

Co design for empathy and reducing barriers to inclusion

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Published PDF deposited in Coventry University's Repository

Original citation:

Woodcock, A 2022, Co design for empathy and reducing barriers to inclusion. in MC Leva, A Ababio-Donkor, A Thimnu & W Saleh (eds), Proceedings of the 2021 Travel Demand Management Symposium: Gender and Equality in Transport.. Proceedings of the Travel Demand Management (TDM) Symposium , vol. 11, Technological University Dublin, pp. 173-4, 10th International Symposium on Travel Demand Management jointly with TInnGO and DIAMOND final conference, 17/11/21.

<https://doi.org/10.21427/yewc-rq34>

DOI 10.21427/yewc-rq34

ISSN 2811-5341

Publisher: Technological University Dublin

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11.50-12.10 / 12.50-13.10 Presentation 44: Friday, 19th November 2021

Co design for empathy and reducing barriers to inclusion

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One of TInnGO's USPs relates to design-led engagement of diverse groups in transport futures, to understand their unmet needs, and to feed these insights into the project and wider stakeholders. Similar to citizen science, we aimed for a paradigm shift in transport system design, towards co-design by and with end users, using the process of design research and visual communication as a process of

engagement. As previously outlined our work in this area was impeded by Covid, which meant we could not work face to face ‘in the wild’ with any vulnerable users or be co-located in the hubs.

Nevertheless, we worked remotely for 18 months with undergraduate design interns to create Design Provocations (<https://oip.transportgenderobservatory.eu/ideas-lab>) based on ideas sent to us by a hub, or our own experience as female users of transport services. The Design Provocations are based on critique amongst the project team, inclusively designed around user journey touch points. Extensive conversations around design drawings, personas, market research and journey maps produced new insight, challenged the young designers and enabled them to develop transferable skills (i.e., empathy and systems design thinking), while our non-designers were able to think more creatively, outside the box and relate detailed personal experiences in exciting, interactive and nonthreatening discussions.

The early concepts are provided as design provocations, along with short textual commentaries on the Open innovation Platform to nudge people into commenting with further insights of mobility. Indicative of the works is: the Pinkorner which uses bus stops as platforms for social education and the Nurturpod, which provides temporary solace when infants need un-rushed care. In terms of moving forward, the design provocations remain on our OIP for others to develop, to stimulate wider discussion of the meaning and application of gender and diversity smart mobility and the use of design as a means of breaking down barriers.

Conclusions

Bringing the community together has the potential to increase realisation and accountability of any implemented community programs. This work has demonstrated a number of venues and efforts to facilitate this achievement. These include a number of innovative approaches and methodologies including data collection, sub population groups, methodological frameworks, educational curriculum as well as other conventional means.

Acknowledgements

The work was conducted as part of the EU funded, H2020 TInnGO project (grant number 824349) and H2020 DIAMOND project (grant No. 824326).

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