
IAS
INSTITUTE FOR
ADVANCED STUDY
PATHS TO DISCOVERY | 2027



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Forging New Paths



Since its founding in 1930, the goal of the Institute has been this: to assemble a collection of thinkers capable of producing—through their talent, proximity, collaboration, conversation, diversity, and toleration of difference—insights and discoveries that could not otherwise have been produced.

The Institute's early decades were ones of political, cultural, and technological transformation. It flourished. The present is a time of transformation as well. If epochal changes in national science and research policy, challenges to the value of expertise, and a shift in geopolitics and the global flow of resources and talent were not enough, there is also the AI revolution igniting questions that are consuming all our disciplines. For a place such as the Institute, dedicated to cultivating intellectual excellence, these questions are existential.

Here is the good news: we are built for moments like these. Founding Director Abraham Flexner called the then-new Institute "an experimental form." He imagined a dynamic community dedicated not to particular fields or dogmas, but to pursuing those questions it took to be most vital as the frontiers of knowledge changed. So long as we remain committed to bringing together the world's talent into intimate and disciplined collaboration, the Institute will remain dedicated to discovery, no matter the forms such discovery takes.

Like the moments that animated J. Robert Oppenheimer, John von Neumann, Albert Einstein, and many earlier inhabitants of this special place, this moment represents both an obligation—to examine what really matters to us, whether individually or collectively, about our work—and an ambitious opportunity—to ask how we might pursue that work into the future. The obligation and the opportunity are at once daunting and inspiring. They are even exhilarating, for there is joy to be found in the knowledge that, like our predecessors, we can bring our insights and expertise to meet the needs of the present and chart a course beyond immediate horizons.





Built on the World's Talent

When John von Neumann arrived as one of the Institute's founding Faculty members in 1933, he set in motion an intellectual revolution. His pioneering work—from his 1928 proof on parlor games to his 1944 landmark *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* with economist Oskar Morgenstern—firmly established the field of game theory. By introducing the mathematical rigor needed to analyze strategy, cooperation, and conflict, von Neumann provided conceptual tools that transformed economics, evolutionary biology, and political science.

In "On the Theory of Parlor Games," von Neumann worked with simple two-player zero-sum games—games in which one person's loss is another person's gain—to explore strategies players use. He sketched pure strategies, in which the player consistently does the same thing, and mixed strategies, in which the player makes selections at random, and showed that mixed strategies would allow players to break even in the long run. This work supported his foundational minimax theorem.

Left: Oskar Morgenstern and John von Neumann at Spring Lake on the Jersey Shore. **Above:** Panelists and participants at "Strategy, Competition, and Coordination: Game Theory after Half a Century," a conference held at IAS in 2002, including then-IAS Director Phillip A. Griffiths, IAS Trustee and event moderator Marina von Neumann Whitman, Eric S. Maskin, and Avi Wigderson, Herbert H. Maass Professor in the School of Mathematics.

By continually welcoming minds who reframe how strategy, computation, and human behavior intersect, the Institute does not merely honor von Neumann's history—it actively carries his ambitious vision into new frontiers.



Later, in *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior*, von Neumann and Morgenstern took these concepts and applied them to larger numbers of players and non-zero-sum games. Besides creating formal definitions, thoroughly outlining game theory, offering another proof of the minimax theorem, and creating a theory that enables preferences to be measured on a numerical scale, they also conceived two forms of games that are still used in game theory today.

This work became a bedrock on which much of today's world is built. Von Neumann's conceptual tools are used in applications like blockchain, cryptocurrency, and modern elections, as well as by war-waging governments, economists studying market behavior, and even biologists.

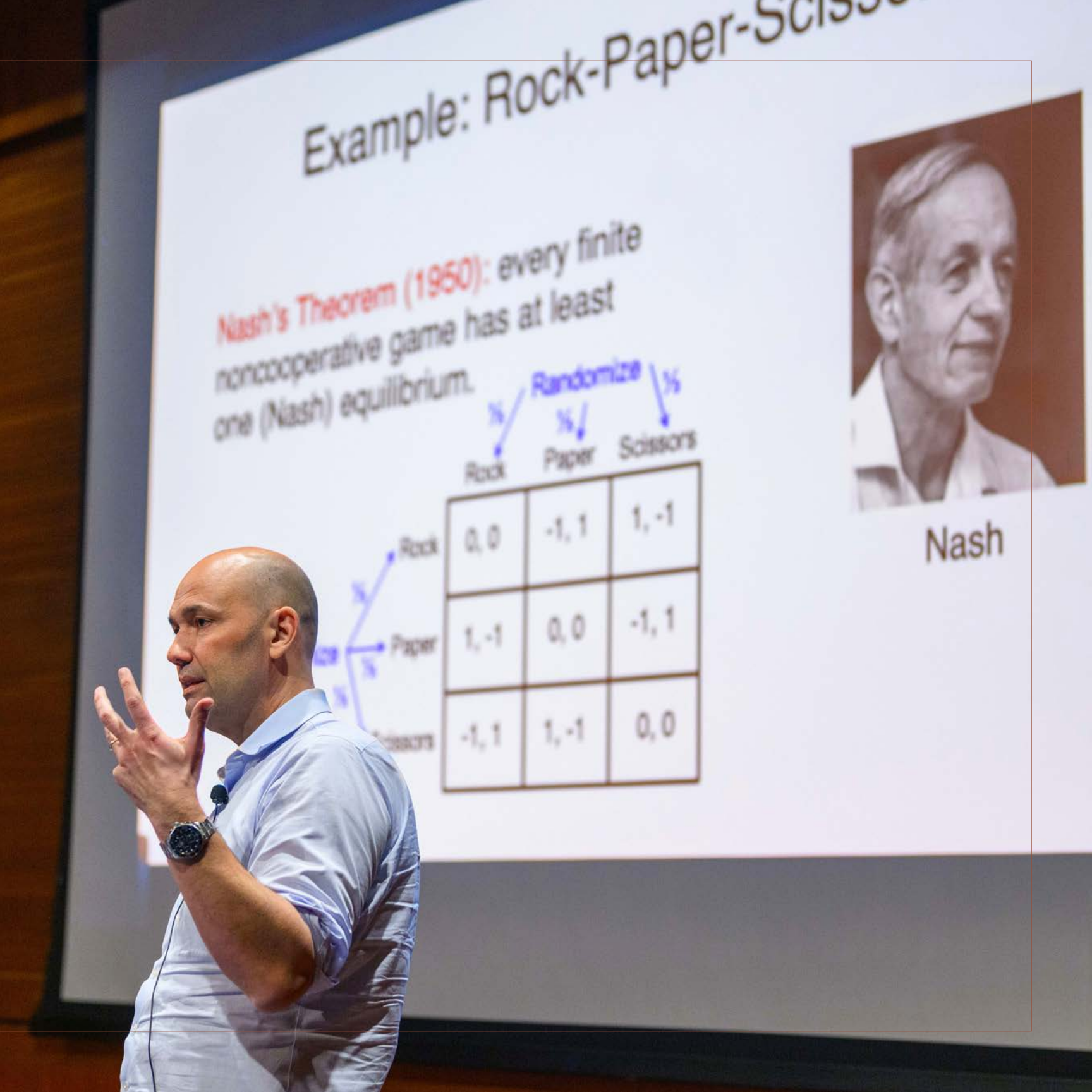
For decades, the Institute has actively nurtured and expanded this legacy. IAS scholars, past and present, have consistently built on von Neumann's foundational frameworks, moving into dynamic new territories.

