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# NETWORKED KNOWLEDGE.

CULTURAL SHARING AMONGST  
DISPERSED IMMIGRANTS

2017/2019

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**NETWORKED KNOWLEDGE: Cultural sharing  
amongst dispersed immigrants.**

**By**

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**BDesign, NIFT, New Delhi, 2013**

A CRITICAL AND PROCESS DOCUMENTATION PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF DESIGN

EMILY CARR UNIVERSITY OF ART + DESIGN

**2019**



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<b>01</b>	Abstract.....	8
<b>02</b>	Keywords.....	10
<b>03</b>	Glossary of terms.....	12
<b>04</b>	List of Figures.....	14
<b>05</b>	Introduction.....	16
<b>06</b>	Literature Review.....	17-22
	>Existence in Cyberspace.....	17
	>Virtual Community building, how 'real' is it.....	17-18
	>Mindful Globalization and affordances.....	18-20
	>Problem Space and Precedent Review.....	21-22



<b>07</b>	Process development.....23-30 >CHIT CHAT CHAI”-The workshop.....23-26 > Primary research analysis.....28-30
<b>08</b>	Design synthesis and application.....32-46 >PHASE 1(Prototype Development).....32-34 >PHASE 2(Testing and feed-Back loop).....35-38 >User-testing, logic flow and Re-Design.....39-44 >General Considerations.....45-46
<b>09</b>	Conclusion.....48-52
<b>10</b>	Bibliography.....53-54
<b>11</b>	Appendix.....55-66

ABSTRACT

Global immigration and population displacement are happening now at rates higher than ever before in modern society. There is a compelling opportunity to take advantage of networked technologies to preserve cultural identity in the face of immigration while addressing problems of cultural integration. Personal devices such as cell- phones and laptops that let us connect to the internet and one another are now widely affordable and available. There is potential here that one might exploit by sharing a network of knowledge that brings immigrant populations in touch with one another and with the culture of their new “chosen” homeland.

This document presents a design research-based approach to possible future explorations in the field of service design that promotes culture preservation. It explores how a personally accessible mobile application can help to create and more importantly, visualize a network of peers one can depend on for culturally relevant information. The application was co-designed via a collaborative workshop with members of PICS: Progressive Intercultural Community Services, Surrey (British Columbia), a non-governmental organization that has been serving the community since 1987. The article also explores how building a virtual community can be the node to forming real-life communities and aid in cultural integration for recent Indian immigrants to Vancouver. Furthermore, the article proposes subjective solutions and their implications for a future of mindful globalization .

N.B.This work does not seek to address immediate issues faced by refugees, religious minorities or any other persecuted group of people, since their requirements are more pressing and beyond the scope of this research. However, it may be adapted to address needs of cultural integration faced during settlement by such groups.

# KEY WORD WORDS

Network Knowledge,

User Experience,

Service Design,

Social Innovation,

Immigrant Communities,

Globalization.

# G L O S S A R Y O F T E R M S

\* Recent immigrants (also known as newcomers without refugee status), are landed immigrants who have come to Canada up to five years prior to current date, (source: newyouth.ca)

\*\*In 1988, Donald Norman appropriated the term affordances in the context of human-machine interaction to refer to just those action possibilities that are readily perceivable by an actor. Through Norman's book *The Design of Everyday Things*, this interpretation was popularized within the fields of HCI, interaction design and user-centred design. It makes the concept dependent not only on the physical capabilities of an actor, but also on their goals, beliefs, and past experiences.

CULTURE: SHARED CUSTOMS, ARTS, SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS, SYSTEMS, LANGUAGE AND BELIEFS OF A PARTICULAR NATION OR GROUP OF PEOPLE.

NEWCOMER: AN IMMIGRANT WHO HAS BEEN IN CANADA FOR A SHORT TIME, USUALLY LESS THAN 5 YEARS.\*

NETWORK KNOWLEDGE: INTERCONNECTED ACCESSIBLE DATA BASE CREATED BY THE SHARING OF INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET.

CYBERSPACE: TERM ORIGINALLY USED BY WILLIAM GIBSON IN HIS SCIENCE-FICTION NOVEL 'NEUROMANCER' IS A CONCEPTUAL SPACE CREATED BY COMPUTER MEDIATED TECHNOLOGY.

INTERFACE: POINT OF EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN HUMANS AND MACHINES.

AFFORDANCE: THE QUALITIES OR PROPERTIES OF AN OBJECT OR SERVICE THAT HINT AT ITS POSSIBLE USES OR MAKE CLEAR HOW IT CAN OR SHOULD BE USED.\*\*

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY: SOCIAL AGGREGATIONS THAT ALLOW PEOPLE TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS AND FORM RELATIONSHIPS IN VIRTUAL SPACE CREATED BY COMPUTER MEDIATED TECHNOLOGY.

MINDFULNESS: "MINDFULNESS IN ITS MOST GENERAL SENSE IS ABOUT WAKING UP FROM A LIFE ON AUTOMATIC, AND BEING SENSITIVE TO NOVELTY IN OUR EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES."-DANIEL J. SIEGEL. (SOURCE-[HTTPS://POSITIVEPSYCHOLOGYPROGRAM.COM/WHAT-IS-MINDFULNESS-DEFINITION/](https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/what-is-mindfulness-definition/))

REAL-LIFE: DESCRIBE EVENTS, PEOPLE, ACTIVITIES, AND INTERACTIONS OCCURRING OFFLINE; OR OTHERWISE NOT PRIMARILY THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF THE INTERNET.

\* Recent immigrants (also known as newcomers without refugee status), are landed immigrants who have come to Canada up to five years prior to current date, (source: newyouth.ca)

\*\*In 1988, Donald Norman appropriated the term affordances in the context of human-machine interaction to refer to just those action possibilities that are readily perceivable by an actor. Through Norman's book *The Design of Everyday Things*, this interpretation was popularized within the fields of HCI, interaction design and user-centred design. It makes the concept dependent not only on the physical capabilities of an actor, but also on their goals, beliefs, and past experiences.

# LIST OF FIGUR ES



Fig 1. Conceptualizing the context of Research (April, 2018, Author)

Fig 2. Redefining Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (access date December 2017, source: [www.whatsthepoint.com](http://www.whatsthepoint.com))

Fig 3. Factors influencing design process (February 2018, Author)

Fig 4. Wordlens (access date April 2018, source: <https://mashable.com/2015/01/14/google-translate-word-lens/#lm9V23IQJOqc>)

Fig 5. Conference room where the workshop was held (July 2018, Author)

Fig 6. Images of participants at the 'CHIT CHAT CHAI' workshop at PICS. (July 2018, Author)

Fig 7. Posters of the workshop at Surrey Central Station. (July 2018, Author)

Fig 8. Images of participants at the 'CHIT CHAT CHAI' workshop at PICS. (July 2018, Author)

Fig 9. Presentation at the 'CHIT CHAT CHAI' workshop (July 2018, Author)

Fig 10. Illustrated notes submitted by the participants at the workshop (August 2018, Author)

Fig 11. Examples of word-clouds created based on the frequency of words used by participants. (August 2018, Author)

Fig 12. 'Easyimmi', a map-based way finding application designed to help immigrants explore a new city based on information provided by culturally similar users. (September 2018, Author)

Fig 13.1-2. Images of participants at the 'Share your city project' held at Emily Carr University of Art + Design (November, 2018, Author)

Fig.14. Images of presentation slides and participants at the 'Share your city project' held at Emily Carr University of Art + Design (November 2018, Author)

Fig.15. Key issues with previous prototype (December 2018, Author)

Fig.16. (top)-previous tab with "like, follow and comment option"  
(bottom)-low-fidelity sketches of network visualization (December 2018, Author)

Fig.17. User-testing on participants according to given scenarios using paper-prototypes of Immigreat application screens (February 2018, Author)

Fig.18. Tentative Business model (Trampoline : RADIUS LAB project\*, March 2019, Author)

Fig 19. IMMIGREAT log-in screen, (March 2019, Author)

Fig.20. Value Proposition and testing human centred design methods (Trampoline : RADIUS LAB project\*, February 2019, Author)



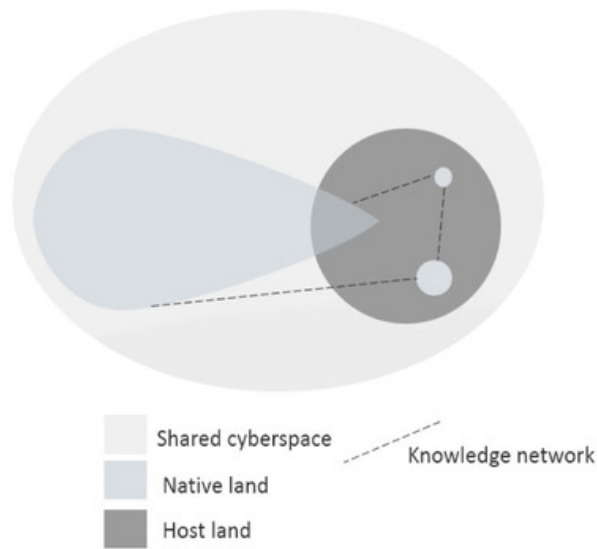


Fig.1. Conceptualizing the context of Research  
(Author)

# INTRODUCTION

Communication platforms such as books, radio, cinema, and television have all been a trigger to social revolutions in the past. However, we are presently witnessing and actively participating in the all-encompassing social revolution, yet, as the founder of Fiverr.com, Micha Kauffman states in his article for Forbes, “today almost everyone and everything is just a digital handshake away.”\*(2012)

The roots of today's digital/social media revolution first began in the 1960s when it was discovered that computers can be connected via the ARPANET. Further developments in the computer-aided communication technology paved way for the Internet. The Internet rapidly bridged the gap between the producers of public information and the consumers of the same.

Presently, as of March 2019, 55.6%\*\* of the world's population has the privilege of easy access to information exchange on a decentralized and participatory platform made possible by the Internet. The Internet has opened doors for another form of existence in the virtual dimension, what we often refer to as ‘Cyberspace’.

Imagine yourself in a new place, very different from where you grew up. You may be here for many reasons. Everything is new and fascinating! But, if you stay long enough, slowly this feeling of newness fades away and you start having a feeling of disconnect instead. A sudden fear that everything you grew up with, sights, smells, sounds, tastes are becoming unfamiliar.

Thankfully you exist in a time and space where your cultural homeland and people scattered around the world who are culturally similar to you are nestled in an all-inclusive bubble of cyberspace. This ease of access, which the present generation has the privilege to enjoy, gives a new dimension of existence. A new space. Can this space be an opportunity to help dispersed immigrants access culturally relevant knowledge in matters of geographic relocation? Can the cyberspace be that third node of connect that gives you cultural comfort whenever and wherever you need it and help make real-life communities stronger and more meaningful?

\*<https://www.forbes.com/sites/michakauffman/2012/10/05/the-internet-revolution-is-the-new-industrial-revolution/#2a2002f47d5b>  
 \*\*<https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>

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## Existence in Cyberspace

Very much like 'real-life', in the virtual world, we create an identity and we exist in the form of clusters or communities based on interests, commonalities, likes or dislikes.

