

Building Next Generation Design Support Programmes

Putting policy into action

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A typical implementation of design and innovation policy is the development and delivery of business support programmes. In recent years, many new design support programmes have been developed across the EU both at regional and national levels. These programmes have been influenced formally or informally by long-running programmes like those delivered by Design Wales and Designing Demand in the UK. Business support has always reflected the policy landscape. Today, as this landscape shifts, programmes that were initially delivered to business, are being modified for delivery to other sectors such as public services.

“Our strengths in design and creativity must be better exploited. We must champion social innovation. We must develop a better understanding of public sector innovation, identify and give visibility to successful initiatives, and benchmark progress.”

European Commission, Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative, Innovation Union

The increasing interest in support programmes, coupled with the growing interest in the principles of innovation of services as a design discipline, raises a number of questions about the design of these programmes at a strategic level. How can we distill best practice from programmes that have run in the past in order to build more effective programmes moving forward, especially in countries that are developing programmes for the first time? How are we evaluating and evolving programmes in countries with a legacy of programme activity? How are long-term challenges of scale, quality and innovation within programme development being managed? What is the future of design-led innovation programmes?

Considering the answers to these questions has led us to examine the potential for a common point of reference for the design and development of these, usually public-funded, interventions. The result is the Business Support Canvas; a framework to support both the evaluation of a given programme and the design, set-up and delivery of new programmes. Although developed through experience of design support, it is thought that the Canvas will work across the full spectrum of business support interventions. The Canvas gives a consistent approach to programme development and introduces a common language to support and encourage professionals to work across boundaries.

A group of these professionals, supported by the SEE project, came together with colleagues from further afield at the first workshop to use the Business Support Canvas, *Building Next Generation Design Support Programmes*, in Tallinn, Estonia on the 6th and 7th of December 2010.

Estonia was the host for the workshop as The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, responsible for the design agenda in Estonia, is currently formulating a proposal for a national action plan for design. As part of this proposal, the Ministry is investigating the possibility of a national business support programme for enabling companies to bring innovative products to market through design. The workshop gave the opportunity for experienced professionals to undertake a critical comparison of their services and for those who are new to this space, like Estonia, to accelerate their action plans.

On day one of the workshop, six presentations were made on design support programmes in Brazil, Denmark, Ireland, New Zealand, UK and Wales. The focus was on the lessons learned and what, in retrospect, would these programme managers “keep” or “change” from existing programmes.



“Design is a fantastic world to be involved with, but by spending taxpayers’ money, sometimes to significant degree, there has to be a return on our activities. We are in the business of economic development.”

Jonathan Ball

The second day was a working session on the development of next-generation programmes. Based on what has been done to date, how should we be changing, adapting, evolving and positioning future programmes? How can we create the most effective programmes that realise the practical benefits of innovation and design policy? What might a programme look like for Estonia? This activity was managed using the Business Support Canvas.

This publication summarises the six programmes and the resulting next and best practice for programme development. It also introduces the Business Support Canvas, how it can be applied and the resulting outline proposal for an Estonian business support programme.

Jonathan Ball and Justin Knecht, January 2011

Ireland Innovation by Design

An 18-month pilot programme run with six diverse companies across a range of sectors in the Northwest of Ireland. This approach was taken to show that a user-centred programme can be effective within organisations big and small; public and private; and as diverse as a crane manufacturer, software developer, airport, dairy cooperative, third-level college and precision toolmaker. The company selection process encompassed the first three months of the programme and eligible participants were chosen from an initial pool of 200 companies.

Participants attend three workshops in total. The first on user-centred design is the cornerstone of the programme, dispelling myths about “design” and providing easy to use tools to identify the right users; observe what clients actually do; involving your customers in development; and understanding how to prototype potential ideas. The second workshop

is about understanding and developing your brand. It introduces the concept of brand touch points and the building blocks of brand development. The third workshop looks at service design and customer experience, providing a simple blueprint for how to design and evaluate service. Decks of cards highlighting key techniques and concepts from the workshops are retained by each company for future reference and use.

