



CHANGING THE FUTURE BEGINS  
IN THE MIND

*"If there is a post-Anthropocene worth living in,  
those who will live in it will need different  
stories."*

Isabelle Stengers

**Join us on this journey!**

[www.plurality-university.org](http://www.plurality-university.org) / [@PluralityU](https://twitter.com/PluralityU)

Facing the challenges that lie ahead of us, knowing is not enough: we must be able to imagine futures truly different from our present, as well as the paths that could lead to them.

The Plurality University Network (U+) is an open, global and networked organization whose mission is to detect, connect and bring together people and organizations that mobilize the resources of the imaginary to explore alternative futures: artists, science fiction writers, speculative designers, utopians...

**THE U+ NETWORK WAS OFFICIALLY INITIATED IN  
EARLY 2019 AROUND THREE SHARED OBJECTIVES:**

- **To change our representations in order to change reality;**
- **To draw inspiration from other people's futures;**
- **To develop the ability of individuals and organizations to think about the future.**

In 2019, much has already been accomplished. In 2020 the Plurality University Network will deploy all its potential through thematic explorations; as well as work on the production of original content, methods and tools.

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## THE PLURALITY UNIVERSITY NETWORK

Although past centuries have shown that human societies are capable of transforming themselves, today we seem unable to confront the nature and magnitude of the transitions that await us - ecological, technological, and so on. We have neither the tools, nor the collective mechanisms to deal with such transformations.

Calls for "new narratives" can be heard from everywhere: we will only find the ability to act on the future by working deliberately on our imaginaries. We need a multiplicity of stories and imaginary productions from every cardinal point of a multipolar world. And we need these imaginaries to enable us:

- **To imagine the worlds that comes next:** explore other possible futures off the beaten tracks, and widen the field of alternatives.
- **To act in a situation of radical uncertainty,** taking into account complexity, and the diversity of stakeholders.

*"This world will be different if we modify its representation"*  
**Felwine Sarr, Afrotopia**

This is the Plurality University Network's (U+) mission: to detect, connect people and organizations who mobilize the resources of imaginaries to explore other futures. With three objectives:

- To change representations of the future in order to change reality
- To develop personal and organizational capacities to change their representations of the future, and therefore their future;
- To make future imaginaries a favorable space where exchange on new, different, and even opposed ideas can take place.

The Plurality University Network is a non-profit organization based in Paris, France. It is chaired by Ketty Steward, science-fiction writer. It counts more than 210 members from more than 30 countries (as of 30/10/2019).

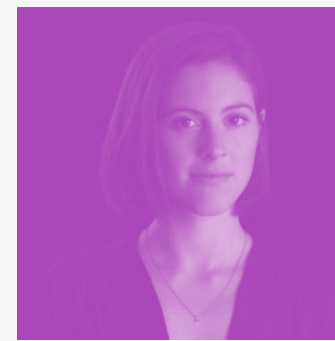
*"As we are passing through a technological discontinuity of huge proportions, we need new narratives beyond the models of industrial production and the separatist, mechanistic concepts of a corporation."*



Ketty Steward, writer  
(France; Chairperson)



Daniel Kaplan, futurist  
(France ; CEO)



Chloé Luchs (Canada;  
Chief Project Manager)



Salik Shah, editor, director,  
writer (India)



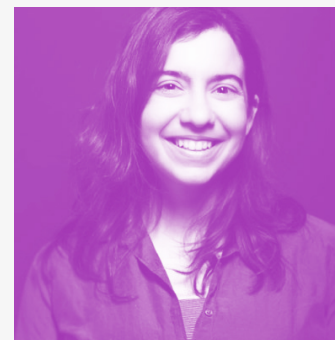
Mimi Mondal, writer  
(India / USA)



Elliott Montgomery,  
designer (USA)



Jacques Barcia, futurist  
(Brazil)



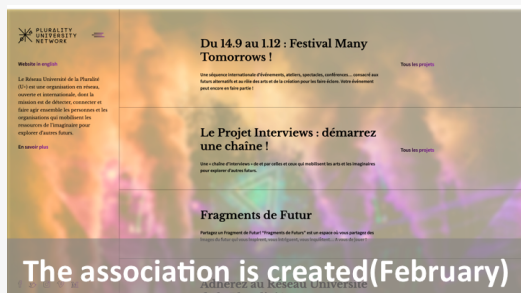
Malka Older, writer &  
sociologist (USA)



Felwine Sarr, economist &  
philosopher (Senegal)

... and many more ! 210+ members, in more than 30 countries, of 4 continents.

