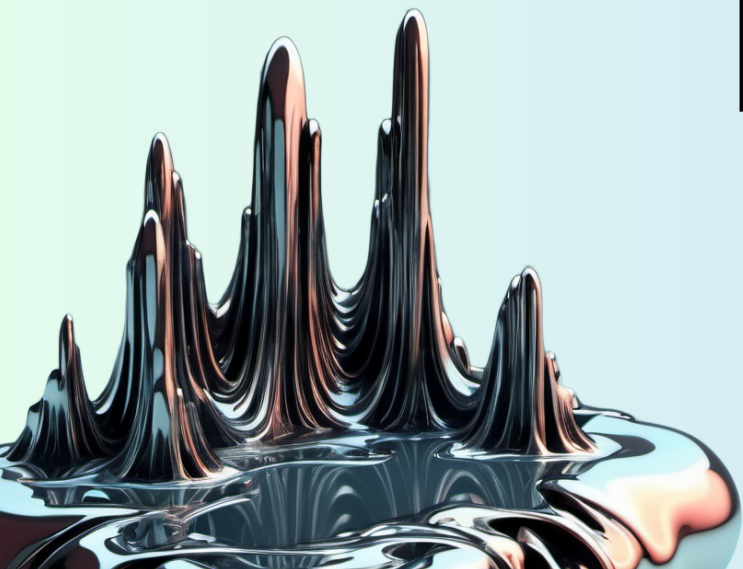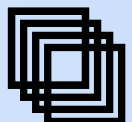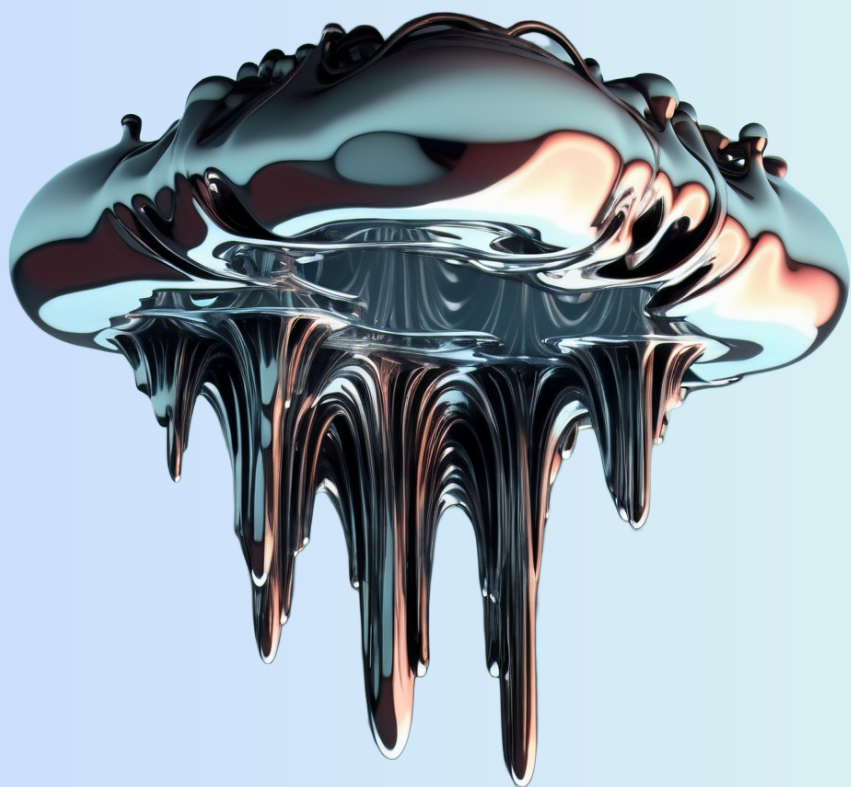*by*Students

Futures Lab
Playbook

COPENHAGEN
INSTITUTE
FOR FUTURES
STUDIES

Introduction

This playbook has been designed with the aim of promoting futures-oriented change-making. It does so by providing organisations and institutions with practical tools for developing and facilitating their own workshop programmes based on the concept of *futures literacy*. *Futures literacy* is a competence and educational concept developed by UNESCO, describing the ability to understand and engage with the future, and to use this understanding to inform one's perspective on - and decisions in - the present.

Supporting young people in developing futures literacy is not about educating large numbers of future researchers. Rather, the purpose of the Futures Lab and the cultivation of futures literacy among youth is to strengthen their sense of collective responsibility towards the future and their agency within the transitions and life phases they are navigating. Thereby, we nurture their ability to become co-creators of the future they wish to see. This is achieved through engagement with current and emerging societal challenges. These are skills that young people can carry forward in their personal lives, professional endeavours, and civic engagement.