Following each workshop, the organisations apply the new skills to their own organisations with the help of a Design Associate. Design Associates have cross-disciplinary experience within multiple business sectors and design disciplines. This facilitation and mentoring is key to integrating new skills and participants can request strategic expertise when needed. Companies receive five days of face-to-face time over the course of the programme and the continuous support of the Centre. On two separate occasions, all companies are asked to present a plan of action and progress to their peers.

The focus of the three workshops creates a steer for most organisations to focus on projects

around user-centred product development; branding or brand refresh; and service development or improvement. Over the 15 months, different participants have launched new brands; generated hundreds of ideas; explored new markets; created prototypes for new products; redesigned their product development processes; delivered new and enhanced services to their customers; briefed and contracted design agencies; and one even renamed their company.

“Our Design Associate was the ‘tipping point’ of the decision to focus on our existing customers.”

Felim McNeela, MD, Avenue Mould Solutions

“Everyone applies a design approach to understanding customers’ needs first, which is key to identifying the right ideas to commercialise.”

Justin Knecht, Programme Manager

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Wales The Service Design Programme



The Service Design Programme is a package of support for the advanced materials and manufacturing sector and the creative industries in Wales. The programme started in the summer of 2010 and will run until August 2013, by which time Design Wales aim to have established a hub of service design activity in Wales through our work in both sectors. The programme is funded by the

Welsh Assembly Government’s Department for Economy and Transport and can be broken down into the following activities:

Design Wales ‘Service Strategy Programme’ is a high-level business support programme available to Welsh manufacturing companies. At present Design Wales are 6 months into the programme and have worked with over 30 companies, these include an electronic water treatment company, a ventilation company and a solar PV company.

The strategy programme aims to introduce companies to core principles of service design, facilitate service workshops and train staff in methods such as observation, mapping and service prototyping.

Design Wales ‘Service Design for Designers’ is a six-month training programme for product, graphics and branding companies that want to extend their offer into service design. Following an initial pilot programme involving 6 companies in Cardiff, applications will now be sought from design companies across Wales on 10th March 2011 to apply for the next six-month programme. By the end of the project Design Wales will have trained 36 design companies through this programme.

The service design programme for designers aims to up-skill designers in Wales and create a hub of companies with service design capabilities. The programme was recently covered in the UK magazine Design Week on 24/02/2011.

Design Wales ‘Service Essentials’ is a workshop developed by Design Wales to raise awareness about the service design process. It is aimed at manufacturing and design companies who are first-time users of service design expertise and covers three key areas, these are; Capturing Experience, Customer Journey Mapping and Service Blueprinting.

“Since our involvement in the programme we have done a 180 turn and really looked at our business differently, we have developed a new product which we plan to launch in the next few months and will start offering this to customers using a new service-model”

Philip Morgan, MD of Watertec Solutions

“I’m encouraged that the Welsh Assembly Government realises the value of service design to businesses and the continued development of the design sector in Wales. It is clear from our first few months that service innovation is required to help many SME’s compete in increasingly competitive markets. At Design Wales we are pleased to see designers start to adopt new methods and practices and manufacturers invest in new ways of working”

Paul Thurston, Service Design Programme Lead at Design Wales
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New Zealand Better by Design

Begun in 2004, Better by Design’s purpose is to inspire New Zealand’s best companies to success by design. To achieve this, the Design Integration Programme was created to embed transformational thinking and capability. The programme connects companies with business experts and design practitioners to create better thinking, better approaches, and better customer connections through the application of design strategies and processes.

The Design Integration Programme is delivered in six stages.

The first stage, *selection*, brings together the CEO of the company, the senior management team, and a Better by Design Business Specialist to determine the suitability of the company for the programme. If suitable, the company enters a formal application and assessment process.

In *assessment*, the company and Design 360 team (a consortium of private sector management and design experts) take a strategic view across the entire business, addressing all areas of design integration. The aim is to identify strengths and weaknesses in the company’s existing design capacity, and opportunities to use design more productively. Findings are used to generate a report which forms the basis of the next stage, planning.

In *planning*, the Design 360 team, the Better by Design team and the company work together to transform the assessment report into an action plan. This plan outlines areas and opportunities for design integration. Clear goals and steps to implement the changes are set. The *resource* stage determines and prioritises the resources needed to implement the proposed plan and how best to use existing assets.

