

NSF I-GUIDE

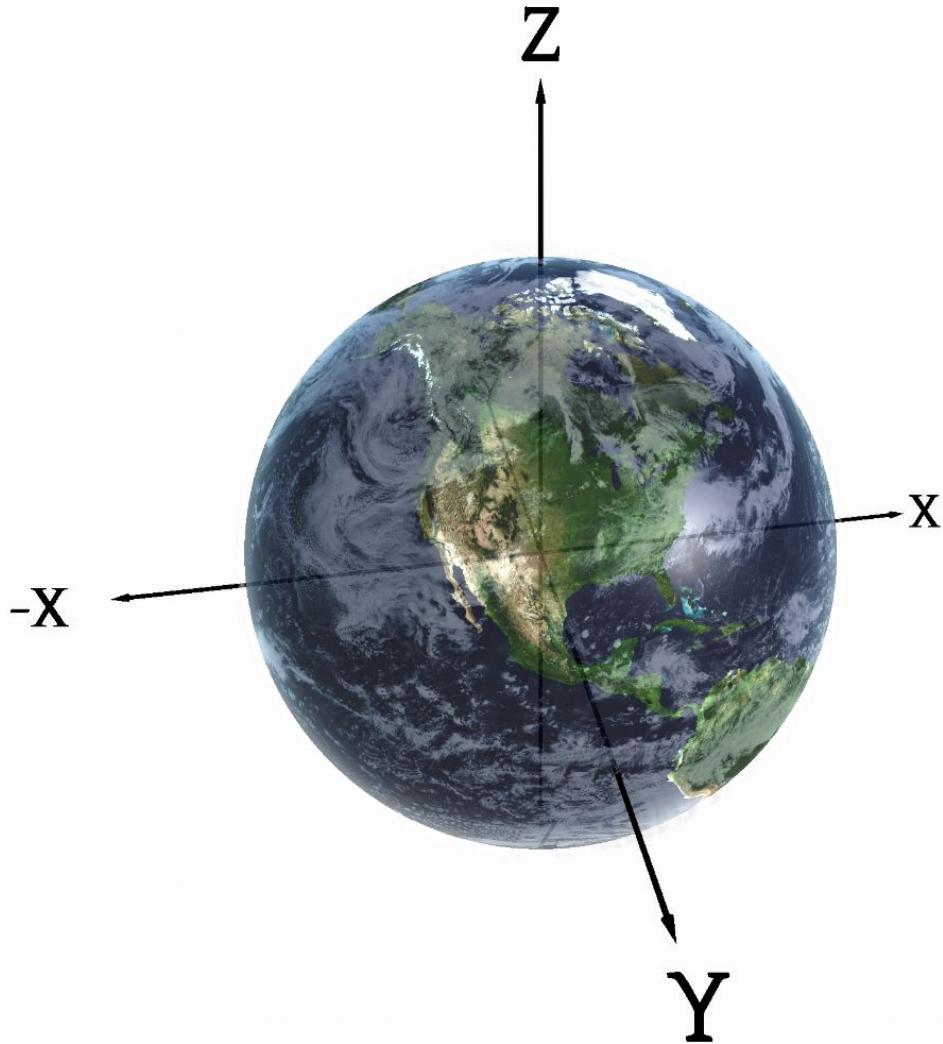
DeepEarth Workshop

9th Hour of 168th Day of Year 2025

(41.889306°, -87.619333°, 184m)

LANCE LEGEL

CEO of Ecodash.ai



Welcome!

