

Policy-foresight workshop methodology

The below framing of the workshop has been set out to be an open policy-foresight methodology that can be applied across different contexts, both in-person or online using an appropriate platform. The workshop methodology is based on a workshop of approximately 1.5-3hrs. If you would like to discuss this with the team, find out more or explore collaboration, please email costarforesightlab@gold.ac.uk.

Warm up: Establishing a 2035 vision

Using an identified group theme as a starting point, task the team with establishing a series of 2035 vision statements using post-it notes on a whiteboard. These short statements should capture what they would like to see in 2035. Use the following prompts to guide thinking:

- What does the ecosystem look like in 2035?
- What are the 'conditions' of this ecosystem? What makes it possible?
- Who are the main actors here? What has improved, and for whom?
- What new capabilities exist then that don't exist today?
- What are we assuming about this future that might need to be made explicit?

Use this warm up exercise as a way of getting people to introduce themselves back to the group – it's a great way to get everyone talking!

This is the long term vision. Now work backwards...

1. Backcasting – working backwards from desired future

Backcasting refers to the process of working backwards from a desired future state to identify steps, decisions and conditions needed to get from today to that future. The following can be used as prompts:

- What is needed to ensure the visions success?
- What are the barriers that might hinder this vision?
- What do we need to find out/measure to help us get there?
- And what actions need to be taken and who should take them?

2. Design a pilot intervention around the group theme

Now, drawing out of key elements of backcasting exercise, invite the group to design a pilot activity that could be rolled out in the next 12-18 months. This should be a tangible intervention that acts as a first step towards the 'desired future'.

The pilot should be targeted, time limited and high impact.

The following prompts can be used to support pilot intervention design:

- a. What kind of pilot is it?
- b. What central problems/opportunities are addressed?
- c. How is it a step towards enabling the 2035 vision?
- d. Who are the actors in this pilot, and what are their roles (individual/organisational/systems lenses)
- e. Are there good examples of this kind of activity already happening?
- f. What are the inputs/processes/outputs/outcomes of the intervention?

Wrap up: shortlist for plenary discussion

Pull together the following to feed back to the group using the sheet provided in the middle of the table.

- Short future descriptor of 2035, or series of statements
- Based on backcasting, a shortlist of key elements (barriers/opps/actors etc/research and evidence needs) and actions
- Name and short description of pilot and how it responds to group theme and related opportunities/challenges