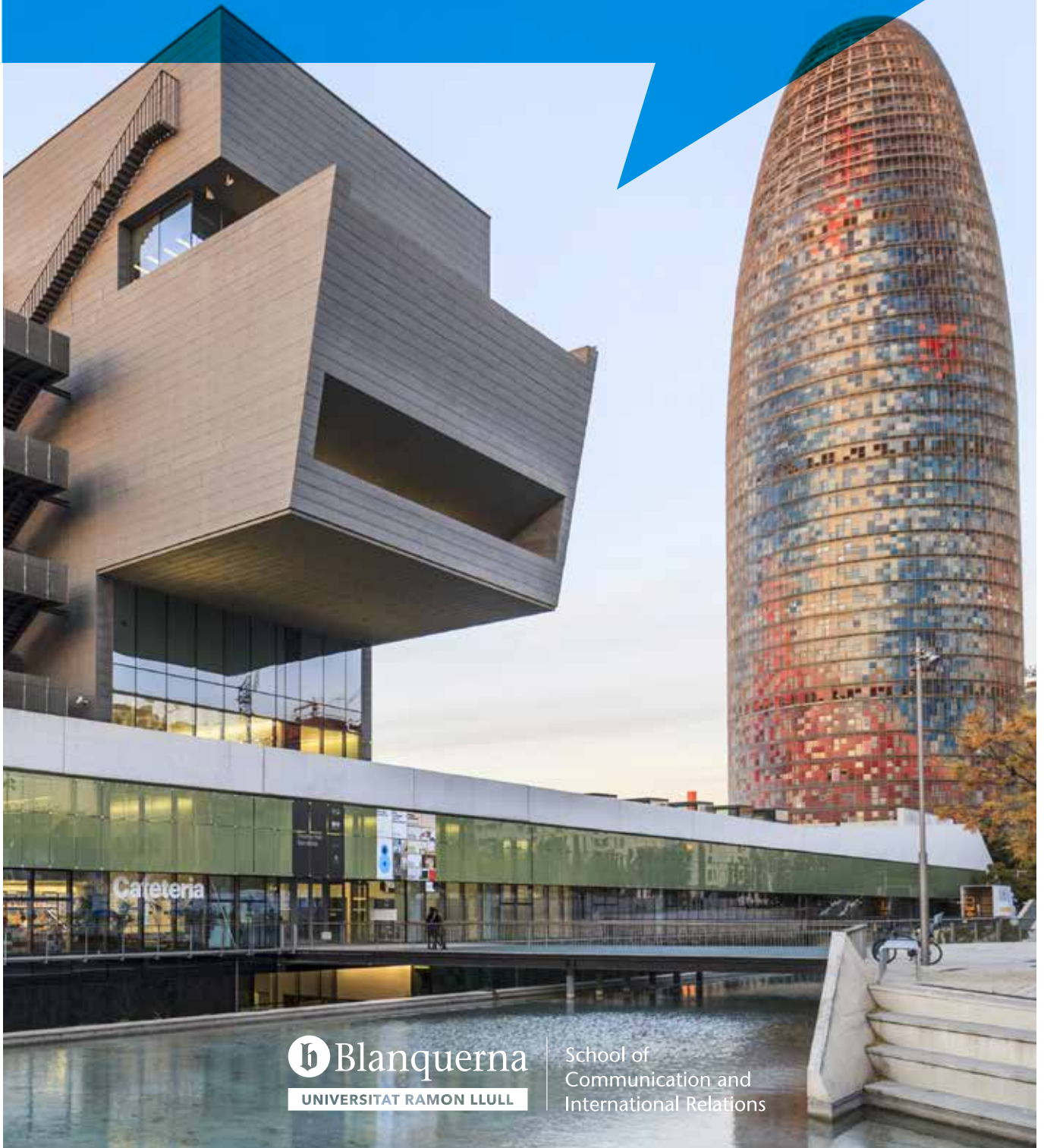


BLANQUERNA 2018  
FUTURES SUMMER SCHOOL

# The Futures of the Future



 **Blanquerna**  
UNIVERSITAT RAMON LLULL

School of  
Communication and  
International Relations







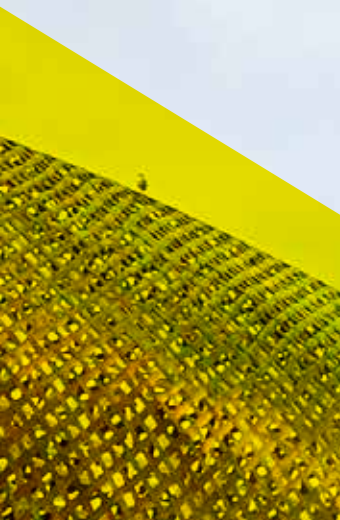
## Introduction

Futures Studies has been a highly dynamic field from its beginning. Originally labelled as Future Research, it has evolved and become Futures Studies in America, while in Europe it is known as Prospective. It has also appeared as Critical Futures, Foresight and more recently we have witnessed the arrival of the Theory of Anticipation, Experiential Futures, Postnormal Times Theory and the impact of technological approaches based on Big Data and/or AI. This is truly an interesting moment that signals a turning point for the discipline.

The first edition of the **Blanquerna Futures Summer School (BFSS)** seeks to provide a critical viewpoint of the state of the art in futures studies. Offering a wide perspective of the more interesting and promising developments on the field, by some of its original and main promoters, the course will deliver a wide perspective of Futures.

Given that in 2018 the Pla Estratègic Metropolità de Barcelona (PEMB) will commemorate its 30th anniversary, the BFSS will be included in the anniversary celebrations. More important, it will devote a significant part of its time to analyse the main challenges for cities in general and for Barcelona in particular.

The course will combine different formats (class, small seminar, workshop and polylogues) to offer students distinct learning experiences that match its theoretical and methodological diversity.







## Dates & Venue

The BFSS will be held from the 29th of June to the 7th of July 2018 at the Blanquerna School of Communication and International Relations (Universitat Ramon Llull) in Barcelona.

## Objectives

### Principal

To offer a critical assessment of the most relevant theoretical and methodological developments that are currently being developed in Futures Studies.

### Secondary

To provide students with a set of competences (theoretical and methodological) that can be applied in diverse academic or professional fields, including:

- Futures studies/foresight/prospective
- Planning and strategic planning
- Communication
- International relations
- Intelligence analysis

To gain insight about the evolution of cities and urban related phenomena. And, within this goal, this edition will also seek to provide useful inputs (both as content and theory) for the PEMB project on future scenarios for Barcelona.

