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# From Hope to How: Designing Better Tomorrows

## OzCHI 2025 | Student Design Challenge | Brief

**The Challenge:** Imagine the future role of Human–Computer Interaction (HCI) in worlds shaped by generative intelligences and planetary challenges.

**Design Prompts:** Your task is to use design as a vehicle to imagine or speculate on what the future for HCI could look like. Explore how HCI might evolve, intervene, or transform in response to emerging intelligent technologies and planetary needs.

You are invited to consider questions such as:

- What new roles might HCI take on when designing for more-than-human futures?
- How might HCI mediate between planetary systems, generative AI, and human societies?
- What forms of practice, interfaces, or artefacts could embody these speculative roles?
- How might HCI both enable and critique planetary futures shaped by generative intelligences?
- How might HCI help us get to that preferred future?



## Scope:

- Your work should be situated within the space of speculative futures — it is not about predicting what will happen, but provoking thought about what could or should happen.
- You may develop speculative artefacts, future scenarios, prototypes, manifestos, or other creative outputs that illustrate your vision.
- You do not need to collect data from people. You may draw on existing open datasets, planetary knowledge, and theory to inform your design.

## Goal:

To spark discussion and reflection on how HCI as a field might contribute to — or be reshaped by — the interplay between generative intelligences and the futures of our planet.

## Practices you might consider:

- Backcasting: <https://designthinkmakebreakrepeat.com/toolkit/backcasting/>
- Design Fiction or Science Fiction Prototyping:  
<https://designthinkmakebreakrepeat.com/toolkit/science-fiction/>
- Speculative Design or Speculating Preferred Futures:  
<https://designthinkmakebreakrepeat.com/toolkit/speculating-preferred-futures/>
- Hero Stories: <https://designthinkmakebreakrepeat.com/toolkit/hero-stories/>

## Resources you might find helpful:

- Climate Solutions Centre: <https://australian.museum/learn/climate-change/climate-solutions-centre/>
- Clever Homes: <https://australian.museum/learn/climate-change/climate-solutions/clever-homes/>
- Smart Towns: <https://australian.museum/learn/climate-change/climate-solutions/smart-towns/>
- Caring for our Country: <https://australian.museum/learn/climate-change/climate-solutions/caring-for-country/>
- What is the difference between Speculative Design and Design Fiction:  
<https://www.critical.design/post/speculative-design-vs-design-fiction>

## Getting started:

- Think positive — the future is not always "dystopian". Technology can be there to help rather than disrupt.
- How could your current living environment look like in the future?

## Submission Requirements:

For this challenge, your submission will include both a video and a poster. These two elements should work together to showcase not only your final design solution but also the thought process and journey that led you to it. While we encourage creativity in how you present your work, both the video and poster should clearly communicate your design concept, approach, and how it responds to the challenge.

- **Video (5 Minutes)**

- **Process and Concept:** Your video should give the audience an understanding of how you approached the design problem and the journey from initial ideas to the final solution. This includes key decisions, iterations, and the design principles you considered throughout the challenge.
- **Final Solution:** Be sure to also explain your final design, emphasising how it responds to planetary futures and meets the challenge's goal.
- **Creativity and Engagement:** The video is your opportunity to tell the story of your design in an engaging and creative way. Use visuals, narration, and other elements to bring your concept to life. However, ensure that the narrative is clear and that viewers can follow both your process and the solution.

- **Poster (Academic Style)**

- **Visual Summary of Your Work:** The poster should visually summarise your design process and final concept. Think of it as a snapshot that captures the most important aspects of your work, from initial research and ideation to the final solution
- **Highlight Key Elements:** While the format is flexible, your poster should highlight key moments in your process, the challenges you addressed, and the innovative elements of your design. Be sure to include visuals (e.g., diagrams, sketches, or screenshots) that support your explanation.
- **Clarity and Professionalism:** The poster should be visually organised, easy to read, and follow the conventions of an academic poster. Even though you have freedom in how you present your work, make sure your design is clear, concise, and professional.

## Judging Criteria:

- **Design Centred on Needs:** How well does the design respond to the challenge prompts and imagine new enabling or critical roles for HCI in the future? Is the speculative vision clearly situated in relation to emerging intelligent technologies and planetary needs? Does this work move beyond prediction toward provocation about what could or should happen?

## Judging Criteria (Continued):

- **Creativity and Innovation:** How well does the design demonstrate original ideas and speculative thinking? Does the design explore innovative approaches to existing problems or introduce fresh perspectives, particularly around the interplay among HCI, emerging intelligent technologies, and planetary futures?
- **Ethical Considerations and Accountability:** Has the team critically examine ethical implications of their vision, such as equity, fairness, technological accountability, and environmental responsibility? Does the design demonstrate a clear understanding of the potential social, cultural, and environmental impacts, both positive and negative? How well has the team used Generative AI (GenAI) and/or Machine Translation (MT) ethically and responsibly, as per the Responsible AI guidelines on the conference website?
- **Inclusivity and Diversity:** Does the design demonstrates the potential of accommodating a broad range of perspectives? How well does the design reflect awareness of interdependence across humans, ecological, and technological systems?
- **Potential Impact and Resonance:** Does the design offer insights or provocations that could meaningfully influence how HCI practitioners, researchers, or the public think about futures? How effectively does the design balance imagination with awareness of current technological trajectories, steering these toward preferred planetary futures?
- **Clarity of Presentation and Documentation:**
  - **Video (5 Minutes):** Does the video clearly and succinctly explain the design process, the concept, and how it addresses the challenge's objectives? Is the narrative compelling and well-structured, allowing viewers to easily follow the design journey and understand the rationale behind the decisions? Are the visual and audio elements in the video used effectively to enhance understanding and engagement?
  - **Poster (Academic Style):** Does the poster visually and concisely communicate the core elements of the design, including the concept, process, and key outcomes? Is the layout clear and well-organised, with appropriate use of images, diagrams, and text to support the presentation of the design? Does the poster align with academic standards in terms of clarity, professionalism, and depth of content?
  - **Consistency Between Video and Poster:** Are the video and poster cohesive, reinforcing each other in presenting the design concept and process? Is there clear alignment in how the design is explained across both formats?