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Pragmatism as a Philosophy-in-Use for Future-Making: Learning from the Bjarke Ingels Group

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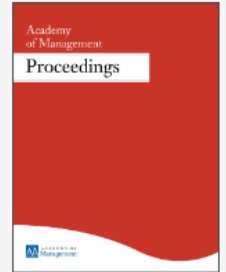
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Abstract

Research on future-making has sparked a burgeoning debate on how futures are imagined and constructed. However, we lack insights into how organizations can succeed at making actionable futures, i.e., futures that are perceived as desirable, yet feasible. Given the inherent tension between desirability and feasibility, organizations require adequate frameworks that guide the making of actionable futures. To this end, we propose that pragmatism can provide helpful guardrails. We illustrate the potential of pragmatism by drawing on the future-making language used in the communication of Bjarke Ingels Group, a globally renowned architecture firm. Furthermore, we discuss how pragmatic language can help building legitimacy across diverse groups of stakeholders. This study contributes to the emerging literature on future-making and organizational imagination. Managers, entrepreneurs, innovators, and policymakers will find value in this study as it offers guidance on leveraging pragmatism as a philosophy-in-use for future-making.

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