



One Site – Multiple Visions

Visioneering between contrasting actors' perspectives

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How do visions transform over time?

- Why do certain visions gain importance leading to radical changes of the project in process?
- What motivates visioneers, what enables them to pursue activities and to change views?

Vision

expectations, hopes, concerns or risks provide guidance, structure and legitimation of activity, define roles and duties and help to mobilise resources (Nordman 2013; Borup et al. (2006); Brown et al (2000), etc.

may unfold a performative character

Imaginary

“collective imagined forms of social life and social order reflected in design & fulfilment of nation-specific projects”

(Jasanoff/Kim 2013)

collective visions of attainable futures

communitarised perception

Boundary object

serves as common object through flexibility and shared structure (Star 2010; Star/Griesemer 1989)

enables cooperation among actors from “different social worlds” to produce “representations of future solutions”

innovation activities create direction

- I. Details on the qualitative data and the case study
- II. Multiple visions – the making in 4 phases
- III. Discussing influences:
- IV. Outcome within complex interrelations

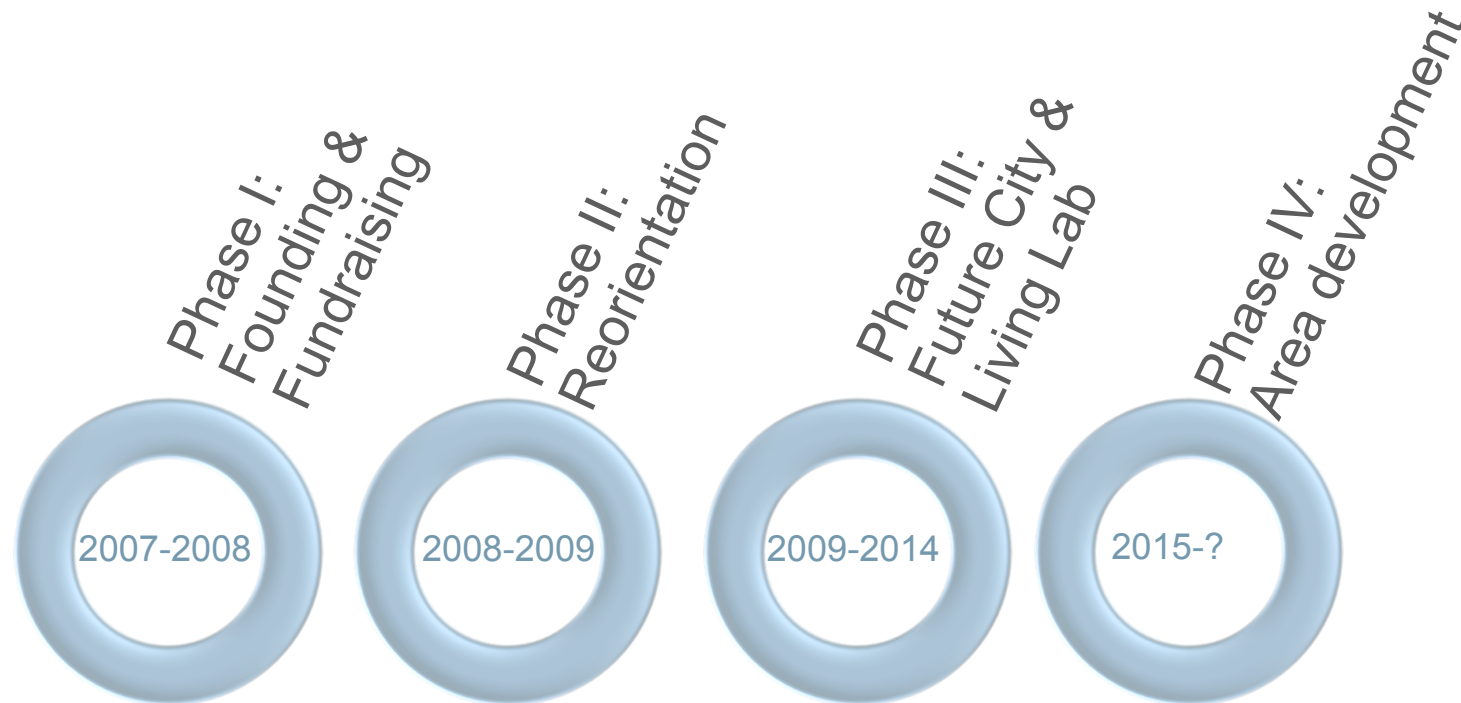
- **The case:** urban living lab for the energy transition / “Energiewende”
- **Research interests:**
 - What is the motivation for diverse actor groups from scientific & economic fields to settle down?
 - What is the actual assessment of how expectations and interests were met?
 - knowledge about the Micro Smart Grid, stakes in the project and their technology assessment
- **Qualitative methods:**
 - semi-structured narrative-generating interviews & group discussion, conducted 2013-2014
- **Sample:**
 - 22 out of 60 tenants in leadership, CEO or equivalent status, covering different branches and organizational size, including long-term tenants as well as “newcomers”, & the site developer
 - group discussion within the Micro Smart Grid project