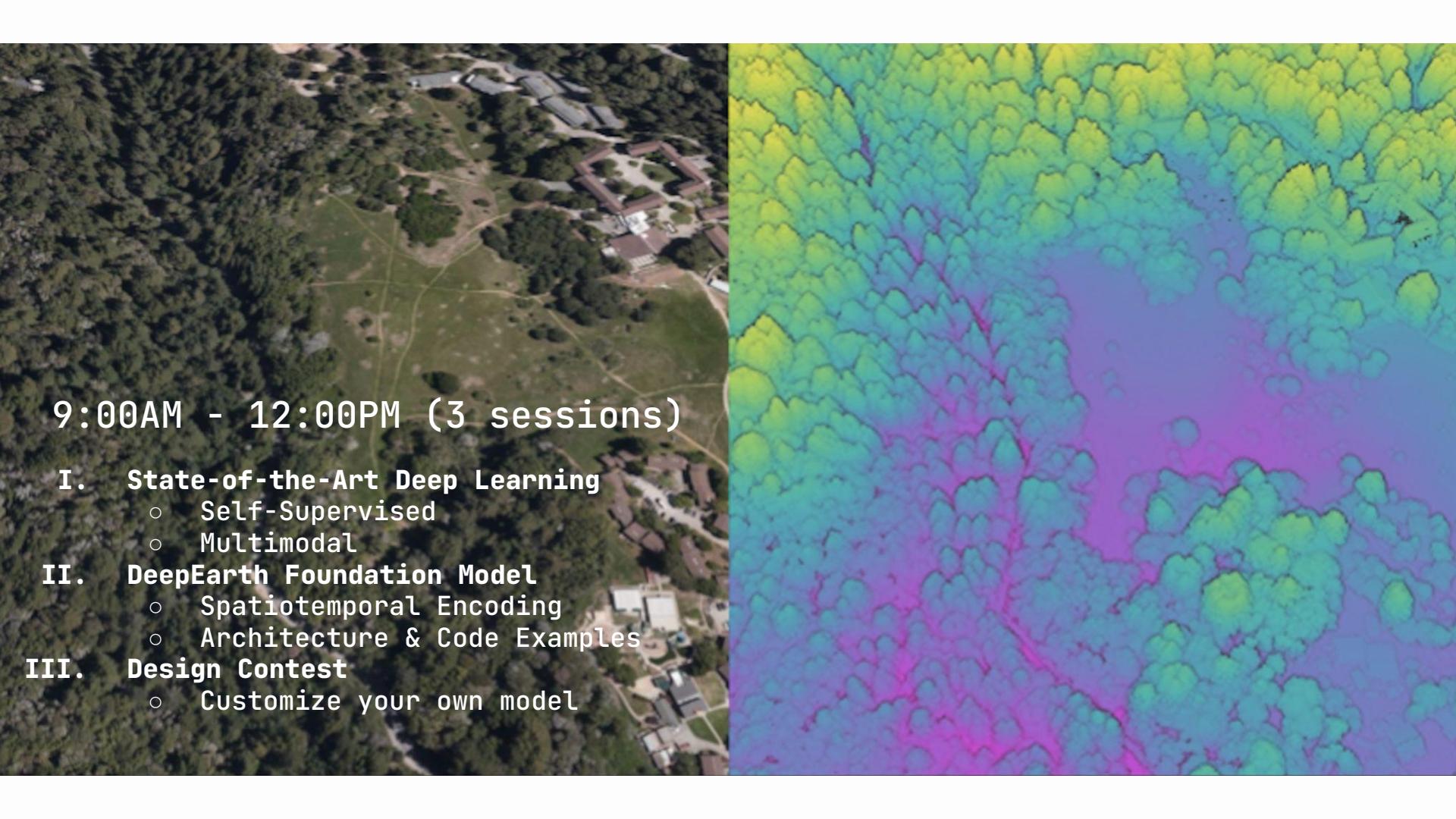
Let's introduce ourselves and get organized...



*Archilochus
colubris*

Record of Workshop Participants

- Professor [Shaowen Wang](#), University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign >> [NSF I-GUIDE Director](#)
- Professor [Danielle Wood](#), Notre Dame University >> [Global Adaptation Initiative](#)
- Professor [Fangzheng Lyu](#), Virginia Tech University >> [Geospatial Data Science](#)
- Dr. [Wen Zhou](#), University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign >> [GeoAI & Multimodal Simulation](#)
- Dr. [Wei Hu](#), University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign >> [Geospatial LLMs & Agents](#)
- Dr. [Elham Jebalbarezi Sarbijan](#), Purdue University, [Rosen Center for Advanced Computing](#)
- Dr. [Jungha Woo](#), Purdue University, [Rosen Center for Advanced Computing](#)
- Dr. [Xin Gu](#), Texas State University >> [Geospatial Urban AI](#)
- PhD candidate [Yen-Yi Wu](#), University of Wyoming, [GeoAI + Hydrological and Climate Science](#)
- PhD candidate [Nicholas Manning](#), Michigan State University, [GeoAI & Ecology](#)
- MS candidate [Ivy Doe Kwashie](#), University of Wyoming, [GeoAI + Digital Twins for Coastal Ghana](#)
- CNA analyst [Carey Whitehair-Conde](#), CNA, [GeoAI for Wildfire Threat Detection](#)
- Ecodash.ai CEO, [Lance Legel](#), Ecodash.ai, [Director of Ecological Intelligence](#)



9:00AM - 12:00PM (3 sessions)

I. State-of-the-Art Deep Learning

- Self-Supervised
- Multimodal

II. DeepEarth Foundation Model

- Spatiotemporal Encoding
- Architecture & Code Examples

III. Design Contest

- Customize your own model

STATE-OF-THE-ART DEMO: OPENAI 03 PRO



What is happening?

