



Biography

Laura Forlano, a Fulbright award-winning and National Science Foundation funded scholar, is a writer, social scientist and design researcher. She is an Associate Professor of Design at the Institute of Design and Affiliated Faculty in the College of Architecture at Illinois Institute of Technology where she is Director of the Critical Futures Lab. Forlano's research is focused on the aesthetics and politics at the intersection between design and emerging technologies. Over the past ten years, she has studied the materialities and futures of socio-technical systems such as autonomous vehicles and smart cities; 3D printing, local manufacturing and innovation ecosystems; automation, distributed labor practices and the future of work; and, computational fashion, smart textiles and wearable medical technologies. Forlano is co-editor with Marcus Foth, Christine Satchell and Martin Gibbs of *From Social Butterfly to Engaged Citizen* (MIT Press 2011). Forlano's research and writing has been published in peer-reviewed journals including *She Ji*, *Catalyst*, *Demonstrations*, *Spheres*, *Design Issues*, *the Journal of Peer Production*, *FibreCulture*, *Digital Culture & Society*, *ADA*, *Journal of Urban Technology*, *First Monday*, *The Information Society*, *Journal of Community Informatics*, *IEEE Pervasive Computing and Science and Public Policy*. She received her Ph.D. in communications from Columbia University.

Abstract

This talk will describe four urban futures that are being imagined through and juxtaposed with techno-optimistic visions of the smart city. The City as Platform—defined by the integration of digital technologies such as WiFi terminals—is a streamlined version of city government in which many services are provided by third party companies rather than by the government itself. The City as a (New) Urban Manufacturer—defined by the integration of development of new businesses around design, digital fabrication and local manufacturing—is a rebirth of manufacturing for the purpose of economic growth. The City as Testbed—defined by the use of public roadways and simulations that are used for the testing of autonomous vehicles—is an experimental space for future technologies. And, lastly, the City as a Lab—defined by the measurement, control, tracking and surveillance of a wide range of urban processes—is a highly scientific and systematic management of urban life.

Date
Thurs 01 Nov

Time
Gather at 12.30pm
Presentation from 12.40pm - 2pm

Venue
Room 131 | Tata Innovation Center
Cornell Tech | Roosevelt Island

Speaker
Laura Forlano
DLI Visiting Faculty

Title
**Techno-Optimistic Smart City Imaginaries:
A Patchwork of Four Urban Futures**

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