

Prototyping for Citizen Engagement

Workshop outcomes Design and the City Conference, 22 April 2016

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Prototyping for Citizen Engagement

workshop outcomes

Design and the City conference, 22 April 2016.

Introduction

This document aims to bring together snippets from the Prototyping Citizen Engagement workshop that happened at the Design and the City conference in Amsterdam, on 22 April 2016.

We wish to have this document be a summary of the workshop, consisting of snapshots of the discussions that went into several directions along citizen engagement, the role of the government, how to scale up interventions, how to foster systemic change and so forth.

The about 20 people present at the workshop offered diverse perspectives on the agenda. The debates along certain topics were sometimes heated or controversial, but “moderate provocation” did trigger further depth in reflection.

This document is not aimed at being conclusive, but to be a go-to reference to recap what happened during the workshop.

Last, but not least, we would like to thank again the participants who had been at the workshop and played along with us. We learned a lot, and we hope that you did too.

Learning through collaborative image creation

Marije te Brink



Workshop rationale

Whereas new terms as DIY democracy and participation society have been introduced on the political agenda, it is not straightforward whether and how these strategies contribute to truly engaged citizenship. There have been various other ways to facilitate the engagement of citizens in urban matters, moving from ad-hoc activism towards more facilitated approaches, such as technological platforms for bottom-up initiatives or different type of events organized around civic matters, for example hackathons, design jams, and similar formats.

We observe that a changing landscape around citizen engagement and multiple strategies are emerging, from informing citizens to participatory city-making. Although the urban context is already complex due to the large amount of actors and stakeholders involved (citizens, governments, businesses, etc.), this is only becoming even more complex with the ubiquity of digital technology. In our view, in this complex setting a single-shot strategy on citizen engagement may not foster long-term change. By mapping and collecting various strategies from different disciplines, we aimed to contribute to the debate on how to stimulate citizens engagement and encourage people to look beyond their respective fields for different approaches and consequently strengthen their work by incorporating other strategies as well.

List of people

List of participants

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Workshop schedule

10:00 Workshop started

Handshaking

Introduction

Mapping own experiences

11:30 Coffee break

Collecting methods and formats for
sustaining social change

Wrap-up / How to continue?

13:00 Workshop finished

Introduction and handshaking

The workshop started with a quick introduction by the organizers that was followed by a mingling session "on speed", where people were asked to shake hands and meet with others for 1 minute for a quick get-to-know, and then move on to the next person. This fostered speed-dating set the mood early on that we have a short workshop and no time to waste.

Presenting the theory

After the quick get-to-know, the group immediately immersed in the workshop topic. The workshop was based on two models in social innovation and urban policy making, that were presented by Ingrid Mulder.