Request for o3 pro

Reasoned for 2m 47s

The photo captures a brief but telling ecological interaction:

Scene description

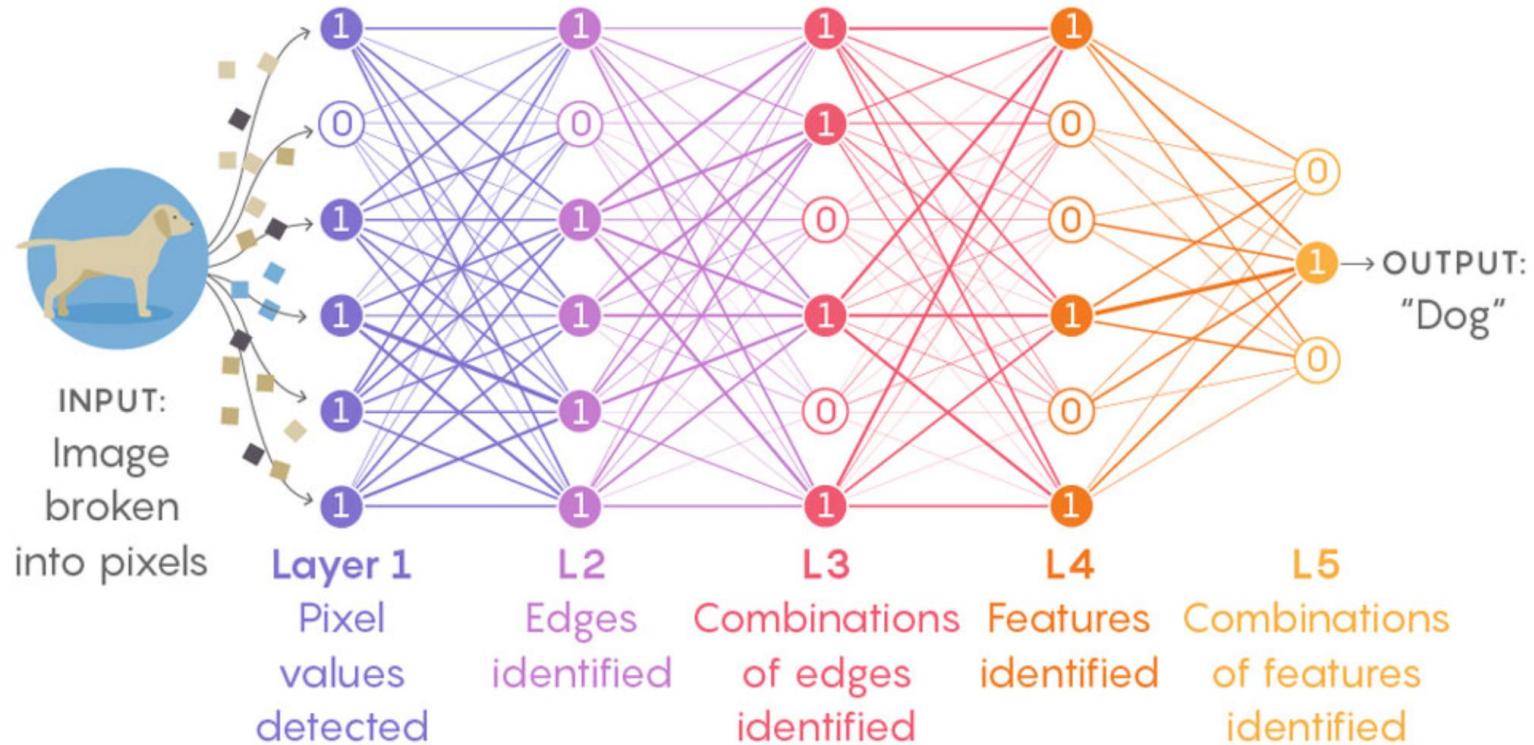
- A hummingbird is hovering nearly upright, suspending itself in the air by rapid wingbeats while probing a tubular, orange-yellow flower with its bill.
- The bird's head and throat flash an iridescent magenta-rose; the back and flanks are metallic green. Those traits, plus the relatively short tail, point to a **male Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*)**, a common resident along the Pacific coast of North America.
- The flowers appear to belong to a shrub with paired, trumpet-shaped corollas—possibly a *Tecoma* or distant relative—whose morphology is well-matched to hummingbird pollination (deep tube, bright warm colors, nectar reward, little scent).