In the past, this has included John Nash, frequent Member in the School of Mathematics, who won the 1994 Nobel Prize in Economics for his analysis of equilibria in noncooperative games, which led to the creation of the Nash equilibrium, as well as Rachel Kranton, Member (2001–02) in the School of Social Science, who developed a game-theoretic model showing how identity, namely a person's sense of self, affects economic outcomes. Eric S. Maskin, Professor (2000–11) in the School of Social Science, further advanced mechanism design theory and dynamic games, translating fundamental mathematical concepts into powerful tools for social systems.

Today, that tradition moves decisively into the digital age. In summer 2026, the Institute welcomed Tim Roughgarden to the Faculty of the School of Mathematics. Roughgarden's work directly evokes von Neumann's cross-disciplinary lineage. Working at the intersection of theoretical computer science and economics, Roughgarden leads the field of algorithmic game theory. His research addresses a core challenge of modern networks: how self-interested actors interact within complex systems, from algorithmic resource allocation to decentralized blockchain protocols. Just as von Neumann mathematically framed uncoordinated choices in simple games, Roughgarden's field-defining research on the "price of anarchy"—co-developed with Cornell University's Éva Tardos—quantifies the efficiency lost when uncoordinated individuals act selfishly in internet routing and network design.

By continually welcoming minds who reframe how strategy, computation, and human behavior intersect, the Institute does not merely honor von Neumann's history—it actively carries his ambitious vision into new frontiers. This chain of scholars, each building on those who have come before, marks the myriad paths to discovery, bringing to the Institute campus a spirit that both challenges and empowers scholars to push beyond the present limits of knowledge.

Top: Rachel Kranton photographed at IAS in 2002. **Right:** Tim Roughgarden delivering a public lecture in Wolfensohn Hall in November 2025, where, drawing on the foundational works of Alan Turing, John von Neumann, John Nash, and others, he traced points of contact between the fields of computer science and game theory.


Example: Rock-Paper-Scisso
Nash's Theorem (1950): every finite noncooperative game has at least one (Nash) equilibrium.
Randomize
Rock
Paper
Scissors
0, 0
-1, 1
1, -1
1, -1
0, 0
-1, 1
-1, 1
1, -1
0, 0
Nash

Building the World's Talent



The Institute for Advanced Study serves as a global nexus for intellectual excellence. Spanning a diverse array of fields and hailing from every corner of the world, the scholars featured here represent just a few of the brilliant IAS minds who have recently earned awards and accolades for their groundbreaking work. Together, their achievements demonstrate how the Institute continues to elevate the brightest minds and drive transformative discovery.

1 Yale University professor **Emilie Connolly**, Member (2024–25) in the School of Historical Studies, received the 2026 Bancroft Prize for her book, *Vested Interests: Trusteeship and Native Dispossession in the United States*, written during her time at IAS. The Bancroft Prize is one of the most prestigious honors in the field of American history.

2 **Molly J. Crockett**, Member (2025–26) in the School of Social Science, was honored with the National Academy of Sciences' 2026 Troland Research Award for work that has "significantly advanced our understanding of moral cognition." Originally hailing from California, Crockett is currently a professor of psychology at Princeton University.

3 Born in Peru and raised in Argentina, **Inés Valdez**, Richard B. Fisher Member (2025–26) in the School of Social Science, was awarded the 2025 T.V. Paul Best Book Award by the International Studies Association for her book, *Democracy and Empire: Labor, Nature, and the Reproduction of Capitalism*. The award honors "substantial theoretical and empirical contribution to the study and scholarship of global international relations."

4 **Vesselin Dimitrov**, Member (2017–18, 2022–23) in the School of Mathematics, is native to Bulgaria. In 2026, he was celebrated with the American Mathematical Society's Frank Nelson Cole Prize for Number Theory alongside his collaborators for presenting a "striking original proof" of a conjecture that had stood since 1968.



5 Israeli scholar **Mor Rozner**, Kovner Member (2024–27) in the School of Natural Sciences, was one of just three "promising early-career astronomers" to receive a 2026 Gruber Fellowship. Awarded by the IAU, the world's largest professional body for astronomers, this fellowship will support Rozner's ongoing exploration of the dynamics of gas-rich astrophysical environments.

6 Hailing from Odisha, India, **Kailash Sahu**, Member (2022–23) in the School of Natural Sciences, was awarded the 2026 Beatrice M. Tinsley Prize by the American Astronomical Society for his "outstanding research contributions" to relativistic deflection—the slight bending of light predicted by founding IAS Professor (1933–55) Albert Einstein's theory of relativity.

7 **Hui Wang**, Elizabeth and J. Richardson Dilworth Member (2023–24) in the School of Historical Studies, was presented with the 2026 Antonio Feltrinelli International Prize for Moral and Historical Sciences. Based at Tsinghua University, Wang received this award, often considered to be "the Italian equivalent of the Nobel Prizes," for his "fundamental contribution" to the history of Chinese modernity.

8 Born and raised in Guilin, Guangxi, China, **Hong Wang**, Member (2019–21) in the School of Mathematics, was recognized not only with a 2026 Fields Medal but also with a 2026 New Horizons in Mathematics Prize from the Breakthrough Prize Foundation, popularly known as "the Oscars® of Science." Wang was lauded for her work on "a family of notoriously difficult problems in harmonic analysis."