The playbook is structured as follows:

- Readers are first introduced to the concept behind *Futures Lab byStudents*.

- Next, we outline the foundation for the programme's design, including the societal need for future-oriented change-making, the theory and practice of futures literacy, key considerations and approaches for working with young people, and the activation of non-formal learning spaces.

- Drawing on our experience with *Futures Lab byStudents*, we then present six principles for developing Futures Lab programmes

- Finally, we illustrate how theory, methods, and principles can be translated into a concrete learning pathway through our own *Futures Lab byStudents* as a case example.

The playbook can be used as inspiration for working systematically with futures literacy, as a reflective tool in the development of alternative learning formats, or as a source of insight and inspiration for creating your own Futures Lab. Our ambition is for Futures Labs to become a recognisable format within Danish society. For this reason, the playbook has been designed to allow a high degree of adaptability to different contexts.

The playbook is intended for anyone who wishes to create a space where young people can develop their futures literacy and practise translating theory into action, using concrete tools to structure their thinking and engagement with the future. The playbook specifically addresses principles aimed at young people, and will therefore be particularly relevant to youth organisations and associations, educational institutions (or their partners), and civil society actors working with societal development.

However, many of the learnings presented here may also inform processes that engage other population groups or foster connections across generations.
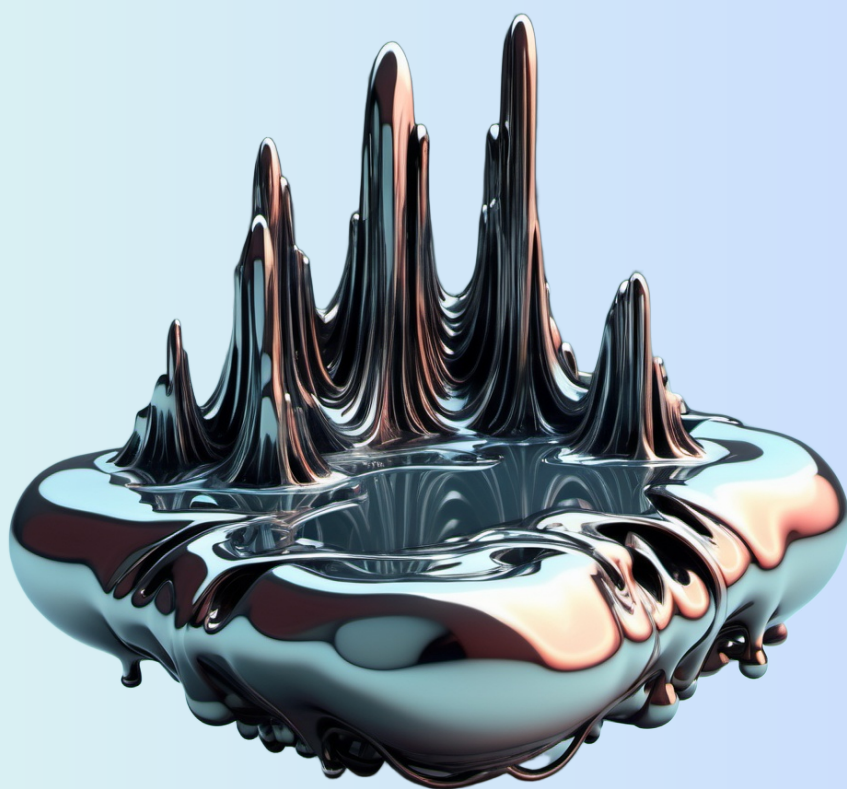
Main takeaways

Students and young people have a strong appetite for developing skills that enable them to navigate a complex world and that give them a sense of agency and determination. The field of futures is inherently complex and offers no definitive answers. This can make it challenging to grasp. The overarching principles presented here stem from our practical experience in conducting a futures-centred competencies-building programme. We believe that others wishing to design and facilitate programmes with similar aims and missions may benefit from reflecting upon these principles.

These principles, together with accompanying reflection questions, are as follows:

Framing is a prerequisite for uncertainty
Which expectations need to be made explicit, and which should be challenged or dismantled in your context?

Narrative drives design
How can participants' life experiences and contexts influence the structure of the programme?

Knowledge is not hierarchical
How do our own assumptions and expectations shape the design of the programme, and how do we act upon them?

We support flexibility and grounding
How can we (along the way) adapt the programme and modes of participation to match participants' rhythm, time, and engagement?