# U+ IN 2019



A board with 8 members in 6 countries. Chair: Ketty Steward.

210 members in more than 30 countries.

4 partners : Maif, Renault, Vinci, Armasuisse



An "interview chain" of, and by, those mobilizing arts and imaginaries to explore alternative futures.

15 interviews as we launch, and more in the process of realization or publication.



An open space to share visions of the future that inspire, intrigue or frighten you....

More than 100 contributions.

Partnerships with: HEC Genève, Story Club (Malawi), University LCI Barcelona...



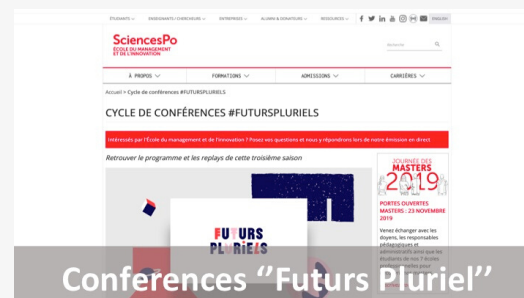
An experimental methodology mobilizing fiction to kick off explorations into the future of work.

2 workshops in collaboration with TheCamp and Vinci. A methodological document accessible to all.



An international sequence of distributed events; workshops, shows, conferences... dedicated to alternative futures and the role of art and creativity in making them happen.

More than 15 events in 7 countries.



Researchers, actors, thinkers & artists exploring together different facets of our futures.

12 conferences, 35 speakers.

In collaboration with SciencesPo Management and Innovation School and Usbek & Rica.

# 2020 OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

At the service of its mission statement, the projects launched by the Plurality University Network will focus:

On content, so as to put in motion the representations of future(s).

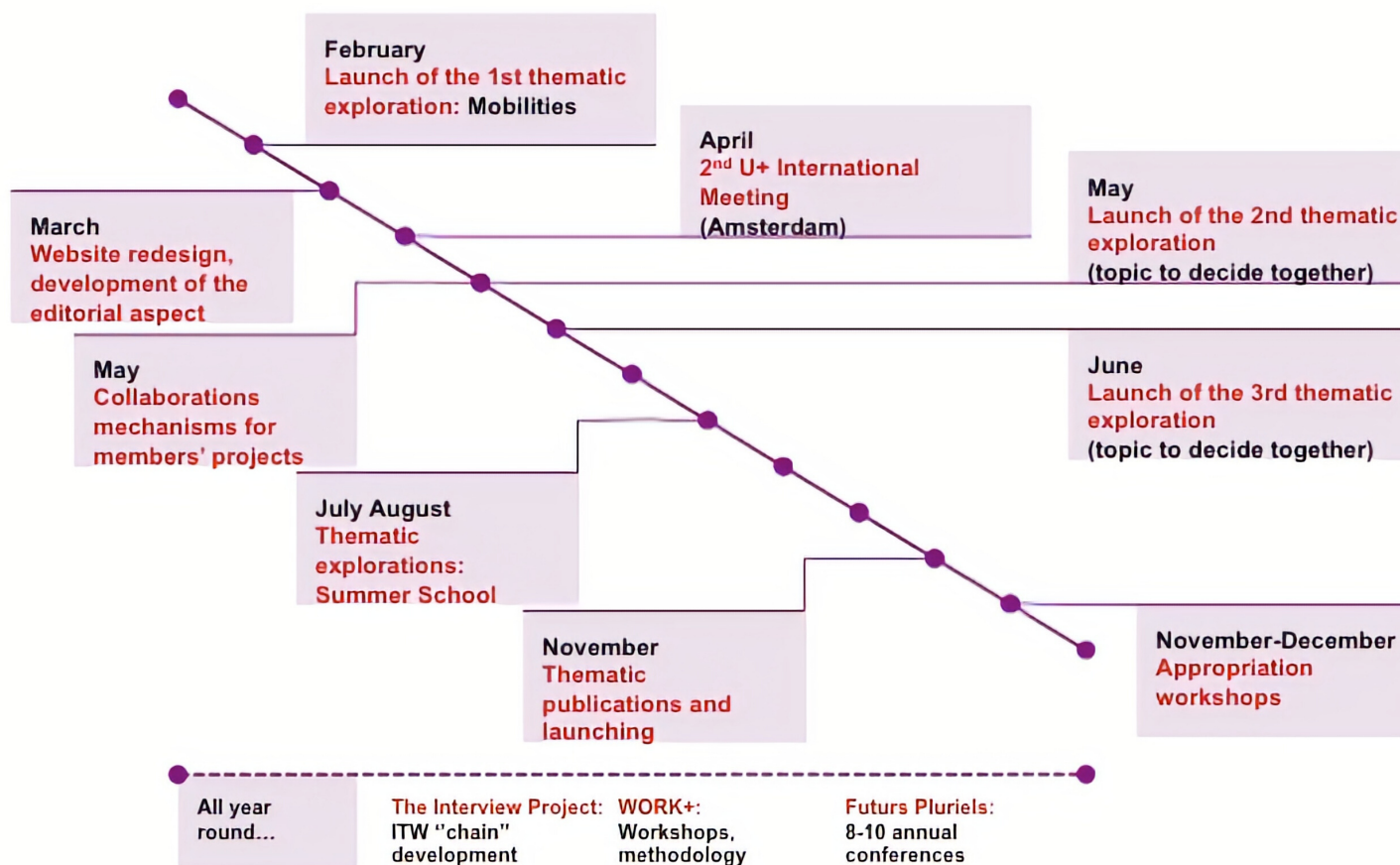
→ 3 collective thematic explorations, resulting in publications, online material, events, etc.

