

**INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE FOR THE  
SERVICE DESIGN COMMUNITY:  
CO-CREATION OF AN OPEN-  
RESOURCE TOOLKIT FOR  
STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS**



**Sara Vaghefian, Prof. Silvia Grimaldi in  
collaboration with MA Service Design  
students**

**BALEAP 2025**



# EAP ACTIVISM? THROUGH THE LENS OF PREFIGURATIVE FUTURES

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- An approach to social transformation rooted in principles like activism, community and solidarity to address problems born out of capitalist structures (Gerber, 2021).
- Taking action within the constraints of existing flawed systems rather than waiting for the system to change (Gerber, 2021).
- Enacting the socio-political structures that we want to see in the world, or building a structure "within the shell of the old." (Gerber, 2021 p. 59)



# WHAT IS SERVICE DESIGN?

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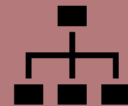
# TO SCRATCH THE SURFACE...



Service Design is a broad, collaborative discipline with multiple applications across various fields.



Service Design is the practice of designing services.



Service Design, more specifically, takes a human-centred and collaborative approach to addressing complex, often systemic problems, in order to improve a service for those that use it.



Service Design employs a range of methodologies flexibly, including systems thinking, design thinking and research through design, among others.

## IN A NUTSHELL...

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**“When you have two coffee shops right next to each other, and each sells the exact same coffee at the exact same price, service design is what makes you walk into one and not the other.”** (Interaction Design Foundation, no date).



# EXAMPLE STUDENT PROJECT: TRANSITION TALES

**WHAT?** A service that celebrates and supports neurodivergent designers in their journey from academic environments to professional spaces. Collaboration with UAL Library Services.

**WHY?** To reframe the conversation around neurodivergence by challenging common assumptions and encouraging meaningful interactions and shared understanding about neurodivergence.

**OUTPUT:** An interactive corner including a fidget library, where individuals can borrow sensory tools the same way they borrow books; tactile items; conversation cards.

Disha Rathi, MA Service Design 2023-24



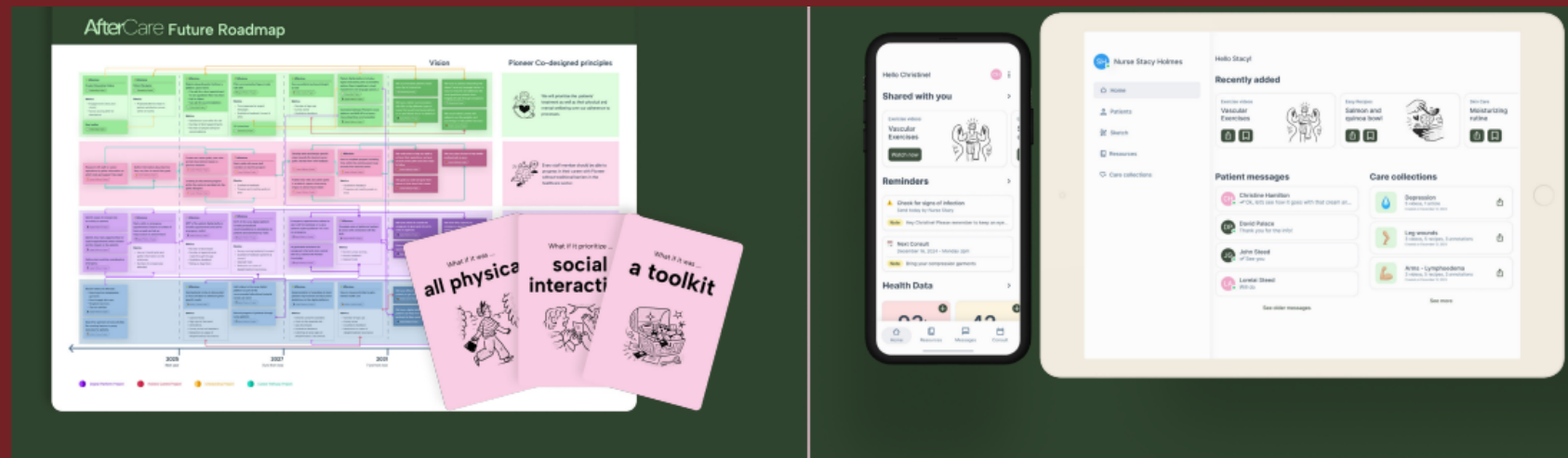
# EXAMPLE STUDENT PROJECT: AFTERCARE+

**WHAT?** A service that provides aftercare support for lymphedema and wound care patients in the NHS at the Pioneer Wound Healing & Lymphedema Centre.