To explore new ways to present/expose/deliver/broadcast the future, but also to perceive/receive/grasp/understand/work with it

## Structure

The 2017 BFSS will have five different strands:

1. The main seminar devoted to The Futures of Future that will run on the mornings from 2 to 6 of July 2017. Every day will have a special focus with two or three main speakers. All speakers will be required to present a particular development in Futures plus some connections for cities/Barcelona.
2. A polylogue that will take place in the afternoons from 2 to 6 of July. Everyday a/several speaker/s will start the debate by outlying the main future implications of the subject discussed for urban areas in general and particularly for Barcelona.
3. Presenting futures. On the first weekend of the BFSS (29 to 30 of June) there will be a seminar about how to present, broadcast and disseminate futures.
4. Open activities. The BFSS may include public events for all kinds of audiences like exhibitions, panels, media forums, etc.



## Strands:

### 1. The Futures of the Future (Main Seminar)

The main seminar is the core activity of the BFSS and will cover five mornings (2 to 6 of July) from 9:30 to 14:00. Its main purpose is to introduce and examine some of the most interesting approaches that are currently expanding the futures field. Each day there will be a particular focus:

#### **Day 1: Felt Futures.**

This day will look mostly at Experiential Futures. Experiential futures, like innovative design and related approaches seek to make futures understandable, palatable or attractive by something other than theoretical inputs.

#### **Day 2: Measured Futures**

The promise of Big data and artificial intelligence applications is to be able to foretell the future without having to understand it or having to master theory. But is it really so? The second session will be devoted to examine some applications with Big Data and/or Artificial intelligence to anticipate the future.

#### **Day 3: Anticipated Futures**

The Theory of Anticipation is the newest approach that aims at providing a solid theoretical foundation to the study and analysis of the future. In addition to that, to explore if there is a common ground where futures studies and other disciplines (interested in the future) can meet and work together. The third morning will focus on the work done by the promoters of the Theory of Anticipation.