Process of social innovation



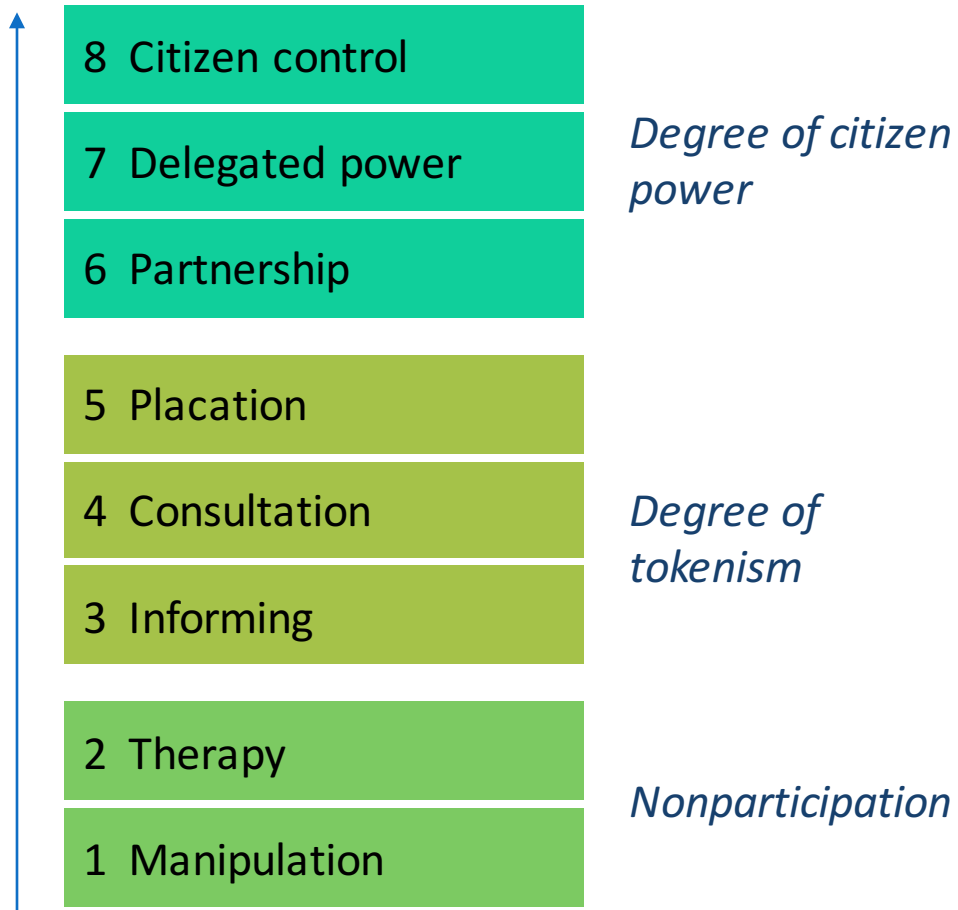
Empowered Power - Citizen's...

Empowered Power - Citizen's... is a model that focuses on the role of citizens in the process of social innovation. It emphasizes the importance of citizen participation and the development of local leadership. The model is based on the idea that citizens should be able to identify and address their own needs and challenges, and to work together to find solutions. This involves building trust, developing shared values, and creating a sense of community. The model also recognizes the importance of external support and resources, and the need for a supportive environment that enables citizens to take action.

Manipulation - Therapy - Inform...