9 One of eight "outstanding postdoctoral scientists" to receive a "highly competitive" 2026 NASA Hubble Fellowship, Australian-born **James Beattie**, Member (2026–30) in the School of Natural Sciences, is dedicating his fellowship at IAS to researching phenomena ranging from galactic turbulence to compact object mergers.





Vital Questions

From left to right: Albert O. Hirschman making a presentation in 1980; Hirschman speaking with a colleague in his office in West Building on the Institute's campus; Alondra Nelson participating in a School of Social Science seminar; Sebastian Seung (left) and Misha Tsodyks (center) engaged in discussion with IAS Trustee Shirley M. Tilghman (right); School of Social Science scholars for the 2025–26 academic year, many of whom gathered to explore the theme of "Digital (In)Equality."

For the 1974–75 academic year, the Institute's newly formed School of Social Science used Albert O. Hirschman's second year on the Faculty to host a cohort of scholars focused on "Economic Development and Political Change in Latin America." This formally launched the themed seminars that are today a regular practice at the Institute.

This first official iteration was successful enough that the use of a themed seminar was put into practice for the following year, and the subsequent years after that—and not only in the School of Social Science. The School of Mathematics hosted, as a joint venture with the School of Natural Sciences, a theme year on string theory in 1987. The School went on the following year to solely host a group of scholars focused on dynamical systems.

These theme years are integral to the Institute's place at the forefront of discovery. Alondra Nelson, Harold F. Linder Professor in the School of Social Science—whose recent theme years have included "Digital (In) Equality," "PLATFORM," and "Science and the State"—explains how the School arrives at the vital questions behind theme years:

"Because the School's Faculty think and work at the leading edge of their fields," she says, "theme years tend to name problems before others have acquired the vocabulary that will later be used to describe them."

For the 2026–27 academic year, the School of Natural Sciences is, for the first time, hosting a theme year, titled "Modeling Fly Vision." Co-organized by Misha Tsodyks, C.V. Starr Professor in the School, and Visiting Professor Sebastian Seung from Princeton University, "Modeling Fly Vision" will investigate visual neuroscience via the fruit fly *Drosophila*, addressing how such flies perceive motion, color, polarization, form, and objects, as well as their complex, visually guided behaviors such as navigation and courtship. This program aims to re-found theoretical and computational neuroscience on the bedrock of twenty-first century brain maps.









At the Institute, collaboration is not an occasional practice but a living tradition.

With its spring 2026 series, titled The Art of Collaboration, the Institute celebrated excellence through collaboration on the stage. The series, which took place in Wolfensohn Hall, showcased artists from around the world through concerts, lecture demonstrations, and conversations. These intimate dialogues rooted in friendship, shared cultural lineages, and musical heritage illuminated music as a powerful site of encounter.

For nearly a century, IAS has brought together world-leading thinkers, fostering connections that range from intimate exchanges over tea—like those that led to the famous EPR paper on quantum entanglement—to global networks that have shaped fields as diverse as computing, art history, and astronomy.

The Art of collaboration series is built on this almost century-long practice, reflecting both the Institute's sustained engagement with the arts and its deep-rooted culture of collaboration.

The Art of Collaboration



1 Andreia Pinto-Correia examined how the Portuguese folk tradition has impacted her work as a musician and composer in a program featuring performances by Princeton Symphony Orchestra musicians and the clarinetist Derek Bermel, IAS Artist-in-Residence (2009–13).

2 Award-winning composer, conductor, author, and commentator Rob Kapilow offered a special iteration of his "What Makes it Great?" series, a lecture demonstration in which he reflected and refracted Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* in collaboration with the DragonBoot Quartet.



3 Award-winning guitarist-composers Sérgio Assad and João Luiz Rezende brought to life the history of guitar duos and the Brazilian composers and musical traditions behind them, performing select studies and traditional “choro.”

4 Clarinetist and composer Kinan Azmeh and composer and violinist Layale Chaker performed selected works from their individual and collaborative repertoires, tracing how two distinct musical voices have been shaped through exchange, mutual influence, and shared creative ground.

5 The Renaissance String Quartet—composed of violinists Randall Goosby and Jeremiah Blacklow, violist Jameel Martin, and cellist Daniel Hass—explored how modern musicians negotiate historical distance by interpreting works by Mozart, Brahms, Florence Price, and the Quartet’s own Daniel Hass in a performance billed as a “collaboration across time.”


Coffee





Cornerstone

Collaborative

The three o'clock hour, each weekday, marks a cherished time at the Institute, as scholars from across campus gather in Fuld Hall to share tea, cookies, and conversation.

Beyond a refreshing break, teatime has also served as the origin point for landmark discoveries.

When Nathan Rosen, Member (1934–36) in the School of Mathematics, raised a question about the interpretation of entangled wave-functions to Albert Einstein, founding Professor (1933–55) in the School, Einstein connected the idea to his own concerns about the completeness of quantum mechanics. As their discussion unfolded, Member (1934–35) Boris Podolsky joined, ultimately proposing the idea for a paper, leading to the 1935 publication of the Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen (EPR) paradox, a foundational thought experiment in quantum mechanics.

And when, in 1972, Hugh Montgomery, Member (1970–71, 1976–77) in the School of Mathematics, struck up a chance conversation with Freeman Dyson, Professor (1953–2020) in the School of Natural Sciences, it led to a discovery that unexpectedly bridged pure mathematics and fundamental physics.

Montgomery had been studying the Riemann zeta function—a mathematical object whose hidden patterns hold the key to understanding prime numbers, the "atoms" from which all other numbers are built. He described to Dyson a formula for how these patterns are spaced out. Dyson recognized it instantly: it was the very same spacing that physicists had found in the energy levels of heavy atomic nuclei—the dense cores at the center of atoms. In other words, the numbers that mathematicians had pondered for centuries and the particles that physicists probe in the subatomic world seemed to follow the very same rhythm. That brief exchange over tea opened an entirely new way of thinking about the Riemann hypothesis, one of the greatest unsolved problems in mathematics.

This past year, the tradition of teatime has been endowed by a generous gift from Ashvin Chhabra and Daniela Bonafede-Chhabra, ensuring that this time-honored practice of exchanging ideas will inspire discovery for generations to come.

Turn to page 30 to learn more about this endowment.



Nourishing New PARADIGMS







At IAS, the pursuit of academic excellence is nourished—quite literally—by an environment that brings brilliant minds together over exceptional food.

