

International Interdisciplinary Conference

Mad Science: Biology, Technology, Systems of Power

'Gheorghe Asachi' Technical University of Iași, 5th-7th June 2026

CALL FOR PAPERS

We are delighted to launch the call for papers for the second edition of the international interdisciplinary Mad Science conference, to take place in 2026 at 'Gheorghe Asachi' Technical University of Iași. This year's topic is Biology, Technology and Systems of Power, exploring current debates and points of inflection at the intersection of various disciplines. We welcome papers and workshop proposals in panels in **Romanian, English, French and German**.

The conference topic is inspired from the social and political events of the recent years, which have brought the social, political, cultural and ideological implications of technology to the fore. As the technological burrows ever so deeply into our lives, the questions that we raise are inevitably connected to the changing status of the human in relation to the technological. Has, in Foucauldian terms, technology become another means of disciplining the body and of social and political disciplining? Has the use of technology today been co-opted and instrumentalised by the powers that be? How are technology and scientific innovation used to reinforce or subvert systems of power and shape society, its culture and cultures? Where does the balance between the biological and the technological stand at the moment? How are the social, political and economic issues of today influenced by the pervasiveness of technology into the fabric of our everyday lives? Can the way technology is marketed to make us better human beings (in monitoring our health) bring back extremist ideologies of the past? **We look forward to receiving your 200-word paper abstracts, as well as workshop proposals, via Google form.**

Organizer: Foreign Languages Staff, Department for Teacher Training (DPPD), 'Gheorghe Asachi' Technical University of Iași

Where: onsite and online

When: 5th-7th June 2026

Conference fee: 60 euros/300 RON professors and academics, 20 euros/100 RON PhD students

Application submission: [via Google form](#)

Conference languages: Romanian, English, French, German

Conference website: <https://6616b9fd1aeb6.site123.me/>

Important deadlines

- Submission of abstracts – by Apr 20, 2026
- Notification of acceptance – by May 1, 2026
- Payment of conference fee – by May 15, 2026
- Publication of conference papers: December 2026, *Les Cahiers Linguaték* (no publication fee for conference participants), CEEOL indexation

Conference topics include, but are not limited, to:

Literature and Film Studies	Linguistics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cyborgs, robots and androids in literature and film; - technology and the posthuman; - technology and anthropocentric fictions; - dystopian takes on technology, science and progress; - science fiction in the 21st century; - biological and technological monsters; - colonising space – technocratic fictions; - technology and capitalism in fiction; - AI-generated film and literature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the language of scientific authority; - discourses of power; - the language of the posthuman; - metaphors of science in public discourse; - the semiotics and language of life; - languages of humans, languages of robots: numbers as language; - the body as cultural signifier; - signifier and signified in the digital age; - technology as cultural signifier.

Translation Studies	Gender Studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ethical use of AI in translation studies; - current directions in translation studies; - the role of the translator in the age of AI; - challenges in the translation of science and technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - technology and the perpetuation of gender inequality; - techbros and the rise of online toxic masculinity; - technology – an appropriation of the patriarchy?; - gaming culture and gender stereotyping; - white feminism vs. intersectional feminism; - transgender bodies and science; - the restriction of reproductive laws and systems of power.

The Arts	Medical Humanities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bioart – living matter as a work of art; - the aesthetic of the hybrid; - art, environment and technoscience; - the machine as a work of art; - arts of the body/the body in art; - digital art and the liberalization of power; - art and the ‘-isms’ – fascism, communism, socialism, extremism; - art and biowarfare; - the socially and politically engaged arts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - medical and pharmaceutical metaphors; - uses and misuses of technology in medicine; - medicine and AI – is the ‘human touch’ replaceable in medical care?; - the ethics of biological manipulation; - ethical and medical dilemmas of scientific discovery; - technology and genetic engineering.

Psychology and pedagogy	Social and political science
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - affection and relationships in the digital age; - the role of technology in enhancing or diminishing psychological conditions; - burnout and technology; - the development of children and technology; - education and attention in the age of AI; - the impact of technology on social and anti-social behaviour; - technology and stress; - mental numbing and technology; - strategies on counteracting the negative effects of technological overstimulation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - technology and the rise of fascism; - biological warfare and authoritarian regimes; - pathologies of power –the use of biological weapons; - technology, capital and inequality; - technology and the society of surveillance; - technoscience and neoliberal governance; - the future of democracy in the age of technology; - democracy, science and the politics of race; - the racialized body and the political body; - technology and soft power; - data science and governance – ethical and unethical practices.

Economics	Law
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - selling biodata: the commodification of the biological body through technology; - technology and international trading policies; - the economics of public health; - technology and the labour market; - venture capital and speculative futures; - behavioural economics and algorithms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - technology and crime: the legal aspects of cybersecurity; - viruses, loverboys and online fraud; - stolen identities on the internet; - children and elderly at risk on the internet; - the legal aspects of data protection; - state regulations, citizens' rights and technology; - digital spying and international law; - biosecurity and legislation; - legal tenets of cyberbullying and harassment.

