hey theys!

hey theys!

hey theys!

hey theys!

an interactive art installation on queer sexuality

Imara Stemvers

hey theys!

hey theys!

hey theys!

hey theys!

hey theys!

hey theys!

Imara Stemvers

Master thesis Design for Interaction
Imara Stemvers
5050065
Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering
Delft University of Technology
April 2026

Supervisory team
Froukje Sleeswijk Visser | chair
Department of Human-Centred Design | CoDesigning Social Change
Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering | TU Delft

Céline Offerman | mentor
Department of Knowledge and Intelligence Design | Internet of Things
Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering | TU Delft

TU Delft Delft University of Technology

hey theys!

an interactive art installation on queer sexuality

Preface

Before we get to the real stuff, I want to dedicate a moment to how this project changed me, instead of how I influenced this project. Sexuality is a personal topic, and there's a couple of things I want to discuss.

Sexuality is not the easiest topic to talk about. It's the charm of the topic - it's sensitive, taboo, provoking - but it also makes it horribly difficult to discuss with people. I learnt *so much* on how to present a project, especially when the audience is in no way familiar with your topic, or worse, thinks it's irrelevant.

Talking about talking, I realised how much I like talking. Talking *with* people. Listening to them. Hearing their experiences. It's not a surprise to myself that I'm extroverted, but throughout this project, I started to own it. I'd like to have a job talking to people all day. That would be amazing.

Lastly, I'm not going to lie, I started out very ambitious and positive and hopeful and like every graduate ever, this project was *intense*, and I worked long days, and it really got me down (figure 1). To keep the spirits up (and document the brainwaves), I make comics.

Because this is *my* thesis and my way of communicating as a designer, I tell the story of my project with help of these comics. And I added a couple of jokes to this thesis. Because life's a party but you got to be your own piñata.

Anyways, enjoy the read.

Imara Stemvers
April 2026



Figure 1: Me writing this thesis. Well, not actually. I started writing in January and this was me during the summer before that. I was preparing the project then. Anyways...

Abstract

This thesis describes the graduation project of Imara Stemvers. Within the project, an interactive art installation was developed that lets visitors explore their sexuality.

There is an absence of queer perspectives in Design for Sexuality (DfS). To enable the reintroduction of these perspectives, their representation must be facilitated through enabling the queer community to actively participate in visualising their experiences. The selected design form for this is an installation.

Queer theory was analysed to constitute an overview of queer concepts, which was validated through conducting an interview research that gathered empirical lived experiences of these queer concepts. Through Reflexive Thematic Analysis, five themes emerged. This enabled determining the main message of the installation: sexuality is fluid, not linked to binaries, and open to change over time.

Three design directions were drafted that might represent the concept in an installation, through expert interviews and auto-ethnographic research. One concept was chosen: an installation as a reflective space, in which visitors can reflect on queer concepts personally and are invited to actively participate with them. The target group was shifted from queer persons to non-queer persons, in order to give the design intention a larger potential reach.

From Foucault's theory on queer spatial design, a list of requirements was drawn. These requirements served as inspiration to ideate and prototype from, and a final design concept was created. This concept was constructed and exhibited in the main hall of the faculty of Industrial Design Engineering of the TU Delft.

Through evaluating the concept in action, it can be concluded that the installation enables representation of queer experiences in the domain of sexuality. The queer experience within sexuality was found to go beyond the sexual. To assure a more complete representation, the installation must be developed into this future direction.

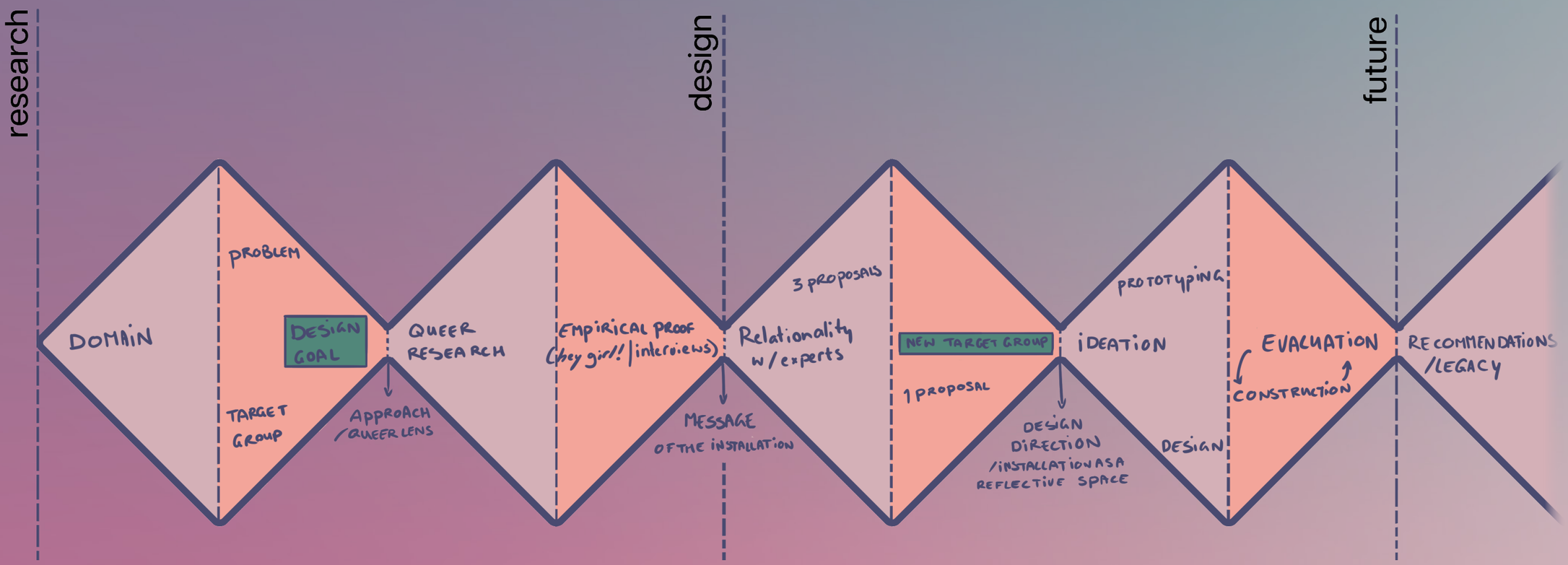


Figure 2: the design proces, visualised as double diamond of diverging and converging (or in this case, quadruple diamond).

IOFESTIVAL
OVERDRIVE
30.05.2026
DP5
Bachelor
Eind Project
DIGITAL
PROTOTYPING
HELPDESK
hey th eys!
hey

Definition of terms

AFAB – assigned female at birth (Devaraja, 2026).

Ally – someone who is heterosexual and/or cisgender, but who is activist for LGBTQIA+-rights. Important distinction is that an ally actually does actions that support the queer community, and not only voices support (Cumming-Potvin, 2023).

Cishet – cisgender heterosexual.

FLINTA – acronym for Female, Lesbian, Intersex, Non-binary, Transgender, and A-gender (Cambridge Dictionary, 2026).

Queer – though the exact meaning is subject of discussion, the general meaning observed in this thesis is: the approach of gender and sexuality that is critical to the concept of a stable identity and instead views identity as fluid over time (Wiesner-Hanks, 2024) (see chapter 02).

LGBTQIA+ – acronym of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, with the plus sign representing all other gender identities and sexual orientations (Gaycenter, 2026).

Sexual orientation – how a person feels sexually about people of various genders (Anderson, 2023), not to be confused with:

Sexuality – a person's sexual behaviours, attractions, (dis)likes, kinks and preferences (Anderson, 2023) (see chapter 01.1).

Sextech – sexual technology.

WLW – women who love women. Also called 'sapphic women' in this research.

Positionality

As a member of the community I research, and the auto-ethnographic parts in my research, this positionality exists to create self-awareness of how my subjectivity might influence my research.

A positionality statement reflects the position that the researcher has chosen to adopt within a given research study, and how this influences their research actions (Goundar, 2025).

I identify as a cis woman, though I believe that gender, in its binary form of our society's world-view, is a construct (see chapter 02). I include perspectives in my thesis of people of all genders.

A major part of this thesis concerns empathising with non-queers (see chapter 04.4). I cannot imagine anymore for myself how it is not to be queer, only how it *used to be*.

I believe it a relatively safe time to be queer. To be queer is legal (in the Netherlands), and the terminology exists to describe oneself. I stress the word 'relative'. Hate exists. When documenting and converting life experience of the queer community into data, the process always necessarily entails a reduction of that experience – along with its historical and conceptual burdens (D'Ignazio, 2012). It is my inherent fallacy as a designer.

Yet also, as a designer, I believe in the 'general human good'. I believe people are good, and kind, and we can love one another. I have been exposed to a lot of beauty through the stories I documented during this project. I hope through this thesis, a little of that positive exposure carries over to you, reader.

Table of contents

Preface 4
Abstract 6
The Design 8
Definition of terms 10
Positionality 11

Chapter 01: Introduction 16
01.1 The Domain – why sexuality? 18
01.1.2 The absence of queer perspectives in DfS 20
01.2 The Problem 21
01.2.1 Representation: active participation instead of passive portrayal 21
01.2.2 Empowerment: discourse and consensus between diverse narratives 22
01.2.3 What is 'queer'? 22
01.2.4 Establishing the design goal 23
01.3 Design Goal 24
01.4 The Target Group 26
01.5 Design Approach 28
01.5.1 Queer lens 29

Chapter 02: *hey girl!* – empirical proof of queer theory 32
02.1 Queer theory 35
02.2 The abolition of binaries 36
02.3 Intersectionality 38
02.4 *hey girl!* – researching lived experiences 40
02.4.1 Recruitment 42
02.4.2 Method & process 43
02.4.3 Thematic Analysis 44
02.4.4 Results 46
02.4.5 Discussion 52

Chapter 03: Defining: from hey girl! to hey theys! 54
03.1 Design techniques 58
03.1.1 Auto-ethnography 58
03.1.2 Working relationally 60
03.1.3 Exhibit-Based Research 61
03.2 Defining the message of the installation 62
03.3 Design proposals 64
03.3.1 Research through exhibition 65
03.3.2 Installation as workshop space 66
03.3.3 Educational installation 67
03.4 Final concept: an installation as reflective space 68
03.5 New target group 70
03.5.1 Interaction vision 71

Chapter 04: From proposal to physical concept 72
04.1 Philosophy on spatial design 74
04.1.2 List of Requirements 76
04.2 Ideation 79
04.2.1 Maquettes 79
04.2.2 FAST Fund 82
04.2.3 Inspirations 84
04.2.4 Co-creation with experts 88
04.2.5 The 1-on-1 prototype 89
04.4 Construction 90
04.4.1 Circularity 90
04.4.2 The cards 90
04.5 Concluding the prototyping phase 96

Chapter 05: Evaluation of the concept 98
05.1 Purpose of the evaluation 103
05.2 Participants & recruitment 105
05.3 Space 106
05.4 Session methodology 108
05.4.1 Design evolution 108
05.5 Results 109
05.6 Conclusion 114
05.7 Discussion: 2nd evaluation 116
05.7.1 Session plan 116
05.7.2 Results 116

Chapter 06: *hey theys!* 118
06.1 Conclusion: has the design goal been met? 122
06.2 Discussion: what is 'queer'? 124
06.3 Limitations 125
06.4 Recommendations 126

AI statement 128
Acknowledgements 130
References 132
Appendices 138

hey!

curious what *hey theys!*
sounds like?

01

01 Introduction

01.1 The Domain - why sexuality?
01.1.1 The absence of queer perspectives in DfS

01.2 The Problem
01.2.1 Representation
01.2.2 Empowerment
01.2.3 What is ‘queer’?
01.2.4 Establishing the design goal

01.3 Design Goal
01.4 The Target Group
01.5 Design Lens
01.5.1 Queer Lens

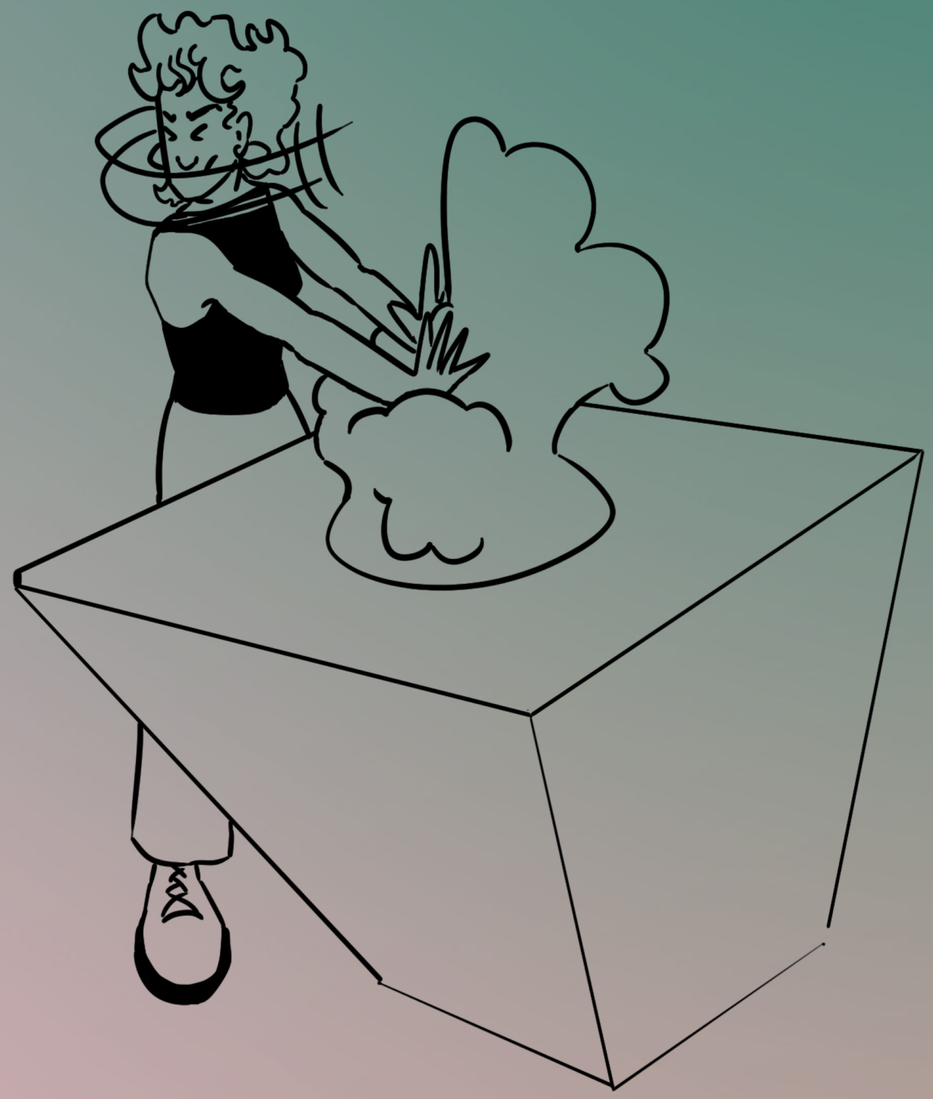


Figure 3: (above and next two pages) Within the spectrum, you should not aim to have one single definition of queerness, or one single narrative that describes all narratives (chapter 01.2 The Problem).

01.1 The Domain - Why sexuality?

It's an understatement to say sexuality is broad. In short, it concerns a person's sexual behaviours, attractions, (dis)likes, kinks and preferences (Anderson, 2023). However, its interconnectedness with other aspects of life proves it concerns more than 'the physical act'. Table 1 shows an overview of related topics that demonstrate the need for rational/critical analysis of sexuality (LeVay & Valente, 2003). Highlighted are the topics that are discussed in this thesis.

As sexuality is interconnected, researching sexuality is integral to understanding the human condition. Increasing knowledge on sexuality has the ability to identify people's medical, social, and cultural needs and counter oppressions within these systems (Graham et al., 2025).

However, in existing academic literature, Design for Sexuality (DfS) remains overlooked. Whilst the past two decades have seen significant contributions to DfS, from the mapping of the clitoris (Komisaruk et al., 2011) to the blockbuster success and normalisation of sextoys such as the satisfyer (Bardzell, 2011), the dominant narrative is still heteronormative (D'Ignazio, 2020).

In recent light, on February 2nd 2025, USA President Donald Trump outed an executive order dictating the federal American government will only recognise two sexes: male and female (Sun et al., 2025). This order was followed by a pause of all public communications for federal health agencies, resulting in, less than a week later, a call to withdraw all research manuscripts which are being considered for publication by external scientific journals which contain the terms ' Gender', 'Transgender', 'Pregnant person', 'LGBT', 'Transsexual', 'Non(-)binary', 'Assigned (fe)male at birth', or 'Biologically (fe)male' (Faust, 2025) (Steenhuysen & Lapid, 2025). Other government data on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) quickly followed (O'Leary, 2025).

Table 1: Related topics to the concept of sexuality, demonstrating the relevance of scientific analysis of sexuality to better understand the human condition (LeVay & Valente, 2003).

Related topics to sexuality
Biological/evolutionary basis of sex
Anotomical/physiological/psychosexual aspects of sexual bodies/intercourse/ development
Gender
Sexual attraction and arousal
Sexual behaviour and relationships
Fertility, pregnancy, and childbirth
Contraception
Sexuality across the lifespan
Sexual orientation and sexual minorities
Atypical sexuality and sexual disorders
Sexually transmitted diseases
The relations between sex, illness, and disability
Sexual assault, harrasment, and partner violence
Sex as a commodity (e.g. prostitution, pornography, and sex in the media)

A lack of data transparency and availability has serious implications. Key in scoping the research was a paper on the myth that lesbians are not at risk for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). Lesbians might feel at low risk for STIs, but not because there is "less bodily contact" or "less fluid exchange", but because they are excluded from the scripts negotiating safer sex practice (Power et al., 2009). When a group is not represented by the existing scripts, it might, through cognitive bias, assume those narratives do not apply to them (Wilke & Mata, 2017). We come from a day and age where being queer and 'practising' your queerness was reason for ostracisation or illegality (Andreassen, 2025). By the systemic erasure of information and accessibility to information, we return to that day and age.



The systemic erasure of data is symptomatic for a more grand problem within design: in the absence of a different perspective considered when designing something, the outcome will be suited to men by default (Perez, 2019). To challenge the common assumptions or misconceptions on sexuality that are popularised through data inaccessibility, I drafted working definitions of sexuality (see figure 4) (Jackson & Scott, 2010).

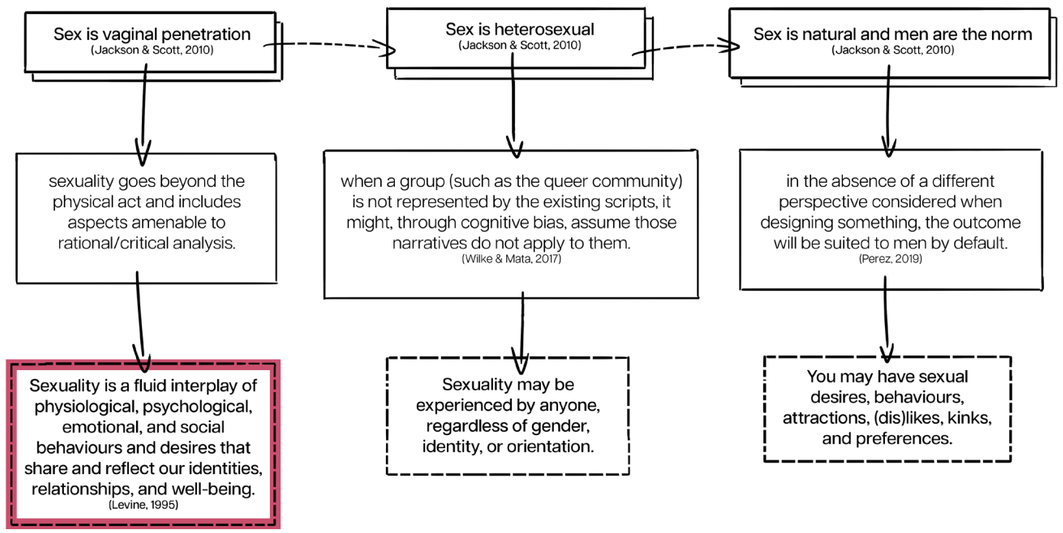
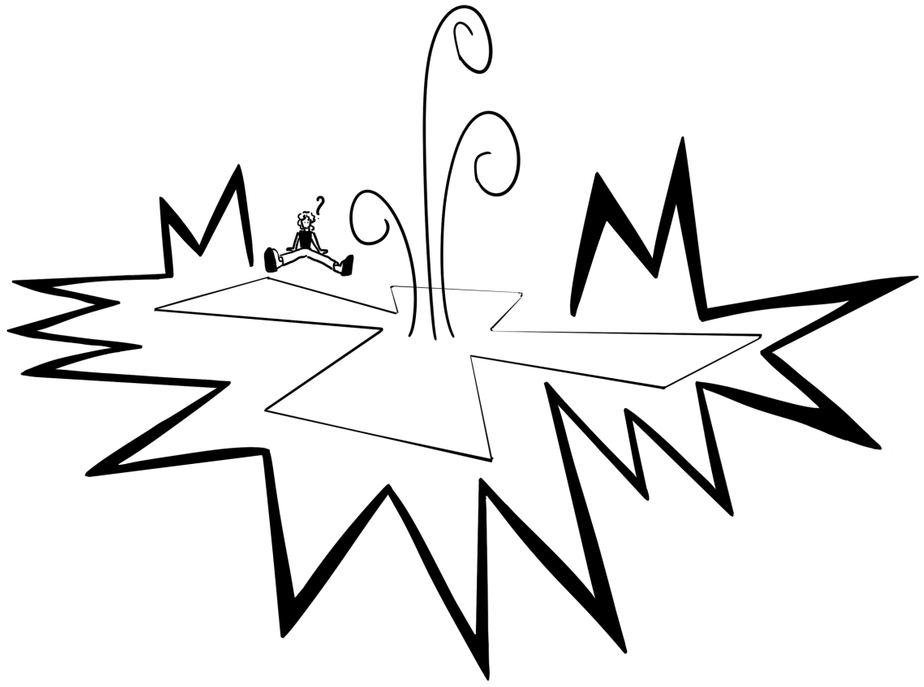


Figure 4: Common assumptions/misconceptions on sexuality, and how academic research challenges these.



In this introduction I wish to outline the gaps in existing research on queer sexuality, and how these imply a need for (reintroducing) queer perspectives in DfS. The problem statement and target group of the project are discussed, along with the subsequent design goal and applied design lens.

01.1.1 The absence of queer perspectives in DfS

In general literature on DfS, some findings can be coined 'queer' in a way: they emphasise the disfunctioning of mass-produced design artefacts, as they abstract what a body is in regard to its gender, age and ability. These artefacts standardise a body, through what it should essentially be, and how it should perform (Brulé & Kazi-Tani, 2015).

When instead, one designs from a queer standpoint, DfS should incorporate the subjectivity of its interactions. This means the design process should be supported by the experiences of the bodies it designs for, instead of based on the bodies themselves (Bardzell, 2011). Diversity in sexuality, and thus in related experiences, is perfectly normal and should be explored instead of categorised (Nagoski, 2021). Linking to queer theory (see chapter 02), when we assume sexuality is fluid, it is subjective, and may not always align with external characteristics of a person, like their body (Barker & Scheele, 2016).

From the literature reviewed, there are clear gaps:

- Queerness is discussed, yet rarely in the context of sexuality.
- There is little literature on the queer community context when discussing sexuality.
- The queer community is seldom directly interviewed or involved in research in DfS.

These gaps demonstrate an absence of queer perspectives in DfS. Despite growing awareness and research on the subject, the queer community's actual experiences are rarely centred in products, services, or spaces.

01.2 The Problem

As outlined in the introduction, there is an absence of queer perspectives in DfS. The problem of reintroduction lies in the 'how?'. To enable representation of queer perspectives in a design, a search for a consensus between differing experiences on queerness needs to be conducted. This can be done through facilitating discourse on queerness and active participation of the queer community into creating their own representation. The complexity of these steps that underlie the design goal, is outlined in this chapter.

01.2.1 Representation: active participation instead of passive portrayal

Representation is a concept that carries its own meaning within the word: it "concerns the equitable and accurate portrayal of people's identities, perspectives, and needs within social structures." However, in the context of a *community*, representation is not merely about depiction, but also about "the act of making people's voices, ideas, and perspectives "present" in social processes." It is both the act of portraying and to stimulate active participation of portrayals in decision-making (Monna & Charoupia, 2024). To represent is the operative term that extends visibility and legitimacy to a group, and can reveal or distort what is assumed to be true about this group (Butler, 1990).

However, no single project, and thus also not this project, should aim to capture the full spectrum of experiences. Experiences are ephemeral and individual (Sleeswijk Visser et al., 2005); there are simply too many and it will fail to do so. This is particularly acute when considering the representation of queer communities and how complex they can be in their diversity.

As this thesis discusses a *spatial* design intervention (see 01.2.4 *Establishing the design goal*), I interviewed two postdocs on their work on queer spaces. Whilst we often associate queer space with urban geography such as 'the lesbian bar' or 'the gay club', these scholars argue "there is no queer space, there are only spaces put to queer uses." For a spatial design,

this means that the environment it stands in does not hinder or stimulate its ability to represent.

However, a representative space, argues Ferreri in her paper 'Queer cities' (2023), is at risk for 'usualising', in which there is the intention to make the existence of the queer community common to the general public in order to increase visibility, but this latter effect does not equal to less homophobia. She instead works actively on research in a so-called 'bottom-up' approach, where participatory practices are used to create inclusive systems.

To sum up, in this thesis, representation is considered to be achieved through active participation. A resulting design should aim to have a facilitatory role. It can create a platform for users to provide their experiences instead of gathering from them and risking unintentionally leaving experiences out.

01.2.2 Empowerment: discourse and consensus between diverse narratives

As aforementioned, a space that facilitates queerness and its empowerment, becomes inseparable from queerness itself. Empowerment is a common term in combination with the queer community. However, misunderstanding of what power means (and thus its verb 'to empower', to 'give' power ("Empower", 2026)) can result in a negative connotation with empowerment.
In the context of oppression, according to Data Feminism (2020), we use the term power to describe the current configuration of structural privilege and structural oppression, in which some groups experience unearned advantages - because various systems have been designed by people like them and work for people them - and other groups experience systematic disadvantages - because those same systems were not designed by them or with people like them in mind. The disadvantaged groups, are, by virtue of being subjected to power structures, formed and defined in accordance with the requirements of those structures (Butler, 1990).

Through this phenomenon, the queer community – often not at the helm of systems – can easily be overlooked. To examine this power, "means naming and explaining the forces of oppression that are so baked into our daily lives [...] that we often don't even see them." (D'Ignazio, 2020). Examination of power thus invites us to interrogate our societal systems (more on the queer tradition of interrogating systems in chapter 2: Theoretical framework).

The verb 'to empower' takes a different take on power. Hannah Arendt, in her essay On Power, explains that "[...] people who have come to an agreement on a common course of action can be a powerful community because power is a relationship, not a property of those who belong to the group." (Penta, 1996). **Power is no longer about the ability to dominate others or the coercion of other's actions, but about the ability to have fruitful discourse, to gather support, or to convert someone's thought.**

I use this definition, as it shows that to represent, you should not aim to coerce one single definition of queerness, or one narrative that describes all narratives. Instead, an open conversation should be facilitated. Consensus and discourse is possible and beneficial between the diverse narratives within queer sexuality.

01.2.3 What is 'queer'?

This brings me to the last question: what exactly is 'queer' or 'queerness'? As with many umbrella terms, we are swimming in the grey space. Are heterosexuals affiliated with the community also queer, or only those who identify within the LGBTQIA+-spectrum? Throughout the thesis I aim to explore this theme, to help concretise the experience of being queer.



01.2.4 Establishing the design goal

The steps above, from active participation through discourse, to a consensus on the queer experience, can be framed into a design goal. A design should enable representation of the experiences of the queer community in the domain of sexuality.

As concluded in 01.2.1 *Representation*, a resulting design from this goal should facilitate active participation through providing a platform for user experiences. The chosen form of this design is therefore an installation, to allow for exposure to a diverse audience and diverse set of experiences.

01

01.3 Design Goal

allows for exposure to a diverse audience, and facilitates an embodied experience

let be visible, be made possible

active participation

Design an installation to enable (re)presentation of the experiences of the queer community in the domain of sexuality.

the experienced reality

owners of the experienced reality

the part of the queer experience I focus on

01.4 The Target Group

Within this project, I explore a loaded question: what is 'queer'? And who do we imply when we speak of the 'queer community'?

To determine the target group of this project, I've drafted a 'workable' definition to lift off from. This definition is open to change over time, as new information comes through in intervals, and I wish to avoid working with singular definitions like I warn against in the introduction. Hence when relevant, the new definition is highlighted in a red-coloured frame like in the figure below.

That is why, when relevant, the new definition is highlighted in a red-coloured frame like in figure 5 below.

The starting definition is: 'To be queer is to identify yourself within the LGBTQIA+ community' (Cheves & Lopéz, 2025). Within the Netherlands, the CBS estimates there to be 2,7 million LGBTQIA+ persons older than fifteen (Kennis, 2024).

To be queer is to identify yourself within the LGBTQIA+ community (Cheves & López, 2025).

Figure 5: the starting definition of 'queer' in this thesis.



01.5 Design Approach

A topic such as queer sexuality is inherently epistemological. Design within the topic is never neutral. As put in *Invisible Women*, the 'norm' is male, cishet, and able-bodied, and all others are not the norm (Perez, 2020). This is not an oversight, but a phenomenon that makes those in privileged positions unable to recognise oppression, what d'Ignazio in *Data Feminism* coins 'privilege hazard' (2020).

Underlying the norm's inability is their lack of "the empiricism of lived experience"; the lived experience of how things really are. Due to this limitation, the norm is impaired in identifying existing problems and imagining solutions. Issues of gender, sexuality, and identity (not limited to, see 02.3 Intersectionality) are OPP to them: Other People's Problems. Downstream, the effect of privilege hazard is "not only that datasets are biased or unrepresentative, but that they never get collected at all." (d'Ignazio, 2020).

In response, I conduct my own empirical research (chapter 02: *hey girl!*) and include my own lived experience through autoethnography (chapter 04.1). However, a practical application of the findings is crucial. Minority groups such as the queer community, should not be obliged to repeatedly prove that their experiences and their oppression are legitimate (d'Ignazio, 2020). Collecting data alone is not the sole leverage for change; 'to represent' (see 1.2.1 *Representation*) means to extend visibility and legitimacy to a group, in order to reveal or distort what is assumed to be true about them (Butler, 1990). The design should strive to challenge the status quo about queer sexuality set by the norm.

Collecting counterdata means quantifying and visualising 'the lived experience', so it can help the norm in positions of power understand the context of the problems of oppression (d'Ignazio, 2020). The interview research *hey girl!* provides empirical documentation of lived experiences of queer individuals, to literally bring to life relevant findings from queer theory (chapter 2). Subsequently translating these empirical experiences into an installation provides the visualisation necessary to represent the context.

01.5.2 Queer Lens

A design lens is a theoretical framework that conceptualises design thinking (Adams et al., 2011). In the project, I apply a queer lens.

Queer thought is rooted in post-structuralism. Post-structuralists, like Foucault (who returns in 05.1.2), reject the idea of a ubiquitous, absolute "truth". They are equally critical of systems of thought that dogmatise truth, such as science and religion, and of grand theories that attempt to unify all of human experience in a single specific structure (Barker & Scheele, 2016).

Like in post-structuralism, the knowledge I retrieve through research is contextual and dependent on the systems of people it is part of. **The research strategies I apply (such as reflective thematic analysis, reflexivity, or working relationally) are founded on including the context of its research subjects.**

Also, a common post-structuralist practice is to deconstruct texts and uncover their binary oppositions, because a text can have contradictory meanings (more on this in chapter 02.2). This supports my practice throughout the project of using evolving definitions of the word 'queer', influenced by the knowledge encountered during research.