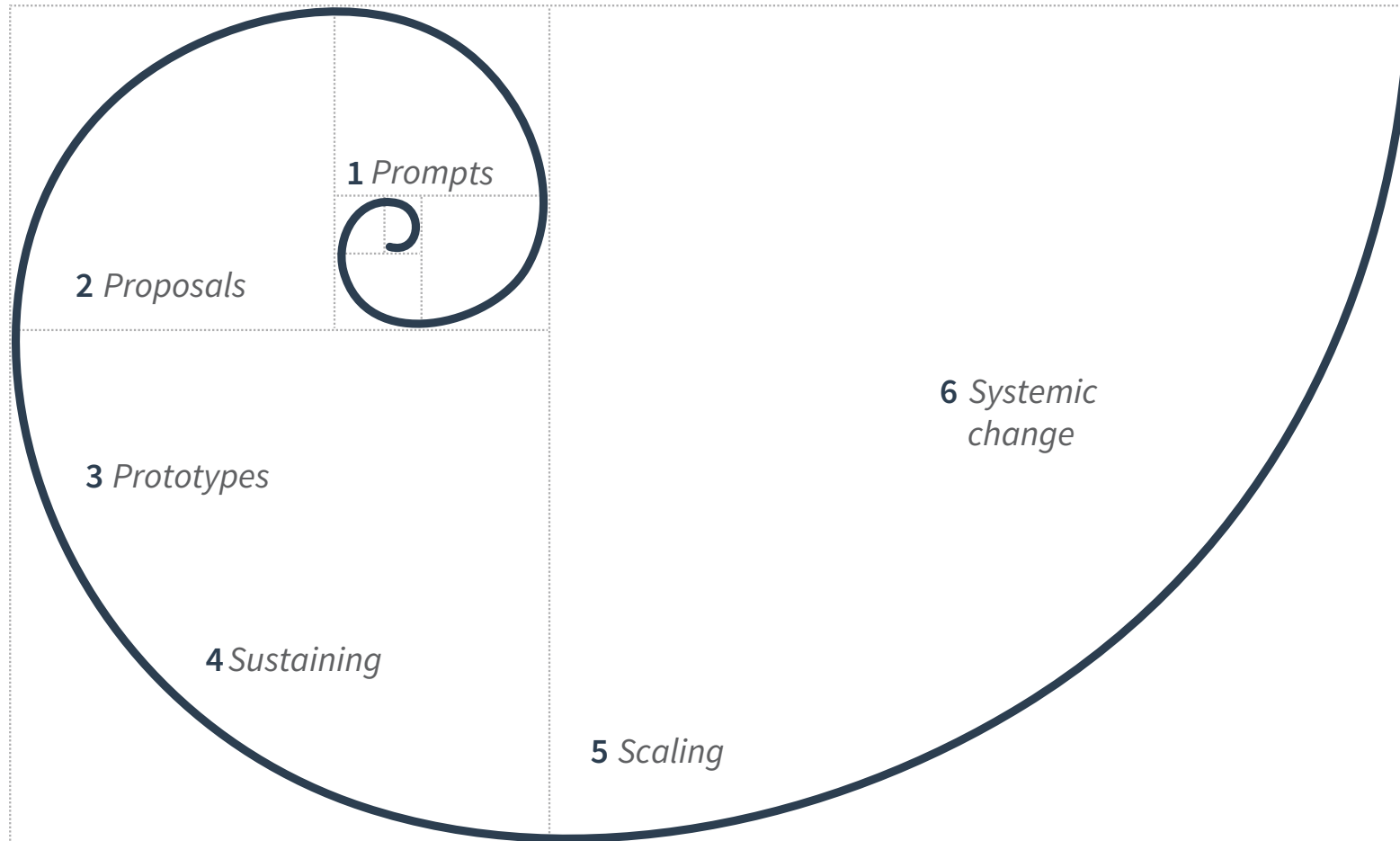
A Ladder of Citizen Participation

Adapted from: Arnstein, Sherry R. "A ladder of citizen participation." *Journal of the American Institute of planners* 35, no. 4 (1969): 216-224.



Process of Social Innovation

Adapted from: Murray, Robin, Julie Caulier-Grice, and Geoff Mulgan. *The open book of social innovation*. London: National endowment for science, technology and the art, 2010.



Process of Social Innovation

Adapted from: Murray, Robin, Julie Caulier-Grice, and Geoff Mulgan. *The open book of social innovation*. London: National endowment for science, technology and the art, 2010.

1) Prompt, inspirations and diagnoses

In this stage we include all the factors which highlight the need for innovation – such as crisis, public spending cuts, poor performance, strategy – as well as the inspirations which spark it, from creative imagination to new evidence.

2) Proposals and ideas

This is the stage of idea generation. This can involve formal methods – such as design or creativity methods to widen the menu of options available. Many of the methods help to draw in insights and experiences from a wide range of sources.

3) Prototyping and pilots

This is where ideas get tested in practice. This can be done through simply trying things out, or through more formal pilots, prototypes and randomised controlled trials. The process of refining and testing ideas is particularly important in the social economy because it's through iteration, and trial and error, that coalitions gather strength (for example, linking users to professionals) and conflicts are resolved (including battles with entrenched interests).

4) Sustaining

This is when the idea becomes everyday practice. It involves sharpening ideas (and often streamlining them), and identifying income streams to ensure the long term financial sustainability of the firm, social enterprise or charity, that will carry the innovation forward.

5) Scaling and diffusion

At this stage there are a range of strategies for growing and spreading an innovation – from organisational growth, through licensing and franchising to federations and looser diffusion. Emulation and inspiration also play a critical role in spreading an idea or practice. Demand matters as much as supply: how market demand, or demand from commissioners and policymakers is mobilised to spread a successful new model.

6) Systemic change

This is the ultimate goal of social innovation. Systemic change usually involves the interaction of many elements: social movements, business models, laws and regulations, data and infrastructures, and entirely new ways of thinking and doing.

