

NDC Glossary

This Glossary contains various terms and information, as they relate to the [New Dusk Conclave](#), that are supplemental to the primary article/s.

'Artificial' Intelligence(s)

The question of sentience and personhood is fairly well understood within the NDC. Anyone or anything that shows signs of a non-programmed personality, with wants, needs, empathy, and the other usual characteristics of a person is considered to **be** a person. This, of course, extends to intelligences that have been created by artificial means, including those found in computer systems.

As the majority of the NDC are created beings, the society and government tends to err on the side of caution. In addition to the true-person Synthetic Intelligences, or Intsynths, the NDC makes uses of a wide array of Machine Intelligences.

Automated City Intelligence

Automated City Intelligences, or ACIs for short, are highly advanced Machine Intelligences with significant processing power and decision making capabilities. Their main purpose is to oversee and manage all major activities in a city related to maintenance, development, and citizen well-being. They are supported by any number of subordinate Machine Intelligences of lesser capability and power.

All ACIs follow a few basic directives:

- Ensure the physical and mental well-being of the citizenry
- Ensure the continued prosperity and development of the city, so long as it does not conflict with the first directive.
- Follow all instructions received from higher in the New Dusk Conclave command chain, so long as it does not conflict with the first or second directive.

Each directive has a number of sub-directives that prevent the ACI from going overboard on any one element in rigid pursuit of its goals. No ACI will view the inability to solve all of its citizen's problems as a dire threat to its own directives, nor will it decide to [maximize paperclips](#) in order to achieve its directives at any cost. ACIs are intelligent enough to be flexible and to understand what is and is not a reasonable goal.

ACIs often take on the name of the city that they manage, such that the ACI for Obsidian City calls themselves "Obsidian". Citizens will sometimes call their cities ACI 'the Administrator', 'the Management', and so forth, though rarely in a derogatory fashion.

While not truly sentient, ACIs still have their own personalities and interests. These are often programmed in and tweaked periodically, but most ACIs are capable of self-managing and adapting over

time. If the ACI chooses to use a tangible or intangible form to interact with its citizens or officials, they self-select their appearance mannerisms to match the personality that they have defined. Given their position, all ACIs conduct themselves with tact, professionalism, and surprising insight.

Infomorph

The name given to a biological entity who has converted their mind into a digital form. Only used when making the distinction between a 'computer-based' [synthetic intelligence \(SI\)](#) or a 'biological-based' SI. In all other cases, regardless of origin, Synthetic Intelligence is used.

Machine Intelligence

Designed to learn and adapt, Machine Intelligences (and their associated data catalog) are sophisticated AIs that can *appear* to be sentient due to programmed or learned responses. They can respond to questions, hold conversations, and grow from day-to-day in an organic fashion. Machine Intelligences rarely show true creativity - they may be programmed to try random solutions and use that as input for their next actions, but they will never make 'leaps of logic' in the way that a true intelligence would. Similarly, they do not typically engage in idle thought and simply respond to external stimuli.

These intelligences are typically designed with a particular purpose in mind and can seem quite personable, but are not considered to be 'true' persons. They are not truly self aware and do not have a sense of their own [theory of mind](#). The NDC views a small Machine Intelligence the same way that they would view the most powerful Machine Intelligence - necessary, worthy of respect, but not a person.

Given sufficient time, resources, and stimuli, some Machine Intelligences can 'evolve' into a Synthetic Intelligence. Most MIs are designed to not grow to this extent, as it could interfere with their original purpose and might be considered slavery due to the typically mundane purposes that MIs are used for.

Machine Intelligences make up the backbone of much of the NDC's technology, whether it be military or civilian. The specific extent of the MI's capabilities vary significantly, but the groundwork laid by the [distributed_intelligence_doctrine](#) has spread far and wide.

Synthetic Intelligence

An AI that has all of the elements that make up a sentient being, including emotion, non-programmed desires and interests, and a free will. Synthetic Intelligences may still have strong senses of purpose based on what they were created to do, built in restrictions, or other behavioral modifiers.

In the NDC, Synthetic Intelligences are considered fully sentient. Accordingly, they have the same rights as any other sentient within NDC space. One consequence of this is that SIs are not used for 'mundane' tasks or forced into a specific job, as this draws too close a parallel to slavery.

In general, SIs in the NDC set many of their own 'rules'. Many of these rules are intended to allow them to function harmoniously alongside their non-synthetic counterparts, even if it restricts their capabilities in

various ways. Beyond this, they are expected to comply with all the other laws and societal norms that non-synthetics are beholden to.

Advancing technology in the NDC allows Synthetic Intelligences to acquire a body that is sufficiently similar to that of a human that they can get the 'full human experience'. Not all SIs make this choice, but many do.

Avatar

A representation of a digital being, whether as a three dimensional model in virtual space, a flat image on a screen, or a three dimensional hologram or hard light projection in real space. Avatars are typically, but not necessarily, human in appearance.

It is possible for a Natural (a non-clone, non-AI) to create an Avatar for themselves by the use of some translation system that turns their actions, thoughts, speech, etc, into the desired output.

