Faculty of Design

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Off to New Shores! Sailing towards common ground
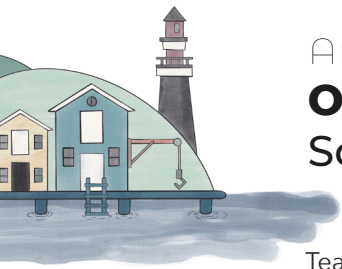
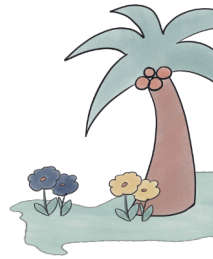Buckenmayer, Maria Belén, Gonçalves, Milene and Mulder, Ingrid

Are we on the same page?
Off to new shores!
Sailing towards common ground

Team: Maria Belén Buckenmayer, Milene Gonçalves, Ingrid Mulder

Workshop format & outline
Duration: 2 hours
Format: Online workshop
Media: Zoom & Miro (no subscription needed)
Participants: ~40 (breakout rooms of 5 people)

In a two hour, interactive online workshop participants will sail together to new shores and co-create a shared understanding of main concepts regarding a provided case. They will learn and apply the concept of fruitful friction and use the metaphor of sailing. Fruitful friction is a concept that deliberately triggers people to express their implicit perspectives to create openness and awareness about different aspects that are usually not put on the table. In the workshop, the metaphor of 'Sailing towards new shores' is used to allow participants to make use of metaphorical language and express their implicit perspective more easily. The metaphor creates an engaging, playful and immersive experience.

As shown in Figure 1, participants are guided through three main activities where the focus moves from the individuals' ways of thinking towards a collective perspective.
First, individuals way of thinking will be uncovered to trigger friction and awareness about the different mindsets. Second, participants will express their perspectives regarding a given project to reveal similarities and differences in participants viewpoints. Third, a shared understanding of the project will be captured to build a foundation for productive and effective collaboration.
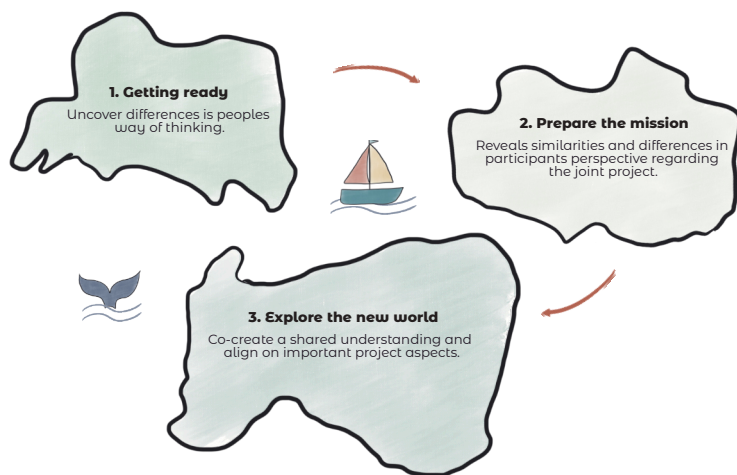
1. Getting ready
Uncover differences is peoples way of thinking.

2. Prepare the mission
Reveals similarities and differences in participants perspective regarding the joint project.

3. Explore the new world
Co-create a shared understanding and align on important project aspects.

Figure 1: The three main activities in the workshop are woven into a story of sailing from one island towards another one.

Background
The workshop complements the theoretical elaboration of fruitful friction that is presented in a full paper at the conference. This workshop is the practical application of a framework outlined in the paper. The workshop was developed to help social innovators and their stakeholders reach common ground. The concept of fruitful friction is applied in order to overcome the often occurring misunderstandings in multi-stakeholders projects due to peoples' different mindsets, implicit frames and values.