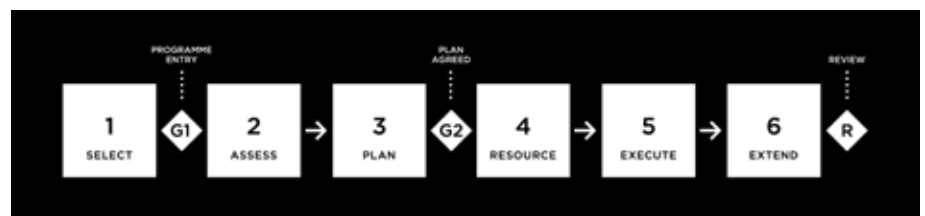
The *execute* stage implements the actions determined at planning. Detailed project briefs are generated and, if required, specialist external consultants are enlisted to help the companies. Additional mentoring advice is provided directly from the Better by Design team. Finally, the progress of the company is reviewed and the next set of opportunities is identified. Better by Design emphasises that design is not a task but a process. The final stage, *extend*, aims to maintain momentum and grow design capability to achieve a higher level of design integration.

Better by Design works one-on-one with around 80 globally focused companies and influences a wider business network through inspirational events which connect New Zealand CEOs to world leading thinkers and practitioners.

“We started with the design audit, but soon realised that just pointing a company in the right direction was not enough. It’s got to be a journey; it’s got to be a long-term relationship with big helpings of both inspiration and practical support along the way.”

“We’re in the business of transformation, so it’s all about changing hearts and minds, and the key person you need to influence is the CEO.”

Judith Thompson, Director
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Brazil

Criação Paraná



The Design Centre Paraná is a non-profit organization that contributes to Brazilian industry sustainable development and excellence through research and dissemination of design and innovation. Its activities comprise two guidelines: education and design initiatives development.

One of the main outputs of the Design Centre Paraná was done with the “Criação Paraná” programme which provides design support for manufacturing industries tailoring their design solutions from initial stages to the product prototype stage. The programme teaches small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) how to hire designers, manage design projects and understand design as a strategic tool.

Criação Paraná is comprised of four main stages:

1. Identify the Design Demands

A planning visit allows the team to understand the companies’ design demands and identify potential companies which could join the programme.

2. Movement through Design

Seminars, meetings and workshops are organized based on companies’ needs. The goal is to create a unified group atmosphere driving companies to work and learn together.

3. Learning by Doing

Companies learn design by doing a real project and with the Design Centre team experience and support; where both, designers and companies, will improve the design development process.

4. Visibility

The last step is a final public exhibition of prototypes and development processes. The published exhibition catalogue, detailing the new products, builds companies confidence and visibility. The exhibition and catalogue encourage other companies to join design initiative programmes.

During the two editions of the “Criação Paraná” programme, nearly 400 companies were visited, 95 of them joined the programme along with 59 design studios and 23 companies’ design teams. The initiative outcomes: 83 prototypes, 32 new products launched and 33 new patent applications. It also contributed to an increase in the design market once the companies learned the value of design.

“At the beginning the designers were worried about losing customers, but the opposite happened - they got new customers! The Criação Paraná Programme doesn’t try to sell design (services), but to help companies to learn how use and hire design.”

Ken Fonseca

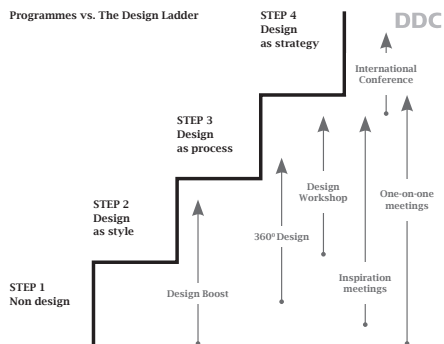
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projetos-acoes_em_design-criacao_parana.html

Denmark

Design Boost and 360° Design



In 2002, the Danish Design Ladder was created as a tool to categorise companies based on their level of use of design. Companies on the lowest step of the ladder use no design. Companies on the highest step, integrate design strategically. It is the aim of the Danish Design Centre to progress companies up the Design Ladder. To achieve this, two programmes

have been created with the purpose of bridging the gap between the industry and design companies. Design Boost is a short intensive program that aims to introduce companies to design. For companies already familiar with design, 360° Design is an in-depth course focusing on business development and design strategy.

