

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF

후원

MINISTRY OF LAND, INFRASTRUCTURE
AND TRANSPORT · REPUBLIC OF KOREA

대한민국 국토교통부



국토교통부

Ministry of Land,
Infrastructure and Transport

URBAN AI SUMMIT

어반 AI 서밋

PLANNING SYMBIOSIS

공생의 설계

September 10–11, 2026

2026년 9월 10–11일

BEXCO / BUSAN — SOUTH KOREA

벅스코 / 부산 - 대한민국

FOREWORD

In 1967, Lynn Margulis published a paper that was destined to change how we perceive the world. In her article “*On the Origin of Mitosing Cells*”, the young microbiologist grounded the hypothesis that our cellular complexity came from an initial symbiosis between a bacteria and a prokaryotic cell. Evolution was not only the result of random mutations and natural selection but also the fruit of a mutualistic fusion between two organisms.

Lynn Margulis’ symbiotic hypothesis didn’t only alter the story of life but also the very fundamentals of modern society. Modernity taught us that life is a race where only the most adapted individuals survive and, by doing so, make the society in it whole stronger. For one to win, others have to lose.

Individuals against individuals. Societies against societies. Species against species.

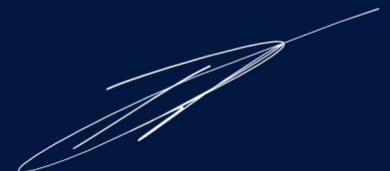
Yet Lynn Margulis brings some nuances to this narrative. Yes, evolution is made of situated adversity and contextual, inevitable, conflicts. But that’s not the whole story. There are also mechanisms of negotiation and cooperation that complexify life and, ultimately, make it more resilient, diverse, and beautiful.

Almost sixty years later, as new autonomous and intelligent agents are entering the city, Lynn Margulis’s legacy offers us some powerful insights on how to plan virtuous cohabitations — or as she might have said “symbiosis”.

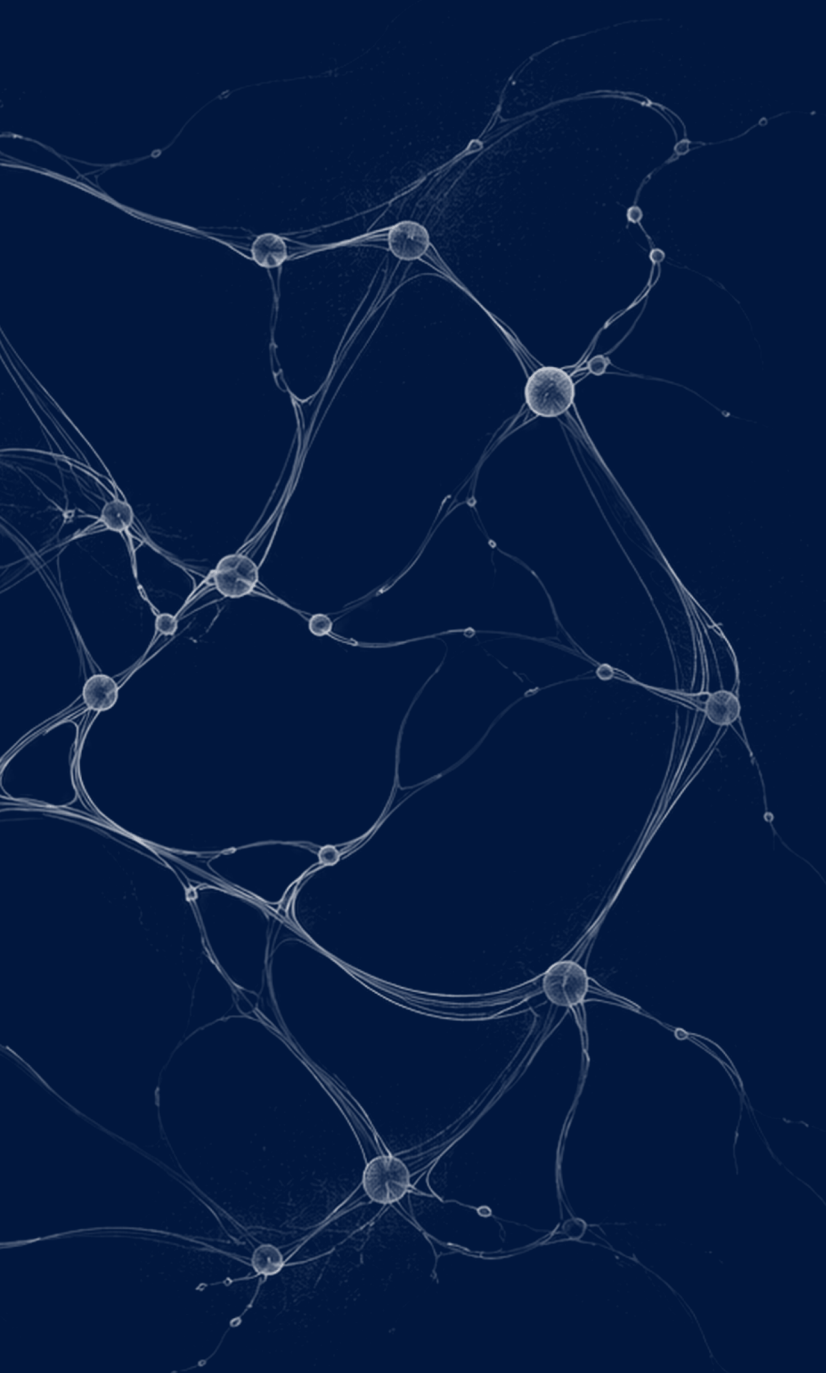
Such vision is more than ever critical. We already see how machines are competing with human beings for water, energy, attention. We already see how AIs bring new conflicts. New winners and losers.

