

***Visions of 2035* workshop facilitation pack**

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Part of the Royal Society's Changing Expectations programme

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Welcome

Many thanks for downloading the [Visions of 2035](#) workshop facilitation pack. [Research culture](#) is important to everyone in the research community and this workshop can help you and your colleagues to think about it. The workshop provides an exciting and innovative way to spark an interest and initiate new conversations about an ideal culture of research, and how you might work towards this ideal. The ideas generated through the use of this workshop will be a starting point from which real cultural change can happen.

But what is research culture?

Research culture is an umbrella term which includes everything a researcher does that isn't research, including issues around collaboration, research integrity, career paths and publishing. Annex 2 compiles a list of reading materials describing in further detail some issues surrounding research culture.

What is *Visions of 2035*?

***Visions of 2035* is an innovative, highly flexible, modular futures workshop.** The *Visions of 2035* workshop uses speculative design scenarios and the [Museum of Extraordinary Objects](#) to inspire new thinking about what an idealised research culture in 2035 could look like. This could be both in terms of big systems change, for example around the way promotion is managed within an organisation or how research integrity is embedded within everyday practice; to small changes such as research leaders leading by example when it comes to promoting good work/life balance or colleagues demonstrating a respect for a broad range of career paths.

Why should I run this workshop?

Research culture is important and this workshop can help you and your colleagues to think about it differently. The scope and quality of research, and the individuals who carry it out, are all impacted by research culture. Therefore, influencing the culture of research within your organisation has huge potential as a way to support excellence. Running the *Visions of 2035* workshop will give you the opportunity to bring the conversation surrounding research culture back to your own work environment, and to think how it might be changed for the better.

Who can get involved?

Everyone! Research culture influences and is influenced by everyone in the science community, and the Society wants everyone to contribute to the conversation. We encourage anyone in the research environment to consider running a workshop. For example it could be used by senior leaders to help think about the future at a strategic level; it could be used by researcher career development officers to think about their offering to researchers in changing work environment; it could be used by individuals to think about mapping a future career paths.

The history of the workshop

In 2017 the Society ran *Visions of 2035*, a series of workshops focusing on what a future 'idealised' research culture could look like, engaging over 100 individuals at 20 events, in 15 different locations. They were designed to inspire new thinking about how a future system could work differently to support increased permeability, interdisciplinarity and transparency. The workshops were run across the country with researchers, technicians and administrators across industry, academia and government. It became apparent throughout this period that many individuals found the workshops a useful way to think about the makeup of their own workplaces as well as the wider system. Demand for the workshop became so great that the decision was made to make all the materials open access so that others could use them to facilitate their own conversations about research culture.

What we ask of you

The Society's research culture programme is trying to reach the full breadth of the research community, and to create a sustaining conversation around research culture. If using these materials or structure, we ask that you send us a blog or report of the session and how you plan to use the outputs, so that we can feed any interesting ideas into our work.

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Visions of 2035 - facilitator's notes

This section offers guidance on how the workshop can be run. You can decide to use all or some of the elements. You may wish to focus on research culture as a whole or focus on a specific area. We have included an example agenda from our workshops in Annex 2. The workshop is flexible, please tailor it to your needs!

Can I run the workshop on my own?

We have found that discussions work best in groups of 6-10 people with one facilitator per group. The workshop can be run without facilitators on each table, but you are relying on the participants to report back to you their discussions. We have found that these reports tend to be generalised, and interesting ideas can be lost. On average, the workshop will require half a day, but the structure is highly flexible and can be adapted to suit your own needs.

How should the room be set up?

The workshop works best with a cabaret set up, with 6-10 participants and one facilitator per table. The facilitator's role is to explain the materials, keep the conversation productive for the workshop objectives, and capture the outputs.

How should the workshop be introduced?

The workshop should start with a full group briefing. Here it should be explained what you would like to get out of the workshop (this could be blue sky thinking about how your group could work differently or you may choose to focus on a specific area of research culture, for example increasing interdisciplinarity in the future). It should also be explained that the materials used in the workshop are not predictions of the future, they are provocations to stimulate discussion. The participants should be encouraged to explore all of the ideas that come up, even those that initially sound unlikely, as insights and better ideas might emerge through further discussion in a way which is difficult to predict. Facilitators are encouraged to gently steer conversations towards goals and aims for the future.

