



Faculty of Design, sLAB (Strategic Innovation Lab)

2014

Making strange: Risk, design & foresight

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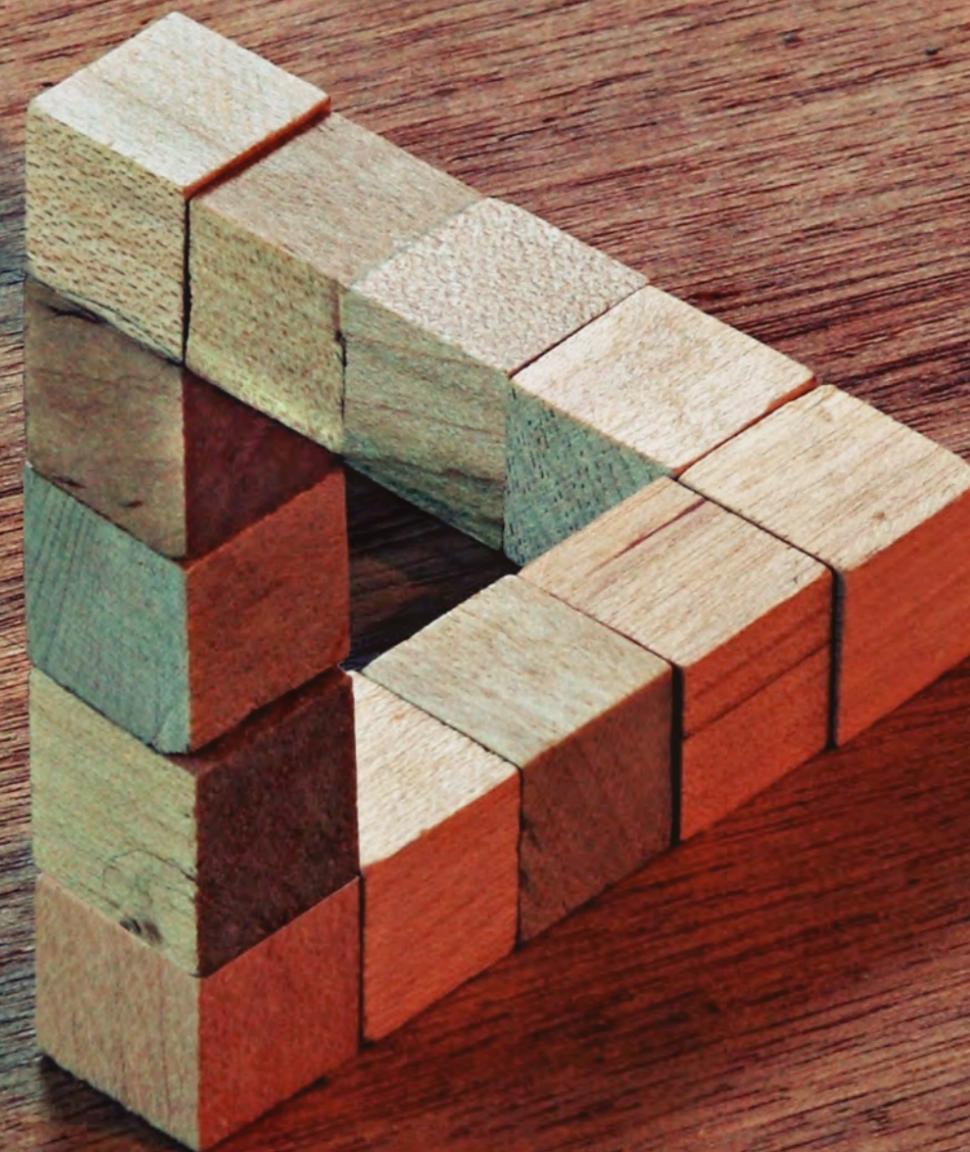
Making Strange: Risk, Design & Foresight

Intergovernmental Forum on Risk Management
Ottawa, Canada 1–2 October 2014

Greg Van Alstyne

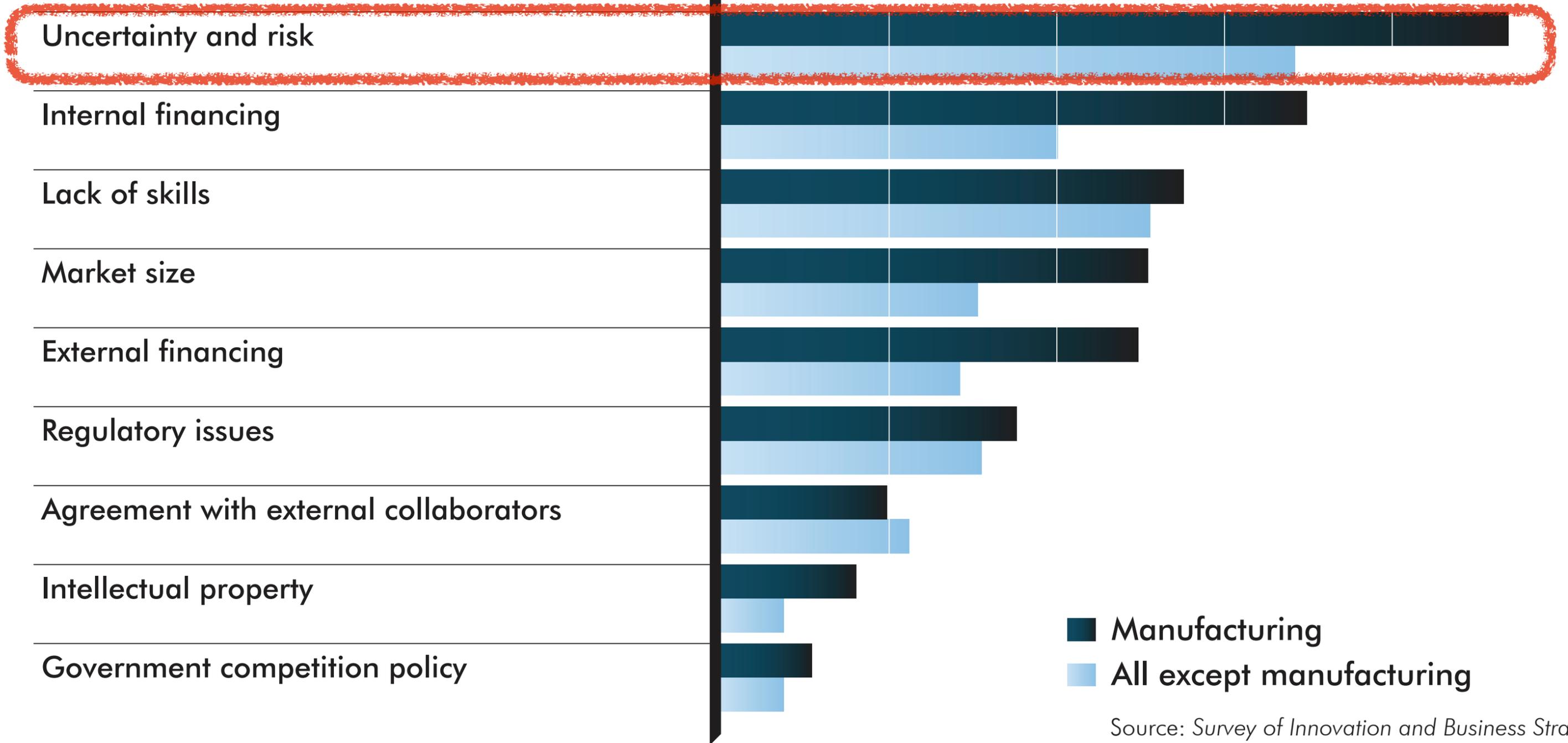
Strategic Innovation Lab (sLab)

OCAD University



What are the biggest obstacles to innovation?

0% 10 20 30 40 50



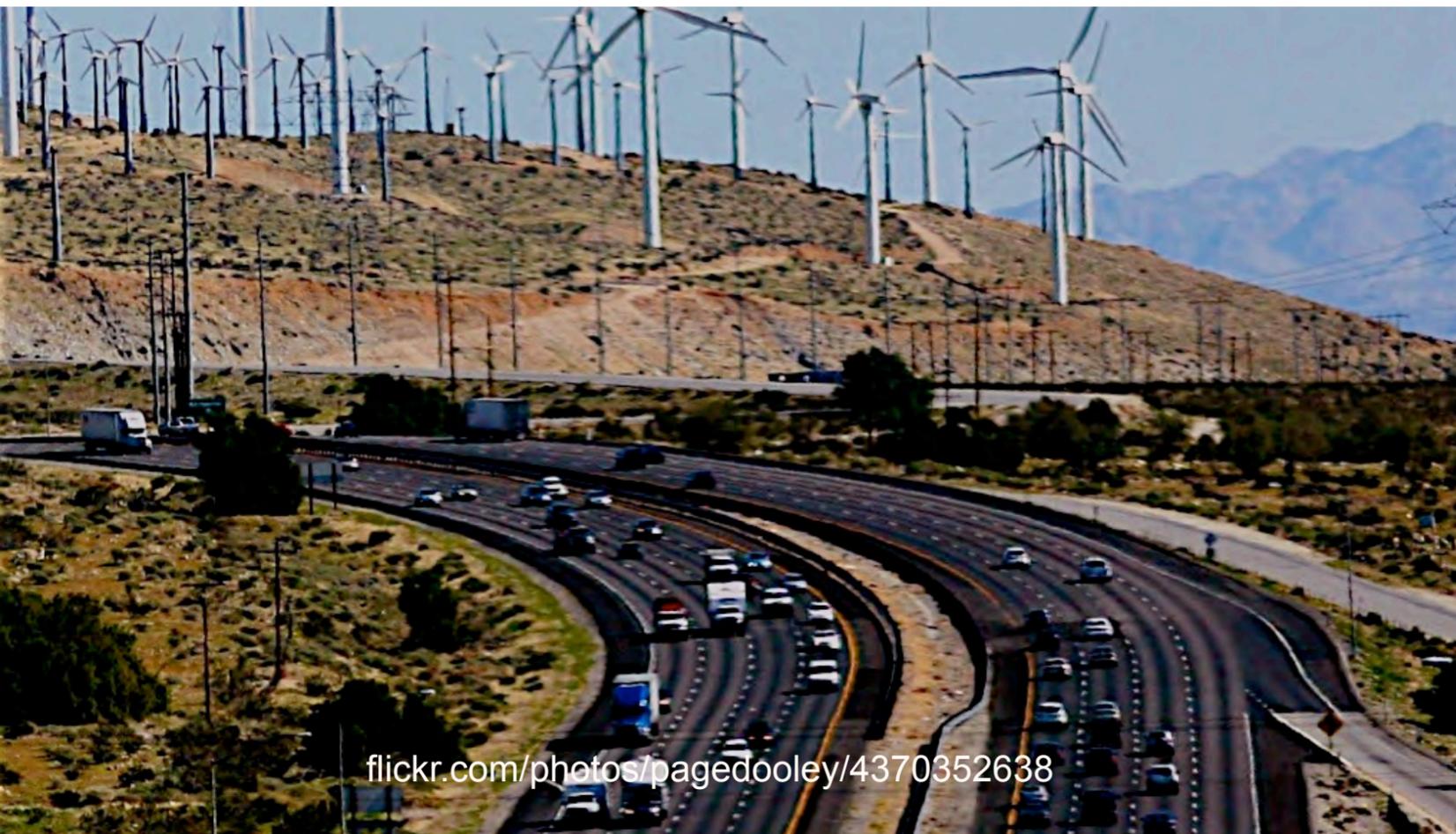
Source: Survey of Innovation and Business Strategy, 2009.

