



# DESIGNING FOR THE CO-CREATION OF VALUE

Facilitate, Engage and Empower new models for creative dialogue  
between organisations and end-users through design.

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**MASTER GRADUATION PROPOSAL  
DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN,  
EINDHOVEN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

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# PREFACE

## Let's talk about innovation.

Pablo Picasso once said that everybody is born an artist but that the only problem is to remain an artist once we grow up. Unlike his taste for art I do share his opinion on how our creativity gets suppressed as we get older. In fact; as kids we reach our creativity peak at the age of five but by the time we have reached our eight birthday that creativity has halved<sup>1</sup>.

I believe that in the way our current educational and organisational systems are build up they still focus on the needs of industrialism. These systems are linear, like a manufacturing process, and aim at acquiring skills and knowledge that are mainly necessary for financial well-being. There is hardly any room for autonomy, curiosity and creativity. We are being taught to conform and express a behaviour that fits with a label and hopefully will give us a job.

Within this system innovation has become a slogan that focuses on competitive power and economic growth rather than on what it is intended for; challenging the things we

take for granted<sup>2,3</sup>. Besides, I believe that innovation is a creative process of being open to experiences from other people from different backgrounds and in which collaboration is key. In nowadays society, where we are more connected than ever before, new ideas are a network of individual knowledge that, once connected, create new forms of experience that build on the creativity already present in our society (figure 1).

I think we need to reconsider the way we look at human capacities and realise we are not only learning and working in order to materialise but, more importantly, to give meaning. This can only be done by a shift from the existing industrial model to new models that aim at social innovation<sup>4</sup>. Within these models I want to design the right conditions for people to use their individual creativity to a full potential in order to collaboratively create social value. After all, money is temporary but meaning is eternal.

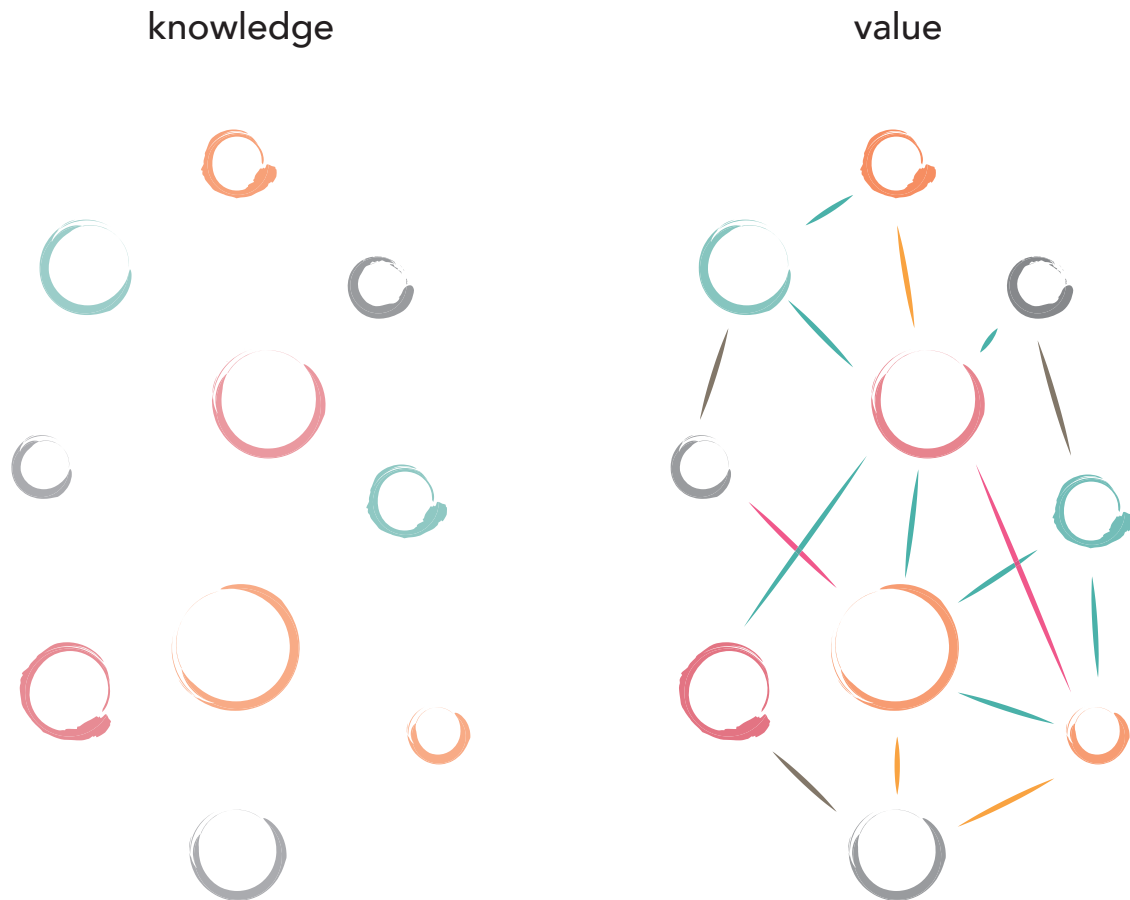
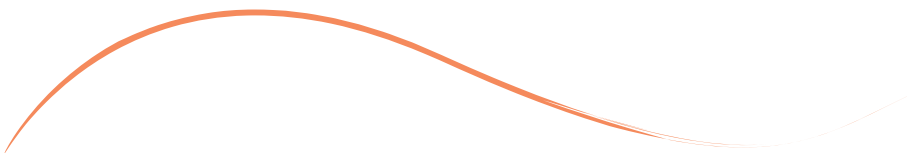