Here, our identity is not based on physical markers unless we chose to make them seen. Howard Rheingold\*, a critical writer of modern communication media, clarifies that "We cannot see one another in cyberspace, gender, age, national origin, and physical appearance is not apparent unless a person wants to make such characteristics public." (1993,p.26). What then is our identity beyond the pre-determined realms of attributes of physicality and ethnicity? Political theorist , Darin Barney, helps us understand human identity by introducing us to a different set of identity markers. Barney (2004) explains, "When we name something we identify it, by classifying it with other things that it is like, and apart from other things that are unlike."(p.143) Thus according to Barney, identity is associations of similarity and dissimilarity. This relatively fluid concept of identity can help explain what he calls 'Network Identity' that marks one's presence in cyberspace. The idea of inherited identity ceases to exist in cyberspace due to the non-existence of its physical form. Instead, it becomes a dynamic blend of who we are and constantly changing notions of who we want to be. Barney\*\*(2004) observes, "Postmodern identity is artificial, fluid, contingent, multifaceted and mutable."(p.151)

So, in cyberspace, you can be whoever you want to be and you have the freedom to create 'pseudo identities'

This may give rise to a dystopian fear that 'virtual people' are not 'real people'.

However, platforms such as Wikipedia, twitter, facebook, and Instagram thrive due to this trust amongst virtual peers. Also, we are quick to associate anonymity with immorality. Being anonymous online does not mean one is untraceable anymore. You are still accountable for your virtual identity and possibly, identity fabrication maybe a little overrated.

However, the difference here is that our community building is no longer based on geographical proximity. As it is in real life, one cannot live in isolation in cyberspace. Cyberspace is an opportunity for conversations and thus a potential space for community building. Communities share intent, belief, resources, preferences, needs, and risks, but primarily thrive by sharing conversations.

## Virtual Community building, how 'real' is it?

So how does one form communities in cyberspace?

The word community comes from the Latin word *communis*, which means "shared in common"(source:Wikipedia). Unlike 'real life' communities, geographic proximity, physicality, and ethnicity cease to be factors that are shared in common for creating 'Virtual communities'.(a term coined by Rheingold) 'Virtual communities' are formed based on our choices. As Rheingold (1993) observes: "virtual communities treat them[users] as they always wanted-as thinkers and transmitters of ideas and feeling beings, not as carnal vessels with a certain type of appearance and a way of walking and talking(or not walking and not talking)" (p.26) It is often argued that 'Network' communities are pseudo communities that weaken 'real' communities and may appear to be meaningful but instead isolate us from the ties of genuine interactions that are supported by geographical proximity.

The shortcomings considered by Barney (2004,p.160) are, firstly, dislocation and disembodiment results in no sense of belonging to a place or with people, which is crucial for a robust community experience. Secondly, withdrawal from real life experiences causes isolation in the offline world. Thirdly, social interactions may be so customized to suit ones wants that platforms for general interest discussions may soon diminish.

Fig.2.Redefining Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs  
(source: www.whatsthepoint.com)

\*Rheingold, H. (1993). Chapter 1 and 2. In *The Virtual Community; Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier* (pp. 1-64). New York: Harper Perennial. This book questions whether a distinction between "virtual" communities and "real-life" communities is entirely valid when our "real-life" identities are almost indistinguishable from our "virtual" identities. In fact, he argues that one can be more "real" and choose to communicate upon the virtual common ground. Rheingold also discusses the far- reaching implications of technology on our social constructs. \*\*

\*\* Barney, D. (2004). *Network Identity*. In *The Network Society* (pp. 143-175). Polity Press.

In this chapter, Barney discusses the emergence of global information technology and its effect on identity.

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Lastly, the cyberspace promotes minimal moral binding and thus promotes irresponsibility. These arguments are based on the earlier mentioned assumption that when a person is unaccountable he is immoral. The two may not be correlated at all. Rheingold's article provides us with a clearer picture of the reality of online communities. His documentation of being part of one of the pioneer virtual community called the Whole Earth 'lectronic Link (abbreviated as WELL-a computer-mediated conferencing system for public conversations and exchange of private email) provides us with insightful observations that are free from over-generalized prejudices against virtual communities. His vivid descriptions of relationships that he forms in cyberspace and their effects on his real life makes seemingly dystopian fears regarding virtual communities seem unwarranted. Additionally, it is difficult to draw hasty conclusion knowing that 'real' communities do not guarantee meaningful connections either. Barney(2004) addresses network community as being convenient since: "they are mediated by devices that are accessible in the private sphere of home, and because networks enable 24-hour asynchronous communication-are also often presented as more convenient than other forms of community engagement. It is often suggested that virtual communities are more meaningful than other forms of a community because they are volitional (i.e. people seek them out)." (p.160)

### **Mindful Globalisation and affordances**

Now that we have established how one chooses to exist in cyberspace, let us now consider the 'real-life' scenario of globalization. According to one of the definitions proposed by UNESCO\*, globalisation is "The acceptance of a set of economic rules for the entire world designed to maximise profits and productivity by universalising markets and production, and to obtain the support of the state with a view to making the national economy more productive and competitive". One may often forget, with this limited definition of globalization, are the human element associated with it.

With globalization comes human relocation and dilution of long-established 'real-life' communities and the need to integrate into different ones. The term 'globalisation' indubitably sparks the image of widespread standardization in one's mind and cultures to disappear into a future 'Global village'. Much like natural selection in evolution, cultures that cannot thrive, fade away.

As designers, it is important that we imagine the future of globalized societies and how we might mindfully contribute to building them (see glossary of terms).

At present we, as the users of the internet, are networking on collaborative knowledge cyber pools and building trust amongst our peers and creating a sense of openness in these virtual communities. Innovations, such as wikipedia, google-maps etc. in cyberspace are harnessing the potential of knowledge databases and connectivity. However, while designing these platforms there are certain affordances that dictates its usability.

Affordance-a term coined by J.J Gibson in 1999 and popularized later by design guru Don Norman, plays a key factor when one questions the design of globalized services and systems. Affordance determines inclusivity and exclusivity, and also the users and the usability. So who are we including in future societies and who are we excluding? In his book, 'Ethnopolitics in Cyberspace'(2010) , Geopolitical researcher, Dr. Robert Saunders optimistically points out that, "Cyberspace offers a great promise for the preservation of identity and national culture. Through computer-mediated communications, nations have the ability to maintain and reinforce their identity in new and compelling ways. Anthems, legends, genealogies, histories, photographs, manuscripts and other tangible assets of national culture are being protected, distributed and accessed in cyberspace. The internet in conjunction with other information technologies such as satellite television and inexpensive mobile phones has significantly contributed to the so-called 'death of distance', thus lessening the need for individuals or communities to have face to face contact in order to build and maintain strong ties. These technological advances have been especially welcome among stateless nations, ethnic minorities, and dispersed immigrant communities who have historically lacked access to many of the tools possessed by elites acting in the name of nation-states." (p.58)

What you may ask now is, why should we care?

Vancouver is a cosmopolitan city and is ranked amongst the top most livable cities around the world. A truly 'global city' recent statistics show that 52% \*\*of the city's population has a first language other than English, this means that the city is a welcoming haven for many culturally diverse immigrants.

\*<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/globalisation/>

\*\*Statistics Canada. 2017. Greater Vancouver, RD [Census division], British Columbia and British Columbia [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.

However, a survey by Vancouver foundation in 2017 shows that 1/4 \*\*\*of its people find themselves feeling more alone than they would like to be. So are we shying away because of our cultural differences instead of celebrating them?

The problem of feeling isolated is real, and these are not the numbers you wish to associate with ideal future cities. It is when you do not feel accepted that you start to distance yourself from the company of others and society. Can cyberspace be that third node of connect to build upon? To form virtual communities that provide you with the strength of weak ties, a concept illustratively discussed by Sociologist, Granovetter, in his book *The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited*.(1983). Maybe this can give you the cultural comfort whenever and wherever you need it? Can it help make our real-life existence and societal integration stronger and more meaningful?

This led me to my next step, to try and have a better understanding of all the services newcomers presently rely on to look for information during their settlement process.

\*\*\*Key Findings, Paragraph 1, Connect & Engage-A Survey of Metro Vancouver, 2017, <https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/sites/all/themes/connengage/files/VF-Connect-Engage-report.pdf>

source: Key Findings, Paragraph 1, Connect & Engage-A Survey of Metro Vancouver, 2017, <https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/sites/all/themes/connengage/files/VF-Connect-Engage-report.pdf>

# 1/4 OF VANCOUVERITES

Find themselves feeling more alone than they would like to.



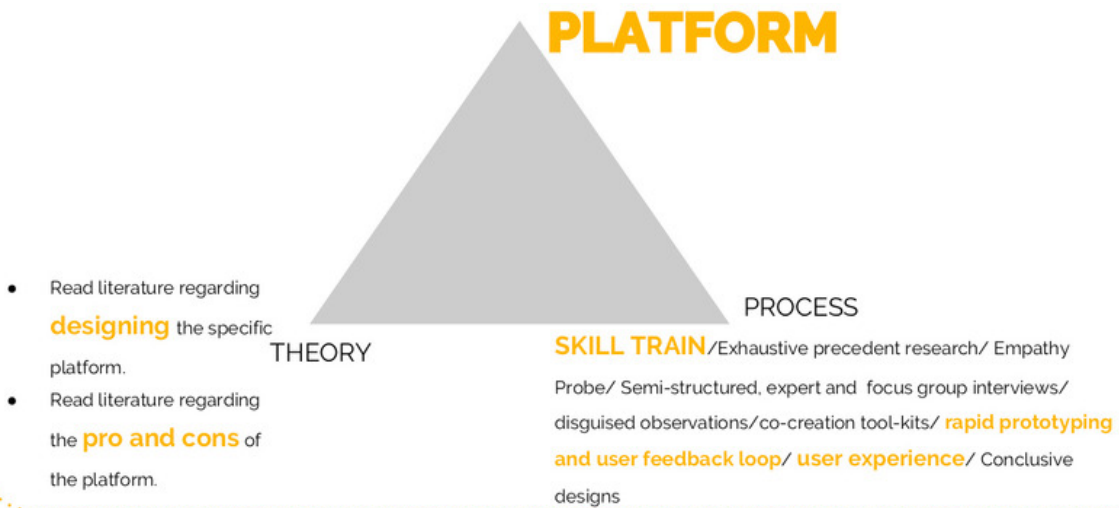
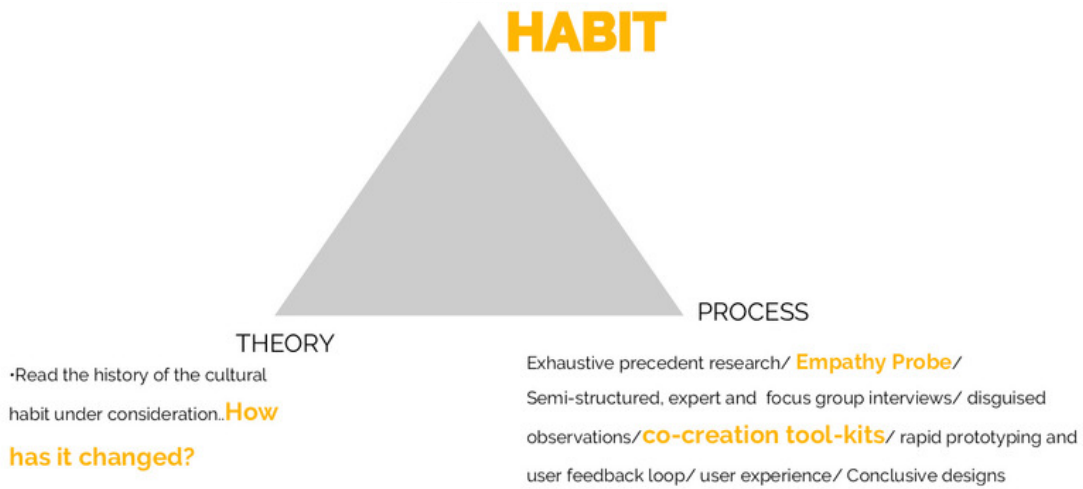
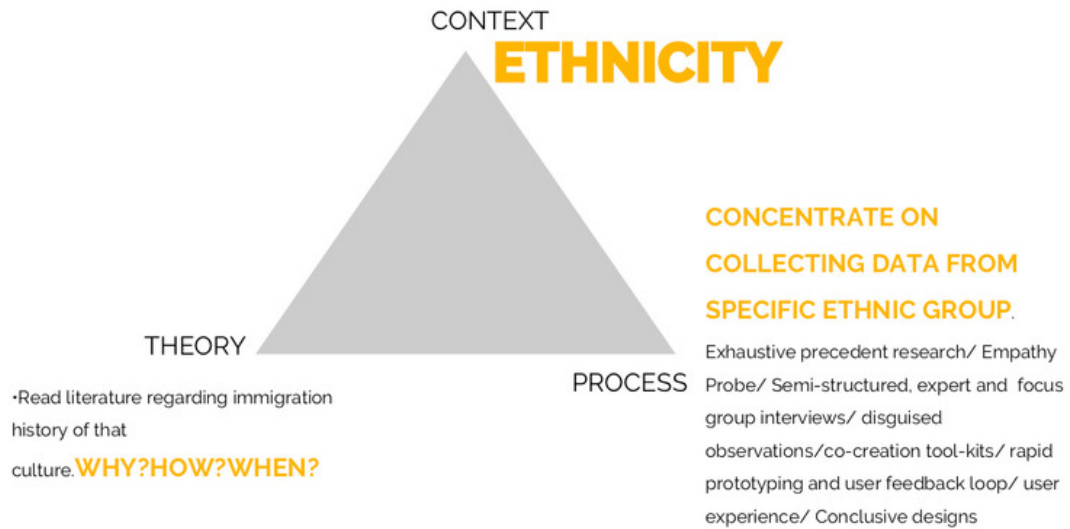


Fig.3.Factors influencing design process(Author)



The research led to some key insights with respect to the problem space and directed towards the precedent review.

