

November/December 2022

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Approaching the new year with anticipation

SAMI members are doing their annual survey of key issues and opportunities for the New Year. We'll be publishing this in our final blog of the year. Futures thinking is all about looking for opportunities as well as threats (and heaven knows, there will be enough of the latter) so we thought we'd point out here one thing which looks like it has moved from potential to revolutionary as the year comes to an end.

Artificial intelligence on the web has moved to the phase where speed of development is becoming if not exponential then at least startling. Search engines like [Elicit](#) answer natural language questions with not only a list of topics, but natural language summaries and analysis. Authorial tools like [Lex](#) offer the opportunity of authorial help of high standard, if not yet actual authorship itself. Tom Whipple, Science writer at the Times, has a very entertaining [Twitter thread](#) on text derived from prompts to GPT-3. And in art, AI is making [astonishing advances](#), breaking through into mainstream discourse as people start questioning what [artistic creation](#) actually is.

None of these technologies are perfect. Text frequently sounds odd. In art, hands and faces seem often beyond the ability of the technology. But here we are at that point where the present becomes the future, and we shall see it happen next year. Watch out for our blog for more – both opportunities and threats as we enter the new year.

All of us wish all of you the very happiest of Christmases, and a successful, healthy and above all peaceful 2023.

APF Emerging Fellows Programme

SAMI Principal Patricia Lustig, runs [the Association of Professional Futurists'](#) Emerging

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Fellows Programme, creating new assets for the foresight community. For more information, [follow this link](#) to read about the programme and the Fellows' blogs. One of the Fellows (Dr Annah Kyoya) has been blogging about the informal sector in Africa and was picked up by a journalist for Time Magazine and interviewed recently. The third intake of emerging fellows will join in January.

Sustainable Innovation Pathways Framework

This innovative approach to combining qualitative and quantitative approaches combines:

- Technology readiness and adoption velocity
- Futures and [foresight](#) thinking
- Financial modelling

Contact Jonathan at jbs@samiconsulting.co.uk to receive a copy of the Framework and to discuss how it could be applied.

Drivers of Change

Following a series of blogposts, Huw Williams is completing an update of SAMI's six Drivers of Change. A new Working Paper will be published shortly. If you are interested in a presentation on the topic to your team, please contact huw.williams@samiconsulting.co.uk.

New World Disorder

Joe Ravetz is running a 3-month programme of synergistic mapping & design, to better understand the problems & potential pathways through the existential double challenge of *climate / conflict*. Two meetings are planned for January and February. Go to www.manchester.ac.uk/synergistics/foresight-3-0-for-ww3-0/ for details.

SAMI Cohort

The recent session of the SAMI Cohort - a small group of professionals sharing experiences of foresight and scenario planning – was led by Patricia Lustig and discussed the ideas and concepts from her book [Strategic Planning](#). For further information, contact Jane.Dowsett@samiconsulting.co.uk.

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Talks, papers and blogs

Huw Williams has been invited by the Institute of Environmental Sciences to talk on “Megatrends” to kick-off a series of horizon scanning and foresight” events in January.

Jonathan Blanchard Smith attended the RSA’s [Living Change event](#) that spotlighted ‘participatory futures’ practices. The event shared insights from work that engages communities in conversations about the future, ranging from exploring future changes to the energy system to improving mental health services for children and young people

Techniques

We are increasingly finding the concept of an “Adaptive Plan” a valuable and effective way to turn scenario outputs into practical steps forward. Contact huw.williams@samiconsulting.co.uk to learn more.

Executive Education



Garry Honey has developed further his course for Board members on “[Unseen risk – why boards often fail to see the obvious](#)”.

We will be running our online course “***Understanding the Future***” again on 22nd and 23rd February. The course fee is £490 + VAT, and discounts may be available for self-funded individuals.

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Our new **“From Scanning to Action”** course will be available shortly. For more information, please email us at training@samiconsulting.co.uk. We also organise bespoke courses to suit specific clients’ needs.

Futures Issues



Autonomous vehicles continue to have mixed success: [Tesla faces a criminal probe](#) following accidents; but also announced release of a “Full Self-Driving2” option. Meanwhile [Waymo](#) was given [a permit](#) to participate in California’s pilot initiative to provide a “driverless” autonomous vehicle passenger service to the public.

A wearable sensor that measures forces on the Achilles tendon can allow researchers to tailor [exosuits](#) to individual walking styles, opening up a wide range of applications.

[Space-based solar power](#) is the subject of much interest. An [ESA](#) feasibility demonstration was successful.

Singapore, a global centre for the [“alternative protein”](#) industry, has approved

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for commercial sale a Parmesan-like product made from carbon dioxide, hydrogen and oxygen and a few nutrients.

French experts have grown a new [3D-printed nose](#) after the patient lost hers to cancer. They then completely reconstructed the patient's nose from a synthetic graft previously implanted in her forearm.

Our Blogs



Our recent blogs have included:

- A review of the [third ESG Conference organised by the Natural Resources Forum](#) which this year was very futures focussed
- Along with the last of our blog series on our [updated drivers for change which considered changes in social attitudes](#) across the generations.

Other topics addressed were:

- The [10 global risk scenarios for 2023 as identified by the Economic Intelligence Unit](#);
- A [review of the outcomes of COP27](#);
- [10 headlines from this year's ESPAS Conference](#)
- An [introduction to our Sustainability Innovation Pathway Framework](#).

If you'd like to receive reminders when our blogs are published, then [check the](#)

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[link on our website](#) or if you would like to write a blog for us, then please [contact us here](#).