No meal does this more effectively than Interdisciplinary Lunch: a regular event—led by Alondra Nelson, Harold F. Linder Professor in the School of Social Science, and Akshay Venkatesh, Robert and Luisa Fernholz Professor in the School of Mathematics—at which scholars from all Schools step out of their academic silos and engage in cross-disciplinary conversations. These gatherings begin with a short, accessible presentation from a scholar and evolve into lively discussions among the tables.

A memorable iteration of Interdisciplinary Lunch hosted in May 2026 saw scholars fuel their conversations with a choice of shrimp tacos topped with avocado crema and roasted tomato salsa, or a vibrant vegetarian entrée of Tennessee fried cauliflower. Crafted by the Institute's Dining Services team, these menus are more than just a culinary delight; they are catalysts for the rich dialogues that define the Institute experience.

Taking the podium at this lunch was Coral Lumbley, Member (2025–26) in the School of Historical Studies. Lumbley's presentation transported her colleagues deep beneath the mountains of North Wales to King Arthur's Labyrinth, an abandoned slate mine transformed









into a subterranean attraction that allows visitors to experience Welsh legends through immersive boat rides, animatronics, and dramatic light and sound effects. She examined the Labyrinth as a striking example of "ruderal medievalism"—an emerging interdisciplinary lens that studies how post-industrial rubble is repurposed for historical storytelling to connect modern visitors with early medieval folk tales.

To ensure that her work resonated across disciplinary borders, Lumbley sought connections closer to home. She visited the Shelby White and Leon Levy Archives Center to research *Slate Oasis*, a sculpture on the Institute's campus. With the help of archivist Caitlin Rizzo, Lumbley studied artist Richard Long's sketches for the piece, discovering that the sculpture was constructed from discarded American slate. This provided a striking parallel to the Welsh slate at the center of her own research. By weaving in this campus artwork and an accompanying poem held by the Archives Center about how geological materiality brings people together, Lumbley found the perfect touchstone to communicate her work to the campus community. "Seeking connections with my colleagues pushed my own research into brand new directions I never would have traveled independently," Lumbley noted.

Bouncing ideas off brilliant minds outside her immediate field at Interdisciplinary Lunch and beyond has also tangibly shifted Lumbley's academic worldview. Conversations with mathematicians and natural scientists at IAS introduced her to scholars working with very different



questions and methodologies from her own. “I kept talking to people who were interested in empirically verifiable questions where, even if they didn’t have the answers, they knew that the answer existed in the form of proofs or observations,” she stated. As someone who works, in her words, “entirely in subjective approaches,” the scientists’ commitment to “universally applicable ideas or principles” fascinated her.

These interactions changed how Lumbley viewed her own subjects. She realized that medieval people also held unifying theories of the universe. They asked profound questions about their world—such as why a plot of land might stop producing, or why a natural cliff might seem to scream when hit by the ocean. Lumbley now sees medieval inquiries into the universe as highly aligned with modern scientific ones.

These insights are set to reshape how Lumbley interacts with her peers after she leaves IAS. “Something I’m really excited about when I get back to my home institution is collaborating with my colleagues outside my English department,” she shared. Before coming to IAS, Lumbley felt something of a “chasm” between her research and that of mathematicians and scientists. Now, she realizes that despite their dramatically different methodologies, they are pursuing fundamentally interconnected questions.

By serving up inspiring ideas alongside exceptional cuisine, IAS fosters an environment where scholars can distill cross-disciplinary conversations into paradigm-shifting ideas that stretch beyond what they could cook up alone.

Following Ambitious Pursuits



When the world's most brilliant minds are given the time, space, and opportunity to converge, they push themselves—and each other—beyond the present limits of their disciplines. The resulting scholarship doesn't just follow trends; it sets the pace for global discovery.

This atmosphere of unyielding ambition is integral to the Max Planck-IAS-NTU Center (MPC) for Particle Physics, Cosmology, and Geometry, an initiative funded, in part, by the Institute's Jonathan M. Nelson Center for Collaborative Research.

A global collaboration uniting the Max Planck Institute for Physics in Germany, the National Taiwan University, and IAS, the MPC serves as a crucible for interdisciplinary breakthroughs. The MPC's goal is truly visionary: to develop a novel, unified framework capable of understanding the universe at all scales. To achieve this monumental task, the traditional walls separating advanced mathematics, quantum field theory, and fundamental physics must dissolve.

In March 2026, the first steps in the journey were taken during the MPC's kick-off conference at IAS. Over four days, established luminaries and rising minds alike explored profound topics ranging from quantum field theory and scattering amplitudes to gravitational waves and the large-scale structure of the universe. Scholars from these varied fields were able to meet, engage in discussion, and begin to explore how their disciplines might come together to answer some of the most daunting questions in physics.

By playing a key role in these vital conversations, the Institute reaffirms its foundational commitment to unrestricted intellectual pursuit.



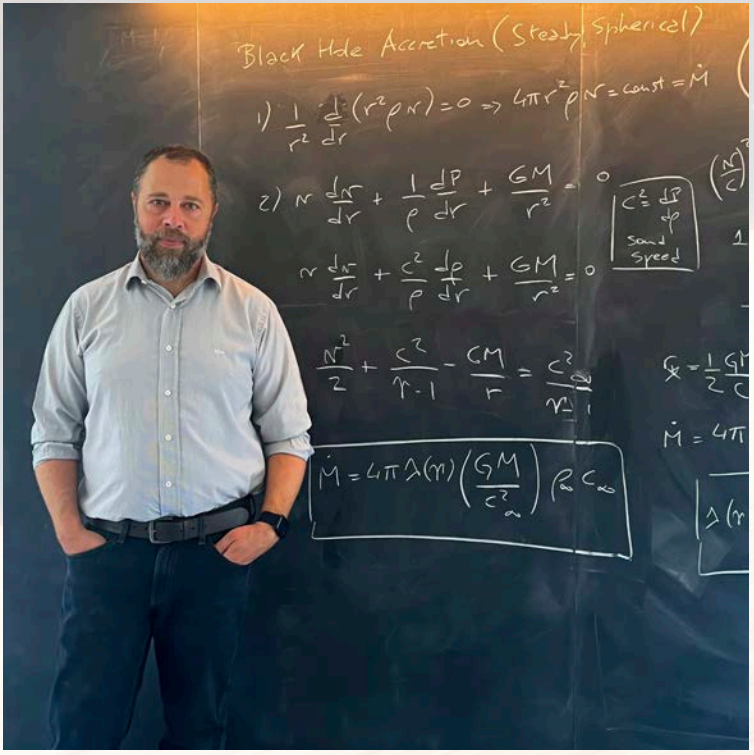







"Scattering Amplitudes"