These insights were based on:

>The current platforms that immigrants use to rely on for information?

>SWOT analysis

>Barriers to entry and design opportunities (i.e. patterns or any issues that are not being addressed?)

>Possibilities of a virtual platform.

With reference to the current media context, there are a number of resources for newcomers to choose from to find information about settling into a new country. The most popular are facebook groups to share information. However, it is important to note the risks attached to such platforms with regards to privacy and manipulation. Personal information can be used for many reasons on platforms such as facebook, and the user may or may not be the beneficiary.

There are many websites and Apps available that cater to immigrants in a host country. Websites such as Quora (an example of computer mediated communication can help answer a wide variety of questions. Although these forums are popular, answers are not received in real time.

Wordlens (Fig.4) is a Google application that helps translate road signs to your language of choice in real time. This is one of the most advanced examples of technology taking advantage of a networked data pool.

Meetup is an app and a website that brings together like minded communities virtually and that can extend to real-life meetings as well.

Existing official immigration website by the Govt. of British Columbia, are informative and extensive. However, more work needed here to prove due diligence and focus on being sensitive to specific immigrant groups.

The most recent development as a digital resource is an application called Arrival Advisor, built by Peace Geeks and funded by Google. It was launched in April 2019 and is only available in the province of British Columbia. It is a guide to aid newcomers get through various paperwork necessary to settle in Canada and understand the Canadian Society. Arrival Advisor goes a long way when it comes to solving immediate problems faced by newcomers, however, it lacks the opportunity to build networks and create a sense of acceptance of one's own cultural traditions and how to balance the transition.

From the precedent review, it is apparent that while the immediate needs of newcomer immigrant communities are partially served by multiple sources, there was a lack of resource to rely on when it came to the cultural and social integration faced during the transition.

This led to the first phase of primary research. To understand the problem space better, I got in touch with an NGO in February 2018. PICS or Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society. PICS is a non-profit society that provides settlement services to assist new immigrants to Canada. It is located in Surrey and has been serving the community since 1987. PICS organizes many workshops and discussion sessions for new immigrants to Vancouver and greater Vancouver area to educate them on various topics such as education, taxes, healthcare etc.

# PROBLEM SPACE & PRECEDENT REVIEW

Fig.4. Wordlens (source: <https://mashable.com/2015/01/14/google-translate-word-lens/#1m9V23lQJOqc>)



Fig.5-8(clockwise)

5)Conference room where the workshop was held.(Author)

6)Images of participants at the 'CHIT CHAT CHAI' workshop at PICS.(Author)

7)Posters of the workshop at Surrey Central Station.(Author)

8)Images of participants at the 'CHIT CHAT CHAI' workshop at PICS.(Author)

With help from Dr. Kang, (settlement Program Manager at PICS ) and Ms.Kamaljeet Bharya (Settlement Counsellor) a better understanding of the kind of formation that newcomers seek in settlement NGOS was gathered. Additionally, it was also important to understand the various services similar settlement NGOs provide for their members and recognize the potential for design opportunities.

The specific needs of the community were studied and how these needs are different and in some cases similar to needs of other groups such as more settled immigrants, refugees, and the general population.

These needs include:

- >Access to employment, including higher rates of unemployment,
- >Poor recognition of foreign diplomas, certification and work experience,
- >Education system not adapting to the diversity of the population (at the level of the educators),
- >Inadequate support for parents and students to know how the school system works here(in terms of how different the education system is),
- >Need for more affordable housing,
- >Services offered by large organizations do not reflect the diversity of the population nor the individualized needs of the community member,
- >Significant language barriers for non-official language speakers

Additionally, when it came to social integration, most newcomer families are transnational, meaning that they maintain connections across borders, with family and friends.This creates a constant comparison between the lives they live in a new country and the one they had back home. They find themselves constantly balancing the need to preserve values and practices from the home country and fitting in with practices and values in the new country.It is most common to find youth figuring out “who they are” – balancing their heritage and their roles in a new society since they tend to acculturate faster than their parents, creating stressors within the family. Changing roles for men and women and also of different members of the family become apparent

By the end of summer 2018, a workshop was organized at PICS called 'CHIT CHAT CHAI' to have a deeper understanding of the problem space.It was held in the community center itself. It was scheduled from 10 am to 12 noon on the 26th of July 2018.

Posters such as the one on the left were stuck near the community centre as well as other relevant locations. Electronic fliers were also personally emailed to some of the community centre members.The workshop was created keeping in mind a casual atmosphere where the participants felt that it was more like a social gathering than a workshop. Participants were provided with light refreshments. The total count of participants that attended the entire time of the workshop was 12. The community center helped in arranging childcare for some participants.

A student-volunteer who was a translator was also assigned.

Most participants were of Indian origin since the community center is located in a primarily Indian locality. Other ethnicities were also welcome, however, this helped me focus my research on a specific ethnic group.

After a brief presentation regarding the interests of the research and about the workshop, participants were given invitation and consent material. They were also required to sign a media release form.

# “CHIT- CHAT CHAI” - THE WORKSHOP



Fig.9.1.Presentation at the 'CHIT CHAT CHAI' workshop.(Author)

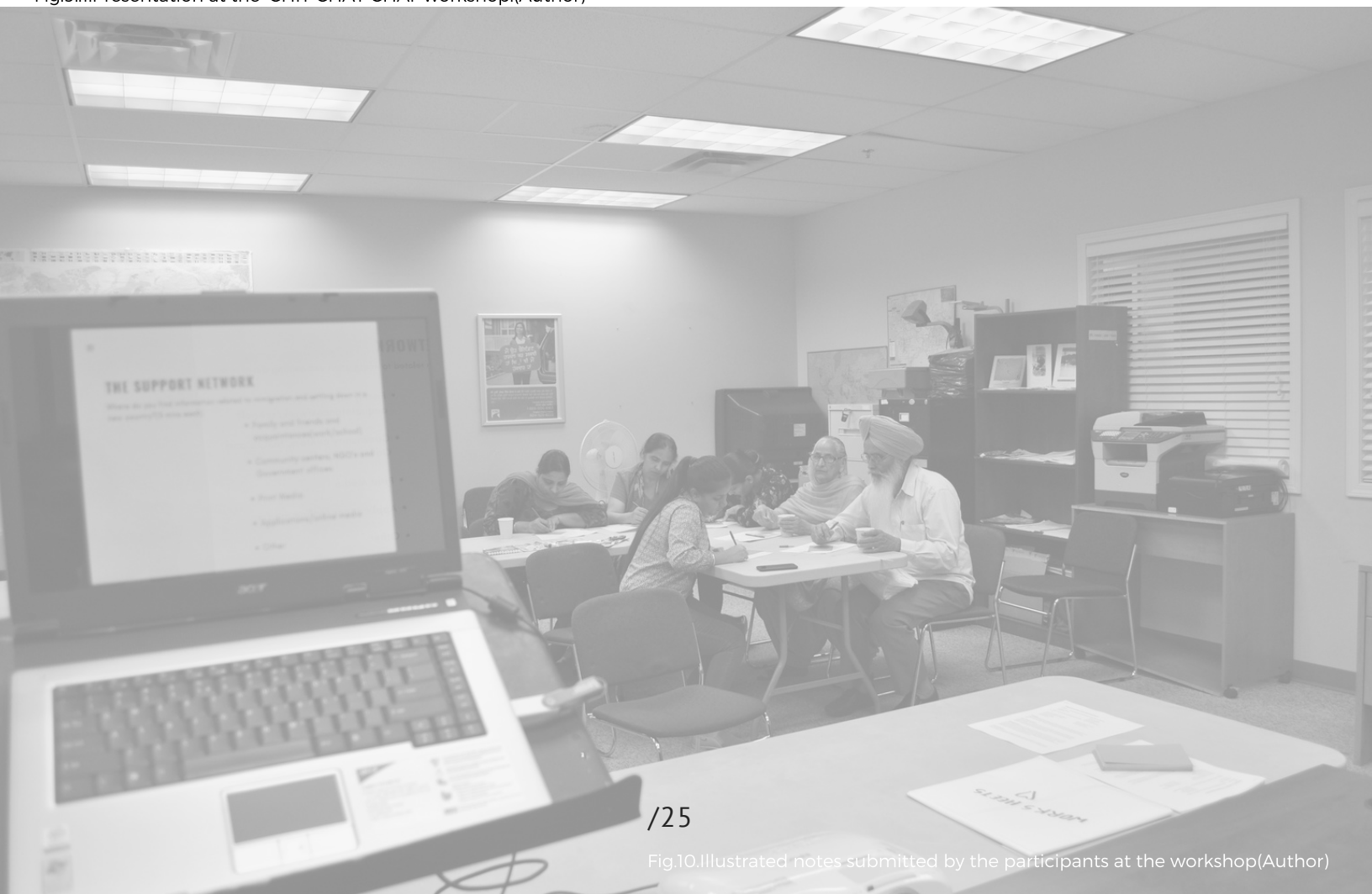


Fig.9.2.Presentation at the 'CHIT CHAT CHAI' workshop.(Author)



The workshop was conducted in two parts.

PART 1: Where do you find information related to immigration and settling down in a new country?

Then they were invited to share where they find information related to immigration and settling down in a new country with reference to different categories i.e

- Family,
- Friends, and acquaintances,
- Community centers/NGO's and Government offices,
- print media,
- Apps/online networking
- and others.

They were asked to then clip them together in order of preference.

PART 2: Then and Now:

Participants had to illustrate their social life 'then'(homeland) and 'now'(after immigrating to a new country). Participants were encouraged to use a variety of methods to express this and were provided with stickers, colored pens, paper cut outs and various craft material. Much was observed in the process.

Data was collected in the form of hand-written cards and illustrations created by the participants themselves.

Note-taking was also a primary part of the data collection process.

Some participants gave consent to being photographed. Additionally, some of them gave consent to using pseudonyms for direct quotes.

Although ethnically similar, these participants had varied cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as age groups, which made the workshop quite fruitful and informative.



WHAT IS...  
This study is being  
dispersed immigrants  
immigrants share and present  
integrate into Canadian society a...

