

DIRECTION FOR INNOVATION

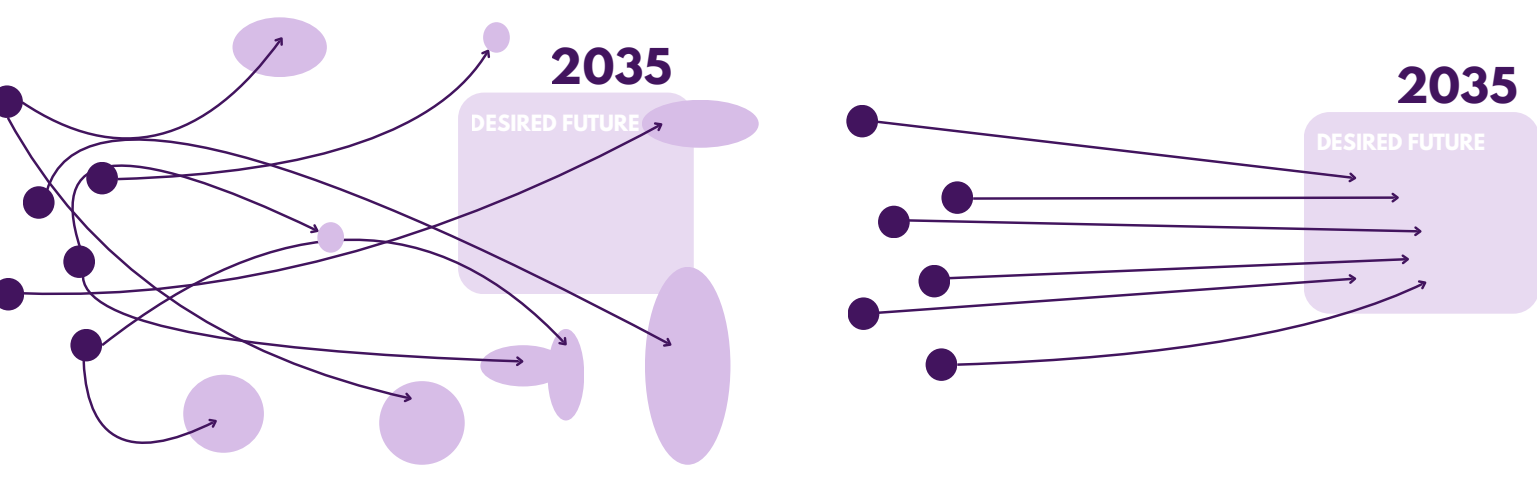
A strategic design tool for guiding future visioning in an executing governmental organisation



The Dutch Custodial Institutions Agency (DJI) is facing increasing pressure due to staff shortages, ageing infrastructure, limited detention capacity, and a growing number of detainees. To respond to these complex challenges, DJI is investing in innovation to become a more adaptive and future-proof organisation. This graduation project was conducted in collaboration with the Directorate of Innovation, a recently established directorate that is responsible for strengthening DJI's innovation capability.

Although innovation activities have been taking place within DJI for several years, innovation has only recently become a structural organisational function rather than a temporary programme. Therefore, this graduation project aimed to explore how innovation practices within DJI can be professionalised and to translate these insights into a concrete design intervention.

To answer this question, a mixed research approach was adopted, combining field researchc, desk research and research through design. The analysis of current innovation practices revealed a mismatch between DJI's ambition to innovate for the future, in line with the Three Horizons model, and its current innovation portfolio, which remains strongly focused on H1 projects, the so-called Proeftuinen. Consequently, future visioning emerged as a promising opportunity to strengthen and professionalise innovation practices within the organisation. This shifted the focus from innovation in general towards anticipatory innovation, a future-oriented approach aimed at dealing with uncertainty and long-term change. Further research identified future visioning as a valuable opportunity to strengthen innovation practices within DJI.