fig.1 image by cartoonist HughMcLeod showing that knowledge only becomes valuable when you make connections.

*I can't come up with any new ideas if all I  
do is exist in my own life.*

Emi Kolawole - Stanford d.school



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# INTRODUCTION

This graduation proposal is built around my attitude towards the way we are using innovation in our current society. You might ask if it is wise to question something that has become fully established in our way of living and incorporated in all types of development and progressiveness. My answer would be that I think it is part of my role as a designer to question the consequences of something we so easily take for granted. If I look to the people behind the Fairphone<sup>5</sup> who questioned the way we are producing smartphones, or the people from Dopper<sup>6</sup> who felt obliged to do something about plastic waste, I see that such initiatives are about people who are frustrated about something they see in their environment and want to do something about it. Taking on this attitude has led to many successful social enterprises<sup>7</sup> that are dealing with the challenges of nowadays society. For me this means that I am questioning the current focus on monetary value creation. I want to show that by bringing people together and using collective creativity new forms of value creation can cause real impact.

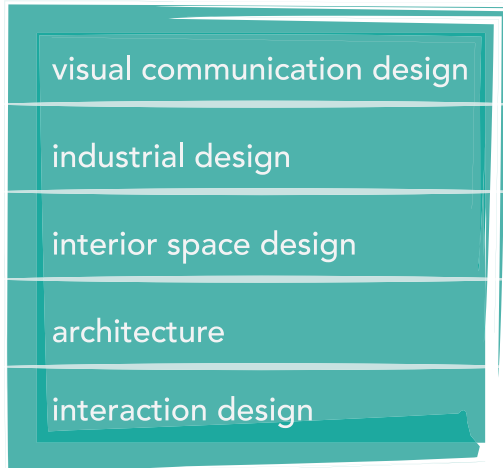
With this document I outline my strategy and personal perspective on my Final Master Project. It will explain why I want to achieve certain goals based on my experience, related work and why I see value in that for the project and how I want to achieve this.

Enjoy reading!



Trough several projects, workshops, master-classes and other engaging activities I have explored the field of human centred design in the last couple of years. I discovered my empathic abilities when working with different stakeholders and designing for societal challenges. I noticed how I like to stimulate people to think differently, get them out of their comfort zone and combine analytical tools and generative techniques to guide an output oriented process. These activities made me realise that my interests were shifting away from the traditional design profession that focuses on industrial production and more towards new emerging design disciplines that focus on alternative forms of conceptualisation and embodiment like design for experience and design for transformation<sup>8</sup>.

### traditional design disciplines



### new emerging design disciplines



*fig. 2 A visual of how the traditional design disciplines are transforming to a new focus (Sanders & Stappers, 2012).*



Within this scope I started to see my role as a designer as a facilitator of creative activities to engage people in creating value. I believe that by doing that I can balance people's consumptive activities and give opportunities for making choices about how to behave in our society. It is during these kind activities of making connections, talking and listening that I feel most comfortable and useful.

This way of working has grown on me over the last couple of years and can be found in several of my projects. The following three projects are short examples of how I have approached different types of design challenges.

### **B2.2 Project - A New Light on Dementia**

Within this project I have shown how designers can come up with solutions for complex challenges regarding ageing and health issues in times of budget cuts and quick change. By exploring with empathic methods I made connections between different stakeholders and inspired people to reflect on their own potential.



