice, including the clusters analysed in the AiSECRETT knowledge base, a consistent message emerges: **human creativity remains indispensable**, but its forms, functions, and enabling conditions are being profoundly reshaped. AI systems can expand the space of possibilities, accelerate experimentation, and support creative processes, but they cannot replace human imagination, critical judgment, ethical responsibility, or cultural meaning-making.

In this context, the digital, ecological, and social transitions underway demand creative capacities that **combine imagination with critical reflection, technical fluency with ethical reasoning, and individual expression with collective responsibility**. The academic proposal therefore rests on a balanced integration of **technical rigour, critical understanding, and ethical and political awareness**, treating AI not merely as a set of tools, but as an infrastructure that actively reshapes creativity, labour, knowledge, and governance.

The structure of the program should reflect the needs and particular challenges of the sectoral realities that will be object of study (diagnostic phase), filtering them through the lenses of the dyanmic interactions of the triple transition .

In this sense, the Master's programme does not simply transfer skills, but contributes to an **educational mandate** emerging from the current AI–creativity landscape: to build integrative training ecosystems that connect computational literacy with cultural awareness, pedagogical innovation with democratic governance, and artistic experimentation with social purpose. The overarching objective is to

strengthen the positive contribution of the AI enyhanced creativity to the triple transition, embedding these values directly into teaching methodologies, learning outcomes, and training tools, and by equipping participants to work reflexively across the tensions and synergies that arise between digital, green and social transformation

The pedagogical values guiding the programme translate its philosophical foundations into everyday teaching and learning practices. At the core is a commitment to human-centered creativity, where technology is approached as an extension of human imagination rather than a substitute for it. Learning is conceived as embodied and contextual, rooted in lived experience, cultural understanding and interdisciplinary exploration. Students are encouraged to engage critically with technology, developing the ability not only to use AI tools but also to question their assumptions, biases and societal implications. Creativity is understood as a form of collaborative intelligence emerging from interaction between humans, machines and communities, while ethical responsibility ensures that innovation contributes to social wellbeing, sustainability and cultural diversity. These values are operationalized through pedagogical approaches such as studio-based learning environments for human–AI co-creation, interdisciplinary problem-driven modules, experimentation labs, reflective practice and critical AI literacy, and creative prototyping linked to real societal challenges, turning the pedagogical framework into a practical expression of these principles.

Digital Transition

The digital dimension of the programme focuses on fostering an informed and critical engagement with artificial intelligence as a socio-technical infrastructure. Students are trained to understand what AI is—and what it is not—by situating computational techniques within their broader social, economic and epistemic contexts. The emphasis is not only on technical fluency, but on the capacity to interpret how digital systems reshape knowledge production, professional practices and creative autonomy across sectors.

Training Content:

- Core AI concepts for non-technical audiences (machine learning, natural language processing, neural networks), with attention to their assumptions, limitations and domains of applicability.
- Creative and professional uses of AI, prioritising open-source models and European-developed applications, and examining their implications for authorship, dependency and technological sovereignty.
- Ethics, regulation and governance of AI in Europe, including legal frameworks such as the DSA and emerging debates on accountability and public oversight.
- Cybersecurity fundamentals, with a focus on protecting creative outputs, intellectual property and sensitive organisational data within increasingly data-intensive environments.

Ecological Transition

The second pillar of the master's programme focuses on the role of artificial intelligence in supporting ecological transition across sectors. This includes raising awareness of the direct and indirect environmental impacts of AI systems and their infrastructures, as well as developing knowledge and competences to use AI responsibly as an enabling infrastructure for more sustainable, circular and resource-efficient practices. In this sense, AI is addressed both as a technology whose environmental footprint must be understood and mitigated, and as a strategic support for creative, design and innovation processes that contribute to ecological transformation.

Training Content:

- Direct and indirect environmental impacts of AI systems, including energy consumption, global supply chains, rare earth extraction and e-waste generation.
- Use of lightweight and off-line AI models adapted to specific sectoral contexts, emphasising sustainability, transparency and reduced dependency on large-scale cloud infrastructures.
- Fine-tuning of open-source models and development of task-specific agents with attention to energy efficiency and contextual relevance.
- Responsible prompting and system design practices aimed at minimising computational waste and unnecessary resource use.
- Efficiency applications for sectoral realities, including energy efficiency, resource optimisation and sustainability-oriented decision support..
- AI as an enabling infrastructure for circular and regenerative practices, supporting sustainable design, processes and business models aligned with the green transition.