01

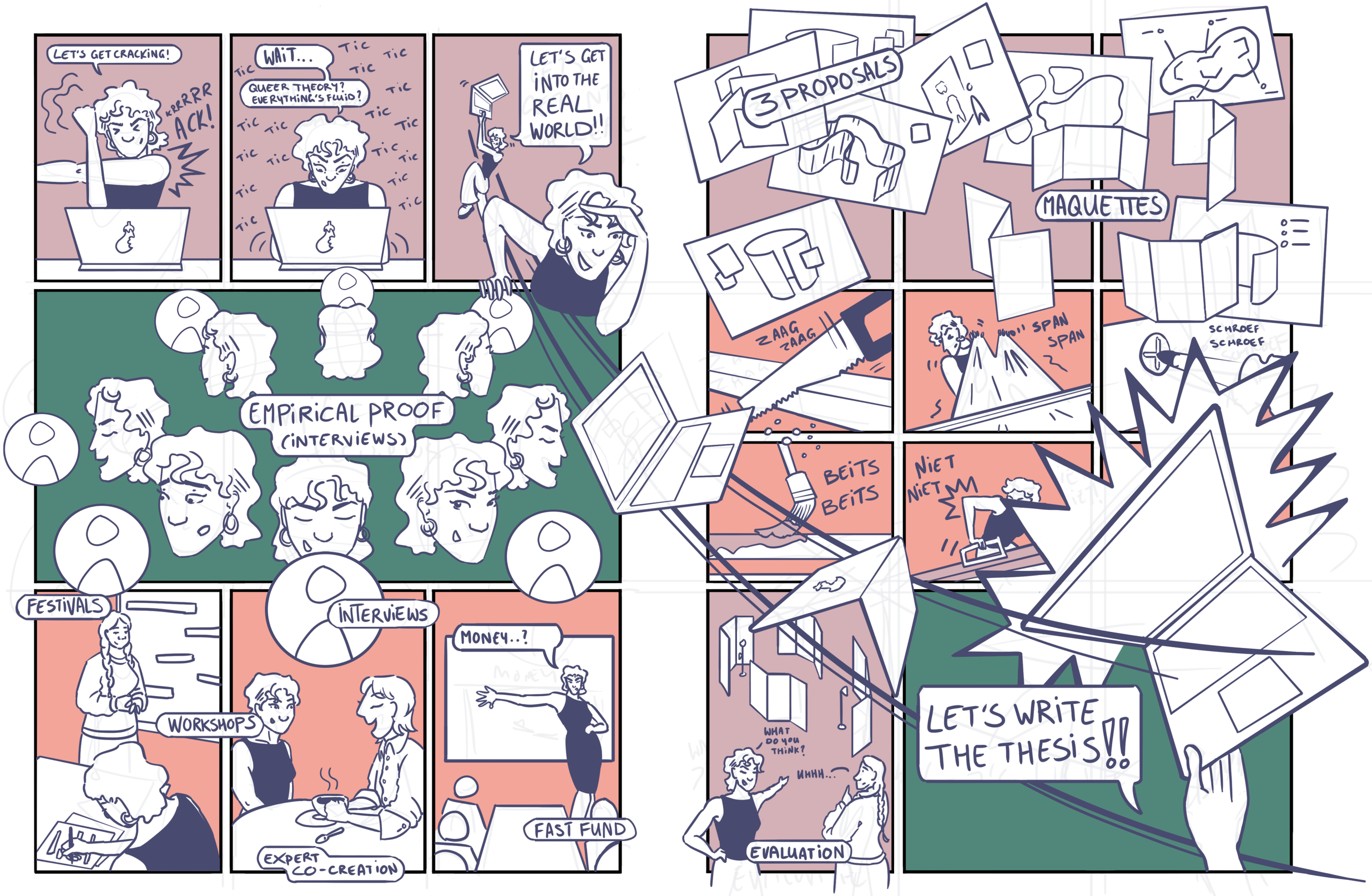
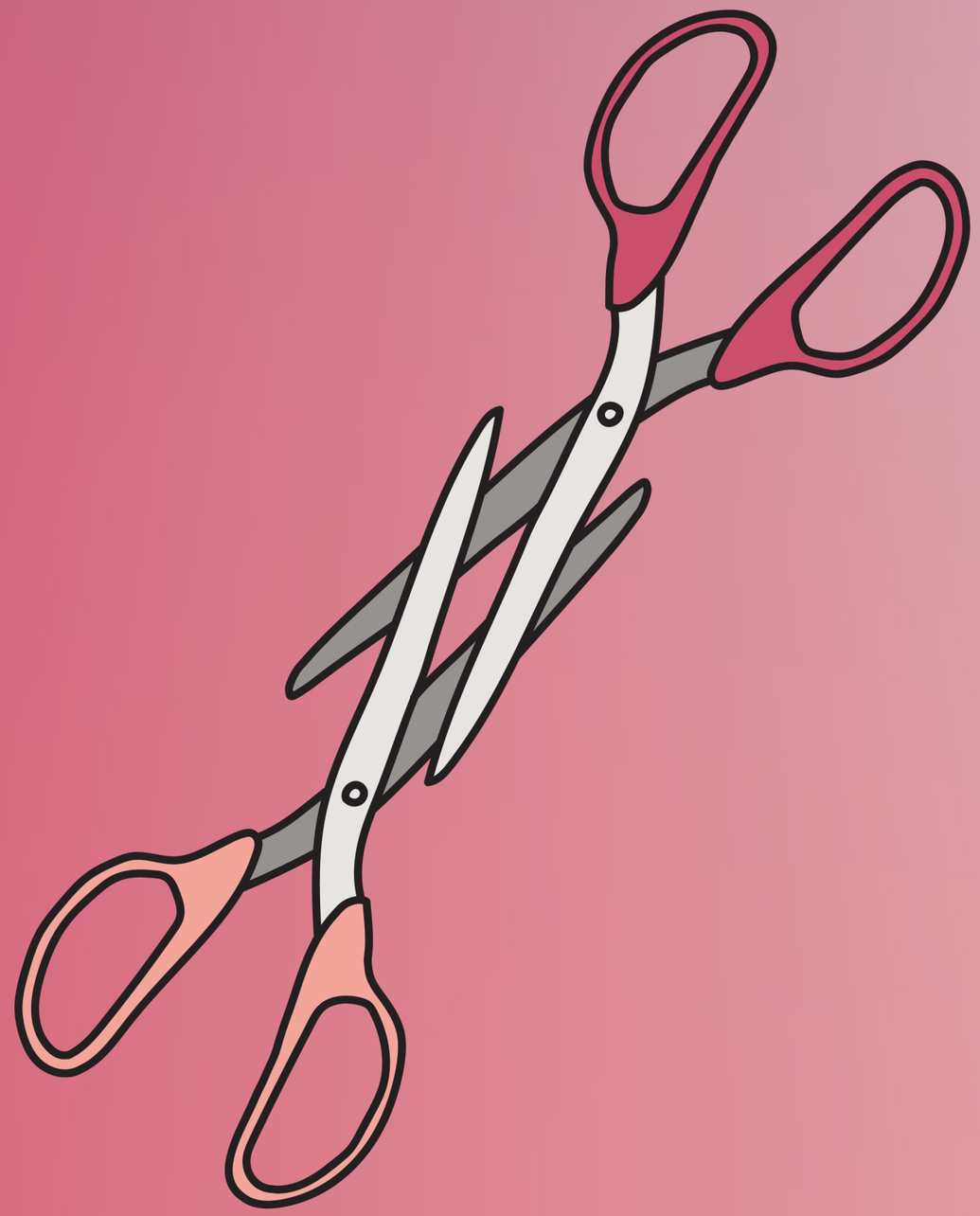


Figure 6: The complete design process of this project, narrated through a comic.

02

02 *hey girl!* – *empirical proof of queer theory*



02.1 Queer theory
02.2 The abolition of binaries
02.3 Intersectionality
02.4 *hey girl!* – a research
- 02.4.1 Recruitment
- 02.4.2 Method & process
- 02.4.3 Thematic Analysis
- 02.4.4 Results
- 02.4.5 Discussion



Figure 7: 'Queer theory' is the umbrella term for all work on ideas on interrogating desire and its relationship to identity (Watson, 2005).

Queer theory, and all concepts related to it, is so expansive and subjective (and even contradictory within itself), that it is necessary to outline the foundation upon which this thesis stands. Not only to comprehend the leading philosophical thought on the queer experience, but also to determine the interpretation of these umbrella concepts within the thesis.

This practice is common for queer theorists and is called **discourse analysis**: critical engagement with linguistic and visual texts. The goal is to uncover assumptions/contradictions that might construct the text (Barker & Scheele, 2016).

This section only discusses the general theoretical framework on queerness: queer theory, the abolition of binaries, and intersectionality. These topics are important to subject to discourse analysis, as it outlines my subjectivity and approach within the thesis, explaining the general philosophy underlying future choices.

> *Queer is a fluid sexuality, disconnected from gender and identity (Watson, 2005).*

Figure 8: a new definition of 'queer'.

02.1 Queer theory

'Queer theory' is the umbrella term for all work on ideas on interrogating desire and its relationship to identity (figure 7). It questions how we came to the use of stable identities (e.g. 'heterosexual', 'lesbian', also called labels) and reveals them as fragile constructs. When one assumes their identity is stable – instead of being open to change over time – this means the identity is dependent on gender performance, or external expression of gender in stereotypical ways to one's culture. E.g. because your hair is cut short, you must be 'masculine'.

Queer theory instead proposes sexuality as fluid – open to change over time – and disconnected from one's gender and identity (Watson, 2005). It challenges the normative assumption that only non-heterosexual people have a sexual orientation, while heterosexuality is treated as the default, unmarked category (figure 8, previous page).

For instance, take our current prime minister of the Netherlands. Applying queer theory means that his value as a 'good' or 'bad' prime minister is not intertwined with his gender (man), sexuality (homosexual), or identity (progressive liberal). If one of these factors changes over time, this should not affect his quality as a politician (figure 9).

This explains how gender and identity do not play a role in the project whilst discussing sexuality. For example, the research *hey girl!* (chapter 02) involves WLW instead of specifically lesbians or bisexual women, because gender is disconnected from sexuality.

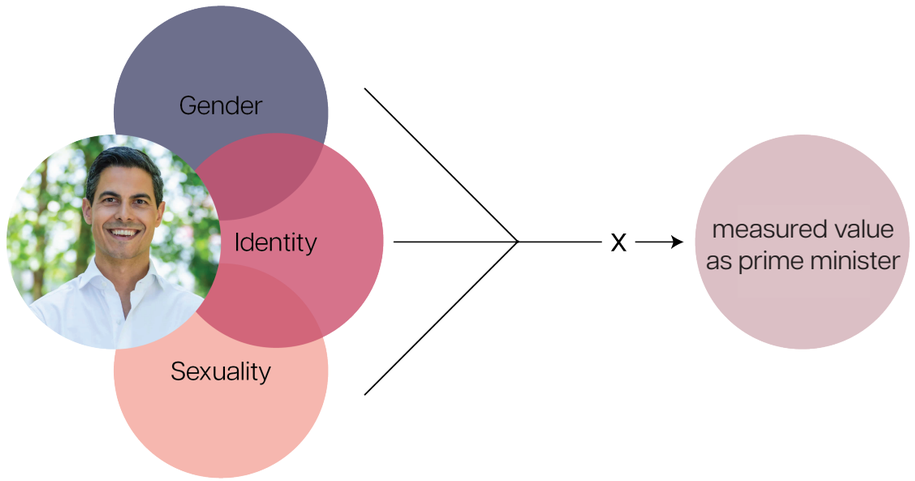


Figure 9: Rob Jetten's value as a 'good' or 'bad' prime minister should be uninfluenced by his gender, sexuality, or identity, even if they would change over time.

02.2 The abolition of binaries

Considering sexuality, gender, and identity as separate, fluid entities permits to challenge the binaries that are in use in our culture to categorise people (see figure 10).

Sexuality is performative in that regard; it's our expressions and behaviours, rather than those expressions and behaviours being the result of some underlying sexual orientation (e.g. you must desire cunnilingus because you enjoy having sex with women) (see table 2). **TLDR; this is why this thesis describes acts and practices, sexuality in what people do, not in who they are.**

Challenging binaries goes deeper than just gender, sexuality, and identity. On a philosophical level, it tackles what we consider 'good' and 'bad'. No need to get all Nietzsche here, but in 1984, queer theorist Gayle Rubin defined what, on a societal level, is considered 'good' and 'bad' in sexuality in her essay 'Thinking Sex' (see figure 11).

Queer theory directly challenges what is 'good' and 'bad' in sexuality by challenging the binaries of 'good' and 'bad'. When one strives to get queerness into the 'good' charmed circle, one is still assuming one's sexual preferences as a universal one that will, or should, work for everyone. Instead, Rubin argues, the whole hierarchy within sexuality should be dismantled, challenging not just the binaries, but the very idea that certain sexualities are superior to others (Barker & Scheele, 2016).

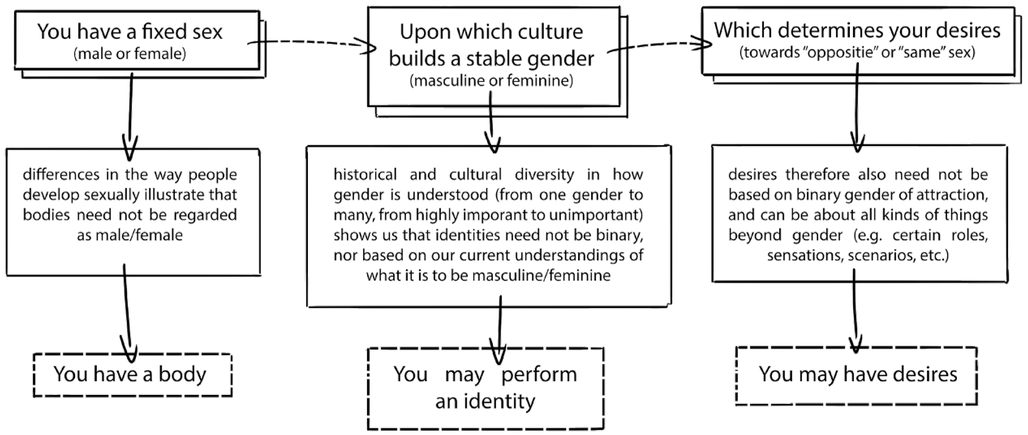


Figure 10: the revised matrix from Queer: A graphic history (Barker & Scheele, 2016).

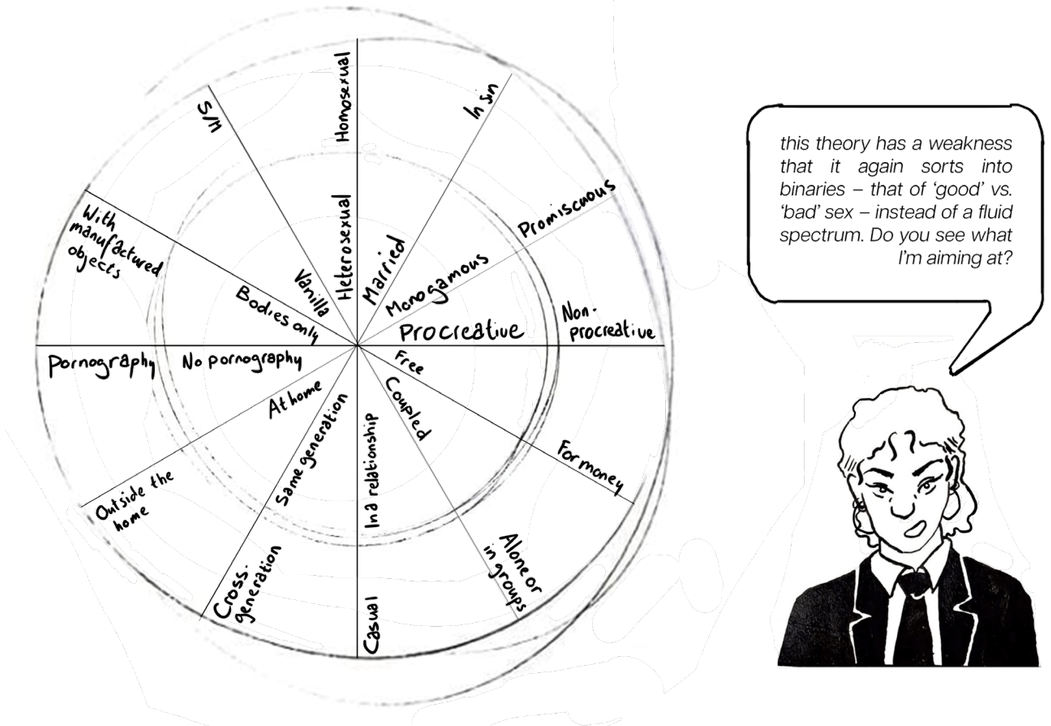


Figure 11: Copy of the 'Charmed circle' with its 'Outer limits' as seen in Rubin's essay (1984).

Table 2: A summary of how binaries within sexuality and gender are challenged (Barker & Scheele, 2016).

Sexuality and gender are seen as...	This can be challenged by...
an essential, fixed, vital part of our identity (who we are).	recognising that gender and sexuality are both multiple and fluid, and refusing to deploy any identity as a foundation because that would sustain normative structures.
intrinsically linked, because our sexuality is defined by our gender and the gender of who we are attracted to, and people often read sexuality off someone's gender expression.	questioning both binaries (male/female, gay/straight) and the links between them.
real, stable, and static through our internalising of the available discourses, and repeated performance of them.	parody and subversive repetitions of diverse gender and sexuality performances – recognising that sexuality can be about "bodies and pleasures" with no necessary connection to existing categories of gender and sexuality.

02.3 Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the interaction of multiple social identities or social categories one can belong to, and the intersecting systems of oppression (or empowerment) an individual is then exposed to (Crenshaw, 1989). This can include, but is not limited to, gender, race, sexuality, class, ethnicity, religion, disability, and age (figure 12).

Intersectionality bridges the *theory* of queer theory and *reality*. Whilst ideally, the other identities of my research subjects are independent and do not influence one another, in reality, they do have a play in the complete experience of being queer. The oppression a person experiences consists of an intersection of their identities (Hagai, 2022).

Crenshaw, the original coiner of the term 'intersectionality', remarks it in a speech at the Southbank Centre in 2016: "Intersectionality is not primarily about identity. It's about how structures make certain identities the consequence of, the vehicle for vulnerability. So if you want to know how many intersections matter, you've got to look at the context. What's happening? What kind of discrimination is going on? What are the policies? What are the institutional structures that play a role in contributing to the exclusion of some people and not others?" **To enable (re)presentation, intersectionality pulls the attention away from the concepts, the identities themselves, and towards the oppressive systems linked to them, the empirical lived experience.**

Conclusion

To understand how queer theory operates in reality, there is need for empirical data. In the next chapter, the interview research *hey girl!* is discussed, that dives into how queer individuals experience queer theory concepts such as fluidity or intersectionality in their sexual dynamics.



Figure 12: Intersectionality is the interaction of multiple social identities or social categories one can belong to, and the intersecting systems of oppression (or empowerment) an individual is then exposed to (Crenshaw, 1989).

02.4 *hey girl!* - researching lived experiences

In 01.6 *Design Approach*, the need of empirical documentation of lived experiences of queer individuals was discussed. These can bring to life the relevant findings from queer theory (chapter 2.1).

hey girl! is an interview research conducted in the context of the course IDEM404 Research (5 ECTS). Next to a review of existing literature (chapter 01.2) and a theory for the thesis (the start of this chapter), this research enabled me to gather first-hand data of the queer experience. Based on the research gaps identified in chapter 01.2, the research aims in table 3 were derived. These indicate an a need for reintroducing queer perspectives in DfS. The research question is therefore:

What could be an interaction design vision for a physical sexual technology which addresses the sexual dynamics between young sapphic women, 18-30 y/o, in the Netherlands?

This chapter discusses the research process, from recruiting participants (03.1), to methodology (03.2) and analysis of results through Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) (03.3). Five main themes for a vision were derived, from which I discuss the findings relevant for my thesis.

Table 3: research gaps that were identified and their consequent research aims.

Research gap	Research aim
Queerness is discussed, yet rarely in the context of sexuality.	Introduce the queer community into DfS.
There is little literature on the queer community context when discussing sexuality.	Bring the context of sexuality into the discussion of design for the queer community.
The queer community is seldom directly interviewed or involved in research in DfS.	Actively interview and involve the queer community in research.



Figure 13: (right page) Recruitment poster for hey girl!

02.4.1 Recruitment

As you can be deduced from the research question, the participant scope was limited to WLW or sapphic women, yet included people who identify as non-binary. The latter group was included, because sexuality and gender are viewed as detached in this research (see 02.1 Queer theory). The participant scope was limited in order to make the research feasible to conduct within the 10-week timespan allotted for the elective.

Opposed to the evaluation sessions (chapter 07), no participant was directly recruited or directly requested to participate. Because of the sensibility of the topic, I wished as much as possible to avoid a feeling of having to participate to be agreeable to the researcher, or 'out of friendship'. There was no cap on the number of participants.

Instead, to recruit participants, I contacted all queer student associations in the Netherlands, a couple of queer institutions such as the COC, Rutgers Instituut and Women Inc., queer WhatsApp groups, and also many LGBTQIA+ bars in the Randstad. However, I noticed a general unwillingness to talk to me. The majority of the rejections made note of research fatigue, often prevalent in communities that are marginalised (Clark, 2025).

Published research into 'queer' is fairly unique to the TU Delft compared to other universities. To give an example: 'Queer' in the general TUD repository gives only 23 hits, opposed to 1032 in the UU repository or 154 hits in the UvA repository (table 4). Limitations to this deduction is that the UU and UvA are both double the size in students and staff in regard to the TUD, and are universities with social science faculties. However, the amount of hits is still more than to the power of two.

As there is evidently a limited research ecosystem connected to the queer community from the IDE faculty or TU Delft, I cycled around to meet the people behind the lesbian bars and meeting spaces I was trying to reach, for example the Trut, the Saarein and Bar Buka in Amsterdam, Outsite and De Koornbeurs in Delft, or Snackbar Frida and Roodkapje in Rotterdam (figure 13, previous page, and figure 16, next page).

Table 4: number of hits for 'queer' in the repositories of the eight biggest universities of the Netherlands (Scriptium, 2025).

University repository	# of hits for 'queer'
Universiteit van Amsterdam	154
Universiteit Utrecht	1032
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen	72
Universiteit Leiden	544
VU Amsterdam	310
Erasmus University Rotterdam	162
TU Delft	23
Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen	595

02.4.2 Method & process

As discussed in the theoretical framework (chapter 02.3: Intersectionality), queer theory dictates the relevance of context when analysing sexuality. In total, 8 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Semi-structured interviews permit the sessions to be focused, while maintaining autonomy to explore tangents that pop up during the research and thus creating a contextualised view upon a question (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021), as shown in figure 14.

Upon having conducted the first interview, snowballing occurred, with participants referring me to the next, who referred me to the next, and so on and so forth. Participants mentioned being happy to be able to talk about the topic and their feelings on it, despite a moment of consideration before actually deciding to sign up due to language use (*hey girl!* is not the most inclusive term) and time commitment (Eilberg, 2023).

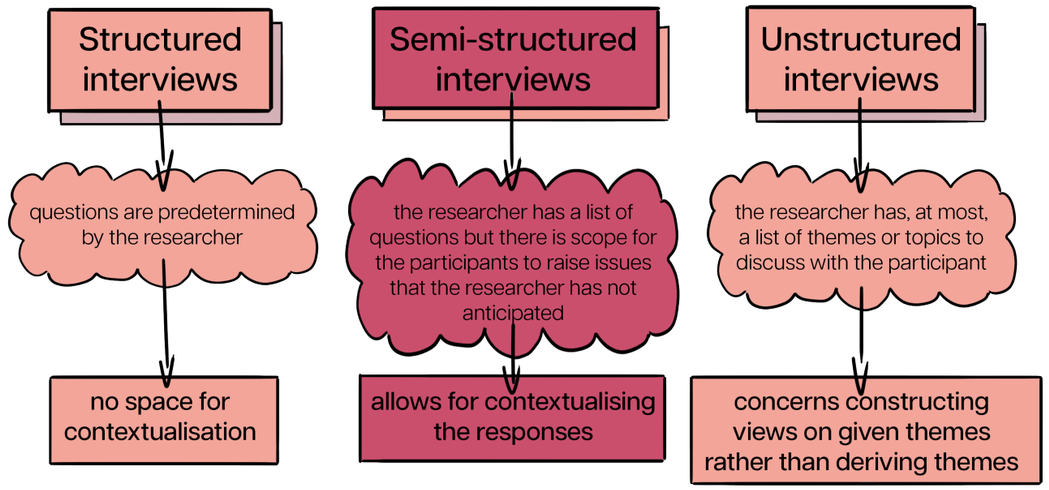
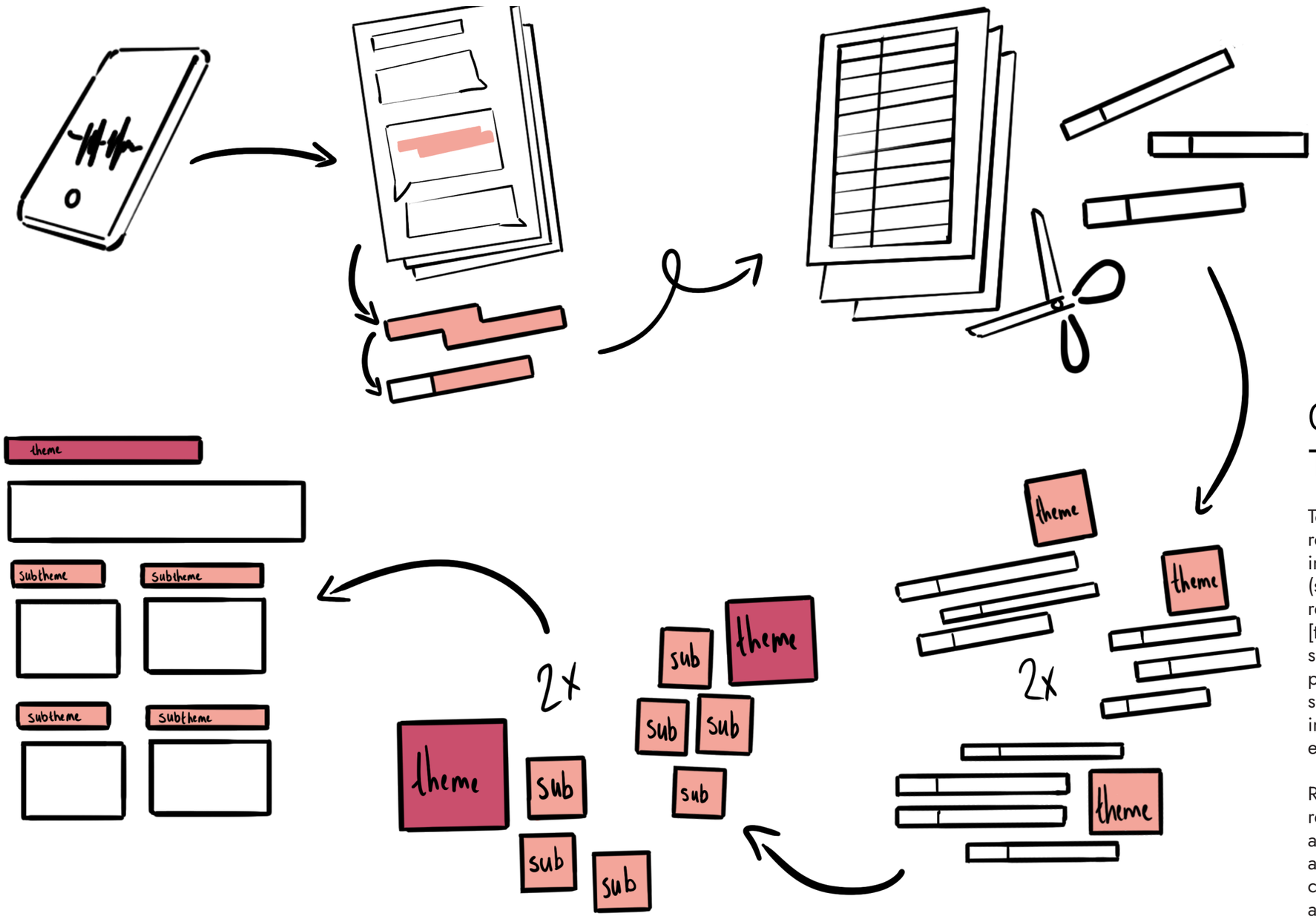


Figure 14: interview types and why they (do not) fit the interview aim (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

02

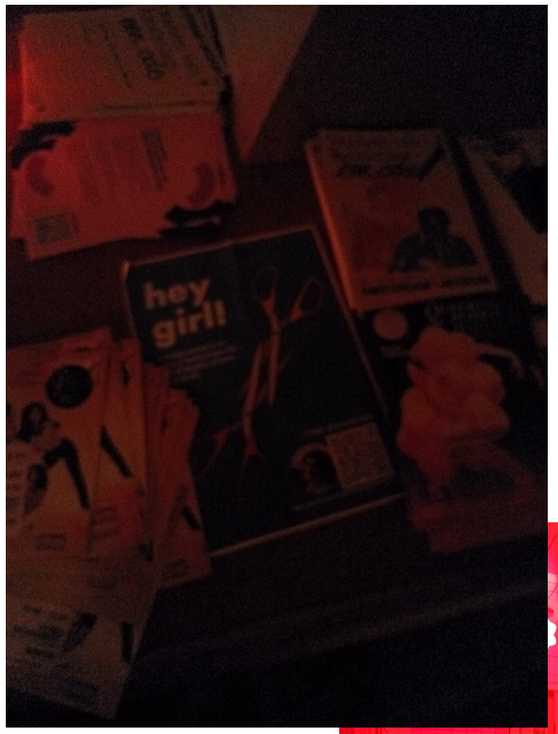


02.4.3 Reflexive Thematic Analysis

To generate functional data from the interviews, reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) was performed in line with the thesis' theoretical framework (see figure 15). As explained by the original researchers behind the approach: "[...] TA [thematic analysis] goes beyond description and summary, to ask questions about how particular patterned meaning might relate to the wider social context, and about the significance and implications of the patterned meanings." (Braun et al., 2022).

Reflexivity in RTA refers to "the process of a researcher critically reflecting on their values, assumptions, expectations, choices and actions throughout the research process, and considering what these might enable, exclude and close off." (Braun et al., 2022). This thesis is preluded by a positionality statement (Positionality, page 11) that outlines my potential biases as a researcher.

Figure 15: (left) the RTA process of hey girl!, visualised.







02.4.4 Results

Once the codes were determined, these were clustered into themes. I ended up with 19 themes, and I clustered these for a second round to generate five main themes or 'narratives' with subthemes. Every generative round was performed twice in order to reflect the generated themes back towards their codes and the transcripts and thus attempt to generate the most appropriate themes.



Figure 16: the poster at de Saarein (top) and Bar Buka (bottom).



Theme 1: the sextech trade-off

The trade-off between personalised and accessible sexual experiences and the inherent complexity of sexuality. Sextech could act as a companion in navigating intimacy.

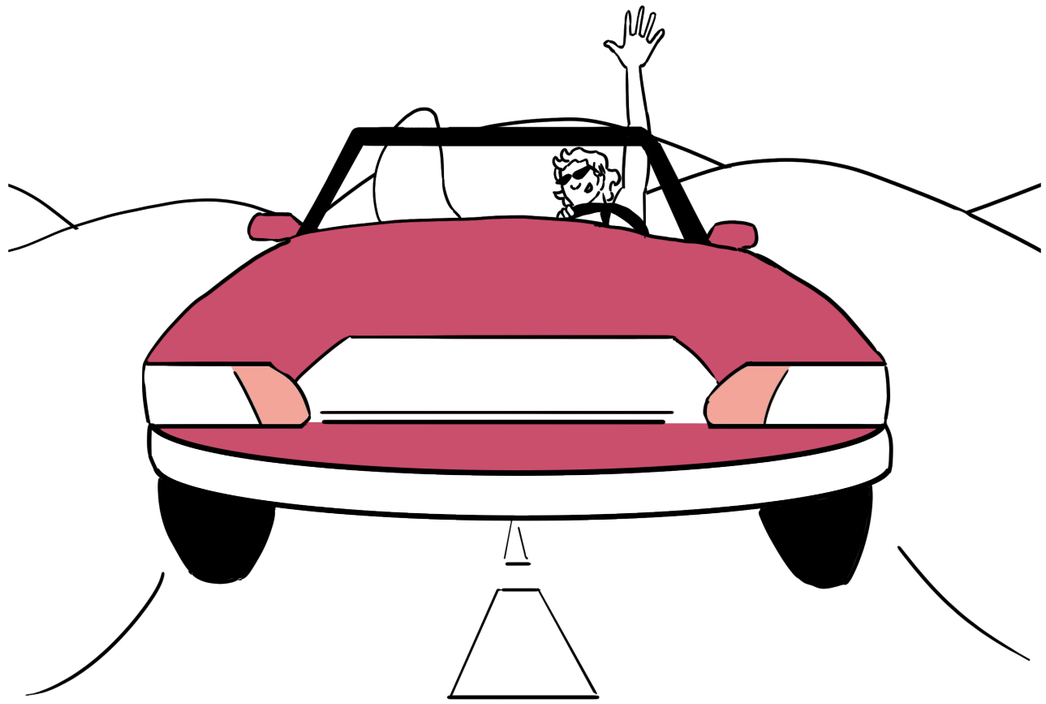
- **Subtheme 1.1: tailor-made intimacy.** A sextech with an abstract physicality, that can be tailored to you, your body and your needs.
- **Subtheme 1.2: the sexuality paradox.** A paradox between wanting efficiency and ease in the sexual experience and the inherent messiness and complexity of sexuality.
- **Subtheme 1.3: sextech in a wellness role.** Sextech adapts to individual needs through a wellness purpose. Mediation of sex in an accessible and low-entry manner.
- **Subtheme 1.4: you are the main character, sextech is the sidekick.** The role of sextech in self-exploration not as a prosthetic, but instead as a companion in personal intimacy.



Theme 2: feeling out of control over sextech

Navigating sexual agency is a challenge in the digital landscape, which on one side provides open access to sexual exploration, yet simultaneously exposes users to a lack of societal visibility in the available sextech. Sextech can continue to develop by also representing its less visible users.

- **Subtheme 2.1: sextech going viral.** Social media and online platforms facilitate sexual exploration and provide accessibility to sextech.
- **Subtheme 2.2: fragmented agency over desire.** The fragmentation of sexual agency due to not being seen and acknowledged by society.
- **Subtheme 2.3: sextech in a wellness role.** Navigating uncertainty around sextech effects user trust. Branding and ethics play dominant roles.



Theme 3: facilitating the sexual journey

Sextech is a facilitator of sexual expression in the journey of sexuality, which is a fluid process of play and discovery.

- **Subtheme 3.1: sexuality cannot be set in stone.** Sexuality is a continuous process of playful discovery – it is fluid in that sense.
- **Subtheme 3.2: fluid dynamics.** Sexual dynamics are fluid and open to external fluctuations. Needs change over time.
- **Subtheme 3.3: transcending functionality towards a higher purpose.** The design and aesthetics of sex toys transcent functionality, and become tools for sexual expression.
- **Subtheme 3.4: sextech in the facilitator role.** The role of sextech is that of a service – it facilitates the sexual experience.



Theme 4: putting the user back in power

Empowering users to be autonomous in their sexuality and their experiences, free from bias and stereotyping.

- **Subtheme 4.1: being the director of your own movie.** Breaking scripts of gender norms and stereotyping, challenging myths, and reimagining intimacy allow for creativity and pleasure beyond traditional scripts.
- **Subtheme 4.2: self-determination within sexuality.** Sexuality is an autonomous part of the self and free for self-determination, distinct from society and gender norms.
- **Subtheme 4.3: an analogy for one's personal philosophy.** A toy is an extension of one's personal philosophy in sex, in a symbolic way.
- **Subtheme 4.4: sexual experience as a blank canvas.** Sexual exploration is an organic and intimate process. Approaching it as unscripted opens space for expression.



Theme 5: sextech for emotions

Sextech can facilitate emotional connection and communication between partners beyond the physical.

- **Subtheme 5.1: sex as facilitator of higher emotional connection.** Emotional connection, sex as a form of care, and feeling seen are central to feeling connected in intimacy. These dynamics can redefine relationships.
- **Subtheme 5.2: sexual dynamics as a conversation.** Sexual dynamics are an interplay of autonomy, attunement and compliance, on a negotiable level.
- **Subtheme 5.3: Liberating language = liberating sex.** Reclamation and free use of language creates space for openness and connection in sex.
- **Subtheme 5.4 Multi-facetedness of sexual dynamics.** Physical sexuality does not always dominate the sexual dynamics, and instead is a part of connection.

02.4.5 Discussion

The five themes (the sextech trade-off, feeling out of control over sextech, facilitating the sexual journey, putting the user back in power, sextech for emotions) serve as empirical documentation of the lived experiences of the queer community. The themes highlight both what is needed in representation as well as how the installation can mimic the queer experience in term of atmosphere and embodied experience.

In the next chapter, these empirical experiences are translated into an installation, to visualise them and bring them to life. Table 5 documents which next design directions can be derived from each theme. These are used as starting points to explore the design space and draft design proposals for the installation.

As the research *hey girl!* was scoped to sapphics specifically, a note must be made on how these findings translate to the 'entire' queer community. Whilst some themes (navigating sexual agency, a fluid experience of sexuality, breaking scripts of gender norms and stereotyping) could be viewed as universal queer experiences, the usage of a queer lens reminds that no community is monolithic, meaning no experience from a part of a community can be portrayed as representational for the entire community.