Diversity is a premise for learning
How can we create conditions in which diversity is activated, and do we have mechanisms in place to recognise if someone feels excluded or uncertain?

Community is the foundation for long-term relevance
How do we nurture community as an integral part of the learning process?

Our aspiration is to see the Futures Lab become a widely used format across Denmark. We hope that this playbook will inspire other organisations and institutions to facilitate their own programmes on futures and the competencies related to them, adapted to their specific contexts and target groups.

Futures Lab
- What and why

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What is a Futures Lab?

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A Futures Lab is a structured educational and workshop programme designed to strengthen students' futures literacy. The programme consists of five phases divided into seven workshop sessions, in which students are introduced to futures literacy as a competence and to various elements of the discipline of foresight. Through this, students learn to explore and develop concepts grounded in the future. Concretely, they learn to think in terms of possible, plausible, probable, and preferable future scenarios, and to identify the opportunities and risks associated with the futures they explore.

Students work with concrete cases addressing societal challenges. The programme is structured so that students develop a future concept related to the case they have chosen to work on. This future concept is developed on the basis of the students' work with theories and methods from futures studies, specifically aimed at activating futures literacy.

The programme thus equips students with tools to design, plan, and implement concepts, framed with an emphasis on feasibility, impact, and scalability.

The Futures Lab programme differs from other competency and futures literacy initiatives by being explicitly situated outside formal institutions, developed *with* and *for* young people, and by orienting futures literacy as a competence relevant to the transitional phase from student and youth life to professional and adult life – all while placing society and our shared future at its centre.

Why a Futures Lab?

Young people are growing up in a world marked by global crises and transformative change, such as those relating to climate, well-being, and technology. In both byStudents' and Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies' work, we have repeatedly encountered students who express that they struggle to see how they can create positive change once they enter the labour market.

This highlights a particular risk that society may systematically miss out on potential changemakers. We see a significant societal need to equip young people with the competencies and the confidence to create positive change wherever their professional lives may take them.

If, as a society, we fail to support young people during this transition, we risk fostering a sense of resignation towards the critical issues that will shape the future. Many young people genuinely aspire to make a positive difference, yet there is a lack of critical, experimental and participatory spaces in which they can explore *how* to do so.

Futures Pessimism Among Young People
Several studies have shown that a large proportion of young people hold a pessimistic or negative view of the future. An international study found that 75% of young people (aged 16–25) look towards the future with fear, particularly in relation to climate change[1]. A survey by UNICEF Denmark[2] found that 4 in 10 young Danes believe the world is moving in a negative direction, while nearly one in three believe that the world today is a worse place than it was when their parents were children.

With this programme, we seek to help young people move away from future pessimism and closer to futures optimism. We aim to do this by tailoring a programme that takes its point of departure in young people's everyday lives and needs:

• Theory must make sense in practice.
• The programme is developed and delivered flexibly, so that it can fit into busy schedules.
• Young people are co-creators, not a buzzword.
• A diverse target group and respect for difference.
• Young people's time is limited – clear frameworks and expectations are essential.

Complex challenges require competencies beyond the familiar
Issues such as climate change, democratic crises, well-being challenges, and technological development call for systemic, critical, and creative thinking. At the same time, the complexity and pace of broader societal

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3 Souto-Otero, 2024.
4 Eshach, 2007.
5 Berman, 2020.
6 Chen & Hsu, 2020.
7 Kazemier et al., 2021.

change demand new forms of learning and imagination that can accommodate uncertainty as a neutral concept.

Futures literacy must and should be cultivated as a *life competence*, not treated as an optional extra. New and complex challenges require different approaches and an active engagement with the question of what kind of future we, individually and collectively, wish to create. This is essential for building the missing bridge between hope and agency.

The formal education system struggles to make room for conversations about the future

The education system has limited capacity for open conversations about societal development. Goal-oriented, performance-based, and academically delimited forms of learning dominate educational environments, rarely inviting students to experiment with critical and normative visions of the future[3].

As a result, the future is often treated as something external and uncontrollable rather than something one can actively engage with. This can make the future appear daunting, as something students are *subjected to*, rather than something they can help *shape*. The Futures Lab seeks to fill this gap and create a learning space where the future is placed at the centre of the conversation and treated with seriousness – both as a problem and as a potential. This is not about distancing ourselves from institutional learning spaces, but about complementing them.

Within informal learning spaces, learning is process-oriented rather than performance-based[4]. Facilitators act as curators or co-travellers who support exploration. Such spaces can be found, for instance, in cultural institutions and museums, where both content and approach are often context-dependent and shaped by diversity. Here, there is a need for clear scaffolding and attentiveness to relationships, psychological safety, and inclusion.