What is innovation?

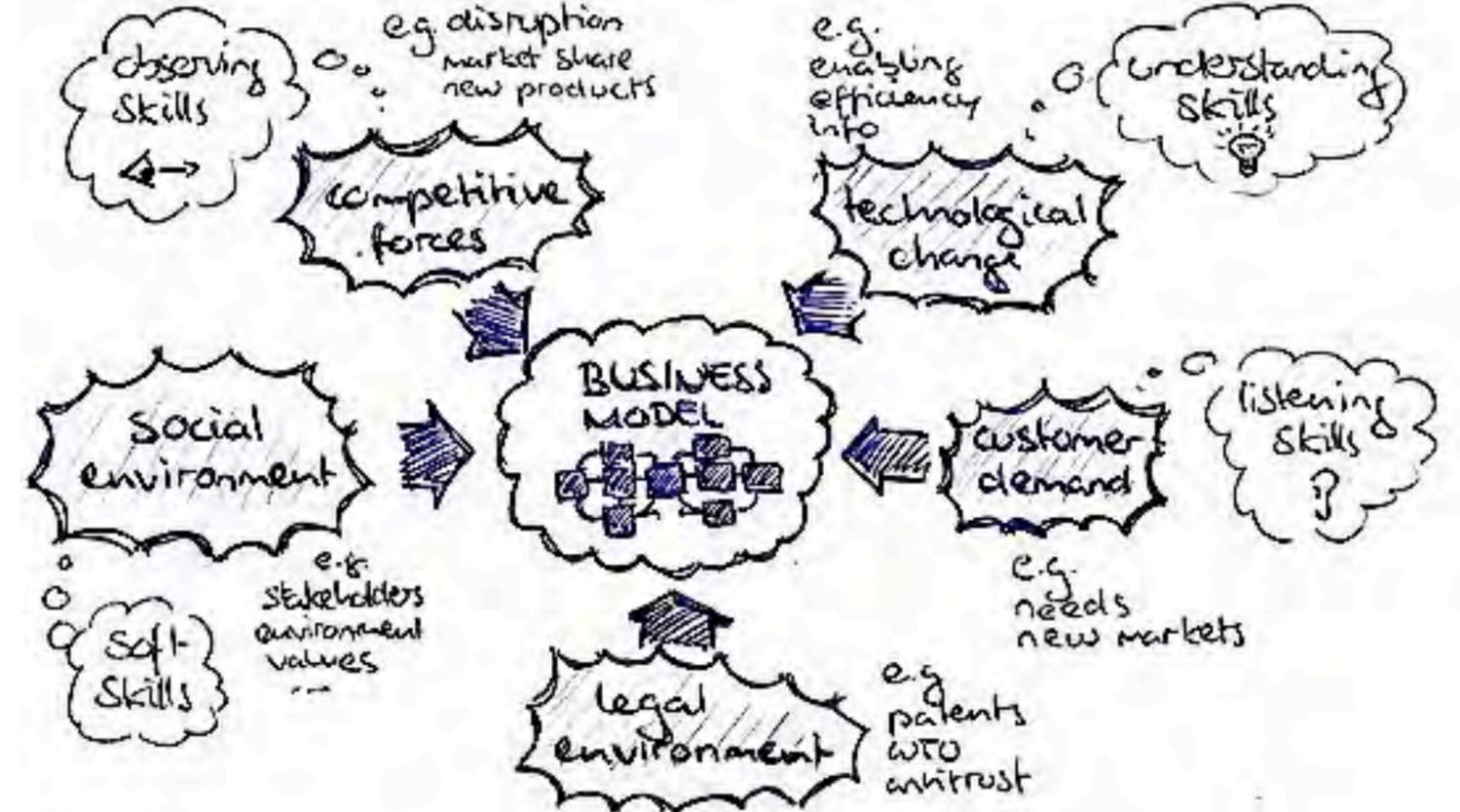
Is it a new technology?

Is it a process?

An outcome?



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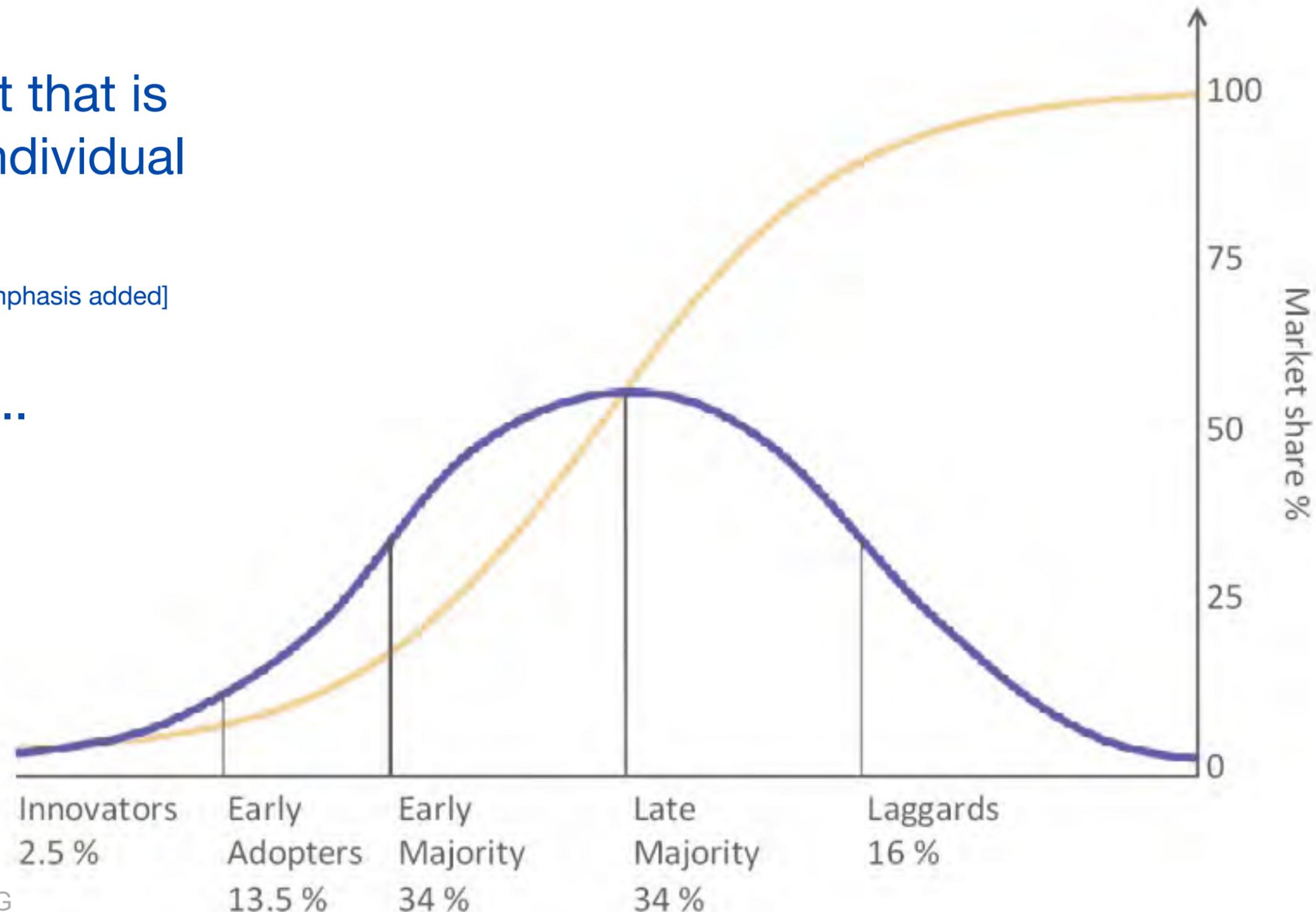
What is innovation?