Therefore, as I continue with this data, any further evaluation of the design process and the installation must be with the queer community, not just sapphics. This decision also ties in with one of the research gaps, that the queer community is seldom directly interviewed or involved in research in DfS.

Table 5: the resulting themes of hey girl! *and the design directions for the installation.*

Theme		Design direction
1	The sextech trade-off	Address the tension between personalisation and accessibility through exploring methods of a self-made installation experience (see 03.3.2 Installation as workshop space).
2	Feeling out of control over sextech	Counter uncertainty and fragmentation by being transparent about inspirations and research behind the installation (see 03.3.3 Educational installation).
3	Facilitating the sexual journey	Embody the journey of sexuality by centring discovery and play in design proposals (see 03.3).
4	Putting the user back in power	Empower users by putting them in the position of researcher, and opening space for expression (see 03.3.1 Research through exhibition).
5	Sextech for emotions	Facilitate emotional connection and communication by looking into how to create space for reflection (appendix A3.1 Residency, 03.2 Defining the message).



03

03 Defining: from hey girl! to hey theys!

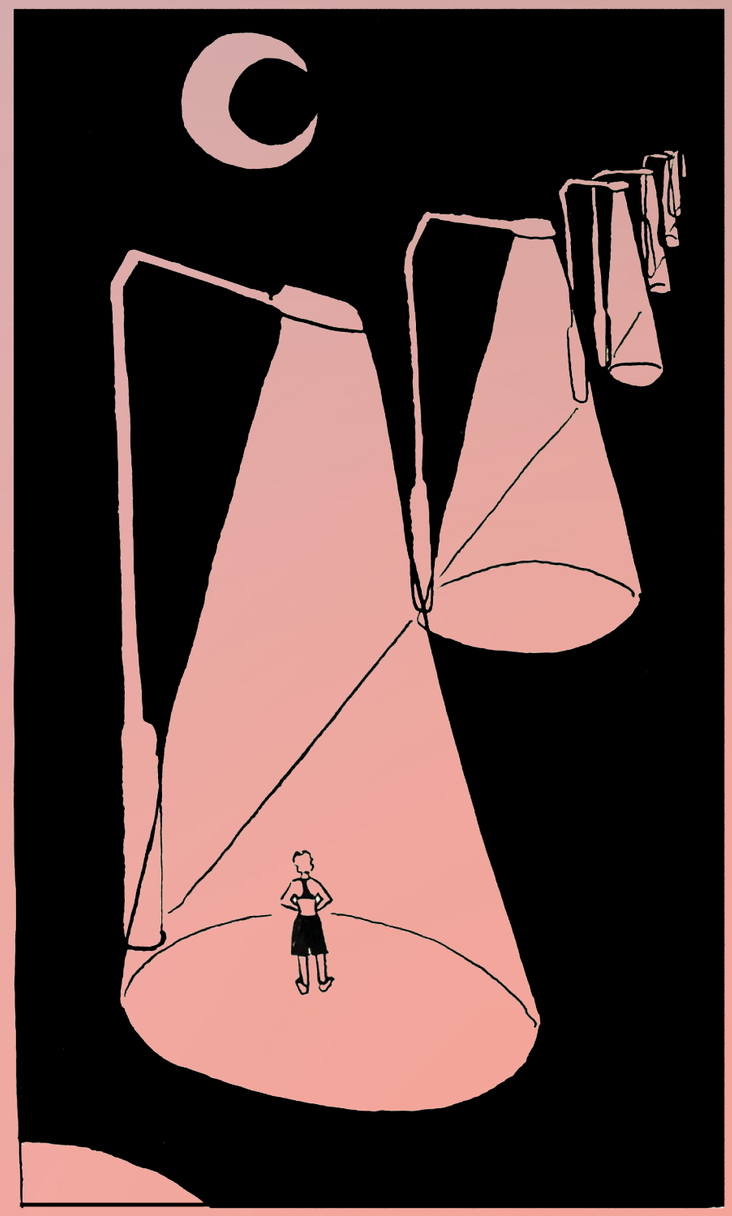
03.1 Design technique
- 03.1.1 Autoethnography
- 03.1.2 Working relationally

03.2 Defining the message of the installation

03.3 Design proposals
- 03.3.1 Research through exhibition
- 03.3.2 Installation as workshop space
- 03.3.3 Educational installation

03.4 Final concept: an installation as reflective space

03.5 New target group
- 03.5.1 Interaction vision



Starting from a design goal (Design an installation to enable representation of the experiences of the queer community in the domain of sexuality.), a target group (the queer community) and a design form (installation), this chapter documents how I arrived at a design concept to tackle the design goal.

In short, how the research *hey girl!* became the installation *hey theys!*.

In summary, the main design decisions were:

- The installation should be on the theme of fluidity out of the five themes (03.2 *Defining the message of the installation*). It appeals to people the most and keeps the message comprehensible.
- I generated three design proposals (03.3 Design proposals). From these, a final concept was generated: the installation as a reflective space (chapter 03.4).
- Inspired by working together with experts within the field of sexuality and DfS, I changed the target group from queers to 'non-queers' (chapter 03.5).
- An interaction vision (IV) based on my findings: "the interaction is like a good conversation with a friend over coffee."

Before diving into the activities, I discuss the design techniques applied in this part of the process (chapter 03.1).

03.1 Design techniques

This chapter outlines the design techniques I applied in order to define my design proposals (see figure 18).

03.1.1 Auto-ethnography

Autoethnography is "the explication of social context through the analysis of personal narratives" (Andrezejewski et al., 2026). In it, the researcher participates in their own research and documents their experiences.

Additional to increased empathy with the target group (Blandford et al., 2016), in my project auto-ethnography functions to sensitise myself to the topic and identify my bias in my role as both researcher and part of the queer community (see table 6).
When the goal is to understand a culture-sharing group, a researcher can be torn between a position as an outsider and bringing an insider perspective. Autoethnography "dissolves the boundary between authors and objects of representation. […] they inhabit the same space. Researchers are (a part of) the object of study" (Andrezejewski et al., 2026) The implication is that measures must be taken to assure the academic integrity of the autoethnography that's performed.

In table 6, I list the traits of analytic ethnography and explain for each trait the measure I undertook.

In his paper *Intimacy in Autoethnography*, Andrezejewski proposes a framework of four 'planks' of assuring trustworthiness in analytic ethnography (2026). These four are summarised in table 7, along with their implications for my project and how I used them to increase the academic integrity of my research. Plank four, collaboration, inspired my project heavily and is explained in detail below.

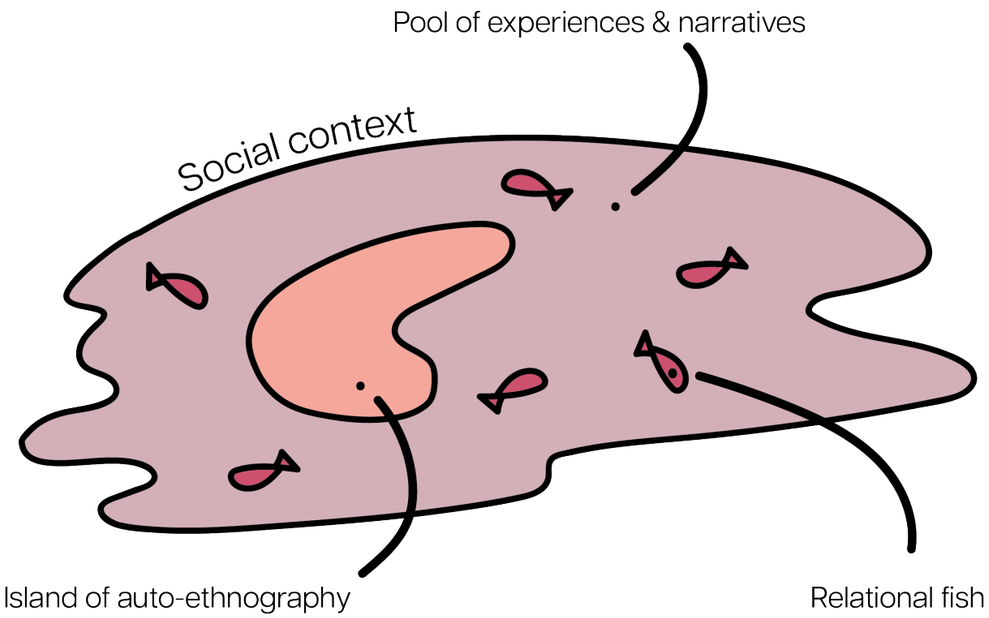


Figure 18: the two main research methodologies within the social context.

Table 6: to the left, the five traits of analytic ethnographies (Andrezejewski, 2026). To the right, why auto-ethnography and this specific trait is relevant to the project.

Trait of analytic ethnography	Relevance for my thesis
Researchers are complete members of the culture under study.	As a queer person active in the community, auto-ethnography aids me in identifying my biases.
Disclosure and presence of the researcher in the writing.	Knowing my bias allows me to document where they impact my research (see *Positionality*).
Inclusion of conversation and observation of participants.	My research process is based in relationality (see 03.1.2).
Deductive analyses rooted in extant theory.	Design choices are made together with experts (see 04.3 *Design proposals*) or are grounded in academic theory (see 03.1.3 *Exhibit-Based Research*).
Intentional reflexive work by the researcher, particularly as it relates to analysis and interpretation.	I participate in my own research (*hey girl!*) and first establish my biases and experiences in the topic (appendix A3.1).

03.1.2 Working relationally

So far, the image I've sketched of my use of 'relational design', is that it entails all research and design activities that involve collaboration and communication with other people. There is a distinct difference, however.

In traditional participatory design, designers and community members collaborate, but the choice in design methodologies and design moves are in the hand of the designer. In a way, this moves power away from the community, which contradicts the intention of using participatory design (Udoewa & Gress, 2023).

In radical participatory design, or relational design, the production of knowledge is rearticulated as a healthy relationship between designer and community, where the autonomy of choice lies with the community (Udoewa & Gress, 2023).

For my defining process, this means that by verifying every design choice with a community expert or active member, I avoid making choices for the community and instead make them with the community.

Table 7: the four 'planks' of asserting trustworthiness in autoethnography, next to their implications for my thesis (Andrezejewski, 2026).

Plank		Implication
1	**Researcher Reflexivity** – is used to examine the researcher's assumptions/ values/beliefs.	I participate in my own research (hey girl!) and first establish my biases and experiences in the topic (appendix A3.1). As intrapersonal reflections can be intimate, I also kept a diary to be able to process what I hear or observe.
2	**Prolonged Engagement** – is 'living' the research site for a prolonged amount of time and engaging with others to co-construct knowledge of the social context.	As part of the research target group, I am 'living' the site, nevertheless, I actively network to be able to gather different viewpoints (02.1 Recruitment).
3	**Thick description** – rich accounts representing the culture, using embodied and emotional language.	I aim to include quotes from my research where possible.
4	**Collaboration** – affords building a pool of experiences and narratives on the social context. Necessary to have more than one participant-research contribute to the body of data.	My predominant research approach is 'working relationally' (03.1.2).

03.1.3 Exhibit-Based Research

Exhibit-Based Research (EBR) is a design method in which an installation design not only exists to represent knowledge, yet also to generate new knowledge (Eccles et al., 2024). The method is structured into three key steps:

1. **Research co-design** – develop a visual way to explain the research problem.
2. **Participant engagement** – visitors become research participants.
3. **Data collection** – multimodal data collection.

Central to EBR is increased understanding among visitors. It links directly to the definition of representation in chapter 01.2; actively engaging visitors can increase the relevancy of the exhibited topic across a large audience and advance its public understanding.

"In this thesis, representation is considered to be achieved through active participation." (chapter 01.2)

Creating a queer EBR-installation requires a deliberate act of taking up space — essentially, "claiming territory" for queer perspectives in research on DfS (Ferreri, 2023).

This design method is the main inspiration for the titular proposal 03.3.1 Research through exhibition.

03.2 Defining the message of the installation

During the Q1 2025/2026 run of the course Creative Facilitation (IDEM104), I participated as a client. The case I delivered was "How do you feel represented?" By the group executing the case, this was rephrased to "How do you feel seen?". This rephrasing links more to the individual definition of representation (chapter 1.2.1 *Representation*): "[representation] concerns the equitable and accurate portrayal of people's identities, perspectives, and needs within social structures."

However, this question functioned as a starting point, to move towards the definition of representation I use in this thesis, that of active participation. Starting with the question, factors were brainstormed that are relevant to 'feeling seen' (figure 19). These were translated to physical elements and as final outcome, a concept of an interactive installation was created (figure 20).

In the sessions, the leading answer was that feeling seen meant having the space to be yourself, on your own terms. **It inspired the message of the installation,** which is based on one of the themes from hey girl!:

"In queer theory, binaries are interrogated and instead fluidity is assumed."

How this message returns in the installation, is discussed in chapter 05: *Prototyping*.



Figure 19: The participants brainstorming on factors that make them feel seen, such as 'being transparent', 'expressing yourself', 'being my 'crazy' self' or 'feeling respected'. These inspired the message of the installation.

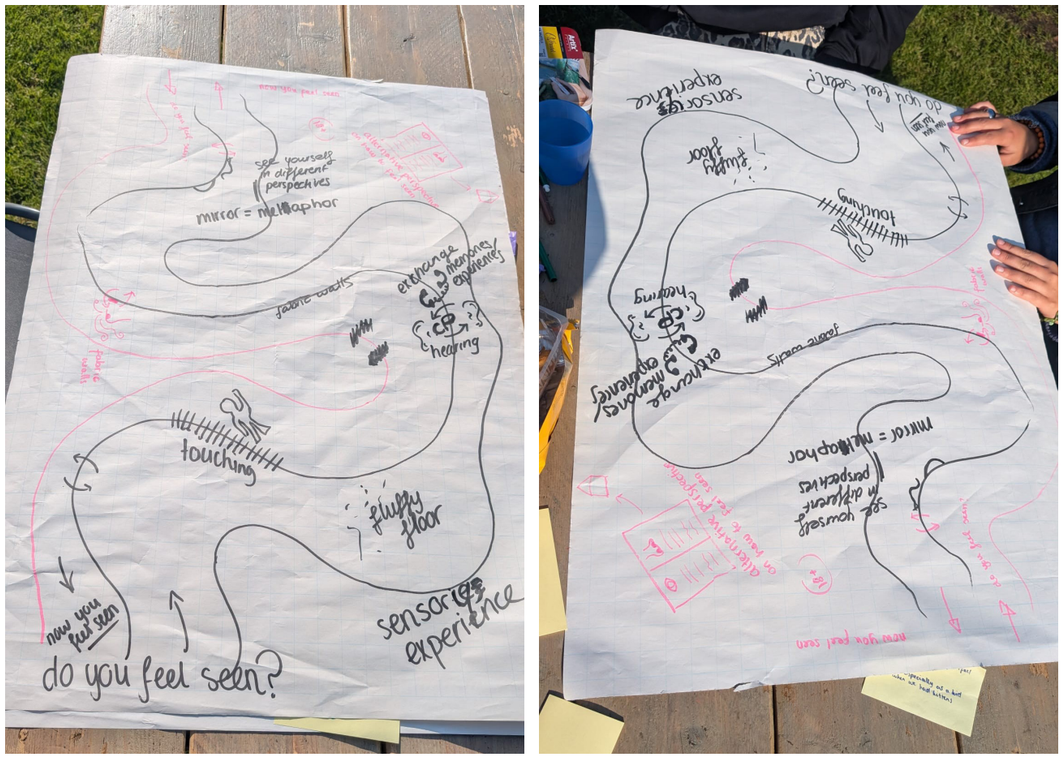


Figure 20: The outcome of the session, a concept for the interactive installation. The 'fluffy floor' as sensory experience returns in the final design as floor pillows. The 'exchange of memories/experiencing' translates to the reflective space in the installation. The idea of mirrors and two sides to the installation returns as the semi-transparent screens.

03.3 Design proposals

At the end of chapter 02: *hey girl! – empirical proof of queer theory*, I identified design directions for the installation (see table 8). These served as a starting point for the relational design process, through which I generated three proposals of what the installation could develop into. In this chapter, for every proposal, the design direction is noted, and the interviews or relational activities are linked that were performed to determine whether this direction might meet the design goal.

In the next chapter (03.4), I conclude with a final proposal for the installation.

Table 8: the resulting themes of hey girl! *and the design steps for the scoping process.*

Theme		Design direction
1	The sextech trade-off	Address the tension between personalisation and accessibility through exploring methods of a self-made installation experience (see 04.3.2 *Installation as workshop space*).
2	Feeling out of control over sextech	Counter uncertainty and fragmentation by being transparent about inspirations and research behind the installation (see 04.3.3 *Educational installation*).
3	Facilitating the sexual journey	Embody the journey of sexuality by centring discovery and play in design proposals (see 04.3).
4	Putting the user back in power	Empower users by putting them in the position of researchers, and opening space for expression (see 04.3.1 *Research through exhibition*).
5	Sextech for emotions	Facilitate emotional connection and communication by looking into how to create space for reflection (appendix A3.1 *Residency*, 03.2 *Defining the message*).

03.3.1 Research through exhibition

This direction builds on design direction 4: "Empower users by putting them in the position of researchers, and opening space for expression." Main catalyser in this direction is EBR. Its three key steps are repeated in figure 21, which also maps what these steps would entail for a concept.

EBR resonates with my design goal, and my definition of representation, as it can elicit dynamic engagement between content and public. The strategy of both researching in-context (visitors viewing the exhibition) and through data collection (survey, interview) heavily inspired the evaluation method of the installation (chapter 06).

03.3.2 Installation as workshop space

This direction builds on design step 1: "Address the tension between personalisation and accessibility through exploring methods of a self-made installation experience." and design step 3: "Embody the journey of sexuality by centring discovery and play in design proposals."

The idea is to reverse the design process, so instead of presenting a finished installation, having the installation itself serve as space for co-design sessions and become a workshop environment. Workshops can facilitate identifying and exploring relevant factors in a complex domain, by surfacing knowledge processes (Ørngreen & Levinsen, 2017).
To investigate this direction, I interviewed

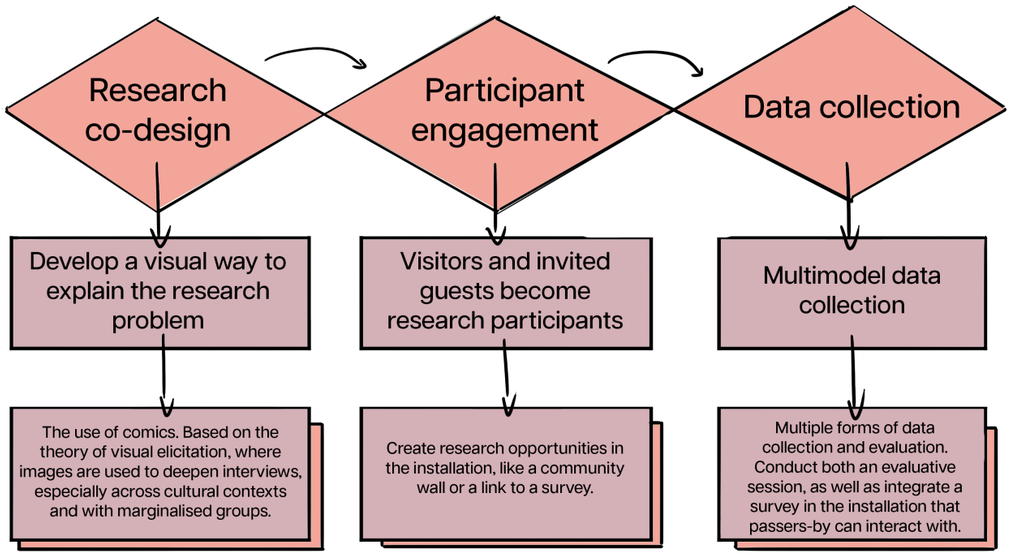


Figure 21: the three key steps of the EBR method, and its potential implications for my design.

four design specialists in participatory design and of two of the design specialists, attended a participatory session. Below I list these interviews and sessions in detail, and insights they provided for this direction:

1. **One concrete idea was to host a "design your own sex toy"-workshop**, this idea was inspired by two findings of the *hey girl!*-research: the need for tailor-made intimacy interventions and a desire for self-determination in sexual experiences.

   I interviewed a alumni industrial designer who had, for their master's thesis, conducted a sextech co-design session. Whilst they confirmed that it actively involves the target group into discussing the topic, it limits to representation of specifically *physical or somatic experiences*, not of experiences in a societal context.

   Whilst I decided not to pursue this direction further, the alumni's experiences in hosting participatory sessions helped me prepare my own evaluation sessions (more on this in 05.2 *Participants & recruitment*).

2. At Roodkapje in Rotterdam, I attended a participatory session on co-designing a new queer space in Rotterdam. The aim of the session was to determine the needs for and spatial requirements of a space.

   In the session, the relational design technique 'deep democracy' was applied. This means that the ideas generated within the session were subjected to debate and a democratic 'election process' of the best ideas took place (Culén et al., 2025). Participants were asked to vote yes or no to an idea, after which 'giving voice to the minority' took place - asking the smallest group to defend their position. Then, participants could switch stance and so on and so forth. This technique facilitates discourse between different groups, though is difficult to execute without supervision. Therefore, I continued searching for an approach that leaves more agency over the discourse to the participants.

3. One of design specialists had completed a project on communication around periods of female athletes. She encountered that trainers of female athletes did not empathise with their athletes, in fact, they weren't even involved. So instead of designing for the athletes themselves, she instead put her focus on the trainers.

   Communication is a two-way street, those who communicate and those who receive the communication. Depending on the desired effect, design should concentrate on one of the two audiences (figure 22).

   For my project, this would mean shifting focus from queer persons towards those who are not queer.

4. At DDW 2025, I attended a participatory session called 'braaf of brave?', on being conventional or radical during the design process. Proposing this direction to other designers inspired me to make the radical design choice, switch focus to a new target group, over continuing with the original target group.

Queer people are already familiar with the topics within sexuality. As aforementioned in 01.6 Design Approach, sexuality becomes something only non-heterosexuals have to consider because they are not the 'norm'. The real opportunity for impact and provocation lies with the receivers of the communication, the so-called 'non-queers'. I discuss the switch of target audience in-depth in 04.4 *Final proposal* and 04.5 *New target group*.

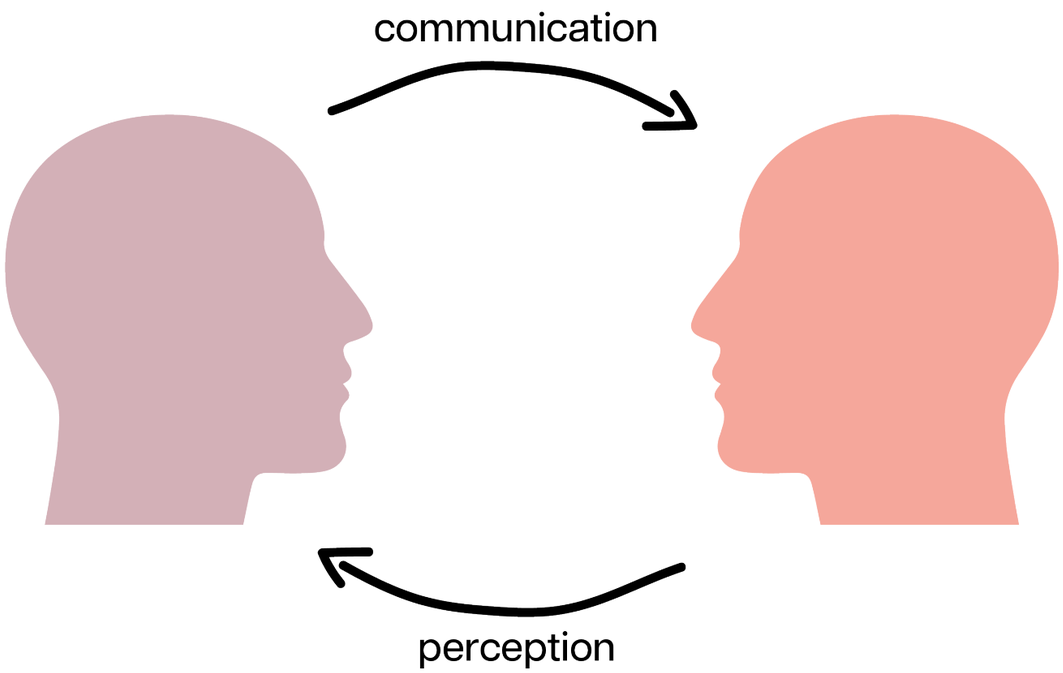


Figure 22: Communication is a two-way street. Design should concentrate on one of the two audiences.

03.3.3 Educational installation

This direction is build upon design step 2: "Counter uncertainty and fragmentation by being transparent about inspirations and research behind the installation." and design step 5: "Facilitate emotional connection and communication by looking into how to create space for reflection."

At the Viva la Vulva festival in Amsterdam, a festival around celebrating the vulva, body and gender diversity (Instagram, 2026), I attended a session by SKSPRAAT on taboos. SKSPRAAT is an organisation that facilitates open and safe conversations on sex (Sekspraat, 2025). After the session, I interviewed the session leaders. The conversation reinforced the importance of centring the experiences of the community in the installation, and using actual narratives and stories to explain concepts to visitors. The feedback was to show my research in the installation, visitors are genuinely interest in to learn from that.

At the What You See festival, a yearly multidisciplinary and international arts festival on gender and identity (What You See Festival, 2026), a research project on growing up queer in a Christian context was presented, in form of a theatre performance. This approach demonstrated how research findings can be presented in a reflective manner, not only presenting information, but also granting space for the emotionality that inherently comes with sexuality.

The installation as an educational tool both aims to inform visitors of my research findings, as well as create space to personally reflect on them. Whilst the idea of 'teaching' visitors information didn't find fruition, the need for a reflective space within the installation did.

03.4 Final concept: an installation as reflective space

By processing the insights from the three design proposals, a final direction emerges: the installation as reflective space. This approach is structured in two phases. First, it exposes visitors concepts within queer sexuality and findings from my research (design direction 2). Secondly, it invites active participation with the information and thus representation, by providing space for visitors to reflect on and interact with these concepts personally (see figure 23).

At the core lie two principles, that of embodied interaction, and of visual elicitation:

- **Embodied interaction** is the direct manipulation of objects in an interaction, enabling a more intuitive and realistic experience (Huang et al., 2023). It can exist in three dimensions: physical, sensory, and cognitive. In the installation, the physical dimension is applied (Xu et al., 2021).
- **Visual elicitation** is the use of visuals as stimuli for research participants to disclose their feelings (Pauwels, 2020). The method situates participants as expert, which facilitates increased participant authority in the research, improving trust and overall engagement (Orr et al., 2020).

Crucial to this proposal is a shift of target group and consequently of design goal. In chapter 03.5 *New target group*, how this influences the design process is discussed in detail.
To conclude this chapter, an interaction vision is proposed. It served as starting point for the prototyping and conceptualisation phase (chapter 04).

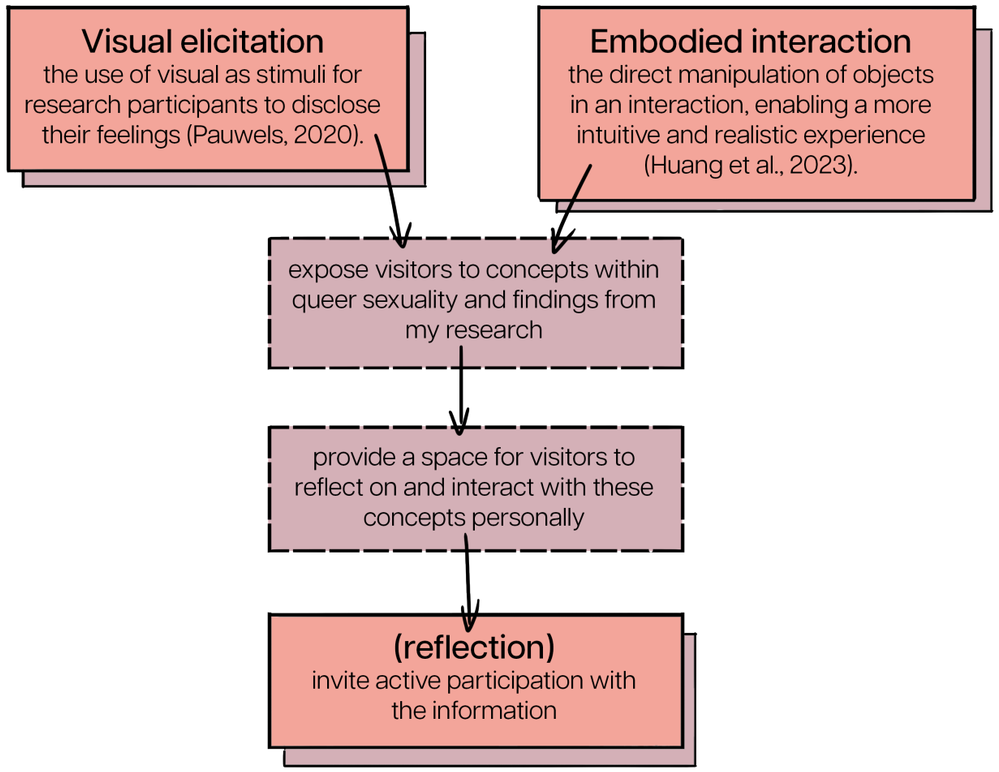


Figure 23: visualisation of the concept flow and its underlying principles.

03.5 New target group

Inspired by the interviews conducted to explore proposal 2 'installation as workshop space', I adapted my design goal. The overarching design goal remains:

Design an installation to enable (re)presentation of the experiences of the queer community in the domain of sexuality.

This goal will be achieved through fulfilling a second goal (see figure 25). Instead of represent, I use resonate, which means "to affect or appeal to someone in a personal or emotional way" (Merriam-Webster, 2026). The installation must therefore facilitate a personal interaction for its visitors. Within this goal, the new target group is also mentioned, the 'non-queers'.

To assume these are simply the opposite of 'the queers' is rather blunt. That would entail all persons who do not identify themselves within the LGBTQIA+ community (see chapter 01.4 The Target Group). This excludes allies, or files LGBTQIA+-individuals automatically as 'queer', even though they might not feel as such. I reassessed my definition of 'queer' to create a deeper level of nuance (figure 24). The new definition is inspired by the definition of an ally (see *Definition of terms*): someone who is activist for LGBTQIA+-rights through performing actions that support the queer community, and not only voicing suport (Cumming-Potvin, 2023).

'Non-queers' might also be openly LGBTQIA+ persons by this definition, but statistical research of the Dutch population older than 15 by the CBS shows that non-queer persons are predominantly cishet (2026). Due to this, I made an active effort to recruit this group for the evaluation (chapter 05.2 *Participants & recruitment*).

With the 180° in target group, I wished to conduct additional research with the group. As all research activities so far have been working relationally with the queer community, I missed insight into the 'non-queers'. I created a plan for co-design sessions and was into active contact with three locations, however due to lack of response from these locations, I was forced to drop these sessions because the planning took too long. The plan is added in appendix A5.1.

Being 'queer' means being active within the LGBTQIA+-community.

Figure 24: the updated definition of 'queer'.

Being 'non-queer' means not being active within the LGBTQIA+-community.

04.4.3 Interaction Vision (IV)

The Interaction Vision (IV) is inspired by visual elicitation. I aim to, like I have done throughout this thesis, explain concepts from queer sexuality through comics. Comics are, due to the interplay between visuals and text, not only suitable for communicating complex narratives, but also for surpassing cultural boundaries and appealing to a wide range of people (Al Faruque, 2023).

"The interaction is like a good conversation with a friend over coffee."



Character of interactions:
Cosy, playful, stimulating, reflective

Affordances:
- *Cosy:* neutral and calming space.
- *Playful:* using analogies and physical engagement.
- *Stimulating:* provoking questions, diverse narratives, visual elements.
- *Reflective:* give take-away statements & questions.

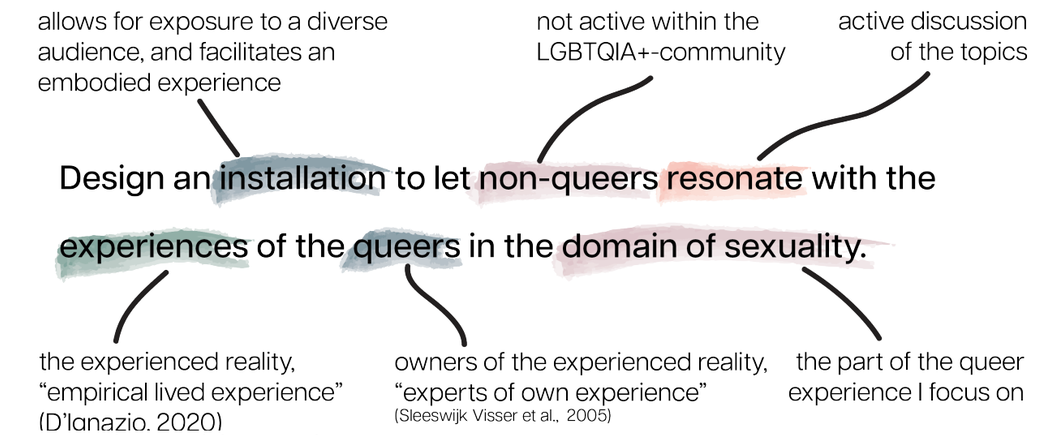


Figure 25: the second design goal.

04

04 From proposal to physical concept

04.1 Philosophy on spatial design
- 04.1.1 List of Requirements

04.2 Ideation
- 04.2.1 Maquettes
- 04.2.2 FAST Fund
- 04.2.3 Inspirations
- 04.2.4 Co-creation with experts
- 04.2.5 The 1-on-1 prototypes

04.3 Construction
- 04.3.1 Circularity
- 04.3.2 The cards

04.4 Concluding the prototyping phase



Figure 26: what an installation is, in the words and drawings of Cole (2019).