Design Boost takes five companies with two employees each (one of which must be a CEO or manager) on three half-day workshops over a two-week period. The main objective is to convey the value of design. For the initial meeting, all companies work together in a single workshop. This varied, small number of participants creates a dynamic, informal atmosphere and activities concentrate on applying design to specific challenges. For the second meeting, businesses are partnered with three different design companies representing product design, service design and graphic design. This meeting offers an opportunity for companies to ask specific questions around design in relation to their own company. For the final workshop, companies are brought back together into a single group and create customised plans of action for the future.

360° Design focuses on improving the use of design through business development and cohesion, namely design strategy. Twelve to fifteen companies, with two employees each, participate in workshops over three to four days. Meetings aim

to create a design strategy mindset that is open to new possibilities. Business development strategies are created to identify the opportunities offered by a design approach and what steps are needed to implement the necessary changes. Companies are introduced to a number of designers from which they can select one to work with in implementing and progressing the new strategy.

The focus of both programmes is to change the mindset of companies. By changing this mindset it is intended that companies will progress up the design ladder, from non-design to design as strategy, and maximise the opportunities offered by the application of design.

“We have gained a greater understanding of where we want to move the company and developed a strategy accordingly. We truly realised how much value designers and their creative input can bring to our company.”

Henrik Lauridsen, Manager, Domex Ovenlys A/S

“They get an idea of how to create a design strategy, how to develop design DNA and, perhaps most importantly, they get a language.”

Christina Mølander, Project Manager

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UK

Design Support Programmes

Decades of design promotion and support in the UK has culminated in the current Designing Demand programme, a part of the UK Government’s portfolio of business support services, Solutions for Business. Design support services development over that time, coupled to delivery at scale, has led to a number of standards or principles that are the points of reference for both the design and delivery of the current national service and future developments.

There is a clear customer journey through the different programme levels of the service. The service is flexible enough to allow entry and exit at any level and for the numbers of businesses to vary depending on uptake. The structure also helps with efficient intermediary referral networks.

There has been a shift over time from the purely tactical approaches of the eighties, “any design is good design”, to today where any design intervention has to be aligned between a businesses vision and strategy and their customers and users requirements. This leverages investment, economic impact and legacy and, in many businesses, will also support a shift to a more creative culture.

Programme content is shaped depending on the category of client and sector focus to position design as a critical part of the ‘glue’ between a business strategy and the end user. Making the links between strategy and user allow the focus to be on the right ‘design’ for the right business reasons yet still align with wider policy and economic or social trends like sustainability and service. The services that have the greatest economic impact (and legacy) are those delivered face to face with the clients by specialist advisers, the network of Design Associates (DA) in the case of Designing Demand.

In the last decade policy changes and reduced budgets has meant a shift away from an expectation by businesses that there will be a financial grant or award to support a project. In the current UK programmes the ‘award’ is viewed as the time of the Design Associate.

Convention in business support in the UK is that one doesn’t start a project with a client that is wholly about a change of culture. Culture change is best influenced by a change of practice. Designing Demand’s action-based approaches appear to leave a positive shift in a businesses culture.

A client’s participation in a programme is only deemed to have been successful if there is a finished design project, or projects, on their way to being

fully implemented. To do the right design project one needs the right designer so a design support programme has to have a transparent process for the matching of client to designer. All the programmes are independently evaluated.

“There are four things that are critical for your programme’s success, for economic impact and a sustainable legacy within the businesses. Content, meaning your processes, tools and techniques. Design associates. Client readiness. The right designers.”

