

Collaborative Volume: Handbook of Media Futures

Deadline: May 15, 2026

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The forthcoming Handbook of Media Futures invites contributions that critically examine the cultural, social, and epistemic conditions under which “future media” are imagined, articulated, and enacted.

Rather than conceiving future media as linear extrapolations of existing technologies, this volume approaches them as discursively produced objects embedded in historically recurring imaginaries and heterogeneous sociotechnical constellations. Media are understood here as complex dispositifs comprising technologies, practices, institutions, discourses, content, and aesthetics. Consequently, “media futures” emerge not only from technical innovation, but from the interplay of cultural expectations, speculative narratives, and social transformations.

We seek contributions that engage with the diverse ways in which future media are envisioned, negotiated, and materialised across domains. Recurring motifs include—but are not limited to—direct couplings of consciousness and communication, media-technological extensions of the body, the production of new realities, and the reconfiguration of social structures through computational infrastructures.

Contributions may include:

- Analyses of historical and contemporary media imaginaries (including science fiction), as well as utopian and dystopian visions of media and their longer cultural genealogies (e.g. internet and networks; telephone and mobile communication; writing and printing; television and (short-form) video; soundscapes; games and gaming; cyborgs and transformations of the body; robots and labour; brain-computer interfaces; imaginaries of optimised learning)
- Case studies from specific domains (e.g. education, politics, mobility, governance, warfare), as well as investigations of emerging or speculative media technologies and infrastructures
- Comparative or cross-cultural perspectives on media futures, including non-Western and ethnofuturist approaches
- Science and Technology Studies (STS) perspectives on sociotechnical imaginaries, expectations, and promises surrounding media technologies
- Media-theoretical approaches to prediction, anticipation, and premediation, as well as broader theories of media change and transformation
- Approaches from future studies and related fields that address practices of foresight, prognosis, and the production of futures knowledge
- Artistic, speculative, and design-based practices as modes of “future making” at the intersection of media, technology, and society
- Analyses of media in relation to innovation, the economy, and infrastructure, including concepts

such as disruption, platformization, and media-economic transformation

- Investigations of religion, cosmology, and other symbolic systems as resources for imagining future media, particularly in relation to communication, embodiment, and mediation

Contributions may be empirical, historical or theoretical (or a mix of these options). We especially welcome papers that place current visions of future media in a broader historical context and examine the conceptual, epistemological, and methodological frameworks that shape how “future media” are understood as objects of knowledge and discourse.

The handbook aims to demonstrate that engaging with media futures is not merely a matter of anticipating technological developments. Rather, it involves identifying the sociocultural conditions and epistemic frameworks that render “future media” conceivable, communicable, and actionable in the first place.

Audience and Scope

The volume addresses an interdisciplinary readership, including scholars and advanced students in media studies, cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, science and technology studies (STS), design, innovation studies, and future studies. It is particularly suited for courses and research contexts focusing on topics such as media change, sociotechnical imaginaries, artificial intelligence, digital society, and speculative media.

Submission Guidelines

- Abstracts (approx. 300–500 words) should outline the central argument, theoretical framework, and (if applicable) empirical material.
- Please include a short biographical note (max. 100 words).
- Full chapter length (upon acceptance): approx. 4,000–8,000 words.

Timeline

- Abstract submission: 15 May 2026
- Notification of acceptance: 1 July 2026
- Full paper submission: 1 January 2027

Submissions and inquiries should be sent to: mediafutures@uni-bonn.de

Reference:

CFP: Collaborative Volume: Handbook of Media Futures. In: ArtHist.net, Apr 2, 2026 (accessed Apr 29, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/52139>>.