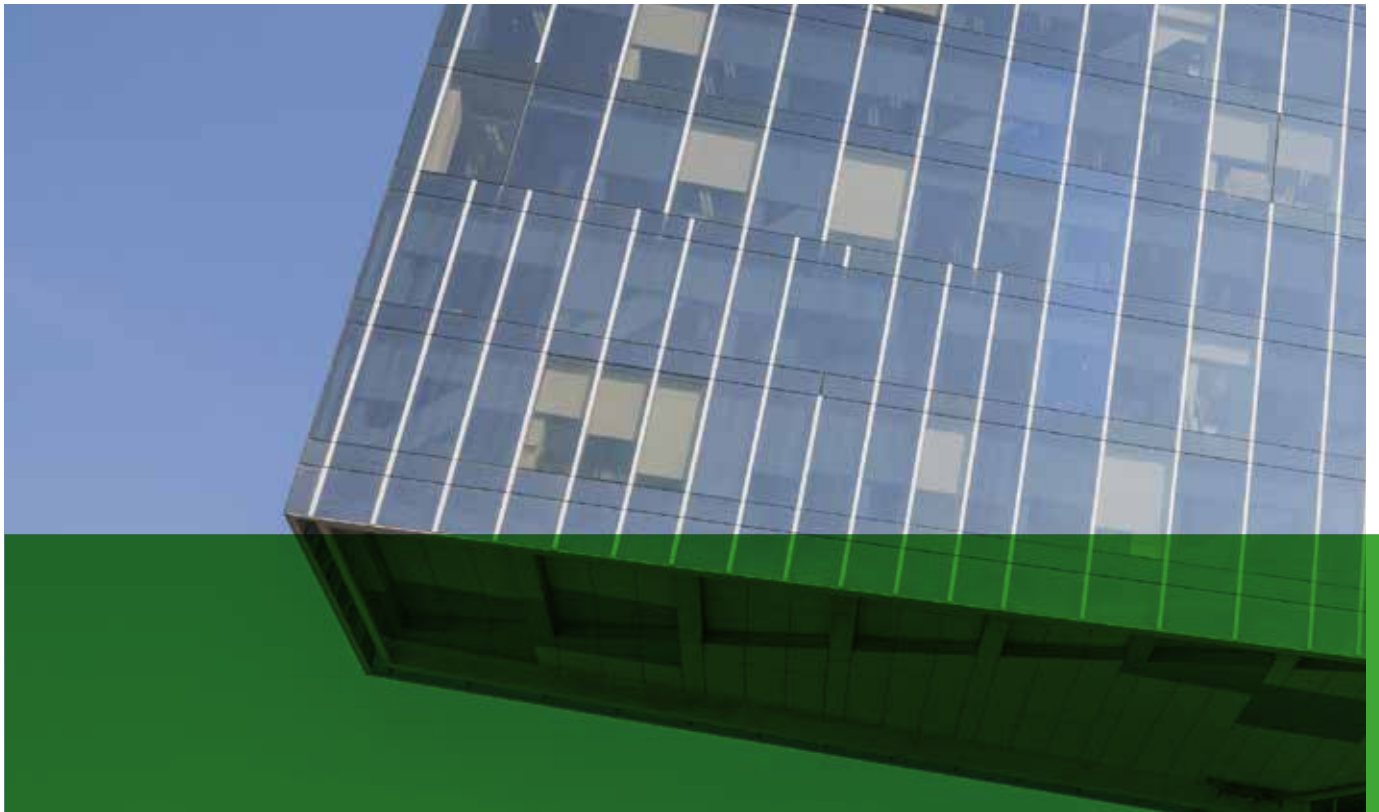
#### **Day 4: Postnormal(ed) Futures**

The Postnormal Times Theory (PNTT) is another recent intellectual effort to assess the relevance of the future investigation in the present day. Thus, PNTT aims at providing a deeper understanding of both change and our comprehension of it. Ultimately, PNTT wants to provide a more thorough approach to foresee the future. The Fourth session will deal with Postnormal Times.