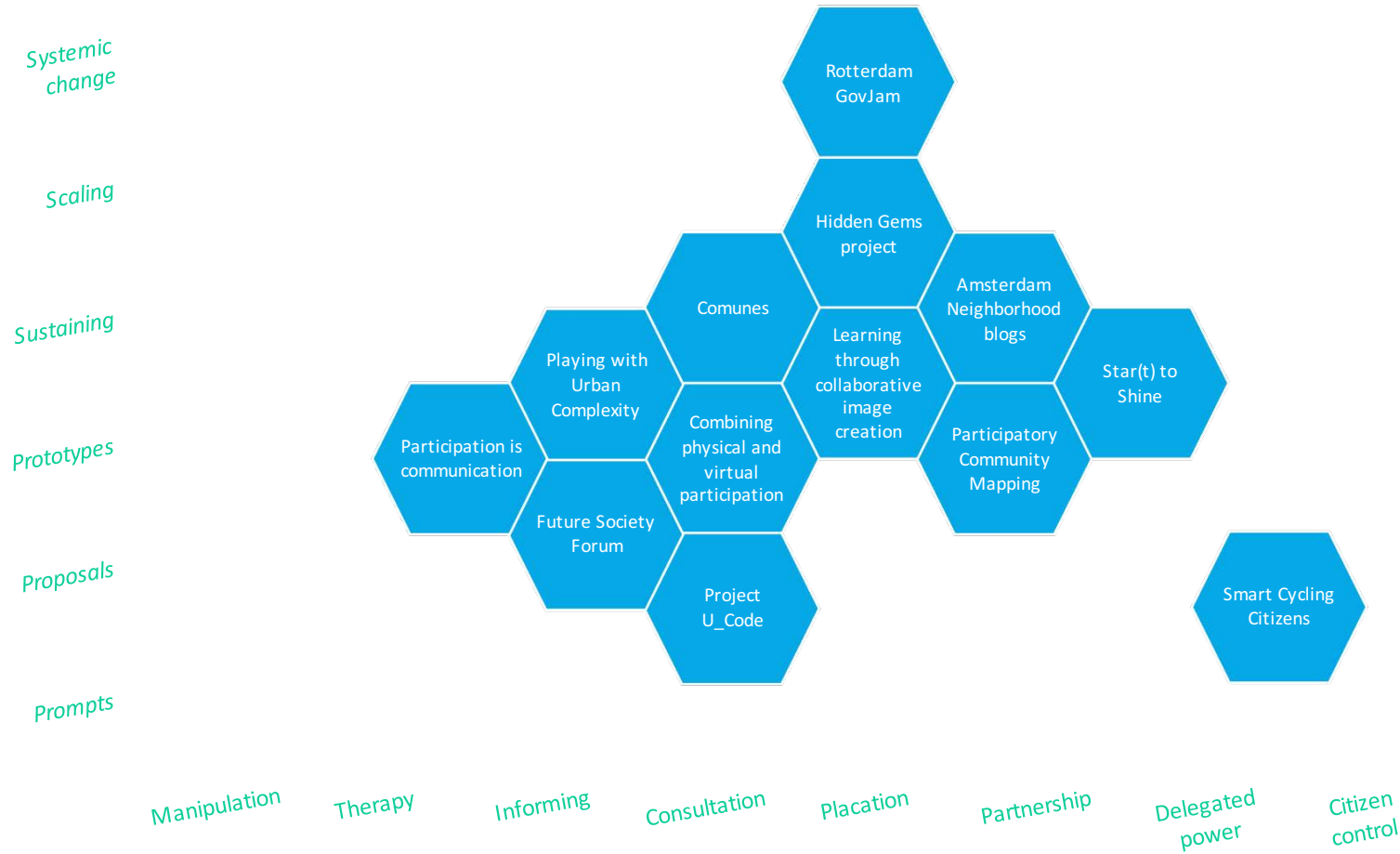
Mapping own experiences

The two models formed a 'matrix' stretched on two-axis. This matrix was aimed to develop a shared vocabulary and reference point for the further discussions, and the participants were asked in small groups of four to discuss their projects and see where they would see them positioned best on this matrix.

As next step, we united the groups and placed all the projects on a single big-sized matrix, creating a landscape of prototyping citizen engagement.

