Thinking About the Future: Trends, Signals, and Values

Thinking about our future starts by observing trends and changes. These trends and changes happen at the organizational level (in the library); at an environmental level (in the community, region, or affiliated sector); and at a global level. They can have implications for our near and long-term futures and help us set priorities for action.

Changes & Trends

ORGANIZATIONAL	ENVIRONMENTAL	GLOBAL

Above: List some of the trends and changes that you observe at the organizational, environmental, and global levels.

Below: List some of the ways that these trends and changes intersect with libraries? What questions do these trends and changes lead us to ask about our collections, partnerships, programs, services, spaces, or technologies?

Intersections & Questions

Thinking About the Future:
Trends, Signals, and Values (continued)

A forecast isn't a prediction – it can just be one way of thinking about what may happen in the future. Picking one of the provided forecasts as a starting point, think about how the library would position itself in that future. If it is easier to focus your thinking on a specific aspect of libraries - collections, partnerships, programs, services, spaces, technologies, etc. - and how those aspects would be positioned in the future, feel free to do so.

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Forecasting & Backcasting

Backcasting works from a possible (preferable) future that is set as a goal and identifies the steps (planning) and changes (acting) necessary to make that future goal come to pass. Based on your work above, begin to backcast some of the intermediary steps that the library or the profession might need to undertake to make that future a reality.

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