

PRESS RELEASE

International Copyright Conference hosted by the Authors' Rights Initiative on 10/11/2025 in the Academy of Arts in Berlin.

New Momentum in Political Discourse

On the 10th of November, the Authors' Rights Initiative hosted the 13th International Authors' Rights Conference under the motto "Culture.Freedom.Europe – strong for culture and economy for 25 years", in the 25th year of the organisation's existence. Experts from the cultural, creative and media industries, as well as from academia, law and politics, discussed the current issues surrounding Generative AI: "Six hours of intense information absorption around the topic of GenAI and copyright". In addition to a large number of prominent and knowledgeable experts, politicians also took the stage, with the most prominent speaker being the Federal Minister of Justice and for Consumer Protection, Dr. Stefanie Hubig. All in all, a new wind can be identified in political discourse, which was further strengthened by the Munich GEMA ruling of the 11th of November.

Berlin, 13th of November 2025. For the 13th time, the Authors' Rights Initiative (Initiative Urheberrecht (IU)) hosted the international Authors' Rights Conference in the Academy of Arts on Pariser Platz. This year, the event focused on the topic "Future-proof and sustainable? The role of Generative AI in the creative ecosystem". Leading experts from academia, politics, business, culture, and practice discussed the current challenges and opportunities of Generative Artificial Intelligence for copyright, creative industries, and society.

How can AI innovation be reconciled with the protection of intellectual property? What role will regulation, transparency obligations and licensing play in future European practice? And how can fair and sustainable value creation for creative professionals be ensured? These questions shaped this year's multifaceted programme.

Following opening remarks from Matthias Hornschuh, composer and spokesperson for the Authors' Rights Initiative (IU), and Katharina Uppenbrink, Managing Director of the IU, the event was officially opened by Prof. Manos Tsangaris, President of the Academy of Arts, and author Mario Giordano.

The scientific program kicked off with a comprehensive "Update on Gen AI." Legal scholar Prof. Dr. Karl-Nikolaus Peifer (University of Cologne) opened with a brilliant keynote speech, while computer science professor Dr. Sebastian Stober (Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg) summarized his findings on the topic of GenAI and stated that "cheap and convenient excuses" predominate. Legal scholar Prof. Dr. Philipp Hacker (European New School of Digital Studies) gave an exciting update on "AI, copyright, and the future of internet search," and media scholar Prof. Dr. Martin Andree (University of Cologne) emphatically stated that "digitalocracy" had "abolished competition"; he asked the question: "How many clear studies do we still need?"

The political part of the conference was opened with a keynote speech from the Federal Minister of Justice Dr. Stefanie Hubig. She wants to actively ensure that authors are fairly compensated for the use of their works, and sees the EU as primarily responsible in this regard. She hopes for clear rulings in the pending proceedings, but “if the licensing market... does not noticeably pick up, we will need to discuss legal changes.” Hubig also emphasized that she is aware of how unhappy many authors are with the current EU Commission guidelines. The Minister’s speech can be seen and heard here, from 1 minute and 21 seconds: [Conference 2025 | Initiative Urheberrecht](#).

The Minister’s speech was followed by statements from Dr. Konrad Schmidt-Werthern (Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media (BKM)), Minister Nathanael Liminski (North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW)), Axel Voss, MEP, and Renate Nikolay from the European Commission. A key focus was on the legal and regulatory frameworks for Generative AI currently being created at both the EU and federal levels. The federal states, led by NRW, are also participating in the discourse. Although there were gradual differences, all speakers agreed that the regulatory framework is not yet perfect. In particular, the BKM head of office and the NRW Minister for European Affairs promised to become even more active. Schmidt-Werthern said that it is about “the future of creative work“, while Liminski stated: “AI (...) must not come at the expense of those who create the content.”

Special attention was paid to the topic of deep fakes and personal rights, which was also mentioned by politicians. In the context of the so-called “Hirschhausen case,” lawyer Götz Schneider-Rothaar and Dr. Eckart von Hirschhausen highlighted current challenges in protecting voice and image.

“Thinking Outside of the Box” addressed diverse perspectives: Prof. Dr. Petra Gehring (TU Darmstadt) chose to focus on the digital policy dimensions of dealing with generative AI in academia. Prof. Dr. Daniel Mügge from the University of Amsterdam eloquently elaborated on “AI & Politics: the good, the useless and the ugly,” and stated: “When it comes to ‘becoming independent’, there is still far too little energy in Europe!”. Karen Rønne from the Danish Press Publications gave a deep and important insight into the efforts in Denmark, and Harrie Temmink of the EUIPO (European Union Intellectual Property Office – Alicante) highlighted the new possibilities offered by this European institution.

In the afternoon, central panels addressed AI policy and copyright in Europe as well as national regulatory approaches: In the first panel, Dr. Amit Datta (Aleph Alpha), Jean-Philippe Mochon (Conseil d’État France), Prof. Dr. Philipp Hacker, Karen Rønne, and Stefanie Eisenschenk (screenwriter) discussed how national actors in Europe could shape and design the legal framework. The panel was moderated by internationally active lawyer Sabine Richly. This program item was supplemented by Dr. Kai Welp from GEMA, who highlighted one of the most important issues of the day: the eagerly awaited rulings on GEMA’s lawsuits against OpenAI (ChatGPT) and Suno – the ruling announced the following day and the reasoning behind it will have delighted everyone present. Dr. Robert Staats from VG Wort then presented new and innovative ideas on regulatory approaches to input and output; his comments on possible solutions for output were met with great interest.

The second panel brought together Dr. Christian Meyer-Seitz (BMJV), Dr. Stephanie Schulz-Hombach (BKM), and Robert Heinrich (BDMS), representatives of the ministries, to discuss the political governance of AI and copyright in Germany. It became clear that some ministries have a great deal of understanding and in-depth knowledge of copyright and current issues. The panel discussion also highlighted the need for a clear and consistent approach to AI and copyright in Germany.

In closing, the two members of the Bundestag, Ansgar Heveling (CDU) and Martin Rabanus (SPD), presented their perspectives on the requirements of culture and AI policy, followed by a stirring update from Prof. Dr. Thomas Höppner (Geradin Partners) concerning developments in media anti-trust law. The conference came to a close with a champagne reception celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Authors' Rights Initiative.

The programme was hosted by composer and spokesperson of the Authors' Rights Initiative, Matthias Hornschuh, and the Managing Director of the umbrella organisation, Katharina Uppenbrink. After more than six hours, they thanked the impressive speakers on behalf of over 140,000 authors and performing artists from more than 40 member organisations.

In their closing remarks, the hosts noted that some things have indeed changed for the better in the legislative policy discourse. The concerns of authors and performing artists receive greater attention; the demands made by politicians of Brussels are becoming more concrete. Matthias Hornschuh: "One year ago, our interdisciplinary "Tandem-Study" from computer scientist Prof. Dr. Sebastian Stober and legal scholar Prof. Dr. Tim W. Dornis attracted international attention. One year later, a German court bases their correct and important ruling in the GEMA vs. OpenAI case on significant parts of our study. This direction is exactly what the industry needed." Katharina Uppenbrink adds: "The new momentum in the political discourse, which we were able to experience at our conference, and GEMA's success in court – there is hope."