From Morning Coffee to Merging Black Holes

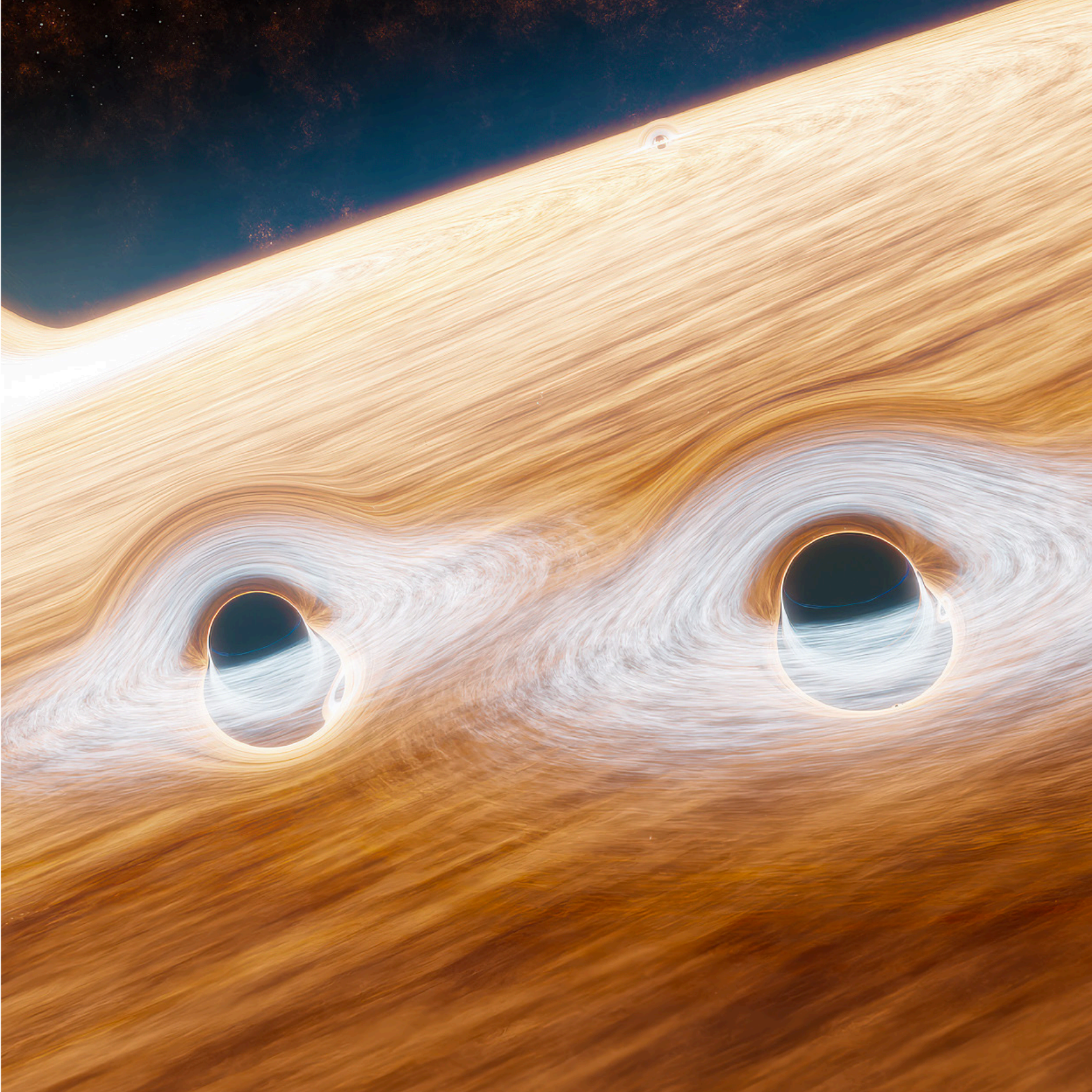


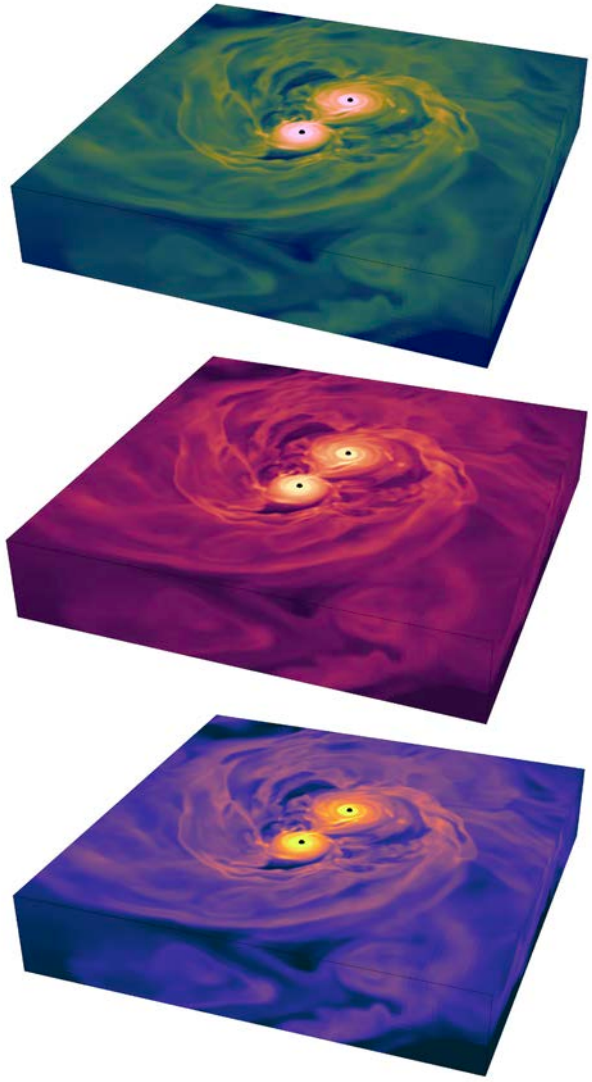
Preparing to lead an informal morning coffee discussion—a cherished tradition within the Institute's School of Natural Sciences—might seem like a routine task. Yet for Martin Pessah, Member (2007–10, 2022–23) in the School, this simple act sparked a new idea. Over the next three years, the idea developed into a research program for which he received, in spring 2026, a European Research Council (ERC) Advanced Grant—one of Europe's most prestigious research awards. The new project will build on Pessah's longstanding scientific ties to IAS through a collaboration with James Stone, Professor in the School of Natural Sciences, to investigate one of the most captivating mysteries in modern astrophysics.

