



FUTURE  
**500**

Summer  
Workshop  
2026

Call for Applications

# Has Dialogue Failed? – Towards a New Concept of Interreligious Engagement

5 – 7 July 2026 | Berlin, Germany

Interreligious and worldview dialogue is one of the most established instruments of peacebuilding and social cohesion in Europe. Yet the evidence of its impact is surprisingly thin. Encounter happens. Representation is secured. But sustained cooperation, shared civic agency, and lasting change in conflict dynamics remain rare.

Recent crises have raised difficult questions about the resilience of dialogue initiatives across Europe: the Russian Orthodox Church's theological legitimisation of the war against Ukraine, the rupture of Jewish–Muslim dialogue after October 7 and the war in Gaza, and rising antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism despite decades of interreligious dialogue programming.

The uncomfortable question this workshop puts on the table is not how to improve dialogue formats – but whether the concept of dialogue itself has become part of the problem.

Most current dialogue practice rests on assumptions that are rarely examined: that encounter reduces prejudice, that shared humanity can be excavated beneath doctrinal difference, and that religious communities are coherent partners capable of speaking with one voice. These assumptions deserve scrutiny. They may not only be empirically fragile – they may actively obscure the power asymmetries, internal heterogeneity, and real conflicts of interest that structured interreligious spaces were never designed to address.



DIALOGUE  
PERSPECTIVES  
E.V.



Federal Foreign Office



FUTURE  
500

Summer  
Workshop  
2026

The workshop therefore steps back from methodology to ask more fundamental questions:

- What images of the human being underpin dialogue?
- How do religious traditions conceptualise responsibility, dignity, conflict, and difference?
- And are these frameworks adequate for today's conditions of polarisation and fragmentation?

A further challenge emerges from transhumanist developments such as cognitive enhancement, digital identity, human–AI hybridisation, and the technological contestation of finitude and embodiment. These developments are already reshaping what it means to be human in a community. And with it, the question of who the dialogue partner actually is.

By integrating perspectives from conflict research, the workshop approaches dialogue not as a harmony project but as a serious form of conflict engagement. It asks what dialogue can realistically achieve, where its structural limits lie, and which normative foundations are necessary for a framework that does not evade tension but treats it as the actual site of democratic work.

**The goal is not critique for its own sake, but reconstruction: the development of a dialogue concept that is anthropologically grounded, conflict-aware, transhumanistically literate, and honest about what dialogue can and cannot do. The workshop will bring together several key European actors in the field of interreligious and worldview dialogue, as well as representatives of major European dialogue initiatives. Their practical experience will serve as a starting point for addressing these fundamental questions from within the realities of dialogue practice.**





**FUTURE  
500**

**Summer  
Workshop  
2026**

## Format

Through a combination of workshops, interactive sessions, and exchanges with experts, participants will explore the challenges and possibilities of contemporary dialogue practice. The programme will place a particular emphasis on engaging conflict, critically reflecting on existing dialogue approaches, and developing new perspectives for interreligious and worldview engagement.

## Costs & Logistics

- Meals during the programme will be partially covered. For accommodation, participants will receive a subsidy of up to €70 per night. Please note that you are responsible for booking your own accommodation.
- Travel costs can be reimbursed up to €300 (2nd class only).
- More detailed information regarding travel and reimbursement will be provided after the selection process.

## Workshop Lead

Jo Frank (Director DialoguePerspectives e.V.)

Kira Wisniewski (Programme Lead Future 500)

## Apply Now

Applications are open until 10 May 2026. Please submit your application via our [website](#).

The Future 500 programme brings together Europe's most promising talents from politics, business, academia, the arts and civil society. Future 500 develops concrete socio-political initiatives through international interreligious-worldview and intercultural dialogue, implementing these within European civil society. Through its work, Future 500 sustainably strengthens social cohesion across Europe.

<https://future500network.com>