What is the overall structure of the workshop?

Following the whole-group briefing move to working in groups. The segments detailed in Stage 2 can be fitted together and used in a way which fits the available time, audience, and objectives. Guidance on each Stage is given below, together with suggested timings.

1. Stage 1: Introductory exercises
2. Stage 2.a.: Scenarios by Strange Telemetry
3. Stage 2.b.: Museum of Extraordinary Objects
4. Stage 3: Identifying an 'ideal' culture and feedback to the room

What are the stages of the workshop in more detail?

Introductions and move to futures thinking: Stage 1

Recommended time: 5 minutes

A round of table introductions, giving name and background, paired with answering the question: 'What is the one thing that would feature in your ideal research culture of 2035?' This question could also be tailored to the audience.

Scenarios developed by Strange Telemetry: Stage 2.a

Recommended time: 25 minutes or more per scenario

Materials:

- Two scenarios – each scenario made up of three A1 sheets
- Pens, post it notes, paper to note people's ideas down on as needed

In Stage 2.a. participants are presented with one of the panoramic images depicting speculative research environments in 2035. They discuss the scenario in the context of five themes detailed below. Participants then move onto the next scenario. You should allow at least 25 minutes per scenario.

The scenarios

- Scenario A – 'The Lab' – a corporate academic university. Large teams operate within the institute and collaborate with those in similar institutes elsewhere
- Scenario B – 'The Kitchen' – a home-based lab. This space is shared by researchers working in international decentralised projects as individuals and in small, networked teams

The scenarios are not predictions, but made up of a collection of things that might happen. They are intended to provoke debate and discussion. Participants are not expected to like them, agree with each other or think that what is depicted is realistic – the role of the scenarios is to inspire fresh thinking.

The discussion

Participants should pick out the different details and consider what they mean for the wider world depicted in the scenario. By moving through structured discussion the scenarios are used as a way into discussing the systems and practices that shape the culture of research.

5 minutes: Encourage participants to look at the scenario, pick out that they see and discuss what they think each element might mean

20 minutes: Semi-structured discussion, guided by the five bullet points below. These are intended to prompt and guide discussion. Participants should be moved through:

- Feelings – what are your gut feelings about the scenario? In that world would you be happy, anxious etc.?
- Good – what do you like about the image? Are there things that resonate?
- Bad – what do you not like about the image? Are there things you disagree with?
- Personal change – if you occupied the scenario, how would you change things?

- External change – if you occupied the scenario, what changes would you want others (funders, policymakers, companies) to make?

Participants can be encouraged to record their ideas on post it notes and stick them to the middle of the table – this can be particularly useful in capturing minority viewpoints.

The most valuable discussion will generally take place when considering the changes participants would make to the scenarios, and the facilitator should move the conversation in that direction when the participants are comfortable with the approach. Once some changes have been discussed the conversation may move away from the scenario – which does not need to be prevented as long as the group is still generating productive ideas.

The exercise can then be repeated with the second scenario if desired. The contrast between the environments depicted can be useful in providing different positive aspects to take forward to stage 3.

The Museum of Extraordinary Objects: Stage 2.b

Recommended time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- Printed copies of the Museum
- Printed copies of the Museum Narratives
- Pens, post it notes, paper to note people's ideas down on as needed

The Museum

The Museum of Extraordinary Objects [link] features seven speculative objects developed through an experimental partnership between the Society and students studying on the MA Art and Science at Central St Martins. They form a hypothetical museum set in 2035, looking back at key moments that shaped research culture in the intervening years. The museum was curated by Julie Light.

