

# Novel “Futurescape” walking tours engage citizens directly with technology of the city

In November 2012, researchers at CNS-ASU piloted Futurescape City Tours (FCT), a novel approach to engaging citizens on issues of technology and society. FCT is the next iteration of CNS-ASU’s research on public deliberation, building on findings from the 2008 National Citizens’ Technology Forum. FCT’s focus is on equity and urban sustainability.

The FCT pilot took citizens of Phoenix on a walking tour to explore the past, present and future of the city. The citizens walked through downtown and visited several sites taking photographs and field notes to track their concerns and curiosities. They met with city officials, research scientists, business leaders and local administrators to engage in discussions about alternative futures, trade-offs and societal choices.

Following the success of the pilot tour, the FCT team is hosting a training for future site leaders in April 2013, and there will be five sites across North America conducting tours and research in the fall of 2013.



During the tour, the citizens photographed or noted anything that caught their eye or peaked their interest. The themes that came out of the photos and observations were used in further research and deliberation.

When the walking tour was over, the citizens uploaded their photos to an online archive, where they were studied in the following deliberative sessions, and shared at a public gallery exhibition.



**Dr. Cynthia Selin** explores future-orientation from an interdisciplinary perspective, asking questions about how foresight is applied in the governance of emerging technologies.

With **Dr. Kelly Campbell Rawlings** from the School of Public Affairs at ASU, she leads CNS-ASU’s Real-Time Technology Assessment (RTTA 3) exploring plausible futures, and public preferences of alternatives.

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