Since the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) made the first direct detection of gravitational waves from a merging pair of black holes, known as a "black hole binary," in 2015, scientists have gained a new way to observe the cosmos. As LIGO and its partner observatories detect increasing numbers of such events, a pressing question remains: in what astrophysical environments do these black hole binaries form and eventually merge?

One candidate environment is the gaseous accretion disk of an active galactic nucleus (AGN)—a compact, luminous region at the center of a galaxy, powered by a supermassive black hole. Gas in these disks can drive stellar-mass black holes embedded within them

Background image: Black hole binary in an accretion disk surrounding a supermassive black hole.





Above and next page: AthenaK simulations showing a black hole binary in a turbulent magnetized disk.

(which measure a few to roughly 100 times the mass of the sun) to move towards each other, form binaries, and merge. Pessah's project investigates the extent to which AGN disks contribute to the observed population of black hole mergers and seeks signatures distinguishing this formation pathway from others.

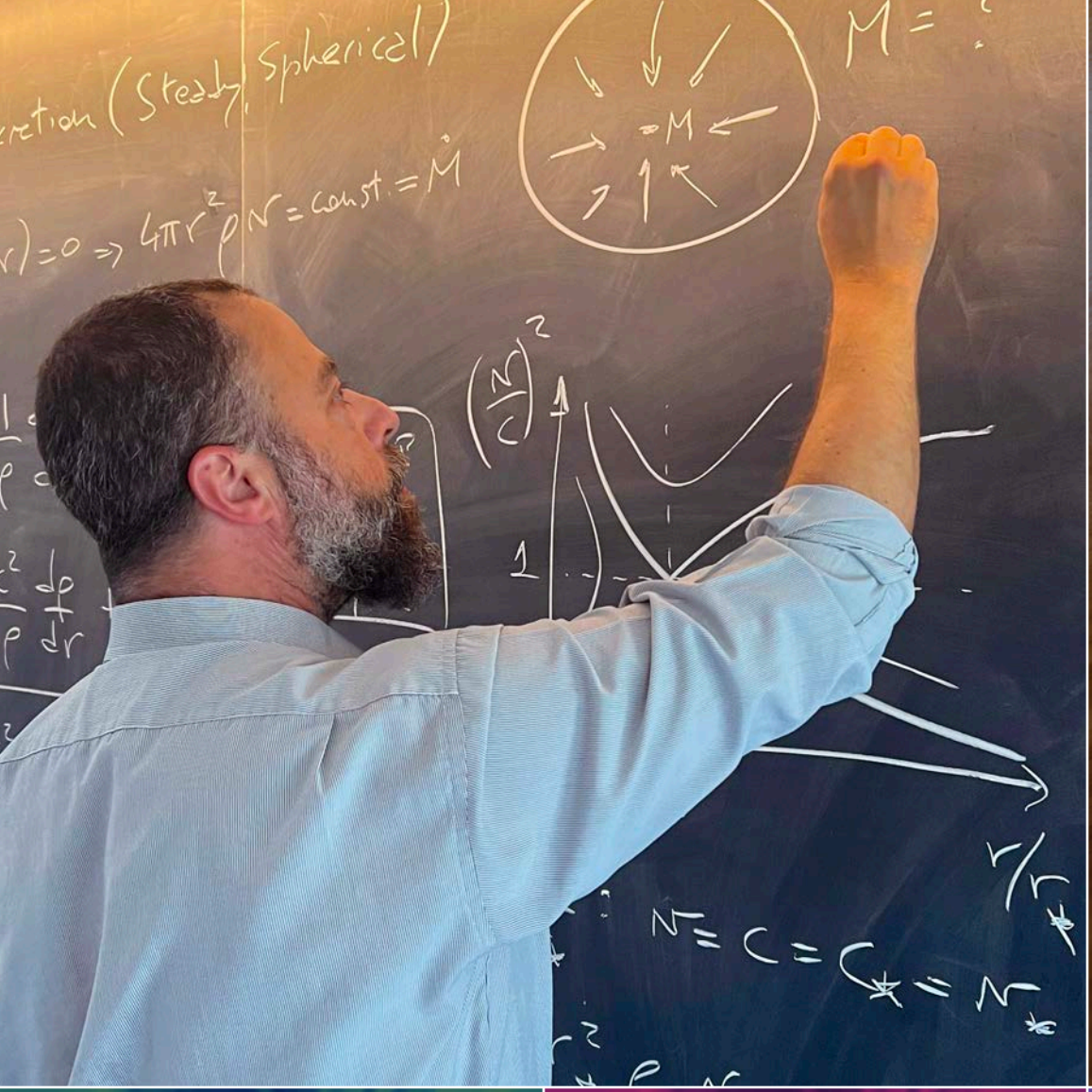
The seed that ultimately grew into his proposal was planted during Pessah's second IAS Membership. In preparation for his morning coffee discussion, he spent a weekend studying several papers detailing the state of the field concerning the evolution of black hole binaries in AGN disks. As he synthesized the literature, he recognized a limitation: the existing models, while advancing scientific understanding, relied mostly on simplified frameworks adapted from studies of planets embedded in protoplanetary disks surrounding newborn stars. However, these simplified models do not accurately capture the environment of AGN disks, particularly the hot, turbulent, and magnetized gas expected in these systems. Since these conditions can strongly influence how embedded black holes behave, Pessah realized that a new framework that includes the missing physics was required.

Upon his return to his home institution, the Niels Bohr Institute in Copenhagen, where he is Professor and Deputy Director of the Niels Bohr International Academy, he continued to develop that insight into his ERC proposal. His project, "Black Hole Binaries in Turbulent Magnetized Disks," aims to pinpoint unique signatures—such as flashes of light or distinct gravitational waves—that would let astronomers recognize when a merger happens within an AGN disk rather than in some other environment. The project will also develop more realistic models of how black holes evolve in these extreme environments and produce quantitative and testable predictions.

