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# ARE YOU READY FOR THE FUTURE?

Foresight playbook  
10 Future quests  
5 Case Studies – The Future of Truth 2040



Project implemented by:

**MONOMYTHS**  
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of future change

## BENEFICIARIES

**Monomyths Association**, a youth organisation based in Bucharest, creates in cooperation with international experts and mentors interactive learning contexts and spaces dedicated to young people, teenagers and youth workers from Romania, EU member states, MEDA and Caucasus countries, South America and Africa. The mission of Monomyths Association is to provide young people with free access to educational and development programmes and tools on the themes of essential skills, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation. The vision of the association is to inspire young people and teenagers around the world to focus their energy, courage and creativity to become active citizens, change-makers and creators of social impact interventions. Our programmes are built around the following principles: active, lifelong learning, reliable, interactive, beneficiary-centered educational experiences.

Young Initiative Association has been supporting the development through education of young people and communities in Romania since 2009. The organization has 3 pillars of activity: Social Inclusion, Youth Empowerment, NGO Development. The association actively supports institutionalized children, young people and NGOs in Romania and Europe, and the common denominator is a strong belief in the power of education to transform communities. The vision of the Association is that an educated society is a strong and free society. We believe in the power of education to change people and communities, to create opportunities and to support children and young people to develop to their true potential. The Association is a member of the YMCA, which supports the development of more than 58 million young people and 12,000 communities in over 120 countries around the world. [www.younginitiative.org](http://www.younginitiative.org)

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Significant contributions to this report were made by Adriana Popescu, Ioana Avadani, Dani Prisacariu, Eliza Iordache and Cristina Mocanu. We would also like to express our gratitude to our team of mentors, future enthusiastic professionals, whose support has been invaluable. We mention on a random basis Anamaria Ghiban, Anamaria Burada, Bogdan Chiriacescu, Fabiola Chiriacescu, Tatiana Cauni, Veronica Sandor, Mihaela Hanganu, Rodica Crismaru and Iuliana Matean for their valuable contributions.

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**ArtiViStory Association** is a community of artists, curators, researchers from interdisciplinary fields working together for social engagement. Through narrative art, comics and sequential art, ArtiViStory members participate in socially engaged projects that aim to build a robust ecosystem and provide new artistic contexts and practices through co-creation, visual communication, mediation, facilitation (image-text content), documentation, representation and reinterpretation of social transformation processes. For more information visit [www.artivistory.com](http://www.artivistory.com)

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“Post-Pandemic Narratives 2040 – Artifacts from the Future of Truth” project implemented by Monomyths Association in partnership with Young Initiative Association with the financial support of the Active Citizens Fund Romania, programme funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA Grants 2014-2021.

FUTURE

THINK  
REFRAME  
UNDERSTAND  
TRANSFORM  
HARVEST



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**Did you know that the percentage of people in Romania that anticipates a worse situation in 2025, compared to nowadays, is growing?**

According to the latest survey by INSCOP Research in 2022, it's almost 40%!

**Let's change this narrative for our next gen!  
Let's create ourselves the future we all want!**

# Introduction

In this ever changing world, are you the type of person that wonders about the future and what it might be like?

*I often think about what tomorrow might bring.*

*I care about my peers.*

*I like to understand how things and systems work.*

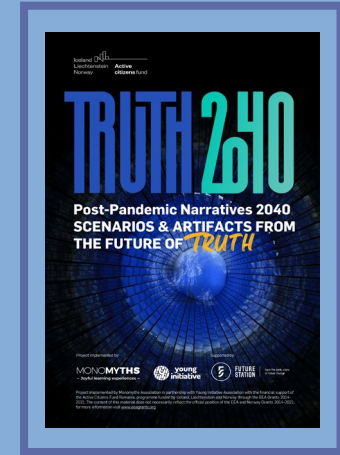
*I am interested in other people and their cultures.*

*Sometimes I feel I am not sufficiently in control of where my life is headed.*

If you find yourself reflecting on the above situations, then this playbook might be the right thing for you!

This playbook is a continuation of the Foresight study carried out by Future Station for Monomyths Association and Young Initiative Association and aims to highlight some of the trends and hypotheses about the future of truth within the years to come. Foresight is an area of expertise that deals with anticipating, exploring, and planning the future, by means of a variety of methods that help identify trends, develop future scenarios and proper strategies to cope with future uncertainties.

This is a playbook that deals with our individual approach to the future. While it explores the future of truth as a case study, all the activities and information provided can easily be adapted and employed to explore any other topic or issue. We aim to provide you with a useful tool to help navigate future uncertainties and feel better prepared for whatever the future might bring.





# Futures literacy and Foresight

*The future is not fixed or pre-set. Sometimes it is closer than we can imagine.*

*Who would have thought, five years ago, that the world would switch to remote working so easily? Or that video games such as Fortnite would become so popular that they will host virtual concerts attended by billions? And who can overlook the rising of social media, such as TikTok, that reshaped youth digital creativity and content consumption.*

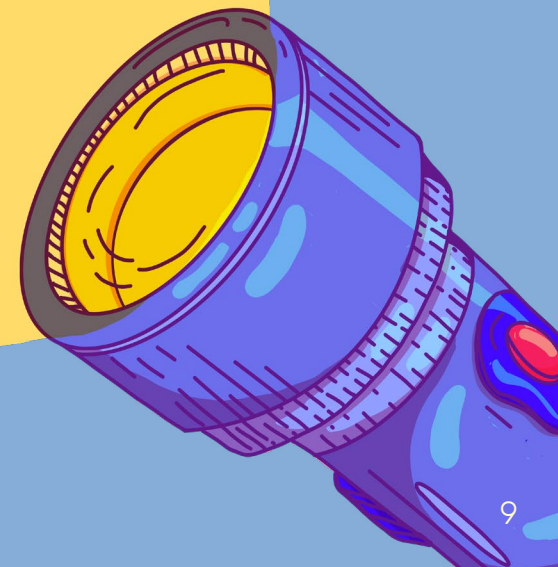
*These are some of the reasons why studying the future is not only academically relevant, but also highly necessary. It helps us prepare for an ever-changing world. By analyzing the possibilities the future holds, we can become active participants, rather than passive watchers. We have the opportunity to shape our own reality, instead of just reacting to changes that occur.*

*Futures literacy and foresight enable us to identify risks, opportunities, and potential paths to follow. We can thus answer Future Future questions such as: "What could society look like 10 or 50 years from now?", "What new professions might occur?" or "How could we create a better and more sustainable future?"*

*This is the framework in which it becomes utterly important to discuss, gain knowledge and imagine possible futures together. We can then actively and responsibly influence the way in which our society is going to evolve.*

*"It is of utmost importance to generate as many contexts as possible in which we talk about the future, especially with youth. I often wonder what it would be like if we taught future the same way we teach the past or the history in schools. What if we spoke not only about biology, but also about biotechnology? It would definitively provide a holistic framework in which past, present and futures literacy could help us prepare for challenges to come. Young people will create our future, but we need to provide them not only with this knowledge, but also with the necessary thinking skills to navigate and shape the future consciously and responsibly!"*

*(Diana Stafie, Future Station founder and Strategic Foresight consultant).*





From: Future Station    To: Students

Subject: Journey into your future

The future opens a world filled with possibilities, but also intricate questions. Think about the future as a journey with options, crossroads, and unexpected directions to turn onto. When we asked students to venture into exploring the future, here's what some of them said:

- **Higher Education:** Is it worth enrolling in a university? If it is, then where should I study? Is it better to study at home or abroad? Should I choose public or private education?
- **Volunteering:** How can I practice volunteering to strengthen my skills and contribute to growth in my community?
- **Value system:** Which are my values and how can I integrate them in my everyday life?
- **Digital identity:** How do I build an online brand that highlights authenticity?
- **Sports:** Should I dedicate time and effort to a professional sport? How is this going to influence my life?
- **Career:** Will I dedicate my whole life to a specific area of expertise, or will I explore others? Which are my relevant criteria when choosing a job?
- **Technology:** How are my life and career going to be impacted by technology?

Does any of these questions resonate with you? There are no fixed or absolute answers, only those relevant for you. The future is essentially built on your own expectations, interests, and decisions. Start your futures literacy journey right now! Enjoy the ride!



From: Future Station To: Facilitators/Teachers

Subject: Journey into your future

*Thank you for agreeing to join us on this challenging journey! There is no way young people could become the responsible adults we hope them to be, unless you guide and support them! You are the pillars upon which future generations are built, so we know your mission is paramount in this ever changing world. Oftentimes, our educational system relies on information and knowledge about the past, but we believe it is equally important to talk about the future. It is thus essential to encourage the youth to see themselves in the future, to acknowledge their roles in their own becoming, and to feel confident about their ability to shape the world they will inhabit. We know young people need more than just academic knowledge. How do we deal with emotions, or with their innate desire to enjoy themselves at school, with the need to effectively communicate, to interact, to think critically and creatively and to use their imagination? Now, with your dedicated support as mentors, they will be able to paint the future in their own colors! We are here to help you do that! We can build our preferred future together!*

#### **Tips & Tricks:**

##### **1. Start the journey by answering the following questions:**

- Which are the skills I should help my students develop, to prepare them for jobs that do not exist yet?
- How can I generate more contexts in which I can talk to my students about the future?

##### **2. Familiarize yourself with the 5 dimensions we suggest:**

Time travelers – How do you see yourself in the future?

Future Architects – How can you shape your own future?

Possibility Explorers – What are the possibilities the future holds?

System Detectives – How are things interconnected and related?

Superheroes of Empathy – How can you help create a better future for all?

For further reference on the 5 dimensions above, we recommend researching the dedicated material from University of Turku (<https://futuresconsciousness.utu.fi>).

##### **3. Split the class into groups of your own choice (when necessary).**

**4. Enjoy the activities with your students and allow your imagination to guide you!** For each of the five dimensions, we have prepared a series of activities entitled Future quests, as well as case studies related to the future of truth. We hope they will help you throughout your educational sessions.

##### **5. Don't forget we're always here to help you!**

# Futures literacy playbook

Let's explore the multiple ways in which we can imagine and explore the future in a structured manner. Why? It will enable us to better understand and anticipate phenomena and their interconnectedness throughout time, how things occur and influence each other.

This foresight playbook was designed based on a model known as "5 dimensions of Future Consciousness". This model was created by de Fanny Lalot, Sanna Ahvenharju & Matti Minkkinen from the Finland Futures Research Centre of the University of Turku, Finland. As defined by the authors themselves, **Futures consciousness brings perspectives to unknown futures: it helps us create hopeful and empowering images that can be turned into action for better futures.** (Sanna Ahvenharju, Senior Research Fellow).

Should you want to better understand the scientific research on Future Consciousness, follow the [QR-code](#) on the side of the page.

The five dimensions (Time Perspective, Agency Beliefs, Openness to Alternatives, Systems Perception and Concern for Others) that comprise the model are detailed [here](#).

The dimensions were renamed and adapted in this playbook as follows:

1. Time Travelers - How do you see yourself in the future?
2. Future Architects - How can you shape your own future?
3. Possibility Explorers - What are the possibilities the future holds?
4. System Detectives - How are things interconnected and corresponsive?
5. Empathy Superheroes - How can you create a better future for all?

The model reflects a set of skills employed when thinking about the future and enables us to take better decisions in the long run. We might actually use all the five dimensions in our everyday lives, unconsciously. However, the more we become aware of our abilities (which we can do through constant practice), and understand and work properly with them, the better prepared we can become to face future uncertainties.

If you are still in the fog, don't worry! Within the following pages you will read detailed explanations and learn strategies through which you can develop those skills pertaining to each of the five dimensions. You will embark on a series of Future quests, and you can also explore the case studies on the Future of Truth. We invite you to choose the ones that suit your context and personal challenges. Enjoy your journey!



**POSSIBILITY EXPLORERS**

**CRITICAL THINKING**



**TOLERANCE OF UNCERTAINTIES**



**OPENNESS TO EXPERIENCES**



**TIME TRAVELERS**

**CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE CONSEQUENCES**



**FUTURE ORIENTATION**



**EMPATHY SUPERHEROES**

**IDENTIFICATION WITH ALL HUMANITY**



**MORAL CENTRALITY**



**SELF-TRANSCENDENCE VALUES**



**SYSTEM DETECTIVES**

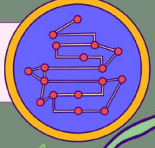
**ECO-PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF**



**HOLISTIC THINKING**



**SYSTEMS THINKING**



**FUTURE ARCHITECTS**

**OPTIMISM**



**LOCUS OF CONTROL**



**GENERAL SELF-EFFICACY**



# Time Travelers

How do you see  
yourself in the future?

