

Speculative Machines and Us: Histories and Futures of AI

An in-person one-day symposium on Thursday 17th July 2025

Location: Imagination Lab (A36), LICA Building, Lancaster University
(see Lancaster's [campus maps and directions](#) for more information)

PROGRAMME

From 9.45 – COFFEE, TEA, AND REFRESHMENTS

10.15-10.35 – OPENING REMARKS (Organisers) and launch of 'Speculative Machines' website
(Prof. Carolyn Pedwell, Lancaster)

10.35-11.35 – KEYNOTE ADDRESS (Chair: Dr Rolien Hoyng, Lancaster)

Prof. Orit Halpern (Technische Universität Dresden): 'Planetary Design: On the Emerging Logics of Generative AI'

11.35-12.00 – TALK AND INTERACTIVE DEMO (Chair: Prof. Nick Dunn, Lancaster)

Dr Joe Lindely and Dr Roger Whitham (Lancaster): 'Learning from Shadowplay and Realtime AI Image Generators: Notes on Prompt Craft and Diffuse Authorship'

12.00-13.00 – LUNCH (vegetarian buffet for all participants; Shadowplay installation running)

13.00-14.30 – PANEL 1: PREDICTIVE LOGICS, UNCERTAINTY, AND NOVEL AGENCIES
(Chair: Prof. Joe Deville, Lancaster)

Dr M. Beatrice Fazi (Sussex): 'Paradoxes of Prediction'

Dr Rolien Hoyng (Lancaster): 'On Liminal Grounds: Smart Farming and The Politics of Uncertainty'

Dr Nathan Jones (Lancaster): 'Dialogues Under Strain: AI as a Tool for Collective Concept Work'

14.30-15.00 – COFFEE BREAK

15.00-16.30 – PANEL 2: SPECULATION, CYBERNETIC AFTERLIVES, AND CREATIVE PRACTICE
(Chair: Dr Eva Cheuk Yin Li, Lancaster)

Dr Aleena Chia (Goldsmiths): 'Speculative Dis/Assembly in Game Engine Culture'

Prof. Charlie Gere (Lancaster): 'Only waterfalls and springs left: Revisiting Lacan's materialist definition of the phenomenon of consciousness in the era of the Large Language Model'

Dr Jen Southern (Lancaster): 'Mobile conversations: AI and participatory art practice'

16.30-16.45 – FINAL REMARKS (Organisers) and **EVENT CLOSE**

Co-hosted by the Centre for Science Studies, ImaginationLancaster, and the Data Science Institute at Lancaster University with funding from the British Academy