Hope in higher education represents water lilies that grow in a dark pond because something enchanting happens. Inspired by Claude Monet's artwork, everything in this painting is essentially hopeful.

The garden behind the bridge is fairy-tale and to me, it feels like the world of our students: bright, vibrant, hopeful to learn something new, and rich with multiple colours they bring to the university. The darker parts fade and higher education surfaces as a safe space. Learning is symbolised by the bridge. It can be wobbly and a few planks might be missing, but it needs to be crossed. But students do not walk alone. Educators meet them halfway, build sturdy handrails and smooth the path ahead. Most importantly, they can hold out a welcoming hand, either physical or digital, guiding students safely to the other side.

When is connection is forged, the water lilies flourish. There are many, many water lilies in the pond, showing that there is much hope in the world of higher education and it will not wither until the very last water lily is gone.