WHAT'S INVOLVED?  
As a participant, you will be asked  
to be asked to participate in the  
sources that help identify  
which will help identify  
photographs and  
the workshop

Handwritten notes on yellow index cards:  
\* The  
I work...  
Everyone friendly  
Be a...  
Coely +  
in  
with  
discuss

Handwritten notes on a brown paper strip:  
\* Apr  
\* Apr  
\* Apr



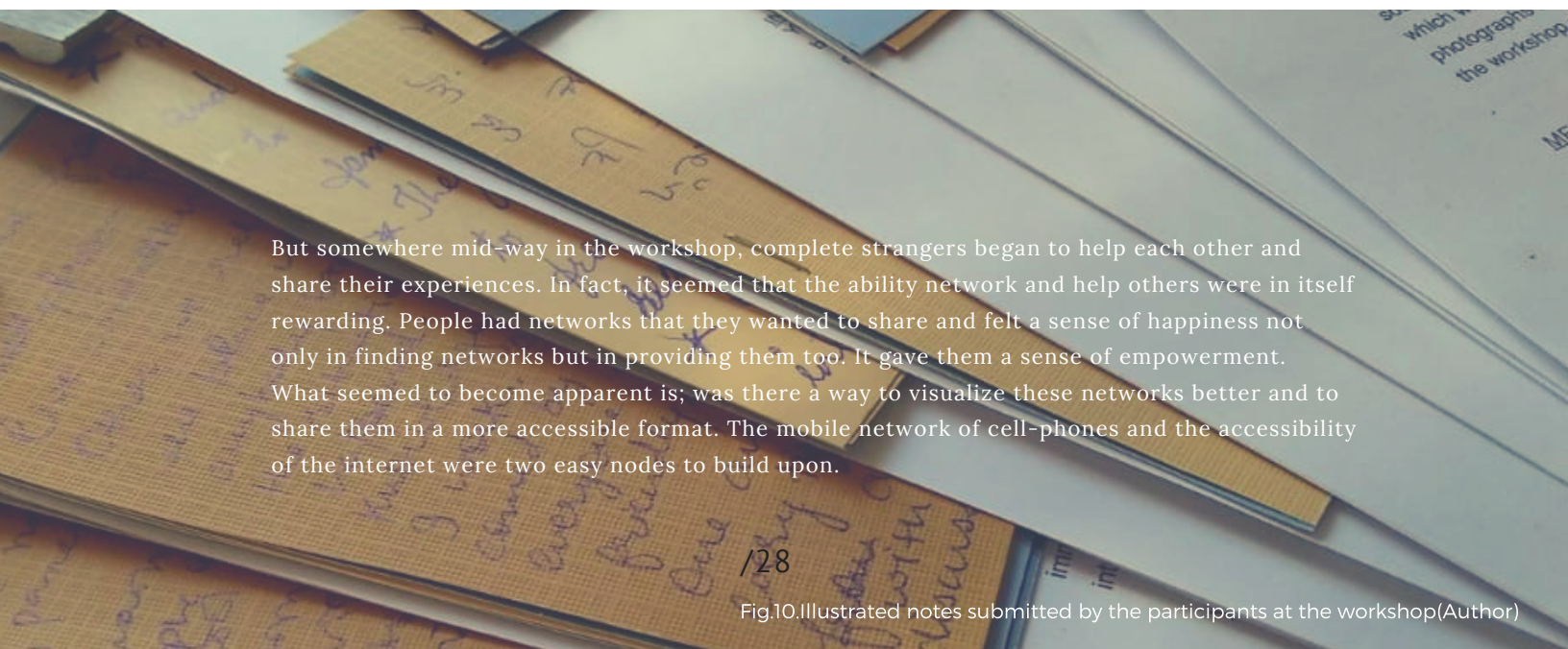
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# PRIMARY RESEARCH ANALYSIS

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The workshop was designed in such a way that it would help identify and analyze a few key points. Additionally to have a wider understanding of the already existing platform for community building that recent immigrants use. It was designed to identify pain points that recent immigrants have with regard to culture loss and whether they have been adequately addressed and which platforms of community building that were already popular and also the ones that had potential. The data collected was exclusively qualitative than quantitative in nature. To better visualize my analysis, the data was visualized in the form of word clouds. The clouds helped to understand the human network one relies on. Family is the most important. Some chose to be more specific about the family member and the kind of help that they received. It is understandable that new circumstances bring families closer together. Conversations led to ask, what if the family is far away? Friends and colleagues were also popular answers and so were neighbours.

People have seemed to rely on information at places of worship, counsellors, language schools, other NGO's and even park benches! Some also mentioned facebook, yelp and craigslist. It seemed that most relied on physically existing communities as compared to virtual ones. However, the idea of being part of a virtual community was not uncommon. Neither was the idea of depending on crowd-sourced knowledge. Everyone in the room seemed to already have access to a smartphone, but it seemed that this potential was not being fully recognized. Why was this so? The group that participated had a variety of questions with regard to immigration. jobs, policies, schools, transport, pension laws, taxes, housing etc. While they all had shared concerns, they had different approaches to them. Many seemed to have already contacted NGO's and government offices for help. They seemed to agree that the process was confusing but it was reassuring to know that they had support.




But somewhere mid-way in the workshop, complete strangers began to help each other and share their experiences. In fact, it seemed that the ability network and help others were in itself rewarding. People had networks that they wanted to share and felt a sense of happiness not only in finding networks but in providing them too. It gave them a sense of empowerment. What seemed to become apparent is; was there a way to visualize these networks better and to share them in a more accessible format. The mobile network of cell-phones and the accessibility of the internet were two easy nodes to build upon.

Fig.11.Examples of word-clouds created based on the frequency of words used by participants.(Author)





Easyimmi



NAME

PREFERRED LANGUAGE

NATIVE COUNTRY

NATIVE CITY

TYPE OF VISA (optional)

DATE OF IMMIGRATION

USERNAME

PASSWORD

RE-TYPE PASSWORD

EMAIL ID

READY!

Easyimmi 95 87 53

KOLKATA 10:25 1 MONTH 20 DAYS

VANCOUVER 13:25 1 CAD=51.29 INR



SEARCH CITY

BROWSE MAPS

BUILD YOUR MAP

LIVE TRANSLATE

SEEK PROFESSIONAL ADVISE

नमस्ते!  
PRAKRITI

Easyimmi 95 87 53

HOUSING SHOPPING

JOBS GROCERY

COMMUNITY MEETUPS RESTAURANTS

TRANSPORT NEARBY

SCAN AN EASYIMMI BARCODE



---

# PHASE 1 (PROTOTYPE DEVELOPMENT)

---

The primary research analysis led to developing a tentative platform as a working base for the final design. This prototype was designed keeping in mind the following key attributes:

- 1) Culturally relevant: which implies that it empowers the users cultural ideals of everyday experiences.
- 2) Easily available: It was important to identify the population and position it in such a way that the users can have access to it whenever they wish to.
- 3) Adaptable: means that even though it is specialized for certain immigrants, it has the scope to modify for other such populations.

This initial medium-fidelity prototype of an application was a platform for newcomers to browse and share maps based on their cultural interests.

Fig 12 shows the wireframe for this application, and illustrates the UI of the application. 'Easyimmi', a map-based way finding application designed to help immigrants explore a new city based on information provided by culturally similar users.

This platform could be used by newcomers to connect with one another to share ideas and experiences.

To log in to the application the user had to fill in their standard personal information such as Username, age, sex etc. Additionally, the log-in also required the user to fill in the following information.

Native country (drop down menu with options)

Date of arrival

Reason (drop down menu with options)

(\* optional for signing up) Based on what the user fills in the application will sort and ensure that users can interact with those of similar cultural background as per their mentioned native country.

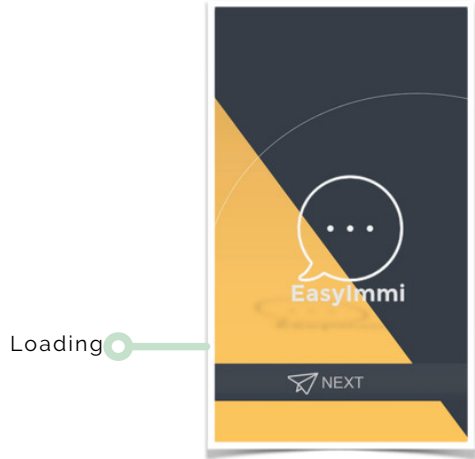
They can then browse through maps based on different categories such as food, shopping, community meetups, grocery etc. The information that they receive will have more probability of having cultural validation depending on the trust amongst virtual peers. i.e if you were Malaysian looking for a certain type of community experience your ethnically similar virtual peers may be able to guide you to it. Additionally you can choose to create your own map and share it. You have the option to follow and like your peers too. Additional feature would include real-time language translation and direct peer to peer support.

This tentative design was it was helpful in the ideation to the platform.

Later phases included analyzing this platform and recognizing alternative approaches.

# EAS Y IMM

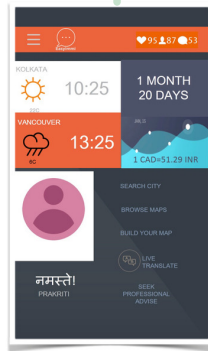
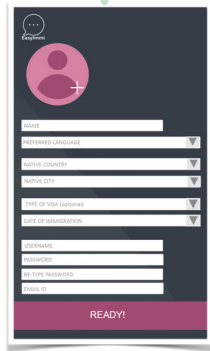
Fig.12.'Easyimmi', a map-based way finding application designed to help immigrants explore a new city based on information provided by culturally similar users.  
(Author)



Loading

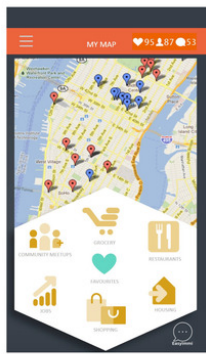
Homepage/User Profile

Log-in Page/User Info



Tab with follow and Chat feature

Way-finding modifier



Browse Map



Translation, Visual and verbal



Fig 13.1. Image of participant at the 'Share your city project' held at Emily Carr University of Art + Design (Author)

---

# PHASE 2 (TESTING AND FEED-BACK LOOP)

---

The most important feedback received from the a few potential users during the first phase of testing the design prototype is that the design lacked:

- A) Tangibility of a real-life community
- B) Feelings and emotions associated with a real life community
- C) Nuances of a real-life community.

So far, the designed platform consisted of groups of people (having similar cultural backgrounds) allowing them to share their favourite spots in the city via a map sharing application and this way grow followers and popularity.

Soon it was realized that what the design considered secondary, was exactly what recent immigrants are looking for, the tangibility of a real-life community. It was important to explore this idea further, and not simply conclude that this cannot be possible in the virtual form.

