

Enhancing Inclusive Wayfinding

A strategic framework to support design practitioners to improve wayfinding in Dutch metro stations for people with visual impairments and low literacy.

Navigating Dutch metro stations presents significant challenges beyond physical access. While current accessibility standards focus on infrastructure, they often overlook the informational and cognitive barriers that create stressful, confusing journeys for many users, particularly those with visual impairments and low literacy. Research for this project revealed that fragmented regional governance leads to inconsistent wayfinding systems, undermining passenger confidence and independence.

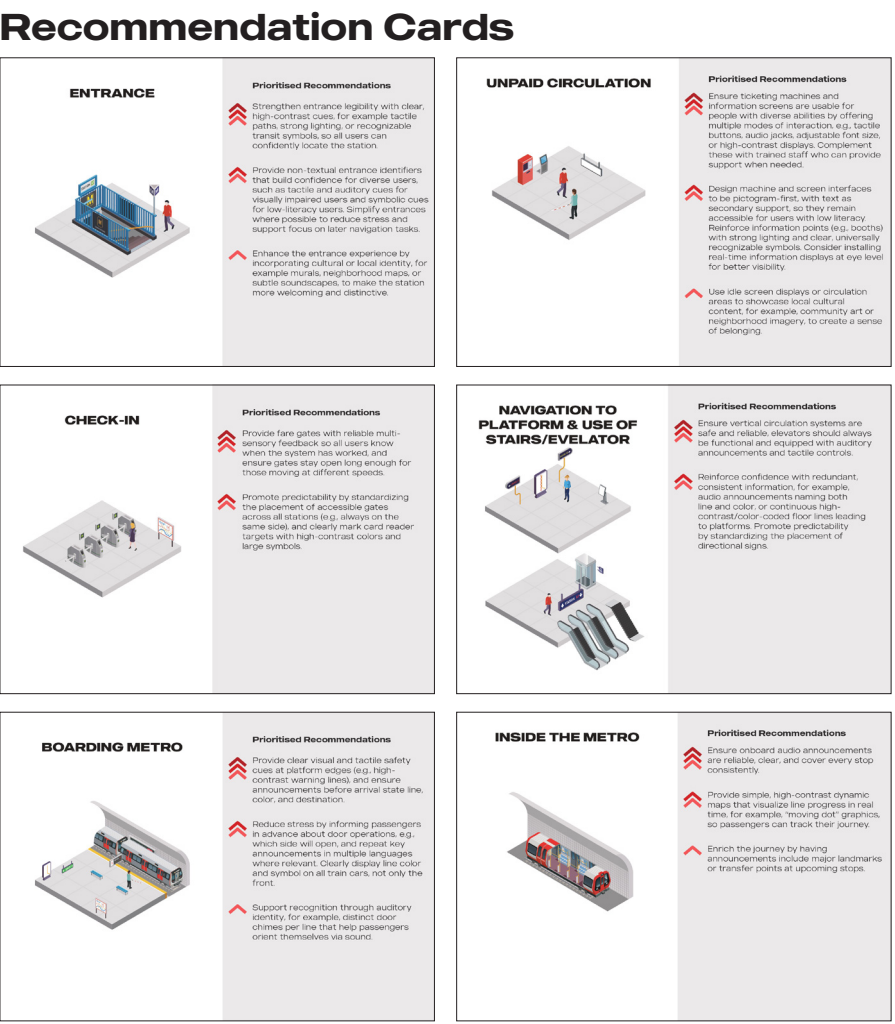
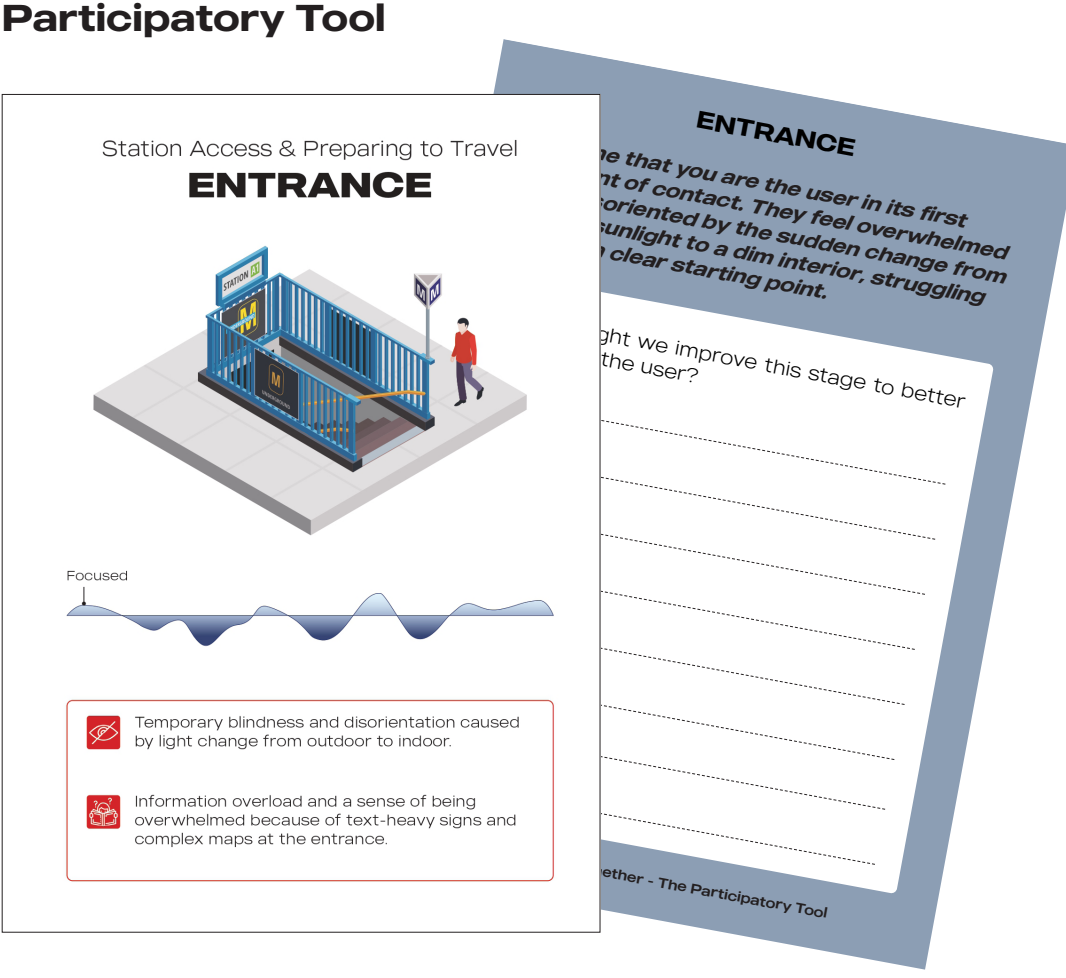