II: The Making of the former urban gas-storing site

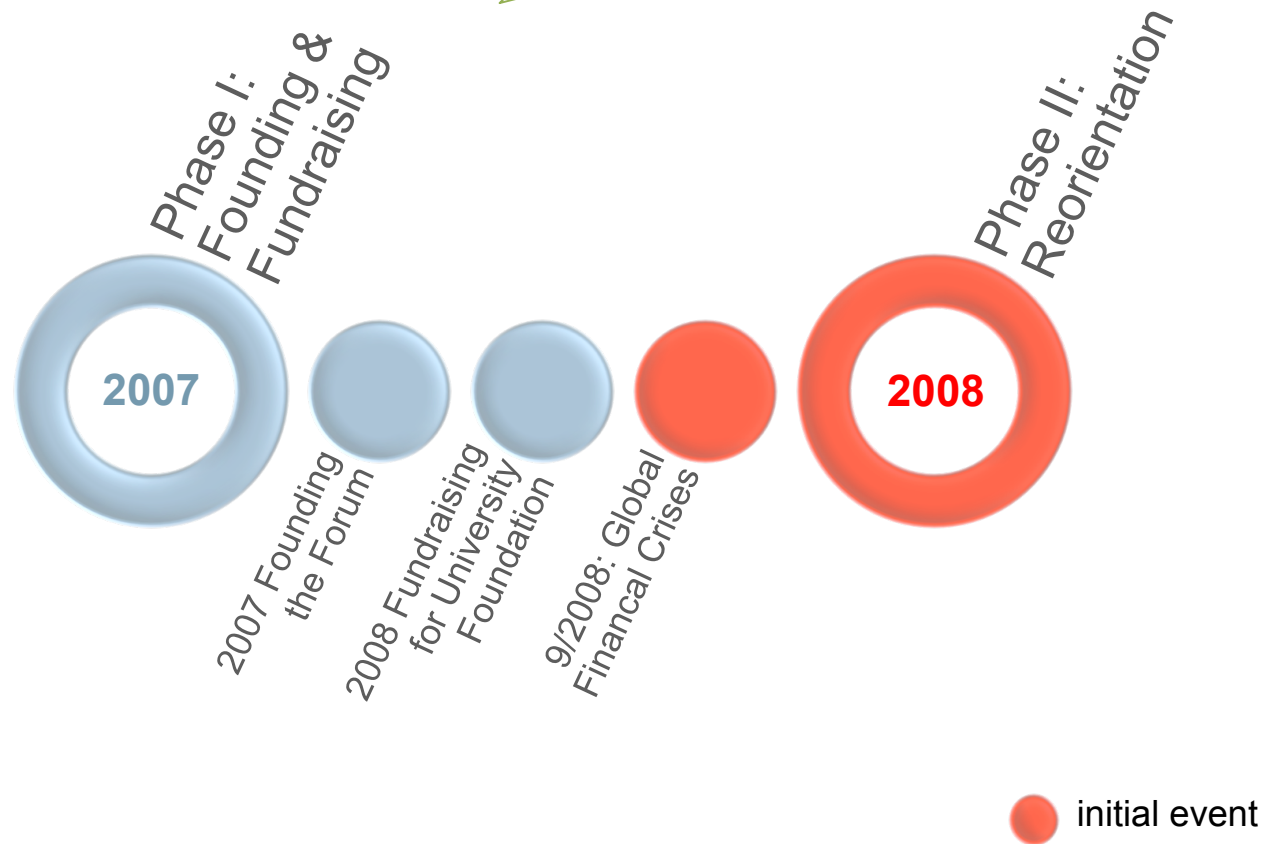


Pictures: www.euref.de

II: Multiple visions – the making in 4 phases

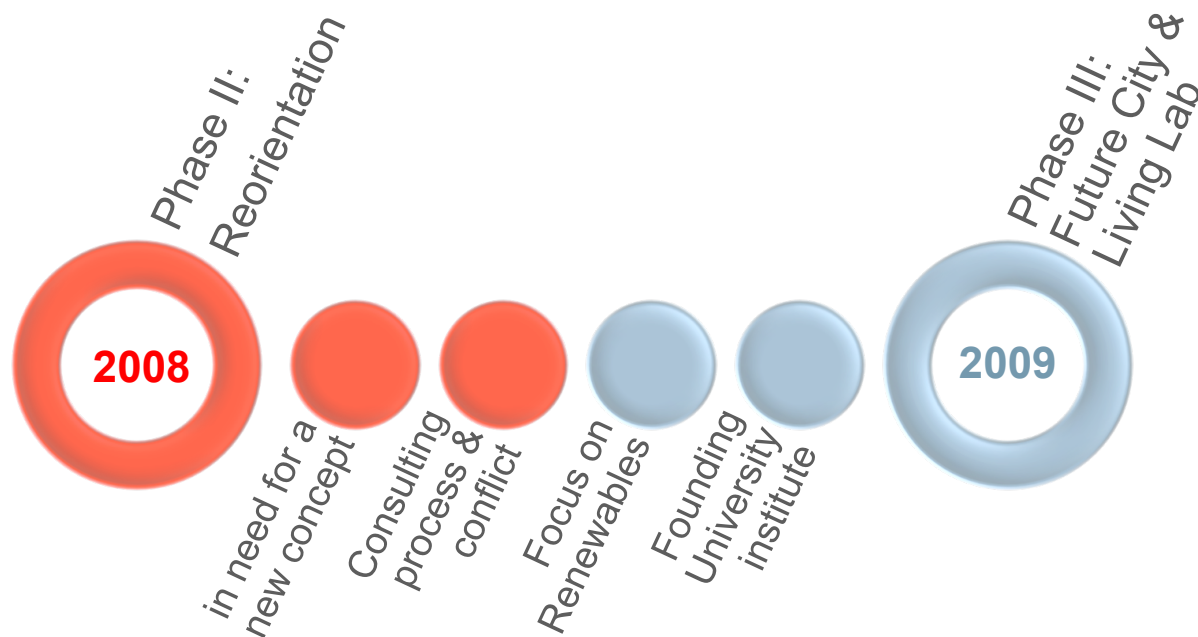


*"I never had another idea than relating to the energy theme. In so far the **project is self-explaining**. So, in fact, it is **logical** that we deal with the energy issue at the site." (project developer)*