Social Transition:

The third pillar of the program is addressed to implement a human-centred, ethical vision of AI for creative professionals. It involves training future AI experts to design and implement technologies that do not reproduce inequalities but instead help to overcome them. It also seeks to embody values of social responsibility, privacy and creative ownership among participants.

Training Content:

- Applications of AI in the social economy, focusing on collaboration, inclusive decision-making and the fair allocation of resources for community benefit.
- Creative rights and AI, including technical and organisational strategies to protect authorship, labour conditions and cultural diversity, as well as tools that empower creators rather than displace them.

- Analysis of biases in AI systems, addressing cultural, gender and racial dimensions, and exploring safeguards, governance mechanisms and participatory approaches to mitigation.

Across all three dimensions, the programme trains students to recognise how digital, ecological and social concerns intersect in real-world contexts, and to approach AI not as a neutral solution provider but as a relational force that must be critically shaped. Graduates are expected to emerge not only as competent practitioners, but as reflective professionals capable of navigating complexity, engaging with conflict productively, and contributing to creative transformations aligned with European values and the objectives of the Triple Transition.

The mission of the programme is grounded in the recognition that the relationship between human creativity and artificial intelligence is not one of substitution but of complementarity. It therefore commits to educating professionals capable of co-creating with AI systems rather than competing against them, developing the ability to guide technological exploration through human judgment, interpretation and creativity. At the same time, the programme seeks to cultivate forms of intelligence that remain deeply embodied, contextual and ethically grounded, ensuring that technological capabilities are always connected to cultural understanding and societal responsibility. Ultimately, the mission aims to empower learners to translate the combinatorial potential of digital technologies into meaningful social, cultural and economic value. In doing so, education is reframed not as the transmission of information but as the formation of reflective, AI-augmented creators capable of shaping the future of innovation and the creative economy

Glossary

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence refers to a broad and evolving field of research and practice that emerged in the 1960s, originally as a term used to describe machines capable of performing tasks associated with human intelligence. Today, AI functions as an umbrella concept encompassing a range of computational techniques with distinct purposes, capabilities and limitations. Contemporary AI is largely shaped by data-driven approaches, most notably neural networks and machine learning, which rely on statistical methods to identify patterns in data and generalise them to new situations. Widely used applications such as large language models, which generate text by predicting probable sequences, or generative algorithms capable of producing images, audio or video from textutal prompts or images, are prominent expressions of this paradigm. While these systems have enabled significant advances, they are inherently probabilistic, opaque in their internal functioning and prone to errors such as hallucinations, biases and context loss.

Within AI-SECRETT, AI is understood not as a single technology, nor as synonymous with current consumer-facing tools, but as a family of approaches grounded in different assumptions about representation, reasoning and control. The dominance of large-scale, data-intensive models reflects one powerful but not exclusive paradigm, closely tied to industrial infrastructures, concentration of resources and governance challenges. Alongside these methods, other AI traditions—including symbolic and knowledge-based systems, logic- and graph-based reasoning, optimisation, simulation, causal modelling and emerging hybrid neuro-symbolic approaches—offer alternative design spaces with different trade-offs. Making this plurality explicit allows AI to be approached more deliberately and critically, supporting applications that are auditable, context-sensitive and aligned with creativity, the triple transition and European technological sovereignty, rather than driven solely by hype or scale.

AI as Infrastructure

AI as Infrastructure refers to the understanding of artificial intelligence not as a neutral or standalone tool, but as a foundational socio-technical system that organises how knowledge is produced, decisions are made, value is distributed and cultural expressions gain visibility. In this perspective, AI systems embed assumptions, norms and power relations through their architectures, datasets, optimisation goals and ownership structures, thereby influencing governance processes, labour relations and access to resources at scale. Within AI-SECRETT, framing AI as infrastructure highlights the need for public oversight, democratic governance and strategic autonomy, recognising that the way AI infrastructures are designed and controlled has long-term consequences for social equity, cultural diversity and European technological sovereignty.