With help from a group of Graduate students in the MDes 2017-19 cohort at Emily Carr University of Art + Design the idea was further tested via a studio experiment called the "Share your City-Vancouver Project". 13 out of 17 students in the cohort were newcomers to Canada. This project was designed to understand the kinds of stories people wished to share and read about when there are new to a city. It was found to be quite insightful. Participants were given a map of Metro Vancouver and were asked to locate spots around Vancouver that reminds them most of home and pin them on maps given to each. These spots were based on cultural nuances of their homeland such as:

- Tastes
- Systems
- Symbols
- Languages
- Smells
- Beliefs
- Habits
- Sights
- Sounds

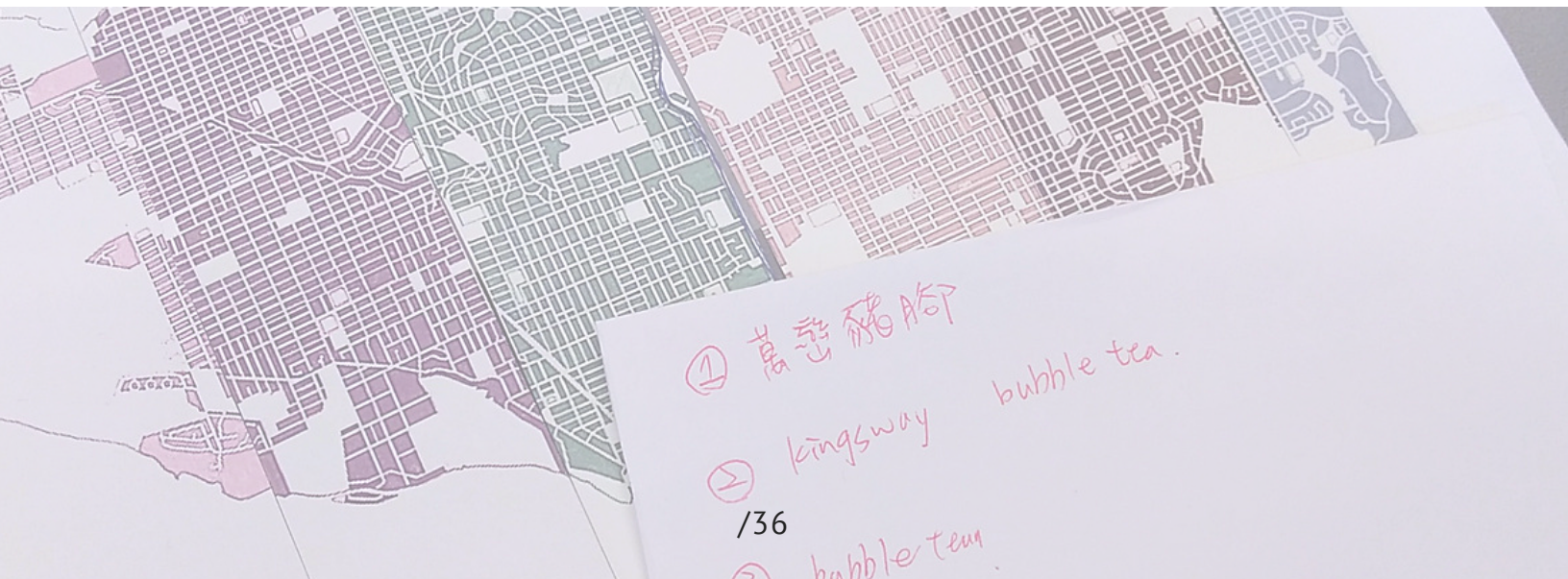






Fig.13.2.Images of participants at the 'Share your city project' held at Emily Carr University of Art + Design (Author)

Participants were given 15 mins to locate them. The maps were then cut up into 10 parts and randomly distributed till each person had a collection of pieces and could create a collage of a map. Then they were, invited to sit around a table and discuss their later maps. Every map around the table consisted of a morphed version of the owner's original map intermingled with the story of someone else around the table at random. Everyone talked and shared stories about home and Vancouver city, things that fit and things that do not. By the end of the session, everyone seemed to know each other and the city better: where the city smells like a Hunan village and where to find authentic Ecuadorian food. This session helped in realizing that it was important not only to map out these spots on a map but also to share the personal story behind them each. Can there exist a platform that took advantage of the accessibility of a virtual community and the embodied connect of a physical one, making the knowledge exchanged more relevant?



# SHARE YOUR CITY VANCOUVER PROJECT

MDES THESIS WORKSHOP



02

## YOUR HOME.

-Mark 10 places that remind you of home on your maps.  
-Use Google maps for locating them based on the following:

- 1.taste
- 2.system
- 3.symbol
- 4.language
- 5.smell
- 6.beliefs
- 7.habits
- 8.sights
- 9.sounds
- 10.any other category  
(15 mins)



04

## OUR HOME.

## SHARE YOUR STORIES

Fig.14..Images of presentation slides and participants at the 'Share your city project' held at Emily Carr University of Art + Design (Author)



---

# USER-TESTING, LOGIC-FLOW AND RE-DESIGN

---

The studio explorations led to further re-designing of the application that was initially proposed. During this process, the need for the application where one could incorporate understandings of empathy, virtual communities, and culture was felt.

Previously, the application was a map sharing platform that was populated by culturally similar immigrants when they travel to a new country and could share and browse maps. It now became important that through the application the users could visualize their progress through a certain time period of moving to a new city. The analysis would be based on the user's feelings and how much the user's network has grown since. The need for the user to visualize their network of friends, family, colleagues, strangers etc. better, needed to be incorporated (just like how one feels to be sitting around the table with them. As the user's network grows, more chairs are added to the table.) This visualization was necessary to serve as a reminder to assure that there is support the user can reach out to.

What the previous design considered secondary and comfortably contained in a narrow tab on top of the screen for users to assess how many people “like, follow and comment” became the most important aspect in the redesign of the application.

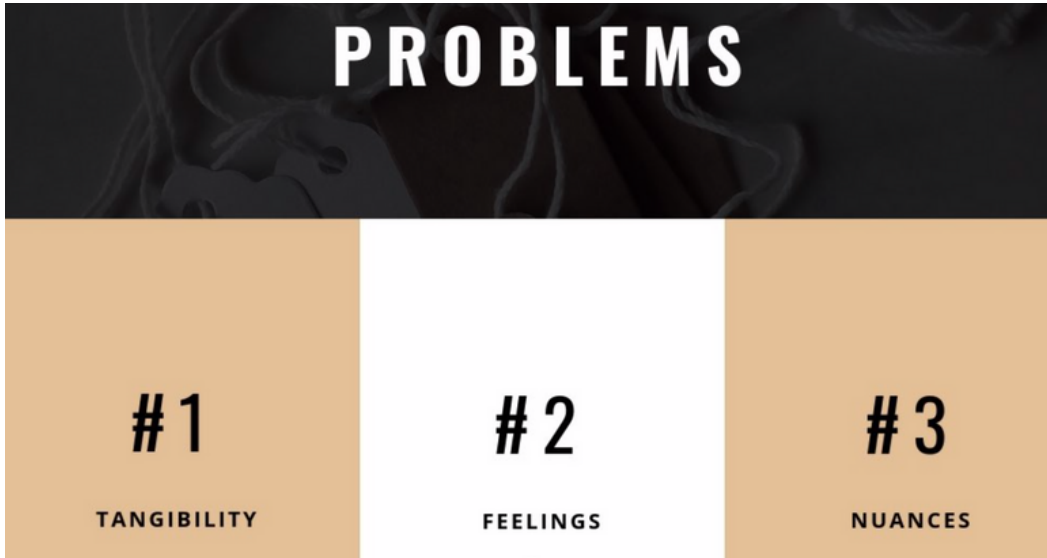


Fig.15 Key issues with previous prototype (Author)

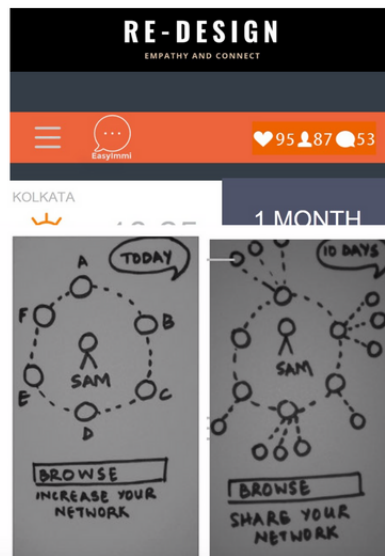


Fig.16. (top)-previous tab with "like, follow and comment option"  
 (bottom)-low-fidelity sketches of network visualization(Author)

---

Sharing and browsing maps still remain key aspects of the application, but the people and their stories behind them were now more important. The application allows the user to browse through stories that people who are culturally similar to the users have shared.

Some of the primary features of the application are:

- a) Users can filter maps according to the experiences they wish to seek in the new city, i.e. experiences of smell, tastes, sounds etc.
- b) They can follow other users and add them to their network,
- c) They can virtually contact them via the app,
- d) Users can request to meet them in real-life
- e) The application is designed to make meet-ups in groups very convenient. i.e. easy selection and creation of virtual groups and filtering availability of connected users for meet-ups. (avoiding it from becoming a dating app).
- f) Lastly, users can request other users to form virtual groups to share commonalities.

Participants during the user-testing were given different personas and scenarios.

During the testing, it was felt that being able to connect in groups instead of one on one meet-up was found to be successful. Participants were more relaxed, felt encouraged to share their information and required lesser information about the other users for them to connect.

A secondary feature that was considered were prompts that the users can use to track their mood over a period of time, This helps the user understand how they are feeling and have felt. This may make the user feel a sense of assurance or empowerment if they see that they are doing better or prompt them to actively seek support if not. However during user-testing, this feature seemed intrusive and distracting as users could not accurately describe the exact mood they felt and 'mixed-feelings' was the usual answer. This made the 'mood-tracker' redundant.

Participants also wanted to see more options when it came to "culture-categories" i.e. taste, smell, sound, sight etc.

It was felt that an 'other' tab needed to be added to make the idea of culture more fluid.

The name of the application was changed from 'Easyimmi' to 'Immigreat'

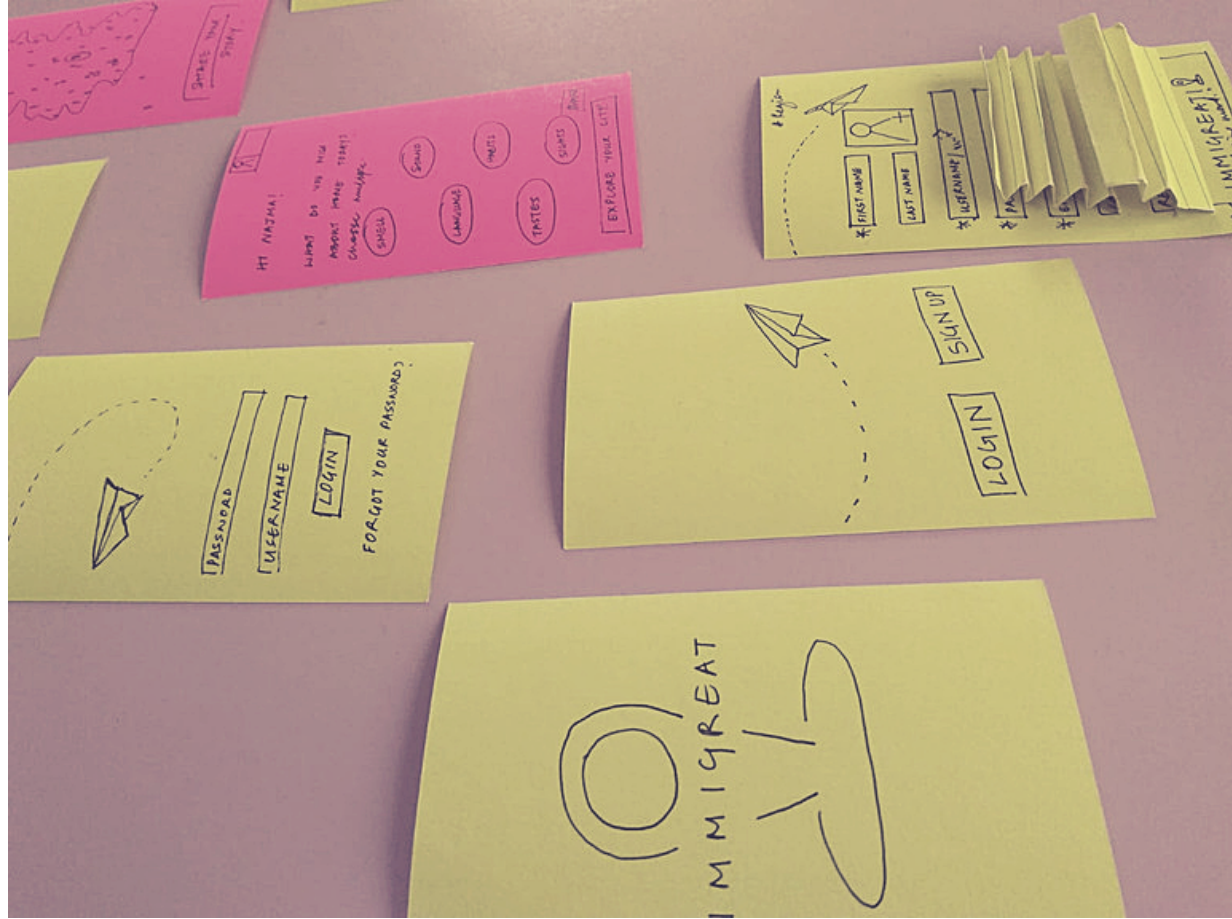
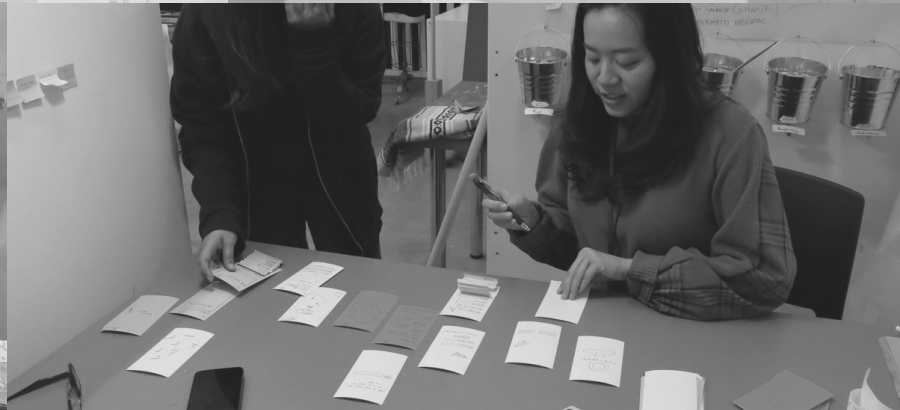