### **M1.1 Project - Influence of Designed Resonance on Sociality**

With this research project I studied how designed details in interaction could influence the sociality between two strangers. I focused on the interaction between two individuals when interacting with the same artefact. By doing a qualitative study with a prototype I have searched for ways engagement probes can be used to build a constructive dialogue.



### **M1.2 Project - Designing Social Interaction in Neighbourhoods**

This project aimed at eliciting social interaction through design in a neighbourhood in Eindhoven. I explored how multi-directional learning between students could result in a design that could facilitate the co-creation of solutions for well-being.



These past experiences have made me search for my position within the field of design and research. For me it became clear that I started using the insights and knowledge gained through these experiences into a form of abductive reasoning<sup>9</sup>. This approach aims at finding the most likely solution for a challenge based on the, often incomplete, information at hand. This means that the new disciplines in which I find myself most comfortable can't directly be labelled within the landscapes of design (figure 3). I see the way I design as a journey through this map and taking the approaches and methods and their corresponding tools and techniques as a mean to design for a specific purpose.

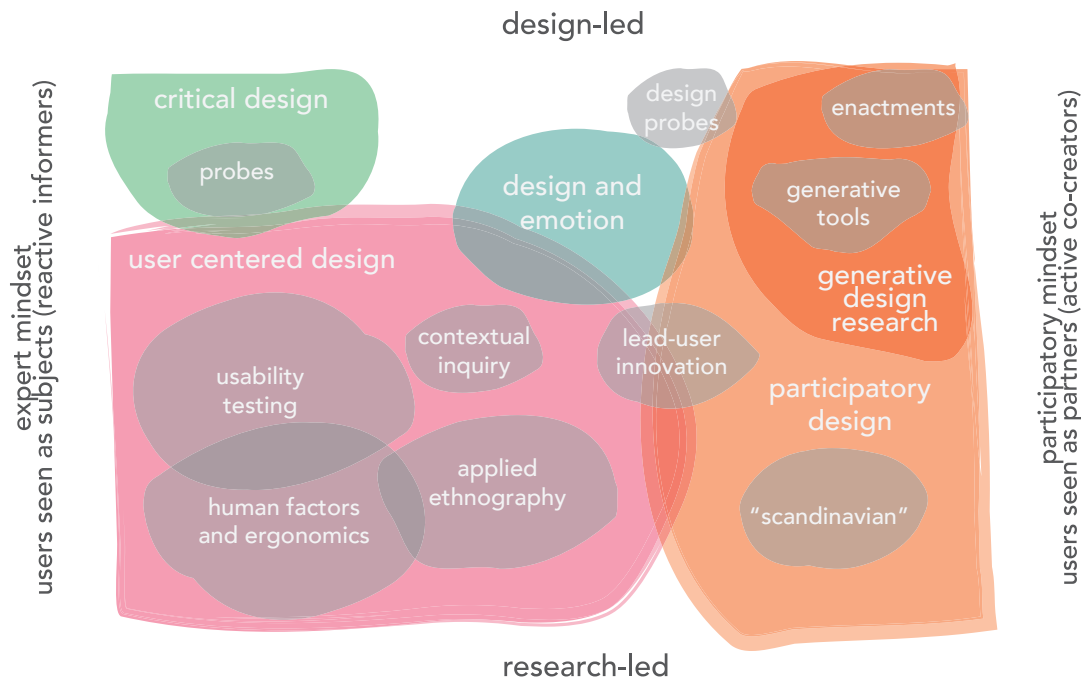


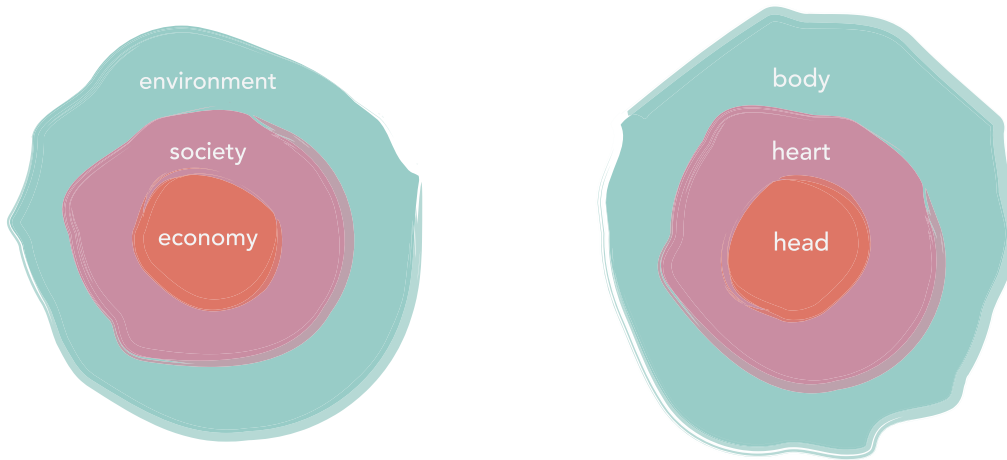
fig. 3 The emerging landscape of design research approaches and methods (Sanders & Stappers, 2012).

