

Special Issue

The Meaning of Life in the Universe

Message from the Guest Editor

Beyond the various topics of generalized geophysics and biology, the not only physical but also philosophical question arises for the explicit function of life within a physical universe. The idea is to visualize life as a complex physical system among others supporting the cosmic tendency of maximizing complexity (Stuart Kauffman). The meaning of life, then, shows up as life's function within the constituents of the universe which itself is being visualized as a maximal system. Research on these basic questions also has to ask for the philosophical foundations of physics and biology, taking care of the metaphysical discrepancy between the world as it is observed and the world as it really is. The concept of system itself, e.g., depends on epistemological aspects rather than on ontological aspects of the world. Hence, when we ask for the meaning of life in the universe, it is also necessary to reflect on the epistemological loop of self-reference, which is a consequence of the fact that human beings are a species that tries to illuminate what is producing it, including its epistemological instruments of cognitive perceptions in the first place.

Guest Editor

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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Philosophies searches for the syntheses of philosophical and scientific inquiries. It promotes philosophical work that is derived from the experience of diverse scientific disciplines and cultures. Multiple philosophies already exist—those of logic, information, computation, natural and artificial life, natural or artificial intelligence, complexity, technology, etc. Our mission is not to abandon philosophical roots and traditions of inquiry, but to promote the development of philosophical foundations and effective methodologies derived from diverse scientific explorations, and intended to enhance these explorations as to generate deeper and more holistic knowledge. Innovation may also be achieved through the cultural dimension. Other cultures can offer from their heritage a diversity of resources for exploration; these resources can also contribute to the emergent synthesis of philosophical inquiry.

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