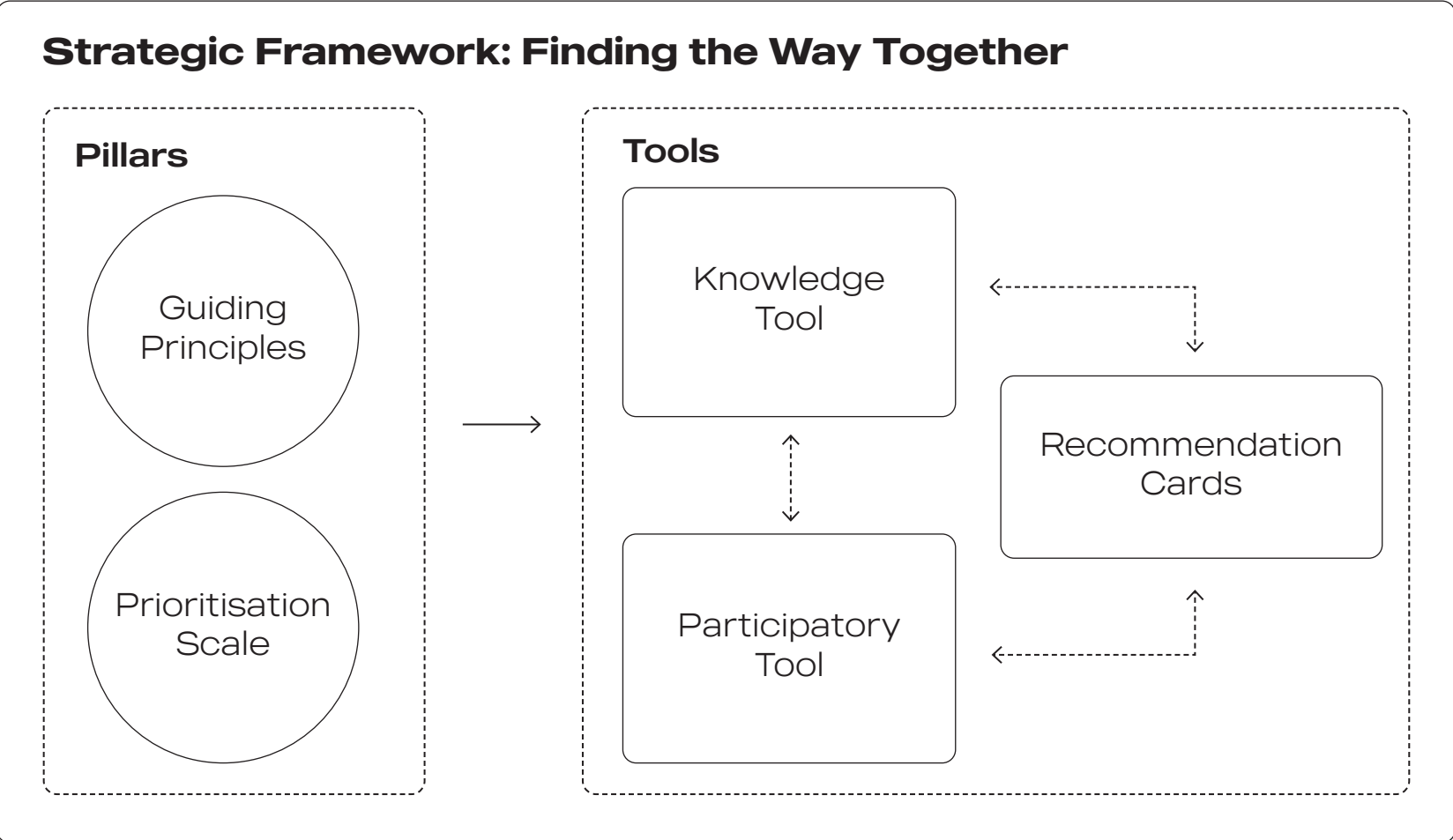
To address this systemic issue, this thesis introduces “Finding the Way Together,” a strategic framework designed to empower design practitioners to implement truly inclusive design. It is not a single solution, but a process-oriented framework for diagnosis and co-creation. The framework consists of three integrated components:

