



Nordiskt Sommaruniversitet

## CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

### **Cybioses: Shaping Human-Technology Futures**

Winter Symposium: March 6, 18-19 and 30-31, 2021

Workshop and publication project.

# **Far Futures Archeology: Collaborative Excavations**

## **Invitation**

We invite scholars, artists, students, technologists and other professionals working or writing on future technologies to take part in our study circle [Cybioses: Shaping human-technology futures](#), a migratory non-hierarchical group of international researchers.

The aim of the *Cybioses* circle is to bring together artists, theorists, practitioners, and technologists. Together we want to discuss practices of making and the social and cultural impact of future technologies. How can philosophical questions support the development of technologies? How in turn can technological practices and development inform philosophical, aesthetic, and sociological theories? And how can both making and theorizing help us imagining future technologies and their impact on societies? Guided by these questions we want to develop a philosophy for makers and a better practice for philosophy.

Our circle takes place within the Nordic and Baltic framework of Nordic Summer University (NSU). Since its inception 70 years ago, the primary aim of NSU has been to provide a forum for experimentation and cross-disciplinary collaboration welcoming members both from within and outside of universities and other institutions.

## **Theme of the workshop**

**In the *Far Futures Archeology: Collaborative Excavations* workshop we will explore various collaborative writing techniques applied to our shared archives, with the goal of producing an experimental publication as the outcome of the workshop.**

In our previous symposia we have examined technology and improvisation, creativity, projection and the practice of prototyping as key practices of shaping futures: When is improvisation required in making or imagining futures? Can creativity be automated? How do we design (for) human-technology futures? And how can projecting into the future prevent us from repeating and prolonging what already exists today?

Since the beginning of our circle we have introduced a practice of collaborative writing pads during the symposia, for collective note-taking and thought-sharing. We now invite you, either a previous participant of our circle, or as a newcomer to the cybioses community, to engage with our accumulated archive during a three-stage online writing workshop in spring. The long-term output of the workshop is a publication/anthology.

Throughout our workshop we would like to return to the previous discussion with a question: How can we imagine these developments in the far future?

### **Workshop themes:**

Any topic from the previous Cybioses symposia or new topic related to the circle theme, chosen by you. Below is a list of representative examples:

- ethical & philosophical perspectives of technology
- future technological evolution
- conceptual/philosophical applications of technological models
- technological inclusion/exclusion
  
- artificial intelligence and its impact on society
- hard/soft/wetware
- discrepancies between conceptual and experiential knowledge
  
- definitions and theoretical considerations of improvisation, creativity, projection and prototyping
- histories and practices for the production of originality and novelty
- technological applications in the arts, theory, tech and the sciences
  
- world building as a speculative tool
- relationships between speculation, prediction, anticipation, projection and prototyping
  
- critical examinations of technology in neoliberal economies
- sustainable futures
- the life cycle of technological objects (prototype–archetype–mass product–waste)
  
- meta-reflection on the difficulties of human-machine futures research
  
- any other relevant topic from the previous Cybioses workshops

### **Format of the workshop and expected results**

We explicitly want to foster exchange between humanities-based researchers, makers, technologists, and artists. The interdisciplinary discussion of technological futures has yet to find its forms within and outside of academia.

Our aim for this workshop is, therefore, to work together on the material that we produced collaboratively so far, and search for the points of the departure in the further investigations together.

We are open for experimental approaches to writing: collaborative, participatory, artistic, performative – time and space of online logistics permitting. We are open for different textual forms: scholarly,

speculative, philosophical, essays, poetic, multi-modal, or design fiction. To facilitate the process, we will provide a structure for the writing efforts, but it is very flexible.

Expected results include anything from short manifestos, observations, poems, to full papers, chapters or essays. Length and form are open.

While we expect a certain level of commitment from participants, drop-ins and partial participation are possible.

You can access a preview of our documentation archives upon request.

## Structure of the workshop

The workshop will happen in several stages, each consisting of online sessions in zoom (video conferencing), with individual or group writing in the weeks between.

### Stage 1. Theme Workshop (Sat March 6, 2021) - 2x2h sessions per day

Introduction to the archives. Discussion of common interests, themes, and overlaps in the areas of research. Possible formation of working groups.

**Harvest period, 2 weeks:** Material harvest and excavations from the archived pads, individual or in groups. Supported by drop-in open zoom sessions for discussions of possible collaborations and hang outs.

### Stage 2. Material Workshop (Thu-Fri March 18-19, 2021) - 2x2h sessions per day

Presentations of findings, syncing of themes. Writing tools workshop and discussion sessions of different approaches of working with the research material.

**Writing period, 2 weeks:** Supported by drop-in open zoom sessions.

### Stage 3. Draft Workshop (Tue-Wed March 30-31, 2021) - 2x2h sessions per day

Presentations, feedback sessions, discussion and cross-pollination

**Final writing period:** Until Nordic Summer University Summer Session in July/August, 2021.

## Submission

To submit a proposal please send via email in PDF format the circle email and the coordinators below (we will confirm receipt of submission):

Circle email: [cybioses@nsuweb.org](mailto:cybioses@nsuweb.org)

Coordinators: Palle Dahlstedt ([palle@chalmers.se](mailto:palle@chalmers.se)), Maru Mushtrieva ([m.mushtrieva@gmail.com](mailto:m.mushtrieva@gmail.com))

1. A motivation letter (**max. 350 words**). This text should include your areas of interest and a proposed research theme within the cybioses subjects. The latter is encouraged, but not obligatory.
2. A short bio (**max. 200 words**)

**The extended deadline to submit proposals is December 21st, 2020.** The preliminary program will be announced on January 7th, 2021, on [www.nordic.university](http://www.nordic.university) where you can also find more information about NSU and sign up for the newsletter.

## Membership fee:

There is no participation fee for the online workshop, but all participants of the workshop need to be or become members of NSU, which is connected with a small fee:

Students, unemployed and independents, West Nordic & Baltic residents: €10

Those associated with institutions or companies: €25 or more (choose your amount).

The membership fee must be paid online in advance of the symposium. Details about the payment will be provided on acceptance.

The membership fee is necessary to sustain the Nordic Summer University, which is a volunteer-based organisation and covers participation fees for one year.

## Local physical gatherings

If the corona situation allows, and depending on the geographic distribution and placement of participants, we plan to organize a couple of local, physical, gatherings in connection with the workshops, featuring artistic contributions by participants. Tentatively, these will take place in Gothenburg, Sweden, and in Berlin, Germany. There may be a small fee, depending on the cost of arrangements.

## Important dates:

Submission deadline: Dec 21<sup>st</sup> 2020

Acceptance decision and notification: Jan 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Payment deadline: Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

## About NSU

The **Nordic Summer University (NSU)** is a Nordic network for research and interdisciplinary studies. NSU is a nomadic, academic institution, which organises workshop-seminars across disciplinary and national borders. Since it was established in 1950, Nordic Summer University has organised forums for cultural and intellectual debate in the Nordic and Baltic region, involving students, academics, politicians, and intellectuals from this region and beyond.

Decisions about the content and the organisational form of the NSU lay with its participants. The backbone of the activities in the NSU consists of its thematic study circles. In the study circles researchers, students and professionals from different backgrounds collaborate in scholarly investigations distributed regularly in summer and winter symposia during a three-year period.

For more information [www.nordic.university](http://www.nordic.university)