To bring the project to fruition, Pessah and his team will engage in an ambitious international collaboration involving James Stone and other scholars from IAS and Princeton University. Stone's Athena family of astrophysical fluid dynamics codes will serve as the central tool for the numerical simulations involved.

Conceiving this transformative project required bringing together several fields that are often studied separately, including accretion-disk physics, magnetohydrodynamic turbulence, few-body dynamics, and gravitational-wave astrophysics. Although the original idea that led to the proposal took shape during Pessah's second term at the Institute, the ground had been prepared during his first, when he learned the value of looking beyond the boundaries of any one field. "What is unique about IAS is its stimulating intellectual atmosphere, which continually encourages you to push the boundaries of understanding—to question the status quo, look for what is missing, and connect fields that are usually studied separately," Pessah said.

The genesis of Pessah's ERC project reflects the Institute's enduring ethos: that cultivating intellectual breadth can catalyze boundary-pushing research.



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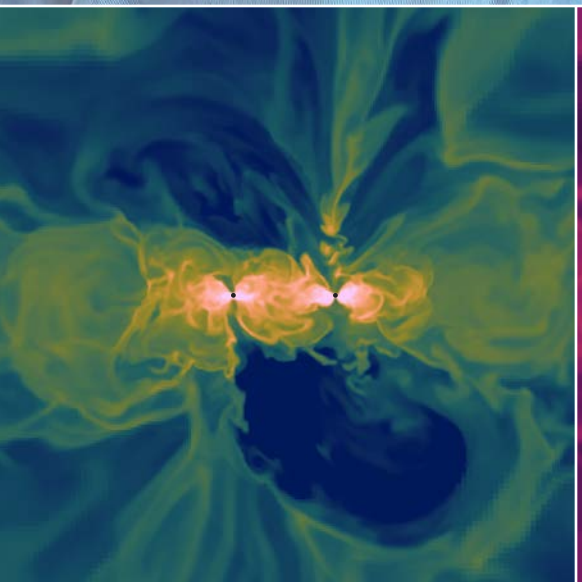

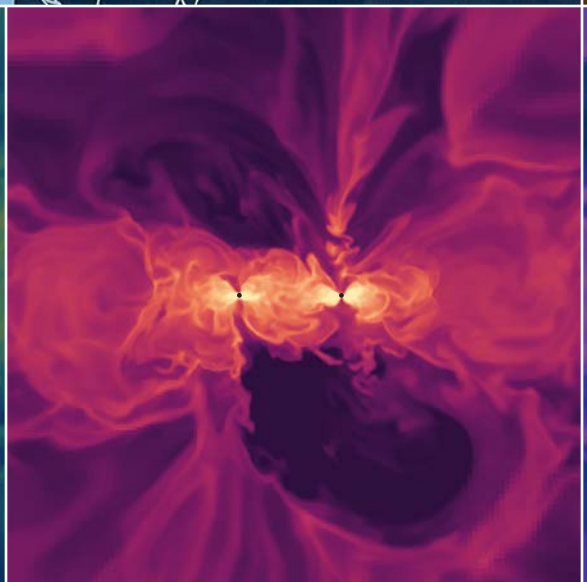

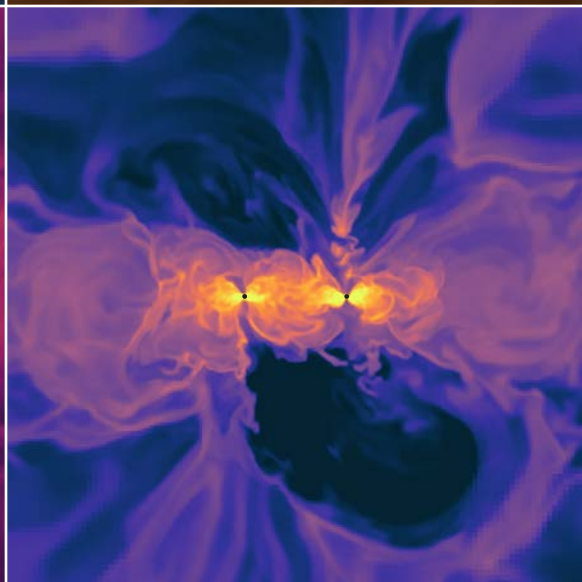

CO





MMUNITY TIES

The Association of Members of the Institute for Advanced Study (AMIAS) is a lifelong community. From the moment a scholar joins IAS, they are automatically part of AMIAS, giving them a lasting connection to the Institute's scholarly community that extends long after their time on campus comes to an end. The newly reinvigorated series of AMIAS regional events, held worldwide, helps maintain those ties throughout the year. And each May, Founders Day draws AMIAS scholars back to campus, nourishing the Institute's community wherever its members are.







Traditions of Excellence

For some, being a part of the Institute's scholarly community is a family affair. Take, for instance, Gopal Prasad, whose impact on the Institute has extended far beyond the field of Lie groups and algebraic groups, his area of expertise. In his six visits to IAS—almost one per decade between the years of 1973 to 2013—Prasad's impact also reached his family, including his brothers and his children.

Three of Gopal Prasad's brothers made a total of six visits to the Institute. Pawan Kumar first arrived as a Member (1995) and then as a Visiting Professor (1996–2002) in the School of Natural Sciences. Shrawan Kumar had two visits as a Member (1988–98, 2022) in the School of Mathematics. Dipendra Prasad also joined the School twice as a Member (1992–93, 2022).

Prasad's son, Anoop, came to IAS as a child with his parents in 1973, attending Crossroads Nursery School. During subsequent visits, Anoop and Ila Fiete, Prasad's daughter, remained engaged in the Princeton community. Ila enjoyed her stays on the Institute campus and attended Princeton schools before becoming a physicist and computational neuroscientist.

The Prasads' connection to the Institute has continued over the years. Anoop—who earned his doctorate in theoretical physics from the California Institute of Technology and now serves as a Managing Director and member of the Executive Committee of D. E. Shaw & Co., jointly overseeing the D. E. Shaw group's worldwide businesses—joined the Friends of the Institute for Advanced Study in 2012 and served on the Friends Executive Committee from 2018 to 2024. In the fall of 2024, Anoop joined the Board of





Trustees, bringing his expertise stemming from the worlds of academia, finance, and philanthropy to help steward the Institute's mission.