Jonathan Ball

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We are all familiar with the notion of best practice. But the concept is a static one. Perhaps, in the world of support programmes, we should be considering the idea of 'next practice'; identifying and describing the changes in working practice as they occur. With this in mind we asked each of the six presenters to tell us what they would keep and what they would change in their programmes based on what they are learning in practice. Following the presentations their responses were grouped into a series of 'next practice' suggestions as a basis for future programme development. These have been organised under seven key headings: Policy, Define, Set-up, Delivery, Promote, Measure and Impact.

POLICY

DO align with key policy objectives and measures. Not only will this require an understanding of the current policy environment but also the forging of relationships within key ministries. It is important to create relationships and build a fan base within government. If the measurements of a programme's efficacy tie back into policy objectives, that's half a battle won with funders.

DO the right thing. Though it is important to tie into key policy, a programme shouldn't be afraid to push back on funders. It is a mistake to choose volume over outcomes and targets shouldn't stop you from doing the right thing for the companies involved.

DO be prepared to change your language for different audiences. In the same way as you will need clear messages for businesses, you need to be able to present your programme in the right language for government and policy makers. This may also involve initial awareness building of the real benefits of design-led programmes within business and public services.

DEFINE

DO define client readiness at the outset. Client selection is critical to the success of any programme. This involves finding participants that are "ready" based on the desired outputs of the programme.

DO prototype before piloting or scaling your programme. There is a progression through programme definition, design and development, and like a good design process, you should be testing, learning and iterating before rolling out a pilot.

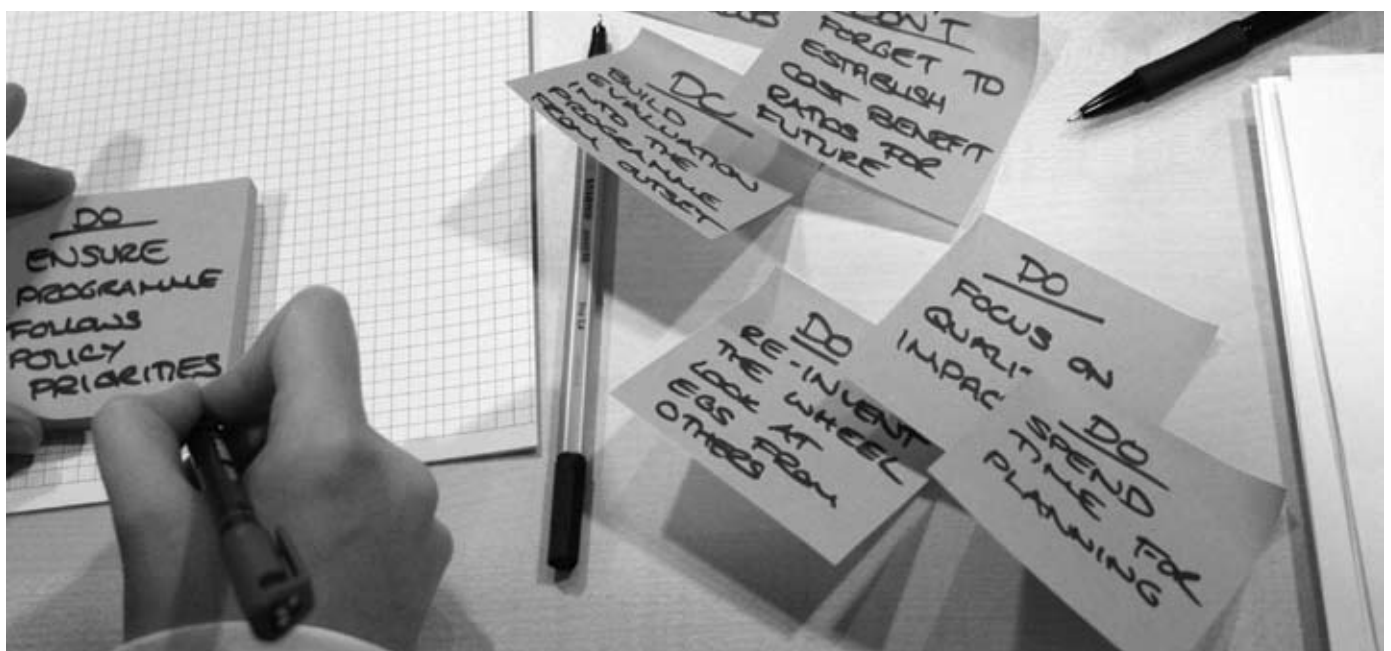
DON'T choose breadth over depth. Ultimately a small number of meaningful projects with lasting impact and definitive economic benefit are worth more than a roomful of design aware companies. Unless your programme's ambition is purely awareness, choose depth over breadth.