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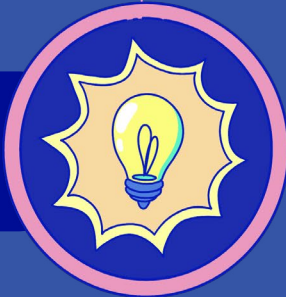


**FUTURE  
STATION**

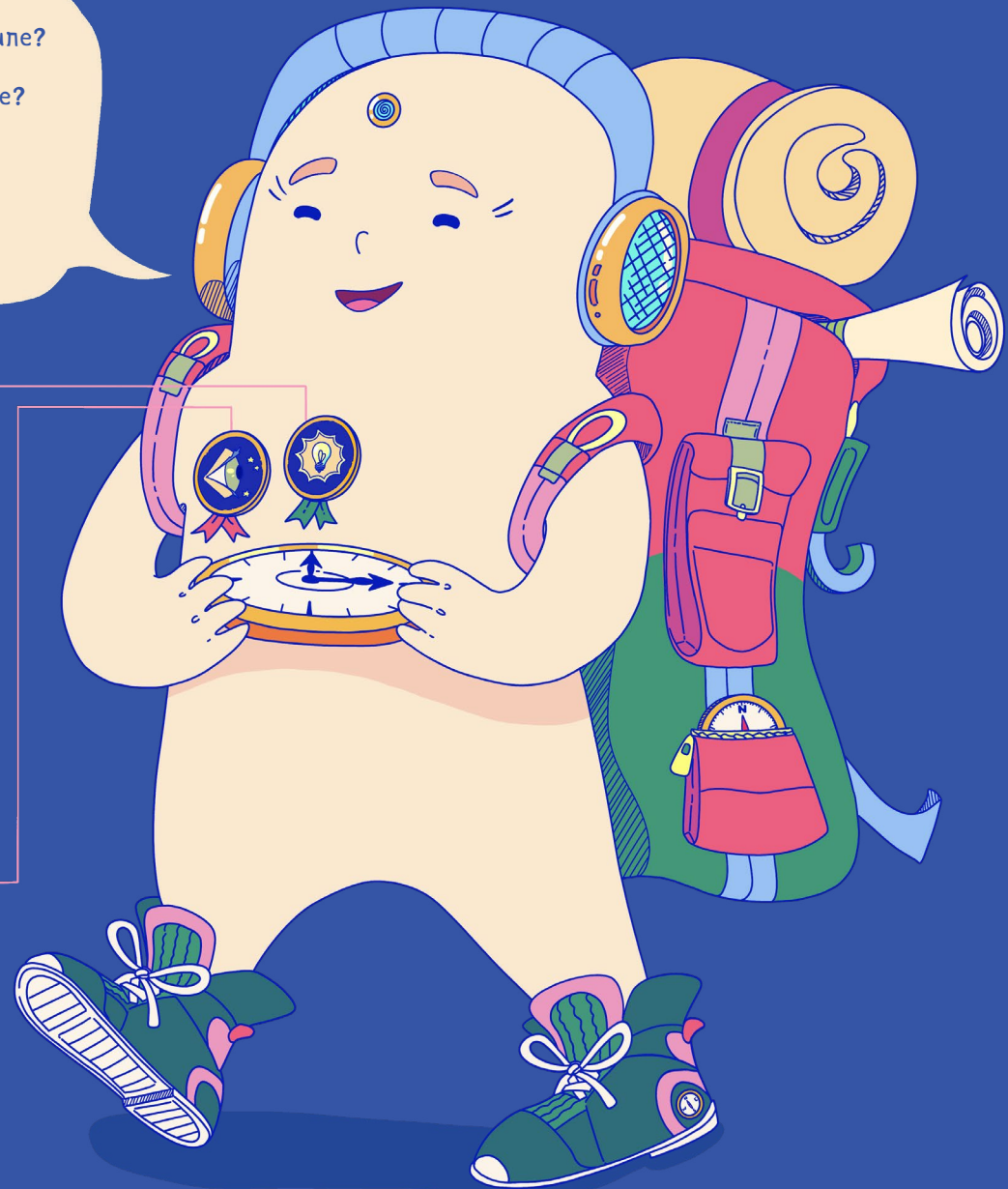
Spot the early signs  
of future change

1. How often do you look into the future?
2. How far do you look into the future?
3. How easily can you see or imagine consequences of actions?

CONSIDERATION OF  
FUTURE CONSEQUENCES



FUTURE  
ORIENTATION



Imagine we are time travelers who can look back, live the moment, and anticipate the future.

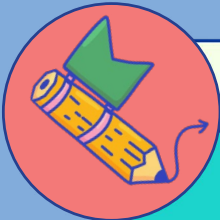
History unravels the secrets of the past, thus enabling us to learn how societies were created and how our ideas developed. Understanding the past helps us make informed decisions. Our present actions have future consequences and can help shape the world. But the future poses a lot of challenges and uncertainties. The world is changing at an incredible pace, and whatever we believe to be true today, might not be the same tomorrow. To cope with uncertainty and adapt to a changing future, we need to expand our perspectives and imagine how the world might look like in the decades to come.

Think of a fascinating adventure and use your mind to envision the future. Imagine how your life might be in 5, 10 or 20-years' time. This adventure knows no bounds and your imagination can help shape a better future for all.

Let's all become Time Travelers and explore the ways in which the past, present and future are intertwined in this fascinating narrative. Together, we can influence events unfolding and we can turn our future into a brighter and better one. It's only the beginning of the adventure!







# FUTURE QUEST: TIME TRAVELING



WRITE THE FOLLOWING TOPICS ON DIFFERENT STICKY NOTES AND TOSS THEM IN A BOWL. MIX THEM. CLOSE YOUR EYES AND TAKE OUT ONE.

**READY?**  
CREATIVE STORY TIME!

IMAGINE YOU ARE THE LUCKY WINNER OF A TICKET ON A TIME TRAVELING MACHINE AND NOW YOU EMBARK ON THREE JOURNEYS:

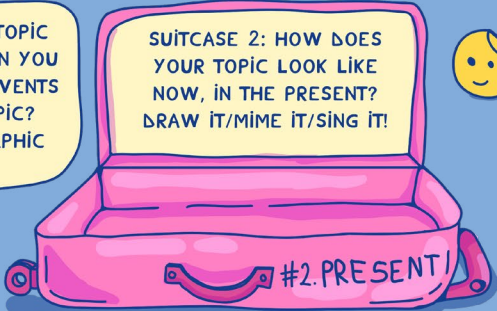


**PAST      PRESENT      FUTURE**

YOU CANNOT LEAVE WITHOUT THE APPROPRIATE LUGGAGE, SO MAKE SURE YOU ADD TO THE THREE SUITCASES INCLUDED ON YOUR TICKET ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO FULLY ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE:



SUITCASE 1: HOW DID YOUR TOPIC LOOK LIKE 10 YEARS AGO? CAN YOU THINK OF SOME SIGNIFICANT EVENTS THAT INFLUENCED YOUR TOPIC? WRITE THEM DOWN IN A GRAPHIC ORGANIZER.



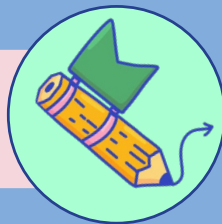
SUITCASE 2: HOW DOES YOUR TOPIC LOOK LIKE NOW, IN THE PRESENT? DRAW IT/MIME IT/SING IT!



SUITCASE 3: HOW MIGHT YOUR TOPIC LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE, LET'S SAY 10 YEARS FROM NOW? WHAT ARE THE CHANGES THAT MIGHT OCCUR? USE YOUR CREATIVITY AND CREATE A SHORT STORY!

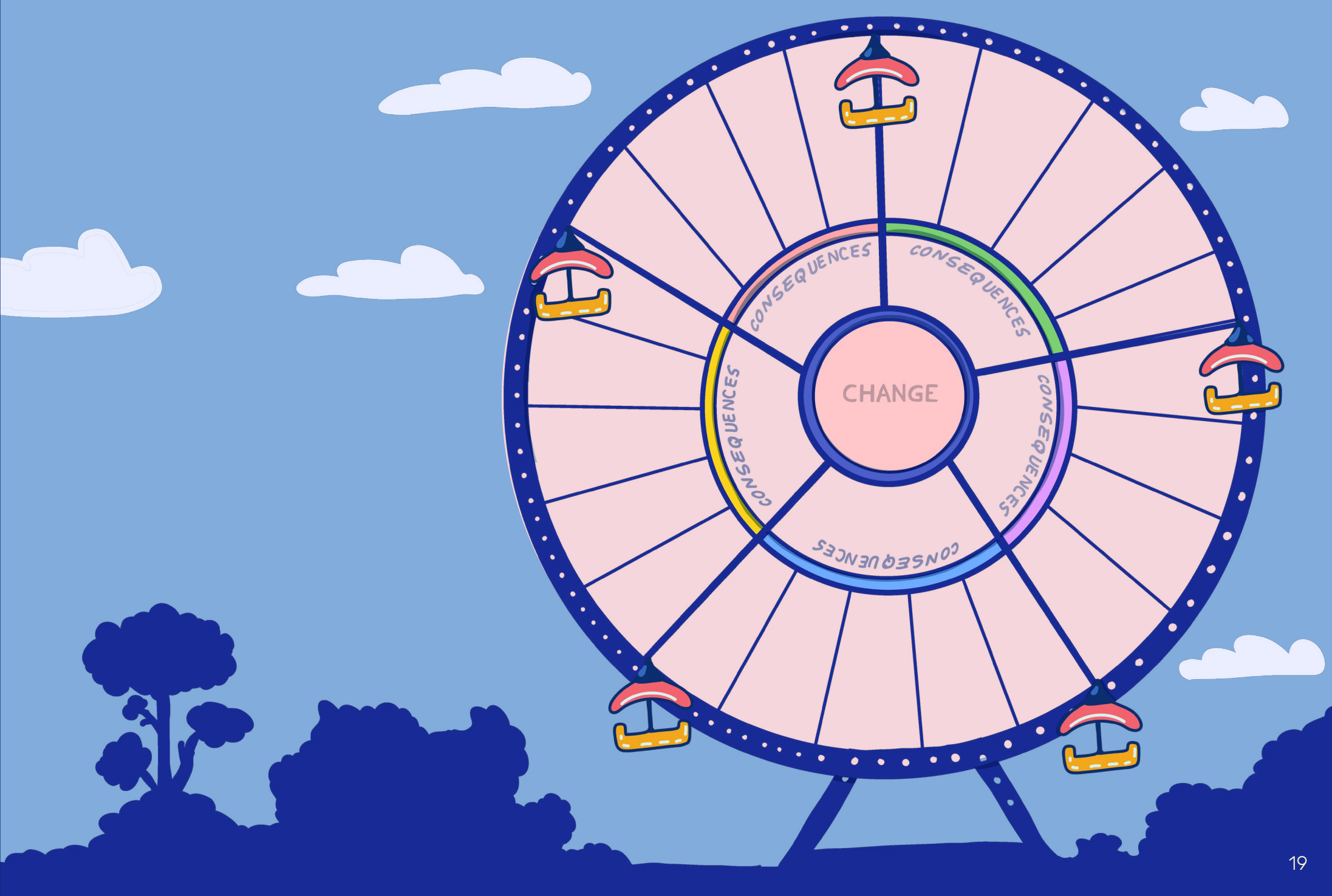
STORYBOARD

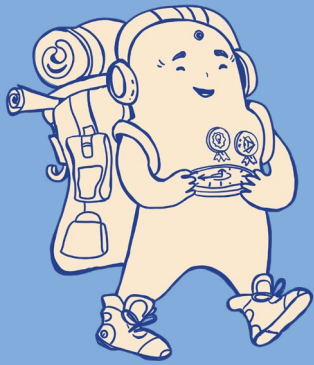

## FUTURE QUEST: FUTURES WHEEL



Futures wheel is a tool that can help you easily identify consequences or implications of a certain change. You are invited to choose a topic to explore and write a change (a trends / an event) that you can see in the present, related to your topic. Ask yourself the following question: **What if this change becomes real tomorrow, what could be the consequences?**

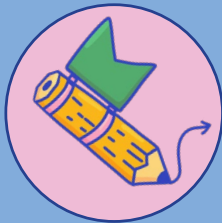
Write down the potential consequences and implied results on the first ring of the wheel. You can think of consequences related to the following areas: society, politics, economy, environment and technology. Then, for each of the consequences you have identified, repeat the process, and complete the second ring of the wheel. Make sure you explore multiple possibilities and not just one type of consequence. Talk to your peers about your answers. What can you notice? Are your approaches different in any way? What are the similarities?





# Case study – Navigating the Future of Truth 2040

You live in the present and you like to critically analyze the society you live in. You have recently shared on Instagram a post about truth and now a journalist has reached out to you to ask for your opinion on an article he/she/they aim to publish in a successful online magazine. You couldn't say no to such an opportunity, so you took a dare. You have no time to waste, you need to get to work! You need a graphic organizer we have designed especially for you! Make sure you answer truthfully, you wouldn't want your article to be nothing but the best, wouldn't you?



1. WRITE DOWN ALL ISSUES YOU NOTICE IN THE PRESENT THAT INFLUENCE THE CONCEPT OF TRUTH.

ASPECTS	IMPACT

2. FOR INSTANCE, HOW DO FAKE NEWS WORK? WHO ARE THE OPINION-MAKERS? HOW DOES MANIPULATION WORK?

**FAKE NEWS**

3. THINK ABOUT THE PAST AND ACTIONS THAT LEAD TO CURRENT ISSUES.

4. IMAGINE A FUTURE IN WHICH EVENTS UNFOLD MAINTAINING THE CURRENT DIRECTION. WHAT WILL THE CONCEPT OF TRUTH LOOK LIKE AFTER 2040?

## A potential future scenario:

Given the current context and imagining a continuity scenario for the future of truth in 2040, we thought we can define it as follows:

- Social topics are still highly controversial, and minorities are increasingly marginalized.
- Easier Internet access is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, information accessibility serves as a major advantage, however, on the other hand, information overload has led to difficulties in identifying and processing truth, which now require more time and effort. This in turn leads to each significant event inevitably being followed by a conspiracy theory tsunami.
- Trust in politicians is decreasing as limited vocabulary characters are popularized in the political spectrum.

These are only some ideas. If you want to learn more, have a look at the **“Keep mad and carry on”** scenario available in [Post Pandemic Narratives 2040 – Artifacts and Scenarios from the Future of Truth](#) report, on page 22.



# Future Architects

How can you shape your own future?

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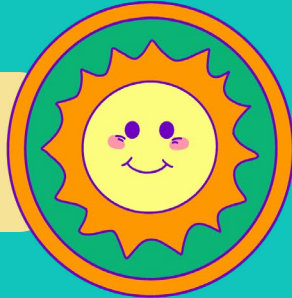


**FUTURE  
STATION**

Spot the early signs  
of future change

1. How much we believe our actions influence the world.
2. Recognition of whether something can be easily changed or not.

