

## PRESS RELEASE

### SISSA Student Day is back

On Wednesday 20 February, SISSA will open the doors to hundreds of high school students to discover science informally



Trieste, 14 February 2019

How do we perceive time? Why do plants take on specific shapes? What is *machine learning*? These are just some of the questions that SISSA researchers will answer during the *Student Day*, an entire morning dedicated to the students of the last two years of high school to discover the research underway, the big questions in science, the ethical and social implications of the technological innovations and much more. The appointment is set for Wednesday 20 February, starting from 9 am in the School's main lecture hall. There will be more than 500 participants, from technical institutes and scientific, language and classical high schools of the region.



Workshops, seminars, interactive lessons, games and exhibitions have been organised for the fifth edition of the SISSA *Student Day*. Participants will be able to move freely, following their own inclinations and curiosity. The event will start at 9 am in the School's main lecture hall with greetings of SISSA Director, Stefano Ruffo, and the presentation of the programme by the event coordinator, Simona Cerrato. This will be followed by almost four hours of class and laboratory activities.

There are close to thirty **seminars and interactive lessons** dedicated to the different research sectors of the Institute. Alessandro Rubin will explain to maths lovers how to "count the uncountable", while Daniele Dimonte and Andrea Papale will provide new tricks to win, and inevitably cheat, playing *Dobble*. The quiz "Rischiavirus" dedicated to biological risks and the open discussion on "Animal experimentation with science and conscience" are ideal for those interested in the **lab life**. Many appointments have also been organised for **artificial intelligence** lovers. Alessandro Laio and Michele Allegra will reveal how a neural network works using an interactive game, while Luca Heltai will guide the students "behind the scenes of *machine learning*". Finally, Simona Cerrato will hold the discussion game "I, robot. Our life with artificial intelligence". Sensory extravaganzas, simulations, superconductivity, memory and much more are also on the programme of events.

To talk about research, but also about its ethical, social and economic implications, researchers will be accompanied in the **science dialogues** by the students of SISSA's Master in Science Communication "Franco Prattico" (MCS). Anna Fehrenbach and Catia Baldassari will discuss how we perceive time, while Mattia Bernetti, Arianna Racchiutti and Marina Menga will talk about drug design, on a journey that ranges from biology to computers passing through physics.

Several appointments will be held in **English**. They will be the opportunity to meet some of SISSA scientists coming from abroad. They include Maria Ktori who studies language with Jon Carr, Mara De Rosa and Jana Hasenäcker, and physicists Josu Hernandez Garcia and Juana Herrero-Garcia, with a talk on "*The invisible Universe: from neutrinos to dark matter*".

**Visits to the laboratories** (booking is required) have also been organised to draw close to the world of neuroscience, genomics and mathematics. Students will be able to see how it is possible to colour neurons in order to study their behaviour or to stimulate specific regions of our brain non-invasively. They will also be shown how maths can enter the laboratory and, thanks to a combination of theory and experiments, help to understand how cells move or why plants take on specific shapes.

Finally, the programme includes guided tours of the **exhibition** “The history of the Universe at a glance” which, in 15 stages, presents the idea of the huge vastness of time compared to historic and human time, and the **garden activities**, from the *Scent Pathway*, to the exhibits on music, sound and optical illusions, to the mural by Piero Ramella.

«The *Student Day* returns for the fifth year and I am sure that it will be as successful as the previous editions» comments Stefano Ruffo. «The fact that the bookings closed within a few minutes bears witness to the exceptional success it has had in the past».

«For an entire morning, we will be invaded by the blast of energy and curiosity these girls and boys bring with them» continues SISSA Director «We have scheduled many brand new and creative activities, designed specifically for this event, which see the full participation of SISSA, from the scientific and administrative personnel right through to the students».

*Student Day* 2019 is part of the “SISSA for School” initiatives, the weekly activity of visits and meetings which takes place all year in SISSA with the intent of spreading scientific culture and making the institute’s activities known to young people. “SISSA for School” is an activity organised by Sissa Medialab in association with SISSA researchers and personnel.

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#### USEFUL LINKS

Full programme:  
<https://bit.ly/2SVno58>  
Short programme:  
<https://bit.ly/2Byvif6>

#### IMAGE

Credits: Sissa Medialab

#### SISSA

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