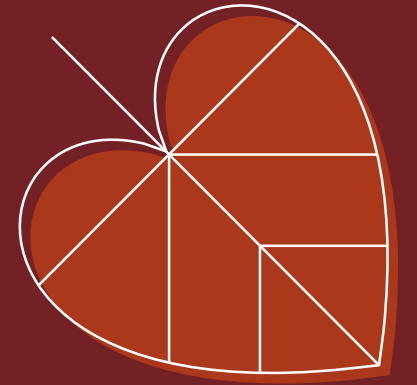
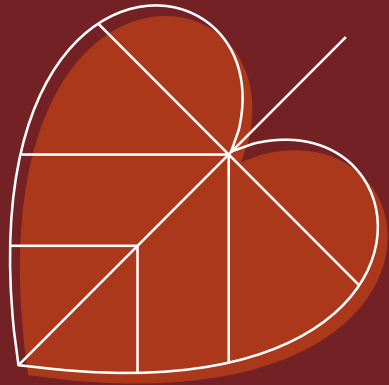
**WHY?** To improve efficiency, clarity and quality of care in a holistic way to ensure NHS patients' short and long-term needs are met. Working within the constraints of the UK public health system, this project offers a new model of transformative healthcare design within the NHS.

**OUTPUT:** A digital platform, where patients and nurses are supported throughout the care journey; future planning workshops to create sustainable long-term care solutions and enable short term service improvements.

**Jamilet Yalan Mendez, MA Service Design 2023-24**



# WHAT IS OUR PEDAGOGIC APPROACH?



# OUR COLLABORATIVE TEACHING APPROACH ON MASD

- Weekly, course-specific EAP classes throughout the year, tracking the main course syllabus unit by unit. We are part of the course, on the student timetable, teaching in their studio...
- Close collaboration and communication between main course team and EAP tutor.
- Engaging with students' learning histories and lived experiences and recognising them as valid social/cultural capital (Singh, 2017).
- Course team, and myself, employ Service Design problem solving methodologies to review, improve and iterate on our teaching practice to ensure students' evolving needs are met.
- Main course teaching and all course units are centred around social responsibility, inclusivity and Design Justice (Constanza-Chock, 2020), so this feeds into the language used during live projects and in written work.

# A PRACTICE UNDERPINNED BY DEMOCRATIC AND DIALOGIC PRINCIPLES

- We reject the 'deficit' approach to teaching language (McLaren 2011; Ramachandran, 2011) focusing instead on clear communication within a community of practice.
- For Art & Design: both "academic" and professional communities of practice.
- Community building (hooks, 1998): students' differences are accepted, valued and treated as a learning resource (Ryan, 2020).
- Dialogic approach (Freire, 1970) to teaching an international cohort, including negotiated EAP syllabus with students and flexibly responding to students' ongoing and emerging needs through pedagogic interventions.
- Ongoing evaluation and reflection on our teaching practice to develop creative ways of subverting traditional pedagogic paradigms to make academic and theoretical concepts and discourse more accessible to all students.

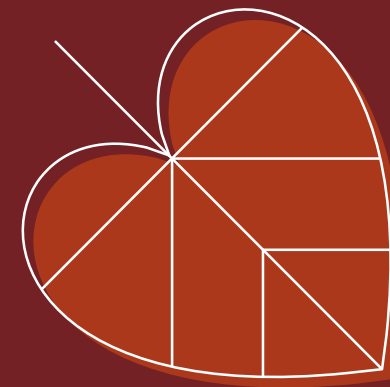
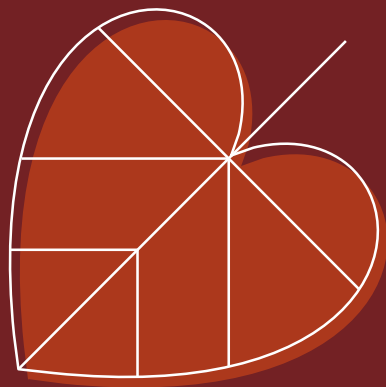
## THE INITIAL CONVERSATION WENT A BIT LIKE THIS...