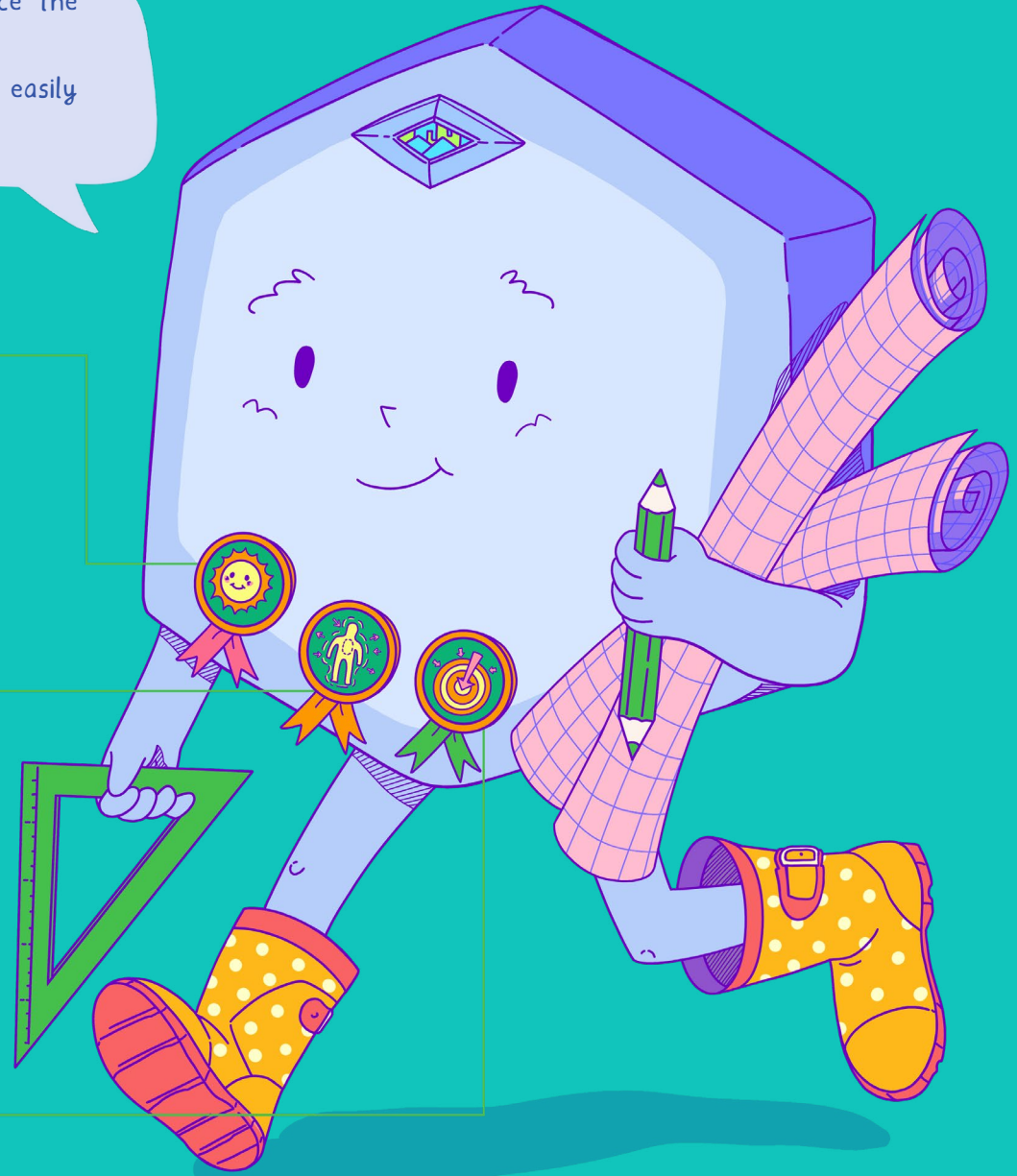
OPTIMISM



LOCUS OF CONTROL



GENERAL SELF-EFFICACY



This approach aims to develop and strengthen proactive and anticipatory behaviors, so it will help you:

- Anticipate events and phenomena happening around you
- Develop alternative thinking, by means of scenario planning.
- Shaping your desired future.

How can you become an architect of the future?

There are two important steps to follow: develop your foresight skills and envision multiple futures, constantly asking yourself "What if?"

What you should NOT do? Don't just sit around and wait for one of these futures to happen. It is in your power to shape it: take action so that you are headed towards your preferred future! Become a future architect now!

In the following section you will find some exciting quests to help you develop your skills. Start! The future starts now!







## FUTURE QUEST: LOCUS OF CONTROL

In 1954 the American psychologist Julian Rotter, author of the [Social Learning Theory](#), introduced the concept of locus of control. This method enables an increased awareness of our own choices and shapes internal and external expectations. Any pursued endeavor leads to a reflection stage, whereby we analyze our own actions and decide whether they are conditional upon ourselves or external factors.

Have a look at the drawing below! Think of an event you are interested in at the moment, which you think might reoccur in the future, and then answer the following questions:

**INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL**  
YOU MAKE THINGS HAPPEN!

**EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL**  
THINGS HAPPEN TO YOU.

The drawing shows two figures. The figure on the left is pink and has green arrows pointing outwards from their body. The figure on the right is purple and has blue arrows pointing inwards towards their body.

**INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL (Pink Figure):**

- Speech bubble: "i can influence my own future!"
- Speech bubble: "Here's what i can do!"
- Speech bubble: "i make things happen!"

**EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL (Purple Figure):**

- Speech bubble: "i cannot do anything for my future."
- Speech bubble: "Why should i bother?"
- Speech bubble: "Why do all things happen to me?"

**QUESTIONS:**

- WHAT? \_\_\_\_\_
- WHO? \_\_\_\_\_
- WHERE? \_\_\_\_\_
- WHEN? \_\_\_\_\_
- WHY? \_\_\_\_\_

Once you are done, try to fill in the graphic organizer below and decide whether your result depended on external factors (OUT) or your own decisions (IN). What can you notice?

**EVENT:**

\* You can cønsider the Cøvid19 pandemic as an example and decide what was (nøt) in yøun centnøl.

**IN**  
(øwn decisions)

What was i in centnøl of?

**OUT**  
(external factøns)

What was øut of my centnøl?

Now think of the locus of control (internal or external) for the events in your life.

You will be surprised to realize that oftentimes you were not to blame for certain actions you took upon yourself. You could easily build a future you truly want, overlooking a lot of the things you cannot control, but are now on your mind. Big organizations do that when working with their employees. That's interesting, isn't it?

# Did you know?

**A higher internal locus of control is usually associated with:**

- high and well developed skills
- high emotional intelligence
- emotional maturity
- good people skills
- high levels of social interactivity
- high self-esteem
- positive personal perception
- positive perception of others
- high tolerance levels
- long-term vision
- active persistence
- ability to postpone small satisfactions in order to achieve greater long-term ones
- listing of personal goals
- high commitment to personal goals
- intrinsic motivation
- increased levels of personal satisfaction

**By contrary, a lower internal locus of control is linked to:**

- avoidance of stressful situations
- low self-confidence and conflict resolution skills
- fear of evaluation
- uncontrolled emotional reactions
- inability to anticipate positive outcomes based on sustained effort.
- reliance on destiny and luck as inexpiable
- lack of perseverance and target abandonment upon first drawbacks.



# FUTURE QUEST: BACKCASTING



What do you think about building your future backwards? Backcasting activities imply creating an action plan that starts in the future and heads to the past and not the other way around. Start therefore by thinking of a long-term goal you would like to achieve and the year you want it to happen. Should it be 2030? Or 2040? It is your choice! Upon deciding what you want to achieve, start thinking “backwards”, by answering a few questions:

How do I get there?

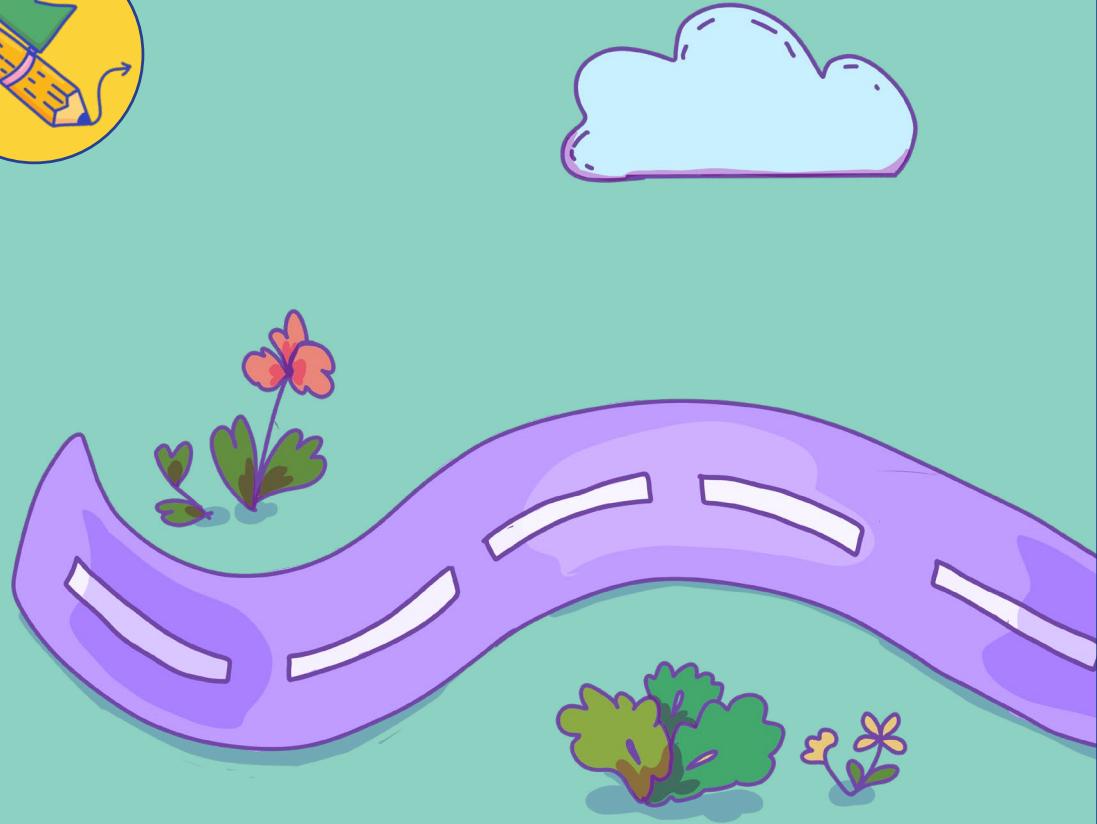
What should have happened before that?

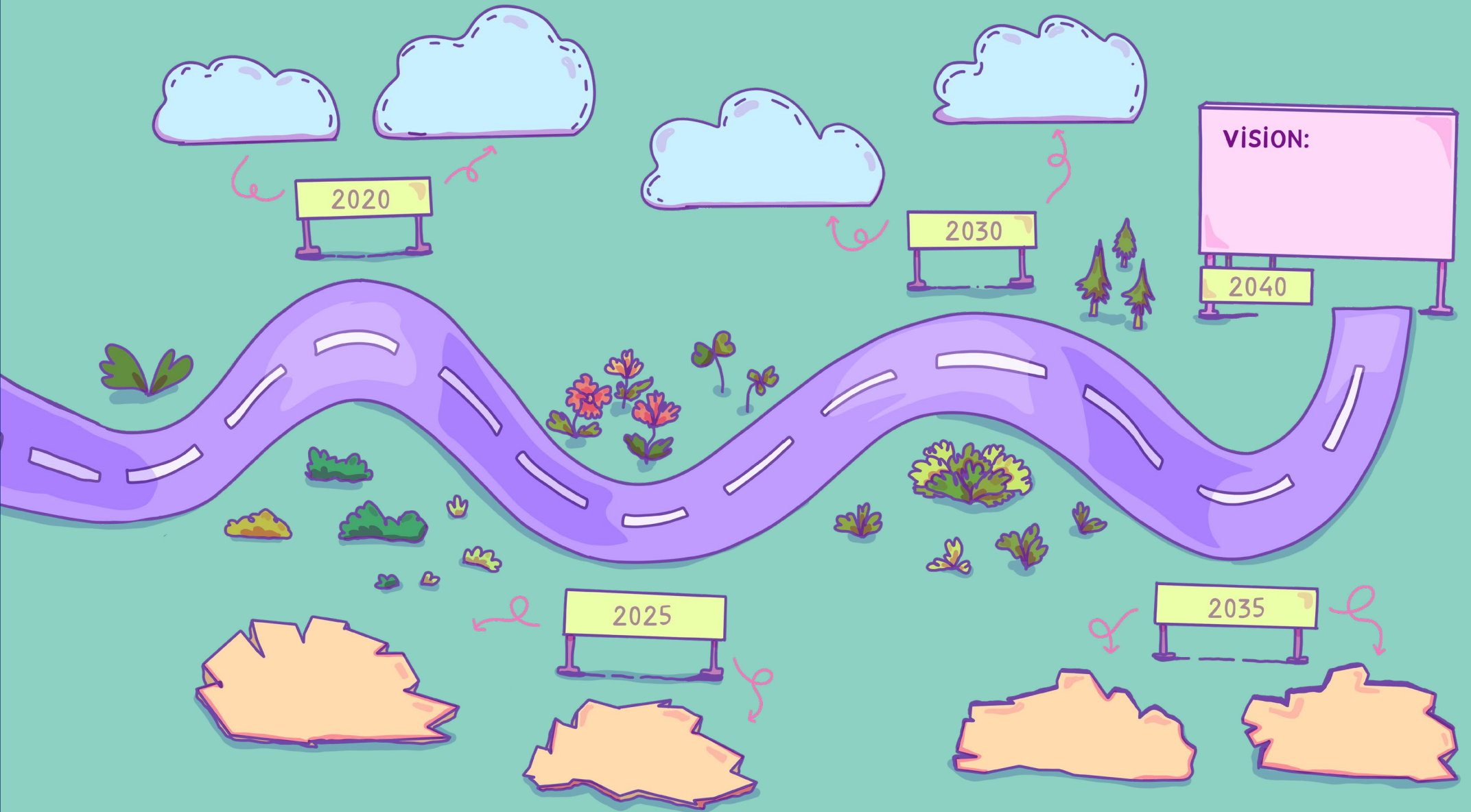
How difficult will it be?