These objects each address a particular theme within research culture and are underpinned by a narrative presenting an idea designed to provoke discussion. They can be used in conjunction with the scenarios to enrich the conversation, or as a separate activity. The objects, themes and credits (which should accompany any images) are:

1. *Young's Translator* (publication and open science) – Stephen Bennett and Amy Starmar
2. *The Noble Award for Team Science* (evaluation and recognition) – Hazel Ching-Hsuan Chiang
3. *Memorial to Mars Mission* (failure and research integrity) – Helen Cawley, Priya Odedra, Josh Bourke
4. *Lab Cab Transport Container* (changing research environments) – Julie Light
5. *The New Career Map* (careers in the research workforce) – Stephen Bennett and Liv Bargman
6. *Interdisciplinary Collaboration Wheel* (team science) – Neus Torres Tamarit, Reggy Liu
7. *Public Ballot Voting Form* (setting the research question) – Tere Chad

The discussion

The objects should be explored through the Museum Narratives. Encourage group members to work in pairs and give each pair an object from the Museum to discuss as well as a copy of the Museum Narratives document. Pairs can then pick out the ideas they identify with and like, and the parts they disagree with or don't associate with good research culture. As with the scenarios participants can use these discussions to then think about how the objects might fit within an 'idealised' research culture. Pairs should note down their ideas on the post it notes and feedback to the group. A wider discussion on the future of research culture can then be facilitated within the group.

Discussion of 'ideal' culture and feedback to room: Stage 3

Recommended time: 15 minutes

Around each table, the group should identify a few key aspects of their good research culture, drawing on the positive aspects identified in the scenarios and objects, and the changes to the scenarios they suggested. They should discuss in detail how those things might be achieved. One member of the group should then feedback to the room on the discussion. Depending on numbers and time, there may then be the opportunity to ask questions between tables and run a whole-group discussion.

What next?

Bring together the notes from the workshop, both those made by participants and the facilitators.

You may want to think about the following:

- Is it possible to make any strategic plans as a result of your discussions, to begin to change the culture in your own work environment?
- How will you and your workshop participants change your own behaviour to reflect the changes in the culture of research examined?
- How will you ensure that this sustained conversation continues beyond the end of your workshop?

Please also write your experience of the workshop up in a blog or short 1-page report, detailing what insights you gained and how you may build on these discussions further. We will feed your insights into our ongoing work on research culture.

If you have any feedback on the workshop and ways in which we can improve it please contact us (frances.downey@royalsociety.org). This is a live document and we are keen to improve and develop it as we go.

Annex 1: *Visions of 2035* workshop - example agenda

- 13:30 – 13:40 Welcome to research culture: visions of 2035
- 13:40 – 14:45 Discussion based on scenarios and speculative objects
- 25 minutes: Scenario A ‘the lab’
- Themed discussion will explore:
- Initial feelings in reaction to the scenario (purple);
 - What is good about the scenario (green);
 - What is bad about the scenario (red);
 - Things you would do differently if you inhabited the scenario (yellow)
 - Things you would want someone else to change if you inhabited the scenario (violet).
- 25 minutes: Scenario B ‘the kitchen’
- Themed discussion as with scenario A
 - Ideas from previous workshops will be introduced and tested
- 15 minutes: Addition of relevant artefacts from the Museum of Extraordinary Objects
- Initial reaction, discussion of the theme addressed by the object, and the narrative underlying it
- 14.45 – 15.00 Discussion of the key features of excellent research cultures, focussing on positives and changes from the scenarios. Feedback to room. Thanks and conclusions.
- 15:00 Workshop close

Annex 2: Reading materials

Reading materials are provided to give a background to the topic of research culture, and to aid the facilitator in stimulating conversations in the workshop where necessary. This list may then be distributed to the participants after the workshop is completed.

Report: The culture of scientific research in the UK. Nuffield Council on Bioethics.

http://nuffieldbioethics.org/wp-content/uploads/Nuffield_research_culture_full_report_web.pdf

Article: Jisc Futures: what will research look like in 2035? Jo Dally & Frances Downey.

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/jisc-futures-what-will-research-look-2035>

Blog Post: “The future of Research Culture in the UK”. Frances Downey, Royal Society.

<https://blogs.royalsociety.org/in-verba/2016/12/13/the-future-of-research-culture-in-the-uk/>

Blog Post: Get involved: Run your own Visions of 2035 workshop

<http://blogs.royalsociety.org/in-verba/2017/11/24/get-involved-run-your-own-visions-of-2035-workshop/>

Blog Post: The making of the Museum of Extraordinary Objects. Julie Light & Stephen Bennett

<http://blogs.royalsociety.org/in-verba/2017/11/24/the-making-of-the-museum-of-extraordinary-objects/>

Please also visit the Research culture page on the Royal Society website for more information about the programme.

<https://royalsociety.org/researchculture>