Yet another script can be written. The integration of autonomous agents and AIs in our lives doesn’t have to follow the incomplete law of conflictual evolution. It could also be founded on complementarity and mutualistic cooperation. What if AI didn’t enclose us in synthetic and isolated cocoons but connected us to the world and with each other? What if machines didn’t steal our attention but gave us time to grow? What if robots didn’t extract natural resources but generated new symbiosis? All those questions have in common to shift the paradigm from agents to relationships. They weave the foundations of an expanded ecology where human beings, machines, animals, plants, fungi are not seen as rivals but as symbiotes that are augmented by each other’s singularities.

Through this inaugural URBAN AI Summit we aim at posing the foundation of a new research agenda for Urban Artificial Intelligence. This is an honor to launch this initiative in close collaboration with the Republic of Korea, one of the most advanced societies in robotics development, as well as with URBAN AI friends and some of the brightest minds in this field. May we together build joyful and symbiotic relationships.



Hubert Beroche
President of URBAN AI



AUGMENTATION

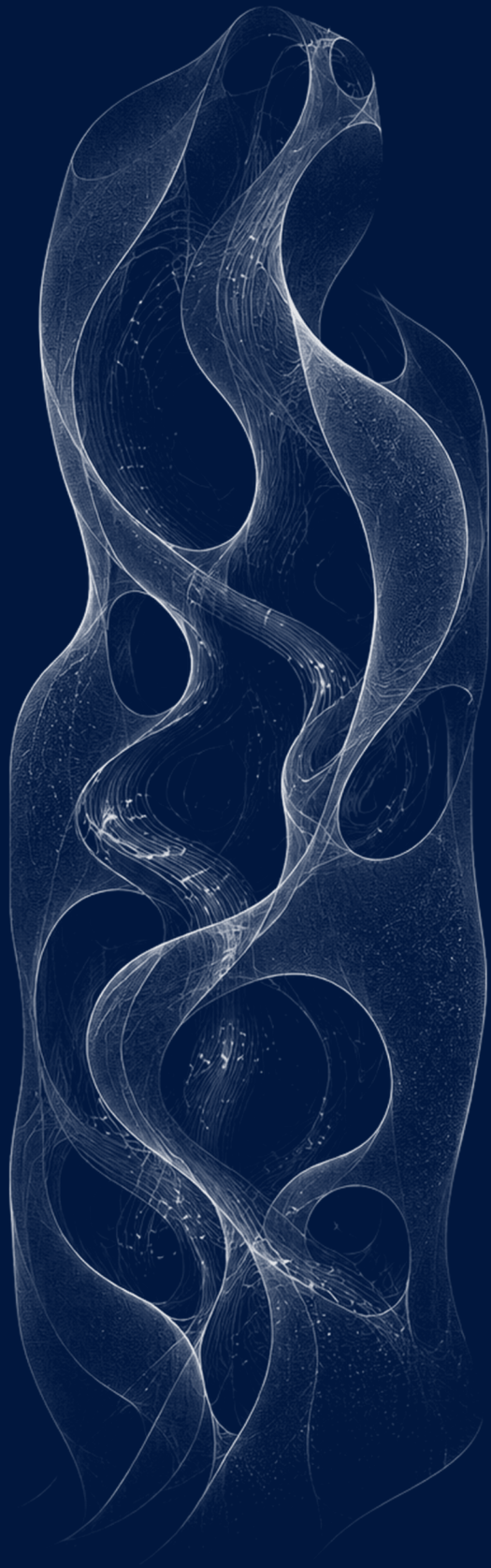
The living world offers many examples of virtuous symbiosis between distinct organisms. Root nodules are small structures that form on the roots of legumes. Within these nodules, the plant provides sugars and shelter to bacteria, while the bacteria convert atmospheric nitrogen into nutrients the plant cannot access on its own. Through this symbiosis, two organisms augment each other by combining distinct metabolic capacities.