“An idea, practice or object that is **perceived as new** by an individual or other unit of adoption”

—Rogers, [1962] 2005, *Diffusion of Innovations* [emphasis added]

“Creating a new paradigm...
changing the rules and
changing the game”

—Dubberly et al. 2007. *A Model of Innovation*
dubberly.com/concept-maps/innovation.html

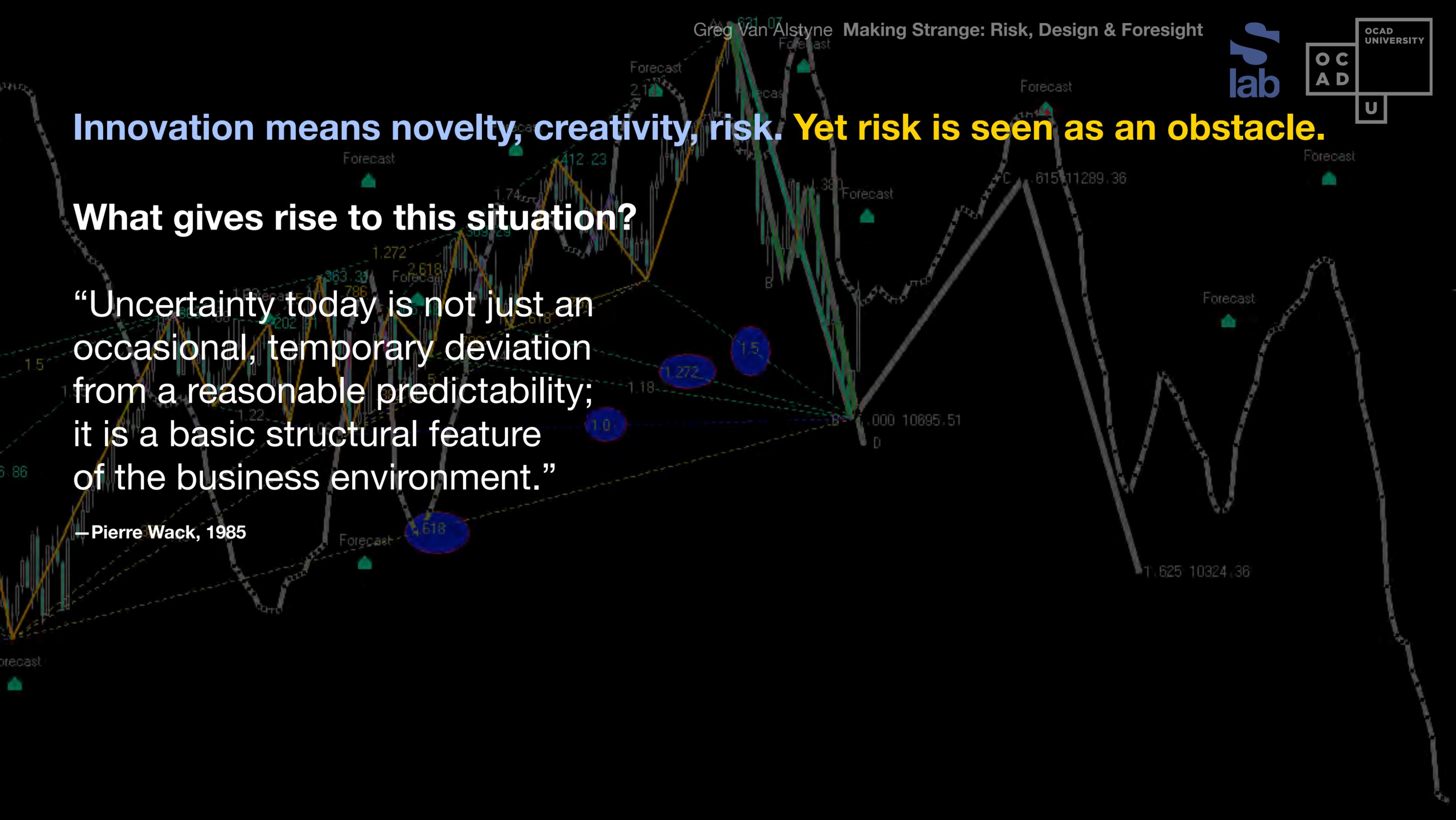


Innovation means novelty, creativity, risk. Yet risk is seen as an obstacle.

What gives rise to this situation?

“Uncertainty today is not just an occasional, temporary deviation from a reasonable predictability; it is a basic structural feature of the business environment.”

— Pierre Wack, 1985



So how does your organization deal with risk & uncertainty?

Federico Díaz, *Sembion* CC BY-SA 3.0

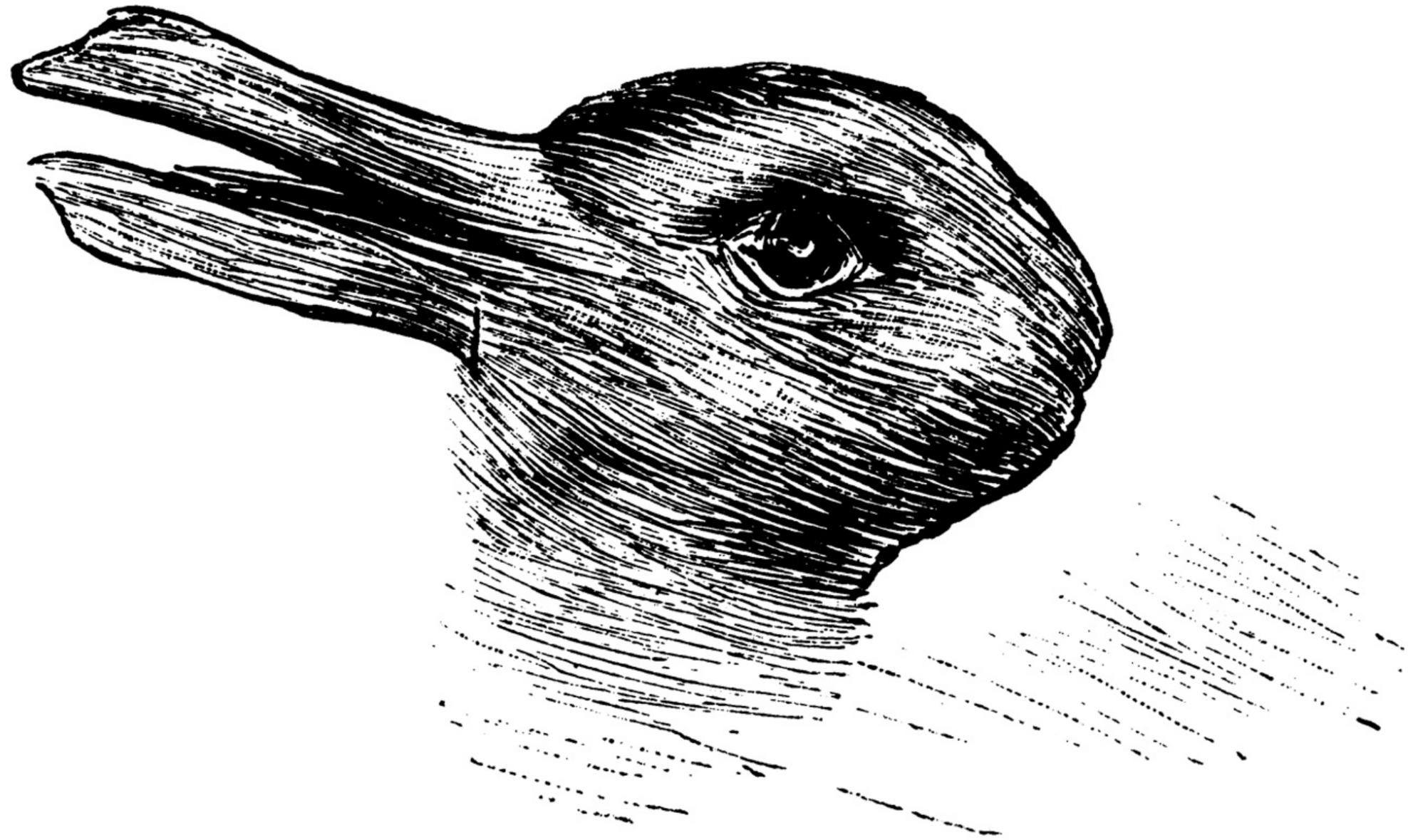


Ambiguity and risk perception

There is no perception
without interpretation

—Gadamer 1960; Kihlstrom 2002

“Ambiguity effect”:
Cognitive bias describing
our tendency to avoid
options for which
missing information
makes the probability
seem “unknown”



quick exercise

The next slide is ambiguous.
What is the *meaning* of this scene?



Ambiguity



Food for your family, from our family.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2011

A World Without Farmers

Have you ever thought about what your favorite grocery store would look like if farmers didn't exist?



Thankfully, Indiana is full of farm families that help make sure that our nation's shelves are filled with your family's favorite ingredients.

Celebrate National Ag Week with us and tell us what your favorite grocery store is and why here and on [Facebook](#) to be entered to win a \$50 gift card to the grocery store of your choice!

