John Thackara Talks & Workshops

The world is not short of ideas, so why invite me as a speaker? I like Marcel Proust’s explanation: “the real act of discovery consists not in finding new lands, but in seeing with new eyes”. My talks combine outside-the-tent, big picture perspective with inspiring stories of real projects I’ve encountered around the world. We start a conversation: What small steps might you take, right now? how, and with whom? The benefits to you: a shared perception of new opportunities - and a determination to make something happen.

Topics For 2014

The grand challenges of our age entail system transformation: food, aging, energy, healthcare, cities. The design opportunity in every context is to determine: Where best to intervene in the system? How to connect with new partners in other domains? How to scale successful solutions?

Alive! Living Systems As Infrastructure
De-paving, food co-ops, river restoration, edible forestry, pollinator pathways: all these are early signals of a transition to living concepts of infrastructure. Keywords: smart cities; infrastructure; living systems; social innovation. Sample: my keynote at Poptech! is here; my lecture for Design In Action, in Scotland, is here.

Creativity and Social Innovation
From 'Paris as a Sponge' to Twitter-enabled markets, I describe the new solutions, and novel collaborative models, that are transforming the economy as we know it. Keywords: creativity; social innovation. Sample talk: my closing keynote at the Informal Economy Symposium, in Barcelona, is here.

What Makes A Change Lab Successful?
The best way to transform social and ecological systems is to 'seed' their edges with small experiments. But how? Keywords: collaborative services; learning networks; enabling platforms; civic labs; social enterprise; franchising. Sample: my talk on Big Data, for AMP, is here.

Sustainable Travel
Inspired by the sharing economy, a new generation of ‘leave things better’ travelers are using the power of networks to connect meaningfully with local communities. Keywords: Active travel; P2P Travel; sharing economy. Sample text: Green Tourism. A short TV interview about "What next after GDP?" is here.

Health and Care - The Social Dimension
How collaborative service networks - from child care, to dementia support - empowering people to work in equal and reciprocal relationship with professionals. Keywords: health; care; wellbeing; service innovation; social economy; participatory service networks; informal economy. Sample: My talk at Mayo Clinic is here.

Testimonials

“an excellent, thought-provoking session on Big Data” AMP, Sydney
“an insightful, engaging, and charismatic jury chairman” Stylepark AG, Curator, Audi Urban Future Award
“an inspiring presentation for our executive workshop” Ikea
“you lifted the conference and discussion to a high level” Oslo Architecture Triennale
“our high-level guests greatly appreciated your challenging talk” T-Mobile
“your lecture created an enormous buzz” Vision2020 Leicester
“you challenged us to look outside the square for inspiration” Queensland Tourism

Contact

If you would like me to speak at or facilitate your event, please email john (at) doorsofperception (dot) com