This creates an opportunity for learning to unfold on the participants' own terms[5]. Through this approach, we aim to contribute to a broader democratisation of learning that gives space to multiple forms of knowledge, participation, and community.

The need for hope and agency

Research shows that actively practising futures literacy can strengthen both optimism about the future and a sense of agency among university students. International studies on the effects of teaching that focuses on the future and futures literacy indicate improved understanding of transdisciplinary systems, greater openness to alternatives, and increased optimism about the future alongside reduced fear of complexity and a heightened sense of agency[6][7].

The ability to navigate uncertainty, understand and assess alternatives,

maintain optimism about the future, and feel empowered to act is a core competence of the twenty-first century. This applies both to the life transitions young people face, to their future working lives and roles as positive agents of change, and to their own well-being in an increasingly complex world.

Futures literacy

Futures literacy is a competence and educational concept developed by UNESCO, defined as the ability to know *how* to imagine the future in different ways as well as *why* it is necessary to do so. As individuals, we should all develop the capacity to "use" the future: to create new and more nuanced visions of what lies ahead, in order to inform the present and the decisions we make for ourselves, for society, and for the planet. By making the younger generation more *futures literate*, we strengthen their sense of agency, empower them to take part in conversations about the future, and enhance their ability to anticipate, restore, and innovate in the face of uncertainty and change.

According to the United Nations, the discipline of *foresight* and the underlying competence of futures literacy are essential forms of learning for the twenty-first century. Likewise, the European Commission emphasises that a structured use of futures thinking is central to the competence framework for entrepreneurship and sustainable development in the future.

Futures literacy reflects a competence-based approach to the future – one that can be measured and evaluated through the *Futures Consciousness* model, developed by the University of Turku and the Finland Futures Research Centre[8]. This tool measures individuals' future consciousness across five overarching dimensions: 1. Time perspective, 2. Agency beliefs, 3. Openness to alternatives, 4. Systems perception, and 5. Concern for others.

Futures Lab is designed and developed on the basis of UNESCO's *Futures Literacy Labs*[9] as a "journey" built around four design principles:

- **Reveal** – We uncover students' expected and preferred futures, along with their underlying assumptions.

- **Reframe** – Based on the identified underlying assumptions about the expected and preferred futures, an alternative, reframed future is explored.

- **Rethink** – Drawing on the insights gained through exploring expected,

10 Department of Psychology, University of Copenhagen, The ABCs of Mental Health.

11 Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies, 2025: cifs.dk/read-listen/reports-knowledge/toolkit-for-applied-strategic-foresight

preferred, and alternative futures, new questions emerge, leading to the formulation of a new preferred future.

- **Act** – Building on the insights acquired in the previous three phases, students develop an action plan for realising their preferred future ("What can we do tomorrow?").

We also take inspiration from the ABC for Mental Health[10], whose principles are *doing something*, *doing something together*, and *doing something meaningful*. This model supports the planning of the overall programme as well as the design of each individual session.

- **Active** – Students should experience doing something active by applying new tools independently and subsequently developing their own concepts.

- **Together** – Students will engage in collaborative work. They will develop a concept in groups, take part in event planning, and later become members of the *Futurists byStudents* network.

- **Meaningful** – Students should do something that feels meaningful. This is inherent to the project's very purpose, which is for students to help develop solutions to the challenges of the future. Furthermore, the sense of meaningfulness will also arise when students see that their concepts and competencies hold genuine value for the participating organisations.

Concepts and methods

Futures literacy can be supported by concrete concepts, methods, and models drawn from various disciplines. In addition to those originating within futures literacy itself, we also draw upon the discipline of *strategic foresight*. This approach allows us to build a bridge between our organisational case studies and the broader focus on societal challenges.

Theories, methods, and models used in our implementation of the Futures Lab are presented in the section *'Theory in Practice'*.
For further inspiration regarding methods and models to support your own future-oriented programme, we refer to Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies' *Toolkit for Applied Strategic Foresight*[11], which provides a detailed overview of a range of methods that each support futures thinking in different ways. You can use this toolkit to guide the design of your own process.

The Futures Lab Principles

How can we create learning environments that strengthen young people's ability to think and act in relation to the future? This question lies at the core of both the design and evaluation of Futures Lab and forms the basis for the development of our principles. The principles emerge from our combined experiences with facilitation, observations from practice, feedback from participants, and a theoretical understanding of futures literacy and non-formal learning.