#### **Day 5: Applied Futures**

The final test of any theoretical and/or methodological contribution is its usability in specific context. However, too often futurists only focus on utility and neglect theoretical soundness. The final day will review the usability and theoretical robustness of the previous approaches in different fields (education, consultancy, policy-making, intelligence, etc.).

In order to provide students with theoretical and methodological inputs, all lecturers will be required to include examples or case studies that could be examined in class. Additionally, and since the BFSS's focus is city and urban phenomena, lecturers will be asked to use examples or cases relevant to cities in general and, if possible, specifically for Barcelona.



## 2. Barcelona Polylogues: Urban Challenges in Postnormal Times

The afternoons from the 2 - 6 July from 15:30 to 18:30 will be devoted to the present and discuss some of the main future challenges for cities. The sessions will be run as a polylogues.

Polylogues are a structured method of discussion designed to lead and generate new knowledge through synthesis in a more balanced and empowering context. Unlike dialogues, brainstorming, Socratic seminar and other methods of discussion, polylogues emphasise multiple perspectives, multi- and interdisciplinary, and pluralistic outlooks. Thus, the participants in a polylogue are deliberately chosen from different backgrounds, positions, disciplines and persuasions. Some of them may be knowledgeable on the issue under discussion, others may be affected somehow by the issue (as users, clients, citizen), still others may just be laypersons. From a future perspective, all are equal, as the future belongs to all of them: all have a legitimate stake in what the future brings.

As the main goal of any polylogue is to help participants to change or improve their perspective on the issue, there are no prepared papers or presentations. Instead, all participants are required to think and explore a specific, starting question.

Each polylogue follows a structured process:

1. Triggering thoughts. Each session begins with a randomly selected participant making an impromptu, short presentation highlighting the main future challenges he/she sees in the issue under discussion.
2. Poly-mapping. There is a first round where participants identify and list various perspectives and implications that need to be taken into account.
3. Poly-insights. The participants are then divided into smaller groups to explore different perspectives more deeply.
4. Poly-synthesis. The participants gather again to share their conclusions and achieve some kind of synthesis: an overall consensual position that incorporates, or takes into consideration, different perspectives and positions.





Before the end of the sessions participants are required to focus on two main questions:

- a. What is missing in mainstream thinking or analysis?
- b. What measures or actions need to be implemented or stopped immediately?

Thus, every polylogue ends with a set of recommendations that the PEMB could incorporate, disseminate, promote or use to deepen its work.

Proposed subjects:

- Day 1: Multilevel Governance
- Day 2: Diversity and Social Inclusion
- Day 3: Energy and Sustainability
- Day 4: Labour and Productive Modelling or Models
- Day 5: Communication and Participation

### **3. Presenting Futures**

One of the main challenges for futurists and communicators in general is to convey the future; or, more precisely, how to do it without resorting almost exclusively on science fiction. It would seem that either you can choose between a rigorous, but boring, depiction of the future; or, on the other hand, a more fun or emotional description of tomorrow without analysing the implications of such an account. In order to explore different alternatives, the first weekend of the BFSS (29 - 30 June) the “Presenting Future” seminar will work on how to present, broadcast and disseminate futures. It will include journalists, artists, writers, designers and futurists that will present their experiences and what they have learned.

### **4. Open activities**

The BFSS may include connected events and acts that could be enjoyed by participants and general public both. They can include exhibitions, panel discussions, media forums, etc. These activities will be announced at a later date.



## Organizers

The BFSS will be organized by the Centre for Postnormal Policy & Futures Studies jointly with Blanquerna, with the support of the Pla Estratègic Metropolità de Barcelona.

### CPPFS

The Centre for Postnormal Policy and Futures Studies (CPPFS) is an international research and consultancy network that promotes futures literacy with a particular focus on marginalized peoples and Muslim societies. CPPFS works with communities, charities, foundations, and research, educational, and art institutions to foster critical inquiry, action learning, and an ethical imagination for shaping decolonized, alternative, and preferred futures. CPPFS has pioneered the theory and methodology of Postnormal Times.

### Blanquerna

Blanquerna, as a plural university community, is inspired by the principles of Christian humanism. It has the mission to provide an integral education in order to allow individuals to become competent professionals, with a wide sense of ethics and compromised with social transformation. Thus, being able to create knowledge focused on justice and the common good.