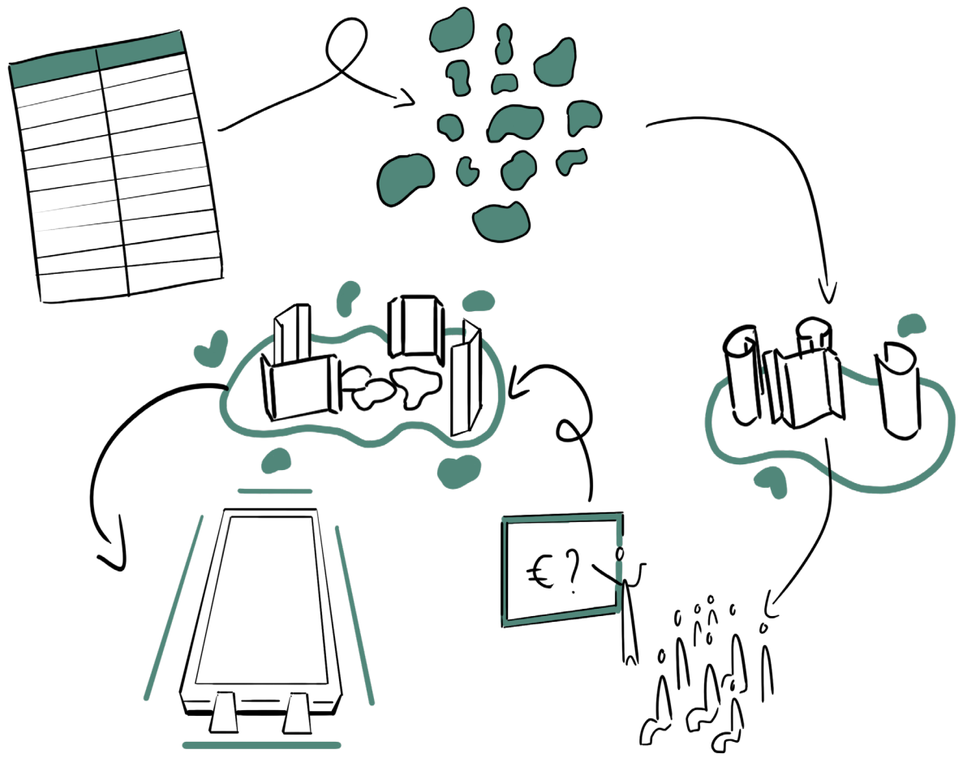


Figure 27: the prototyping process, visualised.

With a clear goal (let visitors resonate with the experiences of the queer community in the domain of sexuality), a new target audience (non-queers) and a design form (installation), a prototype can be realised. The design process from proposal to physical concept was based on the design approach in the comic 'I Make Exhibits' by B. Erin Cole (2019).

Cole, a historian with the profession of designing exhibits, describes them (in a museum context) as "a three-dimensional narrative environment! A story or argument you move through and interact with!" (see figure 26, previous page) The design approach is to get to 'the Big Idea' or main message that ties the narrative together, and to then use different techniques to reinforce the main message.

The main message of the installation is that in queer theory, binaries are interrogated and instead fluidity is assumed (chapter 03.2).

In this chapter I outline the ideation process on what techniques might reinforce main message in the installation *hey theys!*. First, I delve into the philosophy on spatial design to generate a list of requirements for what the installation must physically achieve. Based on these requirements and the directions they propose, I present the highlights of my ideation process that let to a final concept (chapter 04.3) (figure 27).

Unmissable in the process is the introduction of the FAST fund awarded to me in December 2025, that granted me the budget to build the installation entirely (chapter 05.4).

This chapter concludes with an evaluation on whether I achieved to meet the list of requirements with the constructed design.

04.1 Philosophy on spatial design

Philosophy on spatial design was used to generate a list of requirements for what the installation must physically achieve. I was inspired by queer theorist Foucault's philosophical theory of Foucault on space, specifically that of what he describes as 'heterotopias'.

"Heterotopias are cultural/ institutional spaces that are 'other' or 'worlds within 'worlds': both similar to their surroundings, and contrasting and upsetting them." (1986)

Table 9: requirements derived form the theory of Foucault.

Heterotopic principle		Requirement
1	A heterotopia is a place of deviation: "those in which individuals whose behaviour is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm are placed.	The installation must present a deviance to the required mean or norm.
2	"Society [...] can make an existing heterotopia function in a very different fashion."	The function of a heterotopia changes over time, so my installation must have space for input of society (the visitors).
3	"A heterotopia is capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible."	The installation is multiple spaces at the same time, and thus the visitors' flow through the installation must be non-linear.
4	A heterotopia is "most often linked to slices in time [...]. The heterotopia begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time."	The installation must offer flexibility in time commitment of travelling though it.
5	"Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. [...] Either the entry is compulsory, [...] or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications."	A sensitising process must be present upon entering the installation.

A note here is that the term 'hetero' is used in direct translation from the Greek ετερος or 'héteros', meaning "different" or "other", instead of a heterosexual person. The installation as heterotopia can suspect and invert the set of relations, or binaries, it happens to reflect.

Foucault designates five principles of heterotopias, from which once again, a list of requirements can be transferred that can function as inspiration or guideline for the physicality of *hey theys!*.

Foucault's theory on heterotopias can be linked to queer theory through the Theory of Queer Temporality by Jack Halberstam (2005). Like how a heterotopia breaks with traditional time, queer time refers to the potentiality of a life unscripted by the sequenced conventions of birth, marriage, reproduction, death, or simply, the "adult/youth binary". E.g. someone who has had their first queer experience at fifty, might feel younger than someone in their twenties, in terms of years since their first queer experience. Approaching space as non-linear, without a fixed amount time allotted to its exploration, then mirrors the queer experience of space and time (Barker & Scheele, 2016).
On a philosophical level, this ties into H. Arendt's view of what makes up a persuasive message in *On Power* (see chapter 02.4 on empowerment): "based on reason [...], hearing all sides of the story and having access to accurate information." (Penta, 1996)

The requirements derived from these two theories are listed in table 9 on the previous page.

04.1.1 List of Requirements

Next to the 'queer' requirements derived from the theory of Foucault, I also generated general requirements based on previous findings in the project. These function as inspiration for the ideation phase. The complete list of requirements is shown in table 10. I rephrased these into inspirational design directions (figure 28, next page).

However, as the 'queer' requirements based on queer theory are most in line with the main message of the installation, these are the requirements I actively test the final design against during evaluation (chapter 5). They are highlighted in table 10.

Table 10: Full list of requirements and the proposed design direction they entail for the installation.

Requirement
The installation must provoke discussion.
The abstract idea of fluidity must be experiential.
The installation must enable visitors to explore and embody the main message themselves.
The installation must encourage visitors to reflect on their own beliefs and the societal conditions that shape them.
The interactions in the installation must juxtapose a binary approach.
The installation must be accessible to audiences with varying levels of familiarity with queer theory.
The installation must present a deviance to the required mean or norm.
The installation must have space for input of visitors.
The visitors' flow through the installation must be non-linear.
The installation must offer flexibility in time commitment of travelling though it.
A sensitising process must be present upon entering the installation.
The installation must be actively involved with the message.
The installation must allow visitors to have access to all information and not disclose any information.



Facilitate conversation.



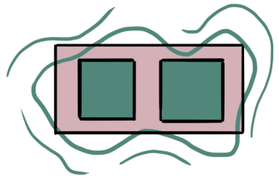
Use responsive environments that change by visitor presence.



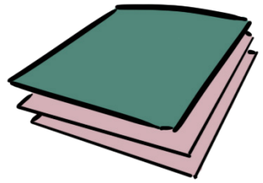
Create participatory interactions.



Use provocative prompts and mirrors (literal and metaphorical).



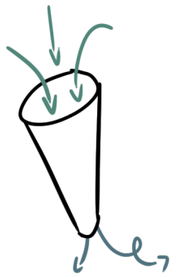
Present binary choices that reveal spectrums when engaged with.



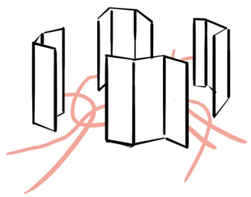
Layer information.



Present familiar concepts in an unfamiliar way.



Design for evolving contribution.



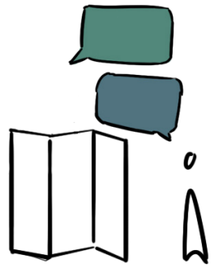
Avoid prescribed paths; encourage exploration.



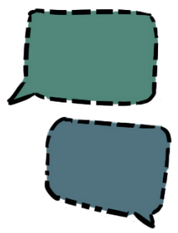
Modular experiences, short or long exploration both possible.



Create a threshold experience for emotional/ intellectual preparation.



Make the installation itself a participant in the dialogue.



Use anonymous data collecion and display.

Figure 28: Full list of requirements.

04.2 Ideation

Armed with the list of requirements, it was time to hop on the ideation bandwagon. In this chapter, I present the highlights of the ideation process, which included, but were not limited to using maquettes to test out spatial configurations of the installation, ideation techniques like 'in a perfect world...' and 'design in a day', taking inspiration from professional installations on similar topics, co-creating with experts, and creating prototypes in several scales.

04.2.1 Maquettes

Designing an installation, or in general, a space, requires a different scale of thinking than a (often hand-held) product. I live together with two MSc architecture students and followed their advice to work with maquettes, to be able to see how your ideas work in space, yet also to be able to visualise where which pieces of content of the installation can go.
I build three maquettes in total:

- A **draft paper version** (figure 29). This version was made to determine the spatial design of the installation at a macro level.
- A **flat version** (figure 30). This '2D' copy of the draft paper version was used to fill out what kinds of content would go in the installation and where they would be placed. By using post its, I could swap around ideas and create different versions to compare.
- Moving into realism already, I created **the final maquette** (figure 31). Five full-size interactions are, in a solo project of just 20 weeks, not feasible. Therefore, I scaled down the concept into three 'content-walls' with a central reflective area. Their exact infill was developed simultaneous to the co-creation (chapter 04.2.4).

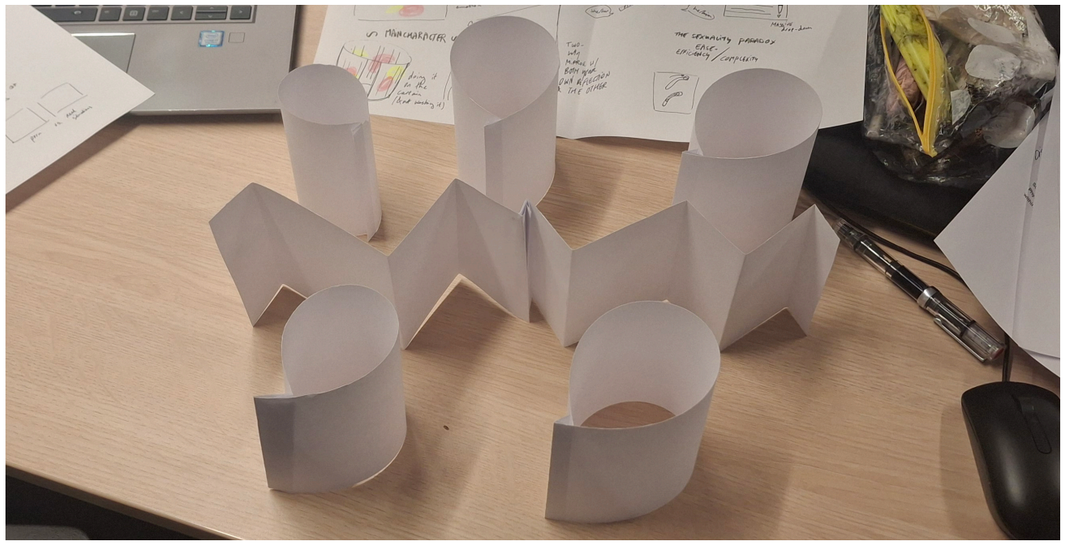
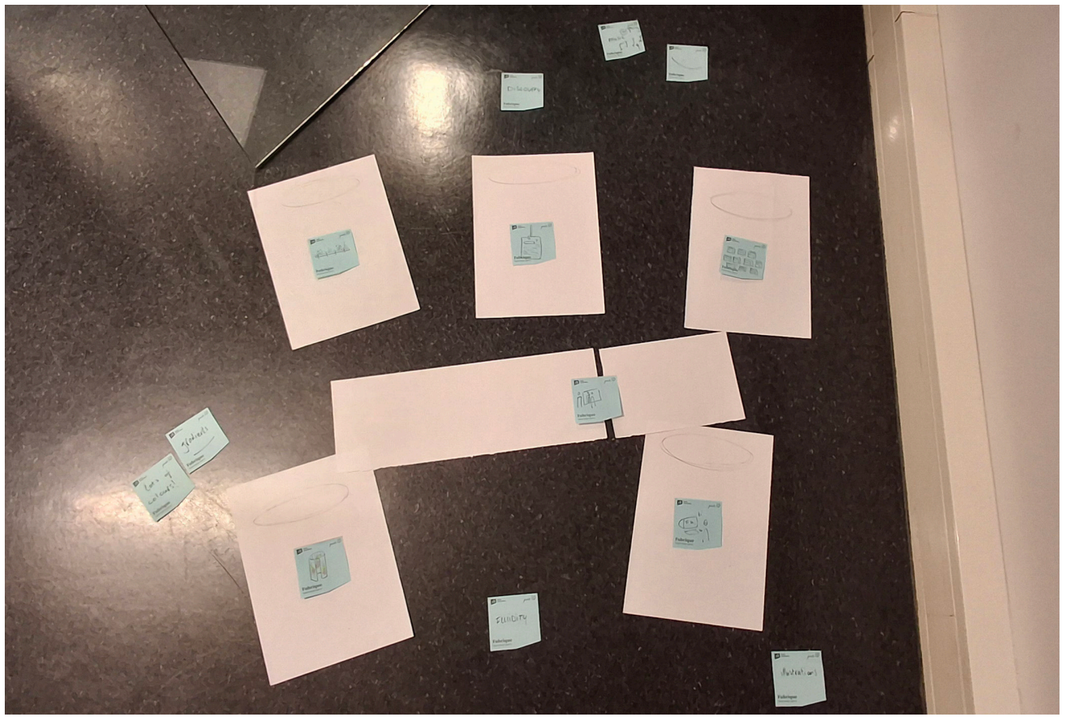


Figure 29: the draft paper maquette. The parts could be moved around to determine what spatial design worked best.



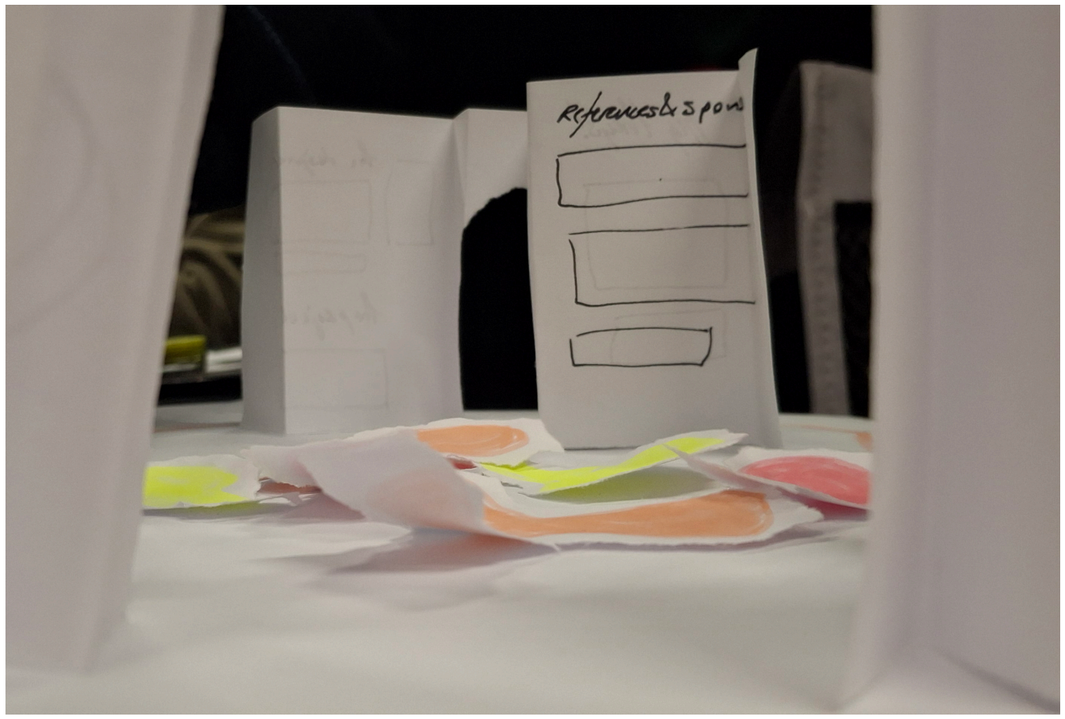
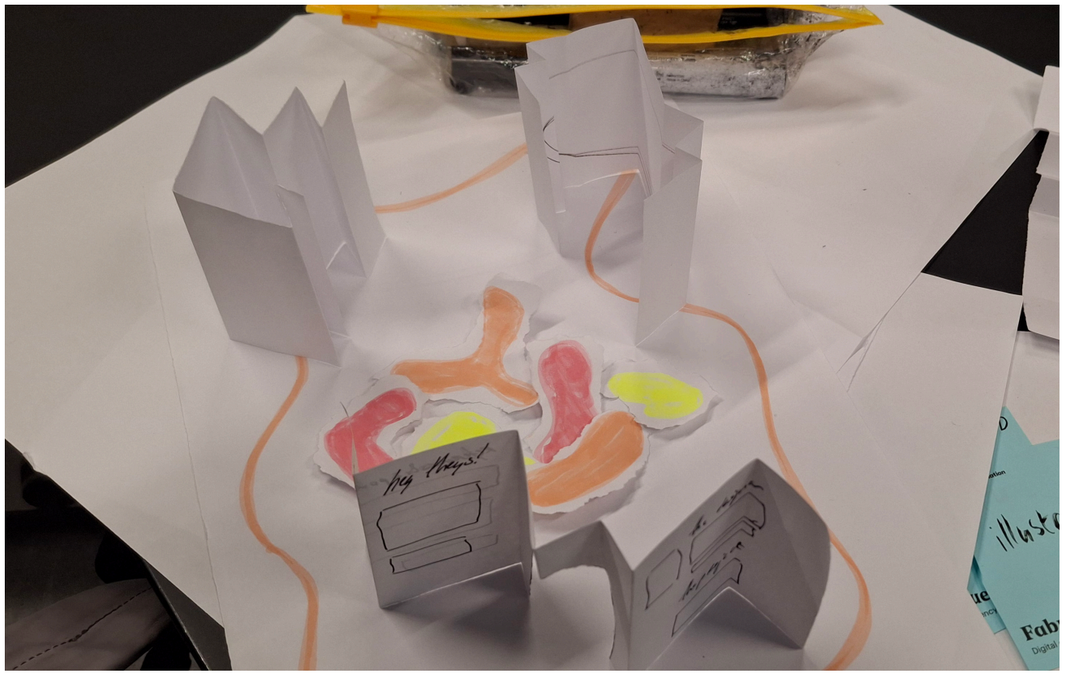


Figure 30: the flat maquette. Note how interactions were represented by post-its, so I could figure out what configuration of interactions would work best.



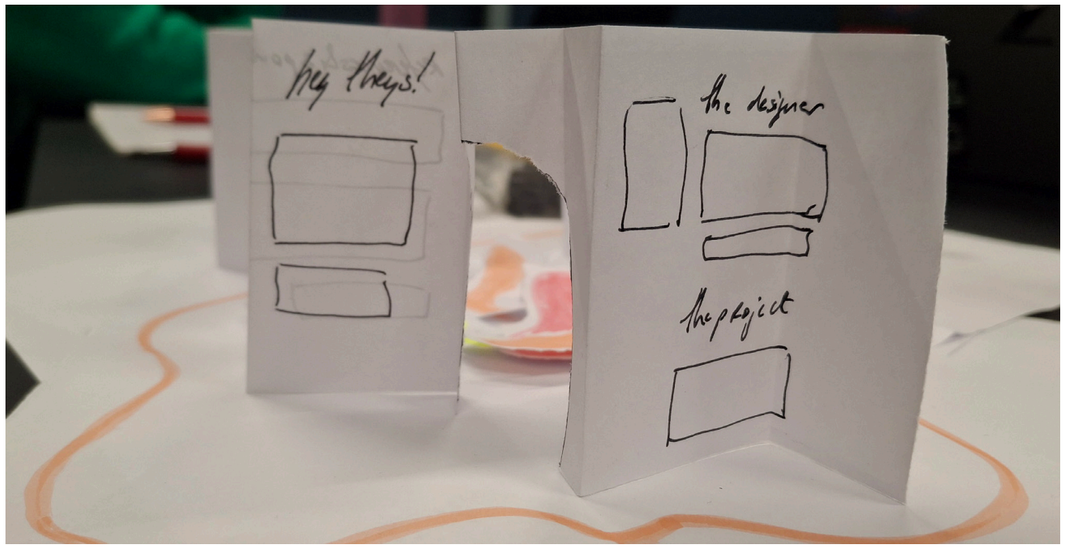


Figure 31: (top and right) the final maquette. It was used to present to experts (see 05.2.2), therefore the elements were still moveable so the design plan could be changed during conversation.

04.2.2 FAST Fund

Pivotal in the prototyping process was the FAST (Funding Ambitious Students TU Delft) Fund, a university funding for ambitious student projects. The application was done within the 'Ambitious Project'-grant, in which up till €15,000 can be applied for. *hey theys!* went through the pre-selection (for the application, see appendix A4.1) and pitch session (for the pitch desk, see appendix A4.2) with a request for €4000, to cover all costs, from building materials and technology, to logistics, promotion, and unforeseen costs. I was awarded the grant (see appendix A4.3.2 for a detailed budget).

The selection process forced me into two directions (see figure 32), to which I responded by performing an 'in a perfect world'. This enabled me to have a very precise vision and narrative behind the installation, to 'sell' it to the Executive Grant Committee. From this 'in a perfect world', how the installation will touch upon the Lean principles of feasibility/viability/desirability could be determined (figure 33). These principles are a framework often used in design thinking and innovation to evaluate and guide the development of projects, including interactive art installations (Van Boeijen et al., 2020):

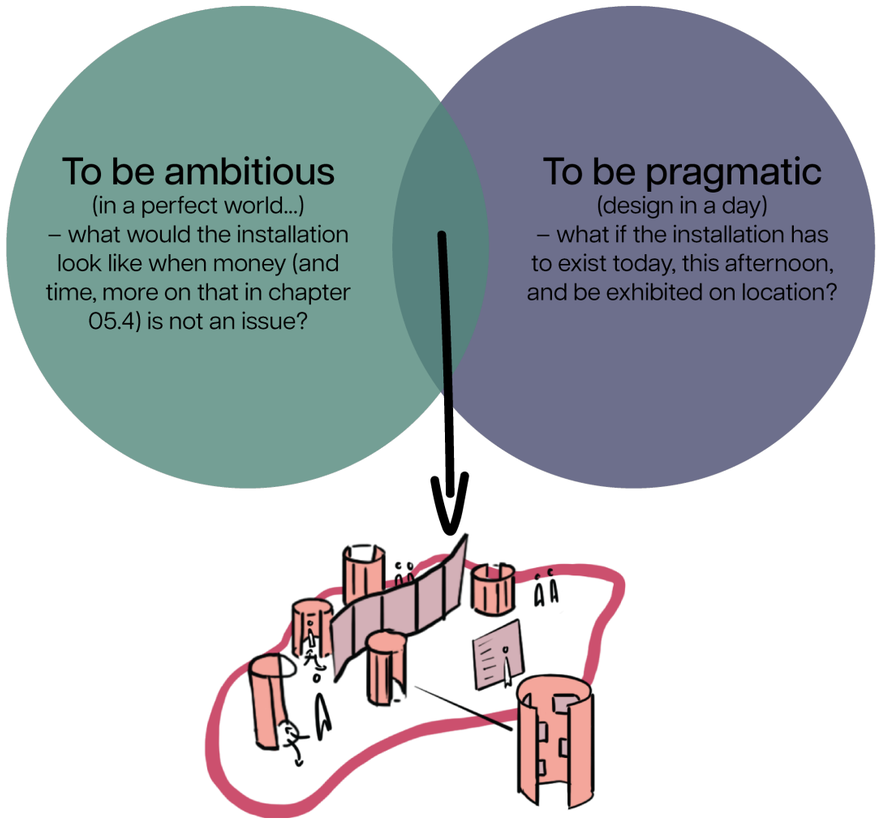


Figure 32: the two directions application to the FAST Fund forced me into, and the resulting design.

Feasibility: whether the installation can actually be realised. Can it be built and function as intended?

- The installation must be technically available, affordable and within my expertise.
- The installation's construction must be physically feasible for me, in workload, size and weight, and must be installable in the intended space.
- The installation must be maintainable, updatable and able to be troubleshooted during its exhibition.

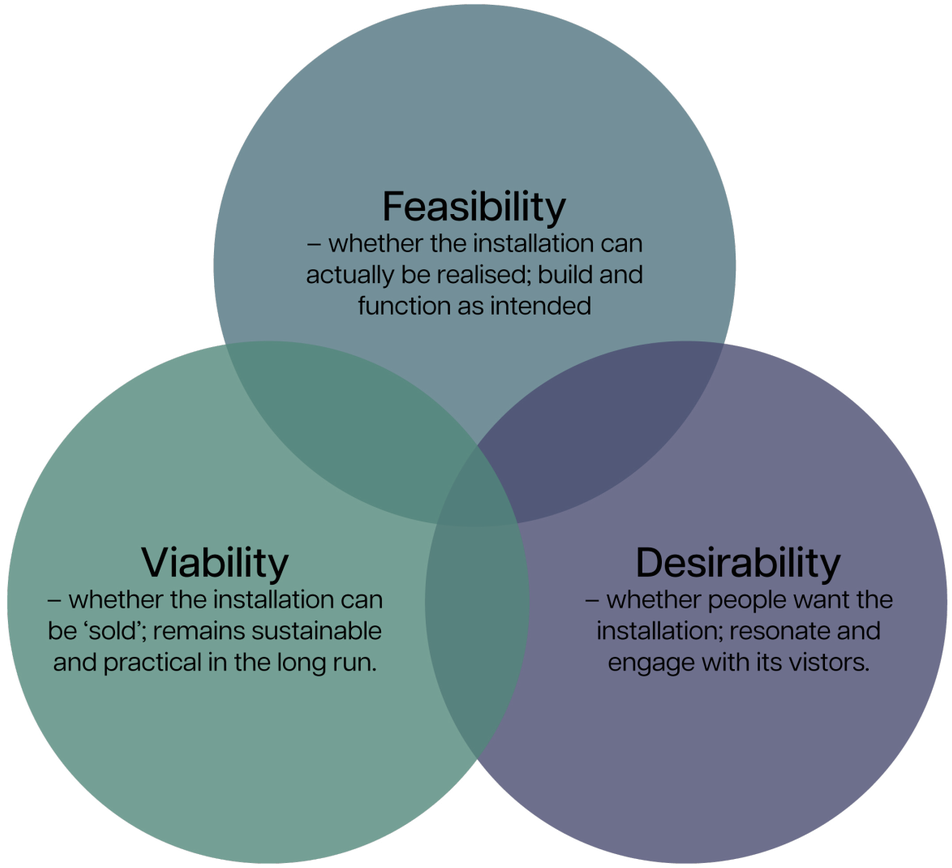


Figure 33: the Lean principles of feasibility/viability/desirability and what they entail in the context of installation design.

Viability: whether the installation can be 'sold'. Is the installation sustainable and practical in the long run?

- Is the plan within the budget?
- Is the exhibition plan easy to execute and scalable, meaning the installation can be easily set up in potential future locations?
- Is the exhibition safe and insured?

Desirability: whether people want the installation. Does it resonate and engage with its visitors?

- Does the installation meet the list of requirements?
- Does it connect with its audience (queer as well as non-queer)?
- Is the interaction enjoyable for participants?

However, because the FAST fund forced me to think grand and ambitious, I still had to make a design move towards an executable building plan. Chapter 04.2.3 details the existing installations and exhibits I visited as inspiration for the physical manifestation of hey theys!. Chapter 04.2.5 presents the prototype that validated the feasibility of my building approach.

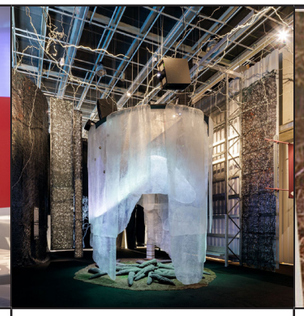
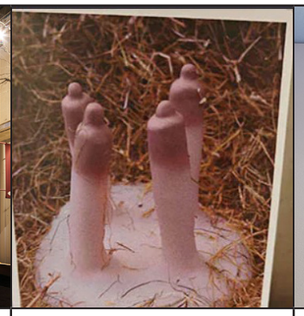
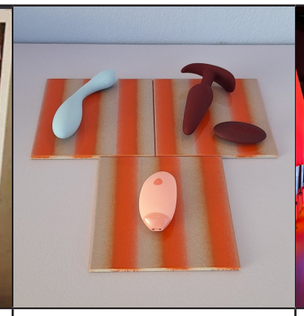
04

04.2.3 Inspirations

To gather inspiration for the installation, I did what all designers do: peek at what those before you have done. In table 11 below I have comprised an overview of all the installations I visited over the course of this project, what inspirations I took from them, and how these return in the installation design.

On the next page, you can also find a digital collage of these inspirations that served as a moodboard/vision board for the installation (figure 34).

Table 11: the installations visited for inspiration, and how these take-aways are incorporated into the design.

Image							
Installation	Jewish Positions	Audiovisuele installaties	Mannenmelk	Toy Stories	Vrouwen als technologie	Ontworpen Liefde	When the body says yes
Location	Joods Museum	Het Nieuwe Instituut	DDW	Kunsthal Rotterdam	Design Museum Den Bosch	Design Museum Den Bosch	Biennale Venice
Moment of visit	02-03-2025	01-02-2024	21-10-2025	22-02-2025	26-09-2025	11-04-2024	07-2022
Take-away	Non-linear structure, presenting the topic to diverse audiences.	How to make an interaction feel private, whilst other visitors can see you interacting.	How to present and communicate a project on sexuality.	The use of colours to designate sections.	How to make an audience curious and draw them in.	A typewriter to write a letter ‘to sexuality’.	The use of fabrics and cushions to create a reflective space.
How it returns in the installation	Non-linear route for visitors. The freedom to determine the sequence of your experience.	The use of semi-transparent screens.	Use different forms of communication within the same installation to reach diverse audiences.	Every section is being illuminated by a lamp in a different colour.	The content of the installation is only fully visible when a visitors enters the installation space.	Include a ‘graffiti wall’, space for visitors to leave something of themselves.	The evaluation middle section of the installation.
Source	(Joods museum, 2024)	(Nieuwe Instituut, z.d.)	(Manifestations 2025 – DDW, 2025)	(Kunsthal, 2025)	(Design Museum Den Bosch, 2025)	(Design Museum Den Bosch, 2024)	(La Biennale di Venezia, 2022)

04



Figure 34: A digital collage of all the inspirations, presenting the take-aways of each inspiration.

04.2.4 Co-creation with experts

After having drafted a general spatial plan of the installation, and gathered inspirations, I detailed the installation. I determined definitively:

1. What do I wish to include in the installation?
2. Where do these elements go?
3. In what order will everything be constructed?

In figure 35, I've summarised the conclusions of co-creation sessions with three experts in installation design, where we sat down 1-on-1 with the build plan and the question that linked to their expertise. Together, a new version of the plan was sketched.

To experiment with what elements to include, and then, where to put them on the screens, mock-ups in Photoshop were drawn. The mock-up, along with the designs for the plates, are documented in appendix A6.2 and A6.3.

The final design and its construction approach (chapter 04.3) are discussed in later chapters.

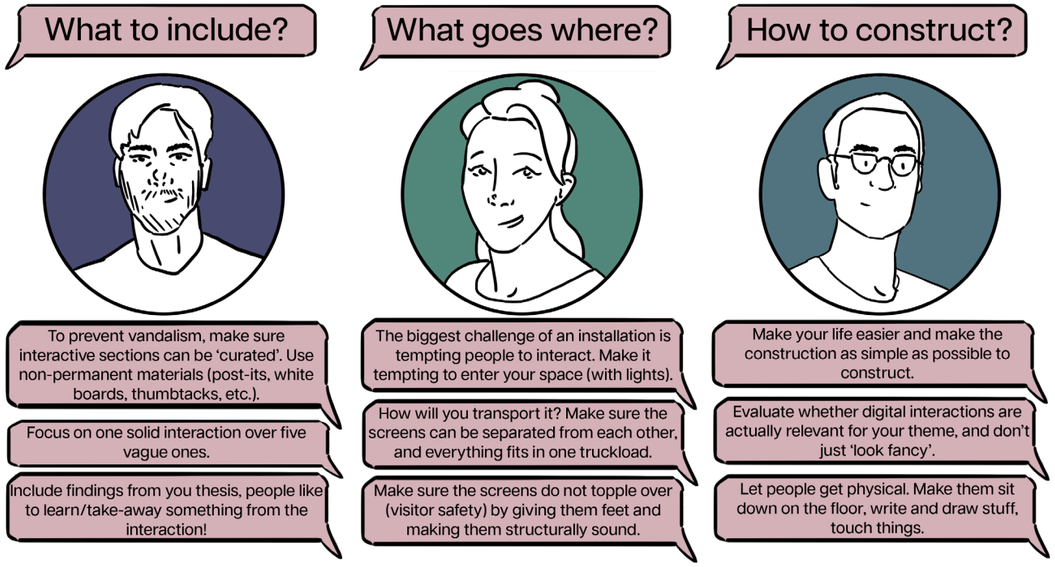


Figure 35: take-aways from conversations with three experts in installation design to definitively determine what to include and position in the final design.

04.2.5 The 1:1 prototype

Finally, I constructed an 1:1 size prototype of one of the screens, along with several material tests. These served to validate the feasibility of the design and building plan, as well as its aesthetics.

With a 1:1 sized prototype, I could feel in my hands the weight of the thing and how it feels to handle it. As my plan was to transport the installation to multiple locations, its weight and size were significant. E.g. it had to fit in a large car.



Figure 36: The 1:1 prototype and aesthetic tests.

04.3 Construction

In this chapter, I document the translation from concept to physical manifestation. Realising a design naturally changes it, not only to make building it possible, but also because complications become visible that aren't that apparent on paper.

04.3.1 presents my personal principle and challenge to make the installation circular. In this day and age, I find it totally irresponsible to produce something that is not environmentally sustainable. 04.3.2 documents the developed of the cards, an interaction that is central to the installation.

04.3.1 Circularity

Whilst constructing the installation, I made effort of making it as sustainable, or even circular, as possible. This was out of my own morality.

I made sure all materials could be taken apart from each other and reused. Complete elements like furniture were bought at second hand stores and a list has been comprised of everything in the installation, so that when it must be taken apart, it is easier to resell or give away materials.

04.3.2 The cards

During a trip, I came across a store with several conversation card games for queer people. What inspired me were the diverse tones these card games take, not all tones resonate with all people after all. The playfulness of a game resonates with how I prefer to design. This inspired me to create an own twist onto the popular 'tea topics' by Pickwick. Playful questions attached to tea bags that can be discussed over tea.
The questions were inspired by actual tea topics. I first brainwrited a list of all the possible questions that came to mind. I then iterated on this list - e.g. no 'who?'-questions, preferably no yes/no-questions, or rewriting questions to be phrased more inclusively (e.g. not all people have (had) sex). Figure 37 shows how the questions related to the themes derived from thematic analysis, which added an iteration onto making them fit my design direction.

With the C-box in figure 38, I could determine the questions explore four different approaches: whether they are direct or ambiguous, reflective or active questions.