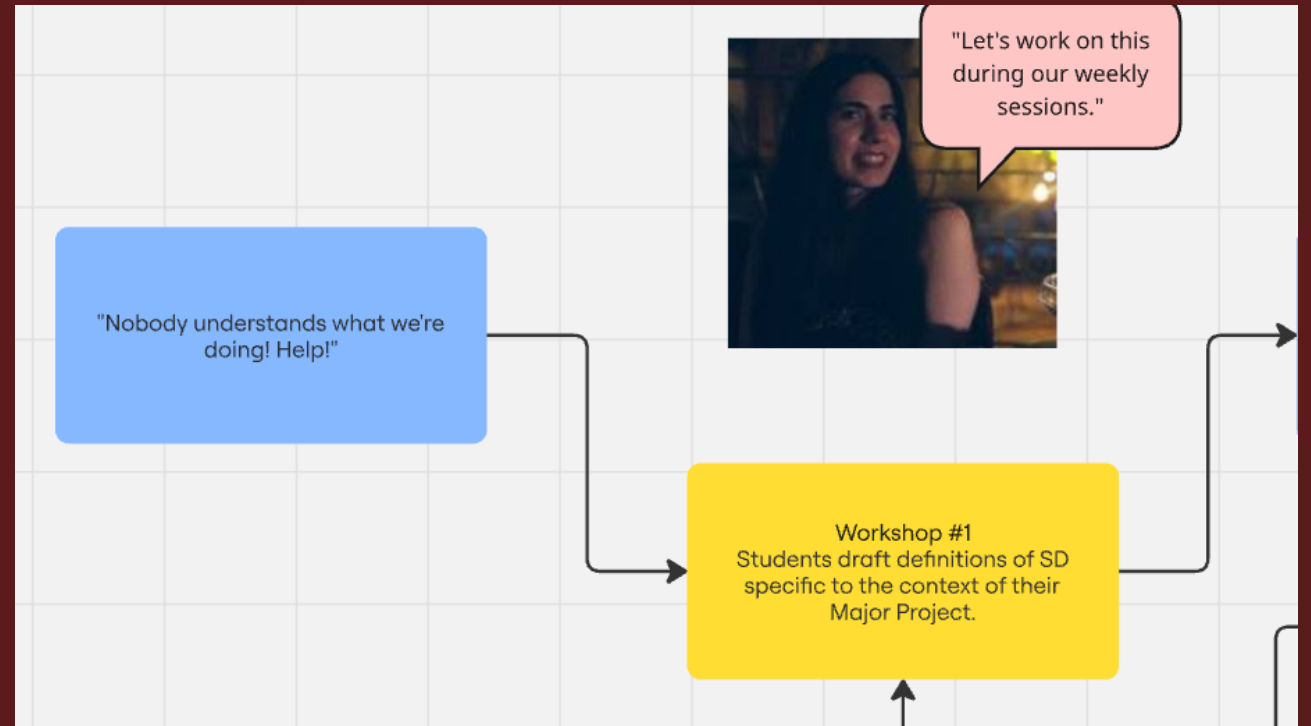
- **Sara: So how are things going with your major project? I know many of you were doing interviews last week. How did that go?**
- **Student: "You know, I think many of us have been finding that it's really hard to explain Service Design to partners and stakeholders who don't work in Design. And also members of the public. They don't understand what Design is and on this course we learn all the academic definitions, but how do we explain this in a simpler, more accessible way to people who have never heard of Service Design before?"**

PROJECT OUTLINE  
TAKES SHAPE...