Phase II: Reorientation towards Renewables

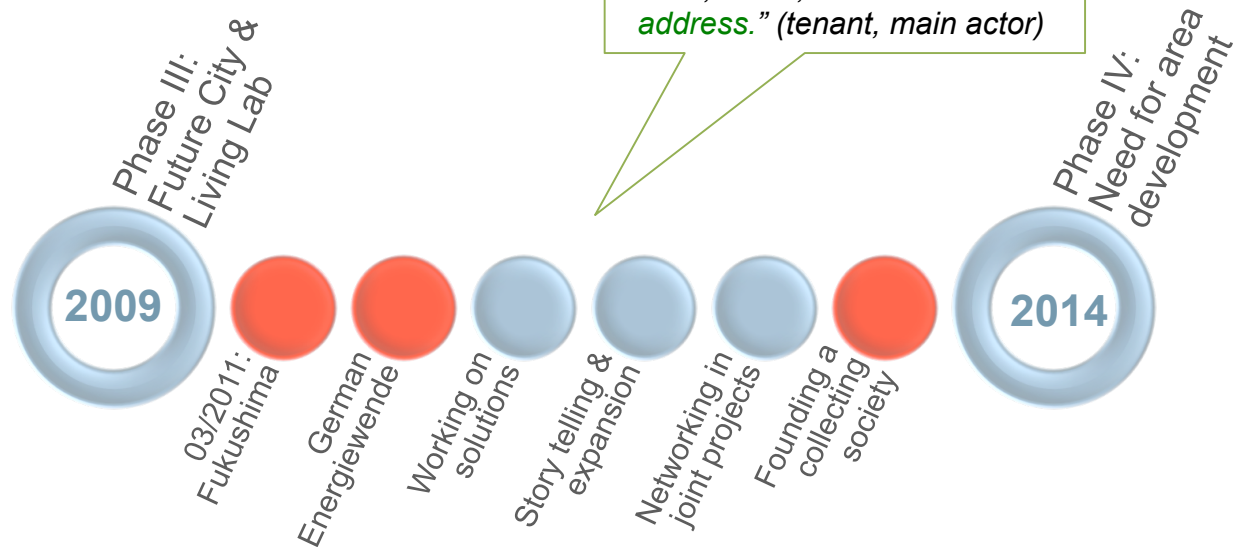
„The gasometer offers plenty of connecting factors to put it on the market (...) *New actor constellations always come with new thinkings*, not to be stuck with a strict concept (...) to go new ways with a lot of partners.“ (architect)



Phase III: Future City, Living Lab, Institutionalization

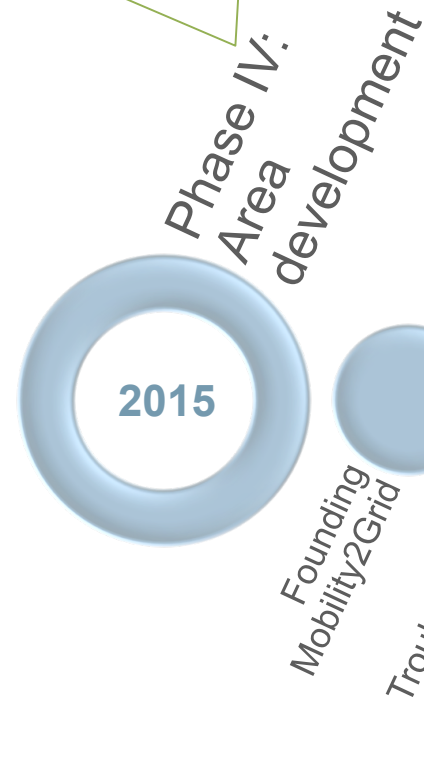
"There was nothing but *promises*, and we were about to move in. So, the *search for identity* was now important, you know . . . It's crazy, but you need such objects and places to establish the identity." (early settler)

"it is a practical example and an urban 'place' for connecting all those complicated processes that, so far, *no one dares to address*." (tenant, main actor)