We believe that the following guiding principles are essential for enabling young people to engage meaningfully with futures. We hope they can serve as guiding points to help others create the conditions through which young people can explore, articulate, and act on their own visions for the future. Each principle is accompanied by a point for reflection, which can be used in the conceptualisation and execution of your own programme.

Framing is a prerequisite for uncertainty

Narrative drives design

Knowledge is not hierarchical

We support flexibility and grounding

Diversity is a premise for learning

Community is the foundation for long-term relevance

Framing is a prerequisite for uncertainty

Young people are often accustomed to clear goals, fixed curricula, and performance expectations. Futures Lab seeks a different form of learning that invites participants to co-shape their journey, where answers are replaced by questions, possibilities, and alternatives.

It is essential to establish a clear framework around the programme. Framing is a balancing act where the goal is to create enough structure and safety for participants to explore the unknown, without controlling content or direction. Without scaffolding, uncertainty can become paralysing rather than motivating.

We prepare participants for the fact that confusion, frustration, and uncertainty are part of the process. This means we explicitly communicate that the learning environment and its premises differ from what they are used to, both during the introduction and continuously throughout the programme. We distinguish between constructive and non-constructive uncertainty. Constructive uncertainty arises when participants are challenged but still feel supported. Non-constructive uncertainty occurs when the framework is unclear and participants are left without direction or feedback.

An important element of framing involves working with group dynamics. In Futures Lab, the groups are interdisciplinary, multilingual, and often composed of students across institutions. This requires time and space to work on collaboration, roles, and relationships. Uncertainty and frustration arise not only in relation to course content, but also in the social environment. We make it clear where students can turn if they need to discuss something during the programme.

Framing is therefore a form of care. It enables exploration of the unexpected without losing one's sense of orientation. It recognises that learning requires courage, and that courage is nourished within frameworks that challenge without creating insecurity.

Which expectations need to be made explicit, and which should be challenged or dismantled in your context?

Narrative drives design

When participants in Futures Lab engage in futures thinking, it begins with a fundamental premise: that they have something important to say about the world and its possible developments. The programme is therefore not merely a method for solving problems, but an invitation to formulate new narratives grounded in participants' own values, in societal challenges, and in a shared desire for change.

We are mindful that many of the dominant narratives in society are shaped by existing structures, economic interests, and political agendas. These influence both the problems we are able to see and the solutions we consider possible. To work with futures, participants must have the freedom to challenge these frameworks and create their own visions of what is both desirable and possible.

This also means that the process should not be output-oriented around a specific "product", but instead focus on competence development. Participants should have the space to decide for themselves "what" they wish to develop or arrive at.

In Futures Lab, we encourage participants to create visions that are inclusive, and to let societal development and challenges form the foundation for their journey. The companies that serve as cases are not the end goals in themselves, but rather actors operating within specific thematic fields.

How can participants' life experiences and contexts influence the structure of the programme?

Knowledge is not hierarchical

Futures Lab exists outside traditional academic structures, grounded instead in volunteering and community-based experience.
This approach reflects our desire to challenge conventional ideas about who holds knowledge and who communicates it. At Futures Lab, we insist that knowledge emerges through co-creation. Facilitation, therefore, is not about possessing the answers but about creating the right conditions for the learning space to unfold. The facilitator's role should be understood as one of grounding, connecting, guiding, and opening up reflection rather than controlling, dominating, or concluding the conversation.

When working with young people, it is especially important to be aware of the structures and expectations that are brought into the room.
It must be made clear that everyone has something valuable to contribute, and that knowledge is not to be measured but explored.

Moreover, learning dynamics and perceptions of who holds knowledge are influenced not only by title or role but also by age, gender, ethnicity, and social position. This requires actively considering how roles are distributed, adapted, and developed throughout the process.

We aim to challenge the traditional roles of teacher and student. It can be a barrier for participants to dare to engage, contribute, and take part actively in the process, but it can also be a challenge for the facilitation team to reflect on which roles feel "natural." What matters is that we work with a broad understanding of the roles within the space, allowing them to be flexible and shifting. In this way, the learning space becomes a place where knowledge is a shared resource.

How do our own assumptions and expectations influence the design of the programme, and how do we act on them?

We support flexibility and grounding

When working with young people in a non-formal learning space, facilitators must be prepared to let the process take shape together with the participants and the realities of their sometimes busy everyday lives. This means letting go of the idea of a fixed plan and instead designing a flexible and inclusive space where diversity becomes an active part of the learning design.

Our goal is to democratise access to futures literacy, and we therefore emphasise offering multiple forms of participation and ways of engaging. Our Futures Events (Fremtidssaloner), for example, serve as open and accessible forums that complement the workshops with a different pace and atmosphere.