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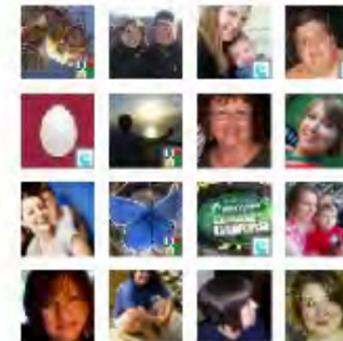
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Q: Which practices deal creatively with ambiguity & risk? A: art & design

**we
are
here**

sLab is “human centred”

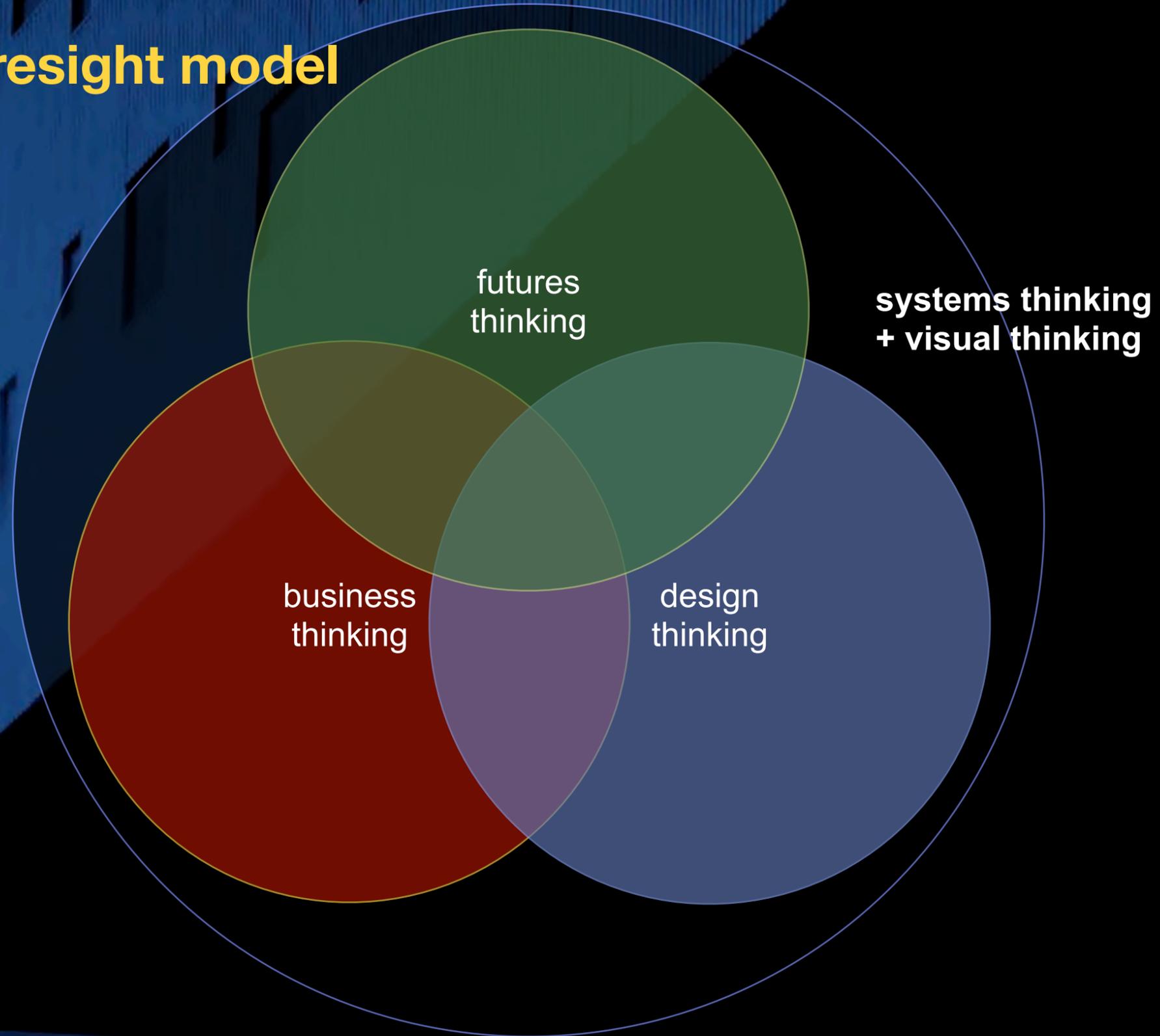
We place human needs, desires, behaviour and culture at the heart of the process

Our process may be seen as:

problem finding	foresight
problem framing	strategy
problem solving	design



sLab design & foresight model



Master of Design in Strategic Foresight & Innovation (SFI)

A new kind of designer — a changemaker. Mapping and tackling complexity. Shaping positive futures, designing responsibly. Understanding change, Leading innovation



Master of Design in Strategic Foresight & Innovation (SFI)

OCAD U's largest grad program

120 students by Fall 2014

Rapid growth

New courses and faculty
Industry partnerships

International enrollment

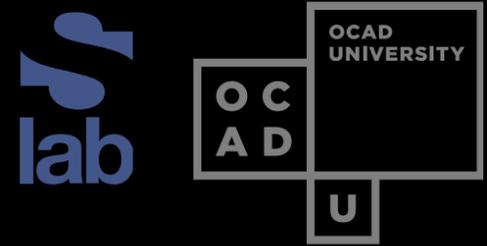
Brazil
Canada
Costa Rica
Iceland
India
Mexico
Nigeria
Pakistan

Leading employers

Bridgepoint Health
BMO Private Client Group
CAMH
Green Living Enterprises
Government of Alberta
Monitor Deloitte
Idea Couture
Leo Burnett
Mayo Clinic

Startups / rebrandings

Art & Science
The Mission Business
Perceptual.com
ZanCom Media



Design thinking is about *sensemaking*, isn't it?

Designers excel at coaching, practicing, and theorizing how to make sense of complex or ambiguous situations & information.

Yet sometimes what is needed is not sensemaking. Sometimes what is needed is ***strangemaking***.

That's where **foresight** comes in.

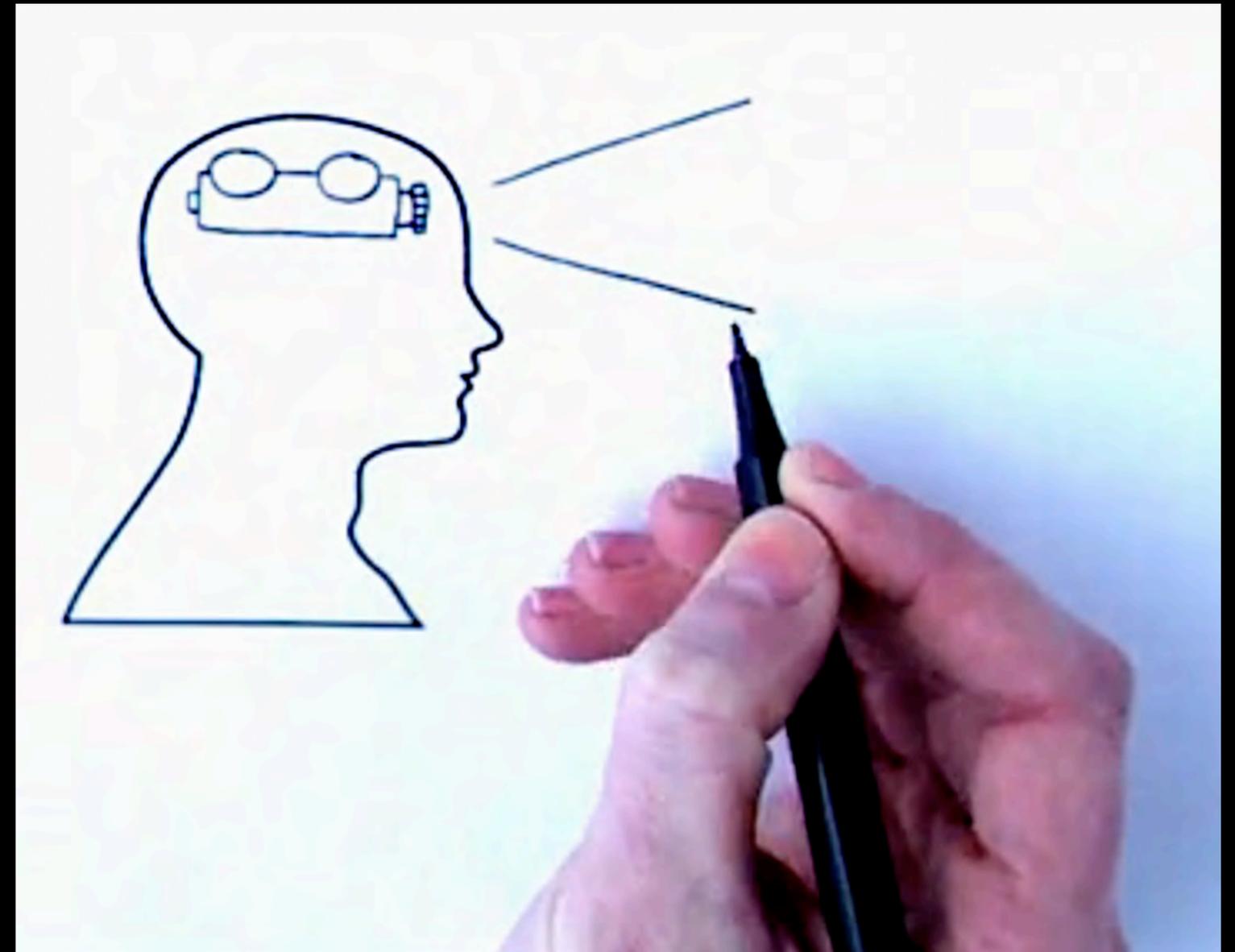
What is foresight?

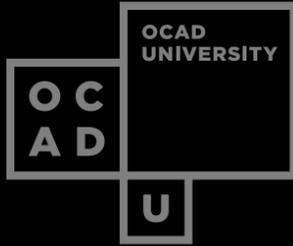
“the ability to create and sustain a variety of high quality forward views and to apply the emerging insights in organizationally useful ways... to detect adverse conditions, guide policy, shape strategy; to explore new markets, products & services.”

