

Voice From Futures: Translating Long-Term Scenarios into AI-Personas for Corporate Foresight

Categoria: 2 -Oltre il brevetermismo: introdurre il long-term thinking nei mercati e nelle imprese

Abstract

In a NAVI world (Non-linear, Accelerated, Volatile, Interconnected), the ability to anticipate alternative scenarios and critically interrogate the present becomes crucial for innovation and design teams (Vellar & Fogli, 2026). Long-term scenarios often remain abstract documents: design fiction that stays authorial, leaving practitioners as passive spectators of the futures it describes. Voice From Futures, a methodology developed by Sibilla Studio (Domenico Polimeno, Elena Galli) in collaboration with Orbyta Tech (Agnese Vellar), fills this gap by making long-term scenarios more accessible to innovation and design teams, who are more accustomed to working with personas than with abstract scenario documents. Its main contribution is to translate long-term scenarios into empirically grounded, AI future personas that can support design and foresight work. The methodology unfolds in four phases. Phase 1 deconstructs existing client scenarios through semi-structured expert interviews, scaffolded by Causal Layered Analysis, focusing on the worldview and myth-metaphor layers to surface value tensions that are embedded yet unstated in the scenario. Phase 2 extends the same CLA scaffold to qualitative research on a mixed sample, 80% corresponding to the age of the target population within the hypothesized scenario horizon and 20% baseline informants at their current age, using Phase 1 tensions as investigation themes; coded material is then synthesized into empirically grounded personas following established qualitative persona-synthesis methods (Salminen et al., 2021). Phase 3 evolves these personas through the Semiotic Futures Personas semantic matrix, positioning each one as Aligned, In Friction, or Drifting relative to the scenario (Mereu & Preira, 2025). Phase 4 codifies personas for AI impersonation, producing a qualitative digital twin built entirely on empirical data rather than synthetic material, extending recent digital-twin persona research (Toubia et al., 2025) into a foresight and organizational context. Drawing on a proof-of-concept case study conducted with Orbyta Tech, which is still in development, the contribution discusses how interrogating AI-embodied future personas introduces qualitative friction into design fiction, consequently strengthening the ethnographic depth of Anticipatory Ethnography (Vellar & Fogli, 2026). It further reflects on the methodology's potential to make long-term thinking more tangible for innovation and design practitioners. It critically addresses the epistemological limits of algorithmic impersonation as an open frontier for corporate foresight practice.

Bibliografia

Mereu, A., & Preira, J. (2025). Un framework personas-first per gli scenari di futuri sulla base del quadrato semiotico: uno studio sul caso del futurewashing. *Futuri Journal*.

<https://www.futuri-journal.org/index.php/futuri/article/view/231>

Salminen, J., Guan, K., Jung, S., Chowdhury, S. A., & Jansen, B. J. (2021). Creating personas from design ethnography and grounded theory. *UXPA Journal*.

<https://uxpajournal.org/personas-ethnography-grounded-theory/>

Toubia, O., et al. (2025). Twin-2K-500: A dataset for building digital twins of over 2,000 people based on their answers to over 500 questions. arXiv. <https://huggingface.co/papers/2505.17479>

Vellar, A., & Fogli, M. (2026). AI-augmented anticipatory ethnography: Envisioning, design fiction and generative AI for co-creating eutopias. In A. Micalizzi (Ed.), *Artificial intelligence and social research: Methods, contexts, imaginaries*. WriteUp Books.

Zhuang, Z., Liu, Y., & Chen, Q. (2024). Integrating causal layered analysis into design: Enhancing user research for deeper insights. *AHFE Open Access Conference Proceedings*.

<https://doi.org/10.54941/ahfe1005122>