Futures Lab does not take place in a single location but moves between different spaces. Wherever possible, the setting itself becomes an active participant in the learning process. New places bring new perspectives and energy, while also grounding participants in the context and reality they are part of. For learning to be meaningful, it must be accessible, contextually grounded, and open to movement. This requires more facilitation, more listening, and a continuous willingness to rethink along the way.

How can we (along the way) adapt the programme and modes of participation to match participants' rhythm, time, and engagement?

Diversity is a premise for learning

Diversity is a fundamental premise of Futures Lab and an essential element for the exploratory space we seek to create. Many of the methods we use aim to identify systemic challenges and cultural values in order to develop alternative understandings and pathways for action. This requires moving away from the familiar and into the complex, where our assumptions are challenged. Most often, that is difficult to achieve without different perspectives and backgrounds present in the room.

However, diversity also brings challenges. Not all participants are accustomed to experimental forms of learning or open-ended processes without clearly defined goals. Some may experience uncertainty related to pace, language, or levels of abstraction. Imbalances in participation and engagement can occur, and expectations for the programme may vary. It is therefore essential to address diversity as a condition that requires active facilitation, not merely as a benefit that arises automatically.

When diversity is met with curiosity and respect, it becomes a resource for learning. Participants experience their perspectives being both challenged and valued. We consciously work with constructive uncertainty as a space where participants can remain in the unresolved and use it as a starting point for insight rather than a barrier to overcome. The facilitator's role is central within this tension. It requires clarity, presence, and courage to keep the space open while ensuring equal participation.

How can we create conditions in which diversity is activated, and do we have mechanisms in place to recognise if someone feels excluded or uncertain?

Community is the foundation for long-term relevance

Although Futures Lab is designed with the focus of developing futures literacy, our experience shows that it is often the sense of being part of a community that sustains learning, not the other way around. It is therefore important to focus on supporting, nurturing, and working within the social framework, and to help participants collaborate in diverse groups.

The social community is not only motivating throughout the process but further extends beyond the programme itself. Many participants rely on the network they build for exchanging ideas, conversation, and friendship as they later begin to apply their competencies in practice.

Finally, developing the social environment is also a way of creating a safe framework within a programme that invites reflection on one's own values, hopes, and doubts. Futures Lab is as much a personal journey as a professional one, which requires creating a space where participants can express the vulnerability that such reflection brings. We find that Futures Lab truly becomes a space for creativity, exploration, and curiosity only when the social conditions for participation are in place, because they make it possible to embrace uncertainty and express doubt.

How do we nurture community as an integral part of the learning process?

What if, in 2035...   DREAM SCENARIOS

post wage labour society. leisure & creativity is prioritised. base wage for artists, people are
paid to make art & explore, experiment. innovation is no longer necessary. play & playful
connection is recentred.

Theory in action
– the Futures Lab byStudents case

How do you turn the ambition of a Futures Lab into practice? The concrete design of a Futures Lab can and should be developed with careful attention to the target group one wishes to engage. In this section, we present our own implementation of Futures Lab byStudents, along with the decisions, adaptations, and adjustments involved in putting such a programme into practice. The aim is to provide insight into how a process designed to create space for young people to explore and engage with the future can take shape. This chapter can serve as inspiration for how and with what objectives you might develop your own programme, tailored to the specific context in which you operate. We present our process as follows:

- **Preparation and framework:** We outline the process leading up to the implementation of *Futures Lab byStudents* and share our reflections on the design of the programme. This section can serve as a set of suggested focus points for the preparation phase

- **Programme:** We review the content of the programme's seven workshops and our objectives for each one. In addition, we explain how we sought to anchor the programme in the wider world and maintain engagement with the students after its completion. This section can be used as inspiration for how a concrete programme might be structured. Broadly speaking, this can be done in three ways: 1) use it to spark ideas for your own programme without necessarily adopting any specific elements from the overview; 2) draw inspiration from the aims and key questions of each workshop and use methods and concepts from your own context to support similar goals; and/or 3) explore the concepts and models mentioned and consider which processes these could support in your own context.

- **Output and outcome assessment:** We outline our evaluation parameters and results. This section can serve both as an overview of the effects of our programme and/or as inspiration for your own potential evaluation process.

Preparation and framework

Futures Lab was created as a space for futures thinking for Danish and international students navigating the transition from student life to working life. Our goal was to provide participants with the opportunity to explore their own perceptions of the future, develop collective visions, experiment with methods that are not normally part of formal education, and gain tools to act on their own desires for change. The first programme was made possible through funding from the Tuborg Foundation and the Knud Højgaard Foundation, and in collaboration with a number of companies and organisations as project partners. These frameworks were crucial in enabling us to develop, design, and test a pilot programme focused on exploring how the format could be adapted to our local context, while making it scalable and possible to recreate in other settings.