Figure 37: the questions categorised into which theme of hey girl! *they relate to.*

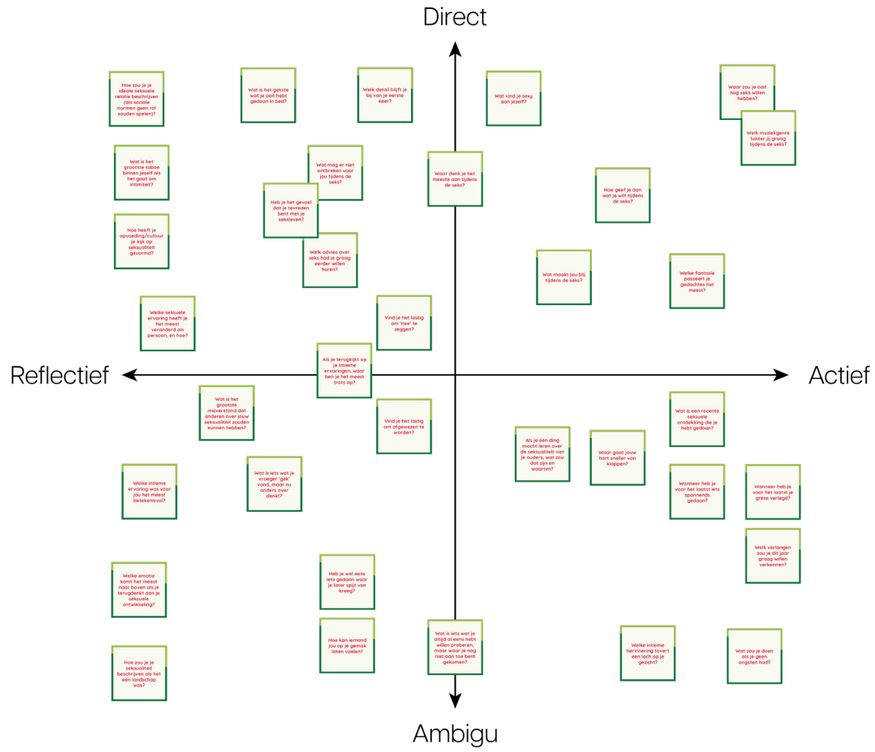
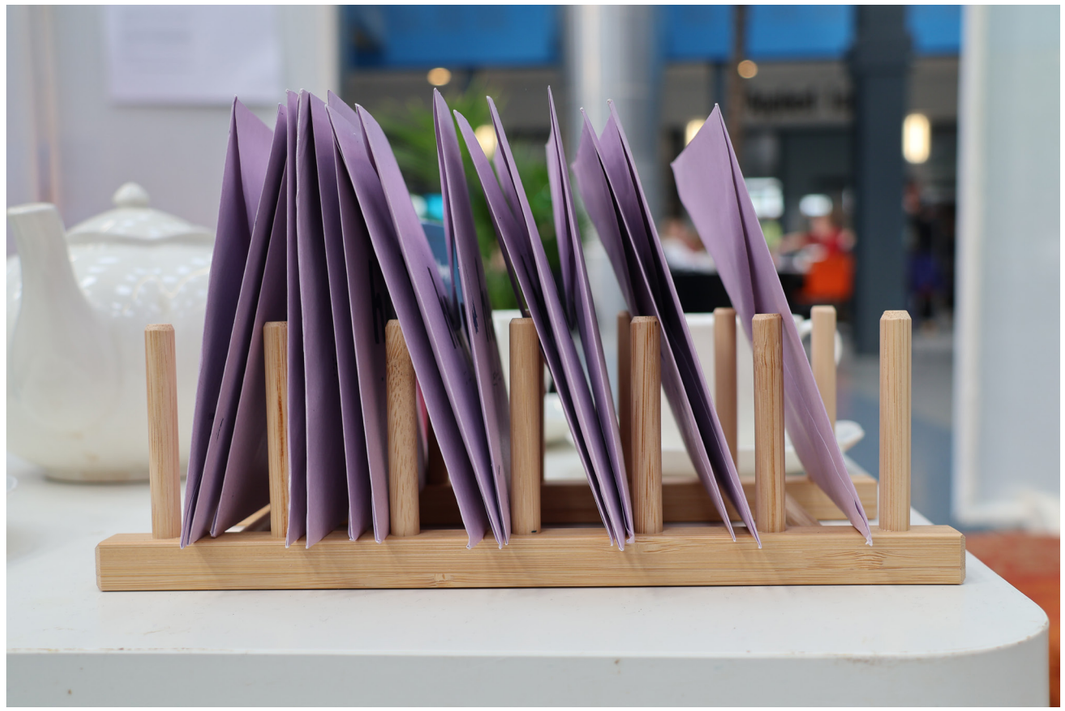


Figure 38: the questions categorised into four different approaches.


hey
hey!
whilst you enjoy the tea,
help out my thesis research and
fill out this evaluation form. :)
hey they!
time for tea.
paste your question here,
for future conversation.


hey they!
you may
take me home
with you :)


Wat is het grootste misverstand dat anderen over jouw seksualiteit zouden kunnen hebben?




hey
they
s!


hey!
hey they!



04.5 Concluding the prototyping phase

With a realised concept, I return to my original list of requirements and assess whether they've been met. An analysis of this is summarised in table 12. The 2nd requirement 'The installation must have space for input of visitors.' could not be assessed yet, as in the current stage of the concept, input points have not yet been added. More on this in chapter 05.7 *Discussion*.

Table 12: the list of requirements and whether the requirement has been met?

Requirement	Has the requirement been met?
The installation must present a deviance to the required mean or norm.	Yes. The concept of binaries is explained through an analogy.
The installation must have space for input of visitors.	No. This requirement can be assessed one the community wall has been added (chapter 05.7).
The visitors' flow through the installation must be non-linear.	Yes. Though there is an introduction to the installation, every set of panels has its own topic and stands on itself. Visitors can start and end at every spot.
The installation must offer flexibility in time commitment of travelling though it.	Yes. Visitors can choose to take part in the entire experience, or to only read a few boards, or to only interact with the cards, etc.
A sensitising process must be present upon entering the installation.	Yes, there is an introduction to the installation, explaining the main message.



05 Evaluation of the concept

05.1 Purpose of the evaluation
05.2 Participants & recruitment
05.3 Space
05.4 Session methodology
05.4.1 Design evolution

05.5 Results
05.6 Conclusion
05.7 Discussion: 2nd evaluation
05.7.1 Session plan
05.7.2 Results



START

CH. 5.1-5.4

How to measure whether the design goals have been met?



Determine evaluation method: group focus session

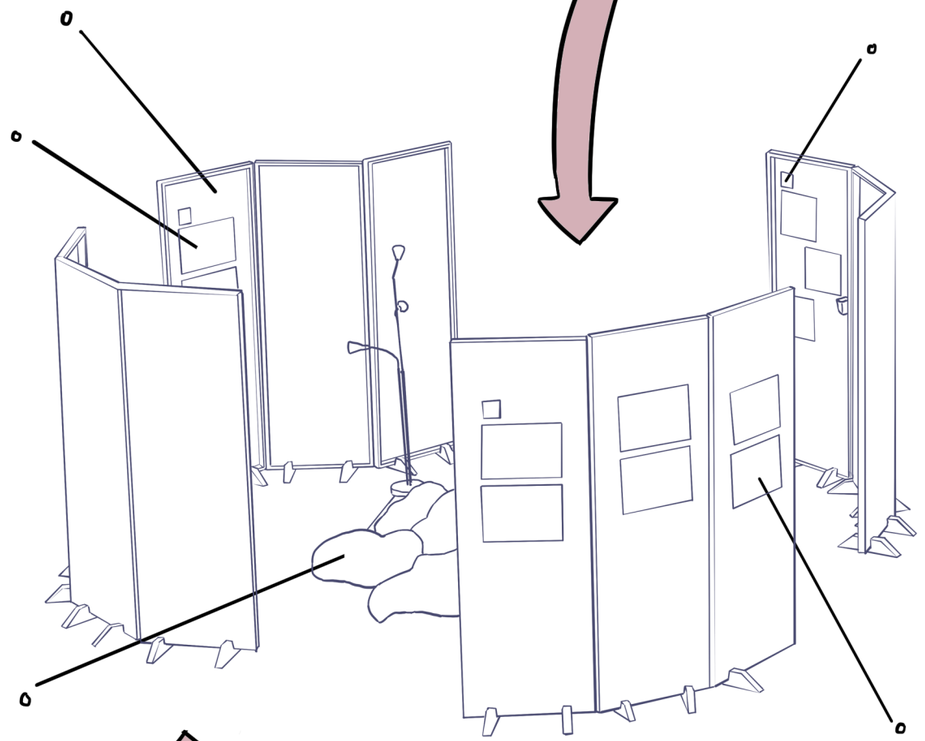
CH 5.5

1st evaluation

Ch. 5.6 Conclusion

What has succeeded?

What still needs to be improved to meet the design goals?



Changes to the design

Ch. 6.2 Discussion

Where is there still friction? Are these:

CH. 6.4

Recommendations!

Limitations!

CH. 6.3

Ch. 6.1 Conclusion

No

Are the design goals met?

Yes

END

2nd evaluation

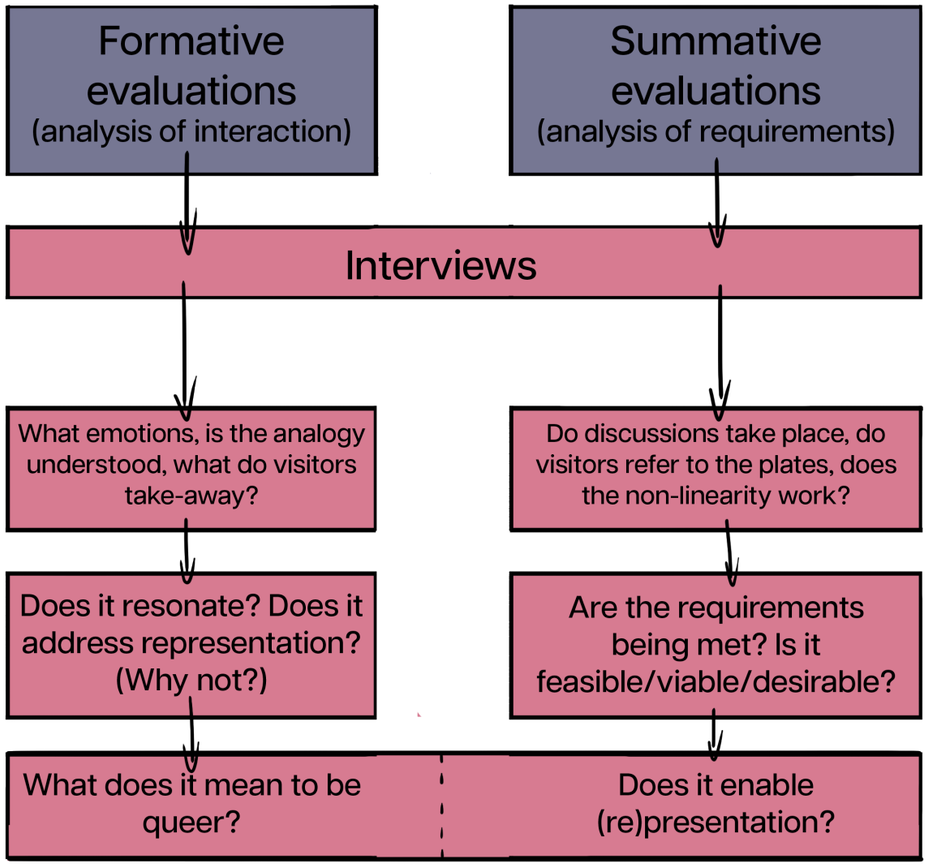
Ch. 5.7 Discussion

With these changes, what must be evaluated in order to determine whether the goals have been met this way?

This chapter discusses the complete evaluation process. It first outlines the purpose of the evaluation, its participant recruitment, the spatial setup of the installation and the session methodology. In-between evaluation sessions I continued to iterate on the design, these steps are documented in 05.4.1 Design evolution. The chapter concludes with the results of the sessions, a concluding statement on whether the design is desirable and the list of requirements has been met, and a discussion of the evaluation process.

General evaluation of the design goal and assessment in regards to the problem statements is documented in chapter 06: *hey theys!*.

Figure 39: the evaluation process in steps.



05.1 Purpose of the evaluation

Evaluation of a design exists in two types:

- **Formative evaluations** aid in comprehension of how a design is interacted with and how this interaction might be improved. These improvements are qualitative, general aspects (Lee et al., 2017). Does the concept help non-queers to be able to resonate with experiences of queers? (Or: Why does it fail to do so?)
- **Summative evaluations** are quantitative and straightforward: does the installation meet the list of requirements (figure 39, next page) (Lee et al., 2017)? Is it feasible, viable *and* desirable?

Figure 39 (left page) visualises the evaluation process in steps. The conclusions drawn in this chapter differ from the general conclusion drawn in chapter 06, the final chapter of this thesis. In the last chapter, I assess what the findings mean in the grand scheme of things (what does it mean to be queer? Has the design goal been met?).

This is why the discussion in this chapter only concerns the evaluation process, and overall discussion of the limitations and strengths of my theories is performed in chapter 06: *hey theys!*.



The installation must provoke discussion.



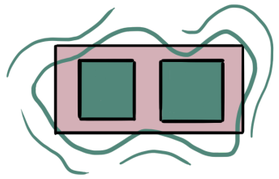
The abstract idea of fluidity must be experiential.



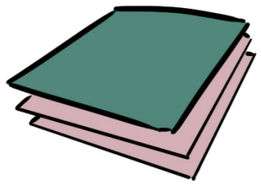
The installation must enable visitors to explore and embody the 'Big Idea' themselves.



The installation must encourage visitors to reflect on their own beliefs and the societal conditions that shape them.



The interactions in the installation must juxtapose a binary approach.



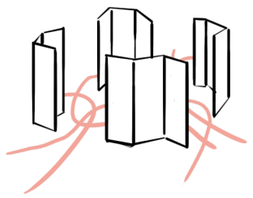
The installation must be accessible to audiences with varying levels of familiarity with queer theory.



The installation must present a deviance to the required mean or norm.



Like how the function of a heterotopia changes over time, the installation must have space for input of visitors.



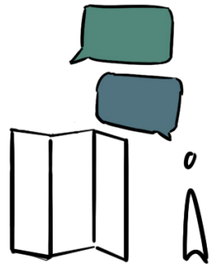
The visitors' flow through the installation must be non-linear.



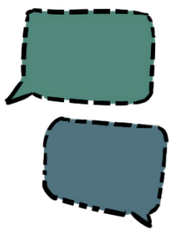
The installation must offer flexibility in time commitment of travelling though it.



A sensitising process must be present upon entering the installation.



The installation must be actively involved with the message.



The installation must allow visitors to have access to all information and not disclose any information.

Figure 40: Full list of requirements.

05.2 Participants & recruitment

To fill in the details of the session, it was necessary to determine first which kind of participants must be recruited.

The target audience of the installation are 'non-queer' individuals (see chapter 03.5):

> ***Being 'non-queer' means not being active within the LGBTQIA+-community.***

However, when the aim of the installation is to provoke discussion and facilitate discussion, the evaluation session must reflect that, which is why I chose to conduct my session in focus groups.

The participating groups (N=5) were either 50/50-mixed queer/non-queer (n=3) or completely non-queer (n=2). One 'group' was a solo participant, non-queer, to be able to conduct an in-depth interview and uncover the *why?* behind what I had heard in sessions. This counters a limitation of focus groups, that the gathered experiences are of greater bandwidth, but less depth (Blandford et al., 2022).

The participants were recruited through personal channels and through posters spread on campus. This potentially limited the reach of recruitment, but is in line with the target audience of the installation.

With such a sensitive topic, a researcher bias of mine is the fear to 'scare off' participants with the intimacy and depth of the discussion.

Before conducting the session, I interviewed an alumni industrial designer, who graduated on generative sessions on sexuality, who performed the following 'comforting actions' during a session:

- Clearly debrief participants at the start and end of the session. Make sure they are sensitised and feel 'warmed up' to the topic before starting co-creation. Also, at the end, leave time and space for discussion, emotions, or questions.
- Establish a "collective code of conduct". This includes values of constructiveness, openness, respect, and safety in communication (the full code of conduct is listed in appendix A5.2).
- Clearly state when you start an audio recording, and also when you are stopping it. Participants may wish to share details for you to write down, which may feel too intimate for a recording.
- Participants can leave their name & e-mail on a list at the end of the session to stay in the loop. This feeds a database of people that wish to be contacted for follow-up interviews or wish to visit the installation.

05.3 Space

Once the installation was ready, it was time to, well, install it. Changes to the design in during exhibitioning was minimal, and predominantly practical. The exhibition process itself is iterative. The Cooper Hewitt, the design museum of the Smithsonian, lists three main design iterations that arise when exhibiting (Brenner, 2016):

1. **Exhibiting exposes existing gaps and inefficiencies in the design.** I attached the comic plates to the screens with double-sided tape. This both looked cheap as well as would be time inefficient, forcing me to tape the backs of all the plates again every time I would exhibit. I decided to instead sew the plates to the screens and use thumbtacks to attach the comics (see figure 41). Sewing blends in with the overall aesthetic and level of detail in the installation, and the thumbtacks allow me to iterate on my texts and comics during evaluation (see chapter 05).
2. **Exhibiting confronts the design with technical challenges.** The screens are lit by coloured lamps to attract attention from passers-by. However, most mainstream smart systems are wifi-connected. When exhibiting on location, I do not always have access to a reliable wifi-system. Therefore, I switch to an offline lamp system.
3. **Exhibiting gives opportunity for experimentation.** Due to time constraints, I did not have time to fully set-up the installation before exhibiting it. The first exhibition date, in the Foyer at X, served as a pilot run. It was the first moment of the installation 'in action' and thus a space for experimenting on how all the elements come together.

The original intent of the evaluation was to evaluate while exhibiting on locations on campus. Due to time constraints this was not realistic. Many of the locations I was in contact with proposed moments in May or June, beyond my graduation timeline. During the pilot exposition at X, the chaos of setting up and removing was too high to record any evaluation.

The evaluation methods set up to record data whilst exhibiting were still implemented into the installation for the exhibition in the main hall of IDE (see 05.8 Discussion).

I chose to set up in a more 'controlled' environment, in basement studio K2 in IDE This environment had several limitations, listed in table 13, along with what I did to limit their impact on the sessions.



Figure 41: sewing the plates to the screens.

Table 13: limitations of using studio K2 as a evaluation space, along with my actions to limit their impact.

Limitation	Resolve
K2 is a closed space, with a single entrance and an obstruction (read: pillar) in the middle.	The installation has been designed to be set up in a diverse set of locations of diverse sizes. By setting it up more densely, there is enough space to roam around it.
Being interrupted during a session.	In retrospect, this is a realistic scenario. In an open space, visitors will likely be 'interrupted' by the environment.

05.4 Session methodology

The session was conducted along the following timetable:

1. (5 min) Welcome and sign consent forms. Establish code of conduct.
2. Free walk-around in the installation.
3. (30 min) When people indicate they are finished walking around, sit down in the evaluation area, start audio recording. Conduct a focus group session, based on an unstructured interview script.
4. (15 min) End audio recording. Leave time for questions.

If we review figure 42 from the methodology of *hey girl!* (03.2), unstructured interviewing is the most fitting methodology for this session. It leaves room for discussion between the participants, generating data that can contribute to the overarching aim of the evaluation: to establish a view on what being queer means, and whether representation has been achieved. The interview script is added in appendix A5.3.

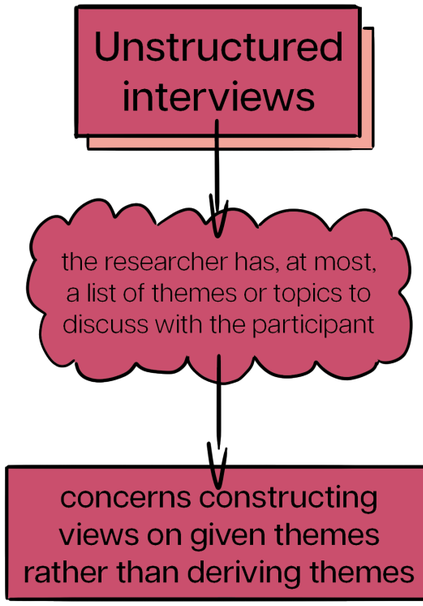


Figure 42: interview types and why they (do not) fit the interview aim (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

05.4.1 Design evolution

In-between each session, I processed my notes and audio recording, and created a transcript. This enabled me to quickly assess whether a quick design iteration could be made to my installation to get closer to the desired effect. In figure 43, the design iterations are portrayed.

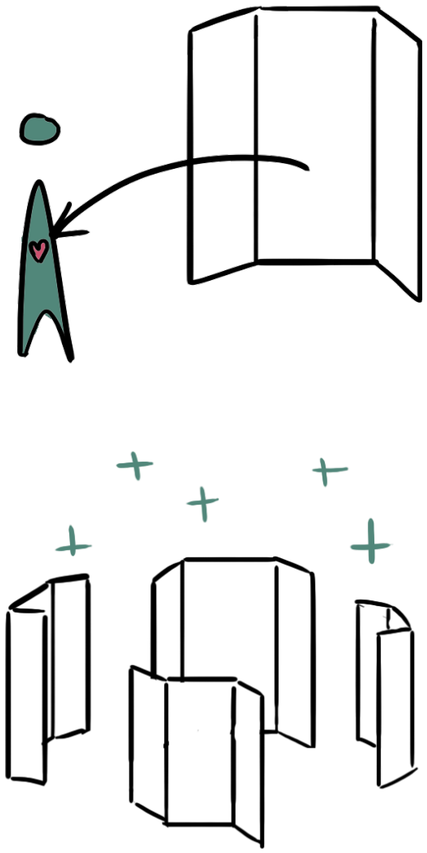
Figure 43: feedback from the sessions and their intermittent design iterations (next page).

05.5 Results

From the coding of the transcripts, cards were produced with the code and a related quote. This iteration to the RTA process was made to give the codes more context. A code in itself like 'entertaining' would feel dry – what was entertaining? What made it entertaining?

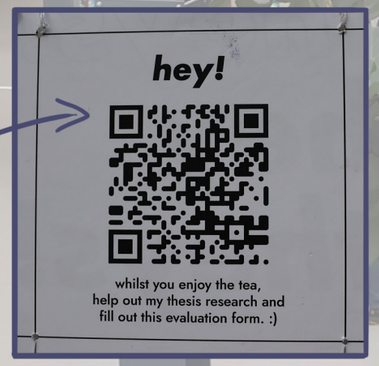
Though clustering, six 'themes' or patterns were identified:

1. **To resonate (or relate oneself) with the topic of the installation.** In every session, at least two discussions took place, meaning two instances in which together, the group reflected on a phenomenon in sexuality. E.g. discussions on the analogy, fluidity as a concept, or other analogies that can be made like quantum physics (source). A predominant approach for these discussions was how these concepts related to the participants' self: *"That's [being heterosexual and monogamous] is perhaps the basic, but maybe it's also odd I find that the basic." "[...] that you can reflect that kind of onto who I am as person and who am I then, also what does that mean in my professional life?"*
2. **The main emotion after the installation was positive.** Participants mentioned feeling optimistic: *"[..] you can just see how the future goes and what you like then."* Or relief: *"[...] like you have had a very long unresolved discussion with someone and then finally have a good conversation."* They felt seen by their environment: *"[...] There are just so many people that just don't get scared off or surprised by absolutely nothing. And that's nice to have [around you]."*



“Because of it I actually wanted to chat with you about it.”

prompts discussion





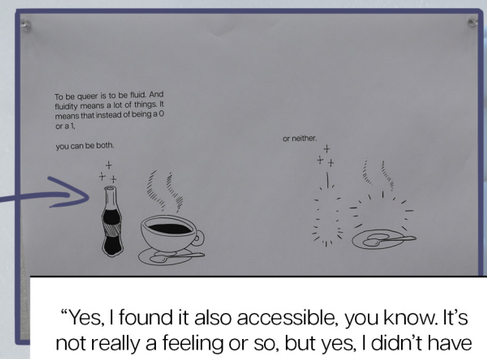
“I would find it interesting to walk around here, also with people who are queer and also to chat with them.”

interest in ‘others’

“Maybe a kind of call to action like: ‘sit down, take a cup of tea and go talk or think about it’ or something.”

direct invite to evaluate





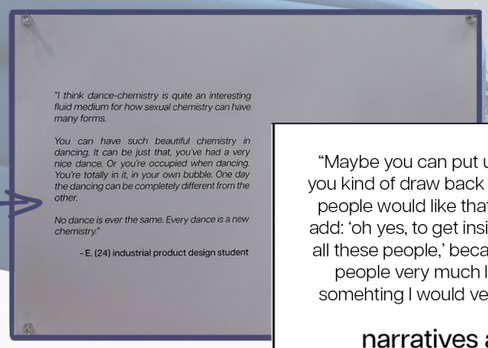
“Yes, I found it also accessible, you know. It’s not really a feeling or so, but yes, I didn’t have the sense of: ‘oh, I have to read this because I know you.’ I thought: ‘well, this is interesting, it’s understandable.’ It’s not like that there are very difficult technical terms that I think, I already don’t understand anymore.”

accessible information

“[...] maybe you can add a kind of conclusion somewhere [...]”

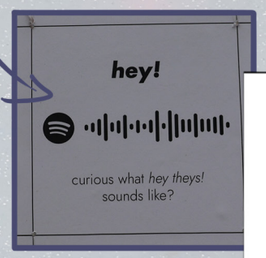
need for a conclusion





“Maybe you can put up a few insights, that you kind of draw back to them. [...] I think that people would like that and also maybe just add: ‘oh yes, to get insight in this I talked with all these people,’ because that’s what I think people very much like to read of that’s somehting I would very much like to read.”

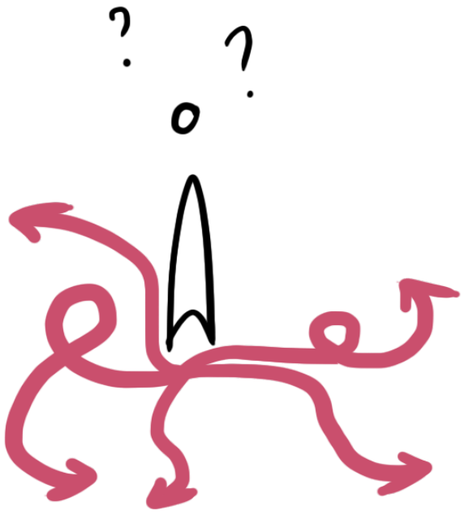
narratives as frame of reference



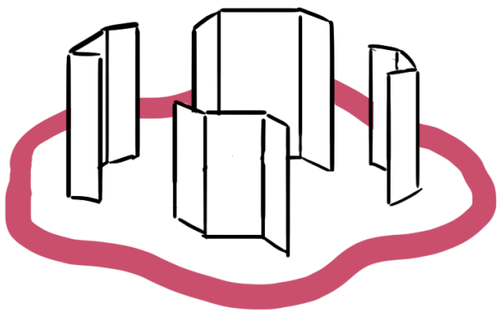
“[...] because there were a few pictures, it was very easy and funny to read.

entertaining

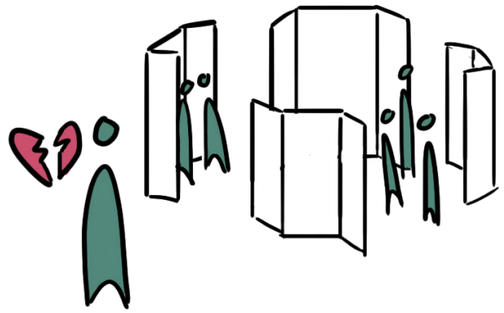
3. **A need for direction in the installation.** Participants were positive about the uncomplex information and found it easy to relate to, they liked being directed into a reflective headspace: "*You are kinda enclosed by something and that's why you are only occupied with that and not with everything around it.*" In fact, they would enjoy even more directioning in the interaction, like a clear flow of information: "*I missed a few steps. [...] We need something in-between or a separate thing [narrative] for gender, sexuality is apart from that.*" Or a direct call for action, take-aways, or "*a kind of deep dive*" option, to guide the possible paths they might wish to take within the installation.



4. **The installation as a space was thought to be comfortable, aesthetic, and cozy "*like a living room*", facilitating reflection.** The comics were main entertainment, making the information "*easy and fun to read*". Generally, the interaction experience was noted to be "*about the state of being. But I find that [reflectivity] sometimes also a very enjoyable state to be in.*"



5. **Participants missed a flow through the installation for solo visitors.** In every session, one of the last remarks was on how the reflective discussion felt as an integral part of the interaction. The installation prompts discussion: "*I would find it interesting to walk around here, also with people who are queer to talk with them as well*" and "*curiosity to others [...]*". Participants would like to see quotes and stories of interviewees from the research underlying the installation, underlining the experiences described in the installation, and more characters in the comics than me, because: "*It really just feels like you now, so it can by somebody who's less open be pushed away as [the experience of] one person, you know.*"



6. **A few participants mentioned disconnect with the topic of sexuality.** It is something "*that you don't really think a lot about*", or a us vs. them-thinking (non-queers vs. queers) is applied: "*they are in that world and I am in this world so yeah.*" However, not relating to sexuality specifically doesn't equal not relating to the idea of fluidity: "*[...] but myself I don't experience that [fluidity] that much in sexuality, but it's a good way to I think feel freedom, that feeling of freedom in something that you do experience it in.*" Instead, they relate it to other parts of their life than sexuality.



05.6 Conclusion

Based on the results of the evaluation, I can conclude the following:

- **Do non-queers resonate with the experiences of queers?** - The answer is yes. Next to the discussions described in theme 1, participants actively referred to information on the screens ("That is that there which talks about that it can really change over time, that it's not kinda one thing, but that it can be different in every moment. And that it can be what you are feeling like, that stuck with me."), and related the information to their own life ("Maybe that I was looking more into that circle like what is that exactly and yes, where do I fit?")
- **Does the installation facilitate discourse?** - Yes. As discussed in theme 1, discussions took place on phenomenons in sexuality from the installation or in general. Additionally, participants, without being nudged, picked up the envelopes and started discussing the questions.
- **Is the installation desirable (out of feasible, viable, and desirable)?** - Yes. As discussed in theme 2, the main emotion after the installation was positive. Participants found the installation space pleasant to be in (theme 4) and entertaining to experience, especially the comic boards: "[...] because there were comics, it was breezy and funny to read." "It's [the plates with the comics] so illustrative because of that, I love that."

Based on theme 5 "Participants missed a flow through the installation for solo visitors", I determined to execute one last design iteration.

From the 7th of April until the 21st of April 2026, the installation exhibited in the main hall of IDE. I added a 'community wall' to the design, see figure 44. This consists out of cork boards, on which people can 'post' one of the questions that are on the tea bags. They can answer the questions with post-its, creating an evolving wall of answer and response.



Figure 44: the community wall in action.

05.7 Discussion: 2nd evaluation

Having confirmed that the installation succesfully lets non-queers resonate with the experiences of queers, it is time to return to the original design goal of this project: does the installation enable representation of the experiences of the queer community in the domain of sexuality?

5.7.1 Session plan

In order to draw a conclusion on this, I conducted a second round of sessions inside of the exhibition at IDE. This round was conducted only with queer persons, who had attended the previous round of sessions.

During the session, I conducted an unstructured interview, asking the participants to think back to the group focus session and reflect on what non-queers said and on the discussions that took place. I was also upfront: does the installation feel as representation? For the interview script, see appendix A5.3.

Additional to these sessions, I received data through responses on the community wall. Visitors could also access an evaluation form by scanning the QR-codes (screenshots of the form can be found in appendix A6.1), which was used to gain understanding of the general response to the installation (Lee et al., 2017).

5.7.2 Results

Within one week, the form had gathered five responses, which all happened to be queer persons. Their response was positive. They noted recognising themselves in the information ("I recognised thoughts in the exhibition which was comforting."), experiencing a similarity to their lived experiences ("It was nice to recognise my thoughts and relate the content to real life situations I experience."), and feeling at ease in the space ("A space where I could read relatable theory to my living experience, a space where I could just be for a minute.").

The interviews provided a more nuanced view. One of the participants texted me a few days after the first session that it left an impact on them. During their interview, they remarked "I had to think a lot about it [the session]." They explained that it made them reflect on how their personal behaviours are 'queer': "Because you mirror with people who are not queer on this topic, you take a new perspective on things and reflect, oh yes, maybe things are subconsciously different than what I've taught myself. I approach things a certain way that other people don't think about at all."

