

Co-Design Experiences Design Crit Notes

Why Co-Design?

- "Nothing for us without us" design mentality
- Difference from focus groups

Notes

- Isolated sessions vs. continual / ongoing participation
- e.g. BiT - what next? how to make the process transparent, "ignorable" (I know what's happening, I can choose to participate or not, I trust those who are working on it)
- quotidian
- compensation/pay- how to sustain it?
- How do you continually practice co-design?
 - how do you sustain frequent co-design? how do you have people available to do it?
 - How do you address the long term economics of co-design
 - Budget in projects
 - Build communities, tools, and platforms that facilitate
 - do smaller, less formal "sessions", more spontaneous
- Balance opportunities to self-select groups, and help get groups out of ruts
- Encourage people to do things that they are not usually comfortable with - maybe set this expectation in the beginning
 - Do an exercise to help embrace their discomfort - for example, do a drawing "Creative Confidence"
 - Work individually and in groups - multiple opportunities for expression (individual and communal)
 - Comfort - Learning - Panic zones <http://www.thempira.org.uk/social-pedagogy/key-concepts-in-social-pedagogy/the-learning-zone-model/>
- Facilitation style matters, adapt, improvise
- How could we introduce the tools at the beginning / in a warm-up activity e.g. the lego etc - that can then be used in the co-design process itself?
- Get participants comfortable with different ways of working, or find which ways they are comfortable working, etc
- How can the tools be a part of the culture of co-design
- Organic conversation - where no questions were asked, but sharing spontaneously happened.
- There's a difference between doing work in people's spaces/communities and inviting people into our lab
 - Setting matters.

Recent Co-Design Sessions

MTO Co-Design Session

BiT Co-design Session 1

- Participants were chosen based on previous relationship to the project.
 - Would have liked to have broader participation
- Structured around a known issue but unclear what the "solution" or design is

BiT Co-design Session 2

- More concrete about features and things they wanted to see in the knowledge platform
- It was a challenge to have participants move into thinking more concretely.
- Lines of power were defined by lines of expression
- How do you mix / organize the groups?
 - the groups in the event were somewhat homogenous.
- suggest multiple processes/ways of working and use them all in one group

PhET Create-a-Thon

Alternative Facilitation Techniques

- [Liberating Structures](#)
- Rashida Phillips - [Afro-Futurist Affair](#)
- Jeanne Van Heeswijk -

Other Co-Design Experiences

Preferences for Global Access (PGA) - First Discovery Tool

quotidian — "of or occurring every day; daily." Also, "common, ordinary occurrence"

Questions

Below are some thoughts I put together last year in prep for sub-teaching an SFI class:

Remaining critical of your own practice and anyone you're doing co-design with

What is co-design?

1. Is co-design just doing something together – and then how is it different from participatory design? It seems it's not just this. Power differential (us vs. them)
2. Is it we're on the same level and doing this together?
 - a. But then why am I paid to be a designer at my job?
 - b. What is my qualification? What is my expertise?
 - c. How do folks get paid? How do you appropriately show appreciations? Who gets money and how much?
 - d. "inviting" – words matter – you're invited to someone else's space – reinforces power

This is new: we want to create it but haven't figured it out yet

1. This is the ethos (break down the barriers between 'designer' and 'user') but we're not there yet
2. Co-design is aspirational – the word is aspirational
3. Doesn't absolve you from empathy and even requires more

How can those of us with design jobs do this?

1. "We weren't experts in sound – we aren't sound people – we tried things out together"
 - a. in some ways not being experts helped us co-design together
 - b. no competition
 - c. genuine collaboration
 - d. Can you do co-design with an expert – what is an expert?
 - i. Depth and breadth
 - ii. Privilege of research and of being a designer is doing this in many contexts and regularly and learning from it
 - iii. Participants are brought in because they're living a life (which they are an expert in – their own life)
 - iv. Is it possible to quiet the expertise? Is that desirable? Can we re-envision using expertise?

At least we know it's about having those for whom the outcome is for involved in the process of creation

1. but how much participation and when?? Early?, middle?, late?
2. Can they really continue? Do they really contribute? What do we do with their contributions?

The problem of tokenism

1. Just like personas being used to represent entire demographics
2. if you lean on that one person to represent more than one person you fail