

TEA Symposium *Technological and Ecological Atmospheres*

A joint symposium organized by KOIAS ([Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies](#)) and FEL ([Feral Ecologies Lab](#))

18-19 April 2026

Kobe Institute for Atmospheric Studies, Kobe University, Japan

(Hybrid participation possible)

“What if atmosphere is not just the air we breathe, but the relational field that breathes us?”

As the planetary metabolism shifts under the weight of both ecological collapse and technological acceleration, our atmospheres – ecological, digital, affective, and spiritual – become ever more significant. The separation between the inner and the outer, the ‘mirror of nature’ as Richard Rorty called it, is a rather modern invention, one that the notion of atmospheres complicates. The notion of atmospheres rejects the sandboxing of inner and outer states as nonporous boundaries, adopting the verbing sense of process philosophy. Both the environmental crisis we are facing and the technologies that increasingly pervade our lives make ever more apparent the fact that we are constantly defined by what surrounds us, in ways at once more subtle and more profound than ever imagined.

It does not matter what space we find ourselves in – whether a living room, an office, a café, a beach, a shrine at the top of a mountain, or an online concert on some metaverse platform; nor does it matter what we are doing or through what medium – watching a movie on our sofa, drinking coffee with a friend while showing them an Instagram reel, taking a walk on a crowded shore, admiring a landscape from a height, or feeling through our avatar the performance of a distant artist. In each case, we cannot escape the fact that something envelops us holistically: atmosphere.

At once the air we breathe and the affective tonality in which we find ourselves, in recent years, atmospheres have gained remarkable prominence across a wide range of disciplines, including philosophy, architecture, art studies, and the social and cultural sciences, as powerful tools to re-imagine the relationship between beings (human and non-human) and world. Thinkers such as Hermann Schmitz, Gernot Böhme, Jürgen Hasse, Tonino Griffero, and Bruce Bégout have pioneered an understanding of atmospheres and ambiances as spatially diffused affective powers that are neither only bodily nor fully mental, neither fully objective nor subjective, and which invite us to rethink the boundaries between subject and environment, self and things. East Asian thinkers have stressed the similarities between this conception of atmosphere and the ancient, but also modern, East Asian concept of *qi/ki* (breath, energy, atmosphere), showing how it can allow us to re-interpret atmosphere beyond the material/immaterial dichotomy, as something at once bodily and affective.

Yet, the relation of atmospheres to technology – and, through technology, to the ecological transformations of the Earth – has not yet become a central problem. Technologies not only act upon the environment but also generate new atmospheric conditions, sensibilities, (dis)affordances, as well as new forms of relation. How do our atmospheres (outer-inner) change when mediated by digital networks, sensors, and algorithms? What new kinds of ecological and technological interdependencies emerge when the air we breathe is also the carrier of information, data, and affect? How do we think the atmospheric as a site of both planetary vulnerability and planetary relation?

THE SYMPOSIUM

This symposium invites scholars, artists, and practitioners to explore atmospheres as a philosophical and relational condition: the mutable space between beings, machines, and worlds. We welcome contributions that dwell within, rather than resolve, the tensions between ecology and technology; collapse and co-creation; breath and algorithm. How might we think, feel, and tend to the entangled air: the various shared mediums through which both weather and data flow?

Ultimately, the Technological and Ecological Atmospheres (TEA) Symposium seeks to create a space for collective reflection and experimentation – where philosophy, ecology, and technology meet through the shared medium of atmosphere. By bringing together diverse perspectives and practices, the symposium aims to deepen our understanding of how atmospheres shape experience, relation, and thought in an age of planetary transformation. Through cross-cultural dialogue and the dovetailing of theory and practice, TEA hopes to foster new ways of thinking, sensing, and breathing together across disciplines, cultures, and media.

Suggested themes

- **Atmospheric Entanglements:** From carbon to computation—what happens when air becomes a medium of extraction, surveillance, or resistance?
- **Technological Weathering:** How do machines alter not only the climate but the *mood* of the planet?
- **Feral Intelligences:** AI, fungi, and winds as co-creators of planetary sensemaking.
- **Hospicing Measurability:** Goodhart’s Law (“When a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure”) and facing the end of paradigms of control with humility, accountability, and care.
- **Meta-Relational Methodologies:** Practices of sensing, tending, and composting within complex relational fields.
- **Atmospheric Ethics:** Breath, boundary, and the politics of shared air.

- **Cross-Cultural Currents:** Dialogues between East Asian and Western conceptions of air, breath, and atmosphere.
- **Aesthetic Atmospheres:** Art, sound, and performance as modes of attunement and atmospheric creation.
- **Breath and Ki:** Rethinking atmosphere through cross-cultural notions of air, energy, and life.
- **Atmospheric Practices:** Art, performance, and embodied research as forms of atmospheric thinking.

We encourage proposals that experiment with form: essays, sound pieces, field notes, poetic interventions, speculative protocols, performances, music presentations, installations, walks, workshops, practice-based research and cross-disciplinary dialogues are all welcome. Paper presentations will be 10 minutes long, but other formats can last up to an hour. Please include an estimated length for the activity in your proposal.

Submission details

- Abstracts (250–400 words) and short bios (150 words) due **15 January 2026**.
- Notification of acceptance: **30 January 2026**.
- Please submit to: aparisi@people.kobe-u.ac.jp and m.salazar@dragon.kobe-u.ac.jp with the subject TEA Symposium