Another participant also noted reflecting on their personal 'queer' behaviours, facilitated by the community wall: "I have the idea I'm

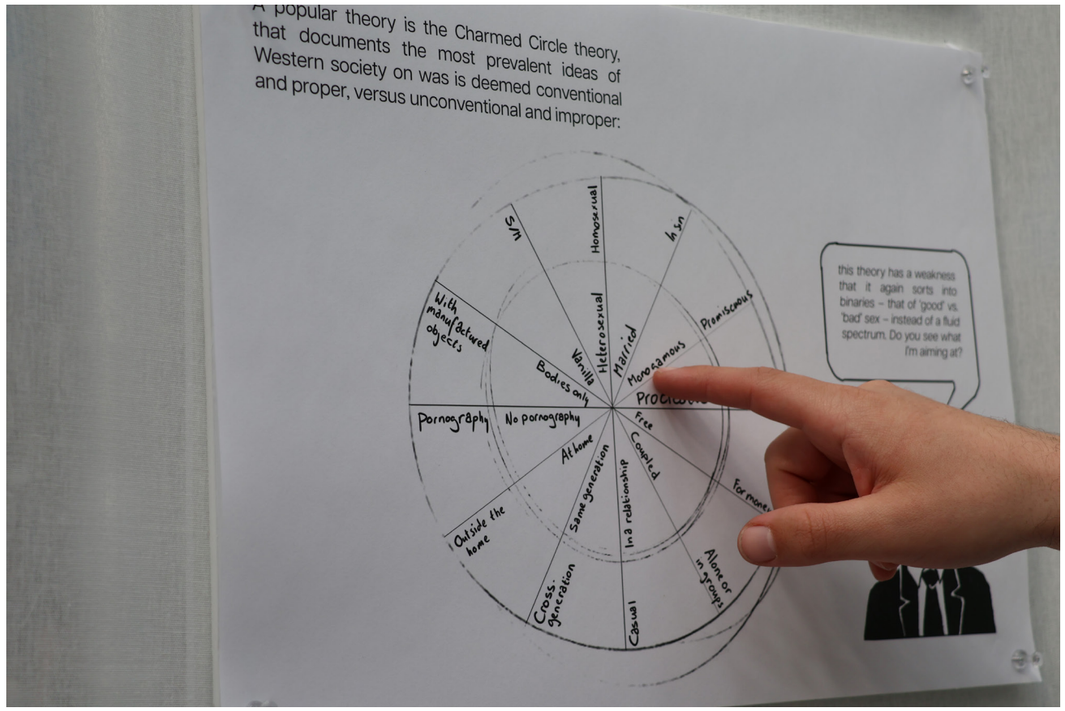


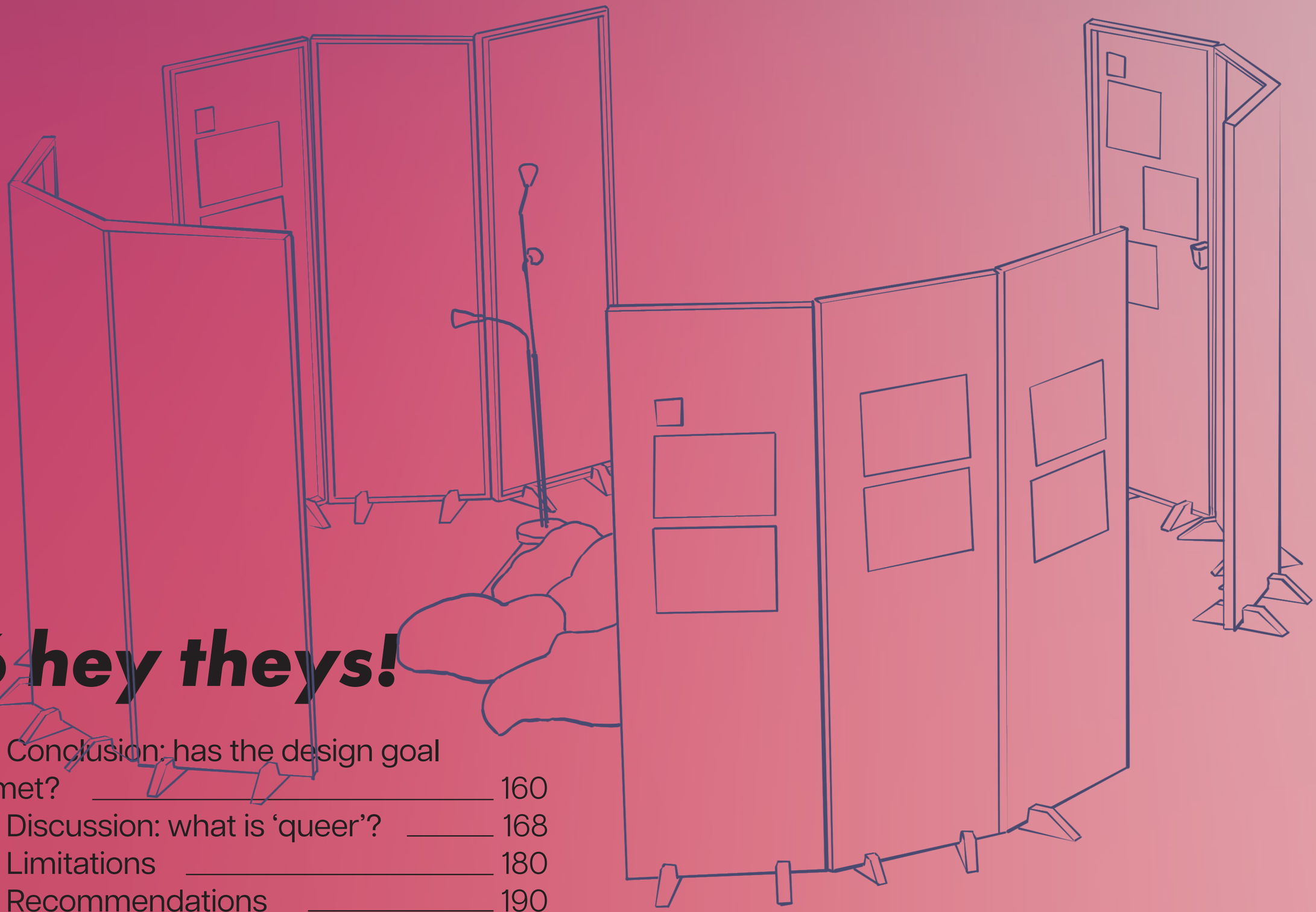
Figure 45: a visitor interacting with the Charmed Circle theory.

reflecting more actively on my sexual life instead of generally, so it becomes more personal." The wall invites for richer engagement with the topics ("Because that [the community wall] is new, the interaction is much more present, so for me it has much more purpose to read the other panels, so I can respond to them well." (figure 45)) that are explained through the information on the boards around it ("Because in here things are explained quite explicitly, I dare to engage deeper and call things by their name.").

On a deeper level, one of the participants mentioned a disconnect with the topic of sexuality (see theme six of the first evaluation: 'a few participants mentioned a disconnect with the topic of sexuality'). "I find the separation between 'you are queer and we are not queer' a little difficult, because it's [queer] not completely all that I am." However, this appears to be resolved by the open set-up of the information, that can be applied to other areas than sexuality: "It's very inclusive. It's clear that I am welcome [..] but you turn it around, as in, even if you are hetero, you can join the conversation, you know?"

On the community wall, I observed visitors not only answering the questions individually, but also interacting with the already existing answers on the wall.

06



06 hey theys!

06.1 Conclusion: has the design goal been met? 160
06.2 Discussion: what is ‘queer’? 168
06.3 Limitations 180
06.4 Recommendations 190

hey theys! is an interactive art installation that lets visitors explore their sexuality. For a moment, visitors can step into a world where everything is fluid and they can determine their own sexual scripts. A reflective area with leading question cards invites visitors to reflect on their own sexuality alone, or together.









06.1 Conclusion – has the design goal been met?

The design goal for this project is:

Design an installation to enable representation of the experiences of the queer community in the domain sexuality.

From the second evaluation, I can conclude that the installation hey theys! succesfully fulfills this design goal. Participants expressed that the installation stimulates them to actively express, discuss, and reflect on their experiences, even a few days after visiting. In general, they find the installation a welcoming and comfortable space to be in, in which they can recognise themselves and their experiences (figure 46).

However, the focus of the installation was too strongly on the sexual within sexuality. The queer experience within sexuality is broader, e.g. to lifestyle or performance: "Lately I'm more occupied with my sexuality in the way I dress and where I find my queerness difficult, like at work or at the university. [...] Maybe it is excluded here, because these things are not about sex, per se." The installation in its current state fails to capture this.

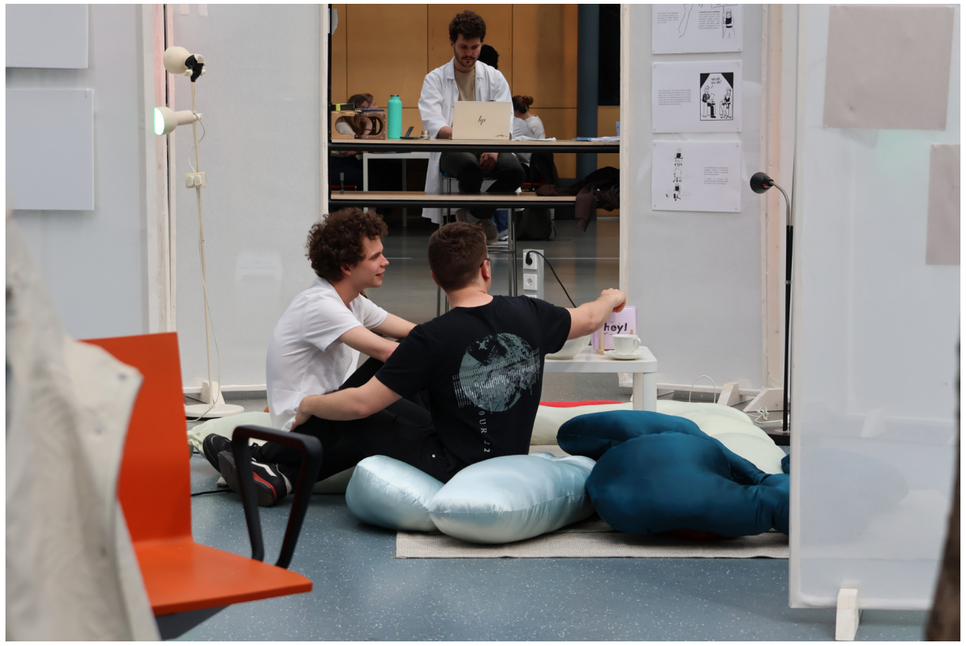


Figure 46: visitors interacting with the reflection area and envelopes.

06.2 Discussion – What is ‘queer’?

Throughout the thesis, I have used several different definitions of ‘queer’. From ‘persons who identify as LGBTQIA+’ to ‘persons who are active within the queer community’. Especially during the final phases of the project, the two evaluation rounds, I’ve gained a layered understanding of what the term means to queer individuals.

Queer is a definition beyond the sexual in sexuality. It can also be used to describe behaviours, lifestyle, performance, dress, and beliefs and values, etc. It can be used as a verb, ‘to queer something’, which means to be actively critical of conventionalities within our society, and question these. Like a participant noted in the second round of sessions: “Maybe I do change myself to fit the world, but what if I change myself so much I don’t notice it anymore?”, queer people are even critical of their own role and actions, even if these go against the heteronormative grain.

In an ideal world, one without a heteronormative ‘norm’, the word queer is not even necessary. There would be no conventions or binaries within sexuality to question or be critical of. However, in the real world, where these binaries still actively prevail in our daily experiences, the term helps us to actively identify which binaries are oppressive and see what can be done to absolve them.

I wish to end this section with a quote from a non-queer participant during the first round of sessions: “It’s just that you like men and are monogamous. That’s maybe the basic, but maybe it’s also strange that I find that the basic.” A little bit of queer thought shines through.

To be queer is to question the binaries within our society.



06.3 Limitations

There are several limitations to the design, interacting at different levels. Below they are listed from most literal and physical, to most conceptual and philosophical:

- **The design is limited in the amount of findings from my research it incorporates.** Due to all of my research being qualitative, I have a large database of quotes and narratives. In the 1st evaluation, participants indicated they wanted to see this research, either to meet their curiosity (“I would like to do a kind of deep dive.”), be exposed to other narratives (“Curious of others, I think. Maybe a little towards yself as well, but especially curious of others if I think about it.”) or to improve the legitimacy of the research (“But it really feels like you, which can cause that somebody whose less open [to queerness] can push it aside as ‘just one person’, you know.” In its current form, the installation has potential to include more findings as its way of storytelling has been evaluated as functional, but does not include them yet.

- **The degree of representation of the queer population in general might be limited, due to the evaluation being conducted on the TU Delft campus, with people recruited through campus-related or personal channels.** Whilst the empirical research hey theys!, the defining of the design concept, and the construction of the design, was performed with experts and participants outside of the TU Delft, the evaluation of the design was performed predominantly with participants from the university. This means that the assessment of the accuracy of the representation can only be applied to the TU Delft population. Linking back to intersectionality (chapter 2.3), it is a far stretch to say that the installation represents all queer persons, e.g. also those living in rural areas or those who are not highly educated.

- **The installation could be more experiential.** One of the principles underlying the final concept (chapter 03.4) is embodied interaction, entailing that the main message, the abstract idea of fluidity, should be experiential in installation. This can be acted upon more. Right now, the idea is explained on the boards and up to discussion with the cards and the community wall, but not experiential in a tangible way.

- In chapter 02.1 Queer theory, I describe how gender and identity do not play a role in the project whilst discussing sexuality. **This theoretical concept, however, only functions in an ideal world, when we assume the concept in its most theoretically pure form. In the empirically lived reality, this is not the case.** As noted during the 1st evaluation session: “In your introduction, the binary is explained with gender, but the rest [of the installation] is actually only on sexuality. Whilst a lot of these things also relate to that [gender].”

06.4 Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned limitations, the following recommendations can be made to enable a more complete representation of the queer experience in the domain of sexuality:

- **Limitation: The design is limited in the amount of findings from my research it incorporates.** Part of the initial design, but not executed due to time constraints, was the usage of quotes on the walls from the *hey girl!*-research, that illustrate the concepts presented. Also, the idea existed of developing a wall on the findings of the thesis and presenting my research. Both these ideas could invite visitors to not only engage with queer concepts, but also with the research being performed.

- **Limitation: The degree of representation of the queer population in general might be limited, due to the evaluation being conducted on the TU Delft campus, with people recruited through campus-related or personal channels.** The original aspiration of the project was to execute it beyond the university. Due to time constraints (taking the project to other cities became quite time-intensive) and logistical challenges (e.g. coordinating with the FAST fund), the scope was restricted to the university campus.

  In the context of the legacy of the installation, it is still highly interesting to explore how the installation's analogies and themes are received in other contexts, particularly outside of academic environments. This could give the project a broader societal relevance. Whilst I am currently in the process of applying for DDW 2026, in a perfect world, the installation would stand in public spaces with a high flow of people, like design museums, or even better, spaces of power, such as political spaces. To bring positive, lasting influence, the project should stand there where influence is enacted.

- **Limitation: The installation could be more experiential.** Due the physical size of the installation and its expansive construction process, the project missed out on design steps that could have made the interaction richer for visitors. However, several design steps can still be made to improve the current design.

  More thorough user testing of the interaction and the separate parts of the installation can gather insights that might refine the experience. Especially testing with participants outside of the TU Delft can introduce new perspectives.

  Testing out and introducing the other dimensions of embodied interaction, the cognitive and sensory dimensions, also hold the potential for enriching the experience

- **Limitation: the focus of the installation was too strongly on the sexual within sexuality.** The queer experience within sexuality is broader, e.g. to lifestyle or performance: More research can introduce a broader narrative to be presented.



AI statement

The AI model used was Le Chat by Mistral AI. It was used in the following instances:

- To brainstorm titles and descriptions for the themes in the reflexive thematic analysis. However, all final texts were written myself.
- To aid in verifying the coherency of my texts. The proposed AI-text was used as inspiration to improve the flow of my writing.

To create transcripts from audio-recorded interviews, Word online, Microsoft software within the TU Delft, was used.

No text was ever directly copied and pasted.

The use of AI was mostly limited or non-functional, as all words related to sex were censored. If I can afford to be critical, the censorship of sexual content, meant to be protective, turns out to be ironic in this case, where it blocks the progression of research on sexuality (Mchangama & White, 2024).



Acknowledge-ments

Gosh, where to begin?

First and foremost love and thanks to my chosen family. Leon and Femke, you are my adoptive parents, my home-away-from-home, my ‘rots in de branding’ whenever I get delulu.

To ‘het hok’. Old friends, new friends. But what we share is too many hours in a small chamber of six chairs, no windows nor ventilation. Some of you got out early – Jannik, Sjoerd, Thomas, Lena – but became old and wise mentors. Some of you stepped onboard late – Yoran, Niek, Maurits, Sophie, Marlou – you are all going to complete amazing projects! One of you wasn’t even supposed to be there – Jochem – but we’ve made the most epic mixtape yet.

To you, Ayla, because the many, many, *many* nights of ‘de UB uitspelen’ would not have been memorable without your rather dark sense of humour. I look forward to seeing the world with you.

I want to thank my roomies – Aldo, Mette, Tessa, Laurens, Jan – for their patience. You remind me that when life feels down, the après skihut in Rotterdam is always open.

To the queer marketing team of RoboHouse. You were a true pleasure to work with. I could not have wished for a more understanding team to be a part of during the most intense academic period of my life.

To Plunk! You lovely Wednesday-lovers, the only place where I can truly be my wacko self. Especially Wolf, for feedbacking my complete thesis not once, but twice.

And to new friends! The inspiring queers who adopted me into the community I needed, without my asking – Eva, Hanne, Thibauld, Jorien and Eva. Especially Veerle and Dion, I look forward to shaking up town with you in Amsterdam.

Everyone who helped me out, build the installation with me, came to my evaluation sessions, visited my expo – you know who you are! Thank you. <3

To my family. Arjan, who only asks whether I’m still having fun, because as long as I’m having fun, it’s worth doing it. My dad, who helped me out during building and bonded with the PMB-men over 3D-printers. My mom, for catching me when I was emotionally spend.

Puk, for your help and gezelligheid, for all the little and big surprises, and a reminder that there is life beyond thesis. You hold a place in my heart.

Lastly, I want to give a special word to my supervisory team. There’s not many women role models at the TU Delft and you are mine.

And myself. <3



References

Adams, R. S., Daly, S. R., Mann, L. M., & Dall'Alba, G. (2011). Being a professional: Three lenses into design thinking, acting, and being. *Design Studies, 32*(6), 588–607. https://www-sciencedirect-com.tudelft.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S0142694X11000585?__cf_chl_tk=fYGO8vP7EvU2XPkkRk4_z7B60fARb2REwy_Oen7ExQM-1775935471-1.0.1.1-z2HQwCY0blSr9il4mi2c9_IOsbRpsoHBjW2l_iWSiVA

Adeoye-Olatunde, O. A., & Olenik, N. L. (2021). Research and scholarly methods: Semi-structured interviews. *JACCP JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CLINICAL PHARMACY, 4(*10), 1358–1367. https://doi.org/10.1002/jac5.1441

Al Faruque, S. N. (2023). The Unique Power of Comics: A Comprehensive Exploration of the Visual-Verbal Medium and Its Impact on Storytelling, Communication, and Culture. *International Journal Of English And Studies, 5*(10). https://doi.org/10.47311/IJOES.2023.5.10.11

Andreassen, R. (2025). The Story of Miss C.'s Seduction of Young Women. A Methodological Quest into Female Same-Sex Relations at the Turn of the Twentieth Century. *Gender & History, 37*(1), 267–281. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0424.12730

Anderson, H. (2023, August 8). *What is sexuality? - Brook*. Brook. https://www.brook.org.uk/your-life/what-is-sexuality/

Andrzejewski, C., Forbes, S., & Hogan, E. (2026). Intimacy in Autoethnography: A Framework for Autoethnographic Trustworthiness. *American Journal Of Qualitative Research, 10*(1), 306–317. https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/17873

Bardzell, J. *"Pleasure is your birthright": Digitally-enabled designer sex toys as a case of third-wave HCI*. https://doi.org/10.1145/1978942.1978979

Barker, M., & Scheele, J. (2016). *Queer: A Graphic History*. https://bvbr.bib-bvb.de:443/F?func=service&doc_library=BVB01&local_base=BVB01&doc_number=029357713&sequence=000002&line_number=0001&func_code=DB_RECORDS&service_type=MEDIA

Bieling, T. (2019). *Design and Activism: Perspectives on Design As Activism and Activism As Design*.

Blandford, A., Furniss, D., & Makri, S. (2016). Qualitative HCI Research: Going Behind the Scenes. In *Synthesis lectures on human-centered informatics* (Vol. 9, Number 1, pp. 1–115). https://doi.org/10.2200/s00706ed1v01y201602hci034

Blandford, A., Furniss, D., & Makri, S. (2022). *Qualitative HCI research: Going Behind the Scenes*. Springer Nature.

Braithwaite, D. O., & Schrodt, P. (2014). *Engaging theories in interpersonal communication: Multiple Perspectives*. SAGE Publications.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. SAGE.

Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., Davey, L., & Jenkinson, E. (2022). Doing Reflexive Thematic Analysis. In *Supporting Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy* (pp. 19–38). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-13942-0_2

Brenner, S., (2019, July 22). *On Exhibitions and Iterations | Cooper Hewitt Labs*. Cooper Hewitt Labs | Technology + Media + Experience. https://labs.cooperhewitt.org/2016/on-exhibitions-and-iterations/

Brulé, E., & Kazi-Tani, T. (2015). *Disputing Ergonomics, Deconstructing Users. A Queer Perspective on Design*. https://hal.science/hal-01246059v1

Cheves, A., & López, Q. (2025, June 16). What Does "Queer" Mean? 9 LGBTQ+ People Explain How They Love, Hate, and Understand the Word. *Them*. https://www.them.us/story/what-does-queer-mean

Clark, T. (2025). Being a Burden. In *The Routledge Handbook of Field Research* (pp. 227–236). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003404903-34

Crenshaw, Kimberle (1989) "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum*: Vol. 1989: Iss. 1, Article 8. Available at: http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8

Culén, A., Stevens, N., Niess, J., Finken, S., Miklian, J., & Hoelscher, K. (2025). In the relational sandbox: Deep democracy and technology. *Nordic Design Research Conference*. https://doi.org/10.21606/nordes.2025.77

Cumming-Potvin, W. (2023). LGBTQA+ allies and activism: past, present and future perspectives. *Continuum, 38*(3), 338–352. https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2023.2296344

Design Museum Den Bosch. (2024, February 19). *Ontworpen liefde | Design Museum Den Bosch*. https://designmuseum.nl/tentoonstelling/ontworpen-liefde/

Design Museum Den Bosch. (2025, October 9). *Vrouwen als technologie | Design Museum Den Bosch*. https://designmuseum.nl/tentoonstelling/vrouwen-als-technologie/

Desmet P.M.A., Porcelijn, R., & van Dijk, M. (2007). Emotional design; application of a research based design approach. *Journal of Knowledge, Technology & Policy, 20*(3), 141-155.

Devaraja, K., Sachdeva, A., Gandhi, K., Gupta, A. A., & Croke, J. (2026). Radiation-specific sexual and reproductive health challenges in adolescent and young adults assigned female at birth: a mixed-methods study of unmet needs post pelvic radiotherapy. *Gynecologic Oncology Reports, 64*.

D'Ignazio, C., & Klein, L. F. (2012). Data Feminism (1st edition) [Ebook]. *The MIT Press*.

empower. (2026). In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/empower

Eilberg, J. (2023, December 16). *Why Patients Refuse to Join a Clinical Trial and What Sponsors Can Do About It*. Trial AMPlify. Consulted on March 31 2026, van https://www.trialamplify.com/why-patients-refuse-to-join-a-clinical-trial-and-the-role-of-a-patient-recruitment-company

Faust, J., MD. (2025, February 1). BREAKING NEWS: CDC orders mass retraction and revision of submitted research across all science and medicine journals. Banned terms must be scrubbed. *Inside Medicine*. https://insidemedicine.substack.com/p/breaking-news-cdc-orders-mass-retraction

Ferreri, V. (2023). Queer cities. Designing inclusive public spaces through participative and social innovative actions and practices. *Conference: IASDR 2023: Life-Changing Design*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/374552586_Queer_cities_Designing_inclusive_public_spaces_through_participative_and_social_innovative_actions_and_practices

FLINTA*. (2026). In *English Meaning - Cambridge Dictionary*. https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/flinta

Goundar, P. R. (2025). Researcher Positionality: Ways to Include it in a Qualitative Research Design. *International Journal Of Qualitative Methods, 24*. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069251321251

Graham, C., Hammack, P. & Wignall, L. *Statement on the Importance of Sexuality and Gender Research. Arch Sex Behav 54*, 1691–1692 (2025). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-025-03174-7

Hagai, E. B. (2022). Changes in Lesbian identity in the 21st century. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 49*, 101508. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101508

Hegenauer, J. M. (2022). Perfectionism and self-compassion in the design studio (Order No. 29209876). Available from *Publicly Available Content Database*. (2668233235). Retrieved from https://www-proquest-com.tudelft.idm.oclc.org/dissertations-theses/perfectionism-self-compassion-design-studio/docview/2668233235/se-2

Huang, H. H., Pfister, H., & Yang, Y. (2023). Is embodied interaction beneficial? A study on navigating network visualizations. *Information Visualization, 22*(3), 169–185. https://doi.org/10.1177/14738716231157082

Instagram. (2026). https://www.instagram.com/vivalavulvafestival/

Jackson, S., & Scott, S. (2010). *Theorizing sexuality*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Kennis, M. (2024, October 11). *Hoeveel LHBTQIA personen telt Nederland?* Centraal Bureau Voor de Statistiek. https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/longread/statistische-trends/2024/hoeveel-lhbtqia-personen-telt-nederland-?onepage=true#c-1–Inleiding

Komisaruk BR, Wise N, Frangos E, Liu WC, Allen K, Brody S. Women's clitoris, vagina, and cervix mapped on the sensory cortex: fMRI evidence. *J Sex Med*. 2011 Oct;8(10):2822-30. doi: 10.1111/j.1743-6109.2011.02388.x. Epub 2011 Jul 28. PMID: 21797981; PMCID: PMC3186818.

Lee, J. D., Wickens, C. D., Liu, Y., & Boyle, L. N. (2017). *Designing for People: An Introduction to Human Factors Engineering*. Createspace Independent Publishing Platform.

LeVay, S., & Valente, S. M. (2003). *Human sexuality*. Sinauer Associates.

Levine, S. B. (1995). What is Clinical Sexuality? *Psychiatric Clinics Of North America, 18*(1), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0193-953x(18)30066-2

Manifestations 2025 – DDW. (2025). *Manifestations 2025 – DDW - media art tech fashion fun festival*. https://2025.manifestations.nl/

Mchangama, J., & White, J. (2024, February 2). The Future of Censorship Is AI-Generated. *TIME*. https://time.com/6835213/the-future-of-censorship-is-ai-generated/

Monna, V., & Charoupia, H. (2024). *Remote Places, Public Spaces. The story of creative works with ten small communities: Power Relations in Participatory Design Practices in Small and Remote Places*. Birkhäuser. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783035629132

Nagoski, E. (2021). *Come As You Are: Revised and Updated: The Surprising New Science That Will Transform Your Sex Life*. Simon and Schuster.

Netherlands (The). (2022, November 18). La Biennale Di Venezia. https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/national-participations/netherlands

O'Leary, L. (2025, 4 februari). Trump Is Deleting the Data That Keeps This Country Running. *Slate Magazine*. https://slate.com/business/2025/02/donald-trump-data-deletion-jobs-report-economy-public-health.html

Ørngreen, R., & Levinsen, K. (2017). *Workshops as a Research Methodology*. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1140102

Orr, Elizabeth R. MSc; Ballantyne, Marilyn PhD; Gonzalez, Andrea PhD; Jack, Susan M. PhD. Visual Elicitation: Methods for Enhancing the Quality and Depth of Interview Data in *Applied Qualitative Health Research*. *Advances in Nursing Science 43*(3):p 202-213, July/September 2020. | DOI: 10.1097/ANS.0000000000000321

Pauwels, L. (2020). Visual elicitation in interviews. *SAGE Research Methods Foundations*. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781526421036846496

Penta, L. J. (1996). Hannah Arendt: On Power. *The Journal Of Speculative Philosophy, 10*(3), 210–229. https://www.jstor.org/stable/25670190

Perez, C. C. (2020). *Invisible Women : Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men*. https://lib.ugent.be/en/catalog/rug01:002787216

Power, J., McNair, R., & Carr, S. (2009). Absent sexual scripts: lesbian and bisexual women's knowledge, attitudes and action regarding safer sex and sexual health information. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 11*(1), 67–81. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691050802541674

Sanders, E. B., & Stappers, P. J. (2012). C*onvivial toolbox: Generative Research for the Front End of Design*. Bis Pub.

Scriptium. (2025, December 18). *Universiteiten in Nederland – Handig overzicht van 13 grote universiteiten*. Scriptium.nl. https://www.scriptium.nl/universiteiten-in-nederland/

Sex: Jewish Positions | Tentoonstelling | Joods Museum. (2024). https://jck.nl/agenda/sex-jewish-positions

Social judgment theory (SJT) | Psychology | Research Starters | EBSCO Research. (z.d.). EBSCO. https://www.ebsco.com/research-starters/psychology/social-judgment-theory-sjt

Southbank Centre. (2016, March 14). Kimberlé Crenshaw: Intersectionality and Gender Equality [Video]. *YouTube*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DW4HLgYPlA

Steenhuysen, J., & Lapid Nancy. (2025, February 3). CDC orders pullback of new scientific papers involving its researchers, source says. *Reuters*. Consulted on April 11 2026, van https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-cdc-orders-pullback-new-scientific-papers-involving-its-researchers-source-2025-02-02/

Sun, L. H., Keating, D., & Nirappil, F. (2025, February 1). CDC removes gender, equity references in public health material. *The Washington Post*. https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2025/01/31/cdc-website-gender-lgbtq-data/

The Cambridge World History of Sexualities. (z.d.). Google Books. https://books.google.nl/books/about/The_Cambridge_World_History_of_Sexualiti.html?id=B3kQ0AEACAAJ&redir_esc=y

Through sounds. (z.d.). Nieuwe Instituut. https://nieuweinstituut.nl/projects/through-sounds

Toy Stories - Kunsthal. (2025). Kunsthal. https://www.kunsthal.nl/nl/plan-je-bezoek/tentoonstellingen/toy-stories/

Udoewa, V., & Gress, S. (2023). Relational design. *Journal Of Awareness-Based Systems Change, 3*(1), 101–128. https://doi.org/10.47061/jasc.v3i1.5193

Van Boeijen, A., Daalhuizen, J., & Zijlstra, J. (2020). *Delft Design Guide : Perspectives - Models - Approaches - Methods*. https://research.tudelft.nl/en/publications/delft-design-guide-perspectives-models-approaches-methods

Watson, K. (2005). Queer theory. *Group Analysis, 38*(1), 67–81. https://doi.org/10.1177/0533316405049369

What Is LGBTQIA+? (2026). The Center. Geraadpleegd op 15 maart 2026, van https://gaycenter.org/community/lgbtq/

Wiederman, M. W. (2015). Sexual Script Theory: Past, Present, and Future. In *Handbooks of sociology and social research* (pp. 7–22). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17341-2_2

Wilke, A., & Mata, R. (2017). Cognitive Bias. In *Elsevier eBooks*. https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-809324-5.06376-8

Xu, X., Kang, J., & Yan, L. (2021). Understanding embodied immersion in technology-enabled embodied learning environments. *Journal Of Computer Assisted Learning, 38*(1), 103–119. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12594



Appendices

A1 General documents _____ 142
A2 *hey girl!* – the appendix _____ 148
A3 Midterm documents _____ 152
A4 FAST fund _____ 160
A5 Evaluation _____ 172
A6 *hey theys!* – the appendix _____ 180

A1 General documents 142
A1.1 Final timeline 144
A1.2 Project brief 146

A2 *hey girl!* – the appendix 148
A2.1 Interview guide 150

A3 Midterm documents 152
A3.1 Residency 154
A3.2 All results from the creative facilitation course 156

A4 FAST fund 160
A4.1 Application 162
A4.2 Pitch deck 165
A4.3 Budget 169
A4.3.1 General budget 169
A4.3.2 Detailed budget 169
A4.4 Time assessment 170
A4.5 Overview of locations 171

A5 Evaluation 172
A5.1 Co-design with non-queers 174
A5.2 Code of conduct 176
A5.3 Interview scripts 177
A5.4 PrEmo but make it non-binary 178

A6 hey theys! – the appendix 180
A6.1 Forms 182
A6.2 Mock-up 184
A6.3 Comics 186

01

A1 General documents

A1.1 Final timeline _____ 152
A1.2 Project brief _____ 154

A1

A1.1 Final timeline

Figure 1 shows the stages of the graduation project over time, excluding *hey girl!* (Q3 2024/2025) and the residency (summer 2025).

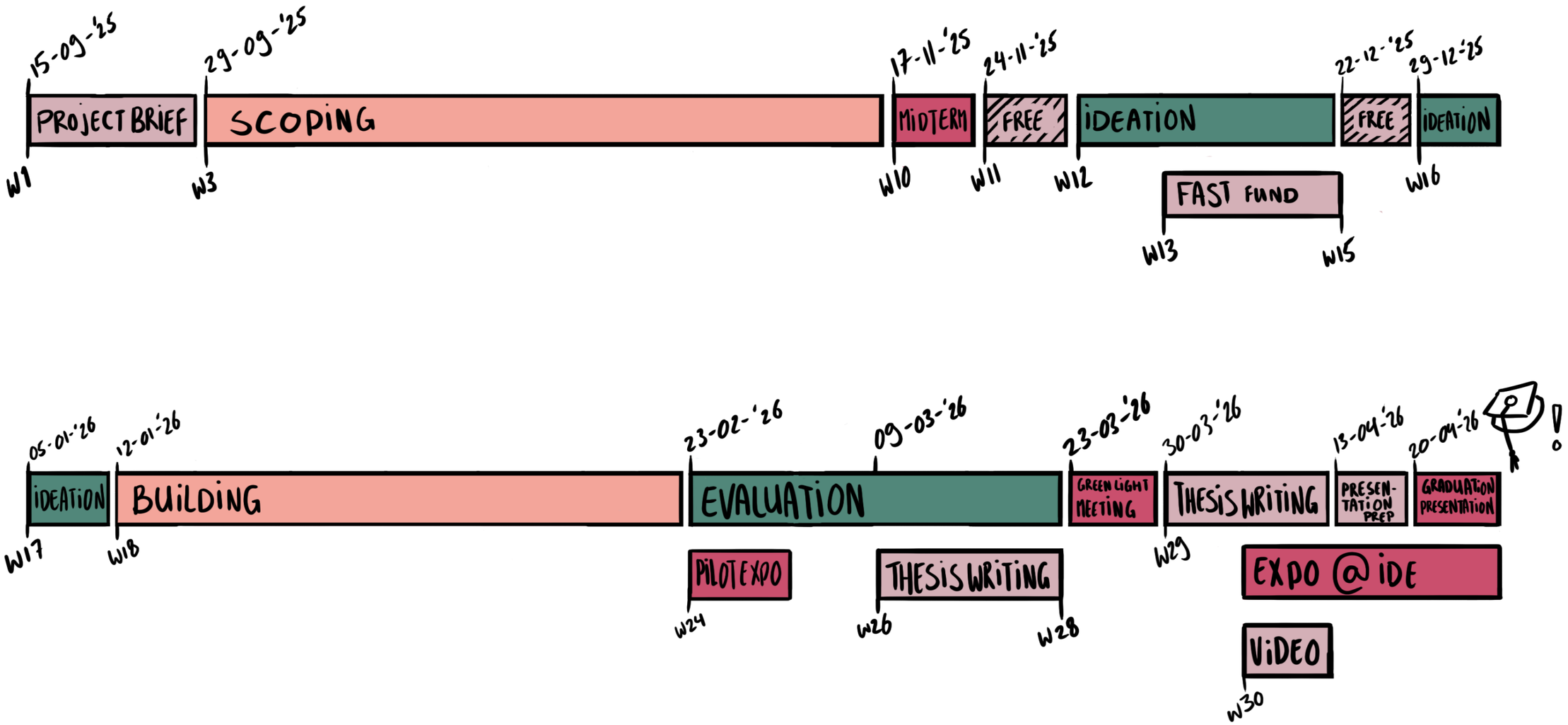


Figure 1: the graduation project over time, divided into stages.

A1.2 Project brief

PROJECT TITLE, INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM DEFINITION and ASSIGNMENT
Complete all fields, keep information clear, specific and concise

Project title Enabling (re)presentation of experiences in sexuality of the queer community

Please state the title of your graduation project (above). Keep the title compact and simple. Do not use abbreviations. The remainder of this document allows you to define and clarify your graduation project.