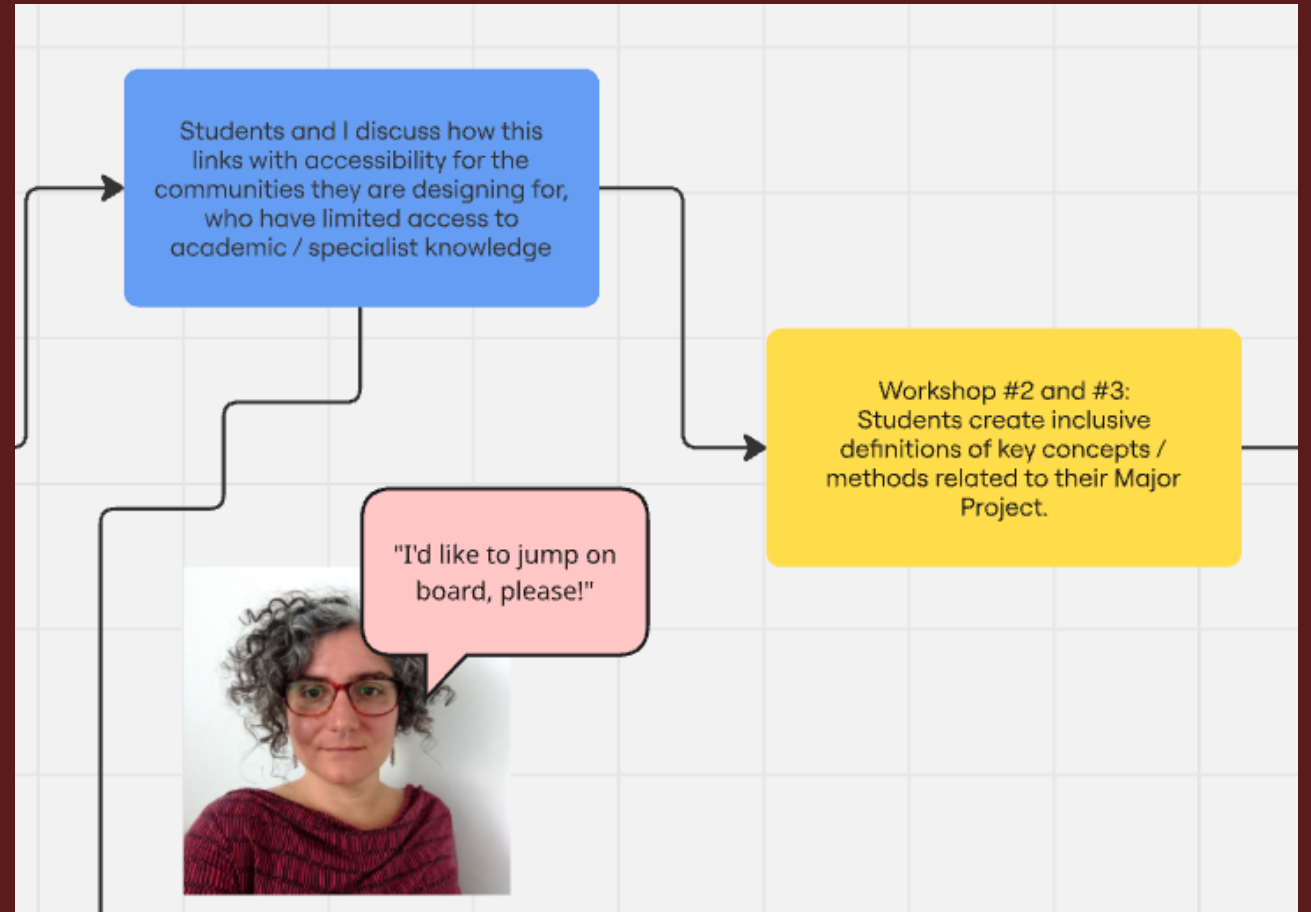
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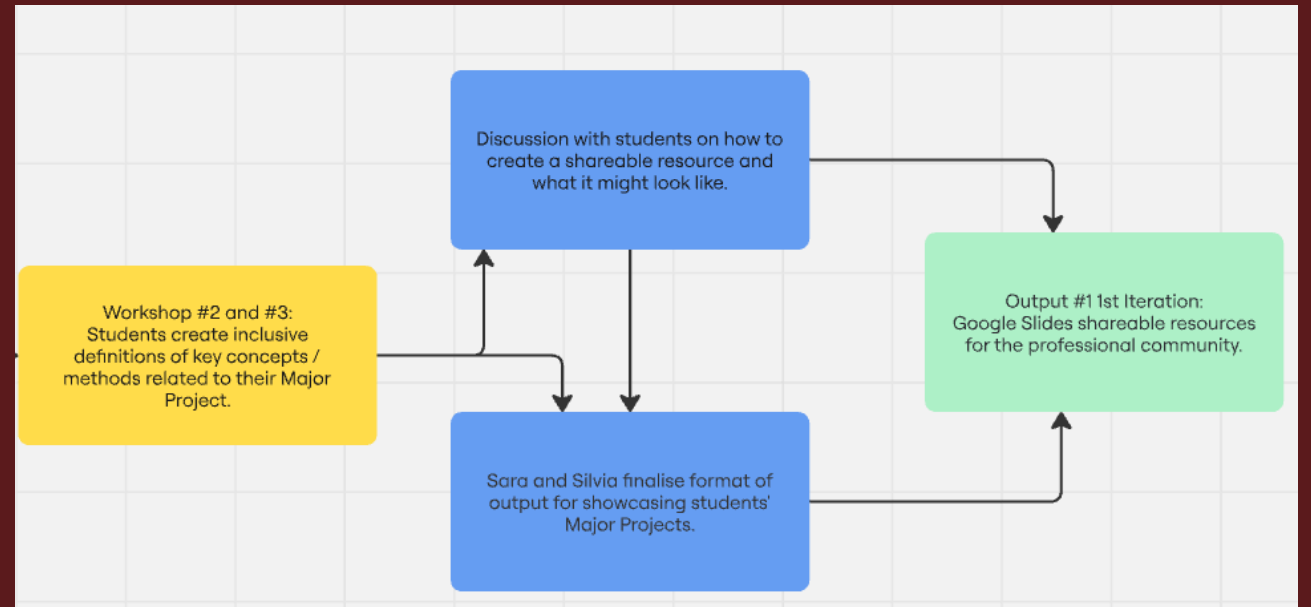
Responding to students' request for support with defining Service Design to a non-academic audience.



