Third Call for Papers
IACS 6 – Sixth Conference of the International Association for Cognitive Semiotics

Department of Philosophy
Sapienza University, Rome
4-6 June 2026

We are delighted to announce the Sixth Conference of the International Association for Cognitive Semiotics (IACS-6), hosted by Sapienza University of Rome from June 4 to 6, 2026.

Conference Website: https://storiaideelinguistiche.web.uniroma1.it/it/iacs-6
E-mail: labsil@uniroma1.it

Conference Theme: *(In)determinacy of Meaning*

Cognitive semiotics, repeatedly reimagined over recent decades, responds to a longstanding demand within both philosophical-linguistic and semiotic traditions: the need to investigate the semiotic mediation of cognition—both phylogenetically and ontogenetically—through the interaction between bodily and cognitive capacities and socio-culturally transmitted sign systems. In this sense, cognitive semiotics inherits the imperative to move beyond conceiving semiotics merely as a theory of signs, toward the development of a genuinely interdisciplinary—or more precisely, *transdisciplinary*—theory of meaning-making.

As a perspective that operates *between*, *across*, and *beyond* traditional disciplinary boundaries, cognitive semiotics draws on theoretical and methodological contributions from semiotics, (cognitive) linguistics, and cognitive science, as well as from anthropology, psychology, and the broader human sciences. It seeks to illuminate meaning in language and other sign vehicles as rooted in perception and embodied action. Approaching meaning-making as an emergent process of biocultural evolution—often, though not exclusively, informed by Husserlian phenomenology—this field addresses both human as well as non-human semiosis, investigating their similarities and differences.

In dialogue with the history of semiotic and linguistic thought, as well as with current paradigms such as biosemiotics, cultural semiotics, and enactivism, cognitive semiotics maintains a distinctive identity. This is marked by its sensitivity to the fragmentation of worldviews, its resistance to reductionism and anti-humanism, and its sustained effort to understand meaning-making across multiple scales of complexity—spanning types of mind, memory, and communicative systems.

The IACS-6 Conference is dedicated to the theme of the *(in)determinacy of meaning*—that is, the constitutive openness, fluidity, and irreducible vagueness of meaning-making processes, in the broad sense, but presupposing subjectivity, or qualitative experience. This theme foregrounds not only the dynamic interplay between structured, codified sign systems and the creative, often unpredictable practices that continually reshape them, but also the fundamental indeterminacy at the heart of semiosis—where meaning unfolds through the dialectic of subjective and intersubjective experience, grounded in lived perception, embodied engagement, and historical situatedness.

We invite proposals that explore how meaning emerges in the tension between nature and culture, through intersubjective practices of accumulation, sedimentation, and transformation—a core concern of the Roman School of Linguistics. Plenary speakers and all participants are warmly encouraged to consider how their research intersects with this theme, exploring the shifting boundaries, tensions, and openings that shape the experience of meaning across *lifeworlds (Lebenswelt)*.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Meaning-making processes between nature and culture
- Consciousness and semiosis: agency, subjectivity, and intersubjectivity
- The sign function and the dynamics of signification
- Philosophical perspectives on cognition, perception, and semiosis
- Theoretical intersections among cognitive semiotics, enactivism, biosemiotics and related fields

- Phenomenology, embodiment, and sensory-kinesthetic feeling
- Synesthesia from body to language
- Phylogenetic and ontogenetic development of semiosis
- Cognition and categorization from cognitive linguistics to cognitive semiotics
- Human and non-human semiosis
- Epistemology, meaning, and truth
- Metaphoric and metonymic mechanisms in meaning construction
- Narrativity and semiotic structures of narrative discourse
- Universal and culture-specific dimensions of semiosis
- Interrelations between semiosis, language, and memory
- Mimesis, protolanguage, gestures and verbal language
- Semiotic ideologies and meaning-making processes in the era of the Anthropocene
- From writing systems to AI: the evolution of semiotic technologies

Confirmed Plenary speakers:

- Paul Cobley (Middlesex University, London)
- Nara M. Figueiredo (Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, Brasil)
- Massimo Leone (University of Turin)
- Alexandra Mouratidou (Lund University)
- Todd Oakley (Case Western Reserve University)

Roundtable: What is meaning-making, and can we find a consensus?

Memorial theme session: Kristian Tylén's Legacy for Cognitive Semiotics

Extra event: Presentation of Göran Sonesson's Posthumous Book

Key Deadlines & Submission Guidelines

- **30 January 2026– Deadline for theme session proposals**
  Theme sessions should include a general abstract (max 300 words) outlining the session's rationale and individual abstracts (max 500 words each) for up to 6 participants. All abstracts must be submitted together as part of a single proposal.

- **15 February 2026 – Deadline for individual abstract submissions**
  Individual abstracts should be no longer than 500 words, clearly stating the research question, theoretical framework, methodology, and main conclusions.

- *All submissions must be in English and will be subject to peer review by the scientific committee.*
- *Each participant may submit only one theme-session proposal and up to two first-author or sole-authored papers. Co-authored proposals are allowed without restrictions.*

Link for submissions: https://easyabs.linguistlist.org/conference/IACS6/
Please do not send submissions to the EasyChair link, as it has been removed!

- **30 March 2026: Notification of acceptance**

Organizing Committee: Filomena Diodato (*chair*), Marina De Palo, Marco Mazzeo, Ilaria Tani

Secretariat: Claudia Cicerchia, Sara Dellino, Marco Maurizi, Edoardo Moré, Federica Ruggiero, Francesco Verde