### PEMB

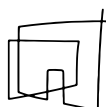
The Barcelona Metropolitan Strategic Plan (Pla Estratègic Metropolità de Barcelona - PEMB) is a private, not-for-profit association – promoted by Barcelona City Council and the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona – presided over by the president of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB)

The PEMB is an instrument for identifying the needs and potential of the territory in the medium term, for foreseeing tendencies and threats and for making proposals to tackle the future in the best conditions.

Organizers:



School of  
Communication and  
International Relations



The Centre for  
Postnormal Policy  
& Futures Studies

Main sponsor:







## Faculty

### **Onno Seroo.** Course director.

Onno Seroo, presently the director of the International Relations degree at Blaquerna - Ramon Llull University, has an extensive career as International Relations experts including several UNESCO related organizations.

### **Jordi Serra.** Course coordinator,

Jordi Serra is the Research director at the Centre for Postnormal Policy and Futures Studies, he is also Associate Professor at Blaquerna - Ramon Llull University. Jordi is a World Future Studies Federation Fellow.

### **Anna Bonet.**

Journalist and Associate Professor at Barcelona University, She is currently Head of television shows and audio-visual projects at Undatia. She also presents in both television and radio shows.

### **Stuart Candy.**

Associate Professor, School of Design at Carnegie Mellon University. Stuart is also an artist and designer whose work has been shown in several museums and festivals. He has done consultancy work too for private and public organizations.

### **Enric Escorsa.**

Enric is CEO at IALE where he works in Competitive Intelligence and Technology Scouting projects as well as technology evaluation and IP management related projects. His teaching activity includes courses on Innovation and Data Management linked topics.

### **Maya van Leemput.**

Maya is a professional futurist, multi-media artist, and a senior researcher at the Erasmus Hogeschool, where she is setting up the new 'Applied Futures Research — Open Time' centre. She is also Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Postnormal Policy and Futures Studies.

### **Roberto Poli.**

Roberto is a professor on social foresight and philosophy of science at Trento University. He has been awarded the first UNESCO Chair in Anticipatory Systems. He is also editor-in-chief of Axiomathes, editor of the series Categories, and Anticipation Science

### **Elisabet Roselló.**

Researcher on strategic trends and consultant on (post)digital transformation through new co-creative, open innovation logics, cultural-social trends and transformations. Elisabet has worked in a variety of businesses, public services and cultural Institutions.

### **Ziauddin Sardar.**

Director at the Centre for Postnormal Policy & Future Studies. Zia has led an intense activity as writer, broadcaster and cultural critic: he has published over 50 books, worked as science journalist, as a television reporter, as a columnist as a Commissioner for the Equality and Human Rights Commission and as a member of the Interim National Security Forum. He is currently editing Critical Muslim.

### **Wendy Schultz.**

Founder and director of Infinite Futures. Wendy has an extensive experience in foresight research, planning, and facilitation for a wide variety of private and public institutions. She has taught in many universities including her time as visiting faculty with the MS program in Studies of the Future, University of Houston - Clear Lake.

### **Chris Jones.**

Chris is a professor in the School of Public Policy and Administration, Walden University, a Fellow and former Secretary-General of the World Futures Studies Federation (2001-2005), he also taught at the University of Houston-Clear Lake futures program.







## Course Fees

As the BFSS has different strands students can choose to enroll in specific strands or for the whole school with a combined fee:

### **Morning course:**

The Futures of the Future (Main Seminar):  
500 Euros

### **Afternoon polylogues:**

Urban Challenges in Postnormal Times  
(All polylogues): 200 Euros

- Multilevel Governance: 50 Euros
- Diversity and Social Inclusion: 50 Euros
- Energy and Sustainability: 50 Euros
- Labour and Productive Model: 50 Euros
- Communication and Participation: 50 Euros

### **Pre-course seminar:**

Presenting Futures: 150 Euros

Combined Fee:

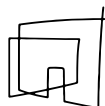
All strands: 600 Euros

# The Futures of the Future

Organizers:



School of  
Communication and  
International Relations



The Centre for  
Postnormal Policy  
& Futures Studies

Main sponsor:



Pla Estratègic  
Metropolità  
de Barcelona

Collaborators:

**UNDATIA**  
comunicació