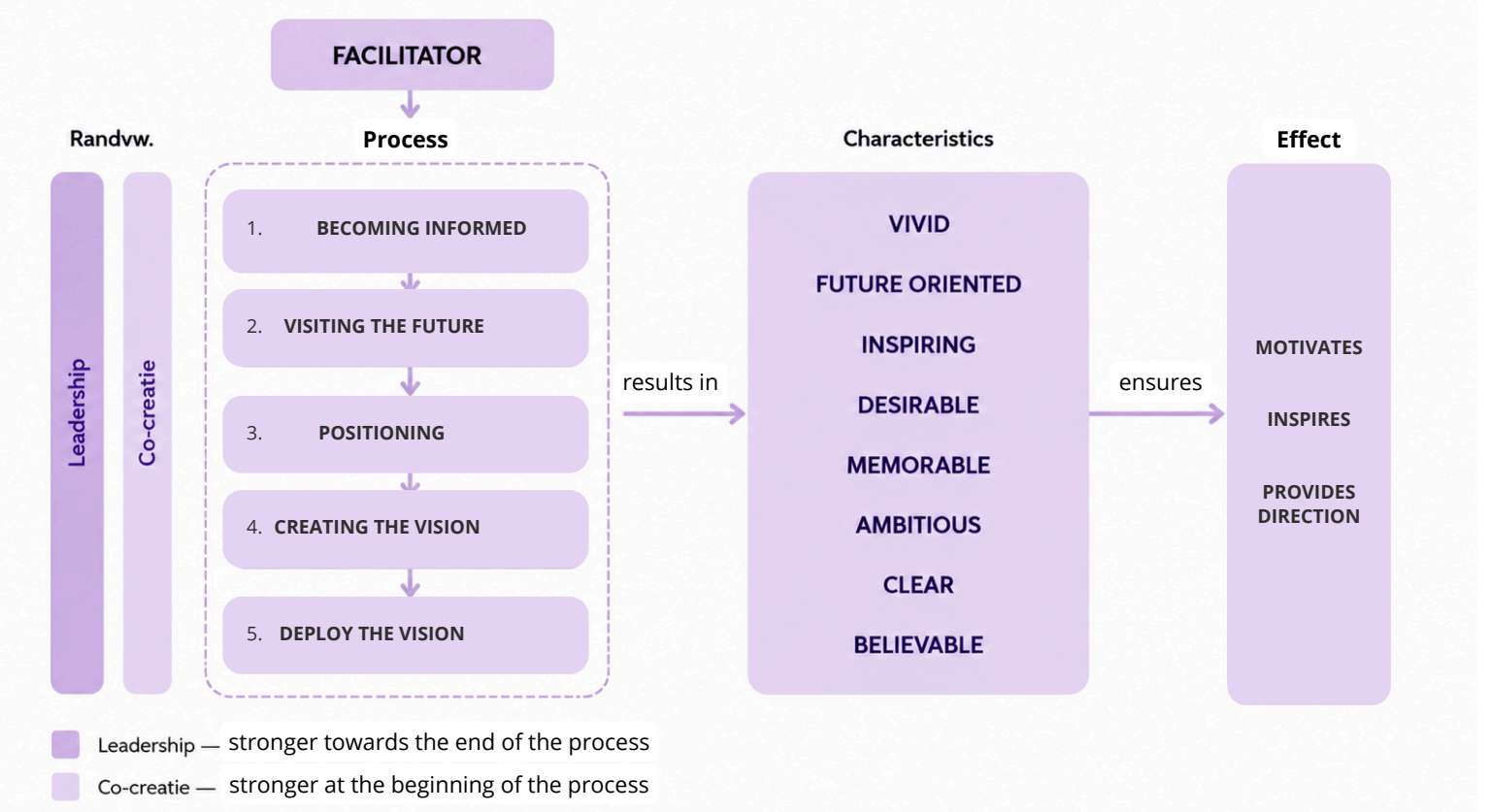
Literature suggests that creating a vision can provide direction for future innovation projects. *“Without a vision, confusion arises within the organisation”*. An integrated theoretical framework was developed, combining the characteristics of an effective future vision, the steps required to create one, and its role in guiding actions and decisions.



Field research revealed several barriers that currently hinder future visioning within the Directorate of Innovation, including a lack of a shared direction, vision illiteracy, unclear ownership and decision-making, and a strong execution-oriented culture.

Based on these findings, the Future Visioning Guide DJI was developed. The intervention aims to establish the conditions necessary for successful future visioning at the start of future-oriented innovation projects. It consists of two main components: a booklet that creates a shared understanding of future visioning and an appendix containing work packages and decision trees that support ownership and decision-making throughout the process. The intervention was iteratively evaluated with members of the Directorate of Innovation and was generally perceived as relevant and valuable. Participants particularly appreciated the clear overview of existing barriers, the structure provided by the intervention, and its potential to support future innovation projects.

This project demonstrates that professionalising innovation within an executive governmental organisation is not solely about introducing new innovation methods. Instead, it requires establishing a shared future direction and creating the conditions necessary to collectively shape and guide future-oriented innovation practices.



The Future Visioning Guide DJI is a guidebook consisting of two main components: a booklet and an appendix. The booklet aims to establish a shared understanding of future visioning by explaining its purpose, process, and underlying theory in an accessible manner. The appendix serves as a practical work package for the facilitator and contains four decision trees that support decision-making throughout the future visioning process. Below they are explained in more detail.

FUTURE VISION GUIDEBOOK DJI



→ BOOKLET

The booklet aims to increase vision literacy by providing a booklet that explains future visioning in an accessible and understandable way. The booklet is intended for both team members of the Directorate of Innovation and stakeholders involved in the process, while simultaneously serving as a reminder and reference tool for the facilitator. Its purpose is to establish a shared understanding of future visioning within DJI and within individual projects, ensuring that all participants have a common understanding of the process and its objectives.



→ APPENDIX

The appendix aims to strengthen ownership and decision-making by providing clear task descriptions and decision-making structures. This is achieved through work packages and decision trees for each step of the future visioning process. These materials help to define tasks, assign responsibilities to the appropriate stakeholders, and clarify decision-making authority throughout the process.

