Intention-setting with reflexivity and introspection: a driving force of more ethical design practice

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Abstract

This work opens up many questions around ethics and design, individual and collective responsibility. Firstly, it was taken on with the aim to deep dive into the question of why ethics seems to be a highly debated topic, yet when it comes to practice it is oppressed to the "gut-feeling" level. Though this instinctive nature of ethics is valuable, by lifting it to the level of consciousness and treating ethics as something intentional, we argue design processes can become more conscious. With it, more sustainable solutions can be built. Additionally, this thesis discusses how bias awareness, reflexivity, and introspection can support forming a path to more ethically-driven and sustainable futures. It looks into what makes up for an ethically led process, with a deeper and more case-sensitive understanding, which goes beyond labelling solutions and approaches in design as "right" or "wrong".

Throughout the development of this project, several professionals were engaged to gain comprehensive insight into the topic that is ethics and design. As a result, an intention-setting activity in a form of a design workshop has been developed to support (not only) service design practitioners in the journey to becoming more responsible, ethically driven professionals.

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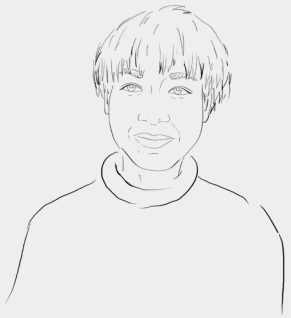

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Abstract

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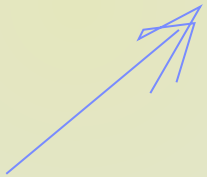

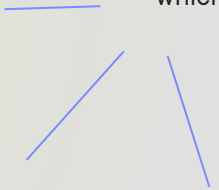

From Julia

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my beloved grandmother, Barbara Borkowska Szulc who sadly will not manage to witness my graduation anymore. I thank her for being my mentor and my role model throughout this entire journey and my education abroad. Who always said *'Don't worry - I am sure will make it'*. That is indeed what happened.

A huge thank you to my entire family - parents, siblings, my fiancé and my friends. It is uplifting to be surrounded by people who believe in me, challenge me and support me no matter what.

From Sara

I would like to thank my family and close friends for their unconditional support, which at times manifests in asking the right and challenging questions.

Adopted Definitions

01. virtue ethics

When decision-making and actions are driven by the best intention, one that honours humans, beings and individual values alike.
It relies on the people's moral character, one with the power of assessing autonomy, transparency, and safety.

- (Aristotle, 2013; Steen, 2021)

02. human-centered

Consideration of humans as part of a bigger ecosystem, as opposed to the epicentre of the universe.

- (Norman, 2023; Steen, 2020)

03. introspection

Deepening the understanding and self-investigation of one's thoughts, feelings, needs, and reasoning.

04. reflexivity

A process of scrutiny supported by mindful reflections on one's perspectives, thoughts, feelings, needs, reasoning, and identifying reasons of their existence.

- (Suddaby et al., 2016)

05. sustainability

In this thesis, sustainability is defined, as a desirable future that is life-centred and conscious of all living beings.

When referring to sustainability, it should be understood as a future that is sustainable, human-centred - placing humans on a scale.

06. responsibility

A state in which one's actions and decisions have an impact on their surroundings.

Because of said responsibility, a person becomes and can be held accountable for the implications of their decisions and actions.

07. bias

Conscious and/or subconscious mental shortcuts causing distorted, subjectified vision of reality.
It is based on individual and societal experiences, background, and other, acquired preconceptions.

- (Wilke & Mata, 2012)

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1. Introduction & Motivation

Design and ethics - the first, often associated with the practice, while the latter with theory, they might seem distant from one another, yet are closely connected (Papanek, 1972). With technological solutions rapidly evolving, and economic and political systems shaping society in new ways, ethical implications and the role and responsibility of designers is a highly debated topic (Felton et al., 2013). Inevitably, the designer is not only the maker but more so a creator that carries personal responsibility for their work, design is more than creating pretty objects or services to promote consumerism (Norman, 2023; Findeli, 1994). On the contrary, ethics is not only about defining what is 'objectively' good or bad, as it is also not a conversation that is outdated (Papanek, 1972; Friedman et al., 2002; Moholy-Nagy, 1947). The discourse arches from the mid-the 20th century to our current age and time.

Nowadays, the design field is blooming in conversations when it comes to ethical considerations, where the debate is widely present in both the academic and professional worlds. Especially with artificial intelligence, automation, and computer technologies emerging, a lot of questions are to be asked regarding the implications of ethics in the digital realm, for example - algorithms, data privacy, accessibility, and such. (Peters et al., 2020; Burr & Floridi, 2020; Sharma, 2019; Chivukula et al., 2020). On the other hand, a notable share in the discourse is dedicated industrial design, with a conflicting principle of creating for people, which can at the same time mean designing against the planet and ecology (Fry, 2009).

While these are pressing issues, we believe they are not the root of the problem. We see these matters as the outputs of design processes and decisions. Focusing on only finding a solution to them would mean putting a bandage on a cut, without understanding the cause of the sore. We believe the origin of said sore is the following: the unaware practice and non-human-centred focus of projects. We believe individual responsibility plays a key role in the surface of dark-pattern-like solutions, and with awareness and a being-centered focus, we might get a step closer to a more ethical future. Therefore, this thesis aims to explore the role of the designer as an individual with an emphasis on their internal qualities, biases, and preconceptions and how they can impact the design outcomes. It looks into what makes up for an ethically led process, as well as what can be done to bring more ethics into design, with a deeper and more case-sensitive understanding, which goes beyond labelling solutions and approaches in design as 'right' or 'wrong'.

There are still disciplines, such as Service Design, that in our view, have been addressed less explicitly, as to how can ethics play a role in it. Surely, as it feeds from a variety of design and social science fields and has the potential to utilize both physical and digital elements, it has the capacity to be ethical. Yet, we believe that its complexity places a higher emphasis on the need to lead Service Design processes with caution.

As Service Design by its definition is characterized as a process of close collaboration with users and stakeholders (Stickdorn et al., 2018a) there is still a lot to discuss when it comes to purely human errors in thinking and their perspectives that can ultimately result in harmful design outputs.

Therefore, this thesis aims to contribute to the endeavours of tackling the wicked challenge that is the development of a responsible and conscious design processes driven by people. The main focus of the work revolves around the individual as a single person, but also as someone part of a group, design team, and part of society. The aim of this approach lies in our belief that introspection and reflexivity as a coherent part of personal practice are key to creating more sustainable solutions which consider humans and other beings alike.

Based on the issues presented in the introduction of this document, the motivation of this work is to provide a possible solution to marry ethics and design. To provide a tangible tool to designers, which can support their journey in becoming more aware, reflexive practitioners. The task to take on in this work is finding a way, to make ethics “reachable” and something that can be interwoven in the design process from the start.
To explore this topic the adopted approach to the thesis scope will be discussed in the following section.

1.1 Thesis scope - Project context

To place this thesis in a context, this section will in summary present its scope.

- As mentioned in the introduction, the link between Service Design and ethics had not been overly popular. Nevertheless, we believe it to be fundamentally important to address, and hope for this material to contribute to the discourse with a fresh perspective and hopefully, an interesting take on how ethics can be exercised in design processes. Additionally, as Service Design is a discipline we know and that we have been studying, it is naturally relevant to place this particular field at the core of the investigation.

- In the coming chapters, the importance of considering ethics all throughout the design, as opposed to a one-time-only manner will be discussed in more detail. However, for the need of this paper, the overall focus will ultimately lay at the start of the process. This is firstly, to ensure a more thorough investigation given the master's thesis span, but also, to allow the development of a more detailed solution for the selected phase and bring more concrete examples of application.

- The solution developed for this thesis, as well as the overall literature review and research, aims on supporting Service Design professionals in becoming more aware and responsible, however, it is not limited to only this discipline. The considerations that are contained in this thesis can serve as inspiration for other disciplines, even outside of design.

- Zooming into Service Design specifically and considering a variety of sectors in which it can be exercised, what shall be stressed is that this thesis does not intend to limit the study to a selected professional segment. Service Design project exists in both the public sector that often deals with topics of high sensitivity, eg. healthcare and other topics of societal nature, as well as private, that can at times be highly commercialized. Even though we perceive both of them as relevant fields to incorporate an ethics-first mindset, they all bring case and context-specific implications and limitations. Hence, it stays within one's own assessment where this work and its outcome could be helpful at scale, as well as how feasible such an approach is.

- Nowadays, with new innovative, digital solutions emerging, so is a discussion on the ethics of these solutions (see introduction). Although we find the topic of ethics in the context of e.g.. computer technology, automation, artificial intelligence, and Human-Computer Interaction highly relevant, these will not be discussed with respect o the scope of this thesis.

2. Methodology

2.1 Process Framework

This thesis process had been led with the support of the Double Diamond Design process framework by the Design Council (2004). This model serves as a reference point and a 'compass' in guiding through the activities, interventions, as well as decisions to make in the process from start to finish. It is segmented into 4 sections, that respectively represent and make room for relevant initiatives to take place. This is also how this thesis document has been structured.

Firstly, the **Discover** phase is dedicated to a divergent exploration of the given topic. In the case of this thesis, in the Discover phase, chosen literature on design and ethics will be analysed and later complemented by primary data collection in the form of expert interviews and a short survey.

Secondly, in the **Define** phase, the relevant findings will be taken into consideration and analysed to identify patterns and opportunities that helped in narrowing down the focus of this investigation and formulating the main research question.

What follows is a **Develop** phase, focused on delving deeper into the main thesis subject and creating opportunities, ideas, and inspiration for the solution development.

Last but not least, in the **Deliver** phase, the final concept will be introduced to the reader as well as tested with users to measure its feasibility and potential for success.

What can be overlooked, as for the visual representation of the Double Diamond process, it is its iterative nature. Any design process shall not, and is not linear in practice, and ought to facilitate iterations and re-evaluation of the material all throughout. This thesis had been following just this logic, including multiple reiterations of focus, relevant activities as well as its outcomes and conclusions drawn.

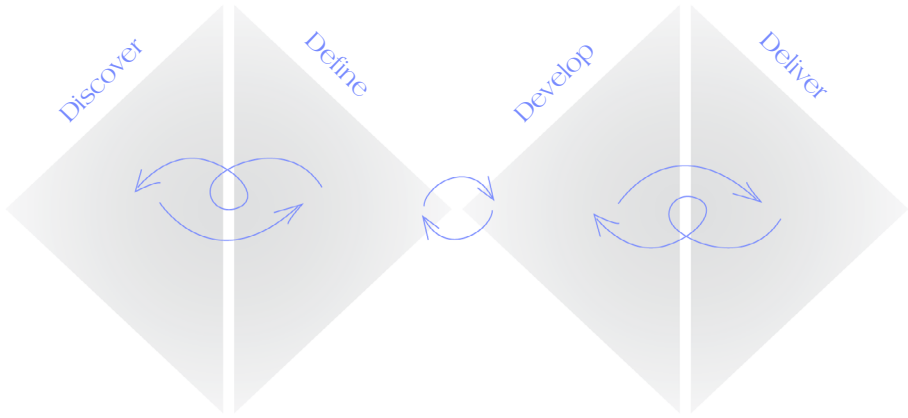


Figure 1: Double Diamond Design Process Model.

From Design Council. (2004). Framework for Innovation–Design Council. https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-resources/framework-for-innovation/

2.2 Research Design

This chapter discusses the research design undertaken in this thesis.
In it, we wish to briefly describe the purpose of the work, introduce the research question, and the overall research approach. Additionally, data collection methods, and data analysis methods will be brought up.

Research Question & Thesis Purpose

The purpose of this study is to provide a possible solution to promote ethical design practice, by utilising the power of reflexivity and introspection as tools for self-reflection to uncover personal biases and preconceptions. To achieve this outcome, the thesis aims to answer the following research question:

„How might we create an intention-setting activity for (service) design professionals that would support their bias identification through reflexive and introspective thinking from the start of the design process?"

Research Approach and Data Collection Methods

In this thesis, a qualitative approach will be applied to collect and analyze data. It will be fulfilled by a literature review as secondary research, primary data collection, as well as participatory activities (Hartson & Pyla, 2018; Sanders & Brandt, 2010).

- **Secondary data collection -** will be carried out, which purpose will be fulfilled by the literature review at different stages of the project. First, to open up the field and understanding the key professionals who formed what we know today, and how we think about ethics and design. The second literature review will be placed during the design process, as an iteration and a more focused review on the bias as one of the defined hindering forces against a more ethically driven practice.

- **Collection of qualitative information survey -** will take place to collect data from participants about their view on the role of ethics and design.

- **Small interventions to gather prospective user insights -** with the aim to discuss their practices to be „ethical" based on their own definition. Furthermore, to understand their preferences in the context of this thesis, ultimately, to gather their elicit feedback.

- **Semi -structured interviews -** will be conducted with selected practitioners or experts in the field of service design, ethics and closely connected disciplines. The aim will be to gather more in-depth information about their experiences and perspectives on the field, patterns they recognize in their work concerning ethics and it will also focus on their perception of today's challenges when it comes to personal awareness, being intentional as a professional, and an ethics driven design process.

- **Ideation workshops for solution development** - will be developed to ideate and open a discussion about possible solutions to the thesis project, to uncover perspectives hidden from us in the midst of the process. These workshops will be conducted in a collaborative setting and will involve brainstorming and discussion of potential solutions.

- **Prototype testing in a workshop setting -** with several groups of participants, a testing and feedback session will be carried out in the form of a workshop, to gain feedback on the design solution. Additionally, to consider and implement the given feedback to improve the solution.

- **Brainstorming sessions -** Throughout the project, several meetings were carried out with peers to discuss the progress and to brainstorm on the most beneficial steps to take. Furthermore, to get feedback and gain insight into other perspectives when it comes to the project's focus and its process.

The research design described previously is classified as qualitative utilising a combination of secondary and primary data collection, together with participatory design activities. As the main goal is to create an actionable solution, the choice of qualitative data collection fits the purpose - according to Stickdorn et al. (2018) "Insights from qualitative research are often more actionable than mere quantitative data as they provide answers to the "why" questions."

When it comes to levels of participation, we place the activities in this thesis at level 4: Consultation, which is defined as the Preliminary Stage of Participation, based on the work of Wright and Block (2007) in Bustamante Duarte et al. (2018).

In conclusion, this research design aims to gather a comprehensive understanding of the role of ethics in design and the challenges practitioners face in integrating ethics into their design process, the role professional awareness, and how reflexivity and introspection might promote more ethical practice.

2.3 Thesis Limitations

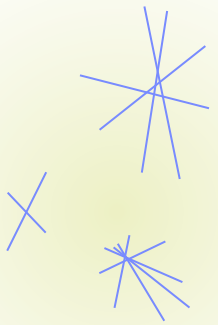
While the research design outlined above is expected to provide an understanding of the role of ethics in design and the challenges practitioners face, there are some limitations to the research approach and data collection methods that should be acknowledged.

One limitation is that the research design relies heavily on qualitative data collection methods, which may limit the validity and reliability of the findings Bjørner (2015). The sample size for each data collection activity is relatively small, which may not be representative of the larger population of design practitioners. Furthermore, the data collected through qualitative methods may be influenced by the biases and perspectives of the participants and the researchers conducting the data collection. The participants of the carried out activities were though mostly designers and many of them partake in the Service Systems Design (SSD) education at Aalborg University (AAU). With shared educational backgrounds, their views might be influenced. The participants were all residents of the European Economic Area, that among other things, can affect their personal views as well as their understanding of societal values.

Another limitation is that the research design relies on self-reported data from participants, which may be subject to social desirability bias (King & Bruner, 2000). Participants may provide responses that they believe are socially acceptable, rather than their true beliefs and behaviours. This aspect should be considered both regarding data collection, but also due to the nature of the final solution developed in the thesis project.

Finally, the research design does not include a quantitative data collection method, which would allow for statistical analysis of the data and a better understanding of the prevalence of certain issues or challenges.

Despite these limitations, the data collected through the research design will provide valuable insights and recommendations for developing a solution that may support a more ethical design practice in the future.



Literature review

Benchmarking

Expert Interviews

Survey

Discover Phase

3. Literature Review

The literature review is driven by the aim to set up an objective that supports this thesis in offering an actionable and tangible solution to foster a more conscious ethical design process. Indeed, the main topic of this work revolves around the question area of ethics, the personal responsibility of designers, and reflexivity to incorporate an 'ethics-first' mindset into the design process. Our "why" is connected to the motivation of this thesis, which is based on the fact that ethics in design practice is something that needs bigger attention and that its importance can be hardly argued with (Steen, 2021; Papanek, 1972; Stahl, 2014).

The question of **'What makes the design process ethical'?** serves only as a light focus, which at this early and malleable stage is only to keep track of the theme of choice.

There are 3 angles from which we aim to open up the topic of ethics in design and how to foster a more virtue ethics-driven process, which we see is in line with a more responsible and reflexive design practice. This is opposed to a consequentialist approach - a moral theory, which defines ethics based on the consequences of a solution, the outcome of one's action (Alexander & Moore, 2021; Hursthouse & Pettigrove, 2022; Sinnott-Armstrong, 2022; Steen et al., 2021).

The following 3 angles will be discussed throughout the chapters from differing points of view:

Step 1. We will introduce our definition of the ethical design process and its components. We will furthermore, discuss why it is important to build a more ethics-driven design process and how the individual can take action to enable it.

Step 2. Reflexivity as a principle will be discussed as the practice and approach to a more consciously ethical design process. Additionally, who is the "reflexive practitioner" and why it is important that the individual is the conscious leader of both the process and their self-reflexive practice.

Step 3. As reflexivity often does not come naturally - the chapter for it will be opened up, both from the designer's side together with connection to the design process. In our view, reflexivity is tied to practising conscious design, therefore, is essential to be investigated in this work.
Finally, chosen people who form and lead the scene of ethical design practice will be pointed out, next to a selected range of actionable initiatives which foster an ethics-first mindset and reflexive practices.

Exploring the field

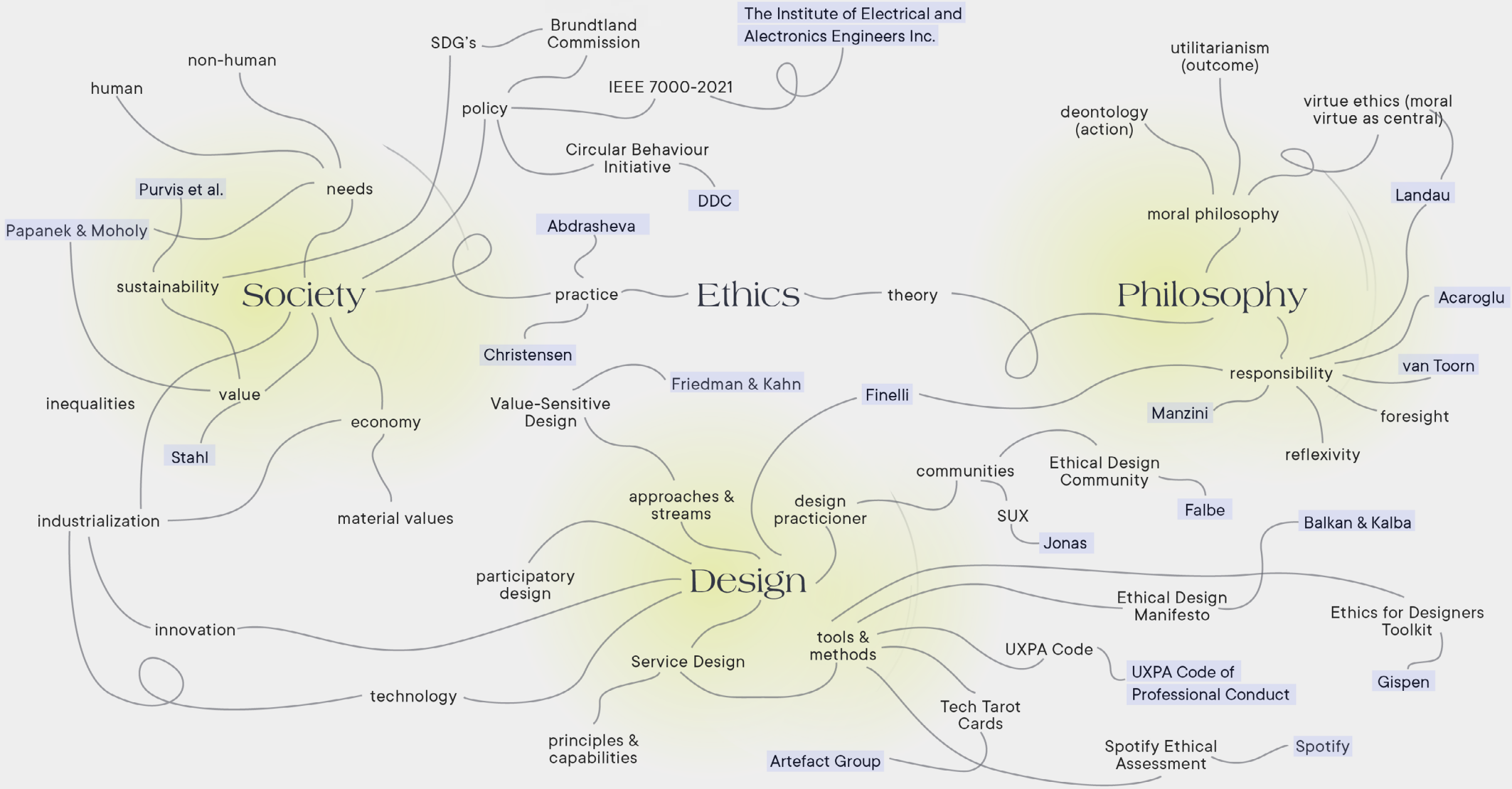


Figure 2: Mind Map representing the explored topics & literature

3.1 Defining the Role of Ethics in Design

The topic of this work came to be from the general perception of the design process and the recognition of the role of the individual in it. This observation is supported by the work of Papanek and Moholy, who we consider key figures in identifying the designer as an individual - someone, who has a remarkable potential to shape human lives (Moholy-Nagy, 1947; Papanek, 1972, 1995).

3.1.1 Types of ethics in design

When it comes to ethics and design, the topic seems to be much more complicated, than taking a moral absolutist stand in it, as it is more elaborate than, “right” or “wrong”. It is important to understand how layered the practice of design is, and how much the outcome of design can impact those interacting with it. What also should be kept in mind, is that utilitarian approaches (see Table 1, p.12), often shifts the outcome of design to be harmful or negligent of humans, other living beings, or the environment. Being human-centred, (which will be discussed in Section 3.1.3) is in Papanek’s view just as important as the usefulness of the design itself (Papanek, 1995).

While there are many branches of ethics, Ethical Design is virtue ethics driven. We base this statement on Steen’s work (2021), where he establishes that virtue ethics might be one answer to being more ethical in design. In the following table, we define Virtue Ethics, Utilitarianism as a Consequentialist ethics, and Deontology as an Absolutist ethics to differentiate between their function, and underline why is the first one considered the most suitable to lead ethical design processes (Aristotle, 2013; Kant, 2013; Mill, 2013). With it, we aim to provide reasoning as to why virtue ethics has the capacity to be human-centred, and in Section 3.1.3. we will provide the arguments why the human-centred design approach is essential for a brighter future and also give a more nuanced reading of this design approach - opening up about why it is more than human.