Landscape of citizen engagement

Combining the *Process of Social Innovation* and the *Ladder of Citizen Participation*



Discussion topics

An important, characterized notion was that projects live a life and often changes the position in the matrix. Thus, it is better to talk about project trajectories, and consider them dynamic, adapting to current, given circumstances. For instance, at the beginning of a citizen project, lack of delegated power might be hard to interpret: the project needs a few, but committed people who can pull the birth of the project through, before gaining larger traction by involving others.

A major discussion was about the “Ladder of Citizen Participation” by Arnstein (1969). This model has some phrasing that might be harsh and potentially outdated today. However, it worked as a trigger for discussion and as a lens to analyze the stages of the projects presented. One of the concluding notes were that although citizen control is where you always want to go, a strong “good enough” solution of a healthy partnership between government and citizens is already better than given status quo.

Quotes from the discussions

“ Not expecting citizens running away with ideas

“ To be forced to think where our project lands

“ Citizen control is where you always want to go

“ Government as a process or the big buildings?

“ Stopped in the chase of ultimate objectivity

“ Matter of intentions: Old-fashioned vs progressive

“ Not waiting for the government but fixing it ourselves

“ There is a scaling problem moving from the city scale to a big (systemic) scale.

“ Trajectories instead of pinning down [projects]

“ Take a position with your project

Twitter outreach

Aldo de Moor @ademoor Following
Positioning our projects along the axes of Ladder of Citizen Participation & #SocialInnovation Process #DATC2016



RETWEETS 3 LIKES 3
10:59 AM - 22 Apr 2016

Aldo de Moor @ademoor Following
Aligning the citizen engagement methodologies! #SocialInnovation #socialinclusion #DATC2016



RETWEET 1 LIKES 3
4:06 PM - 22 Apr 2016

Lewis Greener @damrson Follow
Mapping participation & impact in prototyping for citizen engagement @ #DATC2016 we broke the scale & started again



RETWEETS 2 LIKES 2
3:30 PM - 22 Apr 2016

Aldo de Moor @ademoor Following
Plenary presentations of the subgroups' initial results #DATC2016



RETWEETS 2 LIKE 1
11:03 AM - 22 Apr 2016

Cristina Ampatzidou @CAmpatzidou Follow
Discussing #playUC at Prototyping for citizen engagement workshop. #DATC2016 @KatGugerell @JPIUrbanEurope



RETWEETS 4 LIKES 3
10:58 AM - 22 Apr 2016

Collecting methods and formats

In the last block of the workshop, we deconstructed the projects along their Outputs, Outcomes and Impact. This system was used to standardize our vocabulary to describe the projects as best practices to prototype citizen engagement. Applying these as “lenses” offered further perspectives in reflecting on the projects.

name of the method

Output

Relatively easy to count. Are often selected based only on a theory about what is helpful. If the outputs counted do not lead to anything meaningful, the “results” are meaningless.

Outcome

More difficult to measure. Do measure the observed effects of the nonprofit’s activities. However, the observed outcomes may not actually be due to the nonprofit’s activities. If so, the “results” are meaningless.

Impact

Very difficult to measure. Requires some form of analysis which attempts to hold static the effects of other influences. This is the gold standard because the results are proven.

Based on: http://ssir.org/articles/entry/getting_results_outputs_outcomes_impact

Closing words

At the end of the workshop, it was clear that we cannot change the world in 3 hours and that we just scratched the surface in this much time. Nevertheless, the few bigger discussions indicated that we “tipped our toes” in the complexity of prototyping citizen engagement.

As a conclusion, applying the different perspectives to analyze the projects helped the participants to position their projects on a larger scope where the aim is to foster sustainable systemic change.

Projects

In the following pages a short description to be found of all the projects presented at the workshop.

Aldo de Moor	Participatory Community Mapping
Arnold Vermeeren	Hidden Gems project
Cristina Ampatzidou	Playing with Urban Complexity
Dominique Ollivier and Guy Grenier	Combining Physical and Virtual Participation
Gabriele Schliwa	Smart Cycling Citizens
Ingrid Mulder	Star(t) to shine; GovJam
Kasia Piskorek	Participation as Communication
Kaspar Kazil	Project U_Code
Lewis Greener	Future Society Forum
Marije ten Brink	Learning Through Collaborative Image Creation
Marta Sierra Garcia	Comunes
Pieter Breek	Amsterdam Neighborhood Blogs

Participatory Community Mapping

Aldo de Moor

Participatory community mapping is a useful instrument for sensemaking by communities and their surrounding stakeholder networks in order to help them scale up for collective impact.