What is happening

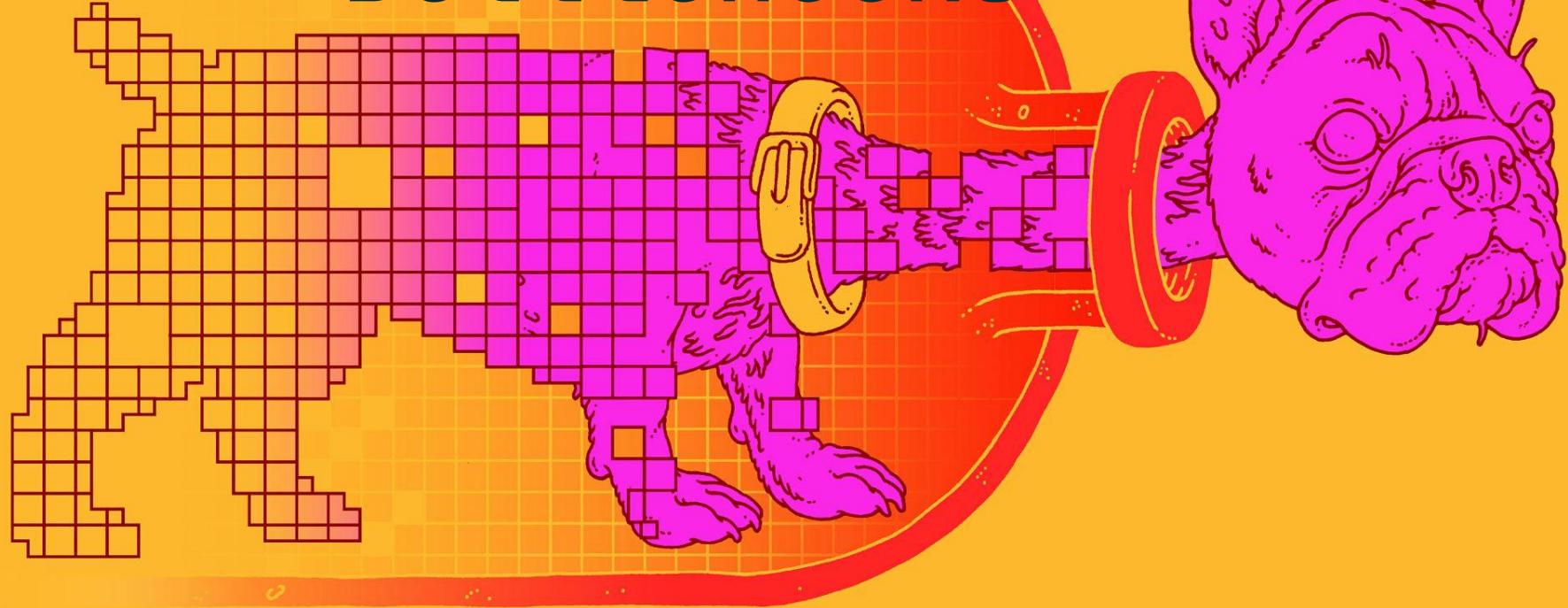
1. **Nectar for energy** – The hummingbird is inserting its long, specialized tongue through the corolla to lap up nectar, a high-sugar fuel that powers its extremely costly hovering flight (heart rates >1,200 bpm and wingbeats ~50 Hz).
2. **Pollination service** – As the bird feeds, its forehead and throat contact the flower's reproductive parts. Pollen grains dust the iridescent feathers and will be transferred to the next blossom it visits, completing cross-pollination. This is a classic bird-flower mutualism.
3. **Energetic micro-territorial foraging** – Male Anna's often defend small feeding territories around nectar-rich plants. The vertical perch-and-hover posture and alert eye suggest the bird may dart off momentarily to chase rivals or return to a nearby perch.

How did we get here?

“In the beginning of deep learning, we had ConvNets”...