## PROJECT BRIEF

Nowadays we are dealing with a growing amount of societal challenges like climate change, ageing and energy consumption. These problems are becoming more and more transparent due to the possibilities of online debate<sup>10</sup>. The collective thinking that is being facilitated because of this transparency results in the realisation that we cannot continue living the way we have been living<sup>8</sup>. At the same time there is a new generation becoming economically active that has to face these emerging challenges. This 'Generation Y' is described as a generation that aims at a form of sustainability that not only focusses on energy and clothing but also on a work-life balance, better living conditions and personal fulfilment. They fill in their lives, against all expectations, in a way that releases pressure and makes them happier and more meaningful<sup>11</sup>.

When designing for these changes we cannot rely on the same knowledge and tools that we used to design products and services that are desirable and satisfying to use on the short term. In order to design for these forms of well-being the attention has to shift from a focus on the objects of design to a focus on the purpose of design<sup>12</sup>. In order to facilitate this Sanders & Stappers (2012) suggest to support conviviality and aim at

a balance between consumptive activities and the ability to participate in creative activities. Indications for change can be found in the recent interest and enthusiasm for design thinking. Many entrepreneurs but also larger corporations starting to look into value creation and new business models that go beyond fulfilling personal consumer needs<sup>13,14</sup>. In practice there are already numerous projects that implement these new ways of innovation. For example; the Learning on the Move project by Hummels et al.<sup>15</sup> aims at developing eco-systems in neighbourhoods in which learning and living are intertwined. The goal of the Bridges Project by Counterpoint<sup>16</sup> is to bring insights of academic research into organisational and political structures. Both projects look at different ways of creating social value with either a bottom-up or top-down approach. My graduation project finds itself in the interplay between these kind of top-down and bottom-up approaches. It takes on the perspective of a person as part of society as well as that person as part of the economy. It aims at designing for a creative dialogue that will build bridges between work and private life to show how they are related to an individual model of fulfilment (figure4).



*fig. 4 Figure to show how I see the different elements of the project related to one another (left) and the translation to a human model of fulfilment (right).*

This means that the project touches upon principles of motivation, behaviour change and psychology in order to connect the needs from our social environment more with the needs within our work environment. The designs should aim at a change in attitude towards the current challenges of our society and a more pro-active, sustainable, self-empowering behaviour.

Furthermore I want to stimulate an awareness within the companies and organisations involved about how they can benefit from facilitating these kind of motivational needs. This requires showing possibilities for new sustainable business models that incorporate specific socio-cultural and economic challenges<sup>14</sup>. The essence of the project is to take elements from a design process, rather than a management process, to see how with new models for innovation we can work towards more sustainable forms of change.

### **Design opportunities:**

- Engagement probes

Using the principles of engagement probes to design tools and interventions that have the specific goal of stimulating conversation and discussion.

- Empathy

Connect people's experiences by designing methods that will allow people to step into someone else's shoes and create new perspectives.

- Self-actualisation

Look into principles of psychological needs and how they can be facilitated through design.

# APPROACH

In order to come to these forms of awareness and attitude change I am going to use an iterative process that aims at capturing value rather than consulting an answer to a question. The basis of this process builds on the three steps of facilitating, engaging and empowering. Within these steps exchanges of co-creating activities and design interventions will be used to create insight in and value for the context and user group.