Phase IV: Area Development

"You need to have a **vision** and a plan on how to get a whole bunch of people together. And I believe the only formula to develop is the vision." (early settler, main actor)



"We definitely do not want the campus to become an **ordinary office location**." (tenant, main actor)

"But in the long term we all have to save the **attractiveness of the site** as a working, living and creative space." (tenant)

"it is characterised by the **numerous stakeholders and their various roles**, which are not yet fixed. We've learned a lot about the interplay and functioning of the stakeholder-specific matrix in the face of the differences related to the site." (stakeholder in MSG project)

Phase IV and beyond: expansion planned



Pictures: www.euref.de

III. Discussing influences

Uncertainty & Complexity of the landscape under transition

Uncertainties

...within the **project**

- Crossing borders: a real estate investor entering the world of science & scientists
- Developing process: interaction with politicians, district government, public

...derived from the **landscape (accidents, crises)**

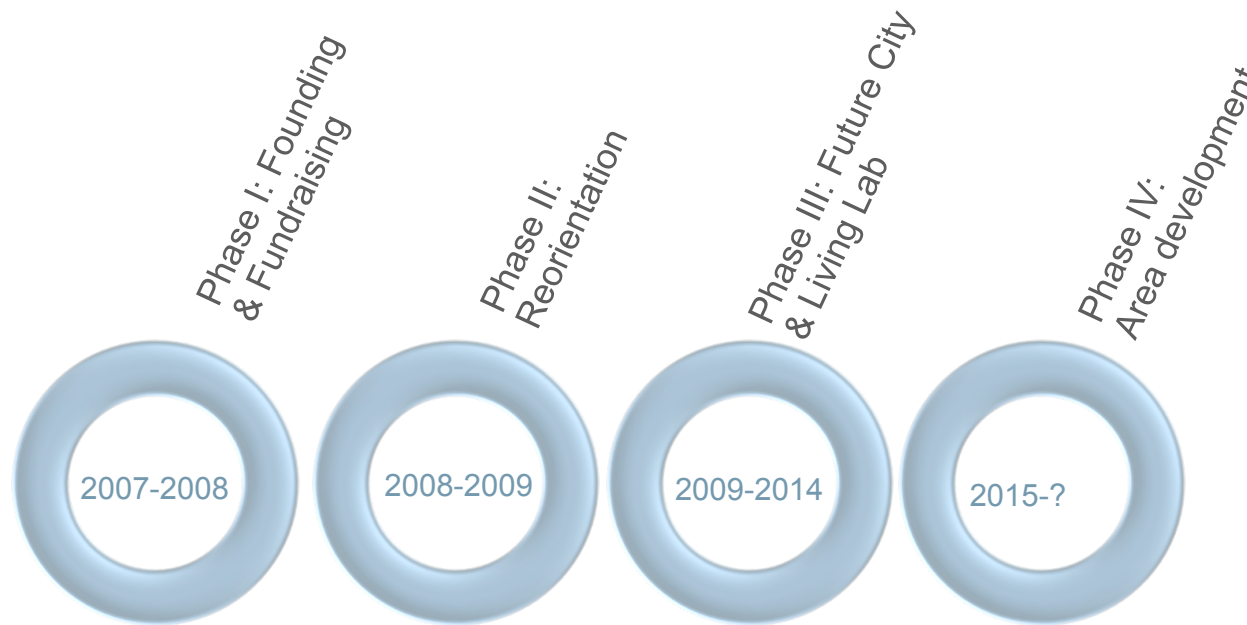
- Global financial crises (2008) – crash of Energy University project in phase I
- Fukushima & German Energiewende (2011) in phase III
- Shifting regulatory and political framework (e.g. EEG amendment (2000-2014); feed-in tariffs, liberalisation of the energy market (1998))

*“Energiewende has **extremely serious impacts**, the energy market is changing entirely, and we have to adapt. Like it was 20 years ago, we had planning security looking at the returns, that’s not the case anymore. [...] Sure, it’s producing an **extremely high level of uncertainty**. If you are used to stability and continuity for decades and only slow changes; and now one change after the other, clearly that’s creating uncertainty.”*
(energy company, stakeholder)

“the most challenging time right now”

III. Discussing influences changing constellation of actors & negotiation process

How do visions transform over time?