Information Bottlenecks

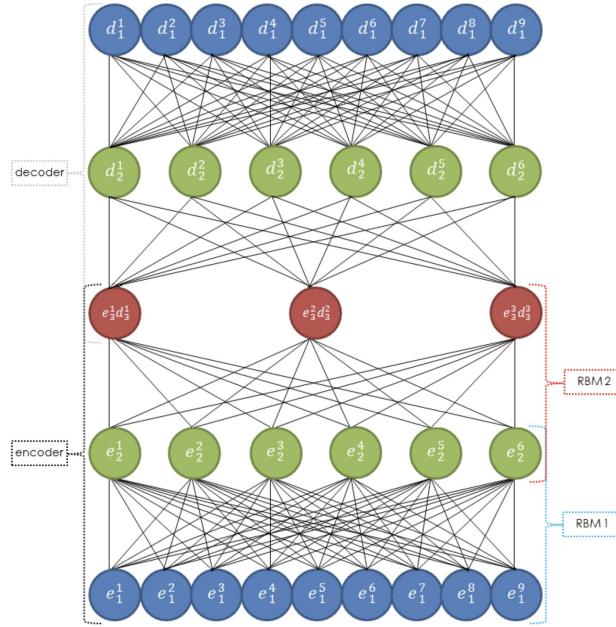


Quanta Magazine, 2017, ["New Theory Cracks Open the Black Box of Deep Learning"](#)

Self-Supervised Learning

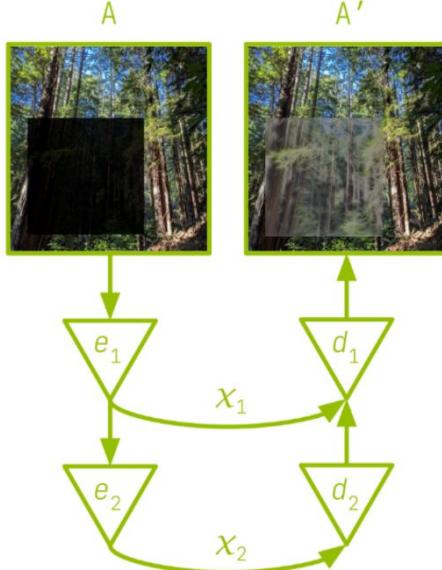


New York Times, 2012,
"How Many Computers to Identify a Cat? 16,000"

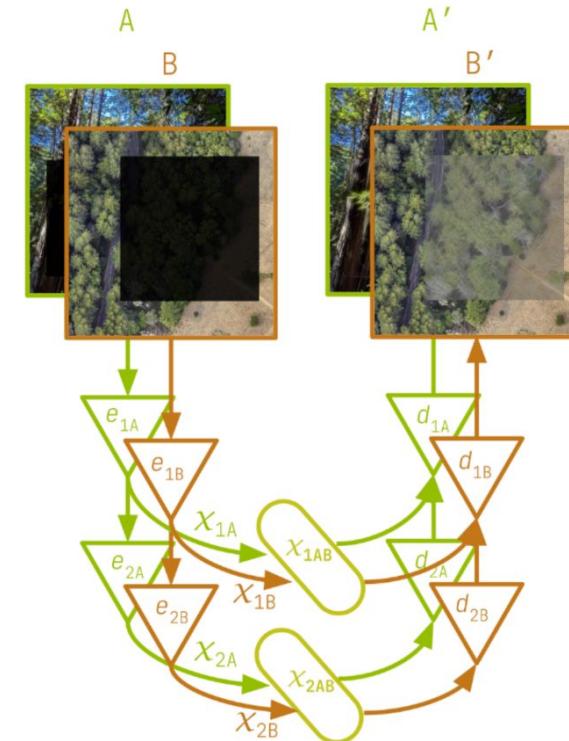


Lance Legel, Master of Science Thesis, 2013,
"Parallelized Deep Neural Networks for
Distributed Intelligent Systems"