Gopal himself was a leading expert within his field. During his visits to the Institute, he collaborated with many Faculty members from the School of Mathematics, including Harish-Chandra, Professor (1963–83); Armand Borel, Professor (1957–2003); and Professors Emeritus Robert Langlands, Pierre Deligne, and Peter Sarnak. In 2002, in honor of this legacy, the Prasad family worked with the Institute to create the Gopal Prasad Professorship. Sarnak became its inaugural chair, and the position is currently held by Nima Arkani- Hamed from the School of Natural Sciences.

Groundbreaking research may define the Institute's reputation, but human connections like these sustain its mission. Such traditions of excellence have characterized the Institute for almost a century, running through intellectual lineages passed down over generations and collaborative networks spanning decades, nurturing discovery no matter its path. The Prasad family's journey is a testament to that spirit: a reminder that at IAS, extraordinary scholarship is not just an achievement, but a shared heritage.

Left: Gopal Prasad and his wife Indu Devi (center) at a social gathering hosted by Marston Morse, Professor (1935–77) in the School of Mathematics, and his wife Louise, on the Institute campus in 1973.
Above: The Prasad family in attendance at an IAS gala held in honor of Trustee Emerita Shelby White in 2022.

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Celia Applegate and David Blackbourn

Those who have experienced scholarly life at IAS understand firsthand the profound value of the places and resources that make it possible. Returning Members Celia Applegate and David Blackbourn, scholars in the School of Historical Studies, first came to IAS in 2017–18 and returned during the 2025–26 academic year. As the Historical Studies–Social Science Library undergoes an ambitious renovation and restoration, Applegate and Blackbourn, both scholars of Germany, deepened their longstanding connection to IAS through a generous pledge to help ensure the library remains a place of beauty, contemplation, and transformative possibility. Their commitment is rooted in an appreciation for the role such spaces play in scholarly life—and a desire to nurture the culture of inquiry they help create.

We strive for excellence and accuracy in recognizing all who supported IAS in 2025–26. Please contact **IASGiving@ias.edu** to request updates to how you are acknowledged in future publications and to share what connects you to the Institute and inspires your support. Thank you for being an important part of this rare and special community.

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Alma Steingart

IAS is grateful to an anonymous donor for endowing the Robbert Dijkgraaf Membership in honor of the Institute's ninth Director and Leon Levy Professor (2012–22). Alma Steingart, Robbert Dijkgraaf Member in the School of Social Science for 2025–26, explored how mathematical reasoning has shaped representative democracy in the United States. Her work examines the ways quantitative methods, measurement, and ideas of rational decision-making have influenced political institutions and public life from the 1920s to the present. While at the Institute, she advanced her book manuscript, "Accountable Democracy: Mathematical Reasoning and Representative Democracy in America, 1920 to Now," shedding new light on the relationship between expertise, governance, and democratic accountability. Steingart's time at IAS fostered rich exchanges and lasting connections that extend beyond her own field—a testament to the power of intellectual freedom and creative exchange to expand the boundaries of inquiry.

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Ashvin Chhabra and Daniela Bonafede-Chhabra

Some of the most consequential exchanges begin informally: a question that lingers over tea, a conversation that crosses disciplinary boundaries, a passing encounter that opens an unexpected path of inquiry. At IAS, these serendipitous exchanges have, over the decades, sparked many unexpected and profoundly influential ideas across disparate fields.

Ashvin Chhabra, former Chief Investment Officer at the Institute, and Daniela Bonafede-Chhabra understand the importance of creating space for precisely these moments. In 2026, they established Ashvin and Daniela's Fund for Community and Collaboration, a lasting investment in the intellectual and social fabric of IAS. The fund preserves the Institute's historic traditions, like daily teatime, while supporting a broader purpose: bringing Faculty, Members, Staff, and Visitors into conversation and creating opportunities for connection across disciplines and throughout the community.

Ashvin and Daniela's vision gives permanence to an essential feature of Institute life: the encounters, conversations, and shared experiences from which relationships deepen, perspectives shift, and new ideas can take shape. Grounded in a belief that fundamental advances in knowledge are the cornerstones of human progress, their vision recognizes the unique role that IAS plays in that endeavor. Through their endowment, the conditions for these encounters will endure, allowing the connections and discoveries they inspire to continue unfolding for generations to come.

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The Ambrose Monell Foundation

For more than 30 years, the Ambrose Monell Foundation has supported Members in the Institute's Schools of Mathematics and Natural Sciences. That sustained commitment has given more than 100 mathematicians and scientists something increasingly rare: the time and freedom to pursue their most consequential questions in the company of colleagues drawn from around the world. Their ideas and discoveries have contributed to an extraordinary body of work—and to a web of collaborations reaching across disciplines and generations. That remarkable web of scholarship includes Peter Sarnak, Professor Emeritus and Monell Foundation Member in the School of Mathematics from 2006–07, and Andrew Mummery, whose time as a Monell Foundation Member from 2025–26 led to him exploring an entirely new direction in his research, a foray into galactic dynamics, through an unexpected collaboration with fellow IAS Members.

This legacy is renewed with each new cohort of Monell Foundation Members, whose work reflects the quiet, compounding power of the Foundation's investment in ideas at their inception and discoveries as they unfold. IAS is deeply grateful for the shared sense of purpose that has sustained this partnership for three decades: an abiding commitment not merely to the answers, but to the asking.

"We are proud of the Foundation's longstanding affiliation with IAS, and of its contribution toward the expansion of knowledge through novel and clever approaches that could only be fostered by this very special place." – Ambrose K. Monell, President, The Ambrose Monell Foundation

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Helene† and Russell† Kulsrud

For more than three decades, Helene† "Laney" and Russell† Kulsrud found at the Institute a community that reflected their own deep commitment to scientific inquiry. They were distinguished scientists themselves—Russell as a pioneering theoretical physicist whose work helped define the modern fields of plasma physics and astrophysics, and Laney as a trailblazer in the early development of computer science, applied mathematical methods, and computational techniques to pioneer advanced electron gun design and parallel computing, guiding the design of high-performance supercomputers toward modern data mining. They became devoted Friends of the Institute in 1999 and gave steadfastly of their time and resources, including support for the School of Natural Sciences, where Russell was a Member from 1989–90.

Their connection to the Institute would ultimately extend beyond their lifetimes. Through generous provisions in their estates, Laney and Russell have ensured that future generations of scholars will continue to find at IAS the freedom to pursue fundamental questions, surrounded by others with a shared dedication to discovery.

Laney and Russell's admiration for this rare hub of scholars now becomes part of its future—an enduring legacy of scholarship, friendship, and philanthropy.

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