Introduction

Describe the context of your project here; What is the domain in which your project takes place? Who are the main stakeholders and what interests are at stake? Describe the opportunities (and limitations) in this domain to better serve the stakeholder interests. (max 250 words)

Design research regarding queer sexuality has mostly remained in the academic/theoretic domain. I believe it can make the translatory step into practice and find an application of new knowledge and insights into a real-life context. The graduation project aims to give voice and action to its main stakeholders, queer individuals, whose experiences and needs at the moment remain underrepresented in mainstream design.

Other stakeholders within the domain are sexuologists, experts, designers active in the field of sexuality, conversation facilitators in sexuality, owners/volunteers in queer space, or queer institutions/non-profits, that approach different facets of the queer narrative to define the potential of design.

At stake is the agency of a marginalised group to be involved in design. At the moment, as the world they exist in has not been designed with them in mind, they are forced to explain themselves instead.

The main opportunity is to co-design with the queer community and its related professionals, an to generate tangible ideas and prototypes. Representation is the key challenge (or limitation) here, as no single project can capture the full spectrum of experiences. An open conversation may show that consensus and discourse is possible and beneficial between the diverse narratives.

➔ *space available for images / figures on next page*

A1

DESIGN FOR our future

TU Delft

Personal Project Brief – IDE Master Graduation Project

Problem Definition

What problem do you want to solve in the context described in the introduction, and within the available time frame of 100 working days? (= Master Graduation Project of 30 EC). What opportunities do you see to create added value for the described stakeholders? Substantiate your choice.
(max 200 words)

This project addresses the absence of queer perspectives and involvement in design processes. Despite growing awareness and research on the subject, their actual experiences are rarely centred in products, services, or spaces. This absence forces them to justify their sexuality to the world around them, which is not designed with their existence in mind. The challenge I am presenting is to enable representation of their experiences. The insights into the queer experience will have a broader audience and aid the community in feeling seen in their sexuality.

An opportunity to create added value is to collaborate with a stakeholder that can make it feasible to transfer the practical outcome into a real-world setting within the project time frame. The added value is that this adds an addtional level of validation and depth to the project, in which I can observe whether my intervention has the desired effect.

I do not have a set stakeholder yet on purpose, as through a first prototype and test I will determine which client fits the manifestation of the design direction best.

Assignment

This is the most important part of the project brief because it will give a clear direction of what you are heading for. Formulate an assignment to yourself regarding what you expect to deliver as result at the end of your project. (1 sentence) As you graduate as an industrial design engineer, your assignment will start with a verb (Design/Investigate/Validate/Create), and you may use the ***green text format****:*

Design an installation to enable (re)presentation of the experiences of the queer community in the domain of sexuality.

Then explain your project approach to carrying out your graduation project and what research and design methods you plan to use to generate your design solution (max 150 words)

The first part of the project (4 weeks) focusses on identifying needs through literature research and processing the results of my research elective. I will also interview designers with projects in my field to gather inspiration for what the final design approach will be.

I will develop an installation that represents the experiences of the queer community.
- Midterm: organise a participatory generative session, to develop a first concept of the installation (5 weeks, W10).
- 5 weeks: move beyond abstraction and prototype the final installation. (W15)
- 5 weeks: validate it in real queer spaces (W20), and present it at the Greenlight Meeting.

The end phase of this installation will be that the insights into the queer experience will have a broader audience and aid in making the queer community feel seen.

A2

A2 hey girl! – the appendix

A2.1 Interview guide _____ 158

A2

A2.1 Interview guide

The following interview script was used during the (N=8) interviews conducted during *hey girl!*:

Section 0: Exploring the Context (5 min)

1. What's your age?
2. What's your nationality?
3. Where on the gender spectrum do you identify yourself?
4. What would you say is your sexuality?
5. Can you describe (the type of) relationship that you are in now?
6. Do you assign yourself any WLW-labels (e.g. butch/femme/stud/etc.)?

Section 1: Sexual Context (10 min)

Sexual context is in this study the sexual dynamics that include the physical aspects of sex and sexual desire, but also the emotional and relational side of how sex plays out in a relationship. This includes the effect of masturbation.

7. How would you describe your sexual dynamics in your relationship?
8. Do you experience sexual tension outside of the 'bedroom environment'?
9. Do you associate yourself with being a 'top' or 'bottom'? Or 'dom' or 'sub'?
10. Do you feel the sexual energies of you and your partner (e.g. libido) are balanced?
11. Do you feel you can be transparent to your partner about sexual fantasies?
12. How important is sex to you?
    Follow-up: Why is it so important to you?
    Follow-up: Do you feel it is balanced in your life?
    Follow-up: Why not?
    Follow-up: How do you feel about this role of sex in your life? Would you like to change it (and in what way)?
13. How important is sex in your romantic relationships?
    Follow-up: Why is it so important to you for a relationship?
    Follow-up: Do you feel it is balanced with the other parts of your relationship?
    Follow-up: Why not?
    Follow-up: And how does you partner feel about that?

Section 3: Current sexual technologies (+ Challenges & Frictions) (15 min)

Sexual technologies (sextech) are technologies that are designed to enhance the sexual experience, and/or increase sexual heath and well-being. These don't have to be electric or automated, but include any (also analogue) innovation designed for this purpose.

14. How big is the role of ST in your sexual practice (use every time, occasionally, etc.)?
    Follow-up: Why so?
    Follow-up: Do you think this will change in the future?
15. Which sexual technologies do you currently use in your practices?
    Follow-up: Which technologies work well, and which do not?
    Follow-up: Why do you think some technologies don't work for you (/are less effective)?
16. What role would you say these technologies play in your dynamics?
    Follow-up: Are you comfortable with this role?
17. Do you have any technologies in mind that are promising to you to experiment with in the future, and which?
    Follow-up: Why are you waiting to try these out?

Section 4: Vision on SexTech (15 min)

18. Do you feel seen by the technologies you use?
    Follow-up: What does feeling seen mean to you?
    Follow-up: How do you experience that?
19. What would you like a design made for you specifically to focus on/take into account?
    Follow-up: Can you rate them on importance for you?
    Follow-up: And what if this design was specifically designed for you and your partner?
20. What role would you like a ST to have in your sexual life?
    Follow-up: If your demands of the ST change over time, do you expect the ST to change with you?

Conclusion/Wrap-Up

21. Are there any points related to this topic that you would like to add, which have not yet been covered?
22. Do you have any questions for me, the researcher?

A3

A3 Midterm documents

A3.1 Residency _____ 162
A3.2 All results from the creative facilitation course _____ 164

A3.1 Residency

Over the summer, in-between *hey girl!* and the kick-off of my graduation project, I was an artist in residence at 38cc, an art gallery in the city centre of Delft. The two-month-long project, which for me personally revolved around visualising the recent journey of exploring my own sexuality, concluded in a salon; a participatory event in which visitors could interact with the art through a creative activity.

It functioned as a start of the project, where I performed autoethnographic reflexivity by stepping 'back into the closet', visualising my own experiences and exposing those to others (figure 2, 5 and 6). During the salon, visitors were invited to communicate their own experiences on sexuality visually on the back of the back of the closet (figure 3 and 4).

The success of providing a platform for people to illustrate their own story, verified the design form (an installation) to fulfil the design goal in.





Figure 2: me in the closet (top). | Figure 3: Visitors of the salon painting on the back of the closet (bottom).



Figure 4: a close-up of a visitor painting.



Figure 5: overview of the set-up of the art piece.



Figure 6: close-up of the picture frames.

A3.2 All results from the creative facilitation course

This appendix presents all the photos taken during the session performed during the creative facilitation course for which I served as client. This includes:

- The participants drawing a space in which they feel seen (figure 9).
- Their drawings up close (figure 7).
- The participants presenting this space to the group (figure 8).
- Factors that make one feel seen (figure 10).
- The factors translated to physicalities (figure 9).
- The participants brainstorming (figure 9).
- A first sketch of what the installation could look like (figure 10).



Figure 7: the participants' drawings.

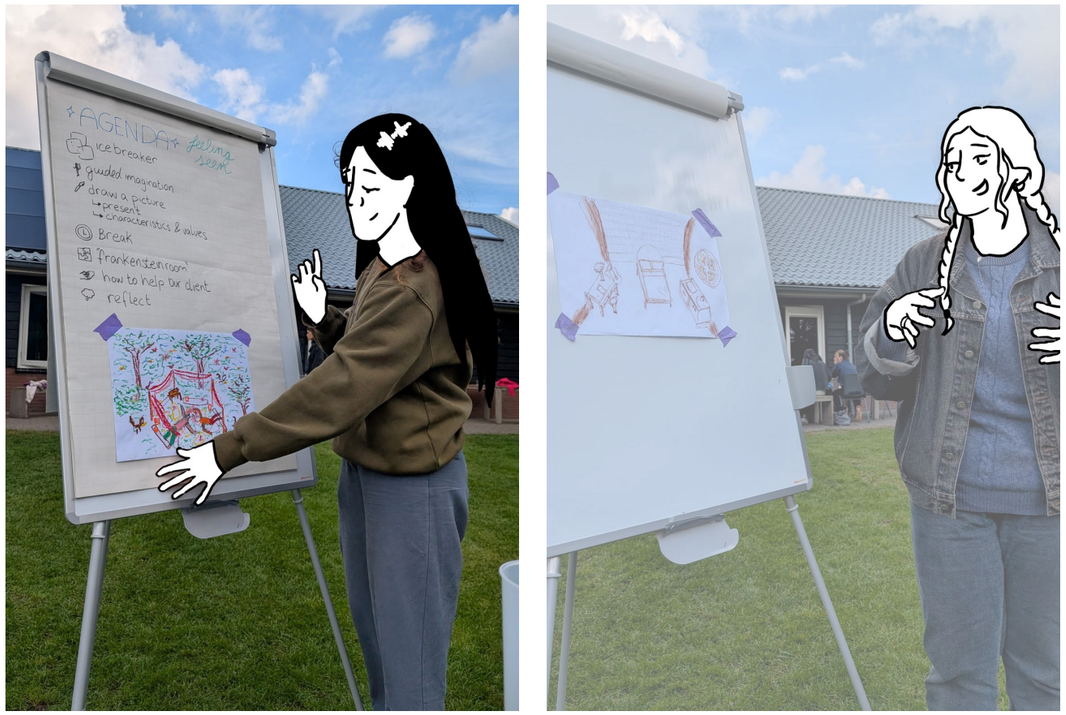


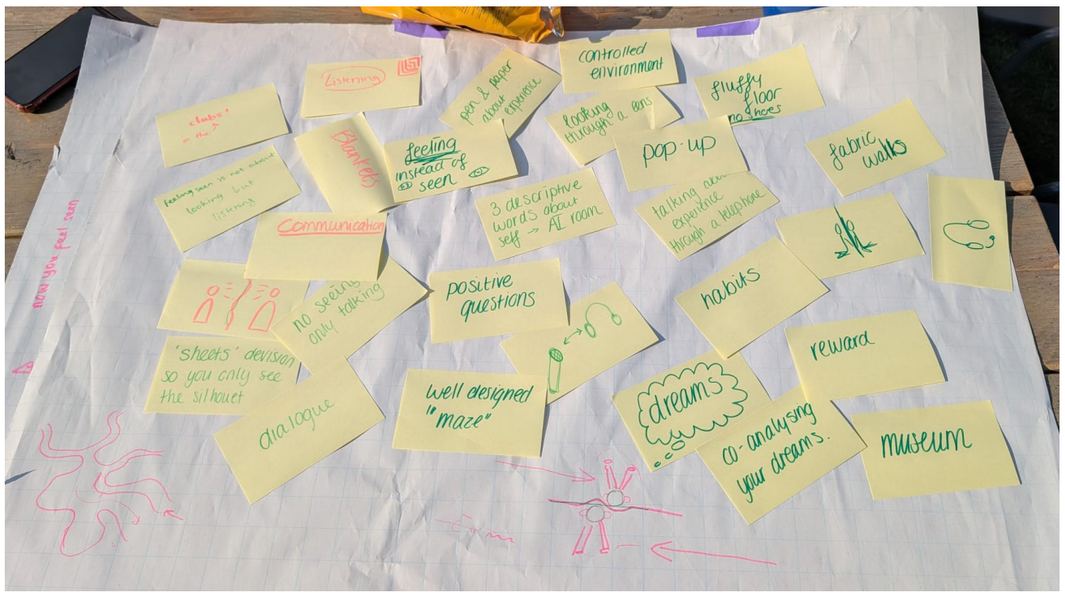
Figure 8: the participants presenting their work.

A3

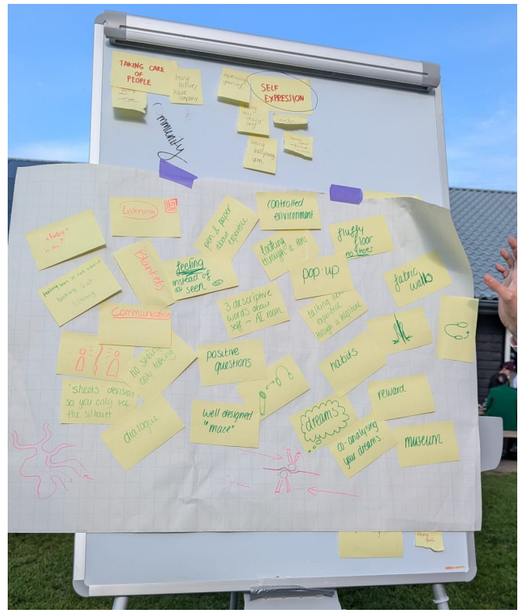




Figure 9: from top left clockwise: The participants drawing. The participants brainstorming. Factors translated to physicalities.







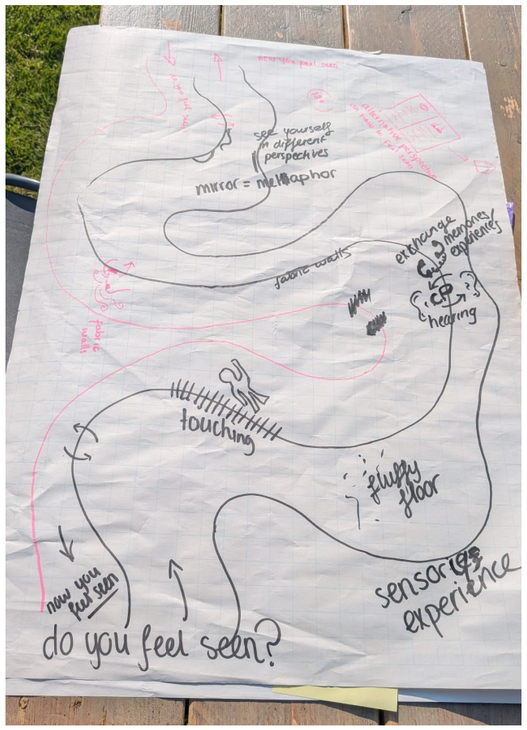




Figure 10: Factors that make one feel seen, overlaid by physicalities, and a first sketch of the installation.

A4

A4 FAST fund

A4.1 Application 170
A4.2 Pitch deck 173
A4.3 Budget 177
A4.3.1 General budget 177
A4.3.2 Detailed budget 177

A4.4 Time assessment 178
A4.5 Overview of locations 179

A4.1 Application

This appendix shows the application form submitted to the FAST fund in the fourth round of 2025.

1) SUMMARY | 2) THE PROJECT | 3) PERSONAL DETAILS | 4) OPTIONAL SUPP

Title of your application

Hey girl! An installation to enable (re)presentation of experiences of the queer community

Amount requested from FAST (max. €15000)

€ 4000

Total project budget

€ 4000

Write a brief summary of what your project is about. Explain what problem it is trying to solve and what solution you propose. (max. 150 words)

Hey girl! is an interactive installation that was developed during my (ongoing) graduation project on queer sexuality. Discovering your sexuality is a defining experience for many students and young people in developing oneself and becoming complete people (and successful, confident engineers). However, because of the lack of queer representation in mainstream media and design, they are forced to explain themselves to the world around them.

I want to make them feel seen and regain agency over their experiences by allowing 'non-queer' people, students and staff, through the installation, go on the journey of discovering their own sexuality. The installation has been co-created with the queer community, so the journey is based on real research and experiences. The goal is to create understanding for what their peers go through and in that way validate the queer experiences.

Innovation (30%)

One of the five subjects that your application will be evaluated on is its innovativity. Please answer the following questions.

Explain how your approach/solution is different from what others have tried? (For example: What new solution is the project using? To what extent is an existing solution being applied in a new way?) (max. 100 words)

Generally projects focus on explaining or presenting queer experiences to outsiders. Hey girl! reverses this, it lets participants experience themselves what the journey of queer self-discovery can be like.

By immersing 'non-queer' people in this process, I want to achieve understanding of experiences of fellow students and staff.

As LGBTQIA+ is very diverse, an existing solution applied novelly is 'research through exhibition'. Explained more in-depth below how exactly this is manifested, it means the installation gathers experiences of visitors whilst active, and in this way enables representation of diverse narratives, limiting risk of exclusion of narratives.

Give a detailed description of your product, approach or technology. Explain how and why it works. (max. 250 words)

Hey girl! Is an interactive installation with two sides, 'discovery' and 'fluidity', separated by a curtain, representing two important hallmarks of the queer experience. The installation is non-linear, so a visitor can start/end/criss-cross either side.

How it works: Each side has themed 'pockets', which provide a framework in the discovery journey for the visitors. In these pockets, participants can contribute their reflections/ stories/creative expressions on the pocket theme. They can write, draw, speak, whatever medium is preferred. The themes have been derived from reflexive thematic analysis on interviews with queer individuals.

On the 'discovery'-side, pockets centre around the LGBTQIA+ self-discovery process and defining what that means to you:
1. The inherent complexity of sexuality and choosing to identify as queer;
2. The digital world (social media, the internet, lack of queer representation in AI) and its role in self-discovery;
3. Communication of your sexual identity to the 'outside' world.

On the 'fluidity'-side, the fluid nature of sexuality is explored and that it can change over one's lifetime as you continue to develop as a person:
1. Sexual expression and aesthetics of sexuality, in art, design, media, etc.;
2. Autonomy & agency over your sexuality, and the freedom to defy societal bias/stereotypes.

Why it works: Central to the installation is interactive embodiment, meaning that our mental processes are influenced by what we physically experience in our environment. By actually letting visitors experience the process, I aim to let them gain understanding for what their peers experience.

Positive impact (30%)

One of the five subjects that your application will be evaluated on is its positive impact. Please answer the following questions.

Who will be the main beneficiaries of your project? (max. 50 words)

The queer community at TU Delft and visiting persons, as well as non-queer students and staff who engage with the installation and dive into queer experiences, creating a more inclusive campus culture.

What is the estimation of the amount of people that will benefit from your project?

1 in 5 people identify as queer. That means that within the TU Delft alone (27,000 students & staff) 5,400 people benefit directly. The entire community gains fror

What is the relevance/added value of your project for your beneficiaries? (what will be the long term impact of this ambitious project?) (max. 150 words)

The long-term impact is empowerment of queer people at the TU Delft, challenging stereotypes (also on a professional level) and promoting societal understanding.

Therefore, the final product I aim to conclude the project with is a toolkit that facilitates equips people to start the conversation around sexuality and queerness. The installation gathers the responses and stories that build up the toolkit, and also researchers how people feel most comfortable to broach the topic.

Plus, I am also planning to 'tour' the installation over multiple locations to expand its reach. It would be amazing if the installation could start out at the TU, e.g. in the library as part of the rotating exhibitions, and then also be shown in other spaces in the Netherlands for a wider audience.

How is your project beneficial for the TUDelft? (max. 100 words)

TU Delft could be a pioneer in the installation and lead supporting its queer community. Especially in the current political climate, taking in regard the active 'unqueering' that is happening in the USA, with D&I departments being shut down, transgender persons being excluded from positions or critical people just simply disappearing, I think it is incredibly relevant for an influential educational institution to promote an inclusive stance instead.

Feasibility (20%)

One of the five subjects that your application will be evaluated on is its feasibility. Please answer the following questions.

If your application is successful, you will receive funding in tranches, each dependent on separate deliverables. Please provide a short timeline that describes the main parts/steps of your project. (max. 200 words)

The timeline follows that of my graduation project. That means that the construction and showing of the installation falls within my graduation project and will be part of my thesis.

Before the Christmas break, I am still conducting the co-creation sessions and making the installation design final and technically detailed. I will be building the installation during January and display/exhibit it around my Green Light Meeting in February. My graduation will then be wrapped up in March.

However, with the FAST fund, I can actually construct the installation instead of just making a mock-up. This also enables me to display it on multiple locations, which means the display and promotion part of the installation will also fall outside of my thesis. For FAST, this means I will require funding during the construction period in January, and funding for logistics (moving the parts, touring the installation, etc.) in February, March and April.

What are the main challenges you expect to face with your ambitious project? Briefly describe how you would deal with those challenges. (max. 150 words)

- **Authenticity** – that it actually resonates with queer people. I tackle this through co-creating with the queer community whilst designing and constructing the installation. This provides me a continuous feedback loop with those I wish to represent.
- **Location** - A place for the installation to 'operate'. I have an atelier contact in Groningen, but ideally with the support from FAST, I could display it on campus and see its effect here directly.
- **Sensitive information** - sexuality is a sensitive and personal topic. Because this installation is the fruit of my graduation project, it has to comply to HREC. This means all input of visitors is anonymised.
- **Inherent sustainability of the building up and breaking down of an installation** - not only do I document the process in my thesis, if the project continues beyond my graduation, I also document the input and events digitally afterwards and in the toolkit.

A4.2 Pitch deck

Figure 11 to 20 list the slides of the pitch deck I used for my pitch to the Executive Grant Committee when applying for the Ambitious Idea Grant of the FAST Delft University fund.

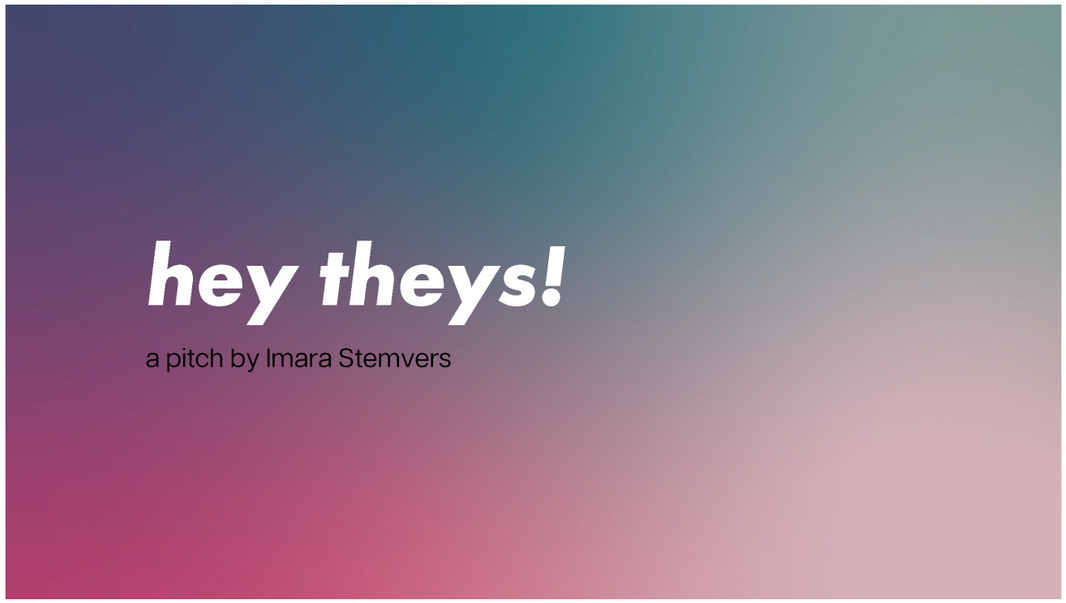


Figure 11: slide 1.



Figure 12: slide 2.



Figure 13: slide 3.

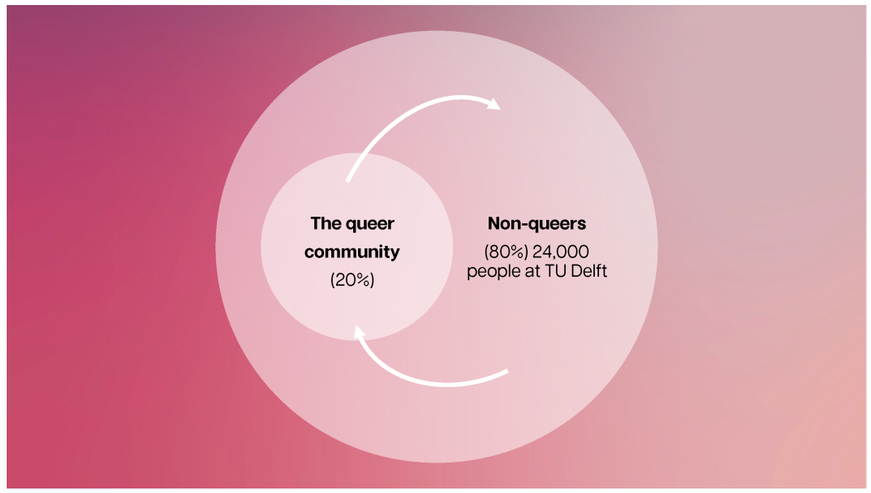


Figure 14: slide 4.

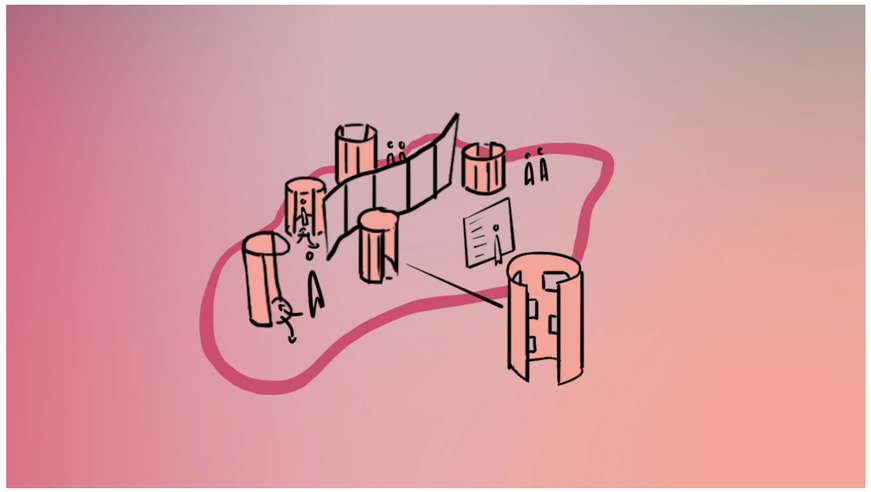


Figure 15: slide 5.

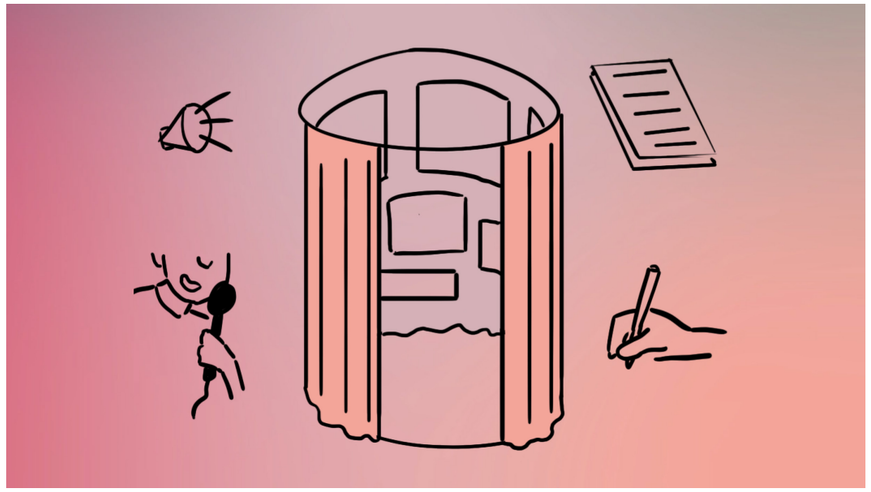


Figure 16: slide 6.

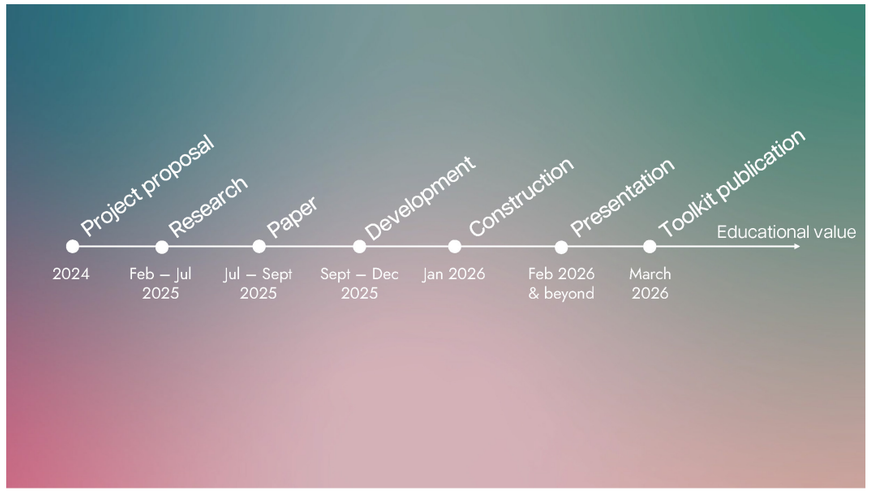


Figure 17: slide 7.

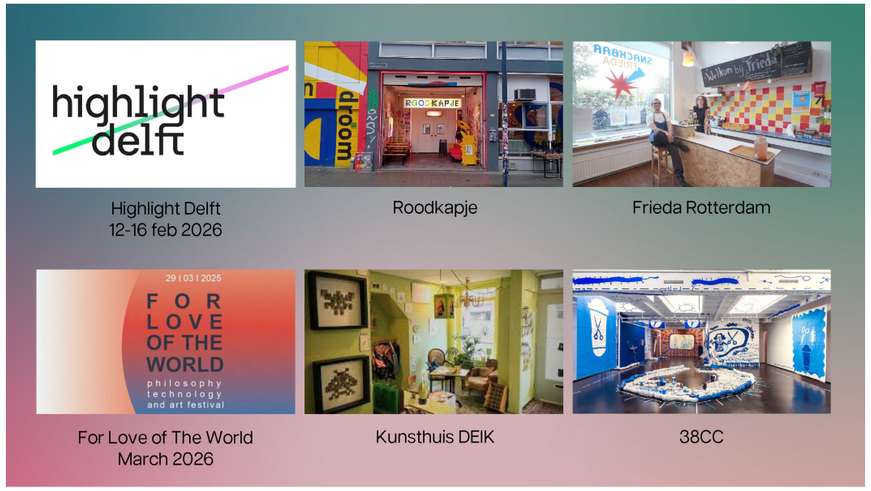


Figure 18: slide 8.

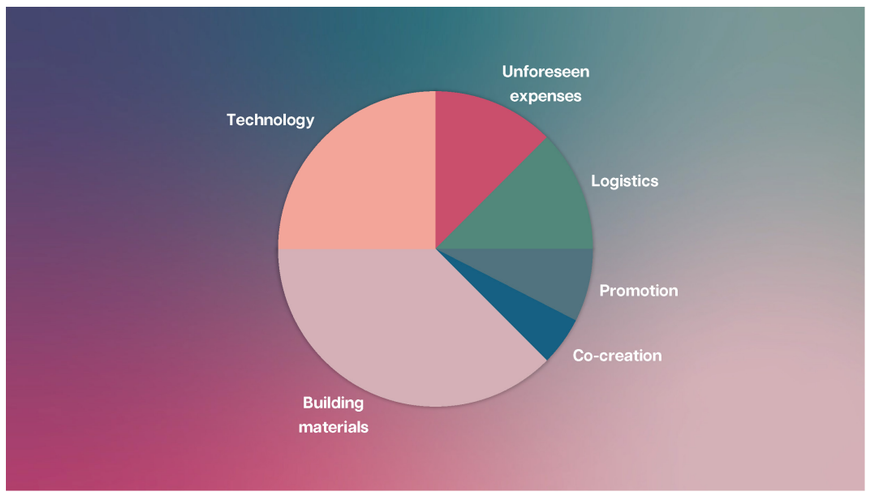


Figure 19: slide 9.



Figure 20: slide 10.

A4.3 Budget

A4.3.1 General budget

The budget was communicated in this level of detail to external parties (table 1).

Table 1: the general budget.

Building materials	1500
Technology	1000
Logistics	500
Unforeseen expenses	500
Promotion	300
Co-creation	200

A4.3.2 Detailed budget

To assess the feasibility of executing my idea for the installation, a budget in detail was kept along with an account of expenses (table 2).

Table 2: the detailed budget.

Object	Kosten	Waar halen	Opmerkingen
Doek			
			30 m ongebleekt katoen, dicht geweven,
Stof	55	Markt	
Textielmedium	11	Online	
Structuurpasta	77,8	Van Beek	
Verf	31,9	Van Beek	
Lino	8,95	Van Beek	
Linogutsen	11,99	Van Beek	
Linoroller	6,6	Van Beek	
Linoverf	32,99	Van Beek	
Acrylgel	14,98	Pipoos	
Penmes	4,87	Pipoos	
Karton	1,83	Pipoos	
Strijkijzer	lenen	vanuit huis	
Foamplaat	29,23	Van Beek	
Totaal	287,14		
Raamwerk			
Latten	40,64	Hornbach	
Balken	22,40	Hornbach	
Handzaag	19,95	Hornbach	
Houtlijm	4,79	Hornbach	Bizon!! anders slechte hechting
Whitewash beits	14,95	Hornbach	
Platte kwast	1,29	Hornbach	
Rampamoeren	12,48	Hornbach	
Platte kop schroevendraaier			
grote maat	10,00	Hornbach	rampamoeren
Binnenzeskantschroef	8,16	Hornbach	voor in de rampamoeren
Verzinkboortjes	7,95	Hornbach	
			4 sets van raamwerken, 2 per set, 8
Paumelles	30,00	Hornbach	paumelles in totaal
Bitjes	21,95	Hornbach	
Schroeven/moeren/			
vlindermoeren	10,60	Hornbach	
Kneedbaar hout	3,84	Hornbach	
Veiligheidsspelden	3,19	Hema	
Textielschaar	8,19	Hema	
Plamuurmes	3,95	Hornbach	
Totaal	224,33		
Bouwmaterialen			
Tacker	lenen	PMB IO	
Stoelhoeken	8,82	Hornbach	
Kruiskopschroevendraaier			
maat 0, 1, 2	30,00	Hornbach	Montage op locatie
Accuboor	104,00	Hornbach	Montage op locatie
Werkhandschoenen tegen			
splinters	3,90	Hornbach	
Afdekzeil	9,75	Hornbach	
Spanbanden	11,00	Hornbach	
Schuurpapier	2,49	Hornbach	
Vijl	7,00	Hornbach	
Rolmaat	5,05	Hornbach	
Totaal	182,01		

Visitekaartje/aftercare/'huiswerk'		Aantal theetjes	250
Enveloppen	68,97	Online (bulk)	
Thee(zakjes)	3,95	AH	
Lijmstift	5,22	Van Beek	
Printkosten	38,78	TU	
Gastenboek	6,20	Van Beek	
Kaarten	50,99	Print&bind	
Staander gastenboek	lenen	locatie	
Zeefdrukraam	10	Van Beek	
Fotoemulsie	10	Van Beek	
Zeefdrukverf	10	Van Beek	
Rakel	10	Van Beek	
Totaal	174,11		
Tech			
Bekabeling	50	Bol	
Stekkerblokken	lenen	locatie	
Gekleurde lampen	60,95	IKEA	
Huiskamerlampen	47,48	2dehands	
Totaal	158,43		
Evaluatiebankje		Aantal theetjes	100
Thee(zakjes)	1,58	AH	
Grondkussens stof	15	Markt	
Vulling	50	IKEA	
Theepot & -kopjes	9,99	2dehands	
Bijzettafeltje	12,5	2dehands	
Tapijt	29,99	IKEA	
Totaal	119,06		
Overige		Aantal theetjes	100
Transportkosten bouwperiode	45		
Reiskosten bouwperiode	66,9		
Draagtassen	1,99		
Vulva festival	15		
What you see festival	30		
Inspiratiebezoeken	59		
Impregneermiddel	29,75		
Gaffatape	19,95		
Totaal	267,59		

A4.4 Time assessment

To further assess the feasibility of the installation, a task list was drafted, along with the amount of time necessary to complete a task (table 3). The accumulation of all the tasks gave me an idea of the time I required to complete building the installation.

