

VTT Futures and iBEX

BUILDING FUTURE CAPABILITIES: SCALING LEARNINGS & SOCIETAL ENGAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

The [learnings](#) that were made during our 2022 around the renewal of the iBEX programme challenged many aspects of how research is currently conducted at VTT. To increase the overall effectiveness of recommended actions, changes need to take place not only within research teams or within VTT - but in society as well.

In this proposal we outline a path forward for VTT to engage in a broader societal discussion about the exponentially growing role of technology in society and what that portends for anyone involved in developing, funding, regulating, and adopting new technological innovations. By doing so we aim to strengthen VTT's role as a key player in the national - and global innovation ecosystem.

We can already witness an emerging societal discussion that voices more critical aspects of technological development, and it will be crucial for VTT to be an active participant to avoid naive techno-pessimistic perspectives to polarize the discussion and negatively impact future innovation policy.

OBJECTIVES

Considering the growing role of technology in society, the aim of the collaboration is to identify and promote new thinking, skills and capabilities that are needed to be wise stewards of technological innovation and adoption. We call these **future capabilities**.

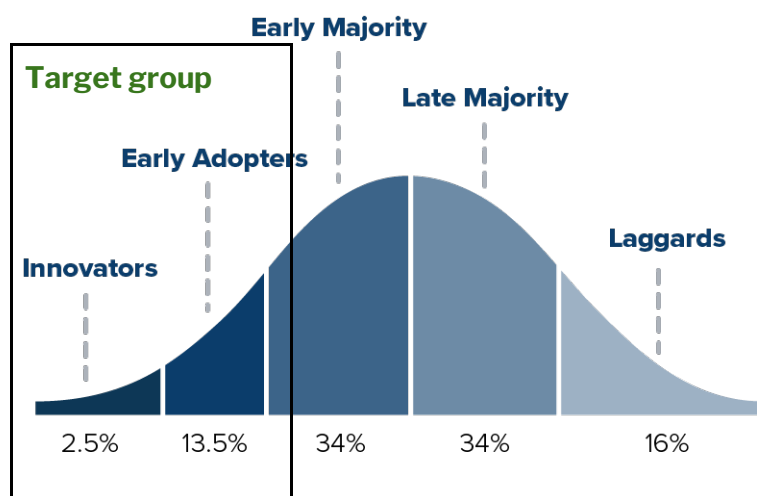
TARGET GROUPS

We have defined three distinct target groups for the Futures Programme.

1. **IBEX as a learning Lab:** Current and future teams
2. **VTT:** Current and future employees
3. **Society:** Funders, policy makers, (potential) clients and partners

While the main focus of the past year was on strengthening the role of iBEX as a learning laboratory, this year the focus is directed primarily towards advancing VTT's role in the emerging societal discussion mentioned above.

Our content and style of communication is designed to speak primarily to people who are already inherently receptive to novelty. Thus, the target group can be thought of as *innovators* and *early adopters* on an imaginative “diffusion of new ideas” curve.



ONE CORE MESSAGE AND FOUR SUBTASKS

The core message and related themes have been chosen based on their assumed relevance in strengthening VTT's position as an attractive research and innovation partner and employer well into the future. These themes will inform the content of all communication activities (i.e., *Future Perspectives* blog series, *Dialogues* and *Masterclass*)