Fig.17..User-testing on participants according to given scenarios using paper-prototypes of Immigreat application screens(Author)





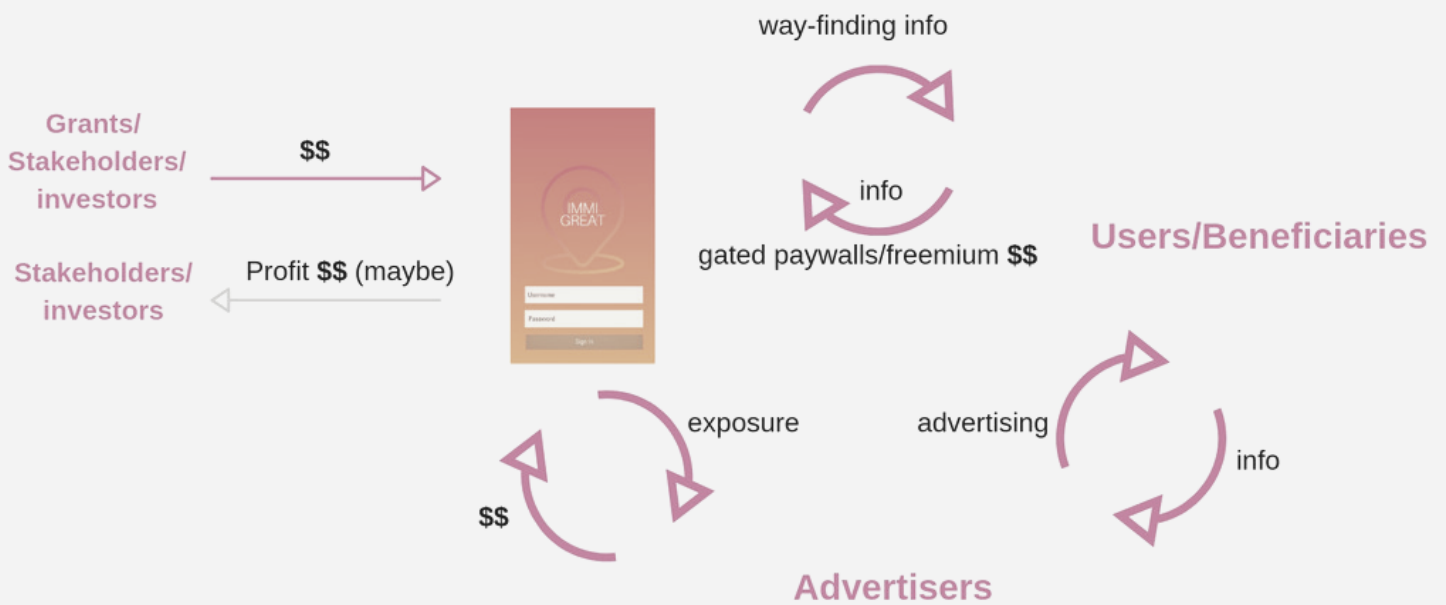


Fig.18.Tentative Business model (Trampoline : RADIUS LAB project\*, March 2019, author)

\*Trampoline, a refugee livelihood program, is a 12-week program for people who have an idea for a social business or non-profit that will address problems faced by refugee and newcomer communities in Surrey. It is funded by The City of Surrey, Surrey Local Immigration Partnership, SFU International, Innoweave, Mowafaghian Foundation, and The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction



## *Tentative models of* **FUNDING**

### i) Advertising

- 1) Free, But With Ads (In-Service Advertising)
- 2) Sponsorship (Incentivized Advertising)

### ii) User-funding

- 1) Freemium (gated features)
- 2) In-service Purchases (Selling Physical/Virtual Goods)
- 3) Paid to access (Costs Money to Download)

### iii) Blended- model

- Step 1-BUILD USER-BASE
- Step 2-RELEVANT LOCAL ADVERTISING
- Step 3-ULTRA PREMIUM PAYWALLS

# GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Opportunity to meet in real-life:

The platform provides with the opportunity for users to connect face to face in real life. One of the features of the platform is to promote group activities and meetups instead of one on one meet up. The choice to meet up in real life depends on the users, as well as to share any contact information via the app (users can choose to connect via the app or if the user chooses to share personal contact information)

Additionally, users have 'user rating' on the app, based on the frequency of their activity and how useful the information they share is for other users. This will help determine the credibility of the user. Additionally, users can report fraudulent activity.

Concerns regarding privacy:

Online privacy is a cause of concern for many and rightfully so, since it involves having to disclose your personal information that is placed in ever-increasing number of databases that can be accessed by a number of other companies. While tech companies argue they need personal information to offer individualized services, they often fail to strike a balance between invading privacy and providing targeted user-customized advertising and fighting to grab the users attention but not being able to hold on to it with non-relevant advertising.

Privacy preservation and relevant local advertising would be very important for an application such as this, especially because of the user-base in concern.

Some of the ways in which user privacy can be respected is by understanding how much information is required for a user to provide to be able to use the application. This in turn can also help build trust amongst users. Any contact information that is shared will be the user's discretion and not a requirement. Restricted collection of data on individuals, requiring consent from them before gathering information, allowing customers to opt out of the service, providing consumer access to correct information, and requiring security of those databases would be important steps to ensure user privacy.

This thesis presents the application in its preliminary stage of research and testing of its design. The application will be further developed at the RADIUS lab.\*

# CONCLUSION

Cyberspace has many attributes, and is essential to recognize that accessibility is one of them. An important question to ask is, can this ease of access be that third node of connect to build better virtual communities that can give you the cultural comfort whenever and wherever you need it, and in turn make 'real-life' communities stronger and meaningful? And can this comfort make 'real -life' social integration for newcomers easier?

My work helped me gain a deeper understanding of the risks and benefits involved in building virtual communities and their effects on new immigrants.

The idea of this research is not to build isolated clusters of virtual communities that shy away from real interactions, instead, it is to help users visualize a network of peers they can depend on for culturally relevant information when they find themselves in unfamiliar environments and do not have real-life communities to depend on.

In conclusion I would like to share that during the course of my work, one of my professors passionately pointed out , "How can you feel you are sitting around a table with friends in the virtual world?"

It is my understanding now, as a designer, the question to ask is, rather than if we can, whether we should create a table of friends in the virtual world. There are many risks involved with the idea of building virtual communities, but the benefits of the internet and its reach must not be overlooked. The application may not be the solution to breaking barriers of social segregation and help solve the complexities involved in social acceptance, but instead it must be viewed as a modest step towards it.

“

*“One cannot experience the heat of the jubilant crowd, the eerie sense of connection that comes from a thousand voices chanting in unison, or the smell of one’s homeland on a spring morning on the internet-in other words the lived is still the exclusive property of real space”(2011, p.61)*

”

As Robert Saunders correctly observes,

# FUTURE OF RESEARCH,

\*Trampoline, a refugee livelihood program, is a 12-week program for people who have an idea for a social business or non-profit that will address problems faced by refugee and newcomer communities in Surrey. It is funded by The City of Surrey, Surrey Local Immigration Partnership, SFU International, Innoweave, Mowafaghian Foundation, and The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

This project is currently in its incubation phase at RADIUS Lab, Trampoline\* program (part of Beedie School of Business at Simon Fraser University.) The programme schedule helps to develop ideas, create business models, provide advice on finance, recognize and develop teams and work with advisors in similar areas of interest.

It finally leads to a presentation pitch to potential investors or collaborators on May 7th 2019.

The 3-month programme schedule is as follows:

- 1. Tuesday February 12th, 5:45-8:45 : Purpose and Value Proposition*
- 2. Tuesday February 19th, 5:45-8:45 : Human Centered Design methods*
- 3. Tuesday February 26th, 5:45-8:45: Advisor session*
- 4. Wednesday March 6th, 5:45-8:45: Minimum Viable Product and Business Models- Room 418*
- 5. Tuesday March 12th, 5:45-8:45: Business Model Canvas*
- 6. Wednesday March 20th, 5:45-8:45: Advisor session- Room 418*
- 7. Tuesday March 26th, 5:45-8:45: Finance and Modeling*
- 8. Wednesday April 3rd, 5:45-8:45: Advisor session- Room 402*
- 9. Tuesday April 9th, 5:45-8:45: Leadership and Team Development*
- 10. Tuesday April 16th, 5:45-8:45: Design Challenge!!*
- 11. Tuesday April 23rd, 5:45-8:45: Q&A and Co-working session, prepare for presentations*
- 12. Tuesday April 30th: Your Final Presentations! Make an ask to potential funders and supporters with influence in the systems you are trying to change.*