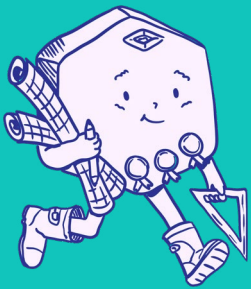
Repeat the process by moving backwards every 5 years. For each of the timeframes, write down at least 2 actions you could take. Have a look at the drawing below, to better understand the quest!

Let’s say in 2040, a certain “X” event could happen. Starting from this, we can ask ourselves: What should have happened before (in between 2035 and 2040), in order for X to be possible? Then, write down the ideas in the respective time frame segment. Repeat the process until you fill in the most recent timeframe (2020-2025). What do you think? Is it interesting?

You can browse visual examples of Backcasting by following [this website](#) (in English), created by The Smartt Retro Project and coordinated by Demos Helsinki. Their “X” was to place Stockholm in the top ten most inhabitable cities in the world.







# Case study – Navigating the Future of Truth 2040

## A potential future scenario:

Within the [Post Pandemic Narratives 2040 – Artifacts and Scenarios from the Future of Truth](#) report we developed a scenario (related to the concept of truth) in which the system falls apart and nothing works as it should. Crises occur and, as a result, new social structures are set. This scenario named **“ERROR 404”** imagines a future in which the concept of truth is collapsing. You can find it on page 26 of the report. Such a scenario related to the future of truth in 2040 could be defined by the following:

- As a result of political turmoil and public opinion, several countries decide to leave the European Union. This results in the rise of charismatic extremist leaders.
- Social justice is abolished, and the system becomes the only deciding authority, albeit rigid, in relation to what is and is not permitted. Society becomes highly regulated and homogenous, thus deterring development. Survival becomes mechanical.
- In terms of information flow, there are more accounts run by bots rather than real people. These accounts are used to promote marketing campaigns or fake news. The voices for unity might get lost in this sea of misinformation and propaganda
- Outspoken individual voices are lost in the crowd and borderlines between online and offline realms are blurred. The sole beneficiaries of the system are higher stakeholders. There is a significant class offset and the upper-class is increasingly detached from mundane reality.





BASED ON THE ASSUMPTIONS ABOVE, THINK OF SOME ACTIONS THAT CAN BE TAKEN NOWADAYS (NATIONALLY, GLOBALLY AND INDIVIDUALLY) IN ORDER TO AVOID SUCH A SCENARIO



NAME THREE ISSUES THAT ARE WORSE IN 2040 THAN NOW. WHICH ARE THEY AND WHY ARE THEY WORSE?



Blank yellow box for writing the first issue.



Blank yellow box for writing the second issue.



Blank yellow box for writing the third issue.



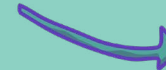
WHAT ARE THREE ACTIONS THAT CAN BE TAKEN NOWADAYS, SO THAT THESE ISSUES DO NOT OCCUR IN THE FUTURE?



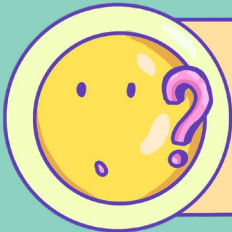
Blank yellow box for writing the first action.



Blank yellow box for writing the second action.



Blank yellow box for writing the third action.



HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS SCENARIO?



Yellow box for writing feelings, containing a row of ten emotion icons: happy, sad, angry, neutral, surprised, thoughtful, worried, smiling, neutral, and shocked.



ASSUMING THIS SCENARIO COMES TRUE, HOW CAN YOU PERSONALLY PREPARE TO COPE WITH IT?



Blank yellow box for writing personal coping strategies.

# Possibility Explorers

What are the possibilities  
the future holds?

Project implemented by:

**MONOMYTHS**  
– Joyful learning experiences –



Supported by:



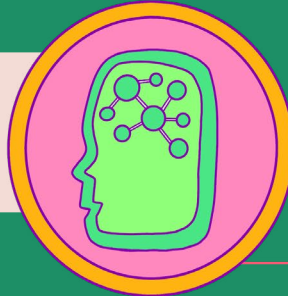
**FUTURE  
STATION**

Spot the early signs  
of future change



1. How open are we to how different the future can be?
2. Thinking critically about present ways of doing things.
3. Acceptance of uncertainty.
4. Creativity in imagining alternative futures.

**CRITICAL  
THINKING**



**TOLERANCE OF  
UNCERTAINTIES**



**OPENNESS TO  
EXPERIENCES**

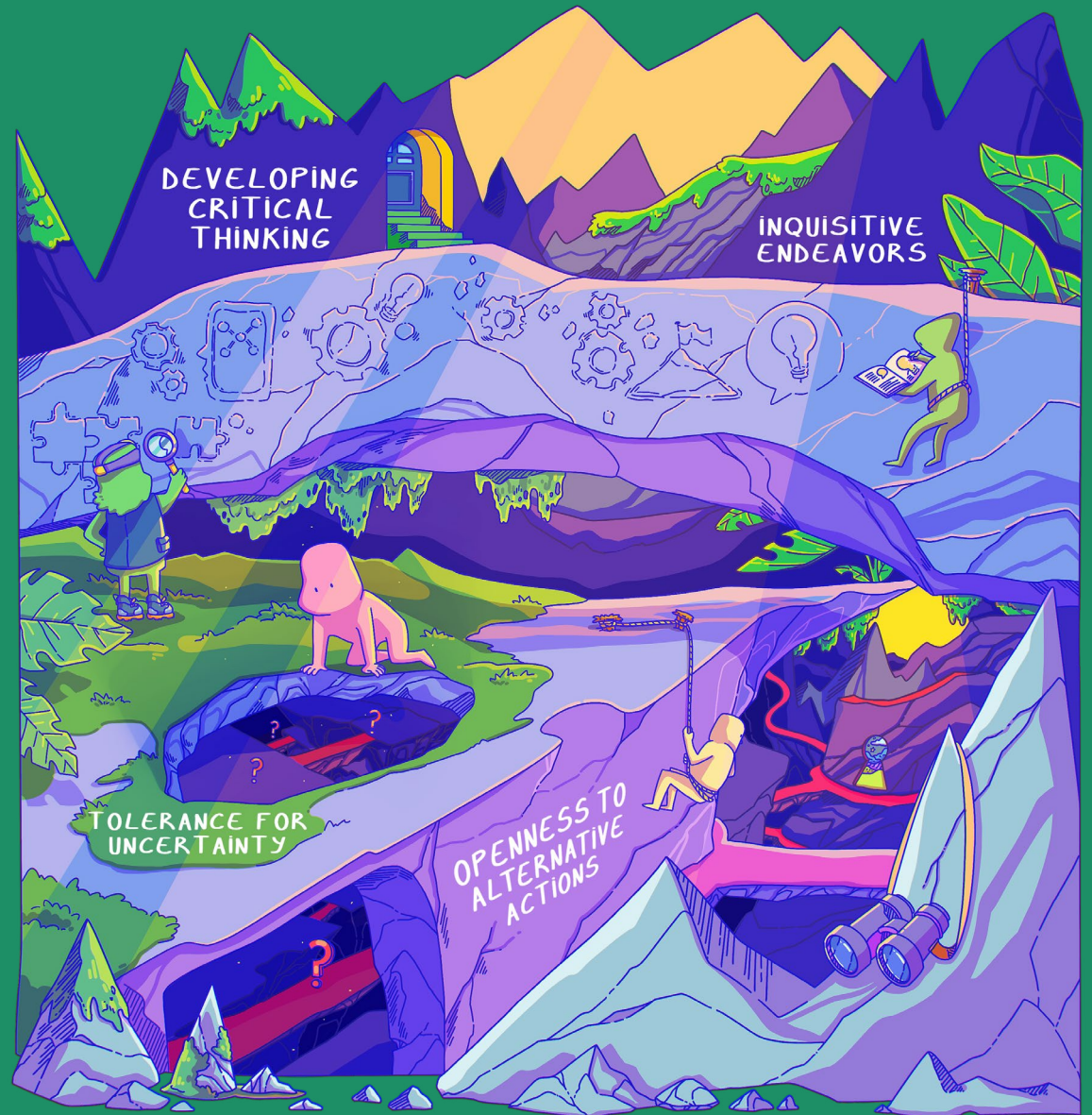


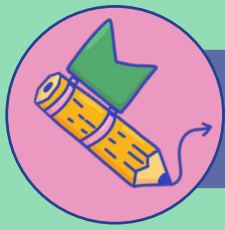
This approach supports the ability to critically analyze and entices openness to actionable possibilities and alternatives. Openness to alternatives also entails higher levels of tolerance towards future uncertainty. For instance, this openness to alternatives is to be seen in our increased resilience to polarization on social media, as well as in our constant strive to overcome divisive ideologies. Contrastive approaches include noncritical optimism or pessimism, submissiveness to authority and excessive reliance of the past to understand the future.

This approach not only involves innovative exploratory endeavors about the future, but also inquisitive ones: Why do some things happen the way they do and what are their potential consequences? Although critical thinking is a rather new concept, its roots date back to ancient times. In the allegory of the cave, Plato depicts a truth-seeking process comparable to nowadays' critical thinking theory. Plato dwelled upon the intimate connection between thought and action. You are now invited to rise to the expectations of these highly appraised ideas.

Are you ready to act? Try to explore as many possibilities and future scenarios as possible, not only those exclusively optimistic or pessimistic. Always question conventional truths. A lot of people might think that X can only result in Z, and they might be right, but... what if there are alternative options? Use your creativity and critical thinking skills to build up courage to step away, even for a minute, from the comfort zone.

Over the following pages, we will challenge you to develop and use your openness to future possibilities and alternatives. Let's go! The future starts now!





## FUTURE QUEST: ESCAPE ROOM



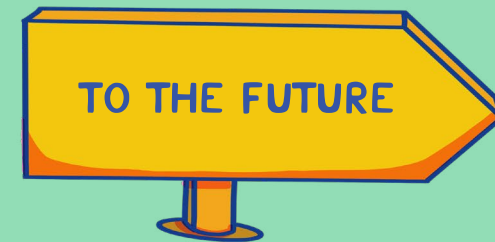
This exercise will help you develop your imagination in a fun way by exploring the future. At the same time, the exercise can also be seen as a self-discovery exercise, because when we think about the future, emotions inevitably arise and they might help you better understand how you will feel, what you wish for and what you can do to reach your desired future, guided by positive emotions.

### ***Let's do it!***

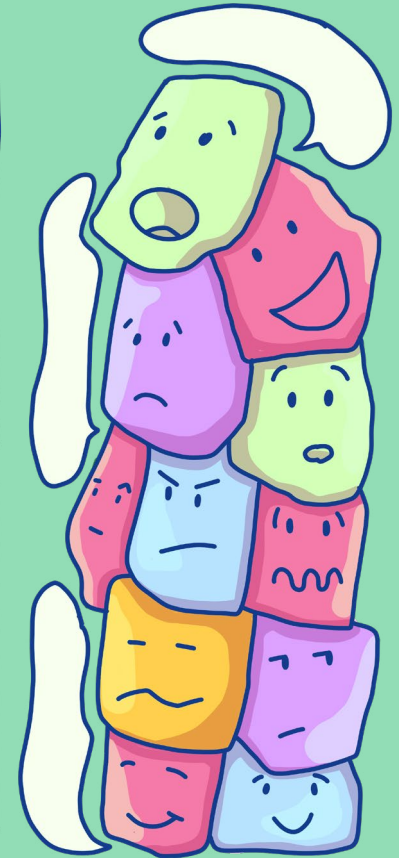
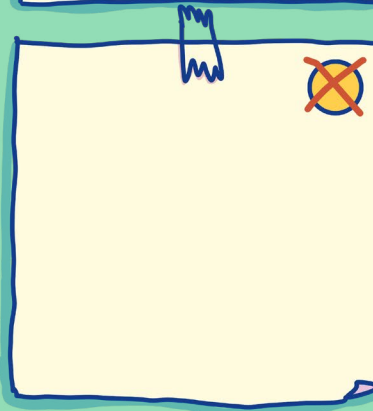
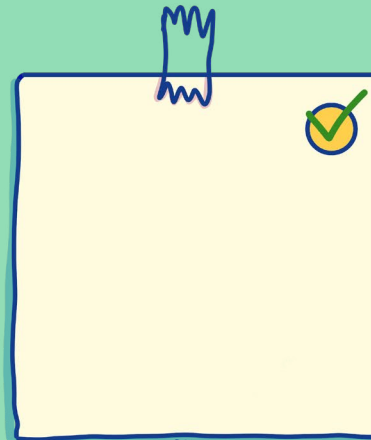
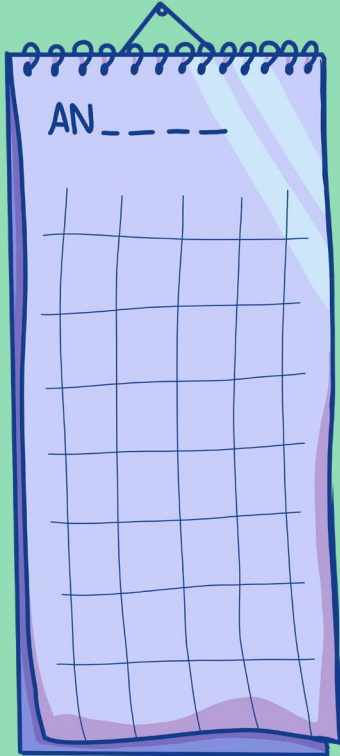
Your friends have prepared a fantastic surprise for you! They've taken you to the coolest escape room in town, created by an entrepreneur with a passion for games. You all got tickets and stepped into a mysterious room.

The moment you walked in, you found a mysterious box. You all opened it and discovered that inside were some question cards. These questions will help you develop your imagination and explore an imagined future.

With each question, you have the opportunity to travel to the future and think about the world out there. Imagine being trapped in the future with no way back to the present.



ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN YOUR PERSONAL DIARY:



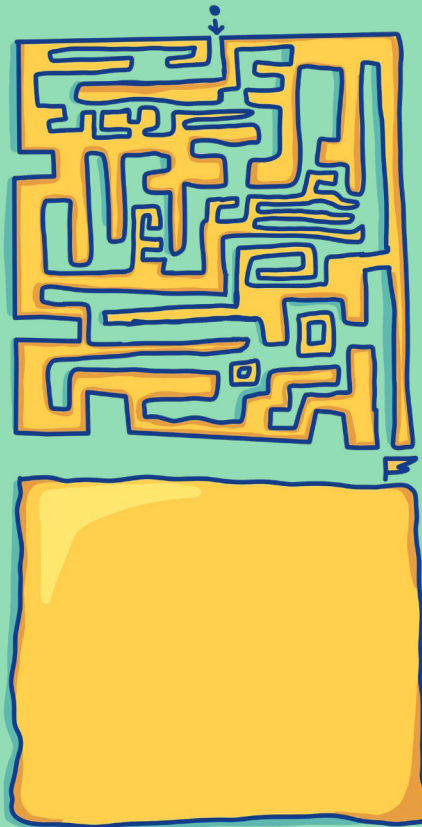
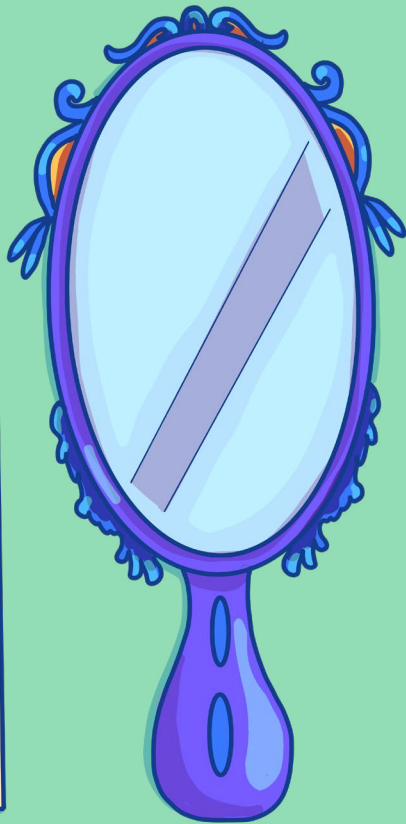
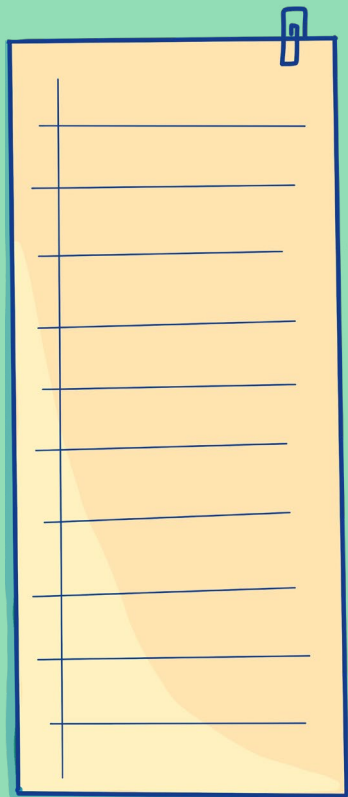
WHERE ARE YOU  
IN THIS FUTURE?

WHAT YEAR DO YOU  
THINK YOU HAVE  
TELEPORTED TO?

HOW IS THIS FUTURE  
DIFFERENT FROM THE  
PRESENT?

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT IT?  
WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE ABOUT IT?

HOW DO YOU FEEL IN  
THIS FUTURE?



WHAT ASPECTS OF THE PRESENT REMIND YOU OF THIS FUTURE?

ARE THERE ANY BELIEFS FROM THE PRESENT THAT NO LONGER APPLY HERE?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO GO BACK TO THE PRESENT?

After completing your personal journals, you have been given a very important mission to return to the present.

Your mission is to search for clues and objects around you in this mysterious room. You must find those items that can be used to build a **teleportation device back to the present.**

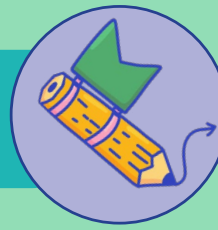
Be creative and work in teams to find unconventional solutions. There are no strict rules or right answers! Each team will then present how they plan to use the items they have found to create the teleportation device.

After the presentations, you will test each other's devices in a fun and exciting way.

At the end, you will discuss the experience in the imagined future and the possibility of applying what you have learned to the present.

You have one hour to complete your assignment and return to the present. Otherwise, you will be sent to the **FUTURE**, with no possibility of coming back (and I don't know how many things you have done right in the present that won't reverberate into the future).

## FUTURE QUEST: 2X2 SCENARIO MATRIX



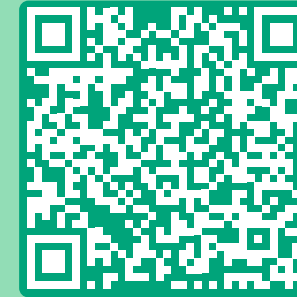
Scenario planning is one of the specific methods employed by foresight and future studies with the purpose of exploring the various future possibilities and alternatives. The 2X2 matrix is one of the tools often used within a foresight process (as an alternative to the Dator model employed in [Post Pandemic Narratives 2040 – Artifacts and Scenarios from the Future of Truth 2040](#)).

### What is Scenario 2X2?

- Scenarios = different future narratives, all of which are possible, but highly challenging (i.e. Imagine a future in which robots run for office in the city hall)
- 2X2 = 2 uncertainties or key-variables associated with 2 possibilities (i.e. lessened or highly probable).

### What can I explore using this exercise?

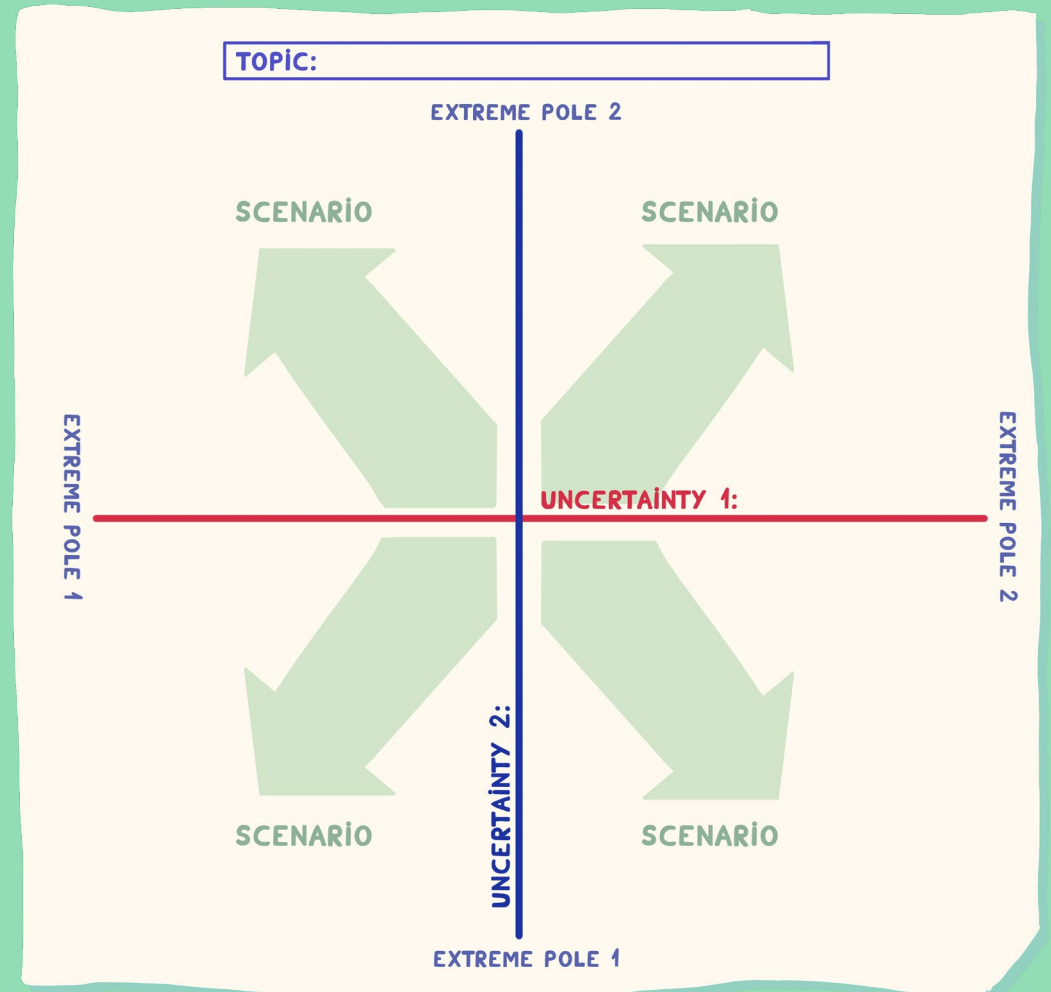
The exercise challenges you to imagine different alternative futures, by considering the forces that drive the present. What could happen if technology advanced rapidly or if we turned sustainability into our main priority? What would the world look like if we radically changed our economy? This exercise encourages you to challenge your current thinking and mental models, explore the future and come up with your own ideas on what the future might bring. It further takes you one step ahead into shaping your own future. It's challenging, isn't it?



## Creating future scenarios in 6 simple steps:

1. **Choose a topic you are interested in.** You might think of how video games might look like in the future, how education will evolve or how transportation will differ in bustling cities.
2. **What are the factors that influence your topic?** Write down all the elements you think might influence your topic. For instance, video games might be influenced by graphic design, virtual reality, metaverse or different types of games.
3. **What is uncertain?** Choose two relevant aspects of the topic that you think are uncertain or variable. For instance, how VR will evolve or whether gaming will turn into a more social or individual endeavor.
4. **Draw a 2X2 matrix: imagine a Tic Tac Toe game chart.** Each center line (horizontally and vertically) corresponds to one of the uncertainties. For instance, on one line you can write "VR – advanced or limited", while on the other you can write "Social games vs. Individual Games".
5. **Scenario narrative writing:** the two center lines divide the drawing into four quadrants, each corresponding to one of the potential future scenarios. For each quadrant, imagine and write a short narrative about how gaming might look like in the respective scenario.
6. **What did you learn?** Talk to your group about these potential scenarios. What do you like the most about them? What are the problems you anticipate? How about the opportunities? How can you prepare for that future??

To better understand scenario planning, watch [this video](#) created by ARUP and get a glimpse on 4 possible future scenarios on how the world might look like in 2050 (developed based on the 2X2 matrix).





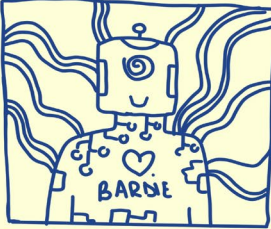

## Case study – Navigating the Future of Truth 2040

Imagine! Bardie, the first AI to experience emotion, is ever-present in human activities in 2040. If you were to travel to this future...

- How would AI influence your approach to the concept of truth?
- Is there still fake news in this future?
- How does disinformation work?
- How is this future different from the present?
- Which is the good side of this future? And the bad?
- How does AI influence human activities?
- Would you like to live in this future, or would you like to go back? What are the reasons for your choice?
- How do you feel about this future?



ANSWER THE QUESTIONS USING THE COMIC-BOOK BELOW.



## A potential future scenario:

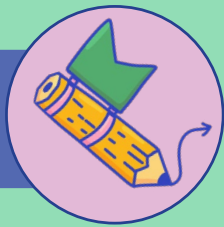
To give you a hint, we identified some aspects that might happen in such a scenario, in which the concept of truth reaches yet another standing point:

- All lines of work (including decision making processes, infrastructure and energy management, news, and politics) have integrated AI to various degrees. Even social media employs AI to moderate communities.
- AI came up with a worldwide accepted series of draft laws to increase standard of living without impacting global productivity. It is the starting point of a genuinely integrated civilization.

Eager to know more? You can read about this scenario entitled **"A Brave Old World"** in the **Post Pandemic Narratives 2040 – Artifacts and Scenarios from the Future of Truth** report, on page 29.



# FUTURE QUEST: JOURNALISTS



In your groups, choose from the resource library 3 interviews/articles you label as true and 3 you label as false (you can access the resource library by scanning the QR code). Discuss your choices. Record your answers in the dedicated spaces below and discuss the different approaches to the concept of truth from your topics. Try to come up with some guidelines for those who are unable to filter future information, either as a 3 main points talk, a TikTok video or an inspired drawing.

A stylized illustration of a tablet device with a purple border. The screen displays a grid of 12 colored boxes arranged in 3 rows and 4 columns. The top status bar shows the time '11:21', the date 'Sun 32 Jun', a Wi-Fi signal icon, and a battery level of '56%'. The grid consists of three columns of solid colors: green, light green, orange, and light orange. The bottom-right cell of the grid is shaded with diagonal lines. A yellow charging cable is plugged into the right side of the tablet.

# Truth ...Where to?

Here are some tips for navigating the information chaos:

1. Avoid ambiguous articles that read phrases such as “Experts say” or “Specialists noted” and further lack details about the respective experts or specialists. Look up background information on the latter to determine their expertise in the field as well as their scientific trustworthiness.
2. Focus on articles that provide actual verifiable examples to support theories.
3. Factcheck sources and research quoted in the article. Examine the research methodology employed to deliver those results.
4. Always look for at least 3 independent sources on the same topic to broaden your knowledge and expand your approach.
5. Watch out for articles that claim future certainty or provide long-term predictions. The world is complex and unpredictable. Check multiple perspectives and prepare for various scenarios.



# System Detectives

How are things  
interconnected and  
related?