—Richard Slaughter, 1999

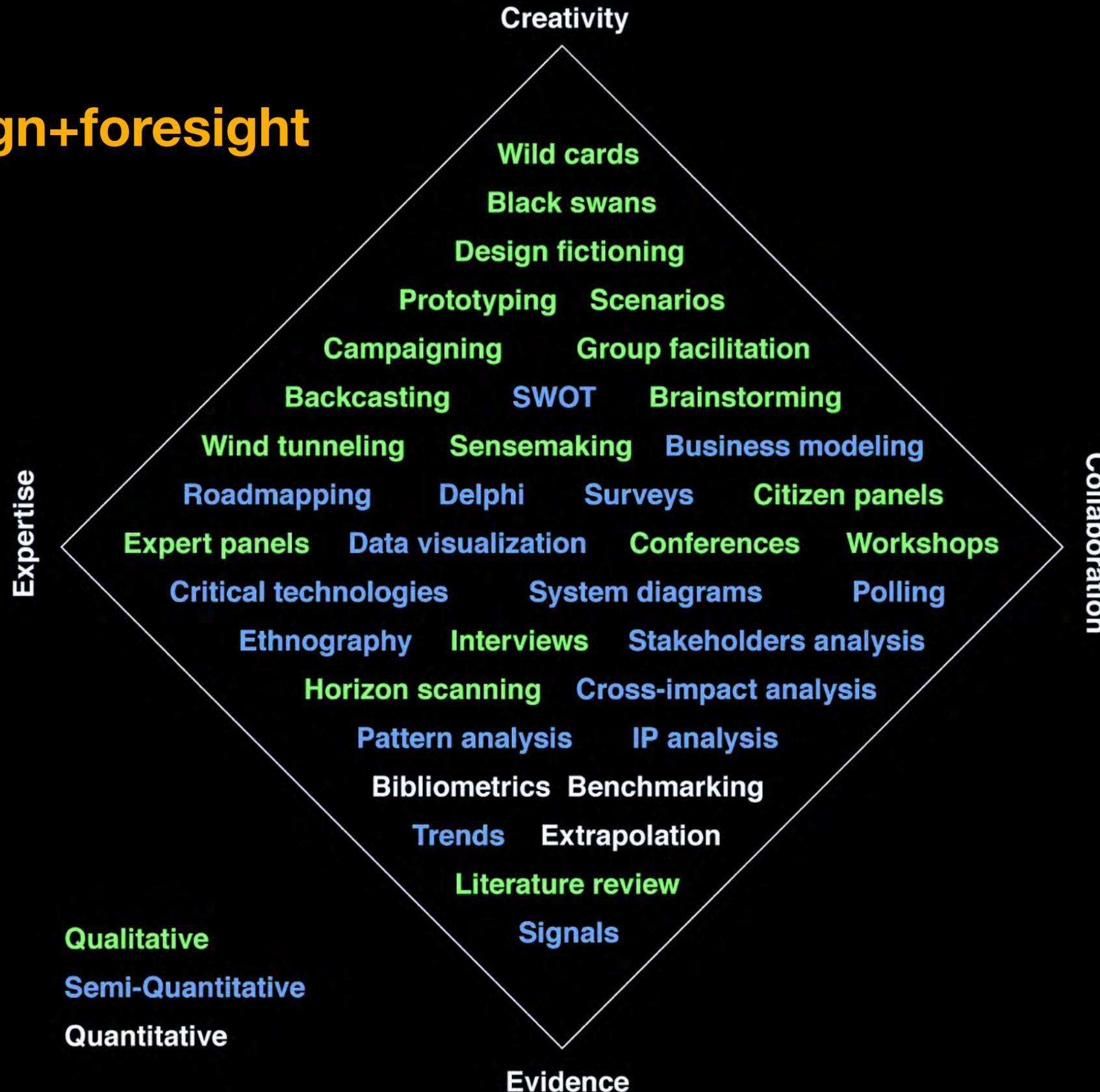
“A systematic, participatory, future intelligence gathering,...**vision-building** process aimed at present-day decisions & mobilising joint actions”

—EC FOREN project



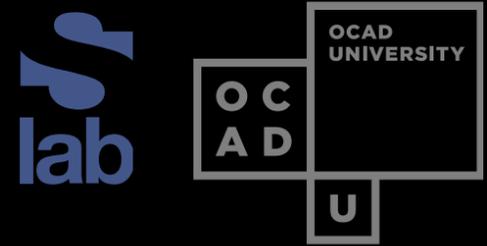


sLab & SFI design+foresight methodology



Making strange





Making strange

Making strange (приём остранения)

—Viktor Shklovsky, 1917

Alienation effect (Verfremdungseffekt)

—Bertold Brecht

“Making the strange familiar,
and the familiar strange”

—Stuart Brand, founder of GBN and Long Now Foundation

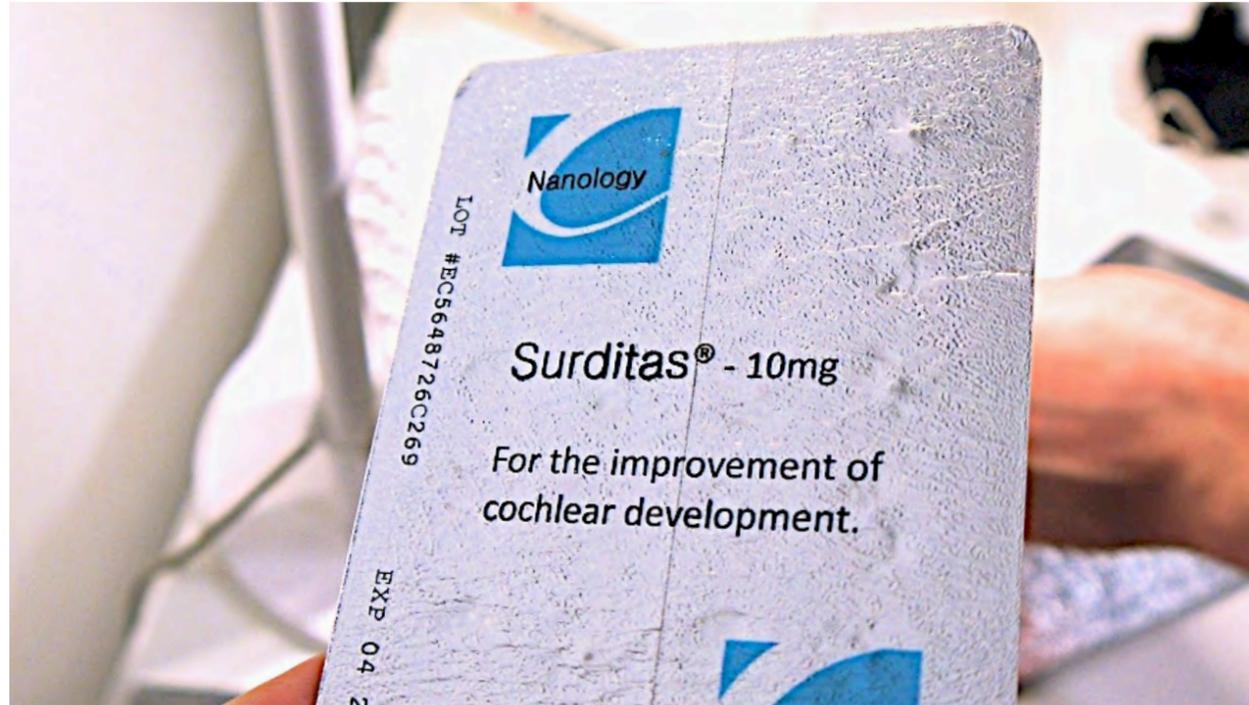
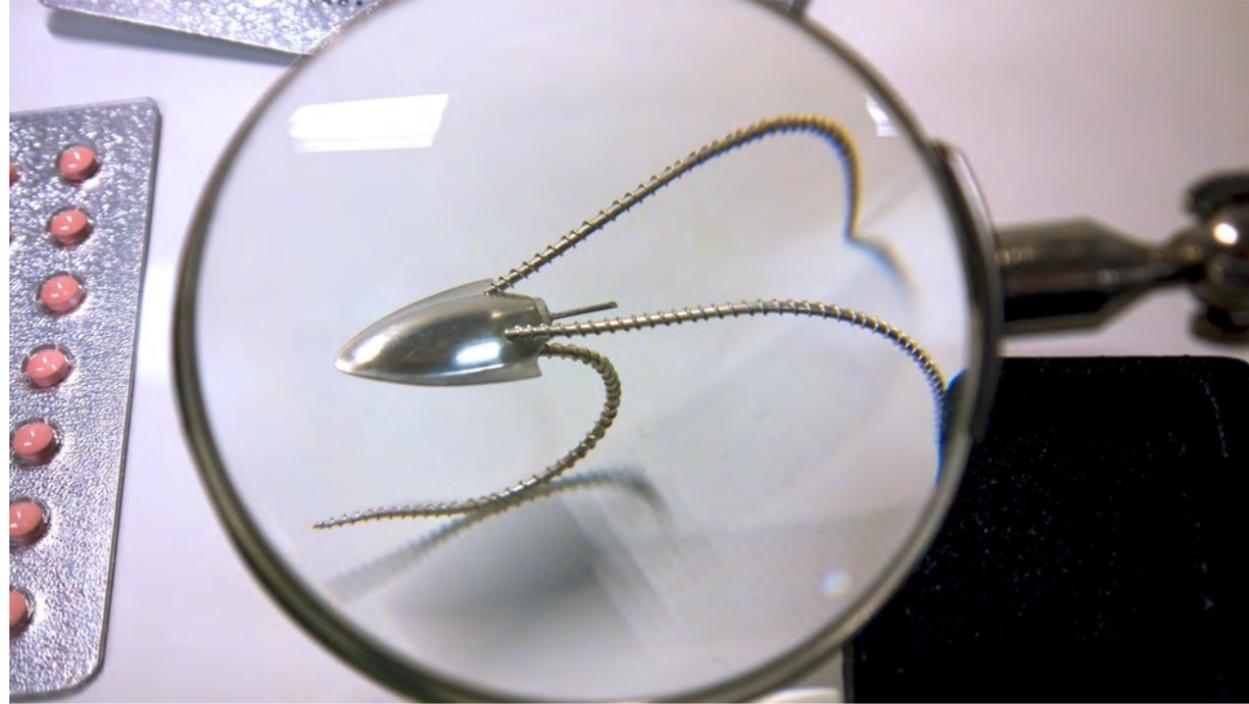
Failing better

“All of old. Nothing else ever.
Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter.
Try again. Fail again. Fail better.”

