

The Future Game – An innovative tool for community engagement for regions facing transition

David Beurle, CEO, Future iQ

Lehna Malmkvist, Managing Director, Future iQ Canada

David Beurle, CEO, Future iQ

David is a renowned expert in creating future planning approaches, and has pioneered the application of scenario planning to regions, regional industries and corporations around the world. David created the Future Game, a widely used planning and workshop tool that has been used in over 500 workshops across 10 countries.

Lehna Malmkvist, Managing Director, Future iQ Canada

Lehna is an accomplished facilitator, who works within multidisciplinary teams across a wide range of projects, and uses her skills to ensure that they integrate innovative, sustainable, whole system approaches. She uses her expertise to guide planning processes to develop a common understanding and create solutions as a unified team.

Session Description:

How do we help people make better decisions about the future of their regions, cities or organizations? The Future Game is an experiential learning tool for practicing future thinking by exploring a range of future scenarios in a hypothetical region, with the results generated through decision-making. Teams learn how decisions that seem sensible in the short-term, may have the potential to play out in unpredictable ways. This challenges status quo thinking and demands collaboration and teamwork. Following the game is a discussion about using the Future Game as a tool for stakeholder engagement.

Outline of your session:

- Room with tables set up for 5 people per table, The Future Game can be played with as many people as the room will accommodate.
- Introduce the Future Game - 15 min
- Playing the Future Game (Teams of 5 participants) - 60 min
 - Game is played using a series of maps that change as teams make decisions at key points over a 20 year period
- Debrief on the Future Game – 15 min

Brief description of how your session addresses the theme of the 2017 Conference:

The session will address the theme, *“Pursuing the greater good ...P2 for a changing world.”*, by providing the participants with an opportunity to experience a public engagement tool that is used to prepare stakeholders for planning for the future of their region, city or organization, by examining a range of potential plausible futures. The game allows them to first practice these skills on a hypothetical region, presenting scenarios at a reduced temporal and spatial scale.

The Future Game is a simple, paper-based scenario game that was developed as a means of engaging people actively in future thinking and in exploring the options for the future of a region. The game was designed to present scenarios at a reduced temporal and spatial scale, while adding the extra dimensions of participation by groups in decision-making, and immediate representation of the implications of decisions. The game consists of printed maps of a hypothetical geographical area, featuring a variety of towns, rural areas, economic activities, environmental features, and social conditions. It is played in a workshop setting in teams of three to seven people. Participants are faced

with a series of game steps in which they make critical decisions about the future of a hypothetical region over a 20 year period. They are required to assimilate external events, deal with contentious issues and reconcile decision-making against the triple bottom line. Key features and conditions of the region, represented on the maps, change in response to the decisions made. It is played as a fast paced and thought-provoking game.

Session learning objective (s):

Participants will learn how to engage in future thinking, use collaborative teamwork in decision-making, and experience a tool that is useful in engaging stakeholders in preparation for future planning.