Project implemented by:

**MONOMYTHS**  
– Joyful learning experiences –



Supported by:

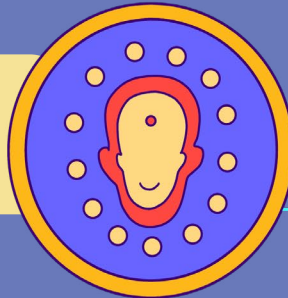


**FUTURE  
STATION**

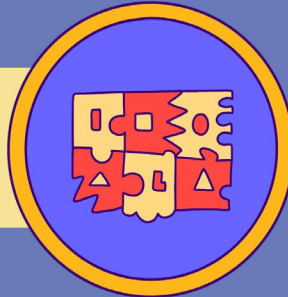
Spot the early signs  
of future change

1. Ability to see how human and natural systems are connected.
2. Recognition of the wide reach of consequences from one system to another.
3. Holistic systems thinking.

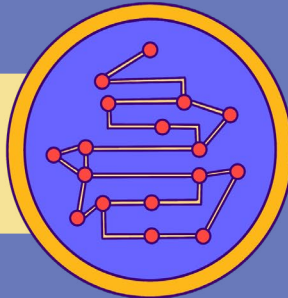
**ECO-PSYCHOLOGICAL  
SELF**



**HOLISTIC  
THINKING**



**SYSTEMS  
THINKING**



Have you ever noticed that you feel tired even though you have slept enough? Your wellbeing does not only depend on the amount of sleep, but also on external factors such as stress or recent food intake. All of these interact and influence your overall state. This is what we might call a systems approach – a comprehensive analysis of a specific phenomenon and the understanding of connections amongst its determining factors.

Nothing is arbitrary. A current phenomenon originates in the past and will influence the future. Once these connections are acknowledged, we realise that one change can have different consequences. This approach enables you to see the big picture and the related connections, instead of simply relying on separate issues pertaining to a certain topic.

Think of our society as a whole: if we analyze a specific area, we can identify patterns. Different causes result in different effects, on different levels.





## FUTURE QUEST: DIGITAL LOGBOOK

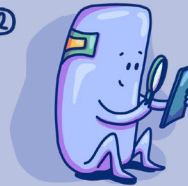
Your challenge is to create media content in the form of a digital logbook, to explore different future scenarios on **media and journalism**. Your quest is to envision and take on 6 emerging professions that might evolve over the following two decades, then create digital content for each. These professions are detailed below. Your systems approach is of utmost importance during this quest. It will allow you to understand how different trends interact and affect each other, and eventually lead to newer trends, challenges, and opportunities.

①



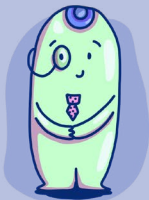
**1. DIGITAL CONTENT CREATOR:**  
THIS PROFESSIONAL IS A DIGITAL PLATFORM CONTENT CREATOR GURU, WHOSE MAIN VIRTUES ARE ATTRACTIVENESS FOR DIFFERENT PLATFORMS, AS WELL AS THE ABILITY TO CREATE AND SHARE STORIES BY MEANS OF CONCISE ONLINE POSTS.

②



**2. MEDIA WATCHDOGS:**  
THESE PROFESSIONALS ARE DIGITAL DETECTIVES EXPLORING THE INTERNET IN SEARCH OF RELEVANT HIDDEN STORIES.

③



**3. DIGITAL COMMENTATOR:**  
THESE EXPERTS ARE KEEN ON DIGITAL CULTURE AND HIGHLY SKILLFUL IN ANALYZING AND COMMENTING CURRENT ISSUES, WHICH THEY RENDER TO THE PUBLIC IN AN ACCESSIBLE YET ENGAGING MANNER.

④



**4. VIRTUAL REALITY ARCHITECT:**  
THESE INNOVATORS DESIGN IMMERSIVE VIRTUAL WORLDS AND GENERATE EXPERIENCES THAT EXPAND OR MODIFY OUR PERCEPTION OF REALITY.

⑤



**5. ADAPTABILITY CONSULTANT:**  
THESE FUTURE STRATEGISTS SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS IN NAVIGATING AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD, THROUGH ADAPTABILITY PLANNING, THUS HELPING THEM STAY RELEVANT IN THE FACE OF RAPIDLY CHANGING TECHNOLOGY.

⑥

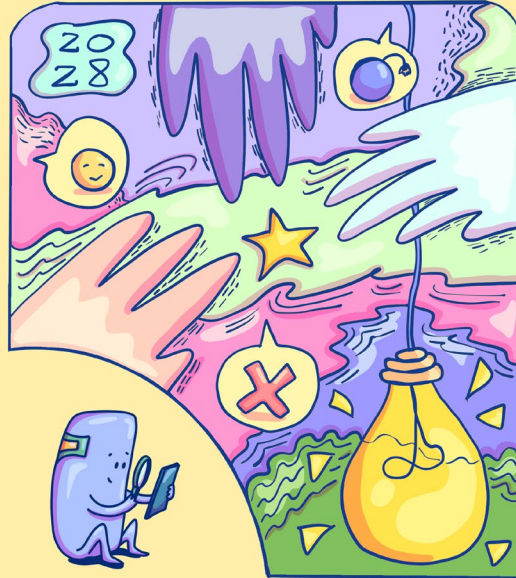


**6. MEMORIES DESIGNER:**  
THESE CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS DESIGN PERSONALIZED MEDIA EXPERIENCES TO EVOKE SPECIFIC MEMORIES AND FEELINGS.



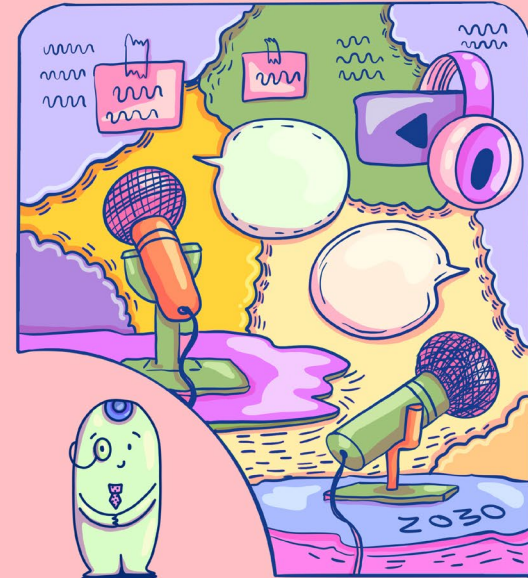
1. DIGITAL CONTENT CREATOR:

YOUR QUEST IS TO WRITE A TWEET OR AN INSTAGRAM POST COMMENTING UPON A MAJOR EVENT HAPPENING IN 2025. HOW WOULD YOU ANALYZE AND DELIVER IT TO YOUR AUDIENCE? HOW DO YOU NAVIGATE THE POST-TRUTH REALM TO GENERATE YOUR DIGITAL CONTENT?



2. MEDIA WATCHDOGS:

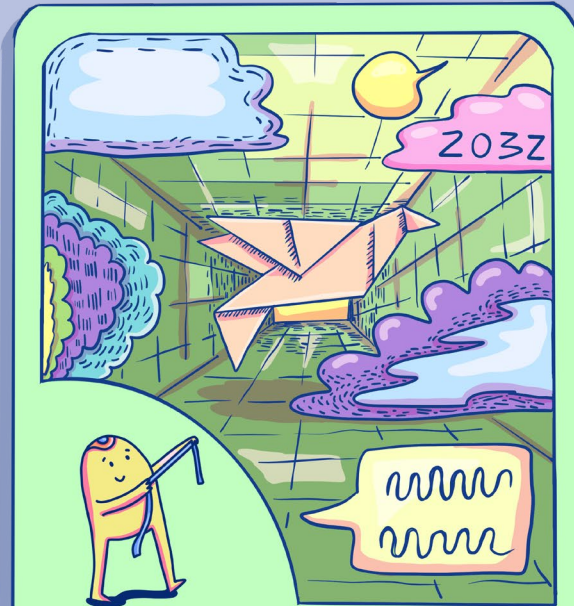
YOUR QUEST IS TO WRITE A BLOG POST OR AN ARTICLE (POSTED ON SEPTEMBER 13 2028) IN WHICH YOU DISCLOSE AN IMPORTANT STORY YOU HAVE DISCOVERED. HOW DID YOU DISCOVER THIS STORY AND WHAT ARE ITS CONSEQUENCES? HOW DO YOU ADDRESS DISINFORMATION AND DISCRIMINATION IN YOUR INVESTIGATIVE WORK?



3. DIGITAL COMMENTATOR:

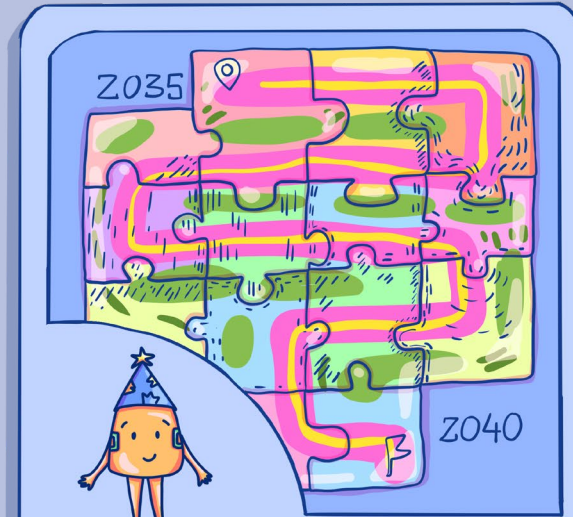
YOUR QUEST IS TO CREATE A PODCAST SCRIPT IN WHICH YOU BRING LIGHT ON A UNIQUE APPROACH TO A SPECIFIC ISSUE OR AN INNOVATIVE IDEA FOR THE YEAR 2030. HOW DOES MEDIA LOOK LIKE IN THIS FUTURE AND WHAT KIND OF CONTENT ENGAGES YOUR AUDIENCE?





4. VIRTUAL REALITY ARCHITECT:

YOUR QUEST IS TO DEPICT THE IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE YOU HAVE CREATED FOR THE YEAR 2032. HOW DOES YOUR DIGITALLY ENGAGING SELF-CREATED VIRTUAL WORLD LOOK LIKE, IF IT WERE TO FOCUS ON ISSUES LIKE DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE? HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THE REAL WORLD?



5. ADAPTABILITY CONSULTANT:

YOUR QUEST IS TO DELIVER A STRATEGY FOR THE 2035-2040 TIMEFRAME, IN ORDER TO SUPPORT A MEDIA ORGANIZATION (I.E. FUTURE TIKTOK) IN ADAPTING TO RAPIDLY SHIFTING TECHNOLOGY AND NAVIGATING THE POST-TRUTH WORLD. HOW SHOULD IT ENGAGE USERS? WHAT TYPE OF CONTENT SHOULD IT PROMOTE? WHAT KIND OF FIREWALLS SHOULD THEY USE?



6. MEMORIES DESIGNER:

TALK ABOUT A PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCE YOU HAVE CREATED FOR A BIRTHDAY PARTY IN 2040, IN ORDER TO GENERATE CERTAIN MEMORIES AND FEELINGS. HOW DID YOU DESIGN THE EXPERIENCE AND HOW DID YOU USE IT TO GENERATE DEEP FEELINGS IN YOUR AUDIENCE?



## Case study – Navigating the Future of Truth 2040

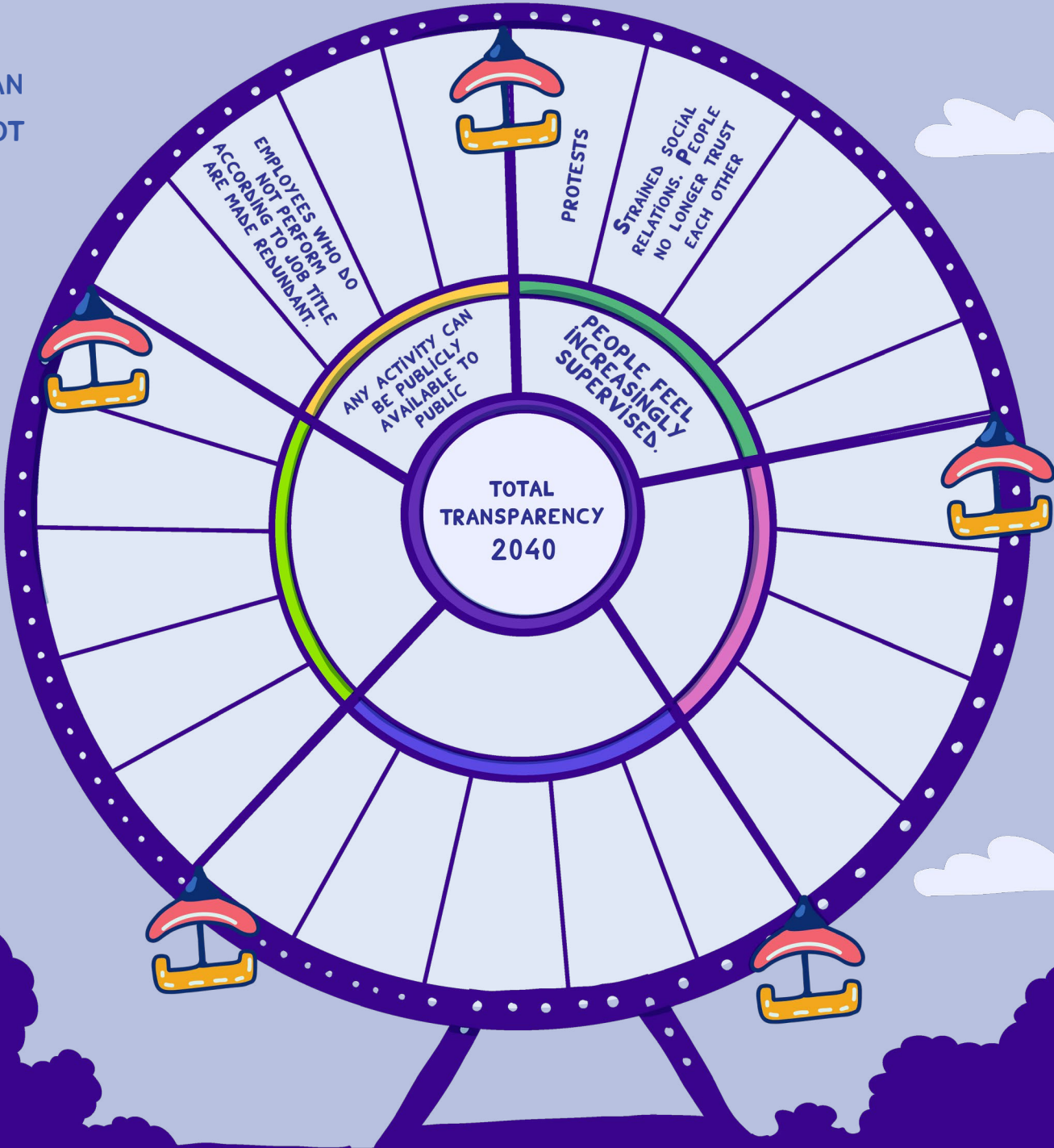
### A potential future scenario:

Let's imagine that in 2040 a new law could be passed to ensure total transparency of information. Write this law in the center of the wheel. Assuming this scenario comes into place thus transforming the concept of truth, reflect on the following Future Future questions: What is going to happen to society? What does the truth look like when each action is scrutinized? We have already included some suggestions, but we need your help to fill in the diagram on the following page.