—Samuel Beckett, *Worstward Ho*



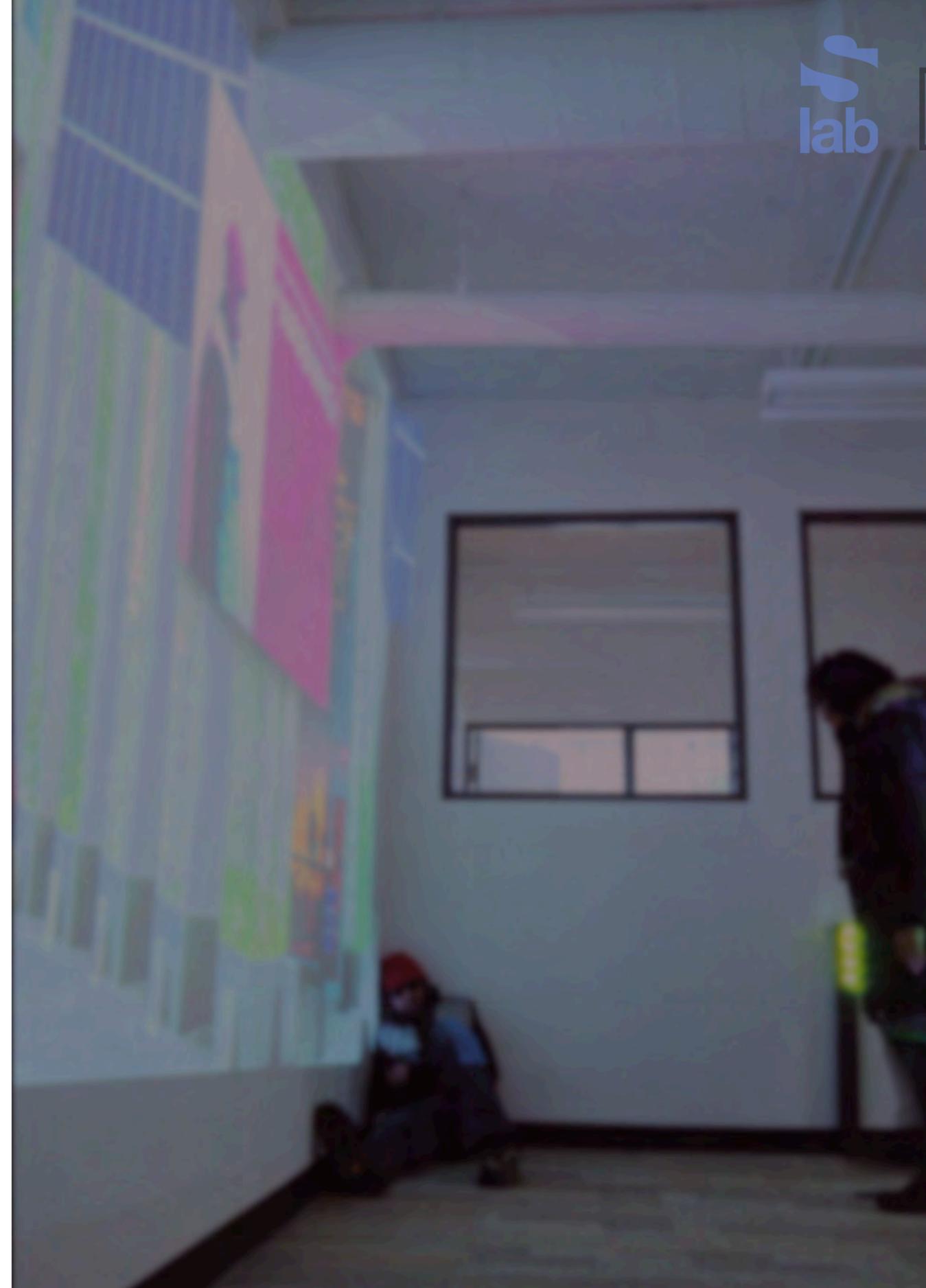
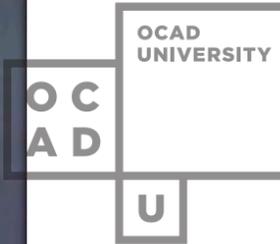
Design+Foresight at OCAD U
Tangible Futures, Design Fictions
in Helen Kerr's Leading Innovation, 2012



Robert Mitchell & Laura Fyles



Design+Foresight at OCAD U
Tangible Futures, Design Fictions
in Helen Kerr's Leading Innovation, 2012

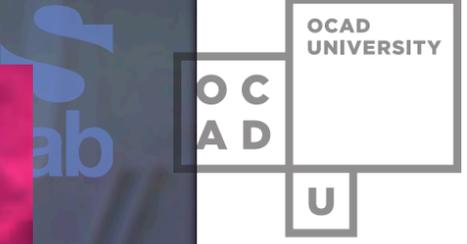
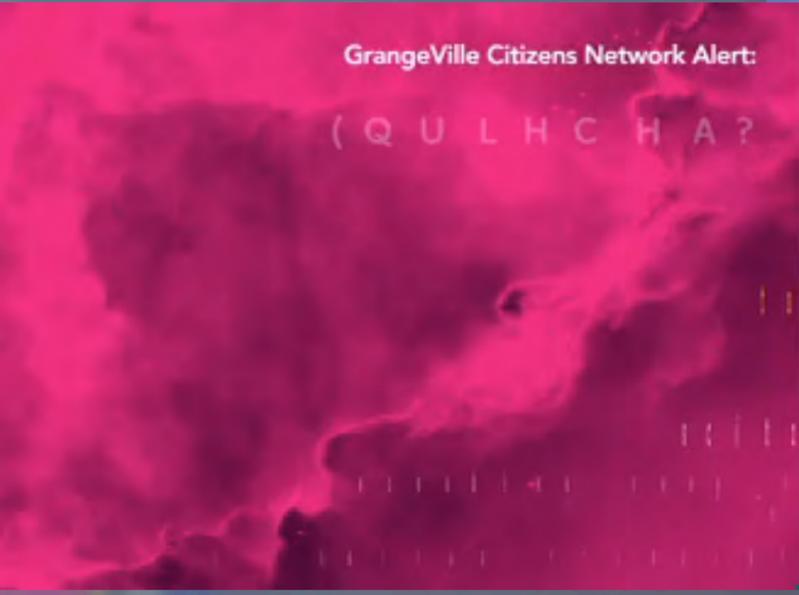


Ben McCammon, Rich Norman, Kelvin Kwong

Design+Foresight at OCAD U
Tangible Futures, Design Fictions
in Helen Kerr's Leading Innovation, 2012



