

Winter Semester 2022/2023

# SDAC Guest Lecture Series

## What the Heck Has Cultural Anthropology to Do with Chemistry & Corporate Foresight?

**\*Career-/Practitioner Talk**Björn Theis  
Evonik IndustriesMonday  
30.01.23  
18-20:00 c.t.  
Online

\*The lecture will be held via Zoom



Björn Theis is Vice President & Head of Foresight at Evonik. He is a member of the management team of Creavis, the strategic innovation unit and business incubator of Evonik AG. He holds a master's degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology, Philosophy, and English Studies from the University of Cologne. Currently, he works on the project "Sustainable Food Futures 2040," which investigates how to enable sustainable nutrition for the world's population of tomorrow. Previous to this, he and his team conducted the "The future(s) of the specialty chemicals industry" scenario project that derived consistent and plausible future pathways the industry might take in the future. Björn Theis teaches foresight at various universities; is a founder of the Conjectural Futures Network and a member of the Future Circle of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

Corporate foresight can be defined as the ability that enables an institution to detect chances and challenges early, interpret the consequences for the specific institution, and formulate effective responses to ensure the long-term success of it. Therefore, this lecture will address the question how to apply foresight methodologies in a corporate environment. By using examples of projects of the corporate foresight unit of the specialty chemicals company Evonik AG, the lecture examines best practices as well as working methods but also challenges in innovation and strategic corporate foresight. Furthermore, the lecture will discuss the question of what the Humanities, such as Cultural Anthropology, can and should contribute to studies of futures in such a technology-driven field.

Please contact Prof. Dr. Viola Thimm  
to register:

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ELITE MASTER'S PROGRAM  
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