

**Thema:**

## **Speculative design and utopia as futurescaping method for more worthwhile and value-sensitive futures – A Nordic perspective**

**Erasmus Incoming Staff:** Rikke Toft Nørgård, Associate Professor, Danish School of Education - Educational Theory and Curriculum Studies, Aarhus University (Denmark)

**Datum:** 12.11.2025

**Uhrzeit:** 10:15 Uhr

Via ZOOM

<https://fau.zoom-x.de/j/62880311189?pwd=Ua3wyW3OMST60ZRaCiq2kELJx4Bs4m.1>

Meeting-ID: 628 8031 1189

Kenncode: 007969

**Sprache:** Englisch

**Kontaktperson:** Karina Brehm ([karina.brehm@fau.de](mailto:karina.brehm@fau.de))

### **Description:**

This lecture draws on Rikke Toft Nørgård's work on speculative design, the futures cone and utopia as method to propose a Nordic-inspired futurescaping approach. Combining speculative design, play and participatory futures methods, it argues these practices can 'rewiden' higher education and rewild institutional imagination. The session introduces pedagogical principles and strategies - speculative vision exercises and concrete examples (like communal repair labs), along with a critical-creative concepts and methods for assessing which futures education enable or foreclose. Using utopia as method, speculative design and the futures cone as an analytical frame, participants will imagine and map possible and preferable futures. Nordic values are treated as beacons, highlighting value-sensitive futures. Examples from Nørgård's work will be highlighted throughout and draw on Nørgård's publications on hopepunk, solarpunk and grimdark futures including '(No) Hope for the Future?' (2024), 'What Comes After the Ruin?' (2022), 'Cultures for Collective Visioning and Future-Making' (2022), 'Futurescaping Alternative Universities' (2022), and 'Utopia, Hope and Desire in Education Futures' (forthcoming). We end the session with writing a collective poem to 'the midnight sun' and hopepunk/solarpunk education futures.

Participants will describe, visualise, and share visions for speculative and utopian futures using Nordic values to see how we together can co-create a manifesto for conjuring and translating hopeful imaginaries into real practice.

**Background resources:**

Nørgård, R. T., & Holflod, K. (2024). (No) Hope for the future? A design agenda for rewidening and rewilding higher education with utopian imagination. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 21(1), 30.

Nørgård, R. T. (2022). What comes after the ruin?: Designing for the arrival of preferable futures for the university. In *Transformation of the University* (pp. 156-174). Routledge.

Rikke Toft Nørgård (2022). 'Chapter 7: Cultures for Collective Visioning and Future-Making' In: Barnett, R., Smedegaard Ernst Bengtsen, S., & Nørgård, R. T. (2022). *Culture and the University: Education, Ecology, Design*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Rikke Toft Nørgård (2022). 'Chapter 8: Futurescaping Alternative Universities' In: In: Barnett, R., Smedegaard Ernst Bengtsen, S., & Nørgård, R. T. (2022). *Culture and the University: Education, Ecology, Design*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Kim Holflod, Sian Bayne & Rikke Toft Nørgård, 'Utopia, Hope and Desire in Education Futures' (forthcoming)

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