Ben McCammon, Rich Norman, Kelvin Kwong





altered states through biotechnology
in science fiction cinema

trevor haldenby
trevor@longexposure.ca

Advised by Greg Van Alstyne
Director of Research, Strategic Innovation Lab

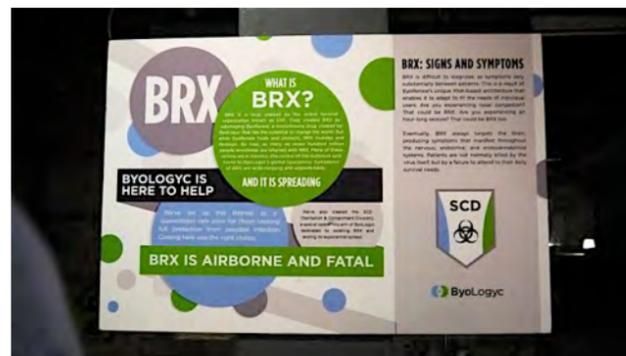
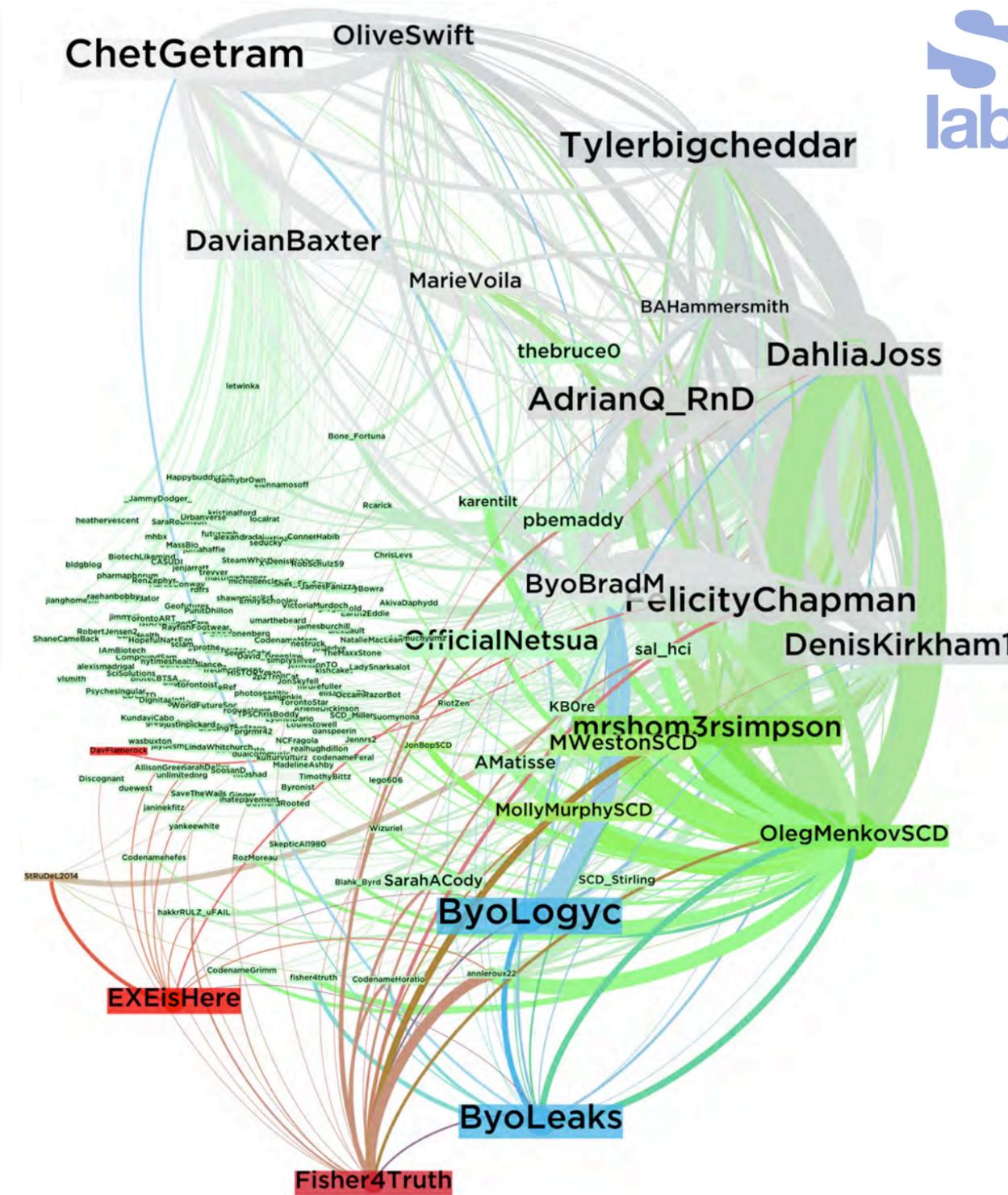


Figure 13: A Gephi visualization depicting the network of interactions on Twitter between ByoLogyc staff (grey), ByoLogyc websites (blue), EXE (red), and ZED.TO participants (green). (2012)³²

Critical Design

“Use of speculative design proposals to challenge narrow assumptions, preconceptions and givens about the role products play in everyday life...”

Dunne & Raby. <http://www.dunneandraby.co.uk/content/bydandr/13/0>

Design Fiction

“The deliberate use of diegetic prototypes to suspend disbelief about change”

Bruce Sterling. [@bruces](#) quoted in [@futryst](#) Stuart Candy [29 Jan, 2012](#)

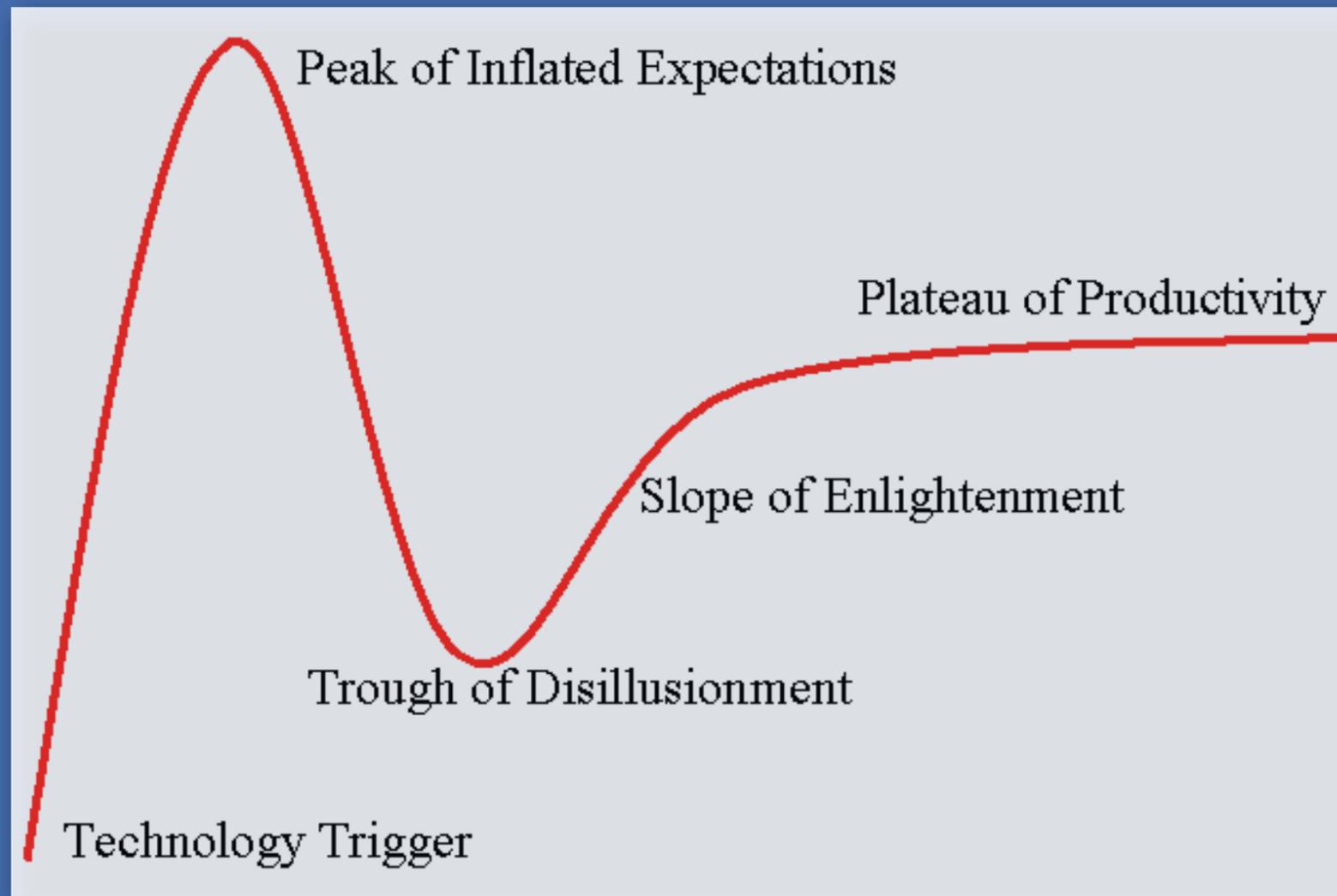
Science Fiction Prototyping

“What if we could use stories, movies and comics as a kind of tool to explore the real world implications and uses of future technologies today?”

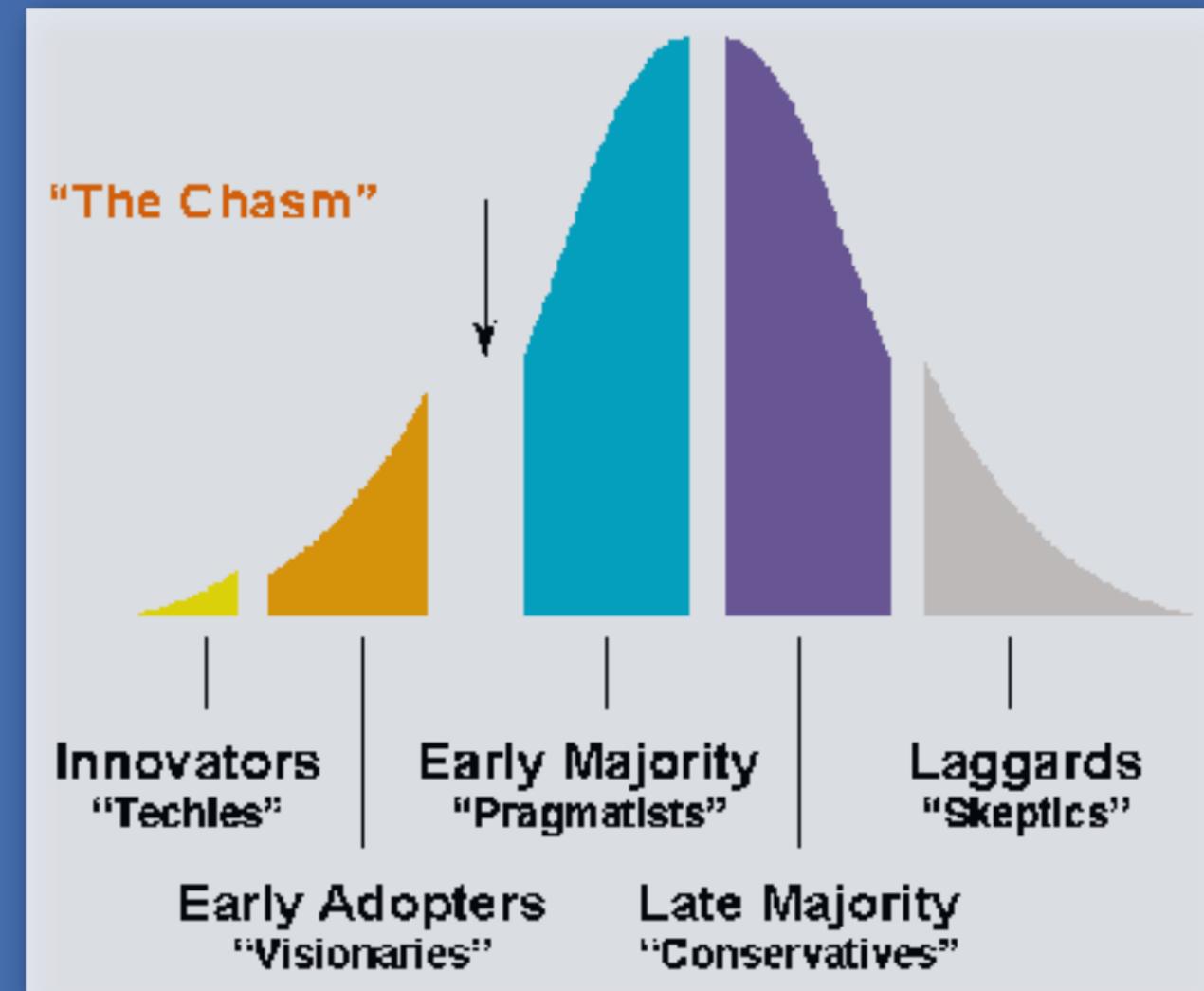
Brian David Johnson (2011). *Science fiction prototyping: designing the future with science fiction*. Morgan & Claypool.