Drawing on the experience of byStudents and the Institute in working with young people, we developed a concept that responds to the needs we have repeatedly heard expressed by students across different contexts. In particular, we placed strong emphasis on developing competencies that give students both the confidence and the ability to act on the changes they wish to help create as they move into working life.

From the beginning, we aimed to attract both international and Danish students from a wide range of academic disciplines. We achieved this by creating broad, diverse cases in collaboration with various companies and organisations, including commercial enterprises, foundation-owned businesses, and purpose-driven organisations.

Our ambition was for as many people as possible to gain access to futures and futures literacy through the programme. To achieve this, we developed a parallel track to the workshop series: three open Futures Events (Fremtidssaloner) which were open to anyone interested, including students and professional networks. The Futures Events addressed some of the key themes and competencies explored in the programme, presenting them in a shorter format to a wider audience. This made it possible to engage individuals who could not commit the time required for the full programme or who fell outside the core target group. In addition, the events gave workshop participants an opportunity to share and apply their newly developed competencies with others.

The programme

We aimed to create a programme where participants could develop competencies in futures literacy by working with societally relevant challenges, with no predefined solutions. To achieve this, we identified five overarching themes in dialogue with companies that volunteered to serve as case partners. The focus was on creating a framework that allowed participants to shape the content through their own perspectives and experiences, without the expectation of meeting the companies' specific needs. The themes were:

- Sustainable food systems.

- Communication and security.

- Development of music, art, and entertainment.

- Creativity and play.

- Home, living, and ownership.

The workshop series consisted of seven sessions, each lasting two hours, held every other week.

The programme culminated in each group developing a concept and a desirable future scenario based on a self-chosen issue linked to their case company or organisation. We placed emphasis on the process rather than the results, focusing particularly on supporting and creating space for co-creation, reflection, and an approach to futures as a field of action and imagination.

The workshop series unfolded as follows:

WORKSHOP 1

Theme: The Future as a Subject Area.

Purpose: Create a sense of safety and introduce participants to futures thinking as a field and approach.

Key Questions: What is the "future", and how can we work with it?

What shapes my assumptions about the future?

Methods and Concepts: Polak Game[12].

WORKSHOP 2

Theme: Cases and Trends.

Purpose: Introduce analytical tools and establish an initial grounding in societal themes.

Key Questions: How can we understand and analyse changes in society – and what can these tell us?

How does my case connect to the surrounding society?

Methods and Concepts: PESTEL, Megatrends[13].

WORKSHOP 3

Theme: Dynamics of Change.

Purpose: Deepen the understanding of change and introduce strategic tools for analysing and understanding the future.

Key Questions: Why is it important to anchor problems in time and space?

How do the past, present, and future influence one another and the developments taking place in society?

Methods and Concepts: Futures Triangle[14].

WORKSHOP 6

Theme: Backcasting and Thing from the Future.

Purpose: Make visions tangible through action and creativity.

Key Questions: How can a vision be translated into ideas and action?

Methods and Concepts: Backcasting, Thing from the Future[17].

WORKSHOP 5

Theme: Core Scenario and Futures Wheel.

Purpose: Develop collective and value-driven visions of the future.

Key Questions: What might a desirable future look like?

What possible unintended consequences of change may exist within our own desirable futures?

Methods and Concepts: Futures Wheel, Scenarios[16].

WORKSHOP 4

Theme: Assumptions

Purpose: Expand systems understanding by exploring the deeper structures behind problems and challenges.

Key Questions: Which underlying structures and worldviews shape the challenges we observe?

Why is it important to look below the surface of the issues we work with?

Methods and Concepts: Causal Layered Analysis[15].

WORKSHOP 7

Theme: Concept

Purpose: Collaborate to develop and communicate a concept in a form that reaches outward.

Key Questions: How can a concept be communicated to create value for others?

How can others be engaged in our visions and concepts for the future?

Methods and Concepts: Development and rehearsal of presentations.

12 Polak, 1961.
13 Aguilar, 1967.
14 Inayatullah, 2008.
15 Inayatullah, 2019.
16 Glenn, 2009.
17 Candy & Watson, 2015.

In line with the principle of creating a flexible and adaptable programme, we made adjustments along the way. We found that the students needed more time to delve deeper into each exercise, so we chose to remove certain elements from the programme as it progressed. In particular, we removed the public intervention elements, which had originally been planned as part of workshops 5 and 6, to allow participants more time to refine their core scenario and develop their concept.

