



EDITING THE FUTURE

Facilitated by: Sohail Inayatullah, *Journal of Futures Studies*

Featuring:

- Dr. Jeanne Hoffman, *World Futures Review: A Journal of Strategic Foresight*
- Stephen Dupont, *Compass Magazine*
- Dr. Patrick Van der Duin, *Futures: The journal for the interdisciplinary study of Futures, Anticipation and Foresight*
- Alfonso Montuori, *World Futures: The Journal of New Paradigm Research*
- Ozcan Saritas, *Foresight: The Journal of Futures Studies, Strategic Thinking and Policy*
- Corinne Roëls, *Futuribles: L'anticipation au service de l'action*
- Dr. Kuo-Hua Chen, *Journal of Futures Studies*

PURPOSE

Seven editors of the leading journals in the field of Futures Studies met to discuss the changing nature of editing. The journals represented were the Journal of Futures Studies, Foresight, Futures, Compass, Futuribles, World Futures Review and World Futures: The Journal of New Paradigm Research.

The purpose of the meeting was to coordinate the global scholarly community in the areas of publishing, assist young scholars in authoring, explore the futures of authorship, articulate alternative ways of knowing and the futures of publishing and enhance quality in a field being deluged by junk scholarship.



QUESTIONS

Editors were asked by the moderator a series of pointed questions. These included:

How did they become an editor of a futures journal?

How is editing in the field of Futures Studies/Foresight/Anticipatory Studies different from other disciplines and perspectives?

How has editing changed over the years?

Any messages for those wishing to publish?

What are some trends and emerging issues they see – for example: the rise of AI in writing and refereeing; reducing barriers for greater inclusion of worldviews and youth; and the rise of peer-to-peer formats?

What is one paper – article, essay or perspective – that stands out for them in their years of editing?

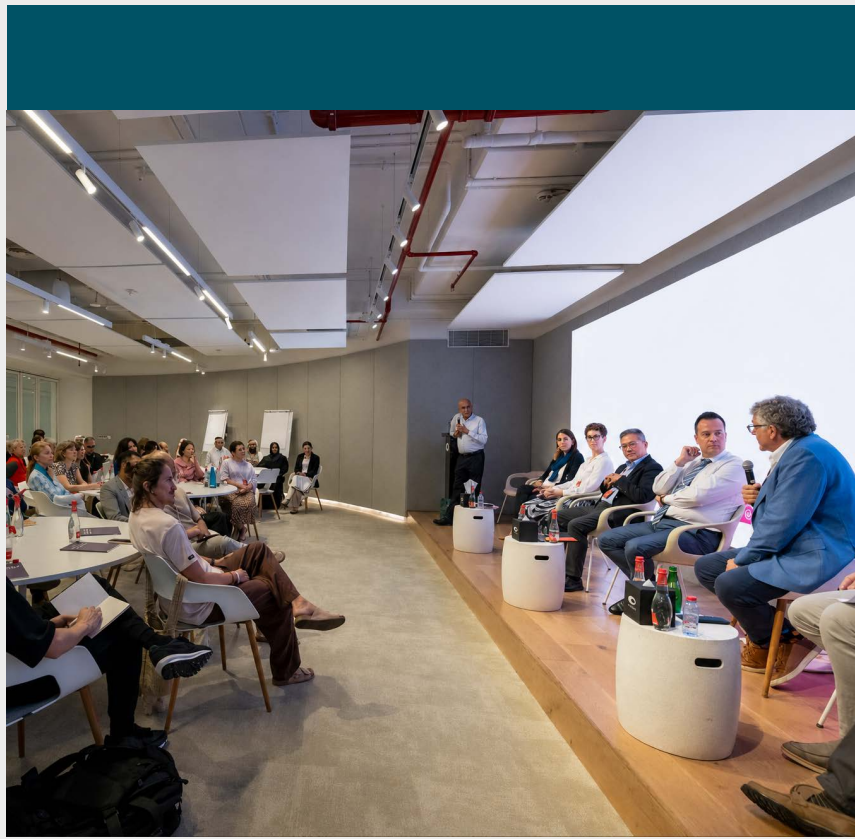


RESPONSES

Responses varied. Kuo-Hua Chen said he started with no budget and a directive from the university president, Clement Chang, to launch a futures journal. Alfonso Montuori spoke of continuing the vision of founder Ervin László. Corinne Roëls talked about the welcome challenges of entering the de Jovenel family enterprise. Ozcan Saritas suggested that becoming an editor was more happenstance than personal strategy. The main changes over the decades have been the increased demand for high-level scholarship, limited budgets and the shrinking supply of referees. Jeanne Hoffman reminded us that the role of the editor is not merely individualistic but about community-building – the editor exists within the context of multiple stakeholders.

After the interview process, the conversation opened to the fifty-plus people in the room. They broke into working groups on topics such as AI in editing, the role of publishers, the changing nature of futures studies and the importance of diversity in the field.

SCENARIOS



The core findings of the discussion are best understood through four scenarios:

1. **No change** – journals remain an integral part of the academy. Editors stay focused on quality control, ensuring that the snake oil salespeople of strategic foresight do not infiltrate and water down the field to mere strategy or conventional policy science. The journal stays within the myth of the cathedral – editors as gatekeepers.
2. **Marginal change** – journals adopt new technologies in editing. This includes the use of AI for refereeing, but also changes to the feel of the journal, moving from strictly text-based formats to different modes of display: text, video, podcasts... Journals become immersive worlds. The doors of the cathedral open – editors become innovators.
3. **Adaptive change** – fluid and flexible. Editors leave the cathedral and allow more voices and perspectives in. Editors become coaches.
4. **Radical change** – editors engage in deep inner and outer work. The field benefits. Editors work with not just the "I" of the author but the "we" of the community to create a forest of foresight. They become Sadvipras – to use Sarkar's language, as argued by Ralph Mercer, associate editor of World Futures. While castles, cathedrals and bazaars ensure rigour and relevance, that is not enough. Editors use collective futures literacy to create planetary change – they become global change agents, Sadvipras.

ACTION STEPS

The process concluded in two ways. First, editors offered the best article from their journal in the last 15 years. “Best” was defined as either the most-cited piece or the one considered most impactful.

[Visioning the Future](#)

[Defining Scenario](#)

[Horizon Scanning in Foresight](#)

[Foresight in Conditions of Uncertainty](#)

[Onion Model for Futures Studies](#)

[Six Pillars of Futures Thinking](#)

A second workshop followed at the 2025 Dubai Future Forum, focused on creating a “star alliance” of foresight courses in the field. While some groups focused on certification and reaching agreements, what emerged most clearly from the editors' meeting was the need for quality control. The field encourages the idea that everyone should be a futurist – but the academy must maintain clear rules to distinguish good research from junk.