Further discussions lead to further workshops and integration with course tutor.

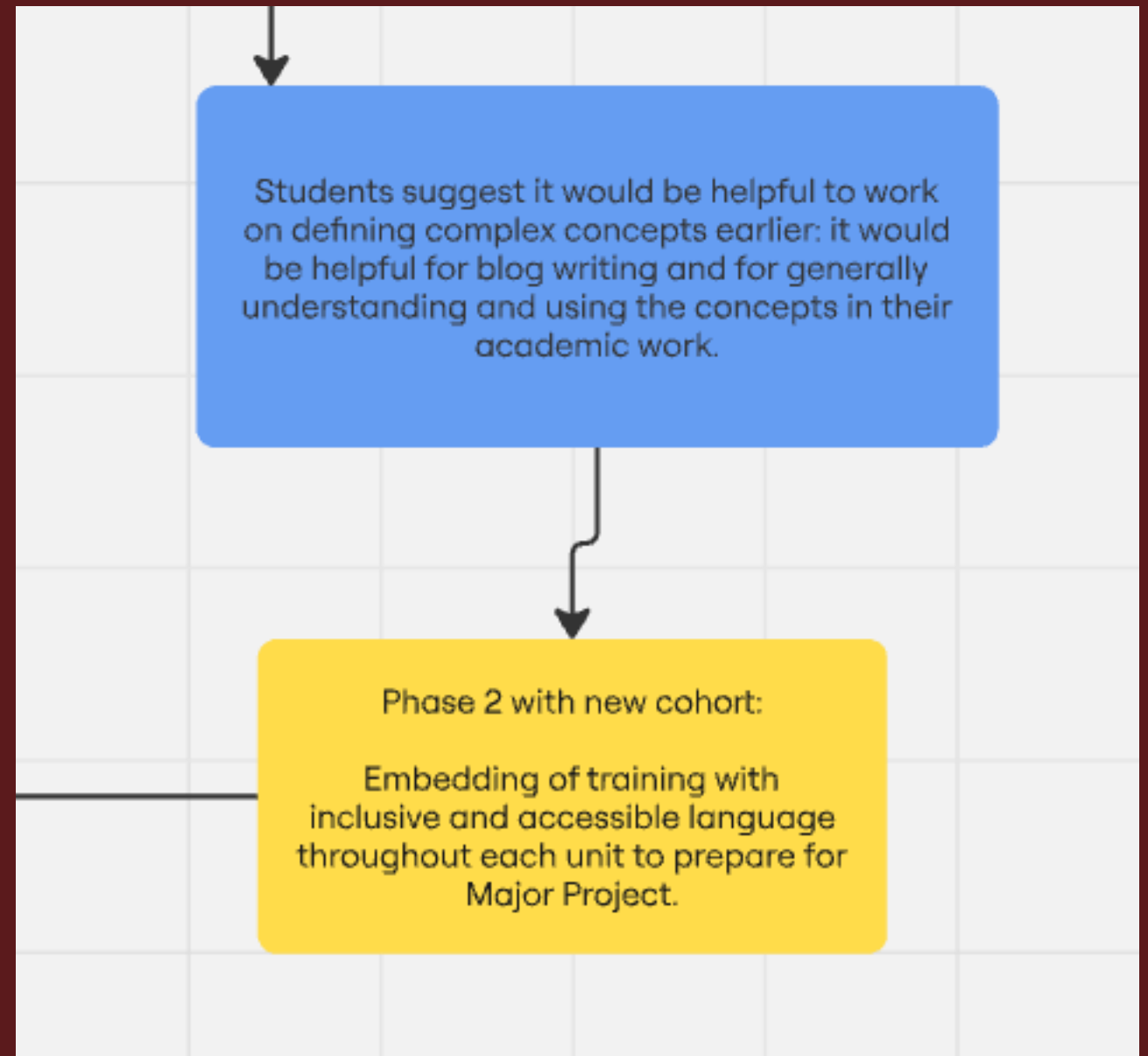


Further consultation with students leads to the creation of digital shareable sources to showcase students' major project work in an accessible way for the wider professional community.



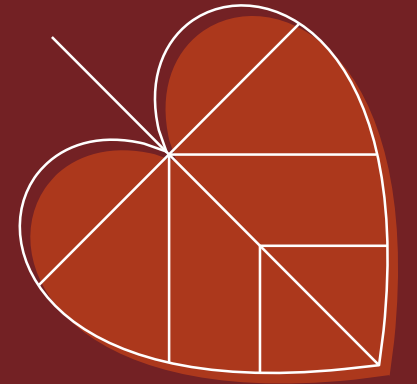
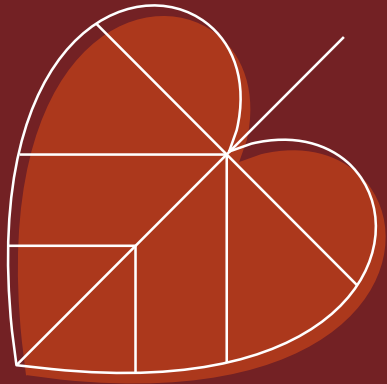
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Upon students' suggestion, we plan to embed this training from the beginning of the year for the incoming cohort. The training will span all units, culminating with the Major Project. This ensures we are supporting students to meet their academic and professional communication goals.



# PROJECT AIMS

- To support students to better understand and communicate complex theoretical concepts within both their academic and professional communities of practice.
- To support students to confidently make their language accessible and inclusive when working on live projects. This is especially important given that the course's alignment with notions of Design Justice and social responsibility require students to directly interact with vulnerable local communities.



# SLIDE TEMPLATES...

## Title of your Major Project, by Your Name

Explain your major project (your can summarise the project summary from your report or use the definition you developed in the first session with Sara). Accessible plain language please!