Futures Events (Fremtidssaloner)
Parallel with the programme, we hosted three public events that served as an important bridge between the workshop series and the real world. During the Futures Events, we explored the role that futures already play within companies and institutions, together with practitioners who in different ways apply futures literacy and foresight in their daily work. Through the panellists' experiences of how futures literacy is applied today, participants were given concrete examples to anchor the theory of the programme.

Moreover, the event format invited the public to learn about futures literacy in an informal setting through varying locations and learning formats. The events thus provided a meeting place and worked as a frame for idea exchange between participants in the programme, other students, as well as stakeholders and companies.

Each Futures Event was centred on a specific theme through which the conversation about futures and futures literacy was anchored:

1. **Hopeful Futures:** A hands-on workshop where participants created and shared alternative narratives about the future, followed by a discussion on the relationship between hope and action.

2. **Envisioning Change:** A conversational salon with food and wine, beginning with an interview with a representative from the public sector as the foundation for group discussions.

3. **Transitioning from Student to Work Life:** A larger event where participants presented their visions for a preferred future to external companies, social actors, and stakeholders, accompanied by an exhibition of the participants' visions, followed by time for networking.

Demonstrating the applicability of futures literacy
The events grounded the programme's theoretical models in various dimensions of contemporary society, using examples from actors across small and large companies, the public sector, and the creative industries.

The focus shifted between exploring the concrete possibilities and limitations of futures literacy at the individual, organisational, and societal levels.

1. The first event took its point of departure in creativity both at the individual and societal level.

2. The second event examined the institutional frameworks for driving change and working progressively with futures within traditional infrastructures.

3. The final event showcased participants' own approaches to using futures scenarios to create change on both small and large scales during the transition to working life.

The events clearly demonstrated the relevance of futures competencies across all dimensions and functions of society today.

The network Futurists byStudents
The programme created a unique space for hope, agency, and momentum among participants. To continue what was collectively built through Futures Lab byStudents, we established the network Futurists byStudents. The network aims to:

- Continue a social community rooted in shared interests and a desire to act.

- Support a unique interdisciplinary space for learning by applying and building upon the competencies acquired by participants.

- Create a meaningful meeting platform connecting both student life and working life.

The content of network meetings may include talks, debates, introductions to new tools, company visits, and creative workshops, but the activities are planned by the participants themselves. With support from the programme's facilitators, participants continue to have access to professional exchange of ideas and a network of inspiring social actors, while independently steering the direction of the meetings based on their own drive and interests.

Impact assessment

As part of measuring the outcomes of the programme, the students completed two questionnaires - one after the first workshop and another after the final workshop. Based on research in the field and our intended goals for the programme, we established nine parameters for evaluating participants' development:

- The ability to imagine that there are many possible and diverse futures.

- The belief that they can influence the future through their actions and choices in the present.

- The ability to envision different kinds of desirable futures.

- The ability to identify current issues and phenomena that are likely to influence the future.

- The ability to identify and address the future in relation to their own field of study.

- The ability to identify assumptions about the future.

- Confidence in questioning and challenging common assumptions about the future.

- To be hopeful about the future.

- The ability to reflect on how the future may affect people who are different from themselves.

All parameters showed a positive development. Participants showed the greatest progress in their ability to imagine different futures, to identify assumptions about the future, and to have the confidence to challenge prevailing assumptions about the future.

*by*Students

byStudents is a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving the lives of young people and students by fostering communities and engagement. With a youth-led board, they are uniquely positioned to understand and respond to the needs and aspirations of young people. **Studenterhuset** is part of byStudents and functions as a café, music venue, study space, group room, and event facility, welcoming more than 3,500 visitors and hosting over 20 events weekly. This vibrant community hub exemplifies byStudents' commitment to creating an inclusive and dynamic environment for young people in Copenhagen.

COPENHAGEN INSTITUTE FOR FUTURES STUDIES

Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies (CIFS) is an independent, non-profit think tank whose purpose is to help people and organisations imagine, work with, and shape their future. Drawing on more than 50 years of experience in futures studies and foresight, CIFS provides the tools to act on futures. The Institute is independent of commercial and political interests, and all profits are reinvested in research and initiatives. CIFS hosts the Danish hub for Teach the Future, which works to promote futures literacy as a life skill by integrating futures-oriented thinking into education and personal development processes.

If you have any questions about the process, our experiences, this playbook, or potential collaboration, you are more than welcome to reach out to byStudents and the Copenhagen Institute for Futures Studies:

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