Creative Professionals

Creative Professionals are individuals whose work involves the generation, interpretation and transformation of cultural, symbolic, social or experiential value, and who operate at the intersection of creativity, technology and societal change. Within the AI-SECRETT framework, this category includes, but is not limited to, creators, artists, designers, cultural practitioners, innovators, entrepreneurs and other change-makers engaged across creative, cultural and innovation-driven sectors. They typically enter the programme with heterogeneous backgrounds, skills and professional identities, but share a common interest in critically understanding and shaping the role of artificial intelligence in their fields.

AI-SECRETT conceives Creative Professionals not as passive users or consumers of proprietary AI tools, but as reflective agents capable of engaging with AI as a socio-technical infrastructure embedded in power relations, value extraction mechanisms and governance choices. The programme is designed to support their transformation from domain-specific practitioners into professionals who can meaningfully integrate AI into human-led creative and innovation processes, while remaining attentive to ethical, legal, environmental and social implications. Over the course of the programme, Creative Professionals are expected to strengthen their technical literacy, critical judgment and strategic autonomy, enabling them to contribute to culturally diverse, socially responsible and environmentally sustainable applications of AI in line with European values and the objectives of the triple transition.

Creativity:

Creativity, in the context of the AI-SECRETT Vision, Mission and Values framework, is understood as a **situated and relational capacity** rather than an isolated individual talent. It emerges from the interaction between people, technologies, cultural repertoires, and institutional contexts. Creativity is therefore not defined primarily by originality in the abstract, but by the ability to recombine existing knowledge, practices, and tools in ways that are meaningful within a given social and historical setting. This definition deliberately shifts the focus away from romantic notions of genius and towards creativity as a distributed process, shaped by learning environments, access to resources, and collective experimentation—conditions that the project explicitly aims to cultivate.

From an operational perspective, creativity is understood as a situated practice of problem framing and world-making, through which imagination, responsibility, and embodied experience are brought into relation. Within AI-SECRETT, creative work is not treated as an abstract capacity to generate outputs, nor as a deficit to be compensated by computational systems, but as a socially and materially grounded process for navigating complexity across the digital, green, and social transitions. Creative acts are therefore evaluated not only in terms of novelty or aesthetic value, but by their capacity to articulate alternatives, question dominant framings, and open new pathways for collective action.

Artificial intelligence is approached not as a neutral “tool” that simply executes creative intent, but as an infrastructure that actively shapes what can be

seen, imagined, and expressed. While AI systems may expand the space of exploration, lower certain barriers to experimentation, and accelerate iteration, they also embed epistemological assumptions, power relations, and exclusions derived from their training data, architectures, and ownership structures. Creativity, in this sense, includes the competence to engage with AI reflexively and critically: recognising its affordances without delegating imagination to it, resisting pre-packaged visions of the world, and remaining attentive to questions of authorship, bias, agency and responsibility. Creativity thus remains irreducibly human, relational and political, even when it unfolds in dialogue with computational systems.

Finally, creativity is defined normatively as a **driver of social impact and public value**. Within the project's VMV logic, creative processes are successful when they translate into practices, services, narratives, or policies that contribute to more inclusive, sustainable, and democratic futures. This entails embedding creativity within ethical principles, respect for cultural diversity, and a commitment to European values such as openness, solidarity, and human dignity. In this sense, creativity becomes a bridge between individual capability and collective transformation: a learnable, governable, and assessable capacity that links cultural production, technological innovation, and societal change in a coherent and accountable way.

European Digital (or Technological) Sovereignty

European Digital or Technological Sovereignty refers to the capacity of the European Union and its societies to shape, govern, and use digital and AI infrastructures in ways that preserve democratic agency, protect fundamental rights, and ensure public accountability. In the context of AI-SECRETT, this capacity is not understood as simple control over technologies or supply chains, nor as an automatic guarantee of ethical or socially desirable outcomes. Rather, it concerns the conditions under which digital systems can be developed and deployed without undermining citizens' ability to understand, contest, and influence the technological environments that mediate knowledge, decision-making, and creative expression.