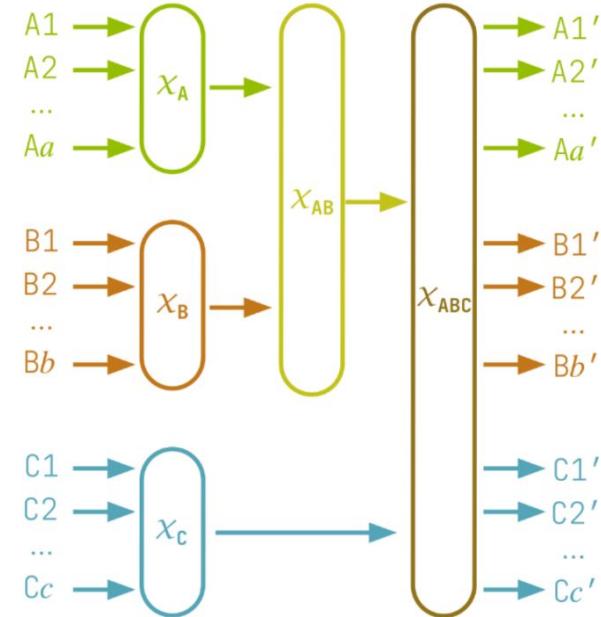
Multimodal Deep Learning



(a) Autoencoder



(b) Inductive Autoencoder



(c) Hierarchical Inductive Autoencoder

Break!

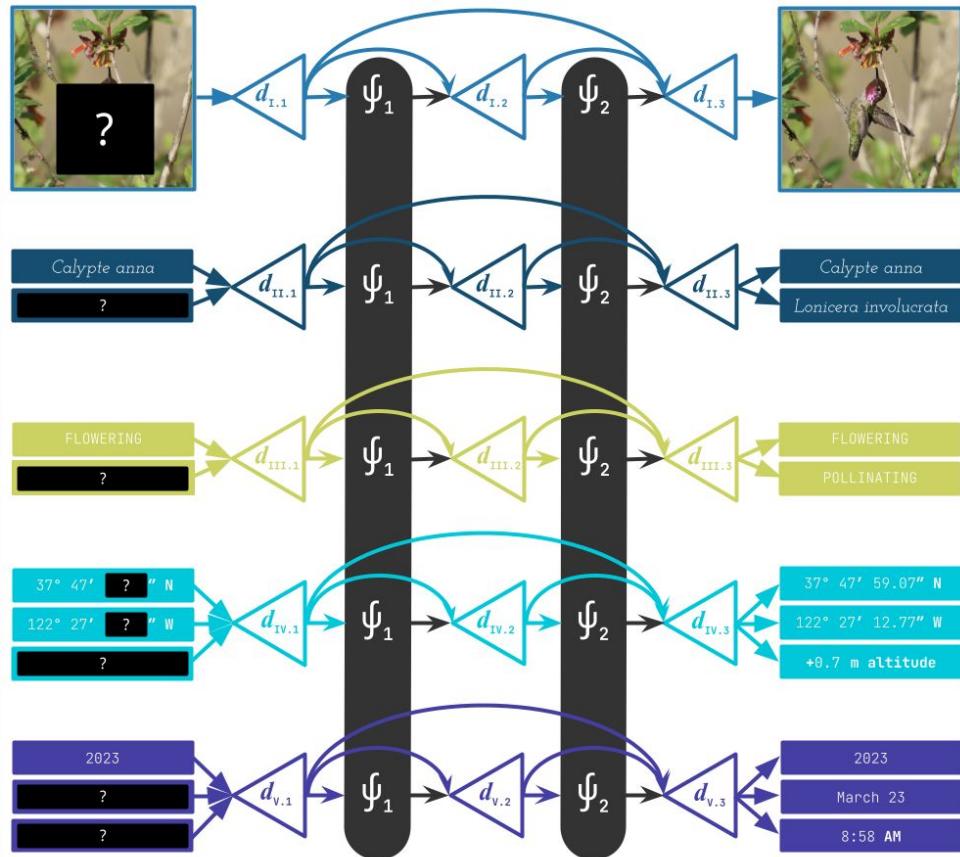
Let's decompress and relax for 5 minutes...