## 1. Facilitate

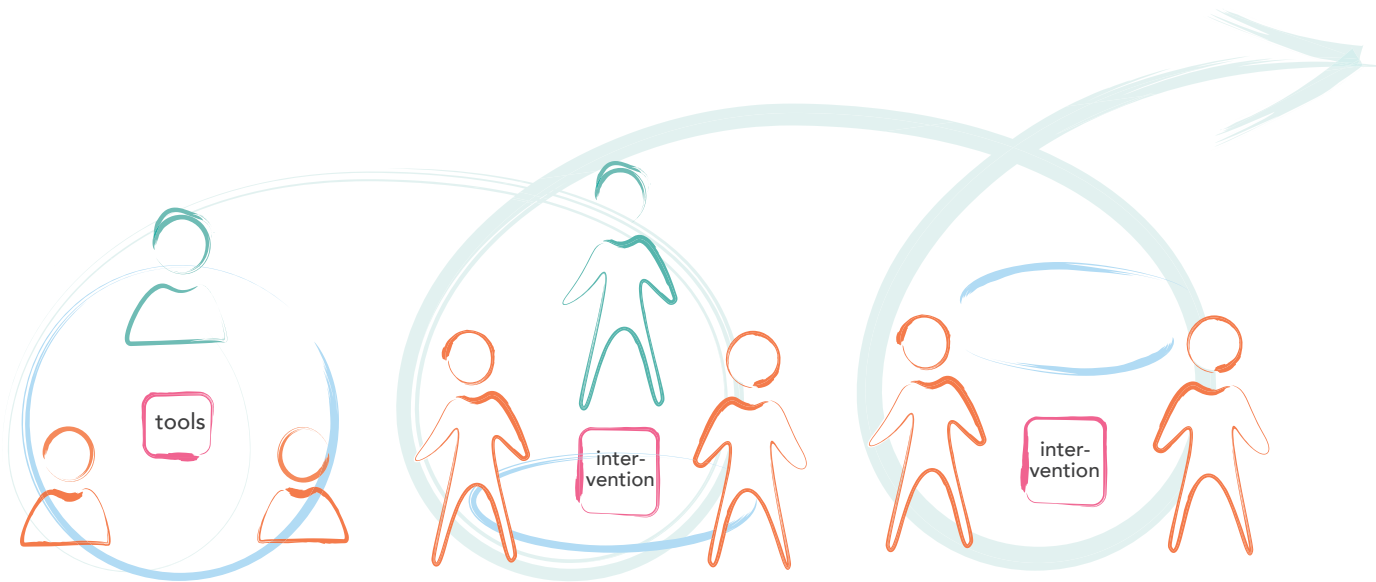
In the first phase I will explore the two sides of the story. I will do research for both the perspective of the person as part of the society and as part of the economy. For the first perspective I will look into a set of motivation theories and see how both the current and new generation are taking in their position towards work-life balance. Through a set of creative workshops I will explore how these insights link to stories of people. For the second perspective I will prepare a benchmark presentation that aims at capturing the value of the project and can be presented to possible clients. With a company or organisation as client I will then dive into a specific business culture with again creative workshops and try to create a deep and holistic understanding of the relations between the two perspectives in context.

## 2. Engage

During the second phase of the project the co-creating activities will be translated into design interventions. The aim is to create tools that can visualise new possibilities and (low-fidelity) prototypes for people to experience. The insights from the societal and economic perspectives are combined to design artefacts that focus on the dialogue between the organisation and the end-user.

## 3. Empower

The last phase is used to implement a new activity system into reality in a way that it can facilitate a long term attitude change. During this period of time the designed and refined artefacts will be used to observe and analyse the effects it has on the desired dialogue between the two perspectives.



*fig. 5 Illustration of the main emphasis of each phase. From left to right; facilitating a process to discover and define, engaging with users to develop interventions and finally delivering an intervention to empower them.*

The implementation of this process cannot be linear. In order to develop, test and refine the interventions that are created several smaller cycles are required to discover which ideas work best. This means that the phases will have both several overlapping and reciprocating elements from each phase. Within each phase there will be elements of discovering, defining, developing and delivering<sup>17</sup>. Depending on the process in time the phases will have more emphasis on respectively discovering and defining in the facilitating phase, developing in the engaging phase and delivering in the empowering phase (figure 5).

# PLANNING & DELIVERABLES

## semester 1

FACILITATE

*Discover & Define*

- Theoretical framework.
- Benchmark and value presentation.
- Expert meetings (Lu Yuan, Rob Bröker).
- A suitable partner
- Co-creation workshops.

DELIVERABLES

## semester 2

ENGAGE

*Develop*

- Design interventions
- Co-reflection workshops

DELIVERABLES

EMPOWER

*Deliver*

- Final Design
- Design analysis
- Process report
- Process video
- Research findings

DELIVERABLES

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