Similarly, AI can augment cities and people by introducing capacities they could not access on their own. Yet these new potentialities also raise fundamental questions: which functions are we willing to externalize and delegate, and which new capacities - or “organs” - are we willing to welcome into our societies?

PROGRAM

DAY 1 · AUGMENTATION · URBAN AI SYMPOSIUM · 10 SEPTEMBER 2026

9:30	From Agents to Relationships: Why We Need an Ecology of AI OPENING KEYNOTE Hubert Beroche, President of URBAN AI
10:00 – 11:15	Decoding Urban Complexity with AI HOSTED BY THE ISI FOUNDATION Riccardo Di Clemente, Director of Complex Connections Lab and Affiliated Researcher at ISI Foundation · Panel Chair Federico Fernandez, CEO of URBANLY Angelos Chronis, CEO of Infrared.City Keemon Jang, Assistant Professor at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
11:15 – 12:00	AI Mutualism: Evolving the Social Contract through Local Adaptation KEYNOTE Emily Binet Royall, Assistant Director at Partners for Public Good
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch Break
13:00 – 13:30	The K-AI City Action Plan of South Korea HOSTED BY THE KOREAN MINISTRY OF LAND, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT Lee Sewon, Research Fellow, Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements
13:30 – 14:00	URBAN AI in Asia: From Smart Cities to AI-Powered Cities — Insights from the 2026 Smart Cities Index Report Jung Hoon Lee, Technology & Innovation Management, Yonsei University · Founding Member of URBAN AI Asia
14:00 – 15:00	URBAN AI Asia Launch Forum : Co-Creating the Future of AI Cities Jung Hoon Lee, Professor of Technology & Innovation Management, Yonsei University · Founding Member of URBAN AI Asia Jung Min Han, Assistant Professor of Architecture, Yonsei University · Founding Member of URBAN AI Asia · Panel Chair Sung Jin Park, CEO, SPARKCITY · Founding Member of URBAN AI Asia Reazul Ahsan, Associate Professor of City and Metropolitan Planning, University of Utah Asia Campus Hubert Beroche, President of URBAN AI Rafael Luna, Co-founder, PRAUD · Senior Lecturer, University of Technology Sydney
15:00 – 16:00	Civitas in the Age of AI HOSTED BY UN-HABITAT Livia Schaeffer Nonose, UN-Habitat Technology & Innovation Specialist · Panel Chair Sampo Ruoppila, Co-Founder of CoPlanAI and Senior Researcher at the University of Helsinki Minwook Kang, Research Associate at MIT Norman B. Leventhal Center for Advanced Urbanism



COHABITATION

The cooperation between clownfish and sea anemones is probably one of the most emblematic examples of symbiosis. Protected by a specialized mucus, the clownfish can live among the anemone's stinging tentacles, gaining shelter from predators and protection for its eggs. In return, the clownfish protects the anemone from butterflyfish, removes parasites and debris, and improves water and oxygen circulation. This mutualistic association allows both species to grow and thrive.

This symbiosis raises a fundamental question of reciprocity: how do we protect what protects us? How can AI become part of a wider web of relationships that nurtures the grounds we inhabit, whether our cities, our own bodies, or the non-human organisms that sustain life?

PROGRAM

DAY 2 · COHABITATION · THE SCREENLESS CITY CONFERENCE · 11 SEPTEMBER 2026

10:00 – 11:00

Cultivating More-Than-Human Cities with AI

HOSTED BY MIT SENSEABLE CITY LAB

Titus Venverloo, MIT Senseable City Lab at Amsterdam & Seoul

In dialogue with:

Mikyong Kim, Founder & Design Director at Mikyoung Kim Studio

SunJeong Hwang, Contemporary Artist and New Media Composer

11:00 – 12:00

Designing Cognitive Refuges Amid AI Overload

KEYNOTE

Annabelle Schneider, Visual Artist & Experience Designer

12:00 – 13:00

Lunch Break

13:00 – 14:30

Planning with Robots: An Urban Perspective on Physical AI

Raphael Languillon, Technical Expert at Expertise France and Research Associate at the University of Geneva · Panel Chair

Rajesh Elara Mohan, Chair Professor at Singapore University of Technology and Design, Co-Founder of LionsBot International

Bahia Guellai, Professor in Developmental Psychology, UMR CNRS CLLE lab, University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès, Co-Lead PI of WP6, CNRS@CREATE DesCartes Program

Rafael Luna, Director of Infra-Architecture Lab and Senior Lecturer at the University of Technology Sydney

14:30 – 16:00

Art, Cities & Robotics: Imagining the Future of Urban Life

Hubert Beroche, President of URBAN AI · Panel Chair

Byungjun Kwon, Media Artist & Hardware Researcher

Todd Asher, Deputy Principal, Media & Technology at Bloomberg Associates

Hye Yeon Nam, Digital Media Artist and HCI Designer

Fori Sim, Upcycling Artist and Robotic Sculptor

PARTNERS

HOST PARTNERS



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