# TRAMPOLI NE: RADIUS LAB

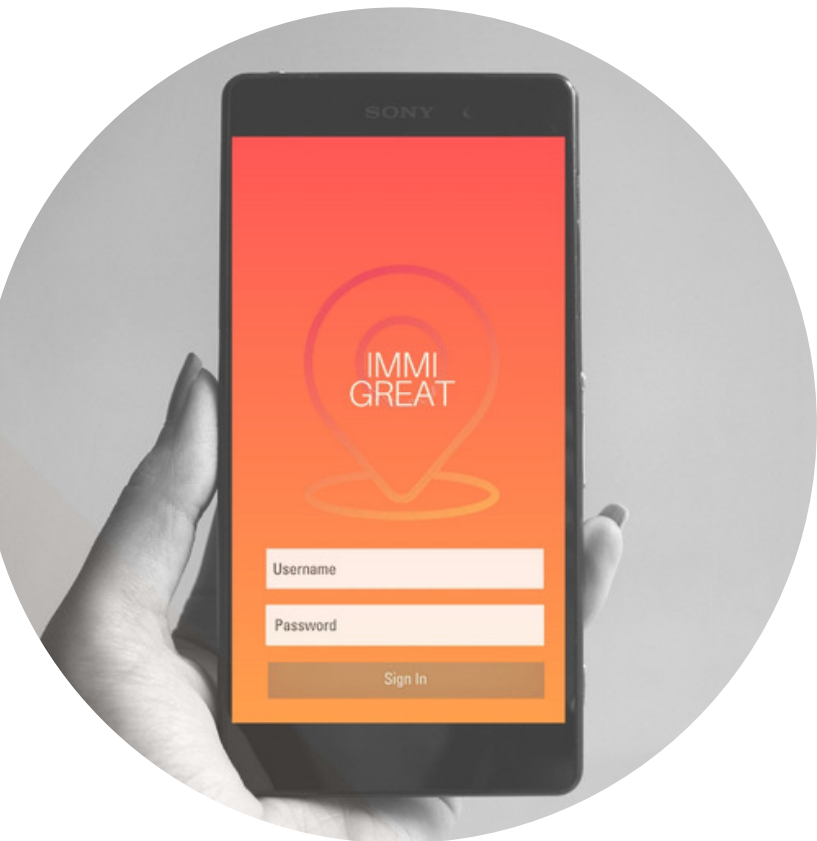


Fig.19. IMMIGREAT log-in screen ,(March 2019, author)

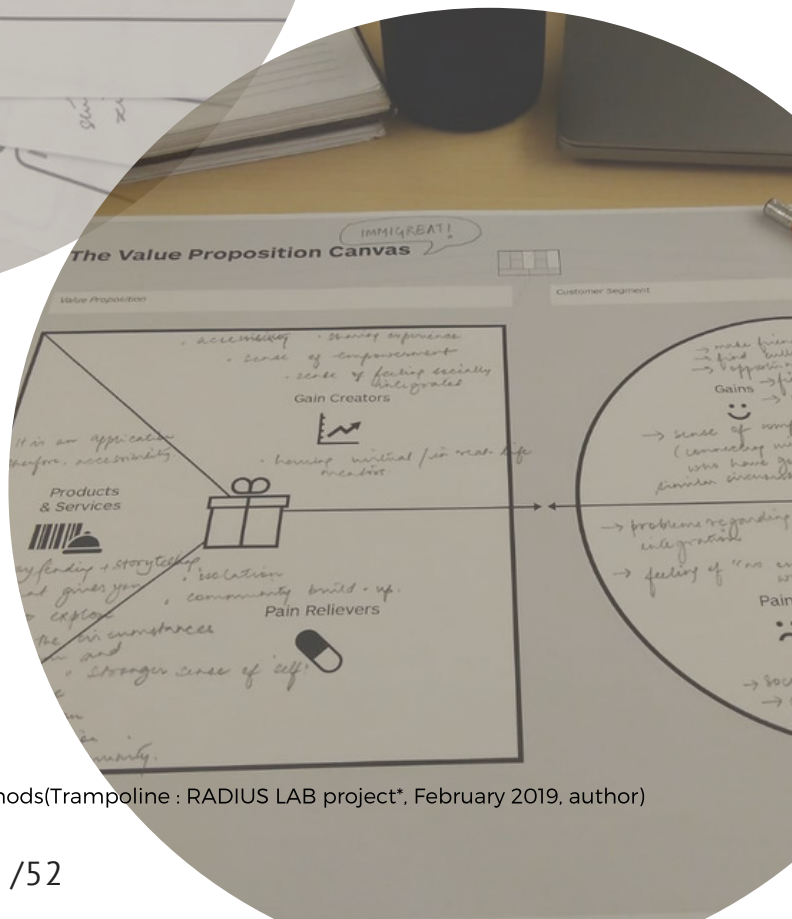
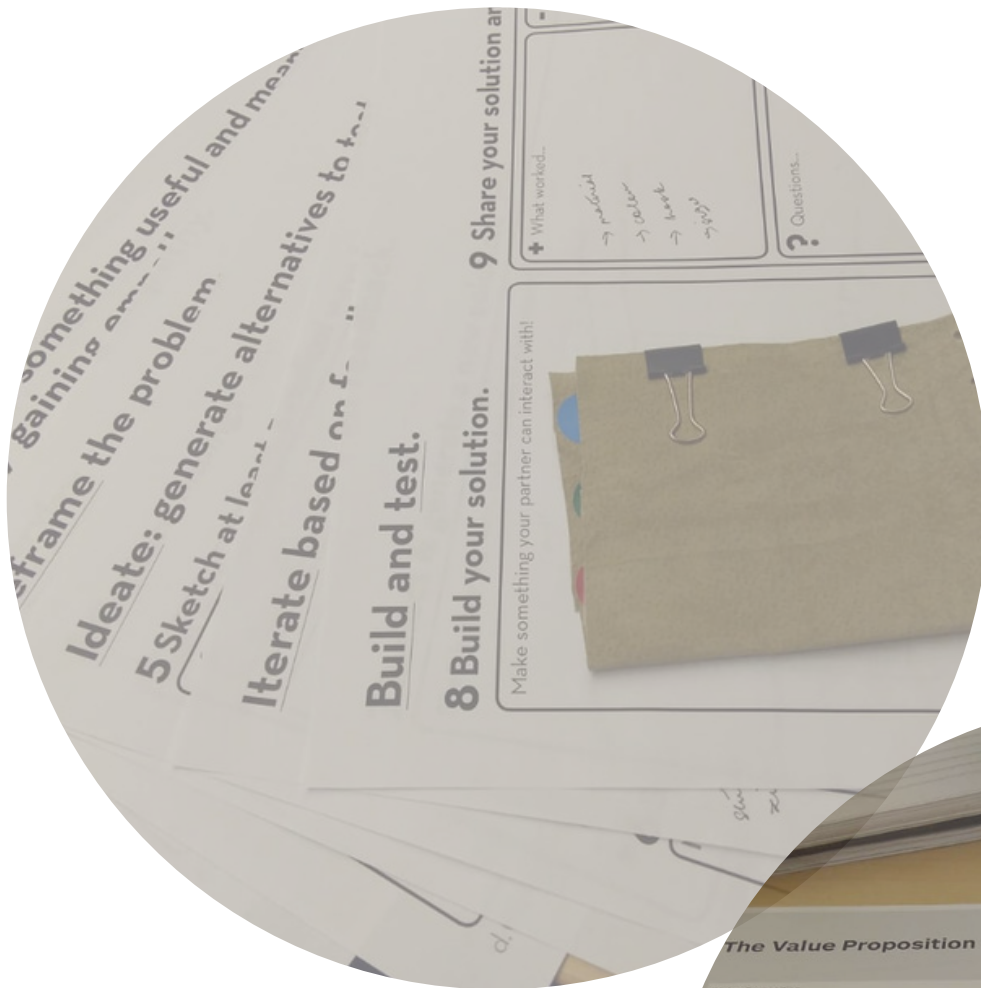



Fig 20. Value Proposition and testing human centred design methods(Trampoline : RADIUS LAB project\*, February 2019, author)

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BIBLIOGRA  
PHY





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Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). *Social media? Get serious! Understanding the Functional Building Blocks of Social Media*. *Business Horizon*, 54(3), 241-251.

Mullet, K. (2003). *The Essence of Effective Rich Internet Applications*. San Francisco, CA: Macromedia.

Fogg, B. J. (2003). *Prominence-Interpretation Theory: Explaining How People Access Credibility Online*. CHI: New Horizons,722-723.

McCoy, K. (2000). *Information and Persuasion: Rivals or Partners? Design Issues*, 16(3), 80-83. doi:10.1162/07479360052053342

Marcus, A., & Gould, E. W. (2000, August). *Crosscurrents: Cultural Dimensions and Global Web User-Interface Design*. New York: ACM Digital library

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Oppenheim,H.L.(2013)*Globalization, Mindfulness and Community*. American Jewish University, USA.Vol. V, No. 2GI

Kelly, E. P., & Rowland, H. C. (2000, May). *Ethical and Online Privacy Issues in Electronic Commerce*. *Business Horizons*, 43(3), 3. Retrieved from <https://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A63736746/AONE?u=googlescholar&sid=AONE&xid=b9918659>

Granovetter, M. (1983). *The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited*. *Sociological Theory*, 1, 201.doi:10.2307/202051

*Best Practices In Supporting the Integration of Immigrant Families Through Small Ethno-cultural Organizations*. (2010, December). Retrieved April 24, 2019, from <https://www.spcottawa.on.ca/sites/all/files/pdf/2010/Publications/Best-Practices-Supporting-Immigran-Families-English.pdf>

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# ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRA PHY

N.B. THE FOLLOWING HAVE  
BEEN REFERENCED AS  
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY  
FOR PRELIMINARY  
RESEARCH.



- Saunders, R.(2011). Chapter 2. Ethnopolitics in Cyberspace: The Internet, Minority Nationalism, and the Web of Identity (pp. 58). Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.

As book discusses the rise of cyber nations forming in cyberspace. Although, this concept remains largely debatable, what one may be compelled to wonder are the possibilities of inclusion the cyberspace provides for minorities and immigrants.

- Barney, D. (2004). Network Identity. In *The Network Society* (pp. 143-175). Polity Press.

In this chapter, Barney discusses the emergence of global information technology and its effect on identity. Barney emphasizes on the fact that network technology not only changes the way we live, but our combination of choices also determine who we are. In this technological network, identity is more than physicality, geographic location or other culturally imposed factors. What one may ask, is 'Network identity' truly disconnected from geographic location and cultural factors?

Key Findings. (2017, November 29). Retrieved February 22, 2018, from <https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/connectandengage/key-findings>

This current report continues the conversation that was started in 2012, revealing more about who is experiencing challenges of building “bonds and bridges” within and between communities in Metro Vancouver. It also discusses groups that are prone to being more vulnerable to social isolation. Since 2012, the main obstacle people identify to participating has shifted from ‘not having anything to do’, to ‘not having enough time’. Has life speeded up in the last five years? Why aren’t we more aware of opportunities to connect? The survey does not discuss alternative methods but instead provides with factual data. With the explosion of connected devices and social media, we’re sure it has never been easier to find out more about recreational activities. We wonder if people know where to look, and are there other more conventional barriers – like time and money – prevent them from participating?

- Rheingold, H. (1993). Chapter 1 and 2. In *The Virtual Community; Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier* (pp. 1-64). New York: Harper Perennial.
- This book questions whether a distinction between "virtual" communities and "real-life" communities is entirely valid when our “real-life” identities are almost indistinguishable from our



McCoy, K. (2000). Information and Persuasion: Rivals or Partners? *Design Issues*, 16(3), 80-83. doi:

• 10.1162/07479360052053342 The author mentions ,'Persuasive rhetoric is as simple as the boldface type highlighting a name when we scan a newsmagazine paragraph. But screen-based electronic media create both the opportunity and imperative for a far deeper application of persuasive rhetoric through interactivity, sound, and motion.' The concept that interests me the most is if cultural persuasion can be used to draw attention to certain information. Data Management, processing and interpretation has often been considered as a dry and tedious task, however the process be made more compelling and relevant by using a persuasive cultural techniques?

• Marcus, A., & Gould, E. W. (2000, August). *Crosscurrents: Cultural Dimensions and Global Web User-Interface Design*. New York: ACM Digital library The text illustrates with interface examples of comparative websites and how they differ based on the culture dimension index, carefully dissecting values and yet not stereotyping. The author discusses many relevant habits of cultures very quantitatively instead of qualitatively. This helps to map out a clear image of how different communities interact with interface. It also helps to draw subjective conclusions to interfaces that appeal to certain communities simply because of the way that N.B. The following have been referenced as annotated they have been designed. bibliography for preliminary research planning. Since this is a project in progress, it will include in depth literature review and thus will require further

• Fogg, B. J. (2003). *Prominence-Interpretation Theory: referencing.*

*Explaining How People Access Credibility Online*. CHI: New Horizons, 722-723.