We summarize work on participatory community mapping approaches which mostly focus on sensemaking by individual communities.

We outline a number of open issues in participatory inter-communal mapping, and illustrate them with examples from practice.



Hidden Gems project

Arnold Vermeeren

The Hidden Gems project explores approaches and platforms for collaborations with local communities, museum networks and other stakeholders, to sustainably engage the younger generation in the development of innovative experiences for very small museums.

For example, by tapping into current developments, such as Do-It-Yourself (DIY) technology, Maker Movement, etc.



Playing with Urban Complexity

Cristina Ampatzidou

Play!UC investigates to what extent games can be used to support participatory processes in spatial development projects, focusing on people involved in community initiatives regarding sustainability and the energy transition.

The goal of Play!UC is to test three game prototypes, which address different topics in the field of Energy Transition, with a selected group of participants from Groningen. In this workshop, the participatory prototyping process of one of these games will be discussed.



Combining Physical and Virtual Participation

Dominique Ollivier and Guy Grenier

In Montreal a citizen-based movement asked for a consultation on how to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. This resulted in the mobilization of more than 3000 citizens through a combination of physical and virtual participation. It was an opportunity for innovation and for change in the way we think about public participation.



Smart Cycling Citizens

Gabriele Schliwa

My PhD research investigates how design-driven initiatives aimed at urban cycling can be embedded in urban governance to address citizens' needs.

It develops an understanding of citizenship within smart city initiatives and helps scholars as well as stakeholders from public, private and civic society alike to consider the implications of such practices.



Star(t) to shine

Ingrid Mulder

A six-step workshop series was co-designed to activate young adult dropouts' using the transformational role of digital fabrication.

The resulting workshop platform (output) serves as a best practice lowering the threshold of access to digital fabrication and learning new digital skills (outcome).

The students were active co-creators and learnt higher-order skills. Some students even had a mind-shifting experience, and transformed into engaged and successful individuals, being role models for their peers: 'stars shining bright in their local community'.



Image source: <http://creating010.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/EMstrk.jpg>

GovJam

International event series

GovJam is an event that applies the concept and energy of the Service Jam into the world of government and the public sector.

(Working around a common Theme, small teams meet at multiple locations, working for 48 hours on building innovative approaches and solutions towards challenges faced by the public sector. At the end of the two days, they upload their results and publish them for the world.)

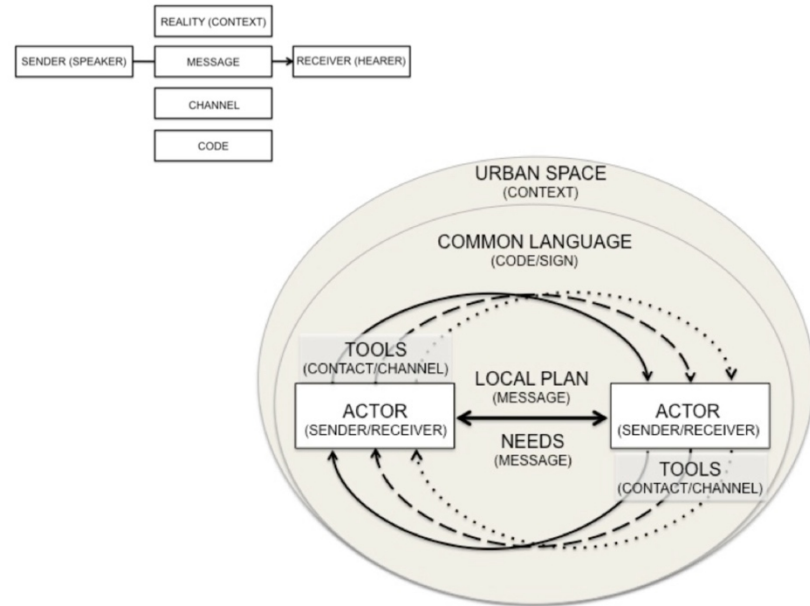


Image source: <https://flic.kr/p/o9aVbF>

Participation as Communication

Kasia Piskorek

Participatory processes, as well as the relation between citizens and local authorities are constantly becoming more complex. Not only citizens' awareness is increasing but also a multiplicity of available tools is intensifying the flow of information. To examine its effectiveness – communicology tools can be used.



