



**Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien**  
German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo (DIJ)  
ドイツ日本研究所



**GERMAN INSTITUTE FOR JAPANESE STUDIES (DIJ)**  
**THE GERMAN CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (DWIH)**

**PROGRAM**

for the International Workshop

**"Imagined Futures in Japan & Beyond"**

October 09 – October 11, 2024

at the DIJ Tokyo, Jochi Kioizaka Bldg. 2F  
7-1 Kioicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0094

<https://dij.tokyo/futures>

Language: English

The future begins with imagination. One example are the Sci-Fi prototyping initiatives of Japanese tech giants like Sony and NTT, which intentionally utilize storytelling to foster public acceptance of emerging technologies. Focusing on the connection between narratives, culture, technological innovation, and marketing, this interdisciplinary workshop delves into both fictional and non-fictional portrayals of Japan's technological future. Our keynote speakers, Fritz Breithaupt (Indiana University Bloomington) and Ōsawa Hirotaka (Keiō University), international scholars, as well as practitioners from Japan's tech industry, will join us to analyze visions of emerging technologies, of their environmental and societal impact, and of Japan as a "futuristic" nation through the lens of "narrative" and "sociotechnical imaginary" theoretical frameworks.

**Wednesday, October 09, 2024**

6:00 – 7:30 PM

**Keynote Speeches/DIJ Forum (on site & online | registration required)**

Chair: Nicole M. MUELLER (German Institute for Japanese Studies, DIJ)

**Future Narratives – Why They Matter**

Fritz BREITHAUPT (Indiana University Bloomington, Experimental Humanities Lab)

**Science Fiction Prototyping Trends in Japan**

Hirotaka ŌSAWA (Keiō University Tōkyō, Keiō SF Lab)

**Thursday, October 10, 2024**

10:00 – 10:30 AM

**Welcome & Introduction (online only | registration required)**

Barbara HOLTHUS (German Institute for Japanese Studies, DIJ)

Markus HECKEL (German Centre for Research and Innovation, DWIH)

Nicole M. MUELLER (German Institute for Japanese Studies, DIJ)

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM **Imaginations of Futuristic Japan (online only | registration required)**  
Chair: Celia SPODEN (German Institute for Japanese Studies, DIJ)

**Imagining Japanese Technofutures – The Role of Futurology and Science Fiction in Shaping the Information Society**

Volker ELIS (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)

**Progress as Decline: Future Imaginaries in Contemporary Japanese Literature**  
Kristina IWATA-WEICKGENANT (Nagoya University)

**The Future of Emotion as Zen: Meditation Apps, Android Bodhisattvas, and Mood-Regulating Tech in Japanese Wellness Spaces**

Daniel WHITE (University of Cambridge, Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence)

02:00 – 03:30 PM **Imagined Futures of the Augmented Self (online only | registration required)**  
Chair: Heiko STOFF (Medizinische Hochschule Hannover)

**Hoshi Shin'ichi and Artificial Intelligence**

Michaela OBERWINKLER (Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf)

**Japan's Dawn of a 'New Extended Reality Era' through the Lens of Future Imaginaries**  
Nicole M. MUELLER (German Institute for Japanese Studies, DIJ)

**'If it were real, I'd feel both fascinated and cautious.' – Reflecting on Japanese citizens' narratives about a prospective metaverse through a design-theoretical lens**

Michel HOHENDANNER (Technical University of Munich & Munich Center for Digital Sciences and AI)

Chiara ULLSTEIN (Technical University of Munich)

Hirotaaka ŌSAWA (Keiō University Tōkyō, Keiō SF Lab)

Jens GROSSKLAGS (Technical University of Munich)

✂ The Paper is presented in person by Michel HOHENDANNER and Hirotaaka ŌSAWA.

04:00 – 05:30 PM **Practitioners' Perspectives: XR Spotlights from Japan (online only | registration required)**  
Chair: Nicole M. MUELLER (German Institute for Japanese Studies, DIJ)

**Japan's Virtual Scene [preliminary title]**

Shuntarō KUBOTA (CEO, MoguraVR)

**XR Imaginaries in Japanese Advertising [preliminary title]**

Shingo MEGURO (R&D Director, Hakuholdo DY Holdings Inc.)

**Reality into the virtual world — VR, AR and more —**

Kenji TANAKA (Founder & CEO, Foxtrot Inc.)

**Friday, October 11, 2024**

10:00 – 11:30 AM **Imagined Societies in the Data & Information Age (online only | registration required)**  
Chair: Harald KÜMMERLE (German Institute for Japanese Studies, DIJ)

**Imagining a Cashless Future for Japan: Digital Payments, Data Monetization, and Customer Experience**

Christian OBERLÄNDER (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg)

**Imagining the future global pandemic and surveillance society**

Takahiro YAMAMOTO (Singapore University of Technology and Design)

**Mapping the Socio-technical Imaginaries of Dataveillance in Japan**

Peter MANTELLO (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University)

Alin OLEANU (Käte Hamburger Kolleg, RWTH Germany & Shanghai International Studies University)

01:30 – 03:30 PM

**Imagined Futures of Our Lived Environment (online only | registration required)**

Chair: Barbara HOLTHUS (German Institute for Japanese Studies, DIJ)

**Ecological narratives in the drawn visions of the future of the Tokyo metropolis**

Corinne TIRY-ONO (Paris-Val de Seine National Graduate School of Architecture)

**Fraught Narratives, Contrived Futures: Connection and the Unhoused across Tokyo**

Paul CHRISTENSEN (Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Indiana)

**Naturing Japan's Homeland: Green Infrastructure as a Narrative of Sociotechnical Redemption and Revival**

Takehiro WATANABE (Sophia University Tokyo)

**Fukushima Futures: The Politics of Nuclear Energy in Japan after 3/11**

Kyle CLEVELAND (Temple University Tokyo)

04:00 – 05:30 PM

**Futures in the Making - Practices, Methods, Mechanisms  
(online only | registration required)**

Chair: Michel HOHENDANNER (Technical University of Munich & Munich Center for Digital Sciences and AI)

**Techno-nationalism and the Land of the Rising Robots. The Japanese government's co-construction of policy and technoscience**

Amanda BRØDSGAARD (University of Copenhagen)

**"Let's think together": Scattered narratives in NHK's #BeyondGender project**

Anya DOI-BENSON (Doshisha University Kyoto)

**Posting the Future in the Present: Imagination as Manifest Destiny**

Jonathan E. ABEL (Penn State University)

05:30 – 05:45 PM

**Closing Remarks (online only | registration required)**

Nicole M. MUELLER (German Institute for Japanese Studies, DIJ)