In the table presented on page 12 (Table 1), we showcase how the three main ethics can alter the focus of design, and how they differ in what drives the designer in their practice. From Deontology, Utilitarianism, and Virtue Ethics, we believe the last one should be the driver of a designer’s practice.
Virtue ethics may contribute to a more ethical design practice and outcome, than for example absolutist or consequentialist values, while not saying the latter two hinder it, rather, their singular presence may shift their focal point from human-centred values and considerations and moves them towards a more performance-based focus (Ethics 101 for Designers —, n.d.).

When it comes to performance-based focus, it is to be understood - by Western and mainly European values, that it often steps away from the true focus of the design, ones that should be in center, so the process and the outcome can be sustainable, aware, and respectful towards all beings (Papanek, 1995).

This does not mean that a designer’s work should neglect utilitarian or even deontological values. Rather, their motivation as an individual should be virtue led, as it is inherently tied to the desire to better the world.

Naturally, as it is tied to virtue ethics, we believe that the responsibility of the designer should not be underestimated. Virtue ethics can require continuous reflection and an internal search from the designer to find the best solution. Though this stand is not unique to us, nonetheless, we believe that individual and collective responsibility, reflexivity, and the role of awareness connected to ethical considerations in design are highly important and should be inherent to the design profession (Papanek, 1972).

Said values are also in line with what Aristotle defined as “virtue in life”, which is to complete one’s purpose, a function that is proper to humankind (Aristotle, 2013). Virtue is also how Steen understands ethics in design, which is the most beneficial to be utilised during the design process (Steen et al., 2021).
When it comes to the implementation of ethics into the design process, there are no set-in-stone, universal approaches to do so, but in our view, supported by Steen’s work, virtue ethics can be considered as a promising rule of thumb, as it is tied to human-centeredness.

Type	Definition	What it entails in design practiceprocesses
Virtue Ethics	“It may, initially, be identified as the one that emphasises the virtues, or moral character, in contrast to the approach that emphasises duties or rules (deontology) or that emphasises the consequences of actions (consequentialism)” - Hursthouse & Pettigrove (2022)	When it comes to design practise a Virtue Ethics-based practice is driven by the best intention, one that honours humans, individual values and non-human beings alike. A virtue-driven practice would rely on the designer as a moral character, one with the power of assessing autonomy, transparency, and safety in their design (Ethics 101 for Designers —, n.d.).
Consequentialism - Classic Utilitarianism	“[...] its name suggests, is simply the view that normative properties depend only on consequences.” -Sinnott-Armstrong (2022)	Utilitarian values assess design by impact and outcome. While at first glance, they can seemingly be human-centred, by the nature of the “greatest happiness for the greatest number” principle they can not regard individual value, which then contradicts this aspect of human-centeredness. With it, it is easy to shift away from the human aspect and focus on values that are connected to performance (Santa Clara University, Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, 2014).
Moral Absolutism - Deontology	“[...] In other words, deontology falls within the domain of moral theories that guide and assess our choices of what we ought to do (deontic theories), in contrast to those that guide and assess what kind of person we are and should be (aretzaic [virtue] theories). [...] Deontologists—those who subscribe to deontological theories of morality—stand in opposition to consequentialists. ” - Alexander & Moore (2021)	Deontology, as the most well-known moral absolutist ethics, would assess design practice via a set of rules, which are true or false regardless of consequences. It views the designer as a moral being, who acts driven by moral obligation, and based on moral rules, in other words, it is intent-oriented (Ethics 101 for Designers —, n.d.).

Table 1: Types of ethics across literature

3.1.2 Ethics as “something actionable” - the core of design pratice

We perceive ethics as something that has to be actionable, to truly serve designers in creating more sustainable and safer futures. We base this statement on the work of (Christiansen, 2014), which underlines that ethics is often criticised to be highly theoretical, and something that is hard to translate into practice. Therefore, we believe a path to a more ethical design is by translating the highly theoretical ethics into actionable solutions that can help designers in their practice.

This is supported by the term from Marc Steen: “doing ethics”, in his view this is the accurate way to understand the word (Steen, 2023). In the earlier paragraph, we discussed our stand on virtue ethics, and the importance of the designer’s practice to be virtuous. Nevertheless, there is still a need to marry theory and practice (Steen, 2020). As Ellen Christensen (2014) highlights the meaning and importance of making a clear distinction between detached moral judgement, which she calls “ethics of the eye”, and judgement about good and bad behaviour which is embedded in practice and its dialogue, called “ethics of the hand”, which also supports our stand on ethics as something actionable.

Christensen (2014) underlines the importance of participatory design and in general, the role of ethics in design. Most importantly, the role of making ethical personal judgments actionable. Steen also addresses the 3 dimensions of ethics, Head, Heart, and Hand, which once again underlines that ethics should be understood as something holistic, not only theoretical (Steen, 2023).

In this chapter we also briefly discuss how ethics is often stuck on a theoretical level, and how the general perception and often dismissive attitude towards it in fields of innovation (Campbell, 1999; Cech, 2014; Steen, 2021; Sunderland et al., 2014). It is critiqued, how ethics in design practice are openly discussed, rather than put into action. Ethics is often something, that gets oppressed and perceived as unimportant, highly-theory-based, and ultimately only a matter of philosophising (Steen, 2023).

What is important to understand is that ethics in design is not philosophising, - though it is philosophical - it does not mean it is without practice or action or at least it should not be.

As Christiansen (2014) discusses, there is an urgent need to bring down ethics from the clouds and put it into practice. On the other hand, Steen (2023) sees ethics as the action itself, something that is a verb, and if perceived otherwise that is not utilising the actionable portion of what ethics are. If not utilised, the role of design becomes misunderstood, with it the extent of the designer’s responsibility as well.

The two well-known phenomena of suppressing ethics into - using the words of Jan van Toorn: “practical intellectual professions”, to enhance production can be often observed, but what is achieved by doing so is the ultimate oppression of critical and analytical thinking, human-centeredness, topics and considerations

essential for a more ethical practice. When these values are gone, personal and collective responsibility and systematic understanding of the discipline and the ability of reflexivity are at risk (Moholy-Nagy, 1947; Rhodes, 2009; Steen et al., 2021; van Toorn, 1994).

Indeed, the initiative Practitioner Stories (2021) unveils the issue of what those who care about ethics fear: the interviewed practitioners in the project, who self-described themselves as service designers, expressed the problem with ethics in 'the real world'. Besides it being too theoretical, when attempts are made to be implemented, it is only an addition to the design processes, often 'parachuted into the project'. Because of this, they do not feel like they have enough space and time to spend on discovering ethics-related tensions in their design processes. It is also expressed in the lack of understanding of the 'moral frameworks' that are brought by designers, teams, and companies they are employed at, as ultimately, this is what will directly shape the design and its outcomes.

3.1.3 Our adopted definition of Human-centred design - How it is more than human?

To set the scene of this thesis, by introducing values our work is driven by, this chapter will elaborate on human-centred design, its role, and its adopted definition in this work.

To start we bring in the book “The Green Imperative: Ecology and Ethics in Design and Architecture” by Papanek (1995) in which he declares that ethical design’s one aspect is that it supports the environment and does not harm the ecology. It is natural to question, how this aspect connects to human-centeredness. Here, we wish to link Papanek’s statement to Steen’s (Steen, 2020) who describes human-centeredness as something that is not exclusively about humans: as it does not make humans the omnipotent centre of the design. Rather, human-centeredness is also about placing humans on scale, that includes all beings and is considerate of our entire ecosystem. When we talk about human-centred design in this work, it is also life-centred, as an ecosystem of living beings of all kinds.

Additionally, following Steen’s (2020) lead, we also decided to make a difference between user-centeredness and human-centeredness and tie ethical design to something that is inherent to the latter. As user-centred design defined by (Nielsen, 1994) tends to look at humans as users, we believe with human-centeredness a more holistic consideration towards people can be adopted. Steen’s (2020) argument is as follows: “HCD [Human-Centered Design] aims to look at people more holistically, not only as users of a specific product or service but also as citizens, as parents, as friends, as co-workers, etc.”

This understanding of potential users and the recognition that human-centred design is - in our adopted view - can contribute to driving a more ethical design process.

3.2 "Why" it is important to build a more ethics-driven design practice and process

When discussing ethics in design, Yi-Fu Tuan's quote in Morality and Imagination: Paradoxes of Progress aims to set the tone in this loaded, but at the same time conflicting and at times still neglected conversation which is ethics in design:

"We cannot remain moral in any recognizable sense of the word, nor can our projects and creations - including tools, homes, cities and landscapes - retain any sort of moral earnestness, without somewhere in the background the support of a deeply felt mythopoetic or religious model of reality."

- Tuan (1989)

As Tuan highlights the context-sensitive nature of morality in projects and creations, we view ethics in design similarly in this work, which is: ethics seems to be more than a set of rules, which goes against the deontological understanding (Kant, 2013) (see Table 1, p. 12). To build a base for this thesis project, in this chapter, we will discuss why an ethically-driven design process is necessary. We do not state that design processes are without ethics, but we believe, that ethics often are not well-defined in design (Fry, 2009). To determine why we should build a more ethics-driven design process, first, we will discuss the emerging issues in it.

Defined by Findeli (1994) designers were understood as the "more or less well-identified category of specialists who claim to improve the quality of the everyday objects that surround us...". Additionally, in the work of (Manzini & Cullars, 1992), the role of the designer was compared to the Promethean ability of humans "to act purposefully" and to condense material and immaterial into tangible products of the design process. These definitions present the designer as a conscious being, with the ability to better our present and build a brighter future.

While this is certainly true, in everyday life the designer's practice is much more complicated, and a part of a system, which often ties their hands in making virtuous decisions. Even though there are many constraints of the profession, we believe it is firstly an individual, and secondly, a collective responsibility to strive to be ethical, no matter the circumstances, especially in the design field, where the outcome will inevitably affect other's life. Therefore, there is a strong responsibility connected to the "why" of building more ethically-driven design practices and processes.

Closing this section, we bring in Papanek's words (1995) where he describes: Design should be valuable, needed, rather than wanted. Functional and universally aesthetically pleasing; an aesthetic that serves function and effectiveness. In Papanek's view, solutions have to be research-oriented, to address true needs, where especially nowadays, utilising unbiased data is key (Buolamwini, 2017). The barriers to the ethical design process and the outcome can be - among many reasons - due to a focus shift: consequentialist values aka performance optimization that can lead to stepping away from human-

centeredness. By shifting the focus from users to optimising performance, those who should be in the focus of design fade into the background, which brings a setback to social planning and social awareness (Larsen & Skjold, 2018).
Due to this, irresponsible design decisions are made, as they serve a cause that should not be the centre of the design.

When it comes to service design, Practitioner Stories (2021) addresses the need to consider ethics within a discipline as well: 'Even though service design prides itself in involving stakeholders and communities, nearly half of our interviewees felt that it still lacks inclusivity, diversity, and accessibility.'
They pointed out that 'discussions, awareness, and general debates around ethical responsibility, privilege, and power are largely missing in Service Design communities.' It seems that creating a more conscious utilisation of ethics is a very much relevant, and needed task, regardless of the area of the design field.

However, the critique of how it is often implemented is also valid. Practitioners Stories (2021) unveiled, how designers often view the topics of ethics with a certain scepticism. The reason for this might be, because the idea of 'designing for good', is often used as a buzzword, rather than tangibly implemented in real life. In response to this, the leaders of the project expressed the following need: in order to implement ethics, a set of principles could be developed, similar to the Design Justice Network Principles (Design Justice Principles Overview and Translations of the Principles in Various Languages, 2018).

Last but not least, they found that there was a lack of knowledge among service design practitioners in regard to how to make the design process inherently more ethical.

3.3 "What" is a more ethics-driven design practice and process

Based on the fact that design affects many, we bring in Papanek's work (1972) in which he focuses on the values, and principles which should lead the design process. Naturally, the following section will focus on the "ideal" design process, which can often sound naive. However, we believe, uncovering the ideal, which often has a Platonic feel to it, is important if we were to aim to better the present and the future of design practice.

The ideal role of design might be best described by the quote from Papanek's (1972) statement in the introduction of his book "Design for the Real World":

> **"Design must be an innovative, highly creative, cross-disciplinary tool responsive to the needs of men. It must be more research-oriented, and we must stop defiling the earth itself with poorly-designed objects and structures."**
>
> **- In Papanek (1972, p.15)**

When discussing the "ideal" design process, in this work we mainly refer to the work of Papanek (1995) defined as the "New aesthetic", as after decades his understanding and definition still stay relevant. In the "New Aesthetic", he pointed out that ideally design practice should be built on necessity, solutions, and concepts. A triad of factors is present which in a sense correlates with the three components of Value Sensitive Design, from the work of Friedman (1997) and Friedman and Kahn (2007). If we were to define "what" is an ethical design practice, based on Papanek's work (1995) it should carry the following values:

- **Sustainable:** It is sustainable for humankind and for all fellow species. As to Papanek's understanding (1995), design has the power to either shape or hinder sustainability, therefore all 3 dimensions of sustainability should be considered during design, which is: social, ecological, and environmental (Purvis et al., 2019). Furthermore, design has to be considerate not only of its impact, but also if placed in different scenarios, such as the impact of the pollution of the environment, wars, foreign policy, economics, and differing morals can alter how the outcome of the design and the process itself is utilised (Papanek, 1995).

- **Considerate:** He highlights the role of social responsibility, which is similar in the current time and age and is discussed in the works of many, for example, Steen (2021). Furthermore, he emphasises the importance of design being human and placing humans on scale. Aptly, on the website of Leyla Acaroglu the article titled "Ethics in design isn't just for philosophers - designers need to take responsibility too" discusses the responsibility of designers to take on in order to ethically practise their profession (Acaroglu, 2016).

- **Responsible:** For ethical design endeavours, Papanek (1995) emphasises the role of governments, industry, entrepreneurs, and policy in order to be implemented, furthermore, the support citizens and their conscious individual decisions as consumers. Their behaviour also should be driven by intelligence and ethical consideration. Discussion is ongoing about designing for systematic change, like the Danish Design Center's "The Circular Behavior

Initiative", which focuses on making the "right" choices, and in order to make such right choices easy: making them desirable is the goal (DDC – Danish Design Center, 2022). There are many examples, just like the IEEE 7000-2021 standard "Standard Model Process for Addressing Ethical Concerns during System Design" which - one of the first of its kind - aims to support the inclusion of ethics into processes of system design (IEEE SA, 2021).

- **Reflexive:** Though Papanek does not explicitly mention reflexivity in the "New Aesthetic", however, in our perception, the term is almost tied to ethical and aware design practice. It is a key element of it, and in line with many statements in Papanek's work as well, therefore we see the space and need to be included here. Steen and Poel (2012) describe the reflexive practice as the ability and tool to actively reflect on professional practice and own personal involvement during a project. It is the practice of identifying one's perception of a topic, action, theme, or even a project (Strand, 2019).

- **Valuable:** Papanek (1995) then discusses the aspect of 'need' in design, as in his view all products of design should serve the user. Such need should be more than aesthetics and desires, it should be built on the true value that adds to the user's life. These views are very much in line with the principles of Value Sensitive Design (VSD) and the earlier work of Papanek (1972) and Friedman and Kahn (2007). In fact, "Value" in general is not an unfamiliar term to moral philosophy. As De Montfort University & Stahl defined it - "Moral philosophy knows several terms that refer to explicit morality. One of these is the term "value". Something is a value when it is considered as having worth; when it serves society as a whole" (2012, p.639).

- **Driven (Spiritual):** In connection to need, and value(able) design, Papanek defines the current stage of these as the "lack of any spiritual basis" of design practice that will form ethical and environmental considerations only the philosophy of design rather than actions to be applied (1995). Papanek emphasises the need for design to be "nourished by a deep spiritual concern for planet, environment, and people" in other words to truly feel deeply about responsibility and the challenges of one's profession and those affected by it. He states such connection is the path to developing a morally and ethically sound practice. With it, he outlines the new forms and expressions of designers and architects, the "New Aesthetic" which at his time and still in our days is desperately needed (Papanek, 1995).

The above points are somewhat resembling the ones in Williams's (2018) book, which discusses the "Designer's Oath", which correlates with the function of the Hippocratic Oath:

"I promise to:
Care genuinely about their success;
Understand their intentions, goals, and values as completely as possible;
Align my projects and actions with their intentions, goals, and values;
Respect their dignity, attention, and freedom, and never use their own weaknesses against them;
Measure the full effect of my projects on their lives, and not just those effects that are important to me;
Communicate clearly, honestly, and frequently my intentions and methods; and
Promote their ability to direct their own lives by encouraging reflection on their own values, goals, and intentions."

- In Williams (2018, p. 120)

Williams care for users is in line with Papanek's views - in the final section in the "New Aesthetic" Papanek (1995) references the role of the said "spiritual concern", which resemble the words of Goethe in the discussion of the theory of Nature and Science:

"[...]For in the final analysis, it is spirit alone that animates technology."
- Goethe in Findeli (1994, p.49)

If we were to build more ethical design processes and solutions, the keyword seems to be "consciousness". Yet, in the paper of Dindler et al. (2022) based on eleven interviews with experienced design practitioners, it is prominent, that the overall concept of incorporating ethical considerations into their professional practice seems to be grounded mostly in their personal beliefs and approaches to design. Participants of the research in the work of Dindler et al. (2022) refer to ethics as a "gut feeling"-led practice, and "moral compass" as a primary driver of their decision-making. To practise ethics, they do not use any specific design methods, frameworks, or tools. Ethics seems to be only an additional, and not an inherent part of the design process. It is discussed and brought up in an ad-hoc manner, mostly only at the beginning of the project. In a sense, all this turns the weight of the responsibility on the individual (designer), which goes in line with what had been expressed in this thesis, as interviewees define ethics as taking account of the design outcomes, the impact it creates, and how it can directly influence people's behaviour and choices.

Tensions in the context of design ethics can also be divided, as often ethical perspectives can be related to business, client, and personal values. What further complicates this topic, is that ethics can be considered with different lens of focus - For example the business focus might consider this: what is 'good' for the business, and from a business perspective. But they also should be considered by keeping the client in mind, as for what is beneficial for their customer, and is/can the client's project be ethical in itself. Finally, personal ethics can also complicate, at times contradict defining the 'right choice' in a working environment.

Questions like the designer's own perspective and their own values can play a role in what is perceived as ethical. It is safe to say that what is ethical can be challenging to define, as the interests and perspectives can differ.

The challenge is great - navigating between interests, aims, and values makes the debate around "what is ethical" highly context-sensitive, and often subjective. In our conclusion, we try to summarise a close-to-universal, but rather, general definition of the "ideal" design process, which mainly means:

It is nothing more, or rather: nothing less, than only serving human and non-human needs, and respecting individual values as well as their independence, well-being, and ability to continuously thrive and co-exist. Ideal in design is in our reading ethically conscious, intentional, empowering, needed rather than only wanted. It is driven by principles and promotes ones, which serve and orient, rather than provide and control.

3.4 "How" and "When" should we be ethical in a design process?

Answering the "how" and "where" in connection to the application and consideration of ethics we adopt Steen's (2023) view. He outlines the importance of shifting the focus on discussing and practising ethics during the design process, rather than before and after, as well as the need to understand and differentiate between what kind of ethics we apply when it comes to considering the ethical values of our practice.

Moreover, in the paper of Dindler et al. (2022) the recurring theme is also that much is decided during the initial stages of a project or before a project is started. This entails project scoping, project kick-offs, or even deciding whether or not to take up a case within specific industries. One of the interviewees in Dindler's et al. work defined ethics in the design process as "macro ethics"- happening before or in the early stage of the project to align on common values and purpose, and "micro ethics" that entail incorporating ethical considerations later in the process when specific details and features of the designed service or product are to be set (Dindler et al., 2022). Therefore, this work also underlines the importance of intention-setting and incorporating ethics from the very start of the project.

In previous chapters we declared that ethics in design should be virtue driven, this statement might not come as a surprise, as the during is what ensures a virtue-driven practice. Outlining ethical values before even developing a project brief or knowing its context resembles absolutist values while assessing ethics after the design process would be simply a utilitarian approach to it (see Table 1 in Section 3.1.1; p. 12.).

3.5 Individual's role is to be a conscious leader of the process

As the designer is more than only a professional, this chapter focuses on the individual's role in building a more ethical design process, as in our view, a more ethical process leads to more ethical solutions. This chapter aims to pay closer attention to the individual, their person, and their sense of responsibility which ultimately shapes their practice and the design as a process.

In the past century, Findeli (1994) and Papanek (1972) defined the greatest mistake a designer can make: which is to use their time and knowledge for useless tasks, to focus on aesthetics over needs, and to let materialistic values dominate or even suppress ethical ones. They expanded their understanding of design and ethics to a more holistic perspective of the design process and the professional disciplines. One reason which might make it hard to act ethically in design processes is the fact that design challenges are diverse. There is no unified practice in how to solve a design challenge, with it design processes are as unique as the challenges themselves - a set-in-stone manner in how one might approach it does not exist.

On the one hand, it is hard to regulate these processes, as they can carry their own biases and can be the space for ignorance and professional misconduct. On the other hand, due to the uniqueness and being targeted towards solving an issue, there is larger freedom in tackling wicked problems, more space for innovation, and with them - creativity can flourish. We see this freedom to innovation, without strict and universal regulations for developing projects, as a key tension in design practice. It is a blessing, and a curse - which is highly dependent on those who design solutions, them as individuals but also as a group of professionals. In Practitioner Stories (2021) it is discussed how the lack of diversity in the design teams can affect ethical outcomes. The interviewees believe that because service design teams are mostly built of people coming from privileged and very similar (societal) backgrounds, the lack of internal diversity can make the designers blind sided by their bias and privilege, and power. As a result, the developed services can end up exclusive and non-accessible, despite the best intentions coming from service design-oriented mindsets. This is an important note, as unethical solutions are not necessarily designed with ill intentions.

We believe the free and diverse nature of the design process places a large weight on the shoulder of the individual, as their awareness can affect the design process, and its outcome as well. With it, it can influence its stakeholder's life (Papanek, 1972). This is one reason why tools, design approaches, methods, and methodologies are developed to support the design process. They are just as crucial for the output of the design, as it is largely dependent on the individual. The designer's role is to keep themselves in check, to recognize how they are influenced by power dynamics which can lead to unethical solutions, but they are also responsible for building groups that are inclusive and diverse enough so personal values can be challenged healthily (Bratteteig & Wagner, 2012).

3.6 Reflexivity as a “master key”

When it comes to individual responsibility in creating more ethical design processes, products, services, and ultimately: futures - we believe reflexivity is a key component. In this chapter we will discuss our adopted definition of reflexivity, how we perceive its function, and how it can correlate and collaborate with ethically-driven design. Additionally, a paragraph will discuss who - in our view - is the reflexive practitioner and what capabilities they possess.

Our adopted definition of reflexivity is based on the work of (Suddaby et al., 2016) - reflexivity is the ability to be aware of the binding and shaping power of surrounding social structures, it is the ability of the individual to recognize the malleability and the influencing power of their social world. Cognition and context are part of reflexivity, it is studying the internal processes, and how mindsets are changing due to their power (Voronov & Yorks, 2015). With reflexivity, individuals can critically reflect on and revise the social structures which they influence, furthermore, they can build independence against unwanted influencing forces. (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Jepperson, 2021; Vink & Koskela-Huotari, 2022)

In our view therefore, reflexivity is closely tied to ethical design practice, as it is the internal work that has to happen to uncover approaches and practices that may manifest as unethical solutions. We see reflexivity as a master key, as it has the value of promoting ethical considerations and bias-aware practice. A key, that has the potential to open diverse doors toward a more ethical future.

As described in Practitioner Stories (2021) there is a need for the designer to be more self-reflective, aware, and careful of their own bias, and power inequality when engaging with stakeholders. They also have to be aware of who they might exclude with their decisions which requires the ability to be reflexive.