- The Knowledge Tool: a detailed journey map, combined with blueprint elements, that visualizes user actions, emotions, and critical pain points, and other significant factors, offering detailed insights into barriers and opportunities across all stages of the user experience. This tool is a research-based reference for deep analysis and consultation by the design practitioners.
- The Participatory Tool: a set of interactive, physical tiles for use in workshops with stakeholders, designed to build empathy and facilitate collaborative problem-solving.
- The Recommendation Cards: a deck of actionable design suggestions, prioritized to guide decision-making from essential features to enriching user experiences.

By making the invisible barriers of wayfinding tangible, “Finding the Way Together” provides a practical method to shift the design process from mere compliance to deep empathy, fostering the creation of metro environments that are not just accessible, but also welcoming and easily navigable, improving the overall travel experience.



Picture taken by the author and edited with AI.

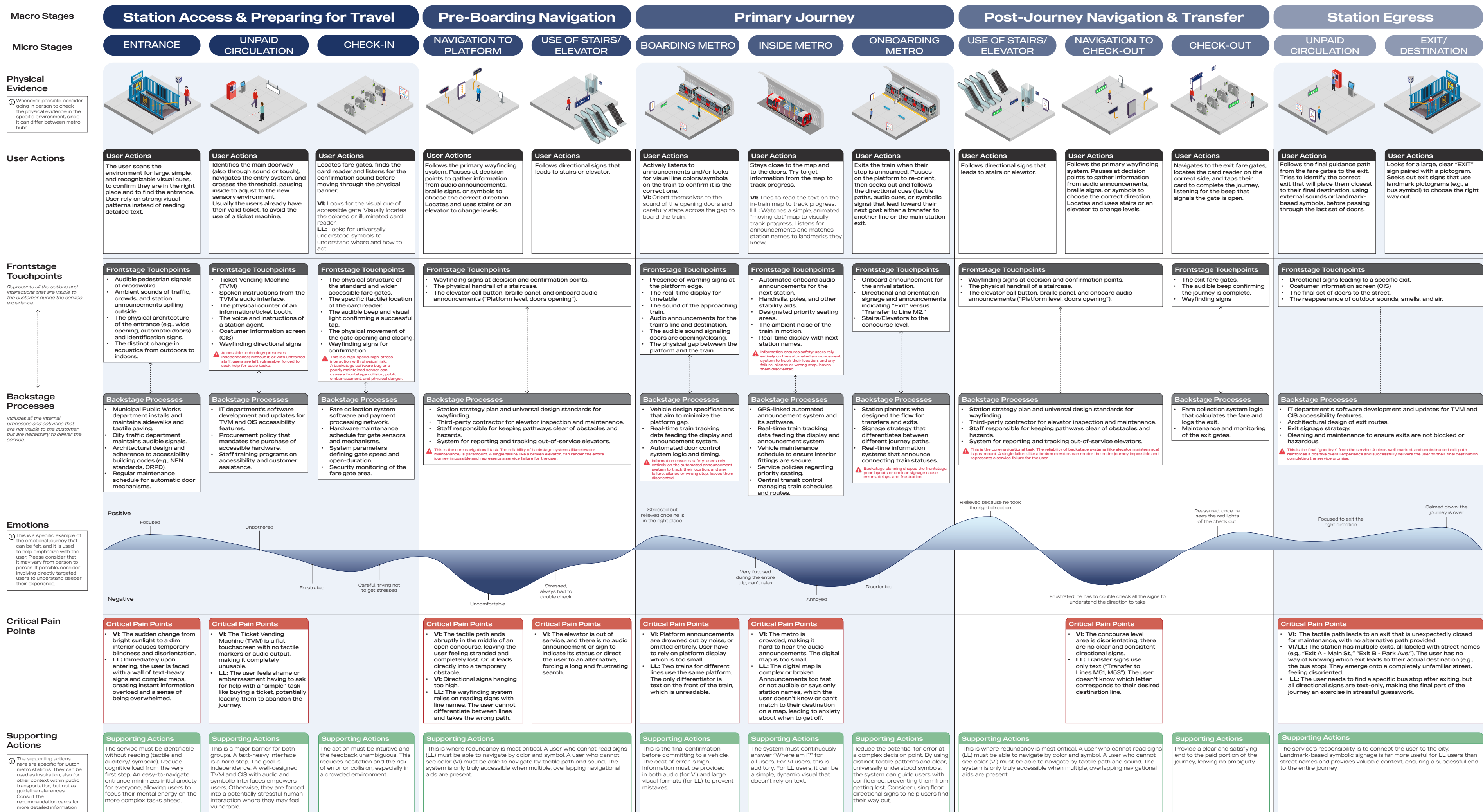


All the elements of the Participatory Tool and Recommendation Cards can be found in the Thesis report.

Knowledge Tool

Finding the Way Together

Design practitioner's Knowledge Tool for Inclusive Wayfinding in Dutch Metro Stations for Visually Impaired (VI) and Low Literate (LL) people.



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