On individual and organizational capacities.

→ Share and enrich methodologies ; experiment, document and build knowledge.

On the quality of interactions and shared experiences.

→ In person workshops and meetings; Substantial interpersonal collaborations





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## THEMATIC EXPLORATIONS

Thematic explorations mobilize the U+ network around a common, future-oriented issue or perspective. The goal: to change how we view the exploration's theme, by exploring its future through imagination and creation.

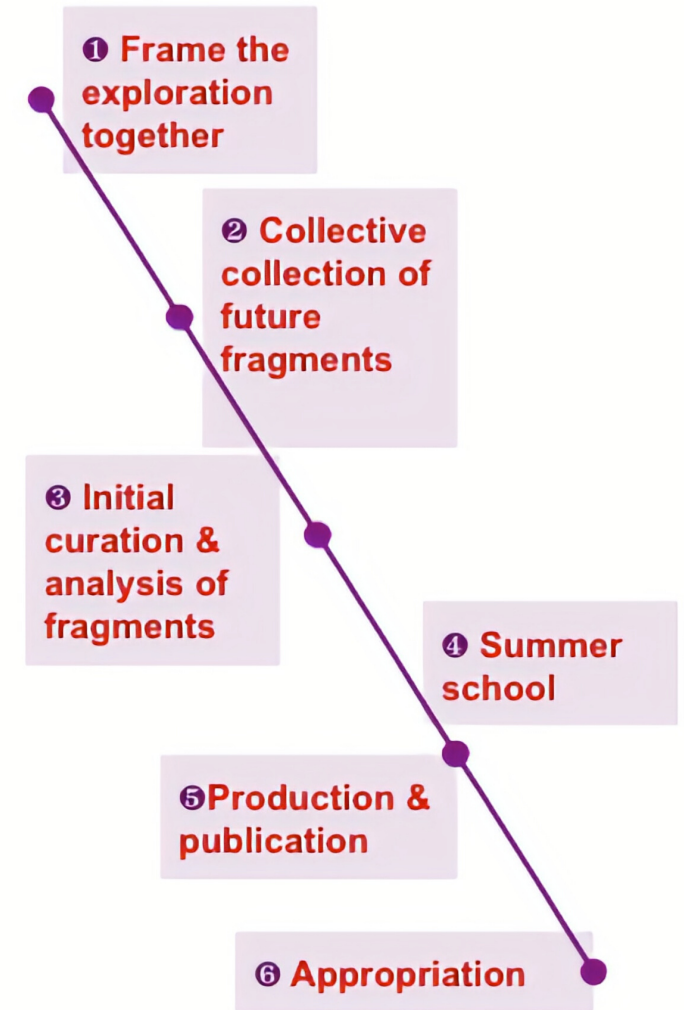
Every exploration begins by sending out a call to collect 'fragments of the future' issued from a diversity of spheres: arts, science-fiction, design, utopias... Collecting these fragments is done online and through workshops (with students, organizations, etc.)

This material will be curated and made available online, but it will also be delivered to "experts", selected for their ability to question their beliefs and work across different perspectives.

After that, a Summer School, will bring together around twenty creators and experts to jointly produce "radical" scenarios and insights, as well as the journey from now to then. A publication and a virtual conference will share the results, as well as the materials collected and methods used, allowing others to use them as part of their prospective or strategic explorations.