Staying humble and using the skill set to guide, facilitate and uncover potential user needs should be among the main concerns of design professionals. Once again, in the Practitioner Stories (2021) project, it is also declared that to be able to critically look at frameworks and methods, service designers need to understand where they come from, who created them, and who is being included as well as excluded by these solutions. We must find ways to make them more accessible and inclusive. These reflections in the project also support the argument for a reflexive design practice, as with the power of reflexivity is it possible to identify, and then solve the challenges of the above-listed user-related issues.

3.6.1 Our definition of the “reflexive practitioner”

We see the reflexive practitioner as an individual with the core values that support ethical design practice and personal awareness, which ultimately affect an ethical design outcome. It is needed to take ownership over the design process as an individual, to develop the ability to act consciously to control design outcomes, so it does not harm.

As Papanek puts it (1995) there was, and might still be a phenomenon of “awaiting designers and architects”, which means that there is a feeling of uncertainty in design fields when it comes to acting “right”, in an aware and ethical manner. He describes there is a tendency on the part of these professionals to wait for fresh guidance which gives unexplored meanings and forms of their practice. He writes: there is an urgent need for more than just “arbitrarily invented style”.

Therefore, in our reading the ‘reflexive practitioner’ is someone with the ability and intent to internalise their work, to analyse the reason behind their views and decisions, but also someone who is able to create based on initiated and shared principles. Someone who emphasizes bettering the future, rather, than only altering it via design. The reflexive practitioner understands the responsibility which comes with design profession, and is ready to challenge themselves and question their own judgement, by addressing difficult questions. It is also someone who is not afraid to challenge others as well.

3.7 Today's scene of ethics in design

The purpose of including good practices of ethically driven design is to present to the reader some examples of existing and actionable solutions, which aim to implement ethics into practice. This serves as a starting point to identifying what characterises these approaches, furthermore, to use as benchmarks for the possible solution of this project. To provide a structured overview of the actionable initiatives emerging around ethical considerations and awareness in design, the following categories have been outlined:

- **Top-down approaches -** including solutions that fall into legislative or organisation-led regulations or initiatives.
- **Bottom-up approaches -** which include personal and community-led ones

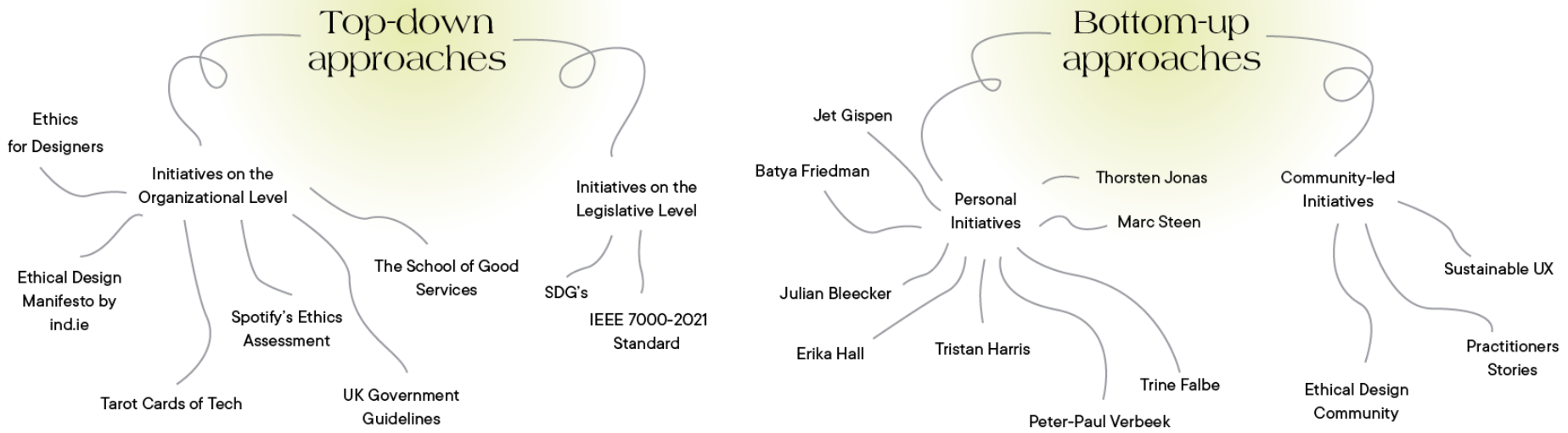


Figure 3: Overview of the selected initiatives in the scene of ethical considerations in design

3.7.1 Top - Down Approaches

In this section, the reader can find a detailed description of top-down initiatives taking place to emphasise the importance of ethical considerations in design. Later, selected good-practice examples will be elaborated on to address how they might influence and regulate the scene of design, ethics, awareness, and conscious practice in general.

Initiatives on the Legislative Level

Legislative level, including policies, regulations, and similar initiatives can affect the conduct of design, including ethical and aware considerations. Though in the field of engineering, it is quite common to regulate processes via such guidelines, when it comes to design it is a more complex, or rather hazy territory.

Nonetheless, a general critique of this level is that often regulations stay very broad and easily misinterpreted (Bali Swain, 2017). For example, the Brundtland Commission's Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, n.d.) while widely considered, they are still very openly interpreted, and often only used as a marketing catch, presenting a company and its activity in a desired light (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). The IEEE 7000-2021 Standard for "Model Process for Addressing Ethical Concerns During System Design" (IEEE SA, 2021) is a rather new example of an attempt to regulate and systematise the application and make ethical concerns a more visceral part of the design process.

As an answer to increasing tensions in the context of design ethics, this document has been formulated under the aegis of The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. (USA). Although this material has been developed by an organisation coming from a discipline tightly linked with engineering and tech, it can serve as a good example of how the leading organisation in a given field stands for setting standards for the industry to follow to stay compliant with ethical values.

On the other hand, as this standard mainly focuses on engineering practices, to reinforce the importance of including ethics in an often heavily commercialised and functionality-based context, there is a remaining question, why do such initiatives seem to be mainly revolving around areas which are engineering related, and bluntly: are not Design.
Is it due to design being a more humanistic approach to innovation? Is it because some might consider it the intersection of art and engineering, where personal freedom and the past century resembling the individualistic nature of the designer is stronger (Osgood & Johnston, 2022)?

Initiatives on the Organisational Level: Regulations, Methods & Tools

Additionally to the legislative level, to address the importance of incorporating ethics in design processes, several organisations have taken action in support of ethical and aware practices. Their activity in this regard varies from, for instance, developing tools and methods to be used by designers, to formulating manifestos and frameworks to enhance conscious practice and processes.

These tools, methods, and initiatives can be open-source or proprietary. In our view, when promoting ethical design practices, it is important to make them inherently tied to the design process and communicate them as visceral parts and building blocks of the design process. To do so, it is highly important to develop widely and available instruments, possibly ones which are open for all.
In this section, without claim for completeness, we selected a few examples which describe the nature and distinct characteristics of the different approaches. The following are:

- **The ind. ie's Ethical Design Manifesto** (Balkan & Kalbag, 2015), which helps to reinforce an ethically centred mindset by hierarchical values and features close to ethics and plots them into a pyramid to then serve as a reminder for designers and organisations to keep given qualities in mind when working on projects or accepting new clients.

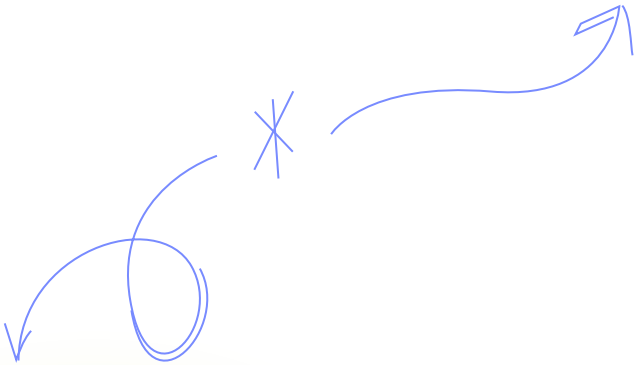
- **Spotify Ethics Assessment** worksheet (Aboulafia et al., 2020), a guide for considering the possible hindering aspects of design and can help to initiate a more bias-aware, accessible, and in general: ethical design process;

- **Tarot Cards of Tech** by the Artefact group (The Artefact Group, n.d.), a set of cards (tools) to support a foresight-driven design process when the design outcome is technology-related.

- **Ethics for Designers Toolkit** by Gispen, (Gispen, 2017) a toolkit for ethics-driven design practice.

- **The School of Good Services (2023)** - as a for-profit example offering master-classes and learning materials for a service design-driven professional practice, that in their perception is tied to a more aware way of working.

- **UK Government's -** recommendation blog posts (GOV.UK, n.d.) as an unorthodox way to spread the importance of more aware design practice, as it is far from tools and methods, but at the same time, a way to educate people, using a platform that is considered reliable.



Ethical Design Manifesto by ind.ie

Ind.ie is a small, non-profit, organisation created by Aral Balkan and Laura Kalbag focusing on promoting ethics in the fields of design, technology, and business. Their Ethical Design Manifesto (2015) is built on Maslow's pyramid of needs and is to support designers in channelling their focus into ethically driven decision-making (Maslow, 1943). The pyramid's base is what ind.ie has determined to be the fundamental values for incorporating ethics into the design. The levels of the pyramid based on their work is as follows:

- **1st level - Respect Human Rights: "Decentralised, private, open, interoperable, accessible, secure & sustainable".** According to Aral Balkan, "Diversity is not a charity, diversity is a competitive advantage". The Manifesto authors emphasised the importance of diversity in the design teams. They point out the current 'colonial approach' to design, describing it as a phenomenon of - at this time and age - designers often tend to study 'other groups' without the ability of thorough understanding, as opposed to the diverse groups designing for themselves.

- **2nd level - Respecting Human Effort: "Functional, Convenient, Reliable".** Building on the first stage, this principle describes the respect towards people's effort they put into using a given service/product. "It is thoughtful, accommodating, it understands that you might be distracted or differently abled." Such an approach is more than observation, it is about understanding diversity and how to accommodate such varying needs.

- **3rd level - Respecting Human Experience: "Delightful"**

At the top of the pyramid, Balkan and Kalbag (2015) have placed "Delightful" experiences that are intuitive, invisible, joyful and focus on contributing to an individual's happiness, their feeling of contempt.

Figure 4: Ethical Design Manifesto by Balkan & Kalbag
From Balkan, A., & Kalbag, L. (2015). Ind.ie–Ethical Design Manifesto. https://ind.ie/ethical-design/

The Manifesto was received with open arms at many agencies and offices, becoming a part of the design process as a guide in making conscious design decisions. The highlighted benefits of their work, - among many examples - were notable in negotiating project scopes, as well as in the internal debate on design-related decisions to stick to ethical principles which were previously established within an organisation. Such outcomes are valuable not only because they are promoting conscious decision-making while working on a project, but also because with their use over time, it is possible to stay true to outlined values. Ultimately, that is the true aim; to be able to stick to values that were formed in a theoretical manner, at a time when hardening factors did not press professionals into overlooking them. Solutions like the Ethical Design Manifesto can benefit a team in "sticking to the plan", as well as keeping the user in mind as the central reason to design.

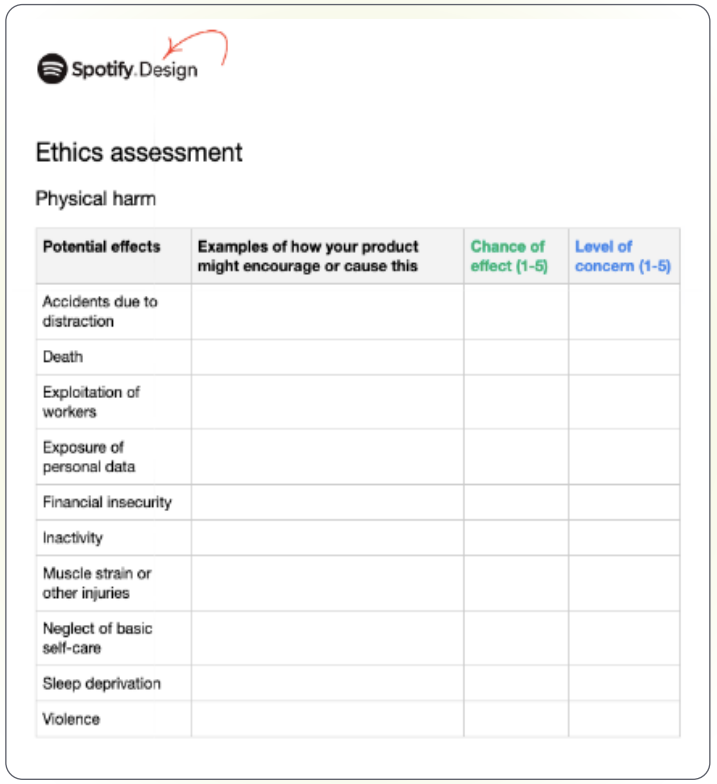
Designers are human after all, they are biased by nature and often influenced by their surroundings. Humans malleable beings, due to it, are often presented negatively. But but influencing our surroundings via the values we wish to carry in our personal and professional life can contribute to a more aware and thought-through practice as well, as it can affect other people

Spotify Ethics Assessment

One of the publicly available tools to help designers in their process of incorporating ethics into their practice is the "Ethics Assessment" created by Spotify (Aboulafia et al., 2020). This worksheet contains three main categories (Physical, Emotional, and Societal Harm) where the designed product or service could cause negative effects taking into account various criteria.

The objective of this assessment is to address the questions and answer the probability of such harm taking place using a scale from 1-5 (1-Highly Improbable, 5- Highly probable). Another assessment for the team to make is to define the level of concern (1- least concern, 5 - greatest concern) concerning the given harm being an actual issue in the context of the designed product/service.

For example, the first category - 'Physical harm' contains a list of potential effects that the given product/service can cause - e.g. Accidents due to distraction, Death, Exploitation of workers, Violence, etc.



Spotify Design

Ethics assessment

Physical harm

Potential effects	Examples of how your product might encourage or cause this	Chance of effect (1-5)	Level of concern (1-5)
Accidents due to distraction			
Death			
Exploitation of workers			
Exposure of personal data			
Financial insecurity			
Inactivity			
Muscle strain or other injuries			
Neglect of basic self-care			
Sleep deprivation			
Violence			

Figure 5: Snippet from the Spotify's Ethics Assessment Sheet

From Aboulafia, S., Madar, E., & Han, L. (2020). Investigating Consequences with Our Ethics Assessment. Spotify Design. https://spotify.design/article/investigating-consequences-with-our-ethics-assessment

Reflecting on Spotify's Ethics Assessment, unlike the other methods and tools, this material is shaped in a form of a checklist for the designers to go through and consider very specific instances of harm that had been formerly defined by the authors. It can help with looking into earlier determined areas like e.g. negative self-image (emotional harm), accidents due to distraction (physical harm), and unequal quality of service (societal harm). However, at the same time, these categories are rather broad and imprecise. Due to this fact, they do not leave much room for one's own perspective (e.g. considering and looking for other possible harm-creating occasions) and limit the activity to only hypothesise on the probability of earlier-defined harms taking place overall, rather than to facilitate the described exploratory mindset.

Tarot Cards of Tech

On the contrary, in our view, a more actionable tool is the Tarot Cards of Tech developed by the Seattle-based design agency, Artefact Group. They describe their product as:

"[...] a set of provocations designed to help creators more fully consider the impact of technology. They'll not only help you foresee unintended consequences- but can also reveal opportunities for creating positive change." (n.d.)

The deck consists of 12 theme cards divided into 3 main categories: **Scale and Disruption, Usage, Equity, and Access.** Each card is dedicated to addressing a specific question that is to spark discussions in the design teams in the process of making.

Looking into how Tarot Cards of Tech have been formulated, there are two key takeaways to be addressed and reflected upon.

Firstly, the cards and their content, despite the focus on product design, could potentially serve service-design and other design fields due to the universal formulation of questions included in this toolkit. It does not purely focuses on for example, the functionality or usability of the product in a technical sense, but looks into overall product qualities and their impact.

Another takeaway is from the format in which this tool is developed. The questions included in the card deck encourage creative thinking, and imagination, as well as promote reflexivity.

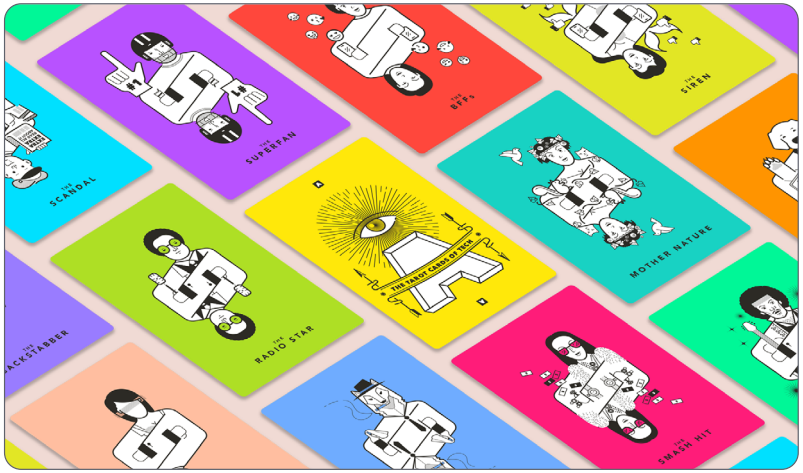


Figure 6: Snippet of the Artefact's Group Tarot Cards of Tech
From The Artefact Group. (n.d.). The Tarot Cards Of Tech. Retrieved 18 May 2023, from https://tarotcardsoftech.artefactgroup.com/

These cards allow stepping out of one's comfort zone and, in a playful way, facilitate the creation of an environment in which some of the topics can be discussed.

Challenging designers like this can be a valuable approach to bring upon when ensuring a more ethically driven design process. In comparison to the checklist-like worksheet developed by Spotify, they are more open-ended. We see the cards as a more collaborative tool as it is only possible to use them in a way that enhances reflexivity, and by its nature, it is very likely to start discussions within a team. Just by thinking about the output of the mentioned two tools: a checklist is a much more solitary practice, while cards are associated with playfulness and most importantly: with a group of people. Therefore in our view, it is very important and also exciting to find a form of the output of a potential outcome of this thesis which by nature enhances the values we wish to promote.

Ethics For Designers Toolkit by Jet Gispen

Another example of an open-source toolkit dedicated to designers with an aim to support them in incorporating a more ethically-driven mindset into their work is 'Ethics for Designers' developed in 2017 by Jet Gispen, TU Delft researcher. Her work is based on the belief that there is a prominent gap in ethics-related knowledge and application among both design students and professionals.
To address this concern, Jet Gispen has created a template-based toolkit founded on the **three main Ethical Skills** that she believes every designer should develop and nurture. Each of the below-mentioned virtues contains two practical methods in the form of sheets to implement in the different stages of the process.

- **Moral Sensitivity - "The ability to recognize the ethical dimension of your designs".** This skill aims at 'deconstructing the design' by asking questions like 'What, How, Why', with these questions, it hopes to uncover some of the underlying intentions of the design. The worksheet developed to address this skill enables uncovering potential harms caused by the design project outcome and set responsibilities between designer and client.

- **Moral Creativity - "The ability to explore creative solutions to moral problems".** This ethical skill includes two tools, the Moral Agent and the Normative Design Theme. The first one is presented in the form of a card deck, this method serves to facilitate creative thinking and ideation in the context of 'the-most ethical design possible'. While the latter, the Normative Design Theme shows an understanding of the complexity and philosophically rooted origin of ethical considerations and introduces popular theories of ethics to designers. These theories, Virtue Ethics, Deontology and Consequentialism (see Section 3.1.1, Table 1; page 12) are put against a design goal that is to be articulated in this exercise and depicts dependencies between them.

- **Moral Advocacy - "The ability to communicate your ethical standpoint to stakeholders".** This skill is also addressed by two tools, namely the Moral Value Map and the Ethical Contract. The first one is in the form of a worksheet that provides a number of values, such as physical well-being, equity, autonomy etc., and draws to understand which of these are relevant in the design and how they can be affected. It also allows the detection of concern areas when it comes to the design outcome and is encouraged to be exercised together with relevant stakeholders.

Last but not least, the Ethics for Designers toolkit can be seen as slightly different from the earlier described tools. What makes up for the biggest shift is the starting point from which it emerges. Jet Gispen had begun her work on the toolkit by determining what traits, capabilities or skills should the designers have, as opposed to the Tarot Tech Cards that solely focus on the design outcome and preventing 'harmful' decisions or effects of the product that is already under development. By determining the three skills: moral sensitivity, moral creativity, and moral advocacy the author emphasises the areas for the potential development of a designer's capabilities, as well as provides dedicated tools and practical guidelines on how these can be mastered.

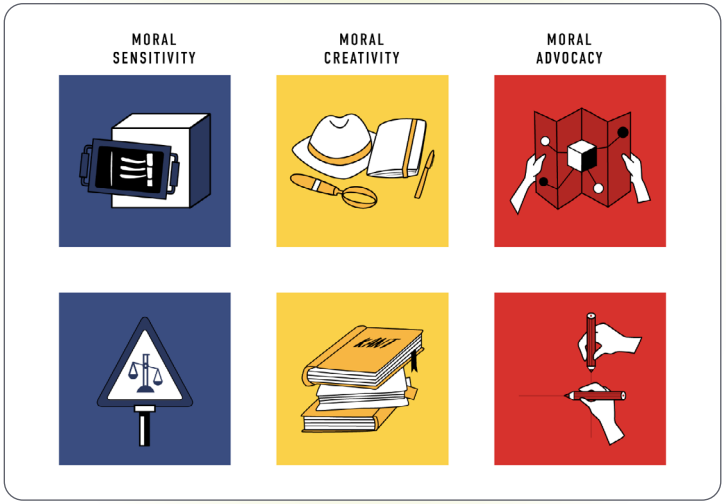


Figure 7: Snippet of the Ethics for Designers toolkit by Jet Gispen
From Gispen, J. (2017). Ethics for Designers–The toolkit. Ethics for Designers. https://www.ethicsfordesigners.com/tools

The School of Good Services

The website 'School of Good Services' offers learning materials to become more aware on the professional level, but also as an organisation. The site introduces service design to professionals focusing on 3 main areas: **Public training, Private training,** and **Capability building.** The for-profit company is dedicated to covering all aspects of organisational decision-making and infusing it with the value that service design and its capabilities can offer (The School of Good Services, 2023). It is important to address that this case is mainly service design focused, but the company perceives service design as the path to a more sustainable and ethical way of operating and leading any type of establishment. Therefore in their perception, a more aware leadership and professional practice is tied to service design as an approach to tackle issues and solve design challenges within an organisation, or company.

UK Government Reccomendations - Blog Posts

With its blog thread the UK Government is working on spreading the word and promoting conscious, aware, and ethical practice. Blog posts like "Conducting ethical internal research" (Bramwell, 2023) or its material "Service Standard" (GOV.UK, n.d.) educates and encourages a more thought-through practice, sharing insight into how the government works on creating a better future for its people. Resources like this can be meaningful and may also reach diverse target groups, even though we assume they are often not highly actionable, nonetheless, they are considered to be from a reliable source.

3.7.2 Bottom-Up Approaches

This section will bring up some of the bottom-up approaches surrounding ethical considerations in design. In this case, it is initiatives and individuals in the field who by their passion for responsible practice are worth being recognized.
Their personal initiatives can influence the design scene and its relation to ethics.