If you are eager to learn other effects the total transparency law might incur on society and on the concept of truth, then check out the [Post-Pandemic Narratives 2040 – Artifacts from the Future of Truth](#) report on page 24, where you can read more about the “CTRL+SHIFT+T” scenario.



THE FUTURES WHEEL TOOL CAN ALSO REFER TO THE FUTURE, NOT JUST THE PRESENT.



# Empathy Superheroes

How can you create a  
better future for all?

Project implemented by:

**MONOMYTHS**  
– Joyful learning experiences –



Supported by:



**FUTURE  
STATION**

Spot the early signs  
of future change

1. Understanding how every person, place and animal are linked together.
2. Willingness to give something away to make the world a better place.
3. Identification with physically and temporally distant people.

IDENTIFICATION WITH  
ALL HUMANITY



MORAL  
CENTRALITY



SELF-TRANSCENDENCE  
VALUES



Empathy is limitless and makes no distinction of color, race, or religion. It is a lens through which we see the world and reach even the most remote human being on the planet. Zorba The Greek said: "to save yourself, help others". How can you help others, to help yourself?

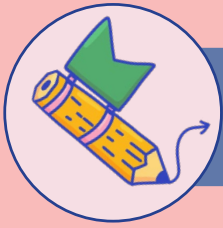
Think of success as a team game. An athlete reaches the highest scores as a result of a team's effort along the way. For instance, a good manager has probably had a good teacher or mentor who showed him/her/them the ropes. Likewise, a renowned doctor is able to treat patients with utmost care both due to personal prowess and team efforts, along with adequate technology.

We are social beings and we need each other to succeed. If one struggles, then the whole community might suffer. Therefore, when you envision the future, think of one that ensures wellbeing for others just as much as it does for you. Empathy is pivotal.

Start by observing and noticing the needs of others. Take a break, forget about your mobile phone and look around. How can you turn these problems into opportunities? How can you support those who struggle? How does an ideal future look like for yourself and for others?

Reflect on the concept of empathy and what it entails for you, in particular. Embrace the challenges that come to mind.



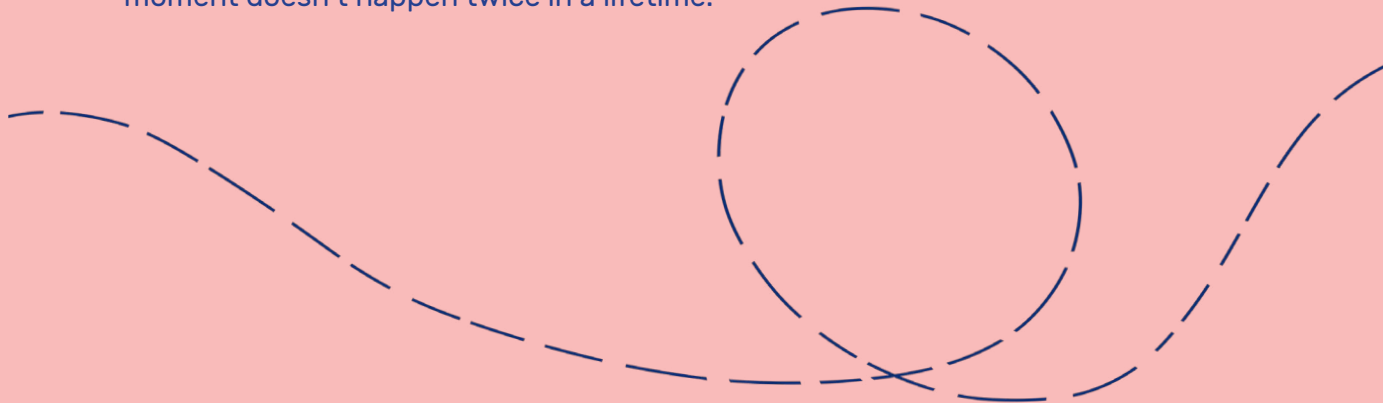
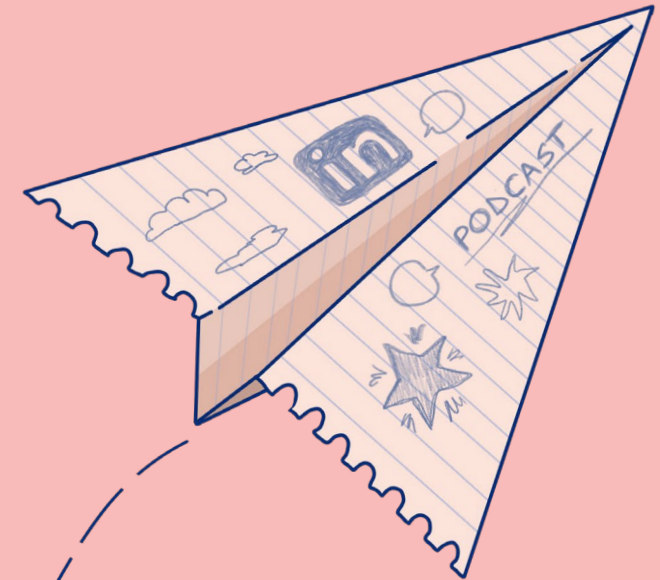


## FUTURE QUEST: PODCAST STATION

Are you ready to be part of a unique moment in your professional career? You've made such a good impression with your CV that the manager of Future Station, the company which provides foresight consultancy services – (see [www.futurestation.ro](http://www.futurestation.ro)), has invited you for an interview.

But here's the twist! This is not an ordinary interview, but a challenge that can change the game. You need to demonstrate that you can navigate the LinkedIn platform by identifying a person who is passionate about a field relevant for the future - a true 'pioneer of the future'. This person must also have 20+ years of experience in that field.

Have you found this person? It's time to start a high-level **podcast**, and this person is your guest of honor. So get ready, because this moment doesn't happen twice in a lifetime.



## PODCAST STATION: CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO CHOOSE THIS DOMAIN 20 YEARS AGO WHEN IT WAS AT THE BEGINNING, AND WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE THEN?

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES YOU'VE FACED THROUGHOUT YOUR CAREER AND HOW HAVE YOU OVERCOME THEM?

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUNG PEOPLE INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING THE SAME PATH?

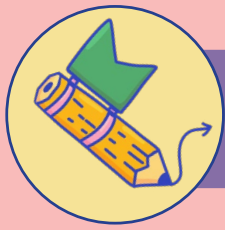
HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF THIS FIELD? WHAT ARE THE REVOLUTIONARY TRENDS OR TECHNOLOGIES YOU ANTICIPATE FOR THE NEXT TWO DECADES?



If you want to have a unique and attractive introduction, read your guest's CV carefully. This podcast is a fantastic opportunity to provide a relevant and inspiring perspective to Future Station.

Hit the REC button and get ready to make the coolest podcast about the present in the future. Challenging, right? Let's do it!





## FUTURE QUEST: TRUTH IN COMIC BOOKS

Trust me, there is no real **empathy** without the ability to understand that other people's truth may differ profoundly from your own. Let's play with this idea a bit and put our imaginations to work!

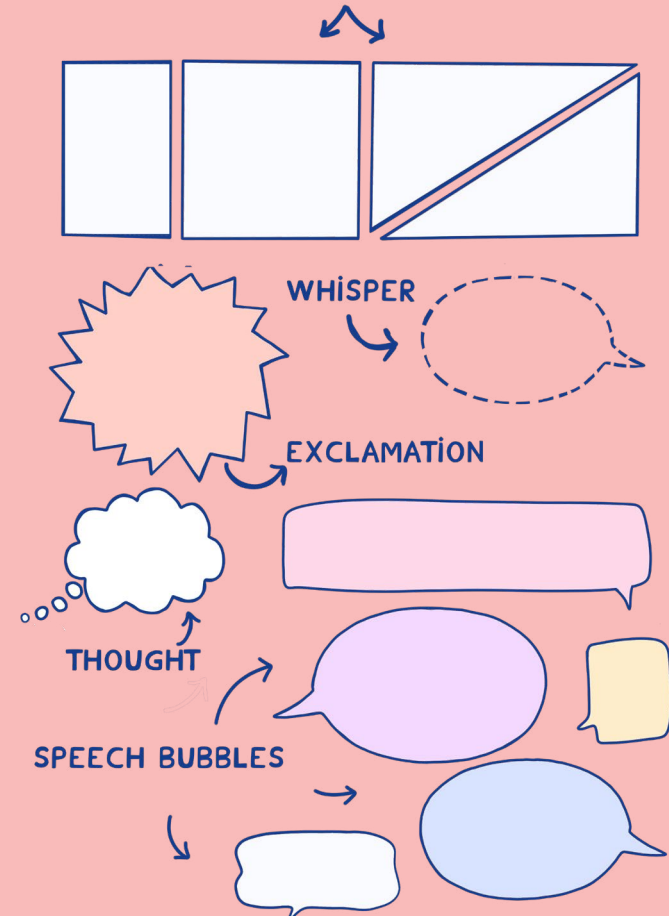
Choose a situation or story where you felt deeply empathetic for someone who was wronged. It can be a real-life experience or something you've seen online. Now, your mission is to convert that story into a **comic book**, and the comic book should highlight the truth from that person's perspective. Use illustrations, characters and dialogue to transmit the emotions and the profound message of the story.

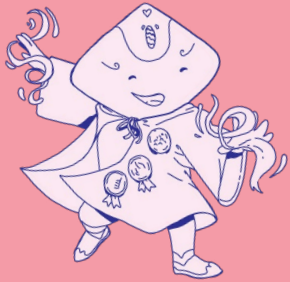
Explore drawing and storytelling techniques from Grassroot Comics or use apps like StoryBoardThat to bring your story to life. Inspiration and resources can be found online so you can improve your artistic and storytelling skills.

In the end, make sure your comic book is an authentic expression of your empathy and understanding that the truth can be different for each person. Let your creativity flow and let the comic book express the power of your empathy.

### COMIC BOOK ELEMENTS:

#### TYPES OF COMIC BOOK PANELS



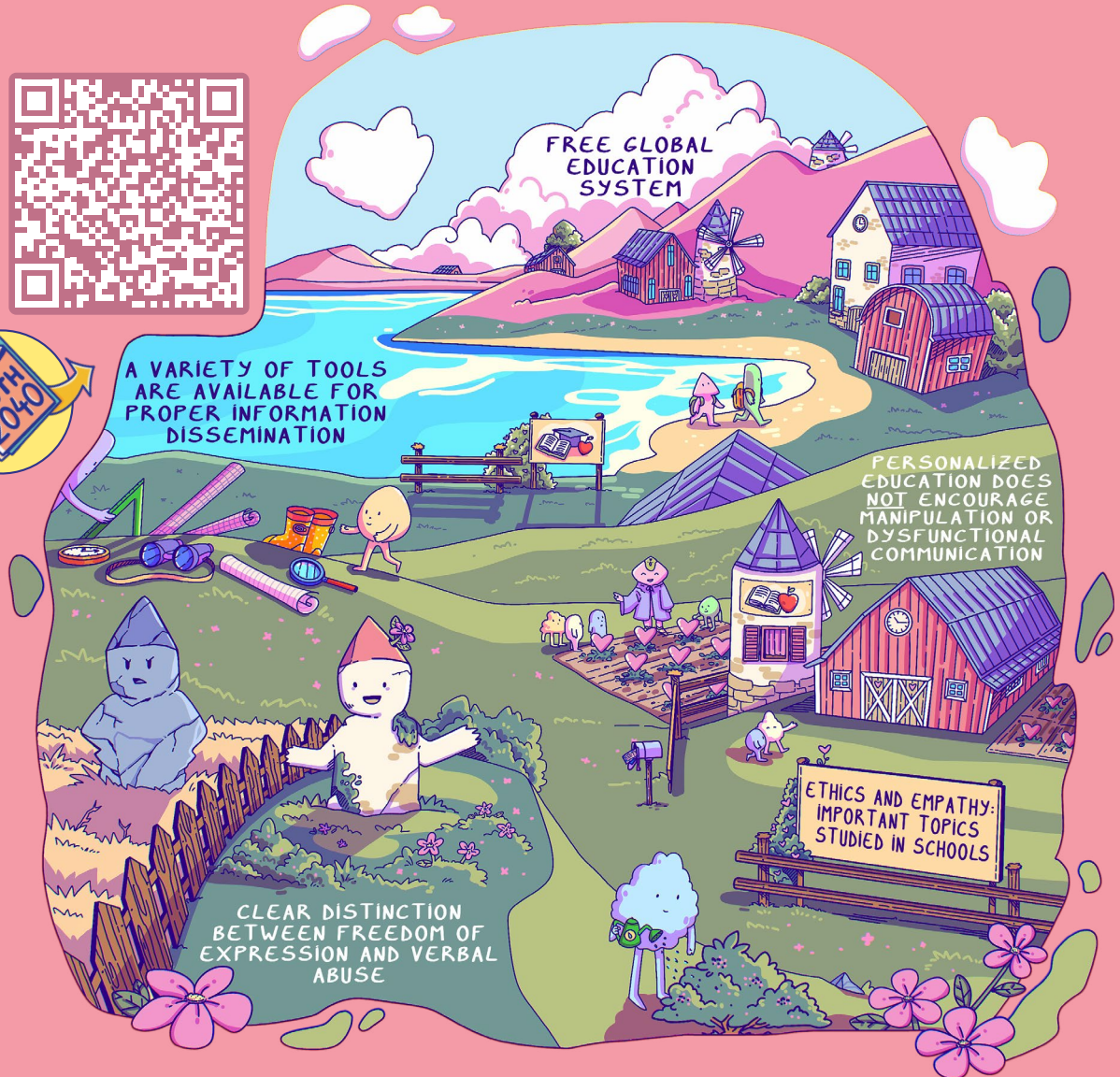
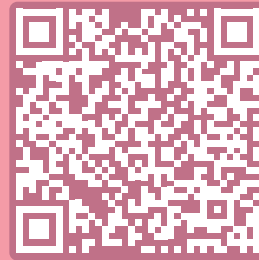


# Case study – Navigating the Future of Truth 2040

## A potential future scenario:

The Post-Pandemic Narratives 2040 – Artifacts from the Future of Truth report, on page 31, depicts yet another potential future scenario on the concept of truth, entitled “**Land of Dreams**”. Here are some key points:

- The borderline between freedom of speech and verbal abuse is clearly drawn.
- Ethics and empathy become relevant school subjects.
- Information sharing is correct and habitual, and a variety of fact checking tools is accessible on a broad scale.
- Accurate personalized education discourages manipulation and dysfunctional communication.
- F.E.F.A. – an educational organization consortium – succeeded in establishing a freely available global education system, which further enables all children/youth to benefit from teaching and learning facilities. Literacy levels have skyrocketed over the past five years, which lead to an increase of global dissemination capacity.





