



Life, Intelligence, Cognition: Why Our Definition of Intelligence Matters

Project

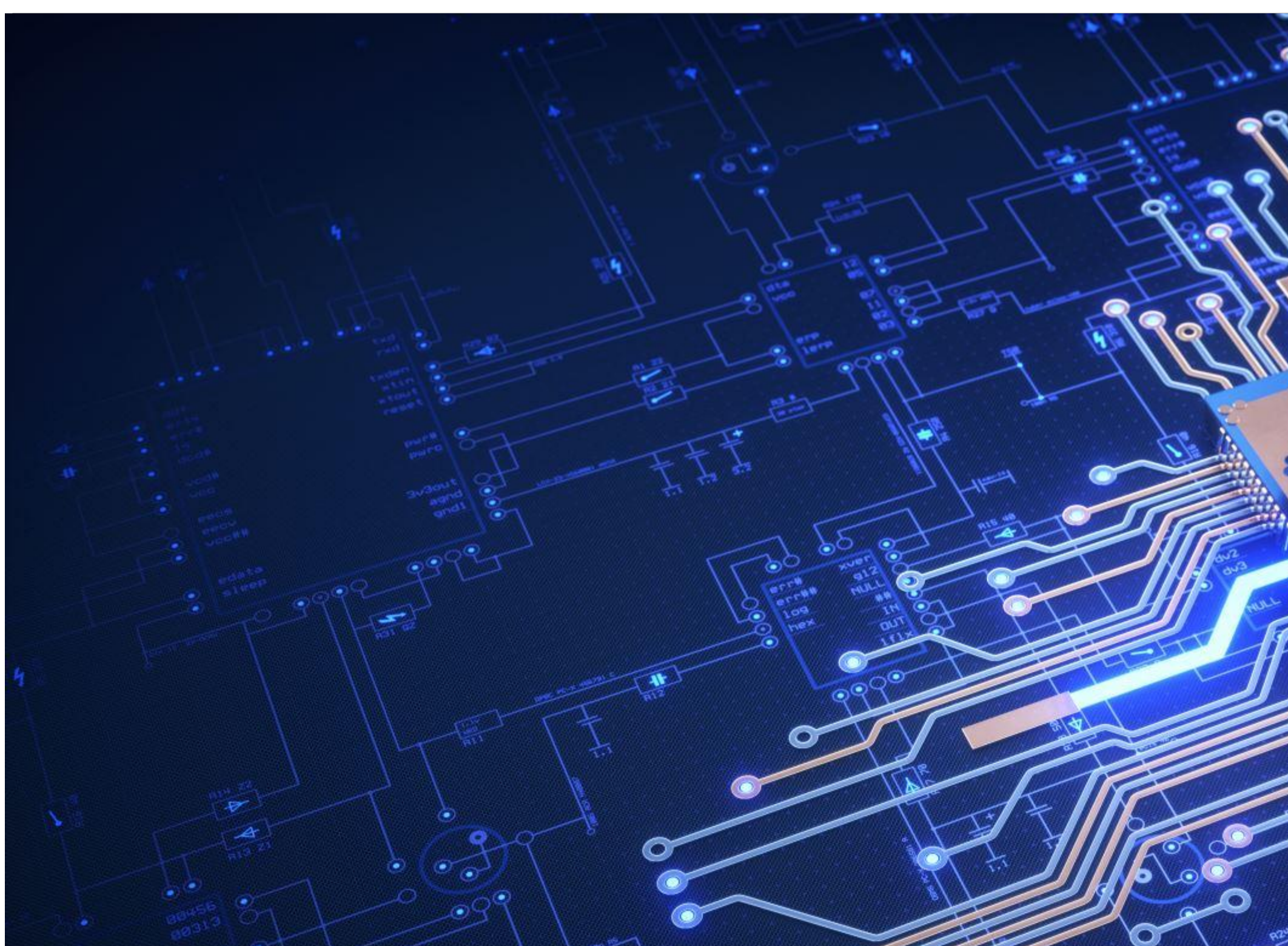
What is intelligence in living beings?

If AI is not “real” intelligence, the obvious question is what real intelligence is.

Yet there is still no scientifically settled definition, which makes it hard to state, in principle, how artificial agents differ from us, even if they were to surpass humans in many cognitive skills.

Methodology

A multidisciplinary theoretical analysis under a philosophical perspective. A conceptual framework that reconnects life, intelligence, and cognition as mutually dependent dimensions of a living subject. This reframing bears directly on human–AI relations. Life, intelligence, and cognition cannot be separated, as they are intertwined around a subject.



Results & conclusions

Intelligence is a mode of being: the dialectical transition from a range of possible responses to the selection of an action or decision. Cognition, by contrast, is the meaningful organisation that emerges in organism–environment relations, through which reality becomes intelligible. These dimensions converge only in living subjects, whose autonomy involves an effort to generate order and meaning through experience.