Personal Initiatives & Communities

Over the years, the design scene has been filled up with key opinion leaders and/or design practitioners who take the stand to address the tensions and struggles of design ethics. They take the position of advocates and activists, often finding their own niche or focus area by zooming into specific instances of ethics in the design context. This paragraph of the thesis aims to collaborate with the literature review, in the sense that we find it important to identify key stakeholders of the present when it comes to conversations about ethics, design, and awareness. It is also a contribution to the earlier presented tool examples, as many professionals in their work hugely contribute to the discussion of this thesis's subject area. Additionally, it foreshadows our aim to interact with some of these key players in the field and possibly reach out to some of them in the primary research part of this work.

In academia, we can see many professionals leading today's discussion about innovation and ethics. For example, **Batya Friedman, Tristan Harris, Peter-Paul Verbeek, and Marc Steen** dedicated their professional practice to ethical considerations and more sustainable practices in engineering, but also in design.

- **Batya Friedman** specialised in Human-Computer Interaction, Multi-lifespan Design, and Value Sensitive Design (VSD). Friedman pioneered VSD, a widely recognized approach to considering human values in the design of technical systems and practice. To support practitioners in making more informed decisions, they developed the Envisioning Cards. In recent times, Friedman is working on exploring the potential of VSD from different angles, like multi-lifespan design, the designing for and in mind of non-human stakeholders, as they are relevant for the collective well-being and the planet.

- **Tristan Harris** is also a notable name in the discussion connected to ethics, intention, and awareness in design practice. Though his work was already recognized, Harris got widely known when he appeared in the Netflix Documentary, "The Social Dilemma" in 2020. Harris is the Co-Founder and the Executive Director of the Center for Humane Technology (CHT) (Center for Humane Technology, n.d.), a non-profit organisation with the mission to build a present and future that utilises technology with humanity's best interests as its core.

- On the other hand, **Peter-Paul Verbeek's** work is more theory focused, as it revolves around the philosophy of human technology, with which he discusses philosophical theory, ethical reflection connected to technology as well as practices of innovation and design. He actively engaged in many projects connected to ethical practice furthermore is the author of the book Moralizing Technology: Understanding and Designing the Morality of Things, published in 2011 (Verbeek, 2011). A book that analyses leading and most significant technologies, where he elaborates on what they might mean in the context of ethical theory and for designers. Verbeek's work is unavoidable when reading about ethics and design, and what's more important: it should not be avoided either.

- **Marc Steen** who is an expert in Value-Sensitive Design, Responsible Innovation, and Applied Ethics of Technology and Innovation and Human-Centred Design. Marc is hard to miss when discussing ethics in design , as his academic work determines the discourse around the topic. His book Ethics for People Who Work in Tech published in 2023, aims to be a guide in understanding how ethics and practice meet, as well as how to keep ethics as one of the core values of the practice.

- **Trine Falbe** dedicated her professional practice to ethics based on her experiences as a consultant. Falbe discusses the need and possible steps to take to create more ethical and responsible products and services. To be more conscious of creating user experiences Fable visits different aspects of ethics and design in her books: White Hat UX published in 2017, (Falbe et al., 2017), and The Ethical Design Handbook published in 2020 (Falbe et al., 2020).

- **Erika Hall,** the writer of „Just enough research" (2013) explores ways towards a more sustainable and responsible way to do research during a process, it provides frameworks for thorough research during a project and discusses approaches to identify shared goals via stakeholder interviews. It aims to provide the reader with insight into best practices to conduct meaningful user interviews and be able to run seamless tests. Finally, the book explores essential methods that help gather and assess data. Hall's work is an interesting approach, as it understands the design process, its flaws, and its often-dictated pace, in which she offers a way to incorporate research that can be done responsibly. It is an actionable guide providing solutions to a very much aching sore, which is often the endless determining factor of a process. Besides her book, Hall is the Co-founder of Mule Design (Mule Design, n.d.), their professional practice is strongly connected to ethics in design and, indulged in ways in which ethics can be put into practice.

- **Julian Bleecker's** name might also be worth mentioning when it comes to outputs that open up the question area of ethical and conscious practice. Bleecker's diverse, transdisciplinary background in design, business, and management dresses him with the skills to understand how decisions about near-future innovation can affect our surroundings. His work is inspired by Design Fiction, a theory that places emphasis on the need to prototype and build scenarios around near-future solutions (Dunne & Raby, 2013).

The flow of this chapter finally arrives from more theory heavy examples to rather practice-focused examples:

- **Thorsten Jonas's** initiative. Based in Hamburg **Sustainable UX** is led by Thorsten. An initiative to place focus beyond users, and to create – in a more sustainable manner. The **SUX Community** and the podcast Sustainable UX (n.d.) aim to bring people together, start conversations and educate about the pressing issues in connection to design practice, sustainability, and users. Thorsen's initiative is just one example of communities out there that promote ethical practice. In this line, **Tristan Harris's "The Catalyst"** newsletter and **Trine Falbe's 'Ethical Design Network'(n.d.)** are contributing to building a space where the pressing issues of innovative practice can be discussed.

Finally, there are many practitioners who in their professional life take initiative and feel very strongly about doing design the "right" way, or rather: considerate way.

- **Stéphanie Krus** takes great responsibility in working on meaningful projects. Accessibility and inclusion are two key determinants in her practice and can be seen in many forms in her work. As a service designer, she not only engages in professional training, but the designer community as well. **Practitioner Stories** is a project to be highlighted from her work history: **Angela F. Orviz, Stéphanie Krus, and Vinishree Verma** worked on understanding service design as a practice through practitioner's experiences. The website Practitioner Stories document their work in exploring the emerging field of service design, its values as well as its challenges (Practitioner Stories, 2021).

This is a great example of how practitioners can take the lead and engage with others in order to address current issues in their profession and map others' experiences. Initiatives do not have to happen in a highly organised manner as by the nature of their profession and the tools available to them designers have the capabilities to take the lead and create something that is valuable and with good intentions.

3. 8 Conclusion and next steps for developing a project enhancing ethics in design

From the literature review it is clear that ethical considerations in the design process, though essential, should be more than a personal desire to be implemented, yet it starts with the individual. Furthermore, it should be a core principle of design practice, it often gets peripheral attention (Dindler et al., 2022; Practitioner Stories, 2021; Steen, 2023). While there is a wide range of cases covering methods and tools to support ethically driven practice and bias awareness, practitioners often feel there is a lack of guidance. The territory of conscious and responsible innovation and design practice in general, are often led by one's gut feeling (Practitioner Stories, 2021; (Dindler et al., 2022). This question-area of "gut feeling" is what we define as our focus, or rather: making the value of awareness more intentional. We believe there is a need to be intentional as an individual, to form practice consciously as well (Papanek, 1972; Practitioner Stories, 2021; Steen, 2023; Vink & Koskela-Huotari, 2022, p. 202).

What is certain, is that the extent of internal work that needs to happen to keep design practice aware and intentional, is addressed, but the „how"-s of it are unclear, or rather, present in theory, but missing in practice. So much is happening internally, yet holistic approaches seem to be marginal or even missing from the debate. Based on our literature review, when the question emerges: **„How should a more ethical design practice be achieved?",** there are certain guiding principles that come to mind: it should be easy and desirable to apply, and it should be virtue-focused, as the practitioner should be virtuous. The nature of the process should not only be iterative, but highly reflexive. In order to achieve such values of the ethical design outcome and practise one has to be empathetic, aware of own privilege and embrace diverse and multidisciplinary teamwork (Papanek, 1972, 1995; Practitioner Stories, 2021; Steen, 2020).

4. Primary Research

This chapter is dedicated to Primary Research and data collection undertaken in the early stage of this process. Gathering first-hand information from among design students and practitioners was to juxtapose findings from the literature review and provide room for the possible topics of more detailed investigation to emerge.

As for the research strategy the following frame had been prepared, to serve as a guide for the reader, but also, to determine what activities had taken place in a given phase of the project and why.

Step 1.

Research Planning Survey - shortly after opening up the literature review, we had agreed on running a low-impact intervention among Service Systems Design Students and alumni to get an initial sensation of the topic of ethics, and generate data to be collected for the purpose of this thesis. In this case, the obtained information was to provide the context, rather than in its quantity, to prove or disprove any hypothesis.

Step 2.

Expert Interviews - Six professionals were contacted and interviewed to feed in data of high value, coming from their perspectives and working experience in the field. The findings and conclusions of this exercise are to then play a significant role in Research Question formulation and concept development.

4.1 Research Planning Survey

One of the first interventions taken in this project was a Research Planning Survey. As stated by Kumar in his book 101 Design Methods, (2013) - "Research Planning Surveys are short, quick, loosely constructed questionnaires used at the early phase of a research project'. The main purpose of this activity was to reach out to Service Systems Design students and alumni, to gain an initial understanding of their view on ethical considerations in service design, and to get inspiration for the coming research activities and expert interviews.
In the coming section, we guide the reader via the spine of the survey questions, including a short, condensed reflection on the nature of the answers.
All survey results can be found in **Appendix A.**

A modest number of **16 respondents** engaged with the questionnaire and provided the very initial outlook on how ethics and service design can work together. On the figure below, the reader can see the respondents distribution based on their level of participation in the Service Systems Design Programme.

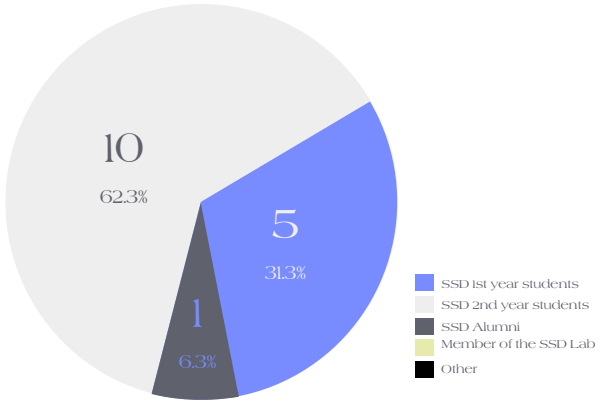


Figure 8: Research Planning Survey - Respondents Share

1. Please provide 3 words that come to your mind when you think of 'ethics in service design'?

This first question was to serve as a thought-igniter and a conversation starter to open up a topic of ethics in design. Its role was to explore the first association that SD practitioners have when thinking of ethics and map out existing patterns. As shown, the most common words were:

Figure 9: Word Cloud - Answers from the Research Planning Survey

2. What does being ethical as a service designer mean to you?

The second question is aimed at uncovering and showcasing how service designers understand ethics from a personal standpoint. As a result, the following categories of understanding emerged:

- Ethics is having a "moral compass" that defines what can be done and what can not.
- To be ethical in one's design means to be inclusive and empathetic towards users and their uniqueness.
- Ethics is showing respect to users' privacy and discretion on user data.
- Ethically driven designer is considerate - able to foresee the effects of the designed service and its impact, as well as being conscious of the overall approach taken in design processes.
- Ethical thinking is ecosystem thinking - being able to "see a bigger picture", (human and non-human), thinking about resources and material as well as fairness for the people involved.
- Ethical designers represent concrete capabilities, being: sensitive, transparent, honest, and just.

3. How do you see the role of 'ethics' in the design process? Think of your current/past projects

The third question addressed how students perceive ethics and its role in the design and the design process - this should be connected to how important it is to them, but also if it is mirrored in their professional actions. The results are as follows:

- A shared observation and understanding among SSD students emerges, as currently, from their experience, ethics seems to be brought into design processes mostly based on the designer's own initiatives, or if there is a specific request to implement - it is not prioritised and demanded by default. Nevertheless, bringing up ethical considerations into design had been described as of high importance.

- Ethics is seen as a way to see the process, as in a specific 'lens', underlying approach, and consideration that helps the designer to navigate, question the status quo, and convey the message to important stakeholders involved.

4. Please provide an example, where you experienced tension/conflict in relation to making ethical decisions during a project.

The fourth question in the questionnaire was to unravel how designers cope with ethics-related tensions that they encounter when working on design projects.

- Among the provided examples, SSD students had included situations from a business perspective, where implementing ethics into the projects would have to be well-justified to take place, as it takes time, however, it does not always guarantee a benefit for the company.

- Another example refers to the difficulty to be able to truly empathise with users, when designers a lot of the time are looking from a perspective of a white, able-bodied person. As one of the survey respondents mentions: "Even when considering ethical implications, a lot of knowledge and sensitivity is needed to do so." It also covers the notion of understanding user diversity in terms of capabilities, cultures, and peculiarities **(Appendix A).**

- Last but not least, the difficulty in making compromises had been brought up. For example, when choosing what features should the designed solution have - e.g. to include profile pictures of users for safety, or not, for the sake of their protection in terms of providing a judgement-free environment. A similar dilemma exists when e.g. using data based on observing users who are not aware of it happening or seeing only the bright side of the developed solution, without asking uncomfortable questions.

5. How important is it in your career to get up-to-date information in connection to design ethics?

The last question was posed on a scale from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important) and was addressed to understand if SSD students go out of their way to educate themselves on the topic of ethics in design. This question came from a hypothesis, that in today's world, ethical considerations should play an important role when it comes to broadening one's horizons and getting inspiration on how to implement it more consciously.

Surprisingly, the most popular answer was a middle value (Figure 10).

This particular question would be extremely interesting to follow up on, as based on the obtained data, ethics seems to still be a secondary topic for nearly half of the respondents, whilst on the contrary, it is considered a priority for the remainder of the group.

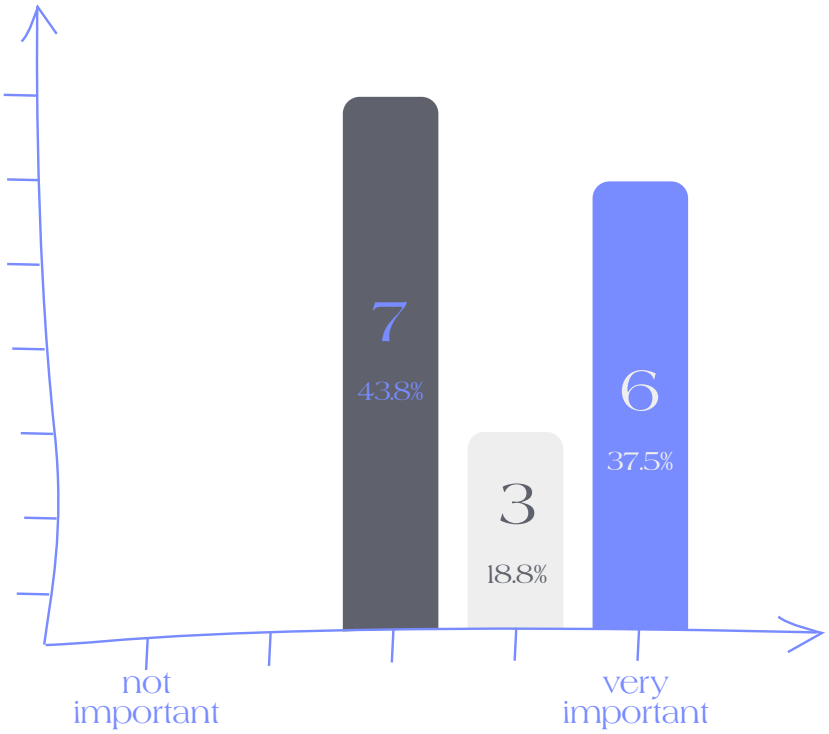


Figure 10: Bar Chart representing the respondents need to stay updated about ethics in design

4.1.1 Survey Conclusion & Limitations

The survey provided some of the very initial insights into a potential further research area.

Firstly, the matter of intentionality of ethically driven processes. Because currently, ethics seem not to be incorporated into the process by default, the designers become responsible for bringing these topics up and showing their considerate side in incorporating this mindset. The above links to the level of empathy and sensitivity of designers in addressing the challenges related to ethical considerations by seeing the 'bigger picture' and being able to foresee the implications of certain decisions in the context of ethics.
Secondly, the survey highlighted the importance of the relationship between users and the designers themselves when it comes to respecting users' privacy, rights, and being inclusive and empathetic with them to truly understand their needs.

The activity was carried out to set the scene and start directing our work towards a path that also considers our peer's insights, and feeds from more than the literature. Disseminating the survey happened on several channels, such as the Linkedin page of the Service Systems Design present and alumni students, the Facebook page of the program, and the Facebook chat group. Additionally, it was sent out in an email, for the SSD students via the university's Learning and Course Management System, Moodle. What this entails is a large focus on individuals who - to some extent - share the same education, therefore, and because of this fact, their views can cause some bias in the insights they provided us with.

Furthermore, it is key to address that we only received 16 responses to our survey, which is far from representing how SSD students, and their views in any way. Based on this, it is important to view this activity as is, and not to jump to conclusions about the nature of the response, but also not to assume that ethics are for example peripheral topics for SSD students in their practice. Even though an exercise in the design process has the potential to unveil a type of insight, the way how it is conducted, and the circumstances of it can highly affect how the data should be viewed.

4.2 Expert Interviews

To enrich the comprehensive literature review and primary data collection via survey, semi-structured, in-depth expert interviews were conducted (Bjørner, 2015). The main goal of this activity was to gather primary data in an efficient and elaborate manner that would later become a cornerstone of the forthcoming research and analysis in this thesis. According to Bogner et al. (2009), Expert Interviews are one of the methods to support the "exploratory phase of a project", by feeding in "'crystallisation points for practical insider knowledge".
To select the interviewees, we had reached out to several persons in the field, specialising in design ethics, or having expressed some sort of interest in such topic through their work. As a result of this intervention, five participants have been recruited and interviewed.

Due to the activity format, the interviewees were asked specific, earlier prepared questions related to, among others, their understanding of ethics in design, ethics-based tensions in their practice as well as personal thoughts and experiences related to this thesis focus area. Each lasted approximately one hour and was conducted via Microsoft Teams and transcribed, as well as video recorded after verbal consent from the interviewees.

To synthesise the obtained data, a detailed analysis had been undertaken to extract key quotes and insights, to be later categorised and cross-evaluated among all interviews to identify possible similarities, opinions, and observations. In the coming section, the results of the interviews will be presented by highlighting the most common patterns and prevailing themes. All the findings are clustered by the area it addresses - **the designer as an individual, design teams, and design process.**

Full interview transcripts are available in **Appendix B-F.**

Stéphanie Krus

Professional background

Service Designer with the background in Computer Sciences

Reason for reaching out

To hear about her motivation to develop Practitioners Stories, and her view on ethics as a professional. Furthermore, to understand governmental perspective in ethical innovation.

Benedetta Lusi

Professional background

PhD student working with compassion in healthcare

Reason for reaching out

To gain insight into the understanding of compassion and its utilization in projects, as by nature it can be just as complex of a task, as the incorporation of ethics into the design process.

Angela Orviz

Professional background

Service Designer with a PhD degree in Design Innovation

Reason for reaching out

To understand Angela's motivation to develop Practitioners Stories, and her view on ethics as a professional with expertise in Design Innovation.

Vinishree Verma

Professional background

Service Designer with a background in Industrial Design

Reason for reaching out

To talk about Vinishree's motivation to develop Practitioners Stories, her view on ethics as a professional with a product-focused background.

Marc Steen

Professional background

Research Scientist working with the topic of Responsible Innovation

Reason for reaching out

To get some insight into Responsible Innovation and how ethics connects to it. Also, to talk about the practical and theoretical nature of ethics.

Figure 11: Portraits of the interviewed Experts

4.2.1 Designer as an individual

Designer's Individual Responsibility

In accordance with the findings from the literature review in the previous chapters, one of the first predominant subjects among all interviewees was the role and individual responsibility of the designer when it comes to bringing up ethics in design projects and advocating for it in general. Surrounding the role and responsibility of one as a design professional, through deconstructing this subject into a smaller granularity level, a few main topics prevail.

First of all, when looking into addressing and raising concerns about ethical considerations, the current trends indicate that most of the time, any actions or initiatives would rely on the presence of an ethically driven, aware designer in the team, as ethics is not an inherent part of the design.
One of the interviewees, Marc Steen, mentions that - "In my ideal world, there would always be somebody putting up their hands - at the start [...] so hopefully in five years it's normal" **(Appendix C).** He also refers to the concept of participatory design, as a collective initiative as opposed to the status quo of today by saying - "I would have liked if it was more like in the 1980s, more like a collective political action, so that doesn't depend on the coincidence of somebody individual feeling responsible, being ethical."

Vinishree Verma, Scottish Service Designer mentions - "I think what I try to do is just remind them again and again after every meeting that as a team because they never talk about it. So it's just me" **(Appendix F).**

These inputs are opening up a dimension in which the boundary between personal viewpoints is blurred, as ethics is brought to the equation as something that comes out as personal and highly subjective. All this puts the designer as someone who 'jumps the gun' to advocate for their private beliefs, rather than for virtue-driven ethics to be a standard for the process in the first place.

What follows is the 'new role' into which the ethically-aware designer is being accustomed to, which is - firstly, becoming a facilitator of difficult conversations in teams, but also a sort of a change igniter, that hopes for things to get better by their influence, that is only to be seen in the future. As described by Stéphanie Krus, having to keep reminding about ethics can become a long-term investment that can often be draining - "Maybe little by little it's gonna improve, but not at the time you were working on it. Maybe it's for the next team to benefit from that advocating for what you have started - it might arrive later" **(Appendix B).**

Introspection, Bias - Awareness & Reflexivity of the Designer

Besides how the ethics-oriented design practitioners are positioned inside the teams, another key takeaway from the interviewed experts is the importance of introspective practices, the reflexive attitude of a designer themselves.

According to Marc Steen, what is critical for implementing ethics in design processes is “awareness of my own blinders, assumptions”. He also mentions that “[...] reflexivity is the ability to, while you’re working on a project, be aware of your own assumptions, and questioning them. Also, if I’m not open to you, be aware of me not being open to you, and then do something in my curiosity, so I can be more open to it in a way” **(Appendix C).**
All this is followed by Angela Orviz who stressed that - “To check your bias, you always need to do reflective practice and understand there the reactions that you are getting from your context, from whatever behaviours and things that you were doing in your context, [...] you always need to be reflective and asking people” **(Appendix D).**

One of the examples of how one can actively exercise reflexivity and introspection before, during, and after the projects were what Angela had tried during her PhD. project. She interviewed herself to calibrate the intentions and her position toward the studied subject and users that she was to engage with. This can be complemented with the words of Marc Steen, who defined a key difference between pure reflection - as in thinking, to reflexivity, as doing and engaging yourself in the questioned topic.

Cognitive Flexibility & Anticipation

Another highly interesting takeaway from interviews with Stéphanie, Angela, and Vinishree was the importance of cognitive flexibility in designers. Service Designers need to be prepared and anticipate the peculiarity of the users that we might be working with and their personal situation attitudes, all this with an aim to be able to engage with them with minimised bias, preconceptions, and appropriate care.

As an example, Stéphanie Krus had been engaged in a project that she had bluntly described as “boring as hell”, as this was a topic that would not be of her personal interest. Shortly after, in the interview session with one of the users she discovered that a seemingly trivial question had triggered a highly emotional response from the person, which was not expected at all **(Appendix B)**.
This is a case-based scenario that alludes to how interlinked bias and ethics are, and how important it can be to begin to engage with users with a never-free, but aware mindset to ensure they are received and interpreted properly. Another practical example comes from Vinishree Verma, who had been put to conduct a co-design session with a group of women, whom she found-out were unable to speak English at the time she arrived to conduct the workshop. She immediately had to shift the focus of the workshop, from verbal-based to visual, so that she could omit the communication barrier **(Appendix E).**

All of the above is to illustrate the importance of one’s capability to adapt to the requirements of the users, with ethics as the core. Staying blind sided by the preconceptions taken up beforehand, can hinder the actual user-centeredness of the exercised activity in design processes.