Alignment with RSD10 themes
We see fit of this interactive contribution with the RSD themes in the sense that **we offer one way on how design can deliberately use tension to deal with conflicting values of different stakeholders** and understand the benefits this can have for collaborations. **In alignment with the conference theme of tension, deals this contribution with friction as a catalyst for change.** The workshop is about individuals perspectives while at the same time considering the bigger picture and common understanding and goals of a project. As this workshop is set up to enrich multi-stakeholder collaboration we see it as a **valuable contribution to the systemic design** field where a variety of stakeholders are involved in tackling today's wicked problems.
An interesting point of discussion at the end of the workshop could be how a seemingly small change in a person mindset has an impact on the system and enables its transformation. To put it in the words of Donella Meadows (2008, pp.163-164): "There's nothing physical or expensive or even slow in the process of paradigm change. In a single individual, it can happen in a millisecond. All it takes is a click in the mind, a falling of scales from the eyes, a new way of seeing." Further research could study the correlation and impact of an individual and collective mindset shift on a system.

Purpose of facilitating the workshop @RSD
The workshop offers a fruitful and practical approach to deal with friction, which leads to the emergence of common ground. The goal of the online workshop is to let conference participants experience how friction can be used to make people aware of their own and others ways of thinking to identify similarities and differences in perspectives and co-create a common vision and project path. Participants get to know a tool to connect and communicate with stakeholders on a deeper level that leads to meaningful relationships and impacts each individual's understanding regarding a project.

By playing with friction in a fruitful way during the workshop, participants experience the productive side of tension.

The approach of facilitation @RSD
As this workshop is usually for project teams of multiple stakeholders it will be adapted to the RSD10 audience. To facilitate the workshop a multistakeholder, multisector real case will be used to guide the participants through the three activities. Roles with small persona cards will be offered (like municipality, business owner, tenant, construction company, etc.) to ease participants into the case. The roles are diverse in needs and wants to create friction in perspectives that participants can relate to.

Participants do not need any pre-knowledge or specific skills to participate in this workshop. The workshop uses visual elements participants can play around with to stimulate their creativity and increase engagement making it easy for people who do not have a design background to engage in the workshop. The workshop team is experienced in facilitating online and offline creative sessions with multiple stakeholders. Some pilot workshops will be held to optimize the workshop for the RSD and secure a smooth session. This particular workshop has been conducted in the context of [DESIGNSCAPES](#), a capacity building program that uses design for system change in the urban context.

Procedure
For the workshop, a Miro board will be prepared like the one shown in Figure 2.

Introduction (15 min, whole group)
The facilitator introduces the workshop agenda, the case, roles and the background of the workshop.

Getting ready (15 min, breakout rooms)
The first activity focuses on uncovering general mental constructs and perceiving certain aspects of each individual, for example, their perception of challenges or the success of others. It is an individual ex-

ercise to trigger people to become aware of their and others' internal frames. The objective of the trigger is to nudge people out of their comfort zone into the "learning zone" to make them open to change (Senninger, 2000).

Explaining next activity (5 min, whole group)

Preparing the mission (30 min, breakout rooms)
This is an individual activity to give people time to reflect on their stand and role regarding the case. E.g. How they would see their role in the project, how they personally envision the outcome, what they consider the best route to get there. This step allows in particular to make explicit similarities and differences in the perspectives that participants have on the case. Additionally, this grants all opinions and points of view to be heard in the group.

Explaining next activity (5 min, whole group)

Exploring the new world (20 min, breakout rooms)
The last activity entails the co-creation of a common mission. Each group works on one board and together they define their shared understanding of how they would proceed with the project together. The set-up of this activity is similar to the second one but now the focus is on the joint journey. Aspects that have been articulated on the previous board are taken back to negotiate a common understanding of them. For example, the common values or a joint future vision. Engaging together in this collective sense-making activity helps to create acceptance and ownership of the project.

Discussion, Q&A, Feedback (30 min, whole group)
Time for discussion, questions and feedback.

Figure 2: Workshop Miro board providing an impression of the visuals and activities of the session.

5 min individual task
2 min each, presenting to the group

10 min individual task
4 min each, presenting to the group

15 min co-creation
5 min summary/conclusion

Further links:
[Full report](#)
[Miro workshop board](#)

References:
Meadows, D. H. (2008). Leverage Points— Places to Intervene in a System. Thinking in systems: A primer (pp. 163-164). Chelsea Green Publishing.

Senninger, T. (2000). Abenteuer leiten-in Abenteuern lernen: Methodenset zur Planung und Leitung kooperativer Lerngemeinschaften für Training und Teamentwicklung in Schule, Jugendarbeit und Betrieb. Ökotopia Verlag.