Q: What comes from risk+design+foresight?

A: Overcoming hype; crossing the chasm



Gartner Hype Cycle



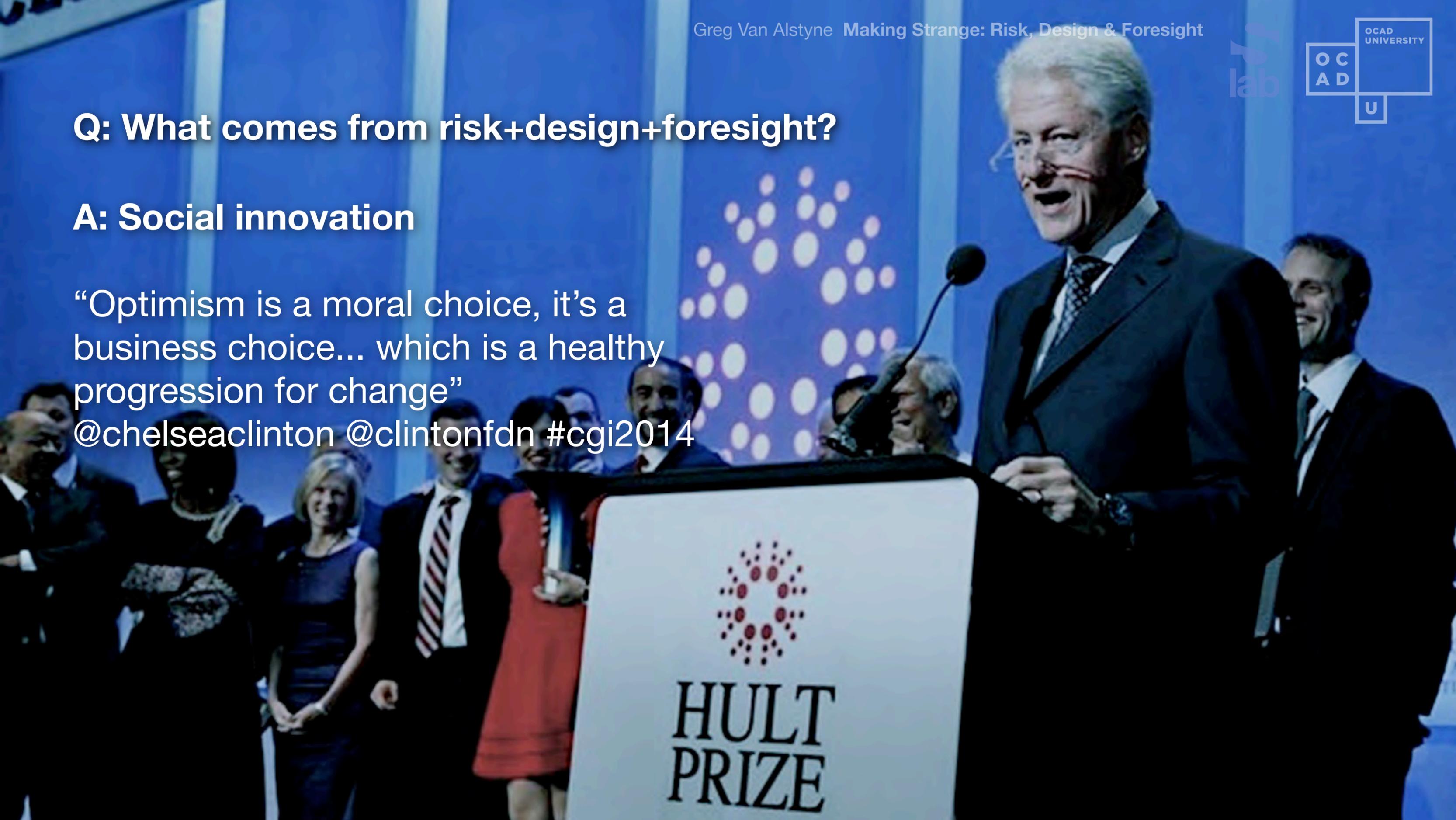
Geoffrey Moore, *Crossing the Chasm*

Q: What comes from risk+design+foresight?

A: Social innovation

“Optimism is a moral choice, it’s a business choice... which is a healthy progression for change”

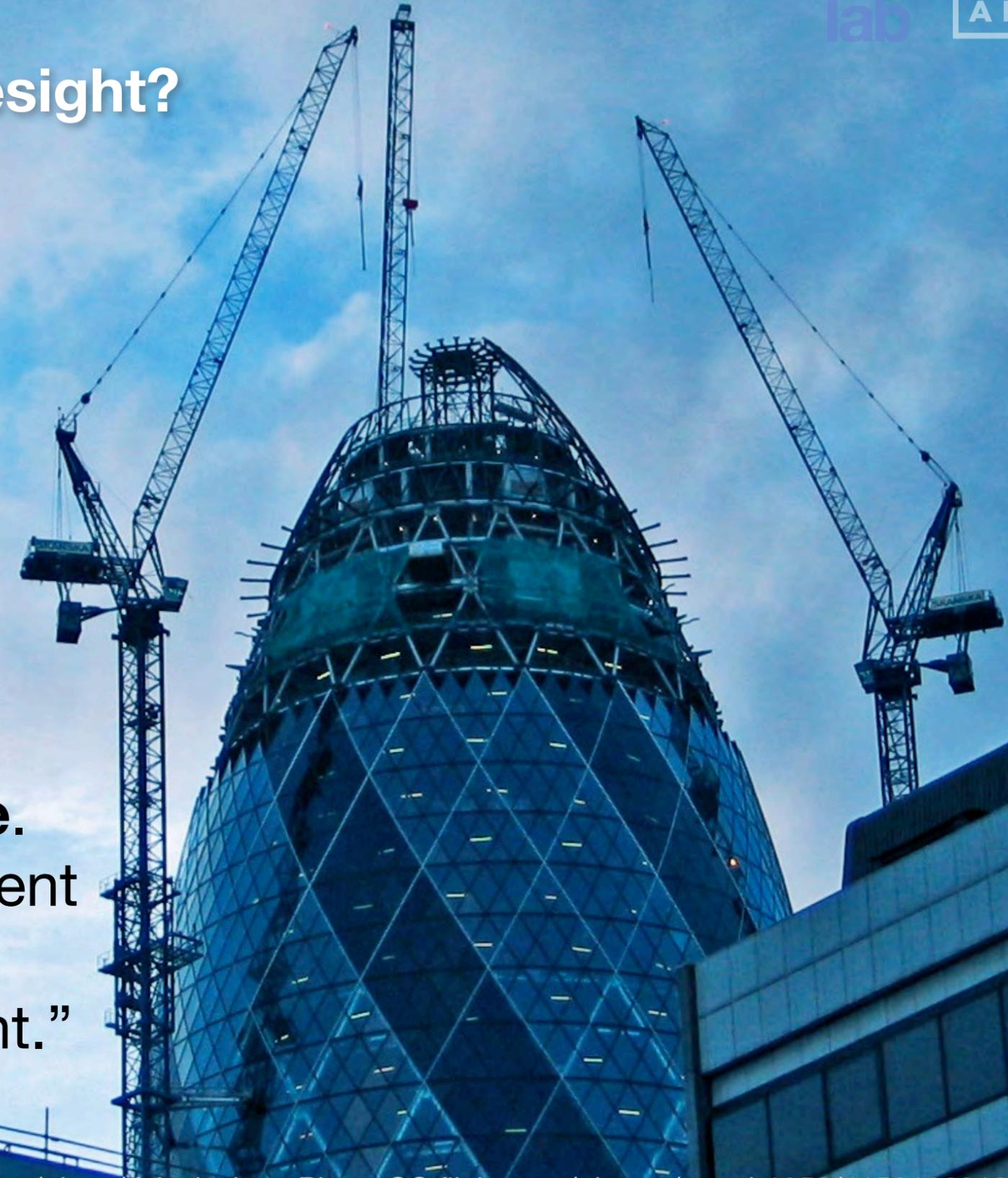
@chelseaclinton @clintonfdn #cgi2014

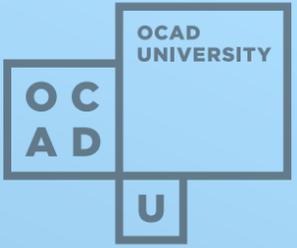


Q: What comes from risk+design+foresight?

A: “Risk design” as strategy

“By soliciting risks and handling them ostentatiously yet seemingly effortlessly, [Norman Foster’s “Gherkin” building] accrued capital for the clients and the City of London, for the architects and their consultants—and also for **design as a risk management practice.** With each solicitation, gain, & management of risk, the design acquired agency by becoming a stronger branding instrument.”





Many thanks

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