From this perspective, European digital sovereignty should not be framed as autarky, exclusion, or the replacement of one dominant provider with another. A narrow focus on proprietary European alternatives risks reproducing structural lock-ins under a different flag. AI-SECRETT therefore approaches sovereignty through a multi-player lens that prioritises user agency, interoperability, and informed choice. Sovereignty is expressed in the ability of individuals, organisations, and public institutions to select, combine, and switch between digital services, models, and platforms without irreversible dependencies or loss of control over data, workflows, or creative outputs.

In this sense, European digital sovereignty is best understood as the capacity to sustain open, plural, and contestable digital ecosystems aligned with public interest objectives and the goals of the triple transition. Such ecosystems do not suppress cultural or normative diversity; they create the institutional and technical space in which different approaches can emerge, compete, and gain legitimacy, including those grounded in democratic values, fundamental rights, and social responsibility.

Rather than imposing values through infrastructural dominance, this conception locates

Eurostack

Eurostack refers to a strategic vision promoted within European policy and research circles that advocates for the development of a fully sovereign, interoperable and open European digital and AI ecosystem across all layers of the technological stack, from hardware and cloud infrastructures to data, software, models and governance frameworks. In the context of the AISECRETT project, Eurostack is not understood as a purely industrial or protectionist initiative, but as a political and cultural strategy aimed at reducing structural dependencies on non-European platforms, countering extractive digital models and strengthening democratic control over key technological infrastructures. By prioritising open standards, public-interest technologies, data commons and sustainable computing, the Eurostack approach provides a concrete framework for aligning AI development with European values, cultural diversity and the objectives of the digital, green and social transitions.

Extractive AI Models

Extractive AI Models refer to artificial intelligence systems whose design, training and deployment rely on the large-scale appropriation of data, knowledge and creative outputs without fair compensation, transparency or meaningful consent from the individuals and communities that generate them. These models tend to concentrate economic rents, control over infrastructures and epistemic authority in a small number of corporate actors, while externalising social, cultural and environmental costs, such as labour exploitation, ecological degradation, cultural homogenisation and the erosion of creative rights. Within the AI-SECRETT perspective, extractive AI models are understood not merely as a technical issue, but as a structural governance problem that calls for alternative approaches grounded in public interest, collective value creation and democratic oversight.

Off-line and Lightweight AI Models

Off-line and lightweight AI models refer to Artificial Intelligence systems designed to operate with limited computational resources, reduced energy consumption and minimal dependence on continuous cloud connectivity. These models are typically optimised for specific tasks or sectoral contexts and can run locally on devices or within controlled infrastructures, enabling greater transparency, customisation and data sovereignty. Within the AI-SECRETT framework, off-line and lightweight models are valued for their potential to reduce environmental impact, mitigate dependency on large-scale proprietary platforms, and support sustainable, resilient and context-aware applications of AI aligned with European values and public-interest objectives.

Self-hosted AI systems can use existing models to be used on a variety of dedicated "consumer" hardware, giving the possibility to build specific workflows for a variety of creative processes. The agency of several types of AI locally available is an

essential feature to open the creative potential of AI technologies without relying on the innovation led by only a few world scaled companies. Furthermore, concerning Generative AI (GenAI), when one or both the model and when its original training dataset are explicitly open source, the global level transparency of the built system rises up. Personal dataset can be freely defined in conformance with the models technologies (neural network type) and used for finetuning purposes, which permits to compensate for some limitation and bias of the base model, or even to build small models from scratch. Non-generative AI (data analysis, segmentation or diagnosis through Supervised Learning, Unsupervised Learning, Reinforcement Learning or, more recently Reservoir Computing) technologies can also be integrated in the workflow by leveraging standard communications protocols between AI. In order to fully grasp the creative potential of these technologies and their arrangements in coherent workflows, engineering knowledge is required, that why STEAM education is of primary importance

STEAM training and research

STEAM training refers to structured learning processes—across formal, non-formal and informal contexts—designed to develop interdisciplinary competences by integrating science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. It emphasizes the acquisition of both technical and transversal skills (e.g. creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and digital literacy) through experiential, project-based and real-world learning environments.

STEAM research refers to interdisciplinary knowledge production activities that connect education, science, technology, creative practices and innovation ecosystems, often involving collaboration between academia, industry, public institutions and communities. It supports the generation of new insights, methods and solutions aligned with societal challenges such as digital transformation, sustainability and social inclusion.