In this article Fogg discusses the credibility of websites; if users think a site and its information and services can or cannot be trusted. He discusses the Prominence- Interpretation theory which states that if something is made prominent on a site, the user will have a judgement. However the judgement may differ depending on assumption, knowledge and context. Thus these interpretations are highly influenced by the user's culture. Profitability of a site depends on user involvement, site topic, user task and user skill.

• Mullet, K. (2003). *The Essence of Effective Rich Internet Applications*. San Francisco, CA: Macromedia. The article talks of the positive connotations of 'seamless, focused, connected and aware' interaction of software which has now become a privacy threat in present times. Can interface design somehow help pave way for the opposite? Make users be connected seamlessly and aware of their digital footprints?

• Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). *Social media? Get serious! Understanding the Functional Building Blocks of Social Media*. *Business Horizon*, 54(3), 241-251.

The text reflects an objective categorization of user generated information which one chooses to share on specific social interaction websites which I feel is a reference to how much it is relevant in different cultures.

## APPENDIX

---

A recent immigrant\* to Canada? Come share your stories and participate in a fun workshop!

\* Recent immigrants (also known as newcomers without refugee status), are landed immigrants who have come to Canada up to five years prior to current date. (source:immigration.ca)



**CHIT  
CHAT  
AND  
CHAI**

Refreshments will be provided!

**PICS, ROOM NO.43**  
Progressive Intercultural  
Community Services Society  
Unit 205,120 725,80th Avenue  
Surrey-V3W 3A6  
Ph.no.604-596-7722 ext.119

**10AM TO 12NOON**      **26TH JULY 2018**

For any Queries please feel free to call 604-763-8456 or email at pmukhopadhyay@ecuad.com

Research conducted by Master of Design Student at EMILY CARR UNIVERSITY OF ART-DESIGN in collaboration with PICS Surrey

This project has Full Research Ethics Approval from the Emily Carr University Research Ethics Board (June 7, 2018, ECU-REB#100207). If you have any comments or concerns about ethical issues in the research, you are invited to contact the Emily Carr University REB Coordinator at [ethics@ecuad.ca](mailto:ethics@ecuad.ca) or (604) 864-3800 ext 2846.



## APPENDIX

---

(REB approval e-mail)

Dr. Maria Lantin  
Other Research Centres/Stereoscopic 3D Centre  
Emily Carr University of Art and Design

File No: 100207  
Approval Date: June 7, 2018  
Expiry Date: April 30, 2019

Dear Dr. Maria Lantin (Principal Investigator) and Ms. Prakriti Mukhopadhyay (Co-Investigator),

The Emily Carr University Research Ethics Board (ECU-REB) has reviewed your application: Proposed Thesis Topic: "Network Knowledge: Cultural sharing amongst dispersed immigrants". Your application has been approved. You may now begin the proposed research. The research ethics approval dates are June 7, 2018 to April 30, 2019.

To continue your proposed research beyond April 30, 2019, you must submit a Renewal Form by (Calculate Date a month in advance of renewal). If your research ends before April 30, 2019, please submit a Final Report Form to close the ECU-REB file and monitoring.

If you need to make any changes to any aspect to the approved application, you are required to inform the ECU-REB prior to the implementation of changes. Requests for modifications, renewals, and serious adverse event reports are to be submitted via the Research Portal.

The ECU-REB file number should appear on all materials that are circulated to the participants in this way: "This project has Full Research Ethics Approval from the Emily Carr University Research Ethics Board (June 7, 2018, ECU-REB#100207). If you have any comments or concerns about ethical issues in the research, you are invited to contact the Emily Carr University REB Coordinator at [ethics@ecuad.ca](mailto:ethics@ecuad.ca) or (604) 844-3800 ext 2848."

For multi-site or partnered research, researchers are expected to comply with the appropriate external research ethics protocols or procedures. Researchers are expected to share notice of this approval with partners or sites of research. If further ethics approval is required or new partners or sites of research become part of the project, the ECU-REB should be informed.

If you have any questions about the REB review and approval process, please contact the ECU-REB at (604) 844-3800 ext 2848 or [ethics@ecuad.ca](mailto:ethics@ecuad.ca). If you encounter any issues when working in the Research Portal, please contact the Research and Industry Office: [research@ecuad.ca](mailto:research@ecuad.ca)

Sincerely,

Dr. Cameron Cartiere  
Chair, Emily Carr University Research Ethics Board

## APPENDIX

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### (Workshop Invitation and consent forms)

#### Research Invitation & Consent Agreement

Date: 07/26/2018

Project Title: Network Knowledge: Cultural sharing amongst dispersed immigrants

Principal Investigator:

Dr. Maria Lantin

Faculty of Other Research Centres/Basically Good Media Lab

Emily Carr University of Art and Design

Emily Carr University of Art + Design

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Vancouver, BC, V5T 0H2

[mlantin@ecuad.ca](mailto:mlantin@ecuad.ca)

Other Researchers:

Prakriti Mukhopadhyay

Graduate Student

Faculty of Graduate Studies

Emily Carr University of Art and Design

+16047638454;

[pmukhopadhyay@ecuad.ca](mailto:pmukhopadhyay@ecuad.ca)

**INVITATION** You are invited to participate in a research study. This research is being done by Prakriti Mukhopadhyay. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are an established recent immigrant (also known as a newcomer), who have come to Canada up to five years prior to current date, not including persons with refugee status.

#### WHAT IS THE STUDY ABOUT?

This study is being undertaken as part of a thesis project titled "Network Knowledge: Cultural sharing amongst dispersed immigrants." The results of the research study will contribute to the design of better services to help new immigrants share and preserve cultural knowledge in a new country.

**WHAT'S INVOLVED?** As a participant, you will be asked to participate in the research which will be conducted in two stages. You may only

be asked to participate in the first stage. The first stage is a workshop (approximately 30 mins) to enquire about the sources that immigrants rely on for information. The (optional) second stage is a cultural probe (1 week in duration) which will help identify pain points and possible solutions. The research methods include voice recording, photographs and sharing stories that will be documented by you. Participation will take approximately 30 minutes for the workshop and 7 days (10 mins per day) for the cultural probe.

#### MEDIA RECORDINGS

Due to the nature of this research, the researchers plan to collect audio recordings and/or photographs of you. The purpose of collecting recordings during the research is to analyze the co-creation session. The recorded information is expected to include images, stories and voices that are identifiable as you or your artwork / work in the co-creation and cultural probe session.

It is expected that the audio recordings and photographs may appear in presentations or publications like print or internet-base or public presentations. A separate Media Release is attached to this research consent form to indicate your consent / non-consent with the use of recordings for this purpose.

#### DIRECT QUOTATIONS & USE OF NAMES

Due to the nature of this research, the researchers request that direct quotations be included in the research. The purpose of including your name is to create a sense of empathy.

Although your decision can be changed during the course of this research, please indicate your preference for the use of direct quotations and the use of your name in the research:

Yes, I consent to the use of direct quotations in this research.

No, I do not consent to use of direct quotations in this research.

If yes, Yes, I consent to the inclusion of my identity (name) in this research.

No, I do not consent to the inclusion of my identity (name) in this research. I choose to remain anonymous.

The researchers & I agree to the use of this alias: \_\_\_\_\_

#### VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide to take part in the research, you can decline to answer any questions or decline to participate in any component of the research. You can also decide to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason, or to request the withdrawal of your contributions to the data. You may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you were entitled to receive prior to the start of the research. The researchers aim to provide information for you about what to expect at all stages of the research.

#### POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

Possible benefits of participation in this research include designing better services that would help new immigrants share and preserve cultural knowledge in a new country. The research will help recognize pain points and inform possible solutions. There may be risks associated with participation such as social risks (including privacy issues, economic position, status, relations with others) and disclosure of personal/sensitive information because participants will be encouraged to share personal experiences which may cause slight discomfort. The extent of disclosure is entirely voluntary. Information about support services available in your community will be shared if required.

## APPENDIX

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(Workshop Invitation and consent forms)

### PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in students theses, design process books, and/or presentations , colloquia.

### CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this research, you are invited to contact the Principal Investigator using the contact information provided above.

This study has received ethics clearance through the Emily Carr University Research Ethics Board June 7, 2018. ECU-REB#100207.

If you have any comments or concerns about ethical issues in the research, you are invited to contact the Research Ethics Board Coordinator, [ethics@ecuad.ca](mailto:ethics@ecuad.ca) or (604) 844-3800 ext 2848.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

All of the information that you provide to this study is considered to be confidential. The information collected may include the following: Name, phone number and email (for the purposes of contacting you only); responses to the interview questions; and audio recording of the interview.

Your contact information will be kept separate from the interview data (interview recordings/transcripts of interviews) which will be coded and then grouped with responses from other participants in an "aggregate data set". During the course of this research the research team will only retain your name and contact information for the purpose of contacting you. Your name and contact information will not be linked to the aggregate data set.

During the course of the research and for 5 years following the conclusion of this study, the data and confidential materials will be securely stored on encrypted hard drives. These materials will only be accessible to the researchers listed above. Unless another agreement is made with you, the confidential materials will be destroyed in a secure manner after 5 years.

### CONSENT AGREEMENT

I agree to participate in the research that is described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read here . I have had the opportunity to get more information about the research from the researchers. I understand that I may ask for more information at any time. I understand that the release to the researchers of my image and voice recording in publications is a choice that I can make separate from my participation in the research. I understand that my participation is voluntary, and that I may withdraw this consent at any time by contacting any of the people listed on this form. By consenting to this research, I have not waived any legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your assistance in this project.



## APPENDIX

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(PROJECT INCUBATION SUPPORTED BY  
RADIUS SFU, Beedie School of Business)



### Invitation: Refugee Livelihood Lab Trampoline: Ideas to Action! Program

Dear participant,

We are pleased to formally invite you to participate in RADIUS' Refugee Livelihood Lab Trampoline program!

We have extended this offer because of your application and other provided information, and because we strongly believe in the value of what you're trying to accomplish. We believe you'll make a valuable addition to the cohort.

Trampoline has been built for entrepreneurs like you, and we strive to create a valuable learning experience to help you find (or not) alignment between:

- the problem you seek to solve;
- a viable, effective solution to that problem; and
- your own skills and passions as an entrepreneur.

Please review the attached "Terms of Acceptance" and confirm your acceptance.

We can't wait to work with you toward moving your venture forward!

Signed,

Camille Dumond, Refugee Livelihood Lab Manager  
RADIUS



## APPENDIX

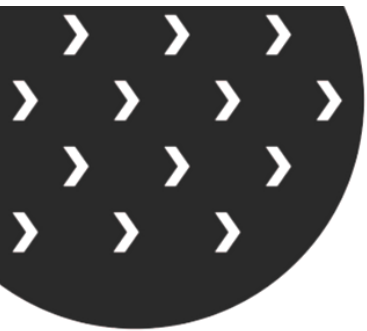
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(TCPS 2: CORE certification)



## APPENDIX

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### Discover ideas greater than you.

In an increasingly globalized world, are we so focused on the details that we miss the bigger picture? As we gauge how it affects us as individuals, thinking about how we create its future is more crucial than ever.

Excerpts from this document were discussed at the Tedx event on March 16th 2019 at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

## APPENDIX

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(TEDxEmilyCarrU Guest Speaker)



**TED<sup>x</sup>EmilyCarrU**  
x = independently  
organized TED event