4.2.2 Design Teams

Design Bias - Hindering ethics, and caused by the lack of diversity in design teams?

One of the interviewees who tried to map out the possible source of the designer's bias and preconceptions was Stéphanie Krus, who had spoken about the issue she had identified in her career as Senior Service Designer. That is, lack of diversity in design teams, which can cause some of the user issues to be not addressed and understood, and be hard to relate to, despite the best intentions and efforts of the designer. According to Stéphanie, being a designer and having studied design is a privilege in itself, whilst having people in teams who eg. are not carrying a higher education diploma is rare, similarly with varying gender and ethnicities.

In service design specifically, despite the principal user-centeredness, if one can not truly step into the user's shoes due, having a colleague in the team, with more proximity to the user group can be of high value and support for ethically driven design. As Stéphanie Krus describes it - "If you have someone in your team who's disabled, who's black, or who's one of these people that you never see in a team that also helps, because it's very much harder to dismiss. Because that person is there every day, they see it and they can understand the experience" **(Appendix B).**

Team dynamics, internal constraints & intention setting

As described above, reflective practices are the foundation for designing more ethically, however, it does not stop on the individual only.
According to Marc Steen, the most value of the design can be obtained by considering three key focal points in the process - **reflection, inquiry, and deliberation**. As in inquiry - " if the project team members and maybe the client, and maybe another stakeholder have really sat around the table, have addressed awkward questions, difficult issues - that's something that people can do, and then out of that comes something that is hopefully more ethical." **(Appendix C).** He stressed the importance of internal calibrations in the teams that would enable them to set the tone for the project overall and would support the team in ensuring they share the same goals and focus.

This is called by Marc - "making explicit assumptions that are that are there, but that otherwise remain implicit." This blends together with the overall pattern across the interviews, where the beginning of the process had been identified as crucial for ethics, because of this very fact - "Ethical mindset needs to be there from the very beginning. I think it should be an underlying mindset", as Vinishree states **(Appendix E).**

To feed onto the above, Stéphanie Krus also addressed a problem of a power imbalance inside the teams, as she describes activities engaging users as particularly vulnerable to ethical considerations - "When we are already not

great at sharing power within the team, in co-design you're supposed to share power with people who are external to the team." **(Appendix B)**
In conclusion, to ensure ethically driven design, firstly - the team needs to be on the same page, putting ethics first, being aware of the internal imbalances, and stopping them from being projected onto users engaged in the process.

4.2.3 Design Process

Ethics in Design Process - Status Quo

A key takeaway and an overall pattern identified by everyone, and what has been stressed across some of the above points - design ethics is not popular, not expected, and not required in design processes. It has been described as a "bare minimum', as a "box to tick" in some cases, when, for example, talking to one person with a disability serves as a way to promote the entire process as ethics driven.

Additionally, ethics seems to be only "popping up'" randomly in the processes when controversies arise, and as Marc Steen describes - "someone puts their hand up" for these conversations to take place **(Appendix C).** All that weight, laying on the individual designer who is to address ethical concerns, and can at the same time, with probability - risk their mental health, career, or internal relationships in the team. This opens up room for reflection on how much is there to do, so that not talking about ethics is seen as unusual.

Ethics in Design Process - The Desirable

The interviewees shared their knowledge and expertise in what actions, elements and characteristics should be included in design processes so that it becomes more ethically driven.
First of them is how ethics shall be exercised, so it is not a single-handed action, but a deeply rooted, underlying consideration. Some call it a compass, some a lens, but the overall message is to keep ethics as the core and the determinant of what steps and how these steps need to be taken in the process. Secondly, seeing the bigger picture, a holistic view of the problem, contexts, users, and internal dynamics is highly required to bring ethics closer into design decisions. Marc Steen, through the interview, but also in his book "Ethics for people who work in Tech" (2023), describes this as doing ethics in a three-dimensional way - head, hand, heart.

Another element concerning direct user-designer interaction is to become an active listener, but also, the ability to represent themselves in front of other stakeholders and decision-makers in the way they would desire to be represented. One of the examples coming from Marc Steen, Vinishree, Angela, Stéphanie, and Benedetta has to do with the ability to use storytelling techniques to evoke emotions in people that would enable them to bring up more empathy, but also, to tell user stories that would captivate stakeholders who are then more likely to act in their favour.

Last but not least, feedback and the iterative nature of the process are considered crucial, as they can contribute to bringing more transparency, and encouraging reflexive practices, but also, gives the opportunity to implement the voices of people into it.

4.2.4 Expert Interviews - Reflections & Limitations

The interviews with experts contributed a lot of valuable, qualitative data to this thesis project. The ability to talk to people with many years of experience in the field has given us the opportunity to gain comprehensive knowledge and insight into the field in a relatively short time. All the information presented above is to play a role in the forthcoming steps of this process, as it will inform the research question formulation and idea generation for the final solution.

What is important to address is that we aimed to reach out to professionals from various fields and backgrounds that connect them to design. The goal was to diversify our interviews and seek the insights of experts who are Ph.D. students, academic researchers, as well as practitioners with experience in the private and public sectors.
The participants were all based and active in Europe. Though we aimed to have an even broader sample of interviewees, this was highly dependent on their availability as well as at times openness to participate.

What is important to mention, is that due to differing expertise, practical and theoretical as well as different disciplines the interviewees work in, the interview questions were catered to each individual and were semi-structured. With this, our aim was to get a glimpse into their perception of design, ethics, and aware practice. It is also important to highlight that Vinishree, Angela, and Stéphanie worked together on a project, which might make it probable that although they have many professional and individual differences, they might share similar values, which can shift the diversity of our insights.

Also, though it is a recurring fact when talking about designers, it is worth mentioning that all experts have higher educational degree on at least the postgraduate level, are able-bodied, based in Europe, and have a career that enables them to be independent.

Data analysis

Download your Learnings

Affinity Diagramming

Framing the Design Challenge

How Might We?

Defining the RQ

Define Phase

5. Data analysis & defining focus

Based on the literature review, in today's world, including ethical considerations in the design process is crucial. However, at the same time, very often it is not an inherent and underlying intention from the start of the design process. Because of that, the responsibility to address ethics-related topics falls on an individual designer, who often carries their own biases and preconceptions. This requires a well-developed sensitivity and awareness of the designer's preconceptions, which can then help to influence the overall process and could ultimately result in a more ethically driven outcome.

In this chapter, we aim to gather all the key insights which we believe are starting to define our way toward the focus area of this thesis and later, a possible solution development. This exercise was carried out in the form of a workshop within our thesis group in a collaborative setting that led to an organised overview of patterns and insights. In order to synthesise the information, we completed an exercise that provided a framework for us to make sure that not only our research question is developed, but it is supported by and addresses all the key learnings.

- **"Download Your Learnings" -** The exercise was based on IDEO's Design Kit "Download Your Learnings", (IDEO, n.d.-a) including the gathering of all insights and sharing it in the team. During the assigned time, we went through all materials collected and gathered all materials in order to be synthesised. True to the rules of this exercise, once the collected information was placed on post-its in Miro, we presented our understanding of the information, in order to give the reasoning for how we perceive the role and importance of the information, so this individual understanding and learnings were shared and could become collective knowledge.

- **Affinity Diagramming & Defining -** Once all key information was gathered, with the help of the "Affinity Diagramming & Defining" (Pernice, 2018) the content was reviewed and gathered in groups, which can further clarify all the information collected up until the workshop. The clusters at this stage were general insights covering all topics, from difficulties of the design process, the nature of the design process, and needs addressed in the literature and by practitioners. It is important to address, that at this stage the exercise focused on all key aspects connected to the main thesis topic based on the gathered information. Therefore, some groups might not seem highly relevant in connection to formulating the research question. We thought it is valuable to divide this synthesisation into two steps, the first focused on gathering all insights, and the second on filtering the insights which are relevant for formulating the research question.

The identified clusters will be presented in section 5.1 - Internal Workshop Outcomes.

5.1 Internal Workshop Outcomes

Group 1 - Designer's individual responsibility

Based on our gathered insights, it is clear that their big responsibility lies on the individual's shoulder when it comes to addressing and advocating for ethics in the projects. It is often the designer's own responsibility to bring up ethics and to advocate for it in projects. Designers take the role of facilitators and "igniters" of ethical discussions on the projects. Furthermore, designers should actively and continuously question themselves and the perspective they are coming from to be able to advocate for ethics in design. Bias is important to address here, as considering ethics is hard from a privileged (white, western, able-bodied, educated) perspective and can be disturbed.

Group 2 - Design Process, Status Quo

Even though many of the issues we discuss today connected to ethics, biases, and sustainability were already discussed in the past century. Ethics often is taken for granted or used as a "buzzword" and addressed only on the surface. Often is degraded to a "box to ticking" exercise. Because ethics seems not to be embedded in the design process by default, it is highly dependent on what the individual considers ethical.

Group 3 - The role of the Initial intention setting

Setting the intention for a project, in order to make it ethically driven is a cornerstone of the entire process, as the early phase of the project will be what ultimately drives it throughout. Returning to these values during the entire design process is also key, to make sure there is no unwanted deviation for the set values in the midst of the process. It is very important to make an attempt and organise exercises that help address the underlying assumptions and preconceptions connected to a project:
"Sometimes it can help to make explicit what otherwise remains implicit" (Appendix C).

Group 4 - Characteristics of ideal design process and practice

Based on gathered information we can state that ethics should be an underlying consideration and a lens through which the design process should happen. Furthermore, the process itself should be iterative, feedback-driven, transparent, and holistic - zooms in and out. It should happen in all 3 ways: all 'Head, Heart and Hands', should be ethically considerate.

Group 5 - Internal vs. External factors

Reflexive practice, which will ultimately shape the intention for an ethically driven process shall start from inward - designer as an individual in the context of the project that they will be involved with, users, and their characteristics in juxtaposition to a designer themselves. Team dynamics should be addressed, agreed on, and discussed before starting to involve users in the process, so tensions and intentions are well-communicated in the design team. Individual reflexivity is based on one's understanding of their own preconceptions, biases, and assumptions, this is the first step in building a reflexive and responsible team, in order to tackle design challenges with the "right" intentions.

Group 6 - Attributes of (our) ideal solution

A possible solution should carry values, like being visual, Storytelling-based, Process-focused Virtue ethics-driven, Guided, Empathy, and Compassion based, one that evokes emotions. Furthermore, based on the insights we gathered by this stage the solution should also be open. In other words: discussion-driven, reflexive by nature, and one that promotes these values with tools and a community in order to provide space for discussion and place personal perception on the scale.

Group 7 - Time constraints

It is clear that one aspect that hinders reflexive practice, is that it takes time and is often down-prioritised in the project/company setting, where goal and result-orientedness is often in focus.

Group 8 - On values like Emotions, Empathy & Proximity

The cluster is based on insights connected to values like emotions, empathy, and proximity in the design process. Based on the gathered information, there is a recurring theme of ethical and reflexive practice being tied to empathy and compassion towards the users. Based on our research, it seems to be highly important to find ways to evoke these in yourself as a design practitioner, in the team, and when interacting with other stakeholders.

These groups are the trends and key takeaways from our collected information. When seeing through the groups there are recurring themes and complex issues, which are very much connected, and often even affected by each other. Based on this exercise our next task was to reflect on the insights and frame the research question based on all relevant information.

6. Defining the Research Question

After the data analysis exercises in Chapter 5 we worked to formulate the research question as at this point of the process, it was needed to conduct the upcoming activities in a more focused manner. This research question serves us in diving deeper into the topic of ethics, individual responsibility, and conscious practice which we define as igniters of ethically driven design. The aim is to support practitioners to act in a reflexive manner, and to develop higher awareness in their work. In this chapter, we wish to walk the reader through the process of defining our research question.

Framing a Design Challenge

To create our research question, the exercise "Framing a Design Challenge" by IDEO's Design Kit (IDEO, n.d.-b) had been used. This exercise was divided into two parts. In the first we individually filled out the designated template based on our previous work and how we perceived the key takeaways from the data analysis workshop.

The second step was to compare the two templates and reflect on them, ultimately formulating one final question. Including the individual exercise was very valuable, as it clarified if we as part of a group have a different understanding of certain, crucial parts of the project and its aim. Keeping a reflexive and open environment, where there is space for discussing personal understanding, aims, and goals, is crucial at this stage of the project, not only because of making sure we are on the same page, but also by the nature of our thesis topic selection.

Creating the Research Question - "How might we...?"

A fundamental element to support the development of this research question was a comprehensive data collection executed throughout this process and analysed in Chapter 5 that provided a handful of insights.
The data pattern presented ethics as often being a personal responsibility of the designer. It had sparked a question and interest in exploring the impact of one's standpoint on their design work. Designers are human after all, they are biased by nature and often influenced by their surroundings.

Firstly, once at work, it is not possible to entirely disconnect from the 'personal self' and become only the 'professional self'. What is more, designers' work can often engage with highly sensitive and vulnerable subjects, as well as with a variety of stakeholders, who work in different fields. This is where augmented self-awareness is the key. Otherwise, personal biases and preconceptions have room to thrive, which can result in hindering the ethics of the design process. Looking at the specific moment in the design process, the initial phase had been selected as a focus area of this work. This is due to the fact that the beginning sets the tone for everything that is to take place after. Once the intention is clear and genuine, the probability that this mindset will be exercised throughout the process is higher, as opposed to treating ethics as a topic that is 'hoped to appear' somewhere on the way **(Appendix C).**

At the end of the workshop, the following research question had been formulated:

„How might we support (service) design professionals in practising bias-aware and ethically-driven design so that they become more prone to identify their assumptions and preconceptions from the start of the process?"

With this question, we aim to have the following focus:

Who: We aim to support those professionals, who categorise themselves as (service) design practitioners.

Why: Without a solution, we wish to promote them to pursue a more bias-aware and ethically driven design practice.

How: We wish to develop a solution which helps the identify their assumptions and preconceptions from the start of the process and throughout the span of the project.

Micro intervention

Literature review vol. 2

User Archetypes

Benchmarking & Cases vol. 2

Brainstorming & Ideation sessions

Initial concept development

RQ iteration

'Gut check'

Pilot Testing

Develop Phase

7. Developing & Framing the Concept - Nº1

This chapter will include activities undertaken to initiate the process of the concept framing and definition, which is then resulting in a final solution of this thesis. To do so, we felt the necessity to obtain more data that would inform the freshly defined research question, as at this time, the focus and direction of this work had been narrowed down.

By disassembling the research question: **"How might we support (service) design professionals in practising bias-aware and ethically-driven design so that they become more prone to identify their assumptions and preconceptions from the start of the process?"**, a few topics ought to be crystallised and taken into consideration:

Step 1.

Some more literature has been explored to understand and establish a common understanding of bias in the context of this work. Chosen psychological, as well as design works around bias are being brought up to position this phenomenon in between these worlds and investigate its characteristics. This serves as the first deep dive into the research-leading theme and a problem to address in the final solution.

Step 2.

Another data type is obtained by running another micro-intervention among a broad community of designers, and members of the Ethical Design Community Slack channel. Similarly to the Research Planning Survey in the Discover Phase, this activity was conducted as an additional exercise to bring up some outside-in perspectives on how designers work around omitting their assumptions and preconceptions in their everyday practice.

Step 3.

By the definition of Service Design, the projects should always be highly oriented toward end users and address their needs (Stickdorn et al., 2018a). In the case of this thesis, the user group becomes rather unusual, as they indeed are design practitioners themselves. Nevertheless, to ensure the transparency of this work and to be able to better empathise and create for them, User Archetypes are created as step 3.

Step 4.

Having established User Archetypes and an initial outlook on the designer's needs in the context of practising design in a more conscious manner, two independent ideation sessions had been conducted. Firstly, internal ideation between us had been run, to explore possible directions and solutions for this work, to be then followed by collaborative brainstorming activity engaging 5 Service Systems Design students. The order of activities was to firstly, verify and cross-check the ideas and conclusions generated through the 1:1 ideation round, but also, to gain new perspectives on the topic and verify whether the user archetypes are relatable and are truly representative of user groups.

Step 5.

As for the iterative nature of the design process, after conducting additional research and ideation activities, the need to define the research question naturally appeared. This way, the thesis focus is ensured to be kept in scope and provide a thorough frame to answering and addressing it in the final solution.

7.1 Further Research Activities on bias

7.1.1 Complementary Literature Review

After having formulated the research question in Chapter 6, a natural way forward is to deepen the understanding of the leading theme. As concluded through the research findings so far, designers' own perspectives, imbalances, and points of view that are brought into the projects can influence the level of ethical considerations and design outcomes, especially if these are not consciously explored. This organically brings this thesis to a point of looking closer into bias as a phenomenon and through exploring its qualities, investigating possible ways of handling it in design processes. Here, the emphasis lies on the early phase of the process, based on the RQ formulation.

Defining Bias

Firstly, what ought to be done is to establish a unified definition of how "bias" is interpreted in the scope of this thesis. The understanding of ethics in this work will remain founded on the definition rooted in psychological literature, where bias, or rather cognitive bias is introduced as:

"Systematic error in judgement and decision-making common to all human beings which can be due to cognitive limitations, motivational factors, and/or adaptations to natural environments."

- In Wilke and Mata (2012)

Cognitive bias, as encapsulated in the definition presented above, has many possible origins, but also many forms in which it is expressed. Based solely on the available sources, there are over 188 different types of cognitive biases that can be identified depending on the particular topic they deal with (Benson & Manoogian III, 2018); (see Figure 12). This however will not be discussed, and will not be elaborated on in detail, with respect to the scope and focus of this work.

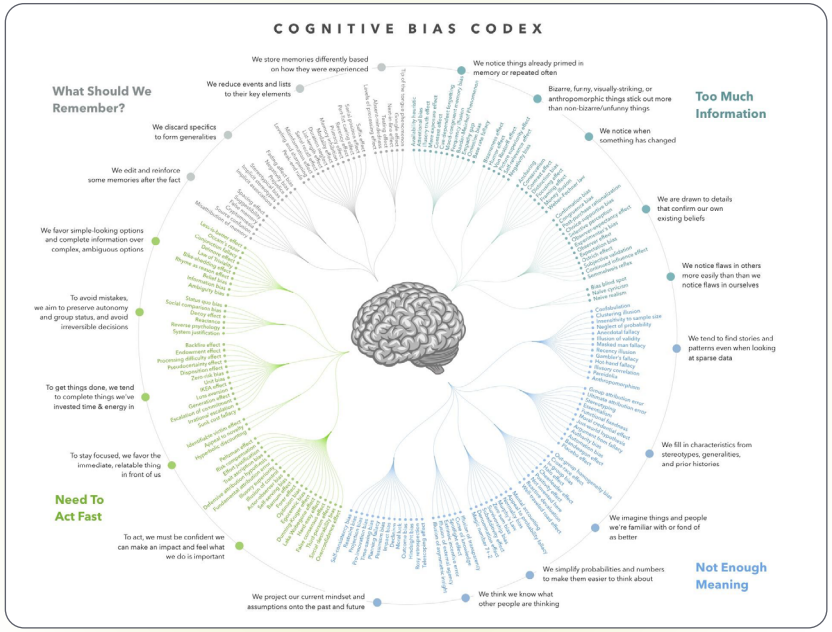


Figure 12: Cognitive Bias codex. Based on the categorization of Buster Benson and the algorithmic design of John Manoogian, developed with the use of Wikipedia data on cognitive biases.

Nevertheless, we aim on looking at bias as a phenomenon in the context of design processes and the role of the designer in such a way, that will examine how one can be more in touch with their bias in a general understanding ("systematic error in judgement and decision making") with a focus on early design phases.

In the book "Design For Real Life", (2016) by Eric A. Meyer and Sara Wachter-Boettcher, similar reasoning is shared: "Making space for our users begins with understanding our biases - something all of us have."

Therefore, further work will delve deeper into bias in design processes according to our belief, that once the designer has a better understanding of their own preconceptions at the start, the probability of the design outcome and process overall will be more ethics-driven is higher. Referring back to the "Cognitive Bias Codex" by (Benson & Manoogian III, 2018) represented in Figure 12, the scope of this thesis will zoom into ways of navigating the range of biases covering the sphere of:

- **"Not Enough Meaning" -** "We think we know what other people are thinking" and "We fill in characteristics from stereotypes, generalities, and prior stories".

All of these categories come into play when we only have small bits of information on a given subject, person, or group that is later to be complemented with preconceptions and assumptions rooted in our own, personal understanding of the context in play (Benson, 2016).

Bias in design - mental shortcuts in the sacrifice

Inspired by the work of another psychologist, Daniel Kahneman in his book 'Thinking Fast and Slow' (2011) he identified two main systems in which human brains tend to engage in cognitive processes:

- "**System 1 thinking -** quick, automatic decision-making. Effortless, impulsive, and often stereotypical."

- "**System 2 thinking -** requires much more careful attention, and includes functions like focusing, comparing, counting, or reasoning"

Whilst "System 1 thinking" can be seen as mechanical, saving brain energy and a space in which biases can have a lot of room to flourish, "System 2 thinking" is on the other side of the spectrum - considering more complex cognitive processes, costing the individual more effort and deliberation to uncover. This is where it is necessary to bring back reflexivity as a key feature of the ethically driven, bias-aware design that by the above definition, belongs to "System 2 thinking". Therefore, it can be concluded once again in accordance with the words of the authors of the book 'Design for real life' (2016)- in order to ensure the presence of reflexive thinking in design, designers shall be able to keep themselves in Systems 2 thinking mode when engaging in design challenges, especially when including users and stakeholders- "to slow down, step away from our shortcuts, and consider things with real people in mind."

This way, invoking a more sophisticated mental model, can possibly encourage more careful decision-making and judgement, which speaks in favour of ethically conscious processes.

The theoretical standpoint in the above division into “Systems 1 and 2 thinking” can sound relatively simple, but when it is the real world setting, things become more complicated. It is because, despite the ability to list many ways in which bias exists, the core importance of the matter lies in the notion of an individual’s consciousness of the existence of said bias. One can not adapt to a behaviour or a schema that is not properly exposed, seen, and identified. As Arabi mentions, “Being connected to ourselves makes us better connected to others and the challenges we are trying to address” (2021). Therefore, the closer one can become to their biases, the higher the probability is of them putting effort into truly understanding and omitting preconceptions in design processes.

Another layer of the issue links back to the research outcomes that dictate the current state-of-the-art when it comes to implementing ethical considerations as not being an inherent part of the design process. This indicates the necessity to begin design work with the intention to uncover and understand one’s biases at the very start, as otherwise, without early intentionality, the ethics easily slip away. Though the need to do internal work, and reflect on our privilege, bias, and all those factors that shape us as human beings are important in design. It is also natural to have biases, which can be revealed over time, but it might happen that they stay unknown to us. We do not state that people should be machine-like - especially as machines are not bias free either (Buolamwini, 2017; Sharma, 2019).

Our biases are what make us unique, and can affect us to see issues differently from others, with them becoming better problem solvers, especially in teams (Buolamwini, 2017). However, in this work when we discuss the role of awareness, it is meant in a way, that we strongly believe the least harmful path to creating a design, is by continuous and rigorous internal, reflective, and introspective work, as well as the sharing of the learnings of such personal practice.

7.1.2 Micro Intervention - EDC

To complement secondary data gathering, a micro-intervention had taken place to obtain first-hand insights into how designers deal with bias in their design processes. To do so, the Slack Community discovered in the early phase of this project - Ethical Design Community (EDC) had been contacted. The objective of this activity was to hear the voices of designers who are already proactively engaged in advocating for ethical considerations in design, and who as assumed, would share an interest in contributing to their opinions and perspectives.

