American Society for Cybernetics

ASC Brazil 2026 is organized around seven thematic tracks, each led by proponents who will guide conversations within their domain. Participants are invited to submit contributions aligned with the concerns and formats of their chosen track.

# Track 1: Viable Confluences — 100 Years of Stafford Beer in Conversation with Latin America

*Organized by Metaphorum (Allenna Leonard, Jon Walker, Angela Espinosa, Pedro Pablo Cardoso, Camilo Osejo, Ayham Fattoum, Stephen Harwood, Juliana Mariano Alves)*

Celebrating the centenary of Stafford Beer's birth, this track explores how his vision of freedom, viability, and autonomy continues to resonate within Latin American experiences of social, ecological, and institutional transformation. The track invites participants to examine how Beer's cybernetics aligns with confluence as mutual amplification, where diverse currents strengthen each other without assimilation. Through poster presentations, participatory marketplace discussions, and a Syntegration demonstration, participants will explore governance, complexity, and the design of viable institutions across different cultural and territorial contexts. Selected abstracts from this track will be invited for publication in a special issue in a cyber-systemic journal.

**Keywords:** Stafford Beer, Organizational Cybernetics, Metaphorum, Viable System Model, Team Syntegrity, Confluence

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# Track 2: Pluriversal More-than-Human Design

*Organized by Annan Zuo (University of Oxford), Claudia Westermann (Curtin University), Frederick Steier (University of South Florida)*

Across many cultural worlds, designing is a collective process emerging from reciprocal relations among humans, animals, plants, landscapes, materials, and spirits. Drawing on pluriversal and more-than-human design frameworks, this track explores how cybernetics can participate in world-making processes by engaging with ontologies in which agency is distributed and more-than-human beings are co-creators of living systems. We invite contributions that demonstrate how alternative cosmologies and relational practices inform systemic and ecological design projects across scales, from artefacts and installations to architecture and landscapes.

Presenters are invited to speak from, narrate, or perform the perspectives of more-than-human agents, presenting their work through the lifeworlds, sensory capacities, and communicative features of their chosen more-than-human beings. This might include articulating Amazonian forestry practices through the view of a harpy eagle or reimagining Satoyama landscape recovery through the voice of a cypress tree. Through connecting performativity, situated knowledge, and multispecies attunement, this track aims to reveal shared relational ontologies embedded in cross-cultural more-than-human design practices while celebrating their distinct cosmologies.

We welcome papers, performances, artifacts, stories, and design speculations. Participants who need an accepted publication for funding reasons should ideally contact the track chairs for publishing options and timelines prior to submitting an abstract.

**Keywords:** Pluriverse, More-than-Human, Design, Performativity, Multispecies Attunement

## Track 3: Hybrid Matters

*Organized by Graziele Lautenschlaeger (USTP Austria), Merve Keskin (University of Salzburg), Thibaud Chassin (University of Graz)*

With the track Hybrid Matters, we aim to juxtapose the cybernetic principles with the contemporary theoretical frameworks of posthumanism and new materialism, unfolding and articulating material-discursive practices that address, for instance, Donna Haraway´s (1944-) natureculture concept (2003) and Karen Barad´s (1956-) agential realism (2012). The guided conversations and activities envision the deconstruction of dichotomies that impoverish discussions and simplify our understanding of the world; envisioning a circular, continuous, and mutual influence between organic and machinic elements. Throughout hybrid gardening as a meeting point for discussing biodigital convergence, the garden operates as both an experiential laboratory and a metaphor for exploring hybrid systems that integrate biological, digital, and cultural dimensions. Participants are invited to engage in participatory mapping, co-design of a hybrid garden, prototyping with plants and sensors, and collective documentation, materializing conversations through making and exploring how hybrid materialities shape new models of coexistence and cybernetic exchange. We encourage not only research abstract submissions but also conceptual projects.

**Keywords:** Hybrid Matters, Natureculture, Biodigital Convergence, Garden, Digital Twin

## Track 4: Futuribles — Ἀκυβέρνητος (Akybérnētos): Drifting Ecologies-as-Cosmologies

*Organized by Clarissa Ribeiro (USP Brazil), Victoria Vesna (UCLA United States), Jill Scott (ZhdK Switzerland), Claudia Jacques (Technoetic Arts Journal, UK), Rewa Wright (QUT Australia), Tania Fraga (UnB Brazil), Rejane Spitz (PUC Rio Brazil)*

Drawing on Roy Ascott’s concept of “futuribles,” this track explores futures emerging not from control but from drift, worlds composed through syncretic encounters, randomic events, and noisy multispecies ecologies. The Greek Ἀκυβέρνητος (unsteered/ungoverned) frames systemic states where steering dissolves, treating drift as fertile ground for new modes of attention and response. Through live demonstrations, installations, and an “Akybérnētos Lab,” participants will co-explore noise-based systems, chance operations, and syncretic methodologies that resonate with Indigenous cosmopolitical practices where worlds are forged relationally.

**Keywords:** Cybernetics, Futuribles, Indigenous Ecologies-as-Cosmologies, Noise, Drift, Syncretism, Technoetic Arts

## Track 5: Entangled Confluences — Designing Relational

# Futures through Indigenous Wisdom, Quantum Theory, and AI Reflexivity

*Organized by R. Eva King and Frederick Steier (Fielding Graduate University)*

This track fosters a living dialogue among three domains: Indigenous land-based relationality, quantum systems thinking, and AI reflexivity, treating them as tributaries of a single river of systemic meaning-making. Through provocative talks and interactive workshops (including "The Shadow Conversations Lab," which explores AI and observer-dependence, and "Confluence Mapping," which visualizes plural ontologies), participants will explore how distinct ways of knowing can coexist without collapsing into sameness. The track centers on mutual amplification, examining how system designers can work with emergent meaning, relational accountability, and non-binary logic.