Core message: We need new future capabilities

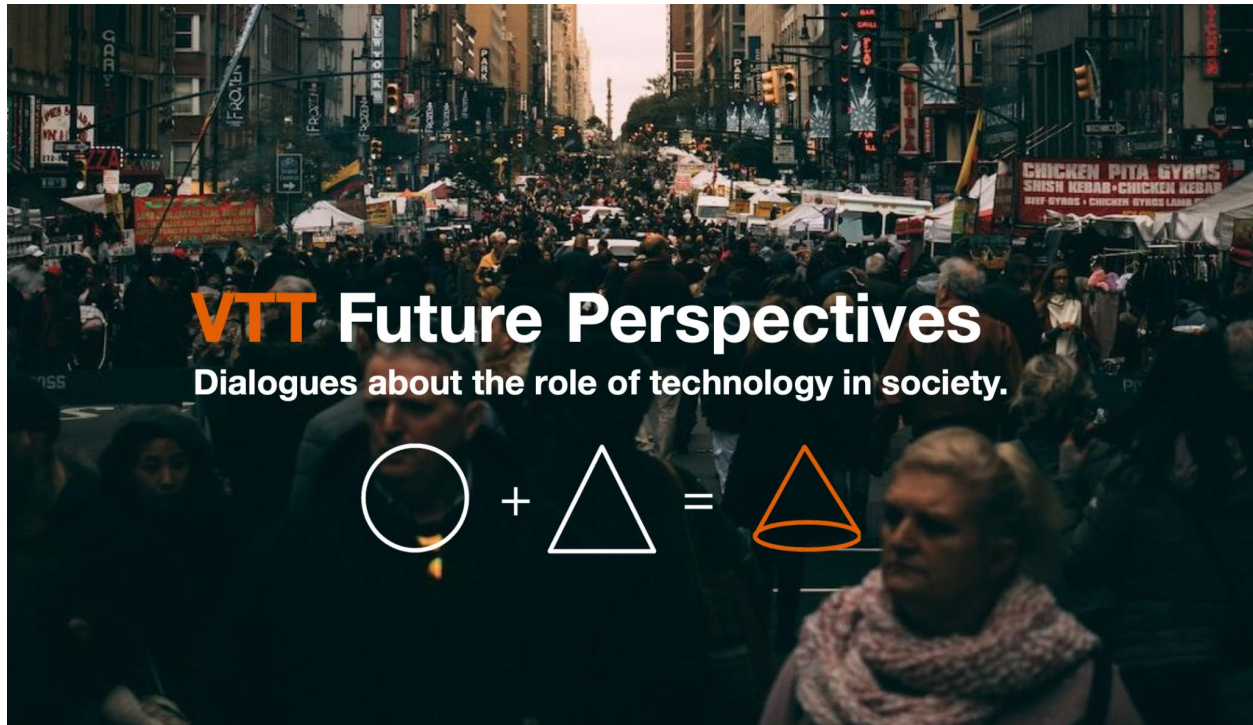
Task 1: Build capacity to optimize positive impact while minimizing harm

Task 2: Build capacity to anticipate futures

Task 3: Build capacity to understand complexity

Task 4: Build capacity to work across silos (natural sciences, social sciences & humanities)

KEY ACTIVITIES AND COST ESTIMATES FOR 2023



Four streams of parallel activities are planned. Each feed into each other: meaning the *Dialogues* concept inspires topics both for the *Futures Perspective* blog series and the *Master Class* videos, and vice versa.

As one central theme of the futures program is *navigating complexity*, we have decided not to structure the content as a hierarchical taxonomy (i.e., we try to avoid thinking in terms of categories and subcategories). Instead, the content is designed so that the audience can jump between content and media instead of merely consuming it in a linear fashion. As the individual blog posts will reference each other as well as the *Dialogues* and *Master Classes*, these individual blocks also act as “marketing channels” for each other.

Proposed activities	Work days	Cost estim. (EUR, VAT 0%)
1 VTT FUTURE PERSPECTIVES BLOG SERIES		
<p>Co-writing “monthly” blog posts together with internal and external experts. The first five blog posts aim to provide our audience with an understanding of why each of these themes are important. Later blogs will be co-written with experts.</p>		
2 DIALOGUES ABOUT THE ROLE OF TECH IN SOCIETY		
<p>Global and local keynote speakers are engaged in dialogues around these themes. The <i>Dialogues</i> concept is building on our experiences from the first four keynote sessions that were arranged as part of the IBEX project, but which were open to all VTT. This time we want to make them public.</p>		
3 MASTERCLASS CONCEPT		
<p>Content for the Masterclass videos. The masterclass videos will put these themes into context (first productions could deal with the current IBEX contexts (Food, Energy and Packaging))</p>		
4 COMMUNICATION & CONTENT COLLABORATION		
<p>This part will be specified together with the Strategy Head and VTT MarComm during Q2. The objective is to work with other organizations and content platforms to maximize relevant reach of our scaling activities. Examples of activities could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Content collaboration with a national media (e.g., Talouselämä) ● Appearances in relevant seminars and forums (e.g., Suomi Areena, Sitra) ● Co-writing content with think tanks/other organizations ● Potential appearances in other podcasts etc. 		
TOTAL		