Additionally, the motivation to use Slack as a point of contact was the ability to directly address a broad audience of over 1.500 members that would be otherwise challenging to reach.

On the next page, the reader can find an overview of questions addressed to the community and their responses.

How are you staying in touch with your bias in the design process?

01.

- Educating myself
- Self-introspection
- Therapy

02.

- Reading, webinars, studies etc
- Searching for opposite points of view and debates

03.

- Learning about other lived experiences
- Actively working on my defensiveness, exploring my discomfort
- Asking the 5 why's

04.

- Being aware about being potentially biased
- Building something in the work process to double-check against bias

How do you identify it and ensure your personal preconceptions do not impact what you are creating?

01.

- Feedback
- Active listening
- Exposing myself
- Arguing with respect
- Having discussions over uncomfortable topics

02.

- There is no foolproof method
- Asking for lots of feedback before, during and after
- Not assuming I know everything

03.

- It does impact it, there is no way around it, so I spell it out
- Making sure that the recipients are aware of my lived experience

04.

- Asking for a lot of input/checks from other people. Ideally, these are people who are not trained the way you are

It is impossible to be bias-free, but are there any practical ways, how you make sure not to harm your users because of your preconceptions?

01.

- Considering how to convince the core stakeholders/clients
- Video of people struggling helps as evidence

02.

- Trying not to get into empathy fatigue
- Fostering a holistic understanding and self-accountability to fight against bias for the sake of users

03.

- Research with real users
- Following experts in fields
- Keeping a "list of common biases" I noticed in myself

04.

- Re-distribute power and control as much as possible
- Keeping on researching the harmful experiences users had in the past

7.2 Developing User Archetypes

In order to move forward and start defining the final solution, we saw the need to appoint our potential users. This raised the question of whether User Personas at this stage could support our project in working towards a solution, based on patterns we recognized connected to potential users and their attributes. After an internal discussion, it was decided that we consider User Archetypes more suitable for our project, especially when it comes to unwanted bias. We felt that in this particular case, there are several attributes of a User Persona development, which are either irrelevant in our view or can even hinder some values we advocate for in the topic of the thesis.

Therefore, due to utility reasons and bias-related issues which in our view in the case of this thesis User Personas might carry, we decided to use User Archetypes. The reasoning is based on the Nielsen Norman Group's article (Laubheimer, 2022) connected to the topic. Both of them carry the same function, as they are developed based on user clusters, with the focus on capturing major overlaps in their attitudes, and attributes, as well as finding a certain dividing line between them.

The reason behind our selecting User Archetypes is as follows: User Personas are very much plausible in their development - their photo, name, and bio information plays a key role, as well as other personal characteristics. On the other hand, archetypes see the user in a more abstract manner. User Personas by nature can enhance empathy, but based on the attributes which are present in their development, they also can carry some bias. As with the topic selection, empathy is a key factor by which we are led, while Archetypes might not have a "face to them". We wanted to avoid age and gender-related assumptions, as our research did not focus on attributes based on which User Personas can be developed. User Archetypes with personal and professional motivation and their professional circumstances as characteristics seemed more relevant to use as user clusters (Kaplan, 2022; Laubheimer, 2022).

In the following page, the reader can find a summary overview of the developed User Archetypes. The detailed profiles can be found in the **Appendix G.**

The In-Crowd Hand-Raiser

This Archetype based on our conducted activities represents a cluster of users who are part of a team and assign high importance to ethical values, and all that ethics entail in the design process. They are the ones advocating for iterative processes and are very much concerned about virtues in the process in order to ensure everything for a more than human-centred, sustainable outcome.

The Master Advocator

The second Archetype is a team leader, someone with several years of experience and therefore a strong sense of why they believe ethics and aware design practice should be at the core of practice. They use their hierarchical power to make sure these values are leading the design decisions. They are very much aware of trends and are connected to key experts in the field, at the same time due to their experience their views on practice are - open for challenge from their team - more settled and less experimental, as they know how hard it is to navigate between values and expectations from clients and business side.

The Pragmatic Achiever

The Pragmatic Achiever is a very goal-oriented and punctual Archetype. They base their actions on theory and are a bit rigid when it comes to utilising tools and methods. They will not be the ones who start questioning the brief or dwell in highly philosophical conversations. They want to do their job and do it efficiently. They very much rely on a collaborative team, who are certain about their tasks to be done. Though they are secure in their ways, they do not close themselves from discussions. Suggestions are appreciated to be data-based and emerge from clear facts in order for them to be worth considering.

The Pragmatic Achiever

This Archetype is very open to new information. They arrive from a discipline outside the Service Design world. They are here to learn, as they believe multidisciplinary teams and transdisciplinary approaches are key to great results. Though they are open to learning and experimenting since their academic background is not in Service Design related field, they can get uncertain and hesitant at times, as for them it is important to understand the context and the connections between things, in order to internalise and take ownership of them.

7.3 Ideation Sessions

7.3.1 Hacking the “Crazy 8”

After having determined the initial focus area of this thesis as well as User Archetypes, all informed by the research question: **“How might we support (service) design professionals in practising bias-aware and ethically-driven design, so that they become more prone to identify their assumptions and preconceptions from the start of the process?”** We had conducted a first ideation session that was designed to ignite dialogues and perspectives into a potential solution and outcome of this work that would also serve to earlier defined user archetypes described in Section 7.2.

Workshop Design & Proceedings

To do so, the activity had been formulated in the form of a 1:1 workshop. The exercise was a fusion of brainstorming with support of the “Crazy 8 Method” (Hermanto, 2021) attributed to three main categories determining the feasibility of the ideas. “Crazy 8 Method”, is a brainstorming technique in which the participants each have one minute to bring one idea to the table, which results in 8 different ideas per person. However, to ensure that the creative process is more guided and would address possibilities that could be realistic to execute, the categories added to support idea generation were as follows:

- **What makes the most sense to do? -** Based on gathered information, and is feasible with our given resources, knowledge, and time.
- **What would be great to do?** - It is probably a lot of work. Might require a change in perspective, but feasible with our given resources, knowledge, and time.
- **What would we do, if we had all resources and time?** - Wildest dreams.

The task was to reflect on the research question by bringing up contributions on some first potential, actionable and tangible ways in which the problem can be addressed. That way, as a result of the activity, 6 ideas were generated for each of the criteria, giving 18 unique ideas to address the research question

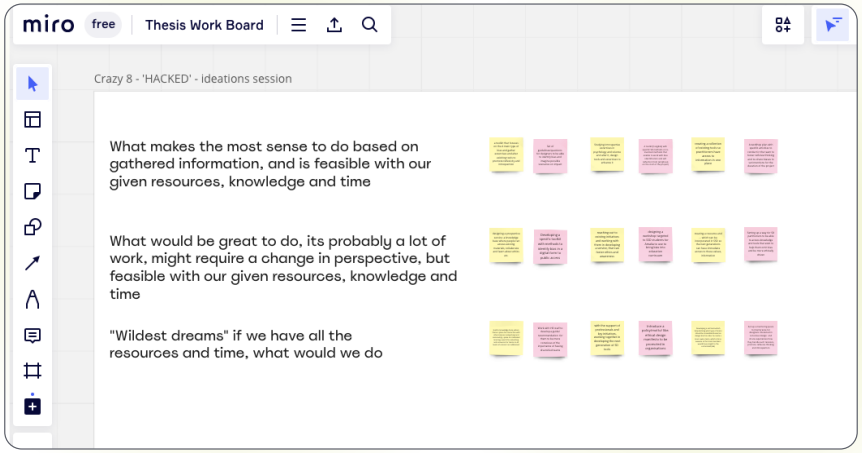


Figure 13: Hacked Crazy 8 activity - generated ideas, snippet from Miro

The following step in the process was to categorise the results of the session into themed clusters, which were as follows:

- **Community & Knowledge Base -** Designing a prospective service: a knowledge base where people can access existing materials, collaborate and learn about ethics and challenges connected to omitting bias in the process.

- **Setting the Scene -** #1 Introduce a policy/motto - like a manifesto, to be promoted in organisations; #2 Team workshops foster reflective thinking and create space for bias co-sharing before the start of the project.

- **Toolkit** - Develop a specific toolkit with methods to support bias identification from the start of the design process.

- **Future generations -** Workshop or a resource for SSD students to be incorporated into the program so that they can obtain immediate access to these values.

Figure 14: Hacked Crazy 8 activity - identified clusters, snippet from Miro

The current clusters and their contents provided the initial feeling of the possible direction of this project to take. The clustering brings various levels of granularity and is in some way interconnected. For example - the Toolkit cluster describes a more general approach of equipping designers with specific tools and methods to identify bias and opens up a possibility to further investigate what concrete methods could be developed and incorporated. On the other hand, designing a workshop plan (Setting the scene and Future generations cluster) could be toolkit based, however, the focus would lean on serving as a sequential, guided process for designers to go through at the beginning of the project.

Another aspect that provides options to define the solution in more depth is choosing a specific target when it comes to design professionals - it can be done by focusing on academic (e.g. Service Systems Design programme) students, practising designers, or organisations.

As mentioned, this activity had been designed to open up conversations that would inspire the initial concept development. However, to ensure a more collaborative process and step away from the current point of view, another ideation session involving participants had taken place.
In the coming section, the reader can find a detailed flow of the said activity, as well as the main outcomes that are to support this concept development.

7.3.2 Collaborative Brainstorming

After our internal ideation session, our aim was to reach out to our fellow students and have a brainstorming session with them. Our focus was, to lead the brainstorming in a way that sets the frame of the session, by providing them with our insight statements to get to know the topic, and also our research question, in order to ideate based on it.

The workshop was structured in a way that allowed us to leave space for all the participants, and not influence them with the results of our conclusions. The workshop took 1 hour and 15 minutes and was carried out online in Miro, with 5 participants and us, the coordinators. The participants were our classmates, second year Masters student from the SSD programme, which indicates some bias in answers, as our experiences and theoretical knowledge are very similar, at least its foundation.

Workshop Design

We started the workshop by briefly introducing the topic, with the support of our insight statements and research question.

- **Round 1 -** In the first round, we asked the participants to generate ideas and reflect on the research question we presented. In the process, the students raised relevant questions about bias, focused on general factors that can alter the design process, and concrete actions to consider in order to act in an ethical manner, but also highlighted societal dilemmas connected to ethics and design practice. This stage served as a warm-up for them to reflect on the research question and the topic, but also to generate materials for the next activity.

- **Round 2 -** This round included the reveal of our existing clusters from Ideation Session 1, and the exercise to start synthesising ideas that share some attributes. For the clustering exercise, we revealed our clusters developed earlier in the 1:1 ideation session (see section 7.3.1), and suggested the participants either use the existing ones – after briefly presenting each to them – or create new ones.

- **Round 3 -** For this exercise, we used the Thinking Hat method (De Bono, 2010) in order to guide critical reflection on the previously generated ideas and clusters. The participants could use the following hats to reflect on the ideas:
  Red hat - Feelings: what are the first impressions, gut feelings?
  Black hat - Cautions: what will not work about it?
  Yellow hat - Benefits: what is good about it?
  Green hat - Creativity: solutions (possible solutions to black hat problems)
  Blue hat - Process: how would it impact the design process?

- **Round 4 -** In the final round we briefly presented the Archetypes previously developed in the project and started a quick discussion about how possible solutions can meet archetype needs. Furthermore, opened up possible other user clusters, like the option of including a non-human archetype.

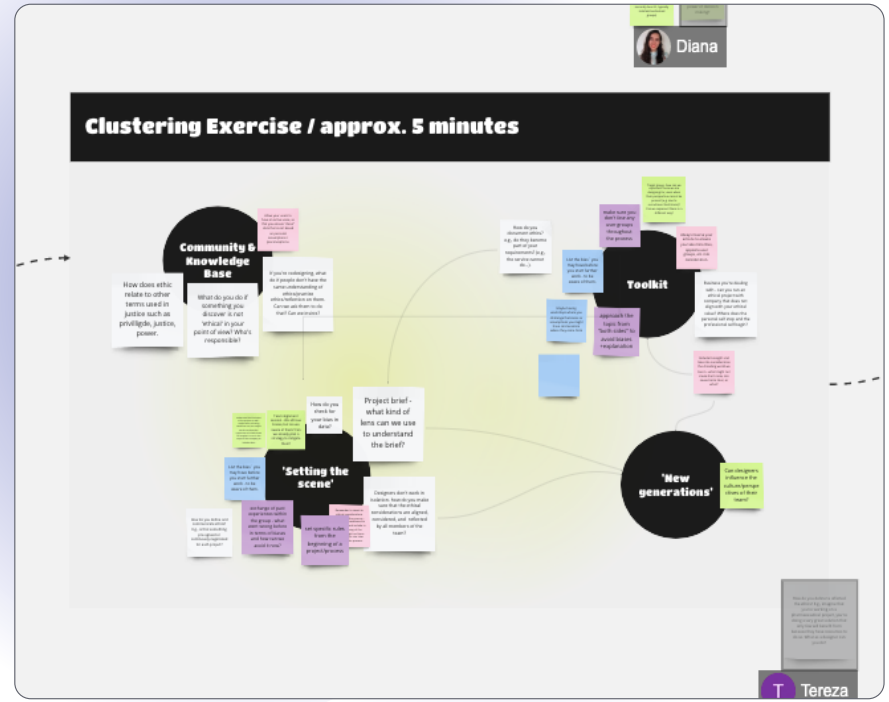


Figure 15: Clustering Exercise at the Collaborative Brainstorming Workshop, snippet from Miro

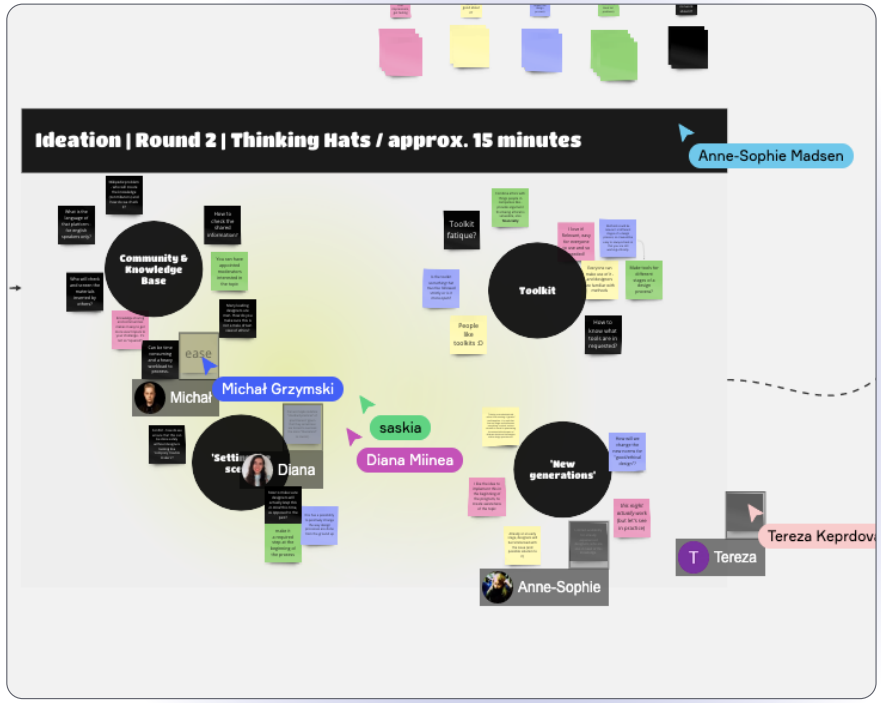


Figure 16: Thinking Hats Exercise at the Collaborative Brainstorming Workshop, snippet from Miro

Workshop Reflections & Futher Internal Work

- **Re-clustering exercise -** Once the workshop was completed, we realised the need to re-cluster the notes which participants created, as we assumed time constraints and the security which the predetermined groups provided might have created less precise groups, with loosely fitting content. Therefore we re-evaluated the groups and realised taking a step back, and creating clusters connected to their focus, rather than trying to fit them under a possible path of solution can be a more fruitful approach. As it enabled us to consider all comments from the participants and to develop our final solution knowing we regarded all relevant insights. The newly defined clusters aim to provide insights connected to intention setting, process, and questions regarding tensions and difficulties in connection to societal issues and design in general.

- **Need to reframe the Research Question -** After re-clustering the notes created during the workshop, we felt the need to revisit our research question, in order to refine it based on new insights. In the next chapter, we discuss the iteration of our research question.

8. Iterating on the Research Question

Based on the discussions and emerging topics of the workshop, we felt the need to refine our research question to create a sentence that collects all ideation and workshop insights, as well as sets the tone when it comes to possible outcomes of the project. At this stage, we used the Gut Check exercise by the IDEO Design Kit (IDEO, n.d.-c) to keep our intuitions and gut feelings regulated and make sure that we are aware of feasibility and other key factors when it comes to the possible final solution. During the exercise we discussed our most potential ideas, their drivers, and barriers, but also if we as individuals found it something that interests us, as we felt it is also an important factor to enjoy this final stage of our formal education on the postgraduate level. We organised our ideas in Miro and made sure to brainstorm and have a one-on-one discussion about the potential route to take when it comes to our final solution.

The following were defined, as the building stones, or rather - values of our final solution:

- In connection to values, our solution should carry **intention-setting, introspection, and reflexivity.**
- In connection to feasible outcomes based on ideation and workshop discussion: **an activity that can promote the values mentioned prior.**
- As to when it should happen, we had an unchanged stand that due to the need to promote intention-setting, introspection, and reflexivity **from the beginning, and as a cardinal part of the process,** such outcome should be at the beginning of the design process.

The iteration of the research question, therefore, is as follows:

„How might we create an intention-setting activity for (service) design professionals that would support their bias identification through reflexive and introspective thinking from the start of the design process?

9. Developing & Framing the Concept - N°2

Second phase of the concept framing and development had been initiated as a result of the research question re-iteration. With the new, slightly more narrowed focus that is - **“How might we create an intention-setting activity for (service) design professionals that would support their bias identification through reflexive and introspective thinking from the start of the design process?”**, some of the more detailed investigations can now take place, to result in a thought-through, data-informed outcome.

In order to further develop our concept, we created the following actionable steps:

Step 1.

At this stage, definition and some initial exploration of what bias is and how it is handled by designers is known. However, the coming chapter will focus on looking into the start of the design specifically and bring up some examples and ways of activities and actionable approaches that can be found and which serve bias identification and reflexive thinking.

Step 2.

Inspired by this chapter’s step 1 findings, as well as all the insights gathered so far, the concept’s founding stones will be defined in more detail by looking at possible solution design. The objective is to define the nature of the intention-setting activity, and its content, and to ensure that it addresses the core values like reflexive and introspective thinking and bias identification. It should also contain the necessary characteristics to be actionable and to serve design practitioners in addressing the problem.

Step 3.

As a last step in this chapter, the initial, low-fidelity solution will be presented and evaluated with the help of a pilot testing activity.

9.1 Dealing with bias - Good Practice Examples

How to deal with bias from the start of the design process?

The topic of bias in design processes and how greatly they impact each other had been widely discussed in design communities (Benson, 2016). As a result, there are several actionable ways that designers had shared to work with one's bias in various contexts. As determined through the current data collection in this work, reflexive, inward thinking and introspection is the key to an ethically driven process and bias identification. Based on that, the forthcoming section will contain an overview of the chosen techniques and approaches that act in favour of omitting projections, own beliefs, and preconceptions of the design with a focus on introspective practices. What shall also be stressed is that this overview contains a selection of strategies that at the time seem feasible to implement at the start of the design process, to keep the narrative within the scope of this thesis.

- One of the available examples of how this can be practised is a re-developed Design Thinking Model created by the 'Mind Lab' (Arsbi, 2021) that includes an **"Introspect"** phase, before empathising phase. According to the author - "In this new stage, participants identify their own values, goals, life priorities, as well as their spheres of influence. Introspection is meant to help participants draw the lines of who they are, for them to step over those lines and truly empathise with others, not only being aware of their thoughts and biases but also understanding their own interests and goals

Zooming into the proposed introspective phase, there are certain chosen areas that come up throughout this investigation:

- **Designer's Power & Privilege Literacy** - The dissonance between the designer's own perspective and the position of the users they are to engage with in the design process had been a recurring theme that had been brought up in this thesis throughout the undertaken research activities. One of the possible ways to introspectively address this issue is by analysing the designer's potential privilege and power dynamics toward a certain user group in a Power Literacy Worksheet developed by Maya Goodwill (2020). It contains a handful of activities enabling designers to explore how they are positioned by assessing the existing power imbalance.

  One of the examples is an adaptation of the privilege wheel that would help to uncover the designer's privilege in juxtaposition to the users, by placing one's position in a social context onto criteria defined on the wheel (e.g. education, race, ability, class, etc). What follows are the reflexive thinking exercises that are to address, for example: "What privilege do I have? What advantages do I experience in my daily life as a result? What biases and blind spots might I have brought into this project as a result?"

- **Identifying own perspectives -** Another possible dimension in which one can keep in touch with their bias is understanding of the differences that exist between all human beings that can be linked but are not limited to personal experiences and perspectives that shape us. One of the activities that can help to introspectively analyse how our memories and coded presumptions influence the way we could be perceiving the design assignment is conducting an exercise that exposes our values.
  As an example, Starburst Identity Chart (Fancing History, 2022) serves to support creating one's identity overview by writing down core qualities that a person believes to be fundamental in determining who they are. Visual representation in this case is crucial, as it helps to materialise what could be normally taken for granted.

- **Deconstruction of the current beliefs -** Feeding from the words of Marc Steen in the Expert Interviews chapter, ethics thrive where there is room for asking awkward, uncomfortable questions. This is where designers have a chance to focus on deconstructing their presumptions early. An exercise example that is often used in design processes, but can also be helpful in understanding what are the possible reasons for the given biases to exist is defining an origin. If bias is treated as a problem, then it must have its 'root cause' (Fahd Rajeh, 2020). Here, conducting a "5 Why's" exercise can be useful. A set of follow-up 'why' questions addressing the given problem by deepening the understanding of the challenge with every 'why' asked.

  Another example is the Assumption Mapping exercise (Schoups, 2017). The foundation here is being able to distinguish between facts (known) and assumptions (unknown) versus the level of importance (important/ unimportant) when e.g. preparing for user research. These values are plotted into two opposite axes. In this way, the designers can expose their initial preconceptions towards a given topic and expose ones that need extra attention due to their high impact.

The examples introduced above were to provide an initial outlook on the actionable ways and tools in which handling bias in the design process can be done. In the coming phases, some of them will stand for inspiration for the final solution development in Chapter 10.

9.2 Founding Stones of The Solution

This section will strive to bring the final concept closer, by establishing the context, as well as the founding stones upon which it will be built. Said founding stones serve as 'design principles' (Rosala, 2020) supporting data informed decision making.

First of all, the solution is being developed in the belief that a deeper understanding of oneself - as in why we see people, topics, and projects in a certain way - can be achieved by moments of self-reflection and introspection. Currently, as concluded through this research, bringing ethics into conversations is highly dependent on the presence of ethics-driven designers in teams, whilst the teams themselves can lack diversity. The attempt to change this issue from a systemic level could be challenging. What can be done, however, is to first, equip designers individually with a supporting set of exercises that encourage reflexive thinking from an individual level, and then help them in exchanging perspectives in teams to create a shared understanding of the importance of this matter.