Insert an image or a collage of images (with white borders) in the box to the right →



Reference: Reference your report in Harvard style at the bottom

Caption: insert caption here



**Sara Vaghefian**  
3:17 PM Feb 7

You can use your definition of Service Design that you created with me to show what Service

[Show more](#)



# Term you're defining

Definition goes in this box

Change the image in the box on the right to your own image to show this concept (horizontal or vertical) →



Author: your name here

Caption: insert caption here

## References

In this column please list References. These should be theoretical texts that you used to inform your definition of this concept, books, academic papers, or others.

Reference in Harvard style please!

## Examples

In this column list a few examples of design projects (preferably in SD) that use this concept well, and may have informed how you define this (in particular when talking about methodology this is very relevant).

Reference in Harvard style please!



**Silvia**

3:12 PM Feb 7

question to everyone - do you think this could use an image?

[2 more replies](#)



**Sara Vaghefian**

10:43 AM Feb 26

I think similar for you, Jami - can you be more concise and cut down

EXAMPLE OF  
STUDENT MAJOR  
PROJECT SLIDES

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With special thanks  
to the MA Service  
Design 23-24  
cohort!



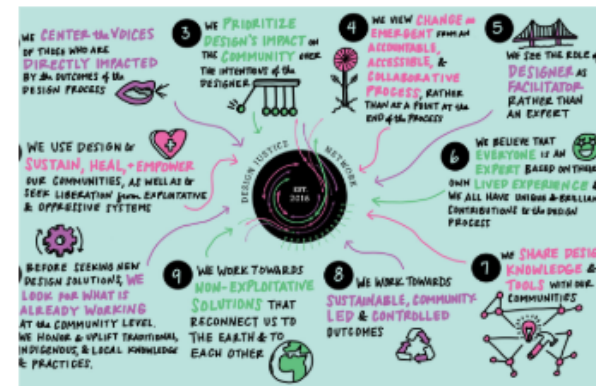
# BEFORE REVIEW...

