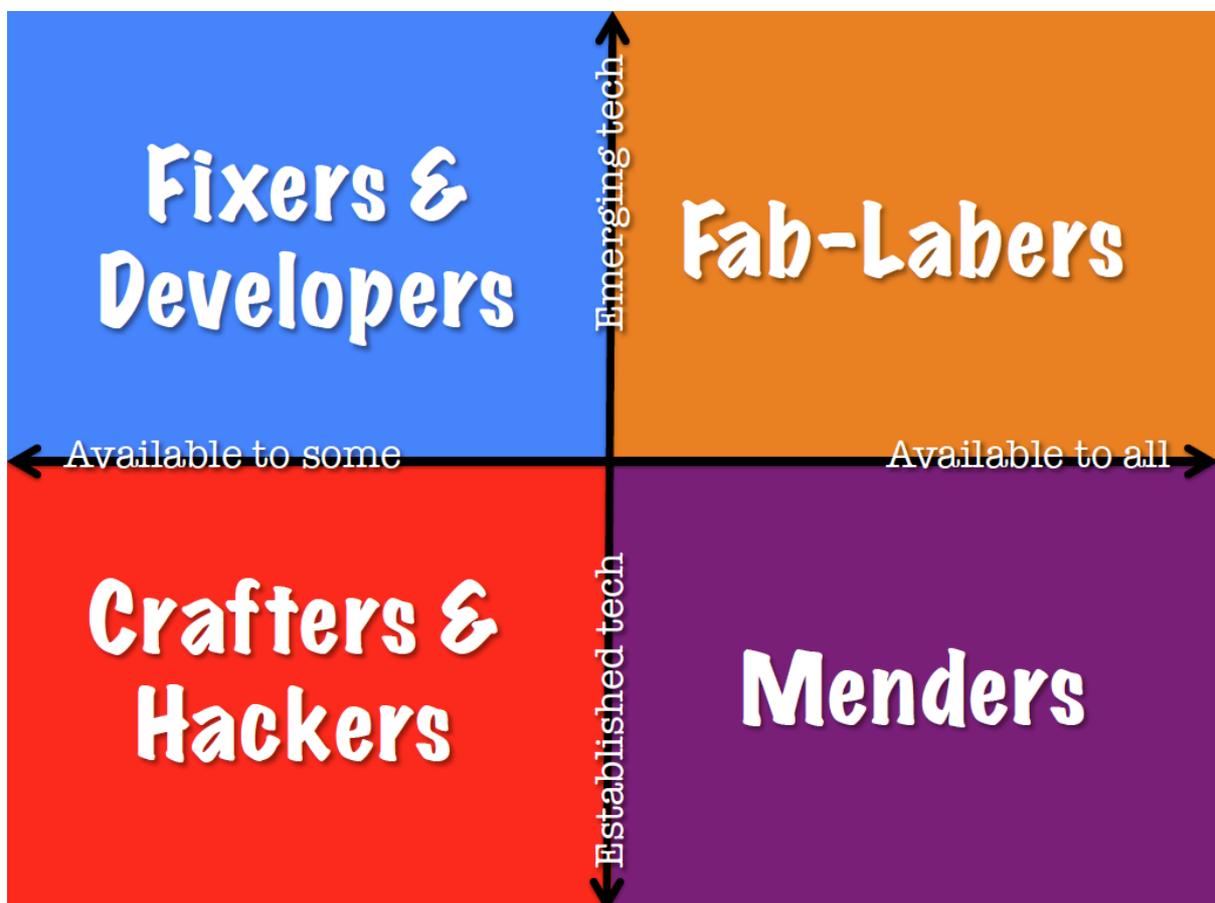


The purpose of this article is to share 4 scenarios for the future.

Rather than proposing one vision for the future, putting all of our eggs in one basket as it were, we suggest four scenarios for the future of D&T. To do this, we take into account two key tensions:

1. What is taught in D&T – established technologies (3D printing, laser cutting, using sewing machines and hand tools) or emerging technologies
2. Who D&T is available to – all pupils or only some

These technological and democratic tensions provide for four future scenarios.



Fixers & Developers

Here the subject is about high tech and emerging technologies that only a few selected pupils have access to. In the rooms, the space is designed for pupils to engage in and learn about design thinking and creativity for the pupils to think about how new technologies can be used.

Some of the work is around investigating practical purposes for new technologies but primarily the lessons are about using and learning how to use the new technologies. Much of the work is done using simulations and computers to model their solutions. Pupils are being prepared for careers in high tech industries.

Crafters & Hackers

D&T is still based on established technologies and processes from the previous decades. Here it is recognised that society will benefit from some pupils knowing how to use traditional skills. This is partly because of the resurgence of the need for people to make things. This subject meets the needs of society to 'craft', to be in touch with the resources and to make personal decisions. So, it focusses on human needs and practical function. Pupils who do D&T in this scenario are becoming equipped for self-sufficiency to be future entrepreneurs who meet local needs, for example working in, running and leading hackspaces. This scenario for D&T is about inquisitive, creative, practical pursuits.

Fab-Labers

In this scenario D&T is available for all, its content is around emerging technologies and, significantly, the implications of these new technologies on society. Because it is available to all pupils, it clearly has a high status and value for all.

This D&T thrives on debate in the classroom, pupils developing the skills of critical thinking and argument, where they discuss the ethics of new designs, and consider the changes to society, locally, nationally and globally. Much of the work is conceptual and virtual, with pupils modelling future scenarios and exploring the intended and unintended consequences of the new technologies.

Menders

Established technologies are dominant in the menders learning spaces. Pupils learn to use tools, equipment and processes. On first view, this D&T is not about global issues. It would appear to be about preparing for domestic home life. The subject content is around the home, processes needed for the home and family life.

However, there is more to it. As we become more mindful of the use of resources (cf Cradle to Cradle) society has become more interested in reusing, recycling, up cycling etc at home. It is seen that by equipping young people with these domestic, practical life skills then some of the imminent crises viewed in the future as we run out of resources could be addressed by this D&T. This D&T is about sustainable education.

Here, instead of proposing one future scenario we have proposed four because we there are value in each one. Taking any of these four scenarios prioritises some aspects of the good D&T we recognise today, leaving others obsolete. This will be true for any future vision of D&T; we need to be mindful of this when designing a future for D&T and be careful of what we wish for.