

Imagining 2040 – Pathways to Flourishing Futures

A podcast inviting Australians to imagine better futures — and help map out how to get there.

What this podcast series is about



Imagining 2040 – pathways to flourishing futures (IMAG40) is an experimental podcast created by Householders’ Options to Protect the Environment (HOPE) Inc. The series is a response to an identified future vision imagination deficit. A challenge in Australia and beyond, where many people struggle to picture what better, community level futures could look like, or how we might work together to achieve them.

Without shared, compelling visions of better futures, public debate becomes dominated by short-term neoliberal thinking, vested interests, and business-as-usual development paths that are increasingly failing people and the planet.

Alongside opportunities for more formal, training in futures thinking, this series creates an informal, accessible space where guests and listeners can explore better, **plausible, evidence-based futures** — futures that could be climate-safer, nature-positive, more socially inclusive, economically fairer, and genuinely democratic.

Our purpose

The series aims to strengthen futures literacy across the community: the ability to imagine different possible futures and understand how today’s choices help shape tomorrow’s outcomes. We want listeners to come to see themselves as active agents in shaping Australia’s development pathways — not passive observers of forces beyond their control.

How our podcast conversations work

Episodes showcase simple, imaginative, preferred futures foresight and visioning techniques such as:

- time-travel to 2040
- identifying ‘signals of the future’ already emerging
- exploring assertive, unconstrained actions that could shift Australia’s development trajectory

Guests are invited to visualise preferable futures and outline the pathways that could help make them real. These conversations could then help listeners understand that ‘the future’ is not fixed — there are better possible futures we can help shape and make real through using collective imagination, genuine citizen democratic participation, and community inspired action.

Why increasing the practice of public imagination matters

Societies that lack compelling, citizen-led visions of the future are more likely to repeat past mistakes. When public imagination is weak, powerful vested interests can dominate the narrative of progress. When civic imagination is strong, communities can:

- collaborate
- challenge failing systems
- and build new pathways grounded in shared values

Imagining 2040 treats imagination as a **public good** — essential for democratic renewal, policy innovation, and long-term wellbeing.

What listeners can expect to hear

- [Inspiring conversations](#) with future vision imaginative thinkers, researchers, community leaders, and everyday citizens
- Stories of plausible change grounded in evidence and [radical hope](#)
- Demonstration of some [tools and exercises](#) for visualising better futures
- Opportunities for [citizen-led action](#), democratic participation, and [community-driven](#) solutions

Where the series is heading

The pilot episodes explored nature-connectedness, citizen resistance to vested interests, systems-level advocacy, and collaborative urban planning. New episodes in 2026 and beyond will broaden the focus to include:

- The key importance of participatory democracy - including [community futures planning](#)
- The urgent need to adopt [wellbeing and ecological economic](#) models of development
- The crucial contribution of [Indigenous governance](#) futures
- Using [progressive visions](#) to create better local and regional development pathways by 2040

Our Guests

We want to help build a national conversation about the better possible futures Australians want — and the democratic, ecological, social, and economic pathways that could take us there. The work of the guests we invite aligns well with our podcast mission. This ensures a progressive goodness of fit within our interviews.

We believe our guest commentaries could help listeners:

- better imagine [what flourishing Australian futures](#) might look like by 2040
- understand the already [emerging signals of change](#) pointing us toward better futures
- explore [assertive actions that could help shift](#) our current, failing, development trajectories
- see themselves [as participants](#) in shaping a better future

Invitation to collaborate with us

Imagining 2040 is for people who believe that better futures are possible — and that imagination, participation, and community leadership are essential to achieving them. We seek to collaborate with our guests and listeners to help spark public preferred future vision imagination - and strengthen Australia's capacity to build futures that serve people, place, and planet.

Listen to the series now on:

[Spotify](#) [Apple podcasts](#) [Amazon Music](#) [iHeart Radio](#) [YouTube](#)

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