III. Discussing influences changing constellation of actors & negotiation process

Actor group constellation is changing over time

- plurality and differentiation, also of **reference systems** and **interests**

Actor groups show different degrees of involvement

- **Main actors** involved in the visioneering
 - Story telling, reinventing and developing of the imaginary
 - Cooperation between economic actors and scientists in projects
 - Setbacks - conflict solving strategies between main players
 - No consens but very diverse interests > attempts to collectivize an imaginary
- **Actors in the periphery**
 - Distancing themselves due to negotiation experiences and actual management

*“There is already a structure of trust grown between the **key players**, which is tested daily, I would say, because there are **numerous points of friction** [...] what we achieved so far led to a **core community**, even if there might be improvements and so on.” (tenant)*

III. Discussing influences changing constellation of actors & negotiation process

Visions are related to expectations (Borup et al. 2006; Brown & Michael 2002; van Lente 1993; Beckert 2014)

- actors settle down to fulfill their expectations, mostly economical
- individual expectations base on the respective field
- and influence the interpretation and **creation of the imaginary**

*If there is no one who is the driver, it will not work – the kind of driver who has a **vision as a driving force**. Everything else is just theory.” (early settler)*

Threats when the imaginary & action diverge

- Translation into action shows differences between the imaginary and procedures on the site (management, power constellation) > source of conflicts
- Credibility, attraction, newsworthiness decrease
> imaginary needs **continous development & translation & put into practice**

*“But in 2015, the only way to survive is, if we **make facts credible**, and not just a backdrop” (early settler)*

IV. Outcome

Imaginarities – dimensions of their effectiveness

- Basically, imaginaries are **unstable**
 - they offer a certain cohesion, but remain **fluid and fragile**
- and hold high **potential for conflict** –
 - depending on the constellation of actors / visioneers
 - as well as on environmental / contextual influences
 - **Need for stabilization**
- The cohesion of imaginaries evolves through **continuous work**:
 - imaginaries need to be renewed and reproduced
 - and they need further development: „1.0 to 2.0“
 - = visioneering is an ongoing process

„[...] **[Site] 2.0** clearly means more community building, not to leave it to the project developer, but to force him into it and to demand more from the tenants“ (visioneer)

IV. Outcome

The realization of a project, like a decentralized energy architecture, unfolds a relation between materiality and immateriality

- **Materiality**, as in material interests, products, processes, i.e.
 - development of the site
 - grid construction
 - Investments
 - Connected mobility table
- **Immateriality**, as in vision, mission statement, i.e.
 - story telling
 - recognizing, reinventing and developing the imaginary
 - negotiation and dealing with conflicts within the process
 - Cooperation between scientific and economic actors, e.g. in research projects

Phases show an interplay between materiality and immateriality which influences the making of the vision and its shifting over time.

IV. Outcome

- The site and its imaginary function as a **boundary object** for the heterogeneous actor groups and their diverging interests
- Actors make use of the imaginary - thereby contribute to its **modification**
- The immaterial dimension leaves enough **openness for identification** and “serve to bridge or mediate across different boundaries and [...] dimensions and levels” (Borup et al. 2006: 286) > “umbrella term”
- The material offers devices and financial **commitment and obligations** – economic interests are pursued
- Both dimensions are interdependent > what if they diverge?
- The imaginary needs to be **(re-)stabilized** > rituals of renewal and conflict-resolution
- and thereby **transforms** over time

Thank you for your attention!

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