Despite this list, the building process took 1,5 months to complete, opposed to the 1 month I allotted, because less tasks were suited for involving help than I predicted in this list and thus took way longer to complete.

Table 3: The time assessment list.

Task	Subitem		Time	Status	Comments
Kaartje ontwerpen	Cards		1 hr	Af	
Kaartje printen	Cards		15 min	Af	
Make tea bags	Cards		hele dag	Af	
Buy envelopes & tea bags	Cards		30 min	Af	
Fold envelopes	Cards		hele dag	Af	
Test screen printing & textile printing	Screens		hele dag	Af	
Prepare tools	Screens		1 hr	Af	
Order fabric	Screens		1 hr	Af	
Design call for help			30 min	Af	
Send call for help			15 min	Af	
Print tea cards	Evaluation		15 min	Af	
Cut tea cards	Evaluation		halve dag	Af	
Buy wood	Screens		halve dag	Af	
Build frames	Screens		meer dan een dag	Af	
Install hinges	Screens		hele dag	Af	
Strectch fabric	Screens		hele dag	Af	
Guestbook	Evaluation		30 min	Af	
Material test inspiration wall	Graffiti wall		hele dag	Af	
Salon table	Evaluation		1 hr	Af	
Pick out fabrics market	Evaluation		halve dag	Af	
Determine & buy material test materials	Graffiti wall		1 hr	Af	
Definitive materials inspiration wall	Graffiti wall		30 min	Af	
Buy tea	Evaluation		30 min	Af	
Educational wall ontwerpen	Educational wall		hele dag	Af	
Design the walls	Main entrance		meer dan een dag	Af	
Buy building materials			halve dag	Af	
Print logo on the screesn (structure paste)	Screens		hele dag	Af	
Sow & stuff pillows	Evaluation		halve dag	Af	
Order fabric pillows	Evaluation		1 hr	Af	
Paint business cards	Main entrance		halve dag	Af	
Make Microsoft forms for the envelopes	Evaluation		1 hr	Af	
Design evaluation process	Evaluation		hele dag	Af	

A4.5 Overview of locations

To further assess the feasibility of the installation, a task list was drafted, along with the amount of time necessary to complete a task (table 4). The accumulation of all the tasks gave me an idea of the time I required to complete building the installation.

Despite this list, the building process took 1,5 months to complete, opposed to the 1 month I allotted, because less tasks were suited for involving help than I predicted in this list and thus took way longer to complete.

Table 4: The overview of locations (left), along with the type of location, and the planning of the exhibitions (right).

Location	Type	Details
Highlight Delft	Event	
X	Location	Foyer
Science Centre	Location/end destination (preliminary)	New museum exposition in the basement
ECHO	Location	
RoboHouse/MGS centre of robotics, digitalisation & AI	Event	Investors event
IDE	Faculty	Main hall
BK	Faculty	
Library	Location	
Studium Generale/de Veste	Event	For Love of the World
ME	Faculty	
Aula	Location	
TNW	Faculty	
The Green Village	Location	
CiTG	Faculty	
TN	Faculty	

Exhibition planning	
Location	**Date**
X, Foyer	20-22 feb
IDE, main hall	7-17 apr

A5

A5 Evaluation

A5.1 Co-design with non-queers ____182
A5.2 Code of conduct ____188
A5.3 Interview scripts ____189
A5.4 PrEmo but make it non-binary ____190

A5.1 Co-design with non-queers

Planned sessions

The following sessions were planned:

- **11/12/2025**: ideation session at the open studio @ DEIK. In this session I wish to ideate on what being 'queer' means;
- **End of December**: ideation session planned at Snackbar Frida. In this session I wish to ideate on what being 'queer' means and also validate my ideas for the installation.
- **Beginning of January**: concept validation session planned at the Koornbeurs, in collaboration with Outsite.

Timeline of session

The session will go as follows:

30 min – walk-in & welcome! Coffee, tea, cookies, a beer, music. Allow participants to sensitise with the research materials I put up (see figure 22).

15 min – Explaining what visual poetry/ collaging is, show examples, show all the materials.

30 min – ask participants to make a collage on their own sexuality.

15 min – present the collages to each other & chat.

15 min – short break

45 min – Second round! Now comes the collaborative part. We will make a collage together on what it means to be queer. If there a lot of people participating in the session, this will be in smaller groups of 4/5 people.

15 min – debrief, show the collages

After – people can hang around and discuss, ask questions, have a last drink etc.

The session toolkit

The toolkit was based on the toolkits I interacted with during other sessions and consists out of:

- Art materials required for the art medium the session focusses around. These materials always include collaging materials like scrap paper, glitter, glue, scissors, scrap magazines, etc. When buying the magazines, I tried to buy those with a focus close to the topic.

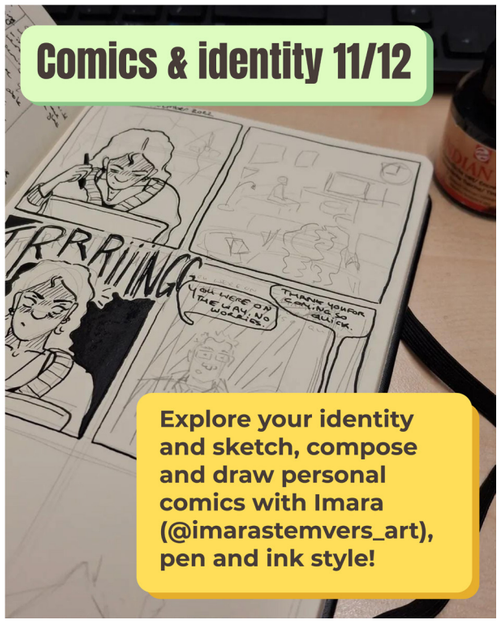


Figure 21: promotional materials for the session @ DEIK.

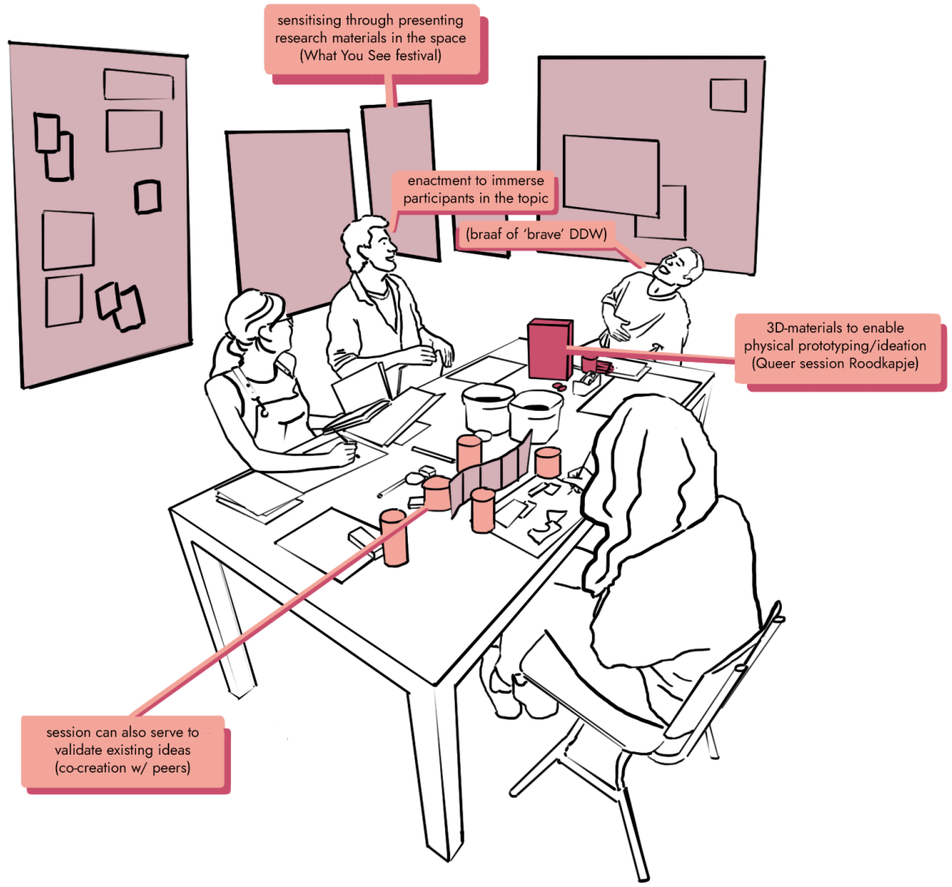


Figure 22: Session lay-out with inspiration points.

- 3D-materials from Scrap XL, that allow for 3D-collaging.
- Coloured pens and pencils to allow for writing and drawing.
- Words and images from my own research, such as the themes & keywords, the 'Spill the Tea'-questions.

A5.2 Code of conduct

The code of conduct used to guide the session safely and respectfully was based on the code of conduct of the designer I interviewed and was as follows:

- **Respect for all identities.** Celebrate the diversity of all participants, including their gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, abilities, and pronouns. Discrimination, hate speech, or derogatory behaviour towards any identity is not tolerated. Acknowledge that people might be at different stages in reflecting and discovering their identities, and identities can be fluid and dynamic.
- **Anti-racism stance.** Commit to actively opposing racism in all its forms. Recognise and challenge systemic racism to foster a space where people of all races feel values and heard.
- **Inclusivity and equality.** Cultivate an inclusive atmosphere where voices from marginalised FLINTA-groups are heard and valued equally. Respect turn-taking during discussions and practice active listening.
- **No harassment or bullying.** Prohibit all forms of harassment, bullying, or intimidation, including behaviours intended to demean, intimidate, or harm others.
- **Promoting safety.** Immediately report any behaviour that compromises the safety and integrity of the participants to the researcher.
- **Privacy and confidentiality.** Respect the privacy of other participants. Avoid sharing personal information without consent and handle sensitive disclosures with confidentiality.
- **Constructive dialogue.** Participate in respectful and constructive discussions. Avoid derogatory language, personal attacks, or inflammatory rhetoric.
- **Respect for pronouns.** Always respect and use other participants' self-identified pronouns. Refusal to acknowledge a person's pronouns is not tolerated. Disclosing pronouns is always optional, and we acknowledge that this practice might vary across language and cultures.
- **Appropriate treatment of sexual content.** While sexual content is not prohibited, it must be approached with respect for others. Ensure that such content is shared responsibly and considerately, with due sensitivity to the diverse members of our community. Acknowledge that people might be at different stages in their sexual and reproductive journeys.
- **All experiences welcome.** Welcome all levels of expertise, especially people new to the research topics. We are all experts of our own bodily experiences.
- **Support and solidarity.** Offer support and show solidarity with fellow participants. Our community's strength comes from our unity and mutual support.

A5.3 Interview scripts

As the interview was unstructured, I composed few questions. These questions were intended to start off or spur the conversation, but not to steer it.

During the first evaluation, the following questions were used:

1. What are your first impressions?
2. How did it make you feel?
   Follow-up: Can you explain why it made you feel that way?
3. What did you experience?
4. What did it do to you?
5. What does it mean to you?
6. What will you take with you when you leave?

During the second evaluation, the following questions were used:

7. We are currently in the 'final' version of the installation. What are your first impressions?
8. Thinking back to the group session, what do you think of what the others (non-queers) said?
   Follow-up: What do you think of the discussions?
9. Does this feel as representation?

A5.4 PrEmo but make it non-binary

Whilst in the end, I didn't use it, I looked into using the Product Emotion Measurement Tool (PrEmo) by Pieter Desmet (2007) to record the emotions of the participants.

PrEmo is a non-verbal self-report instrument to record emotions. A benefit is that it works cross-culturally due to its non-verbality. However, it only comes in male "Simon" (figure 23)/female "Sarah" (figure 24) versions. It consequentially doesn't function cross-culturally for those who don't identify with the binary genders.

That is why, within the context of my research, I created a non-binary version, "Slate" (figure 25), with a neutral body type, hairstyle (neutral hairline, "Steve's" hairline is rather drawn back), piercings and an androgynous face. "Slate" is part statement, part joke, because a mullet and piercings is in-culture the androgynous stereotype of a non-binary person. Still, it challenges the status quo of 'inclusivity' meaning only men AND women.

I ended up not using "Slate" in my evaluation, as academic emotional analysis is not the goal of my research.

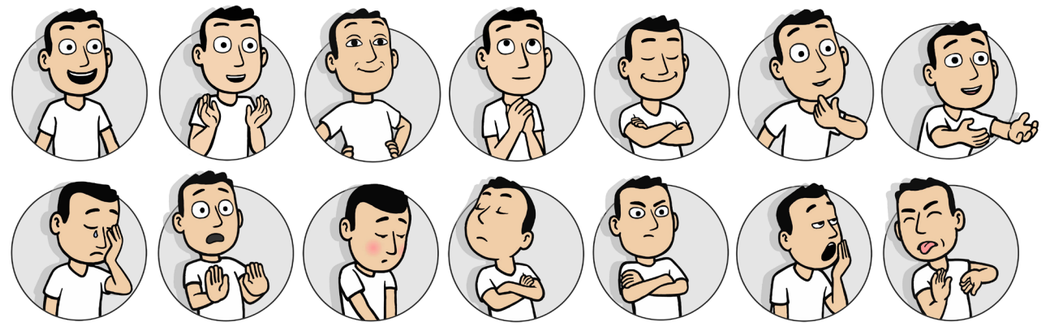


Figure 23: "Steve", the male version of PrEmo.

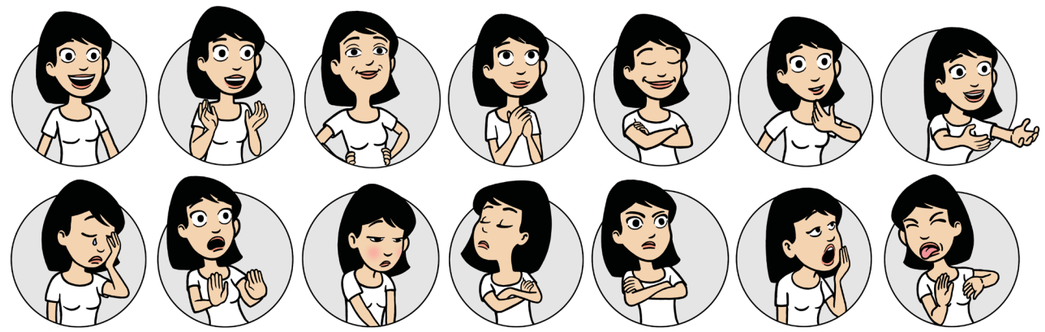


Figure 24: "Sarah", the female version of PrEmo.

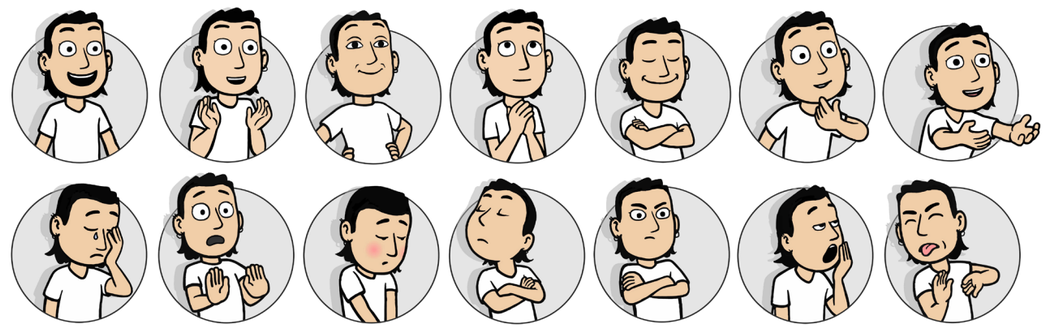


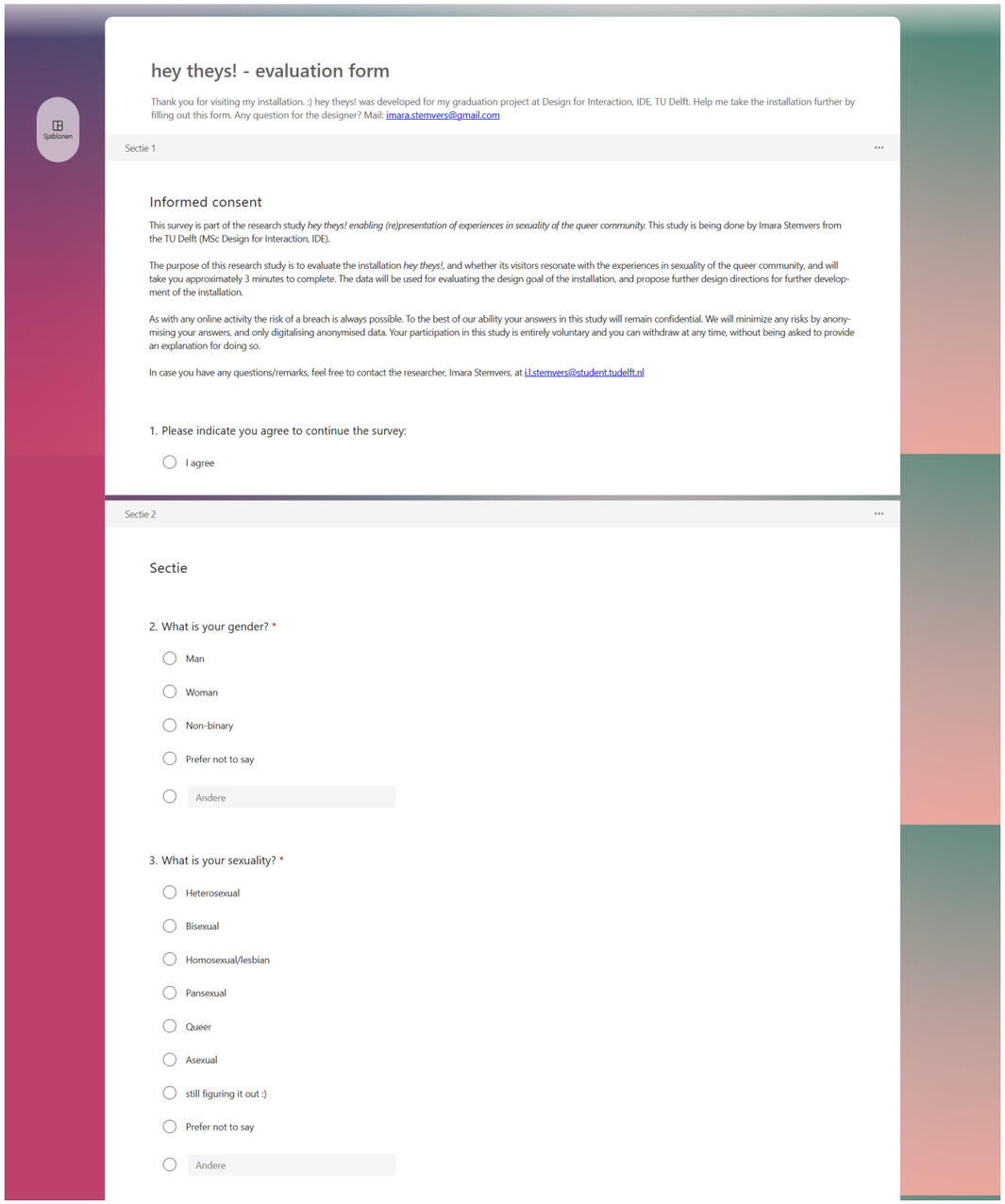
Figure 25: "Slate", my non-binary version of PrEmo.

A6

A6 hey theys! – the appendix

A6.1 Forms _____ 192
A6.2 Mock-up _____ 194
A6.3 Comics _____ 196

A6.1 Forms



hey theys! - evaluation form

Thank you for visiting my installation. :) hey theys! was developed for my graduation project at Design for Interaction, IDE, TU Delft. Help me take the installation further by filling out this form. Any question for the designer? Mail: imara.stemvers@gmail.com

Sjablonen

Sectie 1

Informed consent

This survey is part of the research study *hey theys! enabling (re)presentation of experiences in sexuality of the queer community.* This study is being done by Imara Stemvers from the TU Delft (MSc Design for Interaction, IDE).

The purpose of this research study is to evaluate the installation *hey theys!*, and whether its visitors resonate with the experiences in sexuality of the queer community, and will take you approximately 3 minutes to complete. The data will be used for evaluating the design goal of the installation, and propose further design directions for further development of the installation.

As with any online activity the risk of a breach is always possible. To the best of our ability your answers in this study will remain confidential. We will minimize any risks by anonymising your answers, and only digitalising anonymised data. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time, without being asked to provide an explanation for doing so.

In case you have any questions/remarks, feel free to contact the researcher, Imara Stemvers, at i.l.stemvers@student.tudelft.nl

1. Please indicate you agree to continue the survey:

- I agree

Sectie 2

Sectie

2. What is your gender? *

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say
- Andere

3. What is your sexuality? *

- Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Homosexual/lesbian
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Asexual
- still figuring it out :)
- Prefer not to say
- Andere

4. How did it make you feel? Enter only one word. *

Voer uw antwoord in

5. Can you explain why it made you feel that way? *

Voer uw antwoord in

6. What did you just experience? Describe it. I just experienced... *

Voer uw antwoord in

7. What did the experience do to you? Describe it. The experience... *

Voer uw antwoord in

8. What emotions were you experiencing? Select those that apply. *

- Desire
- Satisfaction
- Pride
- Hope
- Curiosity
- Surprise
- Disgust
- Shyness
- Fear
- Boredom
- Contempt
- Joy
- Andere

Sectie 3

Follow-up research

For the academic quality of my research, it is best for me to ask a few follow-up questions a week after you've visited my expo. :) If you are open to, leave your e-mail address below so I can send you a follow-up questionnaire a week from now!

9. My e-mail address:

Voer uw antwoord in

Nieuwe vraag toevoegen

'entrance' wall - front

hey they s!

Our society is build on 'binaries'. In TU Delft terms: 0 and 1. Men and women. Left or right. Gay or straight.

Handy right? You can categorise the world that way. I am a woman. I study design. I like cats. I like milk in my tea. And we can write our own programme that way. Enough 0's and 1's and you have your societal version of a person. Functional enough, but sexuality doesn't work that way. Sometimes something feels great, sometimes you're not in the mood for it. The one thing that worked for you for years, suddenly doesn't do it anymore. And what you never expected to happen to you, suddenly becomes reality.

No matter how many 0's and 1's you assign to yourself (gay, straight, men, women...), none of these respect all the space in-between. That you might like both, or more than one or two, or all of it, or none.

Heterosexuality is also a sexuality. I invite you, for this moment, to step into a world without borders, without judgement and without binaries. When you enter this world, nothing is binary, everything is fluid.

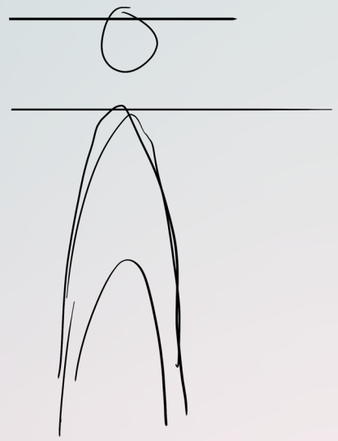
entrance wall - back

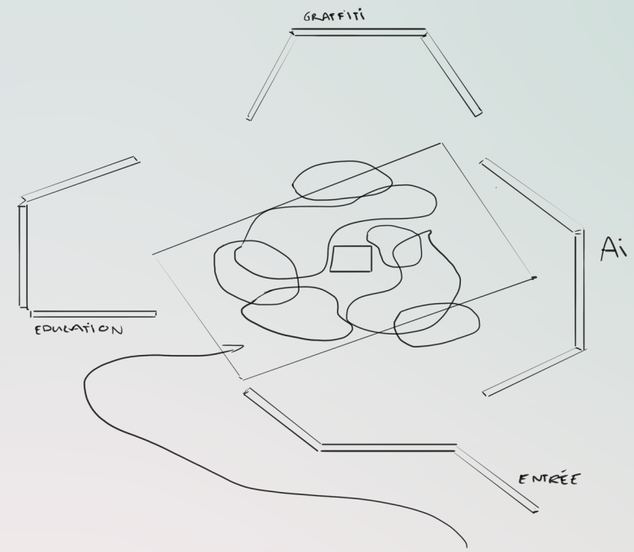


Hi! I am Imara. This installation was developed during my graduation project Design for Interaction, IDE, here at the TU Delft. It started out as a protest: I was missing my own voice as a queer woman in the academic design sphere. Through interviews and sessions with fellow queer people, it became a passion project.
This project is based on the notion of separate lives: a queer reality and a heteronormative one. Which is crazy, taking into account that they do not have to be separated. See it as me inviting my friends into my lived world, one without borders, without judgement, and the power to determine your own rules and your own narrative.

Imara Stemvers is an interaction designer, graduated in Design for Interaction, Industrial Design Engineering, TU Delft. She is creative, extraverted, and likes to be social in both her personal and professional life. I design for humans, with humans, because the best ideas come from real conversations. I perform best in close contact with stakeholders and users. Through visualisation, field research, UX, and playful design, I turn sensitive & complex topics into tangible, collaborative solutions.
- Interactive storytelling: the installation re/rooting, @ the Ketelhuisplein during Dutch Design Week 2024, explores cultural exchange in gentrified neighbourhoods.
- My passion is in art, and I frequently exhibit my work at expo's in and around Delft. I also do commissions and residencies, plus give painting lessons @DEIK in Delft.

Take a business card below!





graffiti wall - front

graffiti wall - back

hey they s!

hey they s!

hey they s!

Queer theory is the umbrella term for all ideas and work on interrogating desire and its relationship to identity. It questions how we came to the use of stable (binary!) identities and reveals them as fragile constructs.

To be queer is to be fluid. And fluidity means a lot of things. It means that instead of being a 0 or a 1 (liking coffee vs. liking tea) you can be both (liking coffee AND tea). Or neither (get me a soda instead). Or you like tea 90% of the time, except when you are sitting in the sun on a terrace in Kopenhagen, get me a cup of hot coffee.

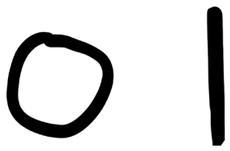
Sexuality works the same way. Most straightforwardly in what gender(s) you are attracted to. But ho! Heterosexuality is also a sexuality. And sexuality is not limited to gender, sexuality also encloses all desires and actions linked to sexual behaviours.

Fluidity then gets a liberating meaning. It means that you do not have to behave along the 'norm' that society sets and instead can define your own path. You don't have to drink coffee with your partner all the time to have 'real sex', you can have tea together. Fluidity also means your needs can change over time. You are allowed to stop liking coffee because you no longer need the caffeine boost, and to start liking it again at a later time.

A6.2 Mock-up

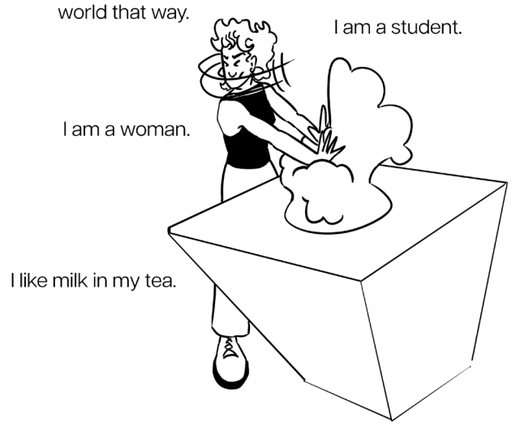
A6.3 Comics

Our society is build in ‘binaries’. In technical terms: 0 and 1. Woman and man. Left or right. Gay or straight.



Handy right?

You can categorise the world that way.



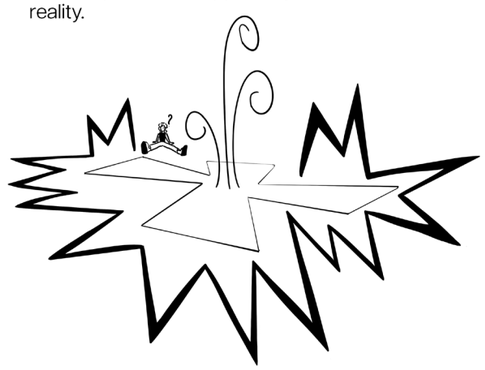


We can write a programme that way. Enough 0’s and 1’s and you have your societal version of a person.

Functional enough, but sexuality doesn’t work that way.

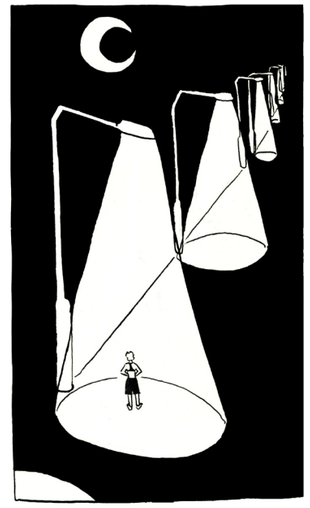
Sexuality is diverse, suprising, and complex.

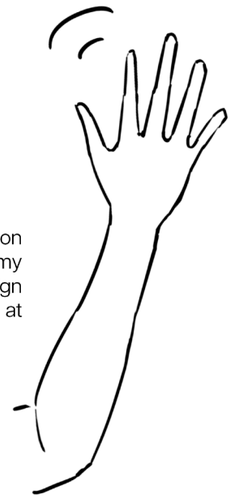
Sometimes something feels great, sometimes you’re not in the mood for it. What worked for you for years, doesn’t do it anymore. What you never expected to happen to you, then becomes reality.



It all depends on how you view it.

I invite you to step into a world without binairies, without judgement, and discover what it can mean to you. When you enter this world, nothing is binary, everything is fluid.





Hi! I’m Imara. This installation was developed during my graduation project Design for Interaction, IDE, here at the TU Delft.



It started out as a protest: I was missing my own voice as a queer woman in the academic design sphere. Through interviews and sessions with fellow queer people, it developed from :hesis into passion project.

Core inspiration to the project was the notion that queer people live separate lives: a queer reality and a heteronormative one. A strict separation of professional and personal life, in my case. One never interrogating the other. Crazy, because we can all benefit from a little openness and a little tolerance.





In my daily life, I am an interaction designer. Creative, extraverted, and social in both my personal and professional life.

"I design for humans, with humans, because the best ideas come from real conversations."

Queer theory is the umbrella term for all ideas and work on interrogating desire and its relationship to identity. It questions how we came to the use of stable (binary!) identities and reveals them as fragile constructs. [1]



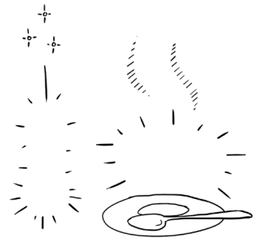
[1] Watson, K. (2005). Queer theory. *Group Analysis*, 38(1), 67–81. https://doi.org/10.1177/0533316405049369

To be queer is to be fluid. And fluidity means a lot of things. It means that instead of being a 0 or a 1,

you can be both. You can like coke and coffee.



or neither.



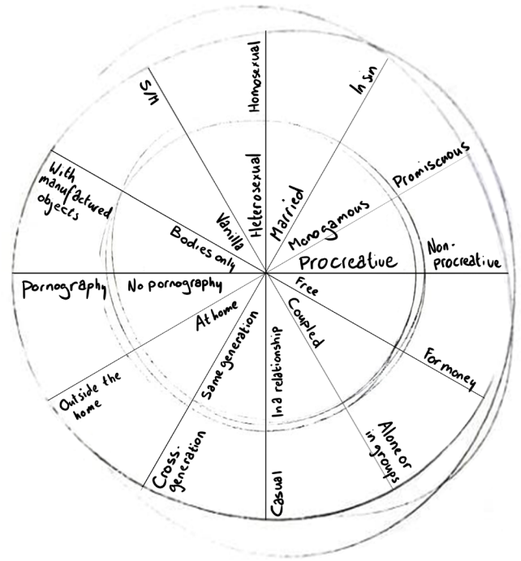


Or you like tea 90% of the time, except when you are sittting in the sun on a terrace in Berlin or something else incredibly specific, get me a cup of hot coffee.

Sexuality works the same way. Most straightforwardly in what gender(s) you are attracted to.

But ho! Heterosexuality is also a sexuality. And sexuality is not limited to gender, sexuality encloses all desires and actions linked to sexual behaviours.

A popular theory is the Charmed Circle theory, that documents the most prevalent ideas of Western society on what is deemed conventional and proper (inside the 'charmed' circle), versus unconventional and improper ('the outer limits'):





Fluidity is liberating. It means that you do not have to behave along the 'norm' that society sets and instead can define your own path. You don't have to drink coffee with your partner all the time to have 'real sex', you can have tea together.

Fluidity also means your needs can change over time. You are allowed to stop liking coffee because you no longer need the caffeine boost, and to start liking it again at a later time.



"I think dance-chemistry is quite an interesting fluid medium for how sexual chemistry can have many forms.

You can have such beautiful chemistry in dancing. It can be just that, you've had a very nice dance. Or you're occupied when dancing. You're totally in it, in your own bubble. One day the dancing can be completely different from the other.

No dance is ever the same. Every dance is a new chemistry."

- E. (24) industrial product design student

hey theys!
hey theys!
hey theys!
hey theys!
hey theys!
hey theys!
hey theys!
hey theys!
hey theys!
hey theys!