Revisiting the words of one of the interviewees, Marc Steen - ethical practice is embedded in three key spheres: reflection, inquiry, and deliberation as well as 'Heart, Head, Hand' (Steen, 2023; Appendix C) which this solution will address.

Based on the above, the solution will be built on the following principles:

- **Actionable -** as expressed in the literature review, ethics, and practice can often be problematic to connect. Having said that, one of the objectives was to ensure that through the solution, ethics, and practice will be joined together to serve designers. This way, we are creating a supported way for design practitioners to act through activities that can ignite and support bias identification and uncover their initial assumptions.

- **Reflexive and Introspective -** the second main principle of the solution is that it shall be based on exercises that promote reflexive and introspective thinking. This enables challenging one's beliefs by shifting their focus toward understanding one's underlying assumptions and biases. With it, levels of empathy are challenged as well which is a key to Service Design projects, especially when engaging with users and stakeholders.

- **Input vs. Output -** Based on our findings, most of the existing tools for ethical assessment are addressing the output by trying to analyse the possible harmful outcomes and implications of the solution developed. On the contrary, this thesis' solution addresses the input, meaning considers the necessity to ensure that what is 'put in' to design is conscious and bias-aware. In this case, said input can be understood as a mindset and beliefs through which designers will approach the project, users and stakeholders that they are to engage with.

- **Unveiling & Challenging -** Once again following up on the words of Marc Steen, what is necessary for ethics is “making explicit what otherwise would remain implicit” **(Appendix C)**. Here, the solution should expose these ‘hidden’ presumptions and materialise them, so that they can be properly addressed and handled. If they remain uncovered and unspoken, they can be overlooked and potentially bring a negative impact on the design process.

- As Marc Steen advises, these processes shall be challenging, “awkward’, or “uncomfortable” **(Appendix C).** They should invoke emotions, as only then they are truthful. Additionally, as designers do not work in isolation, this set of exercises shall be applicable to be executed by the individual and/or the design teams.

- **Visual -** Finally, as the solution is being developed for designers, who often find themselves working with visual materials, the solution developed will be based on visual elements as well. This element found its confirmation throughout the interviews with experts, as well as tool benchmarking in the above section.

9.3 Initial Solution Development

At this stage, by having a well-established outlook, supported by the material coming from data collection in this thesis, and the above described founding stones, it is now possible to draft the concept for a final solution.

The solution framing activity had taken place in an internal ideation session, in order to reflect on information gathered up until this stage, furthermore, to define said frame of the final solution.

The session resulted in the following:

- **Format -** As addressed in the research question, the goal is to create an “intention-setting activity”. Based on this, it has been decided that the solution will be formed in the shape of **a design workshop**, as it is something engaging and actionable. By designing a guided sequence of exercises, we can ensure that the tools that are to be part of it are used in an appropriate context, enabling the designers to actively participate, as well as achieve a certain, actionable goal and output. Moreover, workshops are an indispensable part of the design processes, especially in Service Design, which is a potent ground for it to be utilised in practice (Penin, 2018).
- **Setup -** Reflexive and introspective practices are the cornerstone qualities that should be addressed and exercised during this workshop. As mentioned, the role of the individual and their ability to acknowledge underlying assumptions and biases towards a project, users, stakeholders, and such is key. However, what makes for the design team after all is a constellation of individuals, each having their own prejudices that can influence the design. Hence, the importance of bringing such conversations to the table on the group level can not be ignored.
  The overall workshop has been designing a way that eventually, it can be **executed individually or in a team of designers** including someone, who takes on the role of facilitation.

- **A moment in the design process -** Alluding back to the established research question, the intention is to have such a workshop conducted e**arly in the design process**. This decision has been made as a conclusion, that setting intention is crucial for the outcome of the overall process.

- **Workshop Design -** The workshop design had emerged based on the strategic decision that each part should serve **a specific purpose** and support the discussion of bias from new angles. With a highly important, individual perspective to be later enriched with a group discussion.

As a next step, to build strong reasoning behind our final solution we divided the workshop design into four main phases: **icebreaker, individual exercise, group exercise and a final part** which promotes the implementation of the learnings

into the design process and serves reflexivity from different angles.
The stages were developed with the support of The Golden Circle coined by Simon Sinek (Sinek, 2011), where addressed key questions were formed to support our aim with each of the exercise:

What? What is this phase for?
How? How can it be achieved?
Why? Why is it needed?

As a result, the low-fidelity workshop structure had been created with the intention to define it in more detail. On the next page (p.77, Table 2), the reader can find a detailed description and elaboration of each workshop phase and its purpose.

The next step of the solution development was to brainstorm the possible tools, methods, and activities that could be plotted into each of the four phases, to support their desired goal. As for inspiration, commonly known service design methods, ethical toolkits as well as other examples of had been discussed and evaluated to find a potential fit. Additionally, tools and techniques supporting bias identification brought up by designers in the Micro Intervention in section 7.1.2, as well as the secondary research findings presented in section 7.1.1 and 9.1 were taken into account to inspire this concept development. At the end, activity selection was conducted, followed up with getting into the details of each exercise to tweak it and redesign it, so that it served the solution and the desired workshop format.

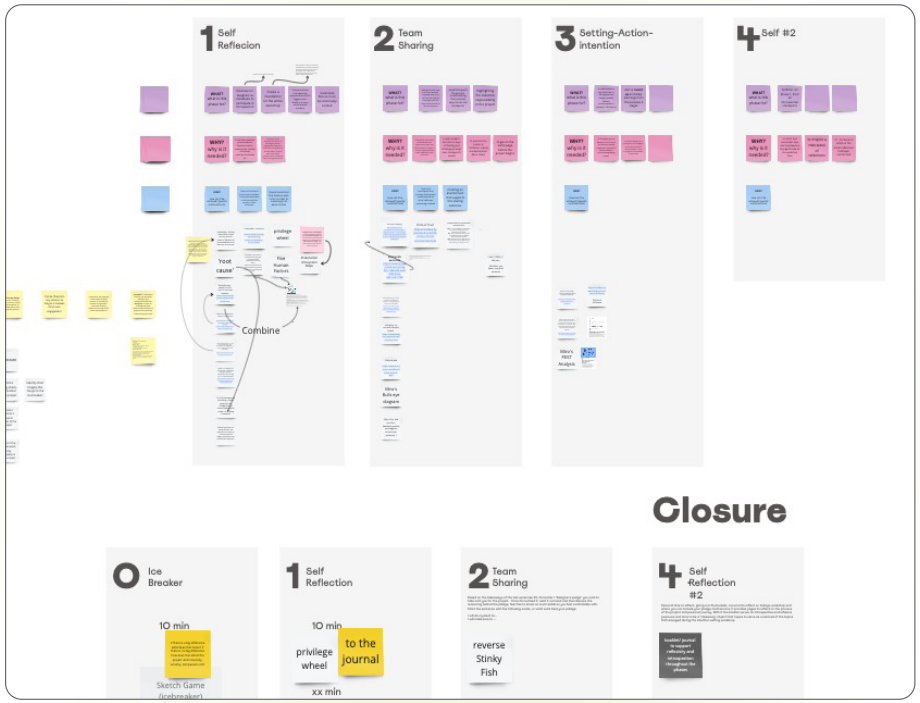


Figure 17: Initial Solution Development Process, snippet from Miro

	Description	What is this phase for?	Why is this phase needed?	How can it be achieved?
1. Intro	this phase support reflexivity by supporting the participant in opening up, so the workshop can be meaningful	To ground people in the context and prepare for the challenges of the workshop	To spark the energy in the room and motivate participants to active participation. To address the issue from an abstract level, to set the tone for the remaining phases	Introducing a short, playful ice-breaking exercise encouraging exchanges in perspective and setting the scene
2. Internalize	this step promotes a deeper introspection. It supports in uncovering on the individual's personal stands and views	To create a foundation for the entire workshop To address exercises for designers as individuals To participate in introspection, and o expose personal bias and privilege for a more ethical project outcome To 'materialise' one's preconceptions, so they can be consciously curated	It uncovers possible preconceptions based on earlier experiences, societal structures, and unconscious biases It is creating an "extra moment" in the design process, to come to terms with and be conscious of underlying biases that every one of us carries	Introduce a set of chosen tools and techniques that prompt a designer to immerse themselves in the introspective analysis of their standpoint
3. Share & Take	serves participants to share perspectives and gain a wider understanding of possible biases and views on the group level	To round up and draw learnings from the previous stages Adding the extra layer to the conversation by stepping away from self and sparring the challenges with the team that will work on the same project To openly address and define what to pay attention to throughout the design process	To promote ethical values in forthcoming design projects from both an individual and team level To turn the thoughts and conclusions into a tangible output that can be then addressed/kept in mind throughout the remainder of the project To highlight the collective responsibility in the project	Tools and techniques that prompt sharing and conversations Creating an environment that supports dialogue Creating an exercise with a tangible, precise output so that it can be used/revisited in the later phases
4. Iterate	promotes taking ownership over the learnings of the exercise series, supports in implementing and reflecting on the insights throughout the design process	To support participants in actively reflecting in their professional practice and whether they are intentional about it	To underline the importance of practising reflexivity and introspection as a core of their work	By creating a final exercise which serves as a reminder to stay in touch with the uncovered insights throughout their work, so they can make conscious decisions in the upcoming, key moments of the project

Table 2: Detailed description and elaboration of each workshop phase and its purpose. Supported by Simon Sinek's "Golden Circle" (2011)

9.3.1 Small-scale pilot testing

After having created and sketched a low-fidelity workshop prototype, at this stage, it had been decided that before committing to the designed workshop structure in the state at the time, we could benefit from conducting a brief, pilot testing activity.

Pilot testing is a procedure borrowed from software engineering, often used in digital user-experience projects that aims on evaluating the developed prototype, or even procedure design before the official testing round involving a number of prospective users (Schade, 2015). Getting feedback early in the development process can help to 'fail fast' (Babineaux & Krumboltz, 2013) and adjust the most prominent mistakes, before polishing the concept and presenting it as final. Moreover, it introduces an outside-in perspective, which is of high value, especially in projects like a master's thesis. For this purpose, three SSD students had been recruited, taken through the concept, and provided us with feedback on their initial impressions.

In summary, what has been discussed was:

- the design and details of specific activities,
- the context in which this workshop can take place,
- implications of bringing up sensitive and personal topics in a forum of a company.

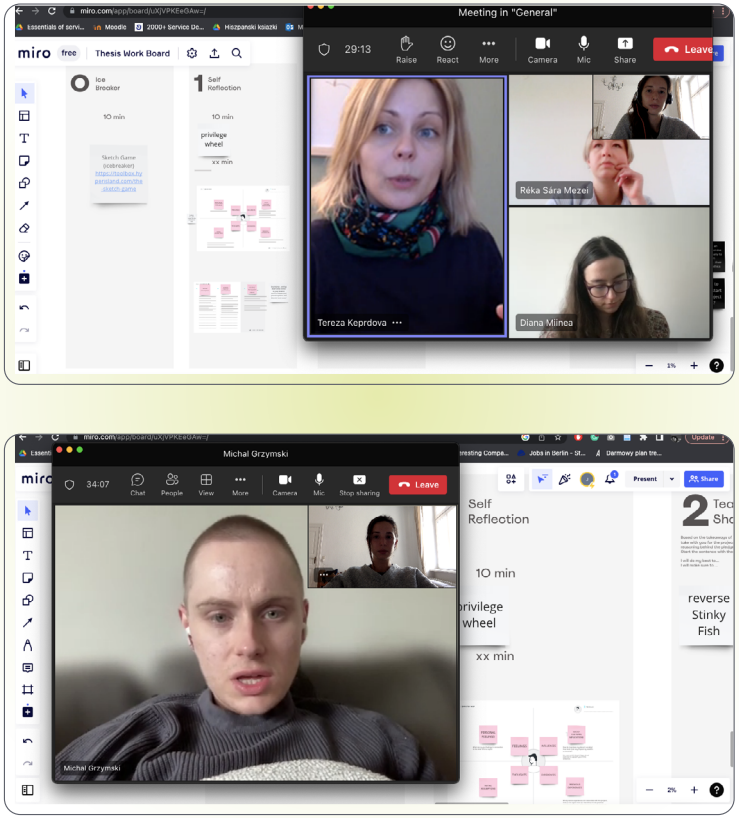


Figure 18: Pilot Testing of the initial solution, snippet from Miro & Microsoft Teams

This testing session was a closing remark to the Develop phase, and even though this was a small, casual testing session, it did bring a lot of meaningful discussions and points of view to be considered and iterated on for the final solution development.

In the next chapter, the reader will find a detailed and visual, high-fidelity presentation of the designed solution.

Detailed concept devlelopment

Ideation & brainstorming

Solution testing

Evaluation

Deliver Phase

10. Presenting The Final Solution

Intention Setting Workshop for Service Designers

This chapter is an opening to the final, Deliver phase where the solution will be presented in detail. **It a replacement for the traditional 'Product Report'** that is usually attached and handed in as a separate document.

The entire workshop materials, including instructions, necessary canvases for web and print, as well as additional materials can be found in Appendix H.

Workshop Purpose

Ethical considerations should be the driver of design projects, so they are life-centred, and with it human-centred. However, ethical assessment is often solely focused on already-developed solutions and assessing what harm it can generate.

However, with this workshop, we are encouraged to take a step back.
Why? - Because the beginning of the project sets the tone for everything that is to take place during and after. Once the intention is clear and genuine, the probability that an aware mindset will be exercised throughout the process is higher, as opposed to treating ethics as a topic that is 'hoped to jump in at some point'.

We hope that the most satisfying outcome of this workshop is primarily, to promote reflexivity and introspection as ways of practising more ethically oriented and aware design.

This workshop is not an attempt to solve all the existing problems, but rather to ignite and encourage self-work and reflective practice, and by it, emphasise that ultimately - the change starts within.
We hope that the most satisfying outcome of this workshop is primarily, to promote reflexivity and introspection as ways of practising more ethically oriented and aware design. With the intention-setting workshop, we do not predict to change the world to guarantee an ethical outcome. Rather, we hope to plant a seed in the designer's mind from the start of a process, and with it contribute to a more ethical future, filled with considerate and intentionally designed solution which is human-centred.

Through it, we ask to consider difficult topics at the beginning of a project, and also, to ask ourselves:

- In what ways am I biased?
- How may my biases affect my work?
- How can I become aware of these preconceptions and their influence?

By opening up these questions, we hope that designers can utilise the power of reflexivity and introspection so that they become more aware of their existing preconceptions from the start. With it, we hope to support practitioners in creating more ethically.

Context

This workshop can be valuable at different stages of the project.
At the beginning of the project- When a project and the context is already known. The goal, in this case, is for this particular brief to become the center of the entire workshop activity - it can be zoomed in and out of the scope according to needs. For example, it can be of benefit before interacting with the outside world - researching and interviewing users and/or stakeholders that are critical for the project.
These points in a project timeline are general suggestions, although it is advised to always make sure to use the workshop where it feels the most valuable for the specific project. Therefore take the guiding questions in the workshop with a grain of salt, and always answer them within the context that is aimed to be reflected on.

Who is this workshop for?

Bringing back User Archetypes developed in this project (see Section 7.2) the workshop is dedicated to designers who feel ethics are crucial in building better services and design solutions (The In-Crowd Hand Raisers), team leaders (The Master Advocators) who want ethics to be the spine of projects and to introduce these values to their team (The Pragmatic Achievers). And anyone who sees design as more than a job that pays the bills (The Wanderer Eager Learners), or is interested in the 'designerly' ways of working.
While team exercises can be of great benefit to boost reflexivity, doing solo introspection is always beneficial as well. The workshop is designed in a way that in case of a desire to run through the exercises alone, parts where team-sharing activities are mentioned can be skipped. Alternatively, what is encouraged is to discuss what has been uncovered with colleagues and friends. Involving others in these conversations is valuable regardless of the time and space.
As of industry limitations, the workshop is recommended to be used especially in the context of public services, or commercial services of "high stake" that entail sensitive subjects such as eg. health, social relationships, etc.

What are the details of this workshop?

This workshop can be carried out both offline and online. Every exercise is based on a template that contains a short, specific description of the task to be completed. The template can be used digitally or printed out for each one of the participants. It is a workshop full of drawing, writing, sharing, and/or discussing thoughts that aim to boost reflexive thinking, uncover existing biases, and assess their possible impact on the design process. The ultimate outcome is a "Designer's Pledge" - formulated, actionable sentence that is to become a motivation, a compass, and a constant reminder to lead the work and the remainder of the process in connection to the identified values.
As time has been brought up many times in this thesis research as the biggest enemy of implementing a reflexive, ethically driven approach in design. Due to this fact, the objective is for this workshop to be short enough that distributing resources for it to take place would not be a major obstacle, nonetheless, we aimed at including exercises that would enable us to explore some topics in more depth, where some are just scratching the surface of the matter.

10.1 Introduction - Unlock

Icebreaker & Discussion Exercise - Theme Card Sketching

This activity is a group drawing exercise borrowed from Hyper Island's method toolbox (n.d.). Participants are going to receive a "Theme Card" containing a common word and will create a drawing of what they associate with that word. It is likely that one's life experiences will lead to drawing different things, or the same thing in a different way. This exercise can show how distinct ideas can we have, even about simple terms. Once the drawings are created and uncovered by the team, it is crucial to reflect on the results and what they might entail.

The full version of the exercise and detailed instructions can be found in **Appendix H.**

Guide for reflection

- Are the drawings very different? If they are, why?
- What might that mean when working in a group, or with users, and stakeholders?
- Can the differences hinder your collaboration? Can they support it?
- On the contrary, if the drawings are very similar: what does that mean when working on a project?
- Can it affect the process and/or the outcome of the project?

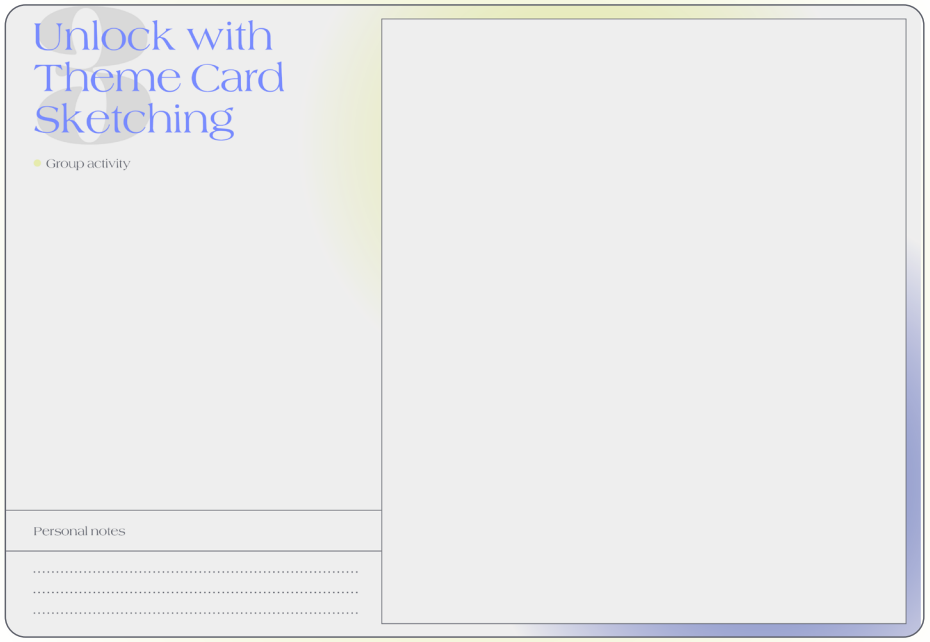


Figure 19: Workshop Canvas - Exercise 1 - Theme Card Sketching

10.2 Internalize

The second phase - Internalise is built on three key exercises. It is also a foundation and critical phase of this entire workshop that can be exercised by the individual participants as well.

Privilege Wheel Exercise

As a first exercise to bring participant(s) closer to the topic of focus, the “Privilege Wheel” inspired by Maya Goodwill’s work (Goodwill, 2020) had been selected. Understanding one’s position, privilege, and possible power imbalance in context can be of support in investigating the root cause of biases and preconceptions. This canvas is made to be an introspective exercise, not to be shared or discussed in a forum, unless desired. As this activity can touch on sensitive topics, parts of this exercise can be skipped, or the whole if needed.

Privilege Wheel serves as a supporting exercise to materialise and expose how one’s position in society influences perspectives on the project (and/or users, stakeholders) but also, helps to understand what personal qualities might be worth paying attention to. At the same time, it encourages the consideration of where the tensions connected to the “Privilege Wheel” come from. The full version of the exercise and detailed instructions can be found in **Appendix H.**

Guide for reflection

- How did you feel when you were filling in the canvas?
- Did your place on the wheel surprise you?
- If not - are you comfortable with it?
- How can your privilege influence the project - your understanding, user interaction, decisions you take?
- What can your place mean to you as a designer?
- How can you utilise the insights it provides you?
- What are the things you need to be aware of and make sure to be considerate about?

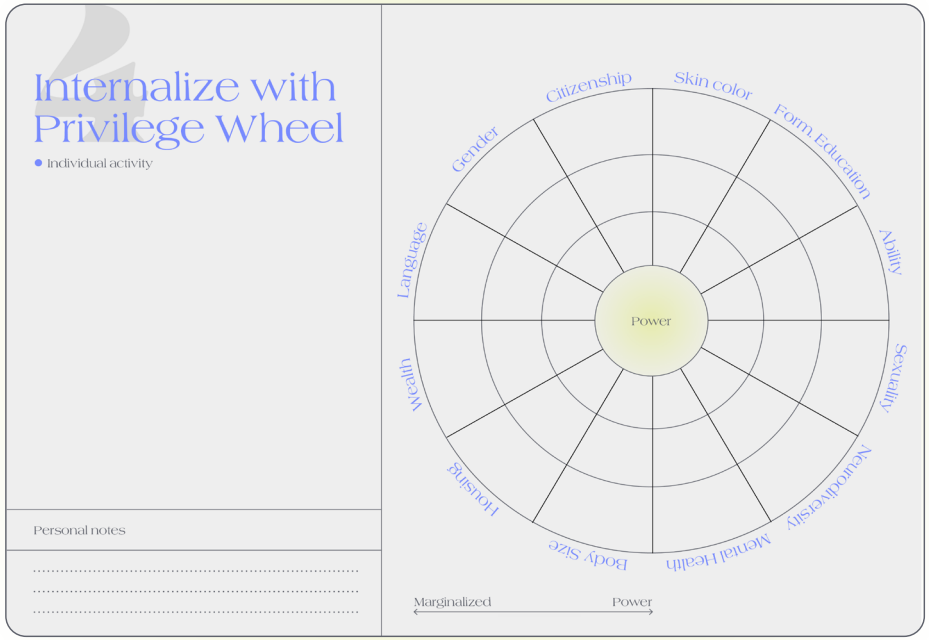


Figure 20: Workshop Canvas - Exercise 2 - Internalize with Privilege Wheel

Self-Empathy Map Exercise

Designers often engage with tools like, for example, Empathy Map (Fereira et al., 2015) which is supposed to answer the questions of needs and wants of users at the core.
However, how often do we think of ourselves in the context of the project? Are we in touch with how we are feeling about it? What preconceptions or biases might already exist at this stage? How does personal and professional experience influence how we think?

This 'self-empathy map' is a canvas that aims to spark reflections about participants' feelings and intentions. Instead of the traditional split into four quadrants ' say, think, do, feel', the canvas had been re-designed to address - "personal feelings, thoughts, influences, and experiences." All are positioned around the participants and aim to discover one's deeper associations and thoughts which might affect their views and actions. Additionally, this exercise is to help navigate these challenging topics, making them explicit and encouraging to map out how one's reality as an individual might play a role in the context.

