

Social Research Call

Title:

***TRUST, AGENCY AND
CRITICAL THINKING IN AI***



Acronym: TACT-AI

Project leader: Mireia Vendrell Morancho

Host organisation: Artificial Intelligence Research Institute- Spanish National Research Council (IIIA-CSIC)

Main purpose of the project: TACT-AI investigates how secondary school students engage with AI and how their perceptions of AI competence and authority influence trust, agency, and critical thinking. It examines how AI design shapes these perceptions to generate evidence that supports critical AI literacy, educational policy, and the responsible design of AI systems for young people.

Design/methodology/approach: A quantitative mixed-design combines a large-scale survey of approximately 2,000 secondary school students in Spain with an embedded 2x2 vignette experiment. Participatory co-design workshops with students will help translate the findings into educational and policy recommendations.

Potential results: The research will generate evidence on how AI design influences young people's trust in AI and their capacity to think critically and make independent decisions. The findings will support the development of AI literacy frameworks, educational guidance, and more responsible AI systems.

Social relevance of the research: As AI becomes increasingly embedded in young people's learning and everyday decision-making, understanding its influence on trust and autonomy is increasingly important. The findings will support more equitable educational practices, strengthen critical AI literacy, and inform policies and AI technologies that foster responsible, transparent, and human-centred use among secondary school students.

Originality/value of the project: Moving beyond technical AI literacy, the research examines how AI design influences students' perceptions of authority and independent judgement. Its combination of large-scale survey research, embedded experimentation, and student co-design offers a novel framework for understanding young people's relationships with AI and their capacity to engage with these technologies critically and responsibly.