SET-UP

DO charge for participation. Paid participation keeps both the delivery partner and client involved. Free services are often undervalued and are easy to walk away from physically or mentally. Making a link between the value obtained through participation to the real cost of delivering a programme will make it easier to justify your fee structure.

DO map both the journey and the destination. Work backwards from key milestones. A visual map of the overall process is going to be helpful during the promotion of the programme as well as supporting the charting of clients' progress along the way.

DON'T allow a company on the programme without CEO participation. This was referred to nicely as the 'CEO + 1' rule. If you don't have and maintain senior level involvement, you shouldn't be working with the client.



Generating DOs and DON'Ts during the workshop

PROMOTE

DO promote economic impact. Case studies and success stories will be needed, but in order to be able to quantify the benefits you must record the numbers. It shouldn't be a leap of faith for a client to join the programme.

DO use the right language. Speak to programme participants in a straightforward business language. Don't use jargon.

DO visit the companies. This ties back into the selection process. Invest a lot of time ensuring you are selecting the right clients. Good relationships within existing support networks and agencies are critical for strong client referrals.

DELIVER

DO take risks. Especially during the prototyping phase, don't be afraid of failure. It was clear from all the speakers that more was learned when something went wrong than when it went right.

DO use action-based learning. Most successful programmes get to a project as quickly as possible. This may also apply to the ordering of a programme and beginning with tangible topics.

DO use visual tools and frameworks. A framework provides a common language and approach for everyone involved in a programme, it is a point of reference for maintaining consistency in delivery and across projects, and its continuing use by the client contributes to a programme's legacy.

DO build local capability for delivery. Identify and involve the right design partners. Most programmes require 'design associate' capacity that will need to be developed. It is faster to prototype with outsourced experience, but in the long run, your associates should be a regional or national resource.

DON'T keep the wrong company on a programme. If it's clear you've lost commitment, those resources are better spent with other participants.

MEASURE

DO build evaluation into procedure at the outset. Determine measures before the programme begins and take baseline measures against desired impact. Have periodic reporting in place. It will ultimately be easier to piece together compelling case studies and stories if you are collecting images and quotes along the way.

IMPACT

DO measure impact. Stories are not enough. You'll want to create a visible, tangible outcome and be able to take quantitative measurements. It is a much more powerful argument for future funding if you can quantify the impact for every Euro spent.

DO maintain legacy. Some programmes have benefited from strong alumni networks. Alumni have provided word-of-mouth promotion to policy makers, sector networks and at events and workshops. They can be used strategically within delivery to support mentored services. Plan to follow-up with past participants to understand every aspect of your programme's legacy. Turn past clients into advocates.



The group collates DOs and DON'Ts into next practice recommendations

The Business Support Canvas has been developed as a tool to assist the evaluation, development and planning of business support programmes.

Applying the Canvas

The canvas is a logical framework, influenced by the policy environment and working toward a specific outcome and impact. We've broken down each of the quadrants of the canvas with key questions and consideration.

It's helpful to consider the application of the canvas around a particular programme in order to understand what decisions were made and why, as well what the implication might have been had another course been taken. We were both involved in the development of the pilot of Innovation by Design (IxD) in Ireland so we've used that as an example of programme development and delivery in practice at each stage.

POLICY

Aligned with national or regional growth strategies business support programmes are typically funded by policy makers to create and demonstrate a measurable economic impact in areas of the economy where there is deemed to be a market failure.

What are the current and future policy drivers?

Research the political landscape, associated policy, alignment with complementary initiatives and the timing for potential funding programmes.

Might policy change during the term of the programme?

It will be helpful to anticipate any change of national or regional government so that the structure, scale and impact of the programme can be shaped to suit changing agendas.

Where is the funding coming from?