## Design Justice

Design Justice is a transformative framework that challenges traditional, top-down design approaches by centering the voices, experiences, and needs of historically marginalized communities. Rather than designing *for* people, Design Justice advocates for designing *with* communities, ensuring that design processes redistribute power, foster inclusion, and promote social equity (Costanza-Chock, 2020). Rooted in social justice principles, this approach prioritizes participatory methods, ethical considerations, and long-term systemic change.

In the field of service design, Design Justice is increasingly recognized as a crucial methodology for creating equitable, accessible, and culturally responsive solutions. It moves away from extractive design practices and instead encourages co-creation, where those impacted by design decisions are actively involved in shaping them. By embedding Design Justice principles into service design research, practitioners can challenge oppressive structures, amplify underrepresented voices, and develop services that truly reflect the needs and aspirations of diverse communities.

Author: Disha Kamleshkumar Rathi



Design Justice Principles in Philanthropy Workshop: April 14th Report Back - Design Justice Network

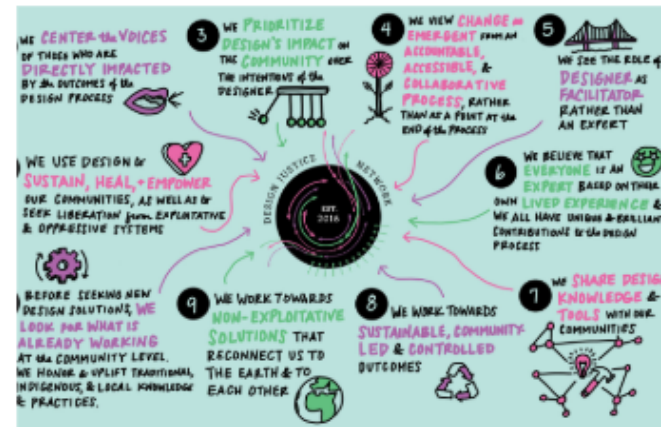
# AFTER REVIEW...

## Design Justice

**Design Justice** is about designing with communities rather than designing for them. In this way, it challenges the hierarchy of traditional design approaches by allowing the voices, experiences, and needs of communities to be listened to and addressed.

In the field of **Service Design**, **Design Justice** is seen as an important methodology for creating **equitable** and **accessible** solutions. It encourages **co-creation**, where those impacted by design decisions are actively involved in shaping them. By using **Design Justice** principles in service design research, designers can develop services that truly reflect the needs and aspirations of diverse communities.

Author: Disha Kamleshkumar Rathi



Design Justice Principles in Philanthropy Workshop: April 14th Report Back - Design Justice Network

# EXAMPLE OF WIP ACROSS OTHER MASD UNITS

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With special thanks  
to the MA Service  
Design 2024-25  
cohort!



# UNIT 3: GROUP ACTIVITY (DEFINING KEY THEORETICAL CONCEPTS)

## What is Pluriversal Design?

Pluriversal design is a design approach that recognizes and celebrates the diversity of cultures, languages, and ways of life. It is a design approach that is rooted in the belief that there is no single, universal way of life, and that all cultures and ways of life are equally valid and important.

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## What are Prefigurative Futures?

Prefigurative futures are futures that are being created in the present. They are futures that are being created in the present, and they are being created in the present. They are futures that are being created in the present, and they are being created in the present.

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## What are the Inner Development Goals?

The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) are a set of 10 goals that are designed to help individuals and organizations to become more resilient, more inclusive, and more sustainable. They are a set of 10 goals that are designed to help individuals and organizations to become more resilient, more inclusive, and more sustainable.

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## What is Systemic Design?

Systemic design is a design approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of all systems. It is a design approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of all systems, and it is a design approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of all systems.

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## What is Changemaking?

Changemaking is a design approach that is focused on creating positive change. It is a design approach that is focused on creating positive change, and it is a design approach that is focused on creating positive change.

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## What is Utopia as Method?

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# UNIT 3 GROUP ACTIVITY: DEFINING INNER DEVELOPMENT GOALS

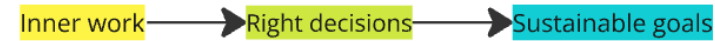
What are the Inner Development Goals?