## WHAT TOPICS FOR 2020 THEMATIC EXPLORATIONS ?

- **1st topic** (launch : february): **Mobilities.**
- **2nd topic** (launch: may): will be organized around more encompassing perspective: "[un]collapse", "inter-species", "techlash"... It will be defined online in February.
- **3rd topic** (launch: june): planned around a methodological challenge : "inclusivity", "from imagination to action". This will be defined in April 2020 during U+'s next international meeting.



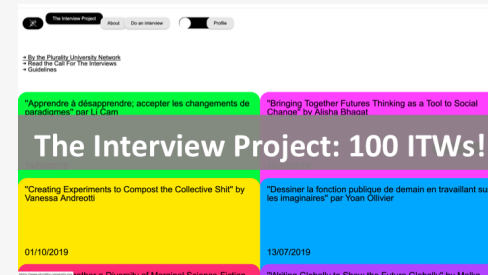
# OTHER ACTIONS FOR 2020



Collaborative Projects

The U+ Network must become a place where members can propose and develop collaborative projects.

A simple tool will help facilitate these exchanges.



By expanding the “interview chain”, the aim is both to gather information on projects around the world, and to extend U+' network beyond the usual circles of recognition.  
Objective : More than 100 published interviews.

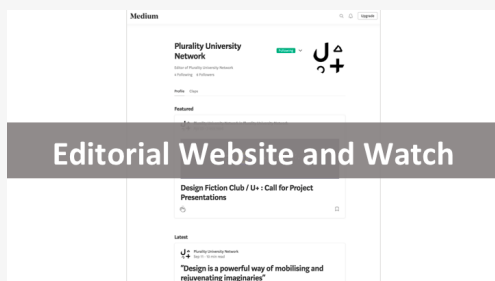


2<sup>nd</sup> International Meeting

April 10-11, 2020, Amsterdam, in collaboration with the 2nd Other Futures Festival.  
A public event within the Festival; A day of joint work to strengthen the network and speed up the projects in development.



In 2020, the "Futurs Pluriels" conferences will largely open to the general public, in collaboration with the “Good In Tech” chair at SciencesPo (Paris).



Editorial Website and Watch

By publishing short papers on emerging subjects and inviting others to do so as well, the U+ website aims to become a destination for those interested exploring alternative futures through imaginaries.

The Medium platform will be used to increase the content's visibility.



WORK+ will focus around organizing workshop with companies and other work communities (freelancer networks, trade unions...)

This experience will allow us to formalize the WORK+ methodology, making it accessible and usable for all.

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## APPENDIX: THE U+ TEAM



**Ketty Steward**  
**President**

Born 1976 in Martinique, Ketty Steward is a writer, with more than 30 science-fiction short stories published as well as poetry and stories outside the Sci-Fi genre. Ketty Steward also gives conferences and courses, and has coordinated special issues of science-fiction magazines.

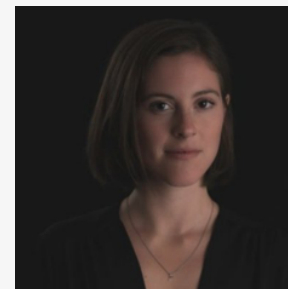
[ktsteward@gmail.com](mailto:ktsteward@gmail.com)



**Daniel Kaplan**  
**CEO / Executive Chief**

Daniel Kaplan, 56, is a futurist and entrepreneur, with one leg in innovation, and another in fiction. In 1986, he created one of the world's first digital communication agencies, JKLM. In the 1990's, he contributed to the Internet's development and evolution. In 2000, he created the Next-Generation Internet Foundation (FING), a nonprofit Think-&-Do-Tank to "anticipate digital transformations". He ran it until 2017, when he started working on what would become the Plurality University.

[dkaplan@plurality-university.org](mailto:dkaplan@plurality-university.org)



**Chloé Luchs**  
**Chief Connector and Organizer**

Chloé Luchs Tassé is interested in questions surrounding the digital era and its impact on culture and the creative economy. She holds a Master's degree in Communication and a Bachelor's in Fine Arts (BFA). Passionate about issues related to culture, international relations and sustainable development.

[chloe.luchs@plurality-university.org](mailto:chloe.luchs@plurality-university.org)

### 2019 PARTNERS

**Academic** : SciencesPo, Institut Mines Télécom, HEC Geneva

**Prospective** : Fing, Futuribles, Usbek & Rica, Institut des Futurs Souhaitables, Design Fiction Club, Thecamp

**Companies** : Maif, Renault, Vinci

**Publics** : Armasuisse