Project U_Code

Kaspar Kazil

Project U_CODE aims to develop a new online platform for enabling expert planners to cocreate and communicate with large numbers of citizens in urban design to ensure a broad public acceptance of these large scale projects.



Future Society Forum

Lewis Greener

We wanted to create a space for discussing ideas of the future and how a “utopia” could look – We run workshops helping people to question what our future society will look like and what we want it to be like.

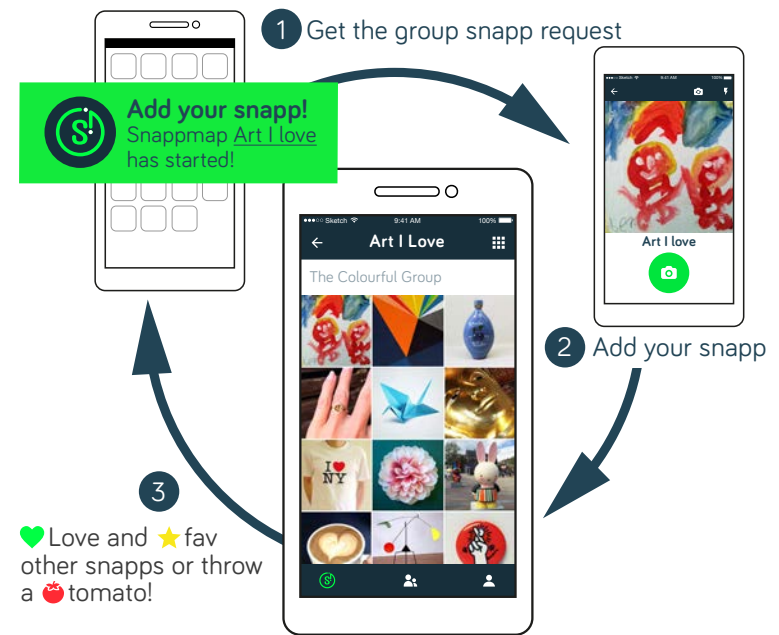


Learning through collaborative image creation

Marije ten Brink

The aim of this project is to show and learn how people can be engaged in critical reflection through collaborative image creation and learn from each others views on the world. Differences in perception about values, behaviors and life can be defined and understood.

This project follows a Research for Design and a Research through Design approach.



Comunes

Marta Sierra García

Comunes is a platform which connects young Spanish emigrants with their hometown neighbours.

It reinforces the ties between them and creates a mutual aid community that takes advantage of their members being outside Spain.

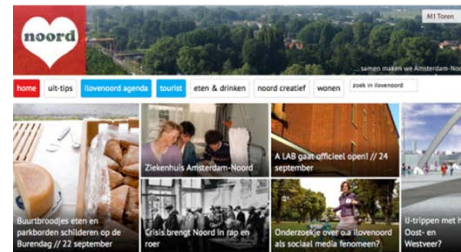
COMUNES



Amsterdam Neighborhood blogs

Pieter Breek

There are many digital platforms designed specifically aimed at influencing the associations connected to the neighborhood (Waal and Lange 2014). The aim is to uncover what motivates people to engage in collective processes of influencing the meaning of their neighbourhood as a place.



Colophon

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Photo credits:

Geertje Slingerland

Gerd Kortuem

Peter Kun

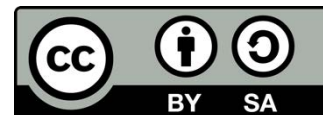


This workshop was made possible by the Open4Citizens project. The Open4Citizens project improves the meaningful use of open data supporting the engagement of urban communities.

More information: <http://open4citizens.eu>



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