- 1** BEING - Relationship to Self
- 2** THINKING - Cognitive Skills
- 3** RELATING - Caring for Others and The World
- 4** COLLABORATING - Social Skills
- 5** ACTING - Enabling Change



Explore Translations Download

In order to make the right decisions to reach our sustainability goals, we need to do inner work.



The **Inner Development Goals (IDGs)** provide individuals with the necessary tools to cultivate inner skills, fostering the mindset shifts essential for achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

By enhancing *self-awareness, resilience, and collaboration*, the IDGs empower people to drive meaningful change and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable world.

# UNIT 3: INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION TASK (LINKING KEY THEORETICAL CONCEPT TO THE STUDENT'S PROJECT)

The image displays a collection of 11 document thumbnails arranged on a grid background. The thumbnails are organized into three main categories, each with a label in a box on the left:

- Nurturing**: This category includes two thumbnails. The first is titled "Nurturing, Feeding, & Reeking" and has a callout number of 11. The second is titled "Self-Curiosity" and has a callout number of 6.
- Meditating**: This category includes three thumbnails. The first is titled "Meditation as a Path to Personalized Awareness" and has a callout number of 8. The second is titled "The Power of Meditation: Finding Purpose Beyond Consumption" and has a callout number of 3. The third is titled "Meditation: A Way to Gather Mental Energy" and has a callout number of 3.
- Fermenting**: This category includes three thumbnails. The first is titled "Outcasts in the Society" and has a callout number of 3. The second is titled "Fermenting - X..." and has a callout number of 6. The third is titled "Self-Reflection Through the Lens of the Metaphor" and has a callout number of 2.

Additional text on the grid includes "Nurturing--Y..." at the top, "Frame 1" between the Meditating and Fermenting sections, and "Fermenting - X..." between the Fermenting and Meditating sections.


# UNIT 3: INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION TASK (LINKING KEY THEORETICAL CONCEPT TO THE STUDENT'S PROJECT

Resolve



**Sara Vaghefian**

10 Mar, 09:49

I think you've done well to be concise in your definitions, but you need to take some more time (use more words, sentences) to break these concepts down bit by bit. A bit more detail before you make the connection helps to not give the impression that you are simplifying these concepts. 

Leave a reply. Use @ to mention.



# EVALUATION & FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

- Pilot was short-lived – lots to build on.
- Engagement affected after student graduation.
- Further iterations needed to reach final version of Google Slides output.
- Further development to be presented at internal UAL conference.
- Track progress and monitor impact on current student cohort to ensure needs and learning outcomes are being met.
- Explore further with students the overlap between academic and professional discourse, as the lines are blurry - students need to get comfortable with this fuzziness!
- Establish what the open resource will look like for sharing good teaching practice in this area – adapt from the WIP being done on the Miro board.

# REFERENCES

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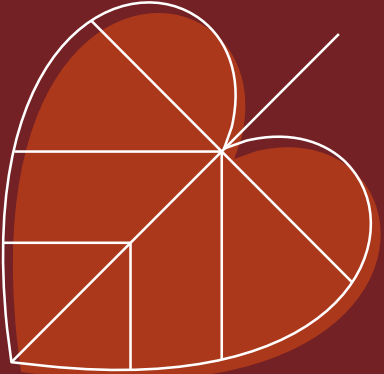

# REFERENCES

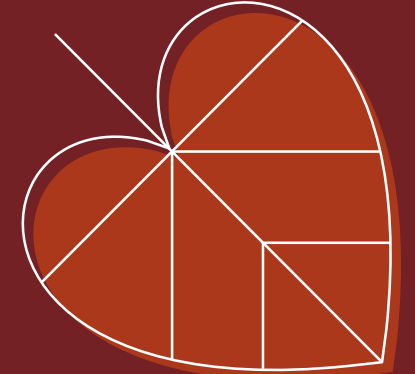
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# WITH THANKS TO MY COLLABORATORS...

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- **MA Service Design Class of 2023-24, London College of Communication (LCC), UAL.**
  - **MA Service Design Class of 2024-25, LCC, UAL.**
  - **Special thanks to project co-lead, Prof. Silvia Grimaldi, LCC, UAL.**
  - **Special thanks to MA Service Design students, Jamilet Yalan Mendez, Disha Rathi, Sakshi Mathur and Divya Elizabeth Charlie.**
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LET'S CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION.  
OVER TO YOU...



REFLECTIONS?



THOUGHTS?



QUESTIONS?



PROVOCATIONS?