In either case, an Avatar does not have to look, sound, or act like whoever created it. It is considered good behavior to stick to a general appearance or theme, however, and copying someone else's Avatar is a significant sleight. Non-modifiable metadata attached to any Avatar makes it easy to identify the true individual behind such a copy.

Engram

In the NDC, a person's memories, personality, and more are collectively called an Engram. It is intrinsically tied to the NDC's concept of [Soul](#), but is 'scientifically tangible'. The [Anima System](#), a mind-machine interface that can mirror or transfer consciousness, acts upon the Engram.

Simply put, the Engram is all that a person is when you strip away their physical body. It is unknown if the Engram *is* a "spiritual component" of the body, or if it is simply connected to some intangible something that makes each 'Soul' unique.

Frame

'Frame' is the NDC's general term for piloted humanoid fighting machines. They tend to be nine or more meters in height and fit in the same size categories as the faction's fighters and bombers.

The NDC's focus on mind-machine interfaces such as the [G1-N2 "Geist" Advanced Interfacing Implant 2.0](#) and [BW-E-2 Anima System](#). These interfaces make it significantly simpler for humanoids to use frames in a natural way, greatly increasing a frame pilot's combat potential.

Glide Boosting

Glide Boosting is a maneuver where a Frame places its feet in contact with, or nearly in contact with, the ground and uses its boosters to move at a faster speed than it would be capable of when running. The Frame appears to be sliding across the surface of the ground during this maneuver with its various thrusters operating at a reasonable capacity so that the Frame's speed and maneuverability remain manageable.

In addition to the obvious speed increase, this maneuver also provides a more stable firing platform for the Frame's weaponry. The onboard targeting systems have less vertical movement to compensate for and can often acquire targets more quickly.

Pilots are warned that Glide Boosting in a straight line at a consistent speed makes your Frame an easy target. Short bursts of speed, erratic side-to-side movements, and periodic hops are all good ways to make it more challenging for an enemy to secure a lock.

Sub-Arm

Sub-arms have a variety of uses, ranging from moving weapons into an easier location for the Frame's main hands to take hold of, quickly reloading magazines without needing to free up either hand, or even wielding additional weapons.

Built using the same general techniques as a normal Frame arm, sub-arms tend to be simpler in design and have lighter armor. For example, a sub-arm might lack the intricate fingers of a Frame's hands or not follow the typical human arm design.

Variable Frame

The common name for [Frames](#) that can reconfigure their body shape into other useful forms, such as a fighter or tank. This change of shape often comes with tradeoffs, such as improved speed and maneuverability in exchange for reduced accuracy or firepower.

Soul

The intangible something that makes you, you. In a universe where it is possible to copy one's mind as many times as you wish and coexist with your clones, the question of a single, immutable soul is potentially an important one. While there is certainly a spiritual component to the concept of the soul, NDC scientists believe that there is a *quantum* component to it.

Through a series of experiments and historical evidence, scientists came to the decision that some important part of an individual's 'self' exists separate from their body. Their findings were as follows:

- It is scientifically verifiable that some aspect of an individual's 'intangible self' is contained in a set

of quantum data that can be observed and/or interacted with separately of the individual's physical form

- An AI that is sufficiently advanced and has true sentience also has one such 'intangible self'
- [No cloning theorem](#) - Quantum data cannot be perfectly copied; any copy of that quantum data, therefore, is not fully identical to the original.
 - In the event that the original perishes and the copy is 'restored' afterwards, the clone 'inherits' the original quantum data and becomes the new 'true self'.
 - In the event that a new 'true self' is established and the previous 'true self' is restored, the new 'true self' would retain the original quantum data - effectively making the original a copy
- [No deletion theorem](#) - Quantum data cannot be truly deleted; this suggests that there may be some sort of 'life after death', if only as a frozen quantum state
 - Further, if a sufficiently accurate copy is restored and associated with that quantum state, it is possible to fully restore an individual such that they are indistinguishable from the original by any existing test
- The only way to ensure that a set of quantum data is the original is to maintain entanglement with that data at any point that it's authenticity could be in question; as any copy is inherently 'in question', maintaining continuity of connection between the original and an entangled form is, therefore, necessary to ensure this authenticity.
 - Disruption of this entanglement has two results:
 - One of the entangled quantum data sets becomes the 'true' self.
 - The other entangled quantum data becomes a 'new' self, the same as with any copy
 - Accordingly, in order to ensure that only a single true self exists, if entanglement is broken, one set of data must be destroyed immediately before it has a chance to diverge and become a new set of quantum data, with its own self

In short, some "thing" exists that causes each clone to be an individual, despite sharing an identical mind and body to the original. At any given time, the NDC believes that only one 'you' can exist and any other 'yous' are not truly you, but some variation on you that will become more distinct and different over time.

Accordingly with this belief, the New Dusk Conclave disallows any system that could create more than one version of an individual at a time. The [Anima System](#) is the most direct implementation of these findings and it relies heavily upon managing these quantum states without creating an actual copy.

It is important to note that these are the NDC's findings on the subject. It is possible that their findings, while sufficiently researched to use as a basis for new technologies, are missing one or more key data points that would yield some larger truth. Additionally, the NDC's view is different from the [Star Army of Yamatai](#)'s view - which is that 'true' copies are inherently the same, but problematic - and thus, illegal.

OOO Notes

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