Technology and engineering	History
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the dangers of AI in cybersecurity; - quantum computing; - techbros, podcasts and the spreading of fake news; - networks of power, networks of technology; - the power of algorithms – devices that know you better than you do; - electrical power, biopower and the energy of the future; - technologies that enhance the body; - “My body is no longer mine” – AI, IT giants and biometric data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the history of technology; - technology and the rise of totalitarian regimes; - technology and the rise of liberalism; - the history of bioengineering; - conflict and geopolitics in the era of hybrid war and biological warfare; - biological warfare across historical eras.

Intercultural Communication and Cultural Theory
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cultural perceptions in the era of digital surveillance and monitoring; privacy, consent, trust; - health communication across cultures; - cultural norms and ethical considerations in technology development; - “The human” and “the body” at the intersection of technology and cultural narratives.

Scientific board:

Gabriel Asandului, “Gheorghe Asachi” Technical University of Iași, Romania

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Laura Ioana Leon, “Grigore T. Popa” University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Iași, Romania
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Neculai Eugen Seghedin, “Gheorghe Asachi” Technical University of Iași, Romania
Elena Velescu, “Ion Ionescu de la Brad” Iași University of Life Sciences, Romania

Suggested reading:

Ruha Benjamin, *Race After Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code*, Polity, 2019.

Andrew Dobson, Kezia Barker, Sarah L. Taylor, *Biosecurity: The Socio-Politics of Invasive Species and Infectious Diseases*, Taylor & Francis, 2013.

Ruha Benjamin, *Captivating Technology: Race, Carceral Technoscience, And Liberatory Imagination In Everyday Life*, Duke University Press, 2019.

Ruha Benjamin, *Viral Justice*, Princeton University Press, 2022.

Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, 1935.

Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*, Columbia University Press, 1994.

Rosi Braidotti, *Posthuman Knowledge*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2019.

Ed Cohen, *A Body Worth Defending: Immunity, Biopolitics, and the Apotheosis of the Modern Body*, Duke University Press, 2009.

Melinda Cooper, *Life As Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era*, University of Washington Press, 2008.

Guy Debord, *La Société du spectacle*, Paris, Gallimard, 1992 [1e éd. Buchet-Chastel, Paris, 1967].

Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la clinique. Une archéologie du regard médical*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 2015 [1e éd. 1963].

Sarah Franklin, *Biological Relatives: IVF, Stem Cells, and the Future of Kinship*, Duke University Press Books, 2013.

Sheila Jasanoff, *Reframing Rights : Bioconstitutionalism in the Genetic Age*, The MIT Press, 2011. Simon Elmer, *The Road to Fascism: For a Critique of the Global Biosecurity State*, Architects for Social Housing, 2022.

- Donna Harraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto. Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism" in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, New York, Routledge, 1991 (pp.149-181).
- Donna Harraway, *Modest_Witness @Second_Millennium FemaleMan Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience*, Routledge, 2018.
- Hannah Landecker, *Culturing Life: How Cells Became Technologies*, Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Bruno Latour, *Nous n'avons jamais été modernes. Essai d'anthropologie symétrique*, La Découverte, Paris, 1991.
- Bruno Latour, *La science en action* [traduit de l'anglais par Michel Biezunski ; texte révisé par l'auteur], La Découverte, Paris, 1989.
- Katherine McKittrick, *Sylvia Wynter: On being Human as Praxis*, Duke University Press, 2015.
- Dorothy Roberts, *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-Create Race in the 21st Century*, The New Press, 2011.
- Michel Serres, *Le Tiers-instruit*, François Bourin, Paris, 1991.
- Michel Serres, *Petite Poucette*, Éditions Le Pommier, Paris, 2012.
- Bernard Stiegler, *La Technique et le Temps. 1. La faute d'Épiméthée – 2. La désorientation – 3. Le temps du cinéma et la question du mal-être*. Suivis de *Le nouveau conflit des facultés et des fonctions dans l'Anthropocène*, Fayard, Paris, 2018.
- Michel Serres, *Troubadour des Wissens. Versuch über das Lernen*, Chronos-Verlag, Zürich, 2015.
- Michel Serres, *Erfindet euch neu! Eine Liebeserklärung an die vernetzte Generation*, Suhrkamp, Berlin, 2013.
- Bernard Stiegler, *Technik und Zeit. Die Schuld des Epimetheus*, diaphanes, Berlin, 2009.
- Eugene Thacker, *Biomedica*, University of Minnesota Press, 2004.
- Priscilla Wald, *Contagious: Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative*, Duke University Press, 2019.
- Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie*, Tübingen, 1976.
- Sylvia Wynter, Dr. Joyce King, Peter Forbath, *'Do Not Call Us Negros': How 'Multicultural' Textbooks Perpetuate Racism*, Aspire Books, 1990.