

Anticipation 2019

Curated workshop

Live Policy Studio: Anticipating Pensions Reform

Themes

Design by anticipation, performative anticipation

This generative session will throw up insights and questions about how pensions in general and women's financial futures in particular are anticipated in public policy. It brings together perspectives from philosophy (Brassett), political science (Vesnic-Alujevic), financial services (Jenkins) and design (Kimbell). Building on work in academia and by the EU Policy Lab team in the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), this pop up 'policy studio' will deploy methods from participatory foresight and design combined with social science and the humanities to examine how people's futures are imagined in pensions policy.

As a workshop, the emphasis will be on enabling participants (n=25) to explore an area of public policy through multiple lenses resulting in novel insights about the topic and about methodologies for anticipating futures in public policy. In so doing, the workshop turns a critical eye on the growing visibility of practices associated with professional design in developing policy such as the emphasis on idea generation and accounting for people's experiences, recognizing the institutional and ideological drivers that co-constitute experience (eg Mintrom and Luetjens 2016; Julier 2017). The workshop will make use of a new participatory design game (Brandt 2006) developed by JRC as part of a broader project exploring the future of government 2030+ using foresight and design (see JRC 2018), in which Vesnic-Alujevic and Kimbell were both involved.

Taking UK pensions policy as a live case through the work of doctoral student Jenkins, the workshop will open up issues about the ways that long-term public policy issues are imagined. Pensions policy exists through multiple actors, spaces and scales, resulting from decisions made at both the level of individual – for example choosing when to retire or, at the system level, setting legislation to determine criteria for state and private pension policies (John 2012; Thane 2000). The consequences of these decisions span generations.

The key activities are

1. Setting the scene via a **briefing** on UK pensions policy, its history and how different ways of anticipating citizen's futures are enacted in policy, regulation and infrastructure (Jenkins, Kimbell)
2. Using a participatory **design game** developed by JRC. This will include a brief overview of four scenarios and introduction to key steps in the game, during which participants will work in small groups within specific scenarios to explore potential new alliances and the implications for women's pensions (Kimbell, Vesnic-Alujevic)
3. **Critically assessing** the institutional and professional logics, norms and organizational cultures shaping how women's financial futures are imagined (Brassett, Jenkins, Vesnic-Alujevic)

Woven together into a novel format, these activities will allow participants to deconstruct the ways that women's financial futures are anticipated. By organising this policy studio as a multi-disciplinary workshop, the aim is to bridge disciplinary traditions and research and action through inventive social research (Marres et al 2018), through which new configurations emerge that exceed pre-existing framings. The approach will draw on the potential for design's material practices to negotiate uncertainty and possibility (Pink et al 2018). Using the JRC game will enable participants to actualize and anticipate different futures through the four scenarios developed by JRC. The expected outcomes of this workshop will be at two levels: offering insights into how women's lives are imagined, resourced and made visible in pensions policy; and methodological, through the combination of scenario planning and design game approaches to open up systemic, cross-generational public policy issues.

Requirements

Small tables with seats for 4-5 people

Professor **Lucy Kimbell** is director of the Social Design Institute at UAL. Recent publications offer a critical lens on the emergence of 'social' design and design for policy. She held a AHRC fellowship in Policy Lab in the UK government's Cabinet Office (2014-15) and worked closely with JRC on the Future of Government project (2017-19). She is co-investigator on ESRC funded projects exploring smart regulation and the impact of AI. (*lead*)

Dr **Jamie Brassett** is Reader in Philosophy, Design and Innovation and Course Leader, MA Innovation Management at Central Saint Martins, UAL. His research spans innovation, design, philosophy, trends/foresight and literature. *Deleuze and Design*, co-edited with Betti Marenko, was published by Edinburgh University Press in 2015. Books in development include *Superheroes and Excess. A Philosophical Inquiry* (Routledge 2020) and *Anticipation, Creativity & Design* (Routledge 2020).

Daniella Jenkins is a PhD student at UAL funded through a joint studentship with the Policy Institute at Kings College London and in association with the Pensions Policy Institute, co-supervised by Pat Thane (Kings) and Lucy Kimbell and Rebecca Bramall (UAL). With a background in financial services, Daniella's research explores how women anticipate their financial futures combining perspectives from design, foresight, cultural studies and the history of UK pensions.

Dr **Lucia Vesnic-Alujevic** is a policy analyst in EU Policy Lab at the Joint Research Centre. She has worked as visiting lecturer in political communication at Zagreb University, postdoctoral fellow at the JRC Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen and a researcher at the Centre for European Studies. She completed her PhD in Communication Science in 2011 at Ghent University. Her research focuses on political communication, digital platforms, politics, European public sphere and public engagement with science and technology.

References

- Brandt, E. 2006. Designing Exploratory Design Games: A Framework for Participation in Participatory Design? In: *Proceedings of Participatory Design Conference 2006, Trento, Italy*, 57-66.
- John, P. 2012. *Analyzing Public Policy*. Abingdon: Routledge. 2nd edition.
- Joint Research Centre. 2018. Blog post. Futuregov.
<https://blogs.ec.europa.eu/eupolicylab/futurgov/>, accessed 10 February 2019.
- Julier, G. 2017. *Economies of Design*. London: Sage.
- Marres, N., Guggenheim, M. and Wilkie, A. 2018. *Inventive Social Research*. Manchester: Mattering Press.
- Mintrom, M. and J. Luetjens. 2016. "Design Thinking in Policymaking Processes: Opportunities and Challenges". *Australian Journal of Public Administration* 75: 391–402.
- Pink, S., Akama, Y. and Sumartojo, S. 2018. *Uncertainty and Possibility: New Approaches to Futuremaking in Design*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Thane, P. 2000. *Old Age in English History: Past Experiences, Present Issues*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.