The full version of the exercise and detailed instructions can be found in **Appendix H.**

Figure 21: Workshop Canvas - Exercise 3 - Self Empathy Map

Formulate Your Pledge Exercise

This exercise is to be built on the inputs from the “Self-Empathy Map” exercise. After having considered various layers and dimensions in which one’s perception, biases, and preconceptions can influence the project, it is time to assess the potential impact and seek actionable ways to work with it.

The frame of this activity had been created and inspired by the “Hypothesis Generation” canvas. (Service Design Tools, n.d.). It provides a structured way of analysing the so-far collected information from the previous activities and supports reflecting on more tangible examples of consequences that imported biases can bring to the design process. What follows is a prompt to ideate on possible solutions on how to make sure that these presumptions will not negatively affect one’s contribution to the project and their overall attitude.
As a last step, all input from this exercise is to be turned into an actionable, single sentence, a ‘pledge’ or a motto, that are to guide the participants in the later phases of the project.

The structure is based on the four main columns that are to be filled out one by one:

- **Defined presumptions -** This column with a set of supporting questions helps to identify how the inputs, biases, and assumptions from the previous exercise can be linked.

  A suggested way to frame these ‘insights’ can be:
  - ‘I am assuming that…. because…’
  - ‘I wonder if…. because….’

- **Potential Impact -** In the second step, the material from the “defined presumptions” is used to reflect on how the assumptions listed can impact one’s approach to the project, users, stakeholders, etc.

  A way to frame these can be:
  - ‘Because I think that X I can …
  - If I do X then Y can potentially happen…

- **Improvement areas -** After defining the potential impact of one’s standpoint towards the project, this section is to list potential action points to help in making sure that defined presumptions do not negatively affect the design.

  - What should I pay extra attention to?
  - How can I curate my presumptions, so they support the process not hinder it?
  - Do I need to talk to my team to create a plan on how to approach this topic?

- **Drafting a pledge -** Based on the previous step: “Improvement areas” the following activity is to draft a pledge, which a participant will declare to stick to during the project. This pledge should serve as an “oath” to take on. It will be then shared with the group to discuss it and iterate on in the next, final phase of the workshop.
  The idea of a pledge as a way to close the workshop comes from firstly, the objective of turning ethics into projects to become actionable. Inspired by Simon Sinek’s “Find your Why” (Sinek et al., 2017) and how the said “Why”

question is answered, helps shift ethical considerations into a ‘purpose’ and the main driver of an individual in the design project. What is more, it is something that can be always revisited to remind us about the underlying values of the individual and a project, as a resemblance to the Ethical Design Manifesto (Balkan & Kalbag, 2015) mentioned in section 3.7.1 of this thesis.

The full version of the exercise and detailed instructions can be found in **Appendix H.**

The sentence can be started with the following words:

» “I will do my best to... (action/contribution) so that....(impact).”

» “I will make sure to ... (action/contribution) so that... (impact).”

Figure 22: Workshop Canvas - Exercise 4 - Formulating The Pledge

10.3 Share & Take

Unveil Your Pledge

As designers do not work in isolation, and their personal perspectives become collective responsibility when engaging with a project as a team, this exercise is a space to start a debate and exchange pledges to gain insight into others' main focus area, which will support them to be more aware in their practice.
The Unveiling begins with the participants sharing their drafted pledge by reading it out loud and then discussing the reasoning behind it. After the discussion takes place, participants will have some alone time to reflect and iterate on their pledges.

It is important to keep this exercise inclusive, therefore ensuring an environment where there is space for sharing, accepting, and also iterating on the ideas is advised. In case if this activity is done by the individual, it is encouraged to, if possible, use it as a conversation starter in other communities.

The full version of the exercise and detailed instructions can be found in **Appendix H.**

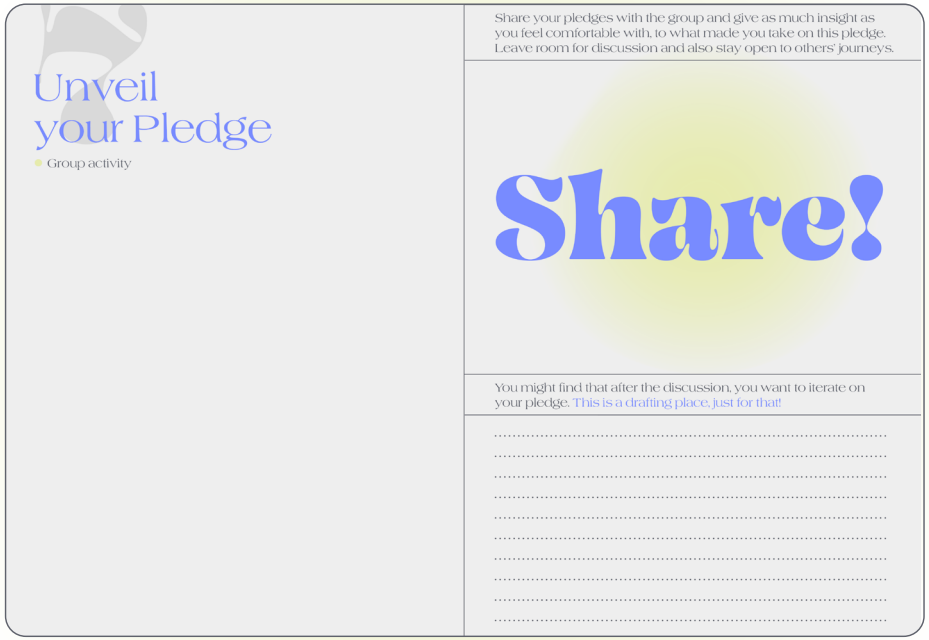


Figure 23: Workshop Canvas - Exercise 5 - Sharing The Pledge

Take Your Pledge

The next step of this workshop is to write down the final pledge version on the dedicated canvas, which can be then cut out to become an ‘artefact’ and a tangible takeaway from this workshop.
Revisiting the words of Marc Steen, this exercise is an opportunity to “make explicit what would otherwise remain implicit” **(Appendix C)**, which is one of the core qualities that support bringing ethics into the design process.

The full version of the exercise and detailed instructions can be found in **Appendix H.**

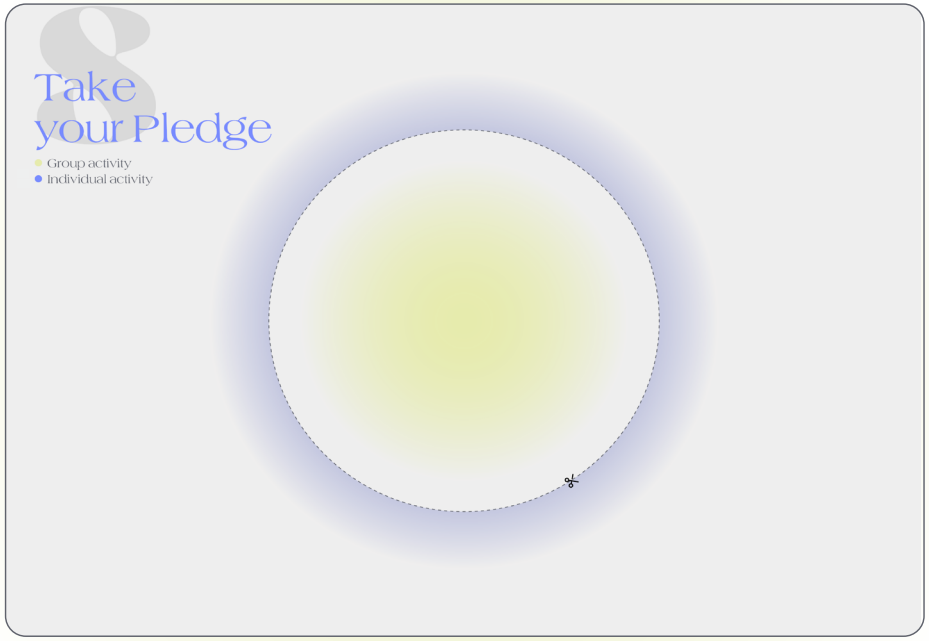


Figure 24: Workshop Canvas - Exercise 5 - Take Your Pledge

10.4 Iterate

Iterate with Your Pledge

Staying reflexive and dedicating time to carefully evaluating our standpoint is crucial throughout the process, not only at the start of it. As a closing remark, participants will be handed a canvas including guides for reflections for the upcoming phases of their process. On the sheet, they can find a set of inspirational questions that are to spark reflections in the critical moments of their project.
It is to ensure that their pledge will not become forgotten when the workshop ends and that they will carry the reflexive mindset all through.

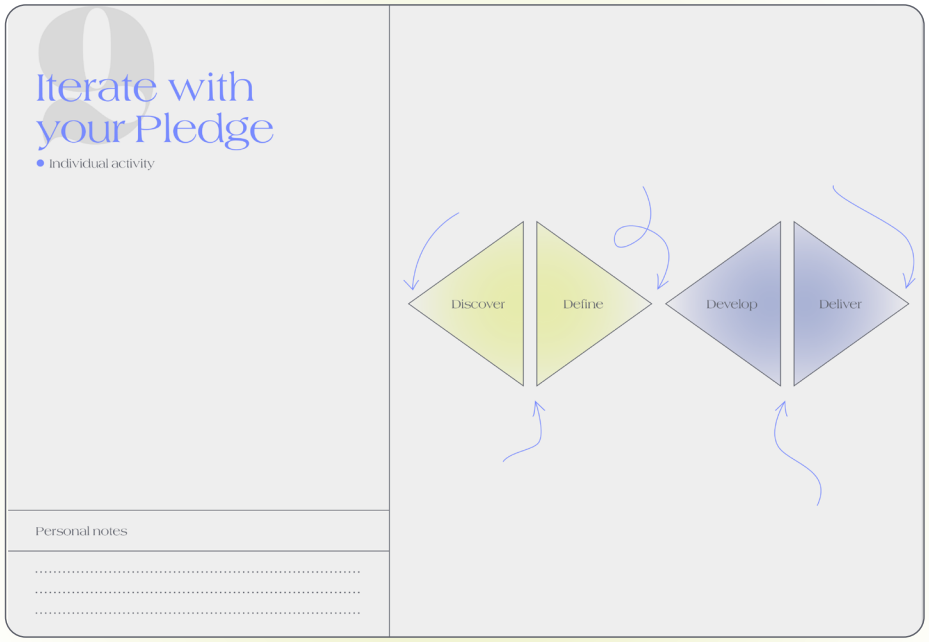


Figure 25: Workshop Canvas - Exercise 6 - Iterate with your pledge

Guide for reflection

- What are my presumptions about the project and its users?
- How does my pledge affect the data collection?
- How does my pledge affect the ideal scenarios we are going to create in this project?
- How does my pledge affect the established design principles?
- Did I thought of, and designed for the afterlife of the solution?

The full version of the exercise and detailed instructions can be found in **Appendix H.**

11. Solution Testing

As a closing remark to the delivery, one full day had been dedicated to testing and gathering feedback for its improvement. For this purpose, seven participants were recruited, among whom three were members of the Service Design Lab from AAU, two Service Systems Design Students, and a Senior Service Designer, Stéphanie Krus, whom we had been in contact with during Expert Interviews. Last but not least, Amalia R. - Service Designer & Researcher actively working in the field.

Testing Procedure

The procedure had taken place in a remote setting via the Miro collaboration tool and was conducted over four separate sessions of approximately 1 hour each.
As for the activity flow, firstly, the topic and the research question had been presented to provide the context, which was followed by a brief concept walk-through. Next, participants were given 20 minutes of individual time to study the workshop canvases in more detail and provide their comments, which then were elaborated on in a closing discussion.

The key objective was for the testers to be able to understand workshop instructions, flow, and activity descriptions without assistance. Secondly, they were asked to provide their impressions on the exercise's content, as well as possible areas of opportunities and threats when applied in real life.

Feedback Categories

The outcome was then evaluated and organised into the following priority categories:

- **Easy fixes -** things that are related to, for example, canvas design, spelling, or wording.
- **Will implement -** more elaborate changes related to activity flow or details, which were found as valuable and relevant critiques of the workshop material.
- **Discard -** ideas that had been discussed and ultimately not taken into account, mostly due to feasibility reasons.
- **For further work -** ideas, and opportunities on how to continue improving this workshop content.

Selected feedback and outcome of this testing procedure will be described in more detail in Section 11.2.

11.1 Solution Testing - Limitations

What is important to highlight is this testing procedure's viability (if the obtained information is accurate) and reliability (if the same testing procedure can be reproduced by others at a different time, but obtain similar results) (Bjørner, 2015).

- This thesis by no means serves as a quantitative study, therefore, the number of participants has been kept at seven only. It is not a representative number of the target group - service design and other design professionals. Nevertheless, the group was big enough to bring in new thoughts, perspectives, and ideas for improvement which was the desired goal of this activity.

- The intention was to ensure that the recruited testers would come from diverse standpoints - academic, as well as professional. This time, it was only possible to gather information from two designers working in the field.
  The ultimate goal would be to have at least a 50/50 split between academic and non-academic test participants.

- As this work revolves around bias, it can not be ignored that the overall testing procedure had been to some extent biased as well. That is firstly due to the fact that we had previously known the recruited participants, either from earlier interactions in the university setting or the mentioned expert interviews. What could ensure higher viability of data is if the testers would remain unknown to us, and vice versa.

Figure 26: Testing Procedure with Stéphanie

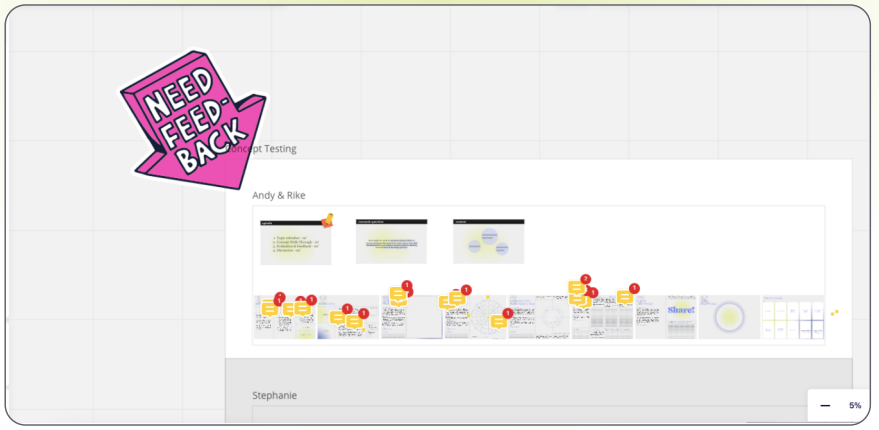


Figure 27: Testing Procedure - Miro Board

11.2 Solution Testing - Evaluation

This section is dedicated to diving deeper and discussing some of the chosen feedback and improvement areas obtained via the testing procedure.

- **Workshop "Discomfortness" -** First of all, the general impression of the workshop and chosen exercises according to one of the testing groups was that it can be intimidating and challenging, especially in the team setting. Nevertheless, referring to the Founding Stones of the solution (see Section 9.2) provoking difficult conversations and making workshop participants feel uneasy about what they discovered during the exercises is a first step into taking action and changing their patterns of thinking. Without confronting and materialising one's preconceptions and biases, said pattern can not be broken. Hence, the workshop design meets its objective.

- **Group vs. Individual -** Another discussion point among testing groups revolved around the question of whether the pledge should be formulated on the individual level or as a group. The intention to have some of the activities take place in a group was to promote collective reflexivity, however, we believe that reflection and introspection on the individual level are also highly valuable.

  What speaks in favour of having one pledge for the team is the ability to align on one specific goal and driver for all, instead of everyone having their own focus that could potentially be out of line with others. On the other hand, the workshop was designed with the intention that the most critical parts of it can be also done individually, therefore, if the instructions promoted only group-pledge creation, it would disqualify solo participants. Another side of this issue is that since the pledge is formulated by individual inputs since we assume that every workshop participant will bring their unique perspectives and areas of improvement, the task to formulate a one-size-fits-all pledge could be a challenging task, also for facilitation reasons. To sum up, if the team would feel the necessity to formulate a unified pledge, this is a possibility. Nevertheless, due to the emphasis put on the individual's role in the design, it had been decided that having one's pledge would be ultimately a better fit to represent this final solution.

- **Privilege Wheel Critique -** One of the bigger comments was related to how biased the wheel can be in itself. Regardless of its aim to expose one's privilege and power, the placing of some of the identity markers can be up for debate. For example, as stated by one of the testing session participants:
  - "Not sure if bisexuality should be put in a category of more marginalised in comparison to gay men. There might be cases in which bisexuality can be seen as a reinforcement of cisnormativity."

  A similar take was discussed when it comes to skin colour and body type. This is something to be acknowledged and taken into consideration, nevertheless, this exercise is not designed to unveil universal, unquestionable truths - rather, through visualisation, helps to acknowledge one's position in society and boost reflections surrounding this issue.

- **Workshop Context -** What has been also brought up in this testing procedure was an alternative use of the workshop. It was suggested that it can be applied not only to assess what position do designers take towards the project but also as a 'way of exit' for people for whom the topic can be personally difficult, as these possible tensions can be uncovered through the exercises.

- **Why worth it? -** Despite the objective to keep the workshop under 2 hours with respect to time, a comment appeared related to how to convince, e.g. project managers and clients to organise such activity and how to communicate the real value. As mentioned by Amalia R. -
  - "In my opinion, many designers will say "yes!" to do this, but the biggest issue will be a lack of time and a project/delivery manager who doesn't see the value of spending time on this. It would be good to have an explanation of why this improves the design process, to share with them and with my client. How taking the time to do something like this drives better design for all (and for their business, too)."

  This insight is also relevant to consider, so that the Pragmatic Achievers (see User Archetypes, see Section 7.2) could possibly be convinced that it is worth taking part in such initiatives.

- **Workshop Closure -** Last but not least, the closing part of the workshop has been debated. At the time being, what designers would be finishing the workshop with was the cut-out pledge that they can then have as a physical takeaway. The most popular question that appeared was - what will then happen to his pledge? What would they do with it? How do you make sure it will not be forgotten as soon as the workshop ends? This suggestion had us re-iterate and firstly, add suggestions to the pledge canvas that state where it can be placed. E.g. at one's desk, on the wall, in the notebook. Secondly, in accordance with the belief that ethical considerations and reflexivity should happen all throughout the process, not solely at a designated stage, an extra canvas - "Iterate with your Pledge" had been created (See Section 10.4). As the pledge is supposed to serve as a reminder for the entirety of the project, the extra canvas contains inspirational questions that can be asked at different stages of the process. It encourages us to take up a reflexive lens, supported by the pledge formulated in the workshop so it does not become obsolete, but a valuable perspective to take onto the journey.

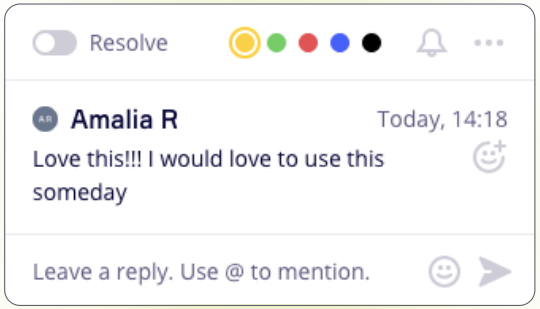


Figure 28: Feedback from one of the Participants of the Testing Procedure

11.3 Future Works

Due to the fact that this project had been initiated in the form of a master's thesis, naturally, it comes with time constraints. Nevertheless, through literature review, research activities, and concept development and testing, a lot of interesting topics had been opened up, yet not explored in depth. This section will bring up some of the potential avenues for further work on the project, including testing possibilities and bringing the solution to the public.

- **Testing opportunities -** First of all, as mentioned in 'Testing procedure limitations' (Section 11.1), concept validation took place in the form of generic feedback sessions, with a relatively small number of participants. Nevertheless, we believe that the most accurate results can be obtained while conducting a real-life workshop. A possibility to improve this testing session would be to run, for example, an actual workshop simulation in the academic environment (SSD students), or to collaborate with at least one company that would be interested in implementing the activities at the start of their new project and later on a report on the results and impact it had generated at the end.

- **Accessibility of materials -** Secondly, as in our personal take, knowledge and practice on ethics shall be accessible and open-sourced, what had been discussed is the will to continue with this project after master's graduation and by creating a designated website and possibly an article to engage in community discussion by gathering feedback on the workshop design, but also, potential data from independent practitioners testing it in their context. Another initiative could be to create a Miro template with the developed workshop canvases and instructions to make implementation easier for the designers and their teams who wish to test this format.

- **Convincing stakeholders -** Last, but not least, it is needed to reflect on the feedback in relation to time constraints vs. process and business value. To address this, developing material that can support and prove the workshop's worth to sceptical stakeholders would be critical. It can be, for example, a pitch deck or a set of data gathered through the voluntary testing sessions conducted in the design community, presenting data on success measures and/or custom KPIs. As the goal is for the workshop to be accessible both in academic and commercial settings, it is important to ensure that the necessary supporting materials are in place to convince the ' Pragmatic Achievers' (See Section 7.2) and clients outside of the service design world.

12. Conclusion

As a path towards more ethical and responsible design practice, this thesis suggests an actionable solution promoting ownership over the values set by human-centeredness and virtue ethics. With the research question:

„How might we create an intention-setting activity for (service) design professionals that would support their bias identification through reflexive and introspective thinking from the start of the design process?

the developed intention-setting workshop is focused on utilising the power of reflexivity and introspection to address personal biases and preconceptions, as we recognize that unidentified bias is something tied to unsustainable design practice and its outcomes.

The key findings of this work are as follows:

- **Ethics in practice -** Ethics is a debated topic in design theory, but in practice, it is less prominent. It usually lies on personal instinct and interest in the topic rather than a conscious code of conduct received in design education or developed by teams and organisations. Project start and articulated intentions play a high significance in how the entire process will play out from an ethics standpoint.

  The "during" phase of the design process is just as important as the beginning, as set principles should be kept in check throughout.

- **Desired attitude -** Individual responsibility should be recognised by design practitioners, and they should feel the urge to be reflexive and introspective. Such values should be encouraged in teams as well.

- **Hindering aspects -** Time constraints in projects can play a key role in hindering the consideration of ethics in design.
  Skepticism toward ethics from professionals, who do not perceive ethics as valuable or key part of the design process also needs attention.

The adopted research design and this work relies on qualitative data connection - it served us in uncovering and understanding tensions connected to ethics and design by answering some of the critical 'Why' questions (Stickdorn et al., 2018). As this work is very much driven-by Western and European values, it could be potentially exciting to uncover how ethics in design is perceived globally, as we believe work connected to ethics and design and tying them to each other is essential to a sustainable and human-centred future for all living beings on earth.

With regard to the scope of the project, the main user group was selected to be service designers and design practitioners, though the solution was created in a way so that other professionals beyond design could benefit from the exercises

with sufficient facilitation.

Additionally, we believe there is open space on the legislative and policy level as well, to develop more human-centered regulations, as it is also key to building stronger channels, on which information and knowledge can spread about bias awareness, ethical considerations and individual responsibility. This is based on the fact that in our research, it seems to be prominent that the resources available are in general not core tools of design processes. Rather they stay on the “nice to have” level, rather than a “must have”. With this work, we take a stand beside the understanding of the conscious consideration of ethics as a “must have” in design processes. With our project, we aim to support the existing discussion, especially those that advocate for actionable solutions which support the utilization of ethics, as we believe reflexivity and introspection should be critical capabilities of (service) designers.

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