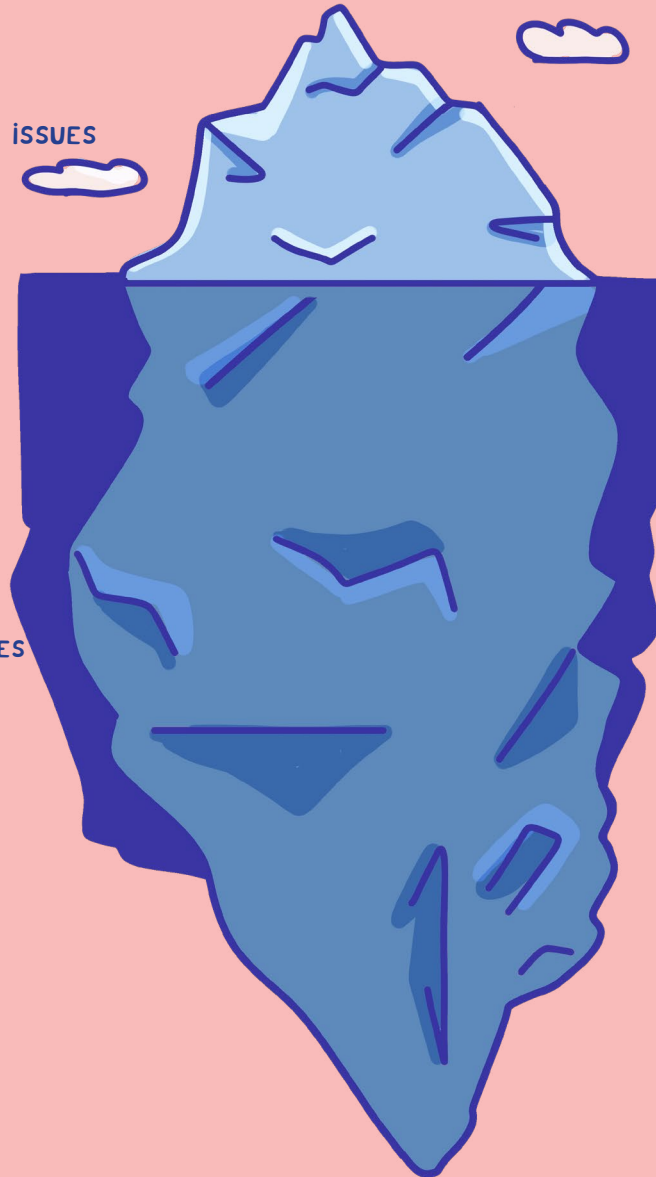
ALTERNATIVE FUTURES TOOLBOX  
ADAPTED FROM CAUSAL LAYER ANALYSIS, DEVELOPED BY SOHAIL INAYATULLAH

NEWS FROM THE FUTURE  
EMERGING HEADLINES AND ISSUES

ACTORS  
ROLES AND PERSPECTIVES

SYSTEMS  
INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAUSES

METAPHORS  
STORIES AND MYTHS



TASK: IMAGINE YOU ARE A REPORTER. WHAT IS A POSSIBLE HEADLINE FROM JULY 2040, WHICH PERFECTLY DESCRIBES YOUR VERSION OF THE FUTURE OF TRUTH?

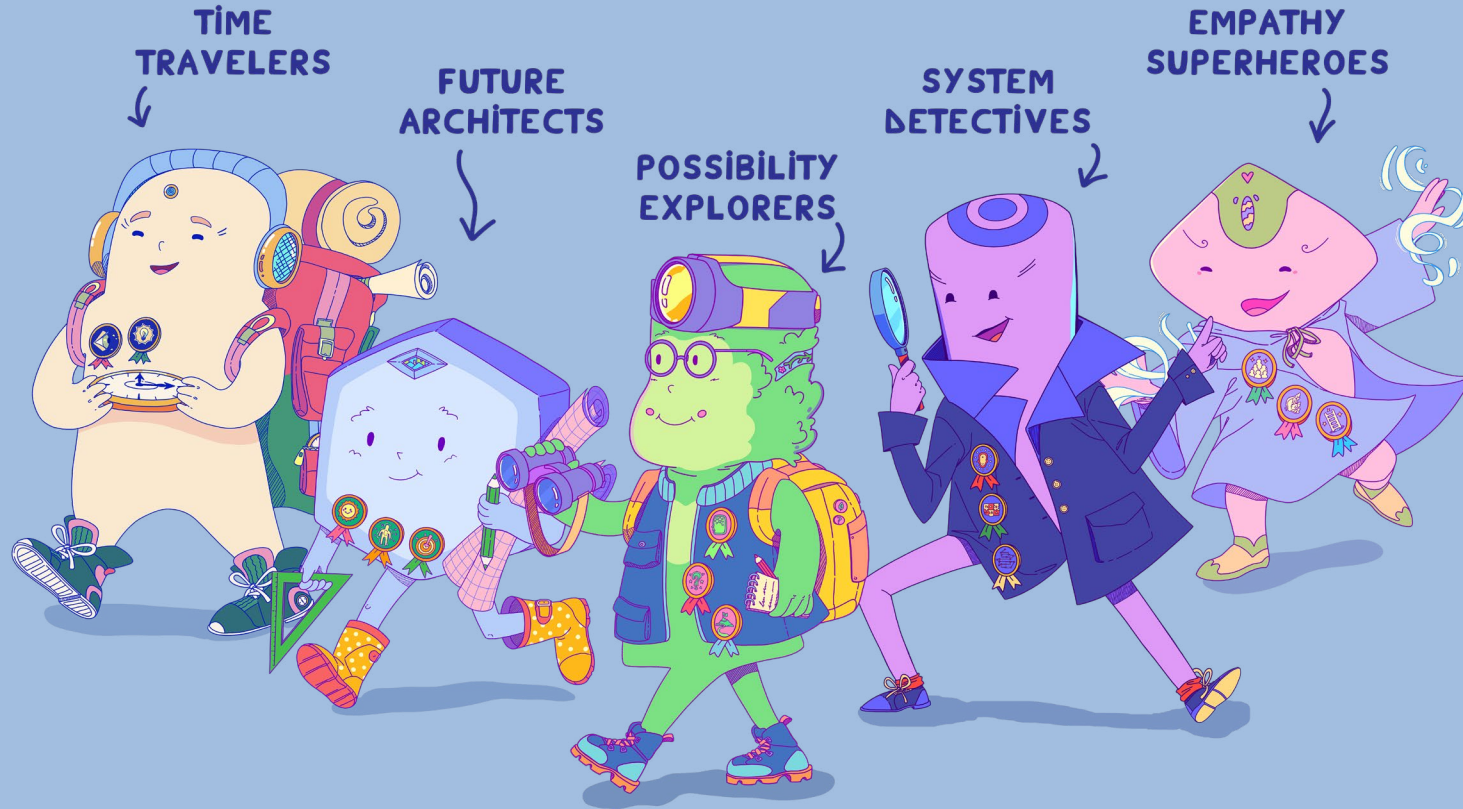
TASK: WHO ARE THE ACTORS OR THE RESPONSIBLE PERSONS RELEVANT FOR SHAPING THE FUTURE OF TRUTH 2040?

TASK: WHAT ARE THE SYSTEMS (ECONOMICAL, POLITICAL, SOCIAL) THAT SHOULD BE IN PLACE TO SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF TRUTH?

TASK: WHAT IS A METAPHOR/ANALOGY/IDIOM/IMAGE THAT COULD DESCRIBE THIS DESIRED FUTURE OF TRUTH?

# Conclusions

Hey! Thank you for embarking on this futures literacy adventure! It was a long and challenging journey, that broadened our perspective on some concepts, through the 5 dimensions we have explored together:



Think of this toolkit as an “enchanted chest” in the story. Take from it what you need, what you think fits better the needs of the young people you work with, in whatever order you want. Its treasures never end.

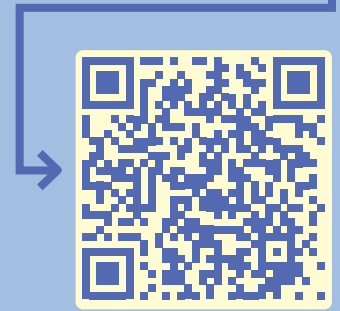
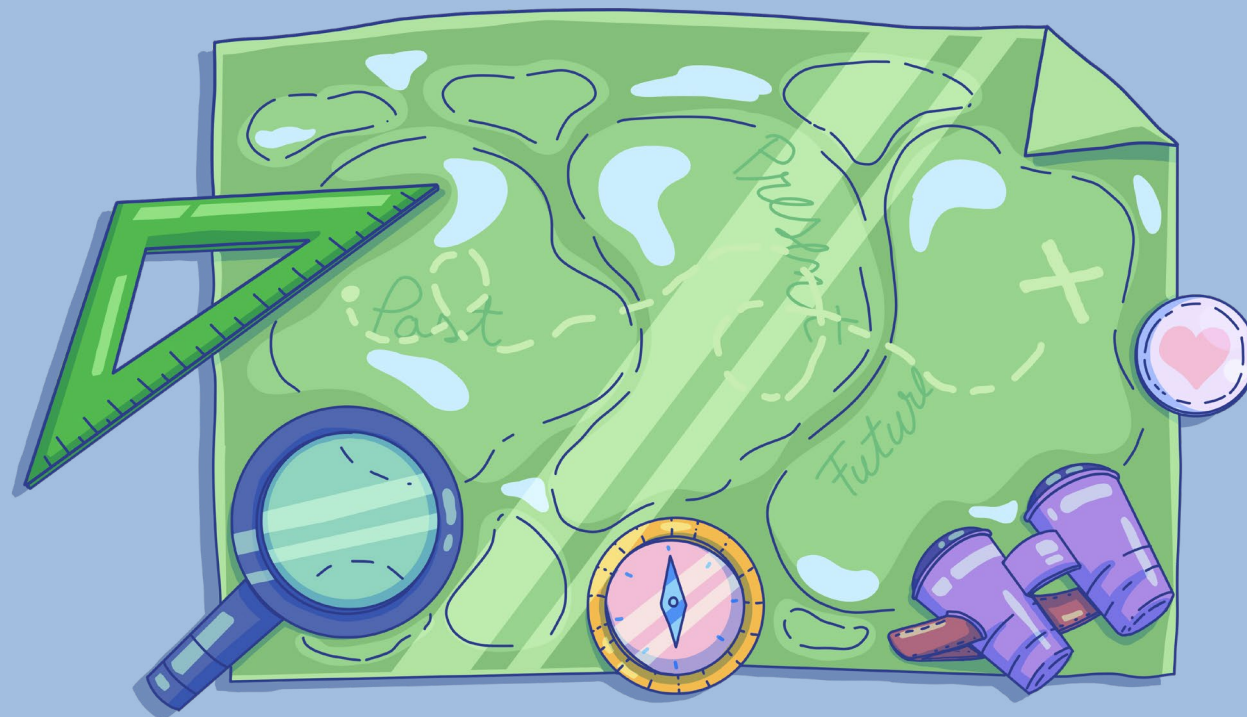
To make it easier for you, the toolkit comes with a selection of tips and sample quest designs that can be taken as-is or adapted. You can find them [here](#). Propose, in turn, models of activities that you have applied and that have been successful. The toolkit is a living tool, growing from the energy and imagination of those who use it.



We encourage you to see the bright colors of the future, to critically analyze the past and curiously explore the present!  
Be the change you want to see in the world!

To deepen your understanding of the 5 dimensions and further explore your personal approach to the future, check the specialized test, designed for both adults and youth, created by researchers at the University of Turku. Check the test [here](#). Should you have further inquiries or simply wish to share your experience, send us an e-mail at [diana@futurestation.ro](mailto:diana@futurestation.ro). We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Keep exploring, discovering, and shaping a future of possibilities!



CONCEPT, ARTWORKS AND DESIGN BY



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**Active  
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Post-Pandemic Narratives 2040 – Artifacts from the Future of Truth



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– Joyful learning experiences –



**FUTURE  
STATION**

Spot the early signs  
of future change

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