

CFP: “Deterritorializing Artificial Intelligence: East Asia as Method”

We are inviting scholars to submit proposals for a symposium to be held at Washington University in St. Louis on **February 12-13, 2027**, titled **“Deterritorializing Artificial Intelligence: East Asia as Method.”** This two-day symposium aims to develop new approaches for AI research by moving beyond US-centered frameworks and attending to the transnational histories, epistemologies, and infrastructures through which AI takes shape. To do so, we turn to East Asia as a historically pivotal site shaping AI’s development. What is today understood as Western AI supremacy is inseparable from transpacific circulations of capital, expertise, education, and infrastructure. These entanglements are visible in the prominence of Asian and Asian American figures such as Jensen Huang and Fei-Fei Li, as well as in the transnational pipelines that structure training, migration, and collaboration for a league of engineers in Silicon Valley. Revisiting AI’s rises and falls across the long twentieth century likewise brings East Asia into view as always already constitutive of AI’s development. Long a vibrant hub of translation and debate, East Asia is where theories of computation and intelligence were taken up and contested—from Qian Xuesen’s introduction of cybernetics to China, to Kunihiro Fukushima’s early work on neural networks, to Japan’s Fifth Generation Computer Systems in the 1980s. In short, East Asia has long been integral to how AI has been disseminated, learned, debated, and competitively advanced.

Centering East Asia as a generative site, we invite bold and pioneering scholarship that challenges US-centered frameworks and mobilizes new perspectives to examine how AI has been imagined, translated, built, circulated, governed, and lived. We welcome contributions from interdisciplinary fields including, but not limited to, the history of computing, the philosophy of technology, digital media studies, East Asian studies, Asian American studies, ethnography, and sociology. We especially invite scholarship that excavates underexamined genealogies, connections, and sites of AI in East Asia, and that critically examines the global circuits of ideas, talent, labor, and capital that shape—and are shaped by—the region. We welcome research that traces how AI is formed through geopolitical contestation, racialization, and imperial/colonial legacies, while engaging East Asian intellectual and philosophical traditions that open onto alternative theories of intelligence and automation.

The symposium will cover travel, three nights of accommodation, and meal expenses for selected participants. Please submit a paper abstract (approximately 300 words) to eastasia-ai@wustl.edu by September 1, 2026. Submissions should represent works in progress rather than forthcoming publications. Participants whose proposals are accepted will be asked to submit a draft paper (5000-8000 words) by January 2027 and to read the other papers in advance of the symposium. The symposium itself will center on in-depth discussion of each paper.

If you have any questions, please contact Ulug Kuzuoglu (ulugkuzuoglu@wustl.edu) or Jianqing Chen (cjianqing@wustl.edu).