We welcome papers, provocations, or other suggestions that initiate conversations to explore these ideas more fully together.

**Keywords:** Indigenous Relationality, Quantum Systems Thinking, AI Reflexivity, Entanglement, Design

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# Track 6: Competing Cartographies: Mapping as Practice of Recursive Becoming

*Organized by the Art, Media, Cybernetics Working Group, American Society for Cybernetics*

In his famous axiom – "the map is not the territory" – Alfred Korzybski articulates a disjunction: no representation exhausts the real. British statistician George E. P. Box's pragmatic observation that "all models are wrong, but some are useful" redirects attention from questions of correspondence to questions of function. Cartography's utility is always situated and partial: different models illuminate different aspects of the real while excluding others. The plurality of maps and models and their usefulness gestures towards a fundamental insight: reality possesses multitudes.

What then of mapping and modeling? Historically, cartography functioned as a practice of territorial rationalization, operating between systems of power and governance. In modernity, the model has become a vessel for scientific and technological knowledge, projected onto our understanding and experience of the world. Today, we live in hyperrealities stitched together from hyperobjects, engulfed and immersed within invisible infrastructures. While the meaning of the map has changed, its essence – that of an epistemic and ontological apparatus for re-negotiating and re-constituting our relationship with the world – has remained the same.

This track invites a cybernetic reframing of mapping and modeling of a different paradigm, grounded in intimacy rather than surveillance, in reciprocal conversation rather than unilateral observation. We seek perspective in the form of paper presentations, performances, performance lectures, dialogues, panels, walking conversations, workshops, and installations that place mapping not apart from the world but situated and woven into its unfolding.

**Keywords:** Territory, Cartography, Model, Reflexivity, Plurality

## Track 7: Epistemology After the Algorithm: A Second-Order Cybernetic Intervention

*Organized by Arantzazu Saratxaga (Aix Marseille Université)*

This proposal outlines a collaboration within the ASC framework to create a collective working space leading to a joint publication. The project explores the emancipatory potential of second-order cybernetics as a response to the epistemological foundations of contemporary algorithmic governance.

Algorithmic governance rests on the assumption that reality is objectively given, fully modelable, and manageable through computation. This premise shifts epistemic authority to algorithmic systems, treated as neutral producers of comprehensive knowledge. The dominance of AI depends on the belief that algorithmic models generate objective truth. Consequently, power is delegated to systems that claim neutrality while concealing their selective operations. A “God’s eye” perspective emerges, legitimizing algorithmic authority not only through performance but through an attributed status of objectivity and omniscience. The track challenges this logic through second-order operative epistemology. Rather than presuming objectivity, second-order cybernetics observes observation itself. It emphasizes that every observation is selective and entails blind spots. Knowledge arises not from representing reality but from reflecting on how observations are constructed. This perspective questions the promises of transparency, automation, and total control.

The track will address central epistemological tensions: observation versus representation; self-organization versus algorithmic determinism; transparency versus the blind spot of observation; communication versus control; reflexivity versus automation; and uncertainty versus the illusion of total calculability.

Drawing on cybernetic operative knowledge, the track aims to critically examine the epistemological foundations of algorithmic power, expose their fragility, and open alternative spaces for thought and action, laying the groundwork for a subsequent joint publication.

**Keywords:** AI, Epistemologies, Second Order

## Track 8: Cyber-Systemic Confluences — Gathering the Dispersed, Refocusing the Distracted

*Organizerd by José dos Santos Cabral Filho, Sandro Luis Schlindwein, Mateus van Stralen*

Drawing on Vilém Flusser’s insight that the challenge of contemporary technological culture is bringing together the dispersed and refocusing the distracted, this track proposes an inquiry into traditions of cyber-systemic thinking. It seeks

confluences understood as processes of refining attention, cultivating unexpected encounters, exploring modelling possibilities, and moving toward action under conditions of uncertainty and complexity.

Rather than approaching technology as an apparatus of restrictive control or strict problem-solving, it invites participants to engage cyber-systemic practices as a way of touching the unknown: welcoming problems before attempting to resolve them through modes of attunement that remain with what resists immediate comprehension. Central to the track is the cultivation of reflexive dialogues: encounters with others, human and other-than-human, in which mutual perturbations become opportunities for learning and transformation.

Understanding may emerge through subtle and provisional modelling of intricacies rather than closed and unambiguous representation. Action is approached through the logic of doing and undoing knots: engaging constraints topologically rather than instrumentally, without reinstating totalising control, and recognising when undoing—or even not acting—may itself constitute a cybernetic response.

Contributions are encouraged to engage cyber-systemic confluences as living processes that gather attention and refocus distracted agencies, while keeping uncertainty, plurality, and reflexivity in play. The track welcomes proposals that may take the form of papers, artistic works, performative experiments, or speculative practices operating across disciplines and scales, as well as contributions more closely aligned with traditions of systems thinking.

**Keywords:** Cyber-Systemic Thinking, Second-Order Cybernetics, Vilém Flusser, Art and Technology, Reflexive Dialogue, Modelling, Attention, Control