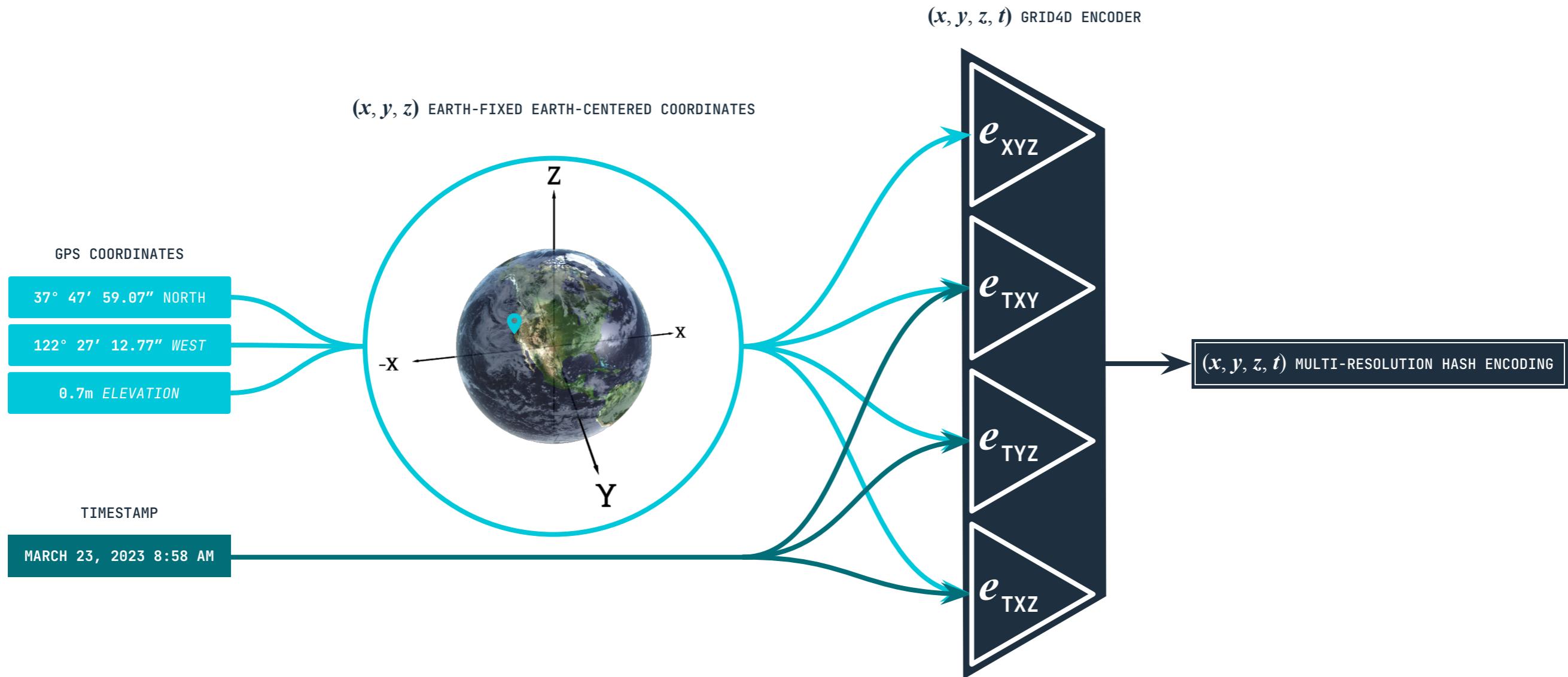
*Selasphorus
rufus*

Spatiotemporal Self-Supervised Multimodality Simulator

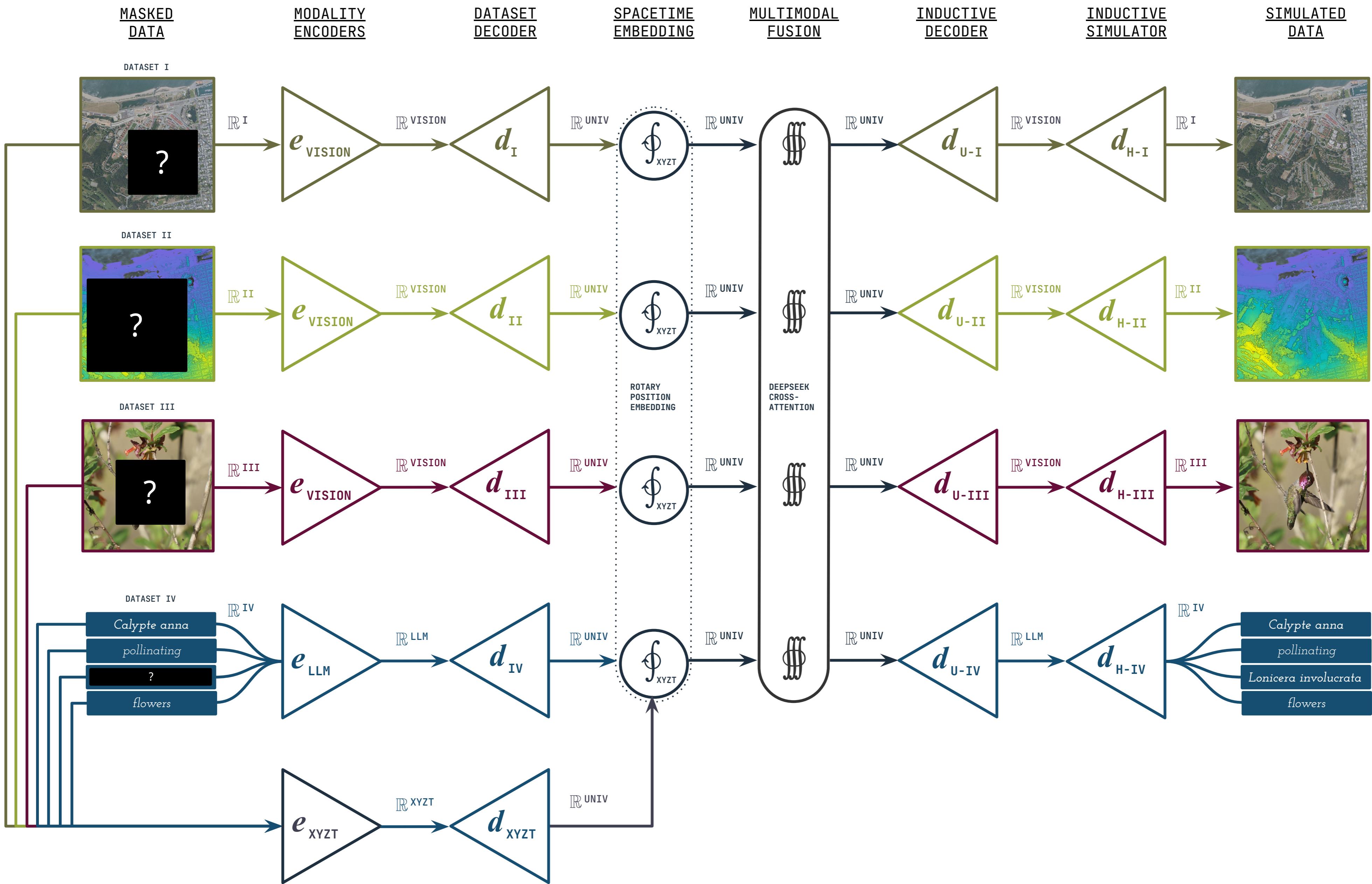
DeepEarth



DEEPEARTH SPACETIME ENCODER



DEEPEARTH INDUCTIVE SIMULATOR



Questions & Roadmap (Post-Workshop Notes)

I. Deep Geometric Vector Encoding

- v0.01 Spacetime Encoding is “Pointwise” (“Rasterized”), which is known to be both effective but also potentially very inefficient.
How can we teach “vectors”, “polygons”, and “ranges” to the NN?

II. Bayesian Uncertainty Encoding

- Following the workshop, there was a discussion about Gaussian Processes and the potential for explicit modeling of uncertainty.
What are some elegant ways to inject uncertainty into the model?

III. Core Infrastructure Prototyping & Testing

- As of June 19th, 2025, DeepEarth’s architecture is more or less fully specified, and peer-reviewed. Collaborators are invited to become core DeepEarth model contributors to bring this to life.

IV. Custom DeepEarth Model Development, Experiments, and Publications

- During the workshop, 6 teams presented adaptations of DeepEarth for their research domain. Let’s plan to explore collaborations to potentially bring such projects to life over the next 3-6 months.

Key Follow-Up References

- DeepEarth Specifications Document including Detailed Python Implementation (2025)
- Foundation Model for Ecology including Historical AI Modeling References (2024)
- Inductive Neural Networks for Ecology including Mathematical Insights & NN Diagrams (2025)
- DeepEarth Pre-Print Preview (Subject to Dramatic Change in Coming Months, 2025)
- NVIDIA Multi-Resolution Hash Encoding: Demos & Paper (2022)
- Stanford lecture on Multi-Resolution Hash Encoding (2022)
- Grid4D encoding of (x,y,z) and time via 4 tri-plane Multi-Resolution Hash Encodings (2024)
- V-JEPA 2 spatiotemporal “world” vision foundation model from Meta (Yann LeCun, 2025)
- ClimaX foundation model for Weather and Climate from Microsoft (2023)
- cBottle foundation model for 1km Atmosphere Modeling from NVIDIA (2025)
- How DeepSeek Rewrote the Transformer [MLA]: Detailing 57x Speed-Up in Transformer (2025)
- Deep Autoregressive Networks: “Universal Distribution Approximator” (2014)
- MADE: Masked Autoencoder for Distribution Estimation (2015)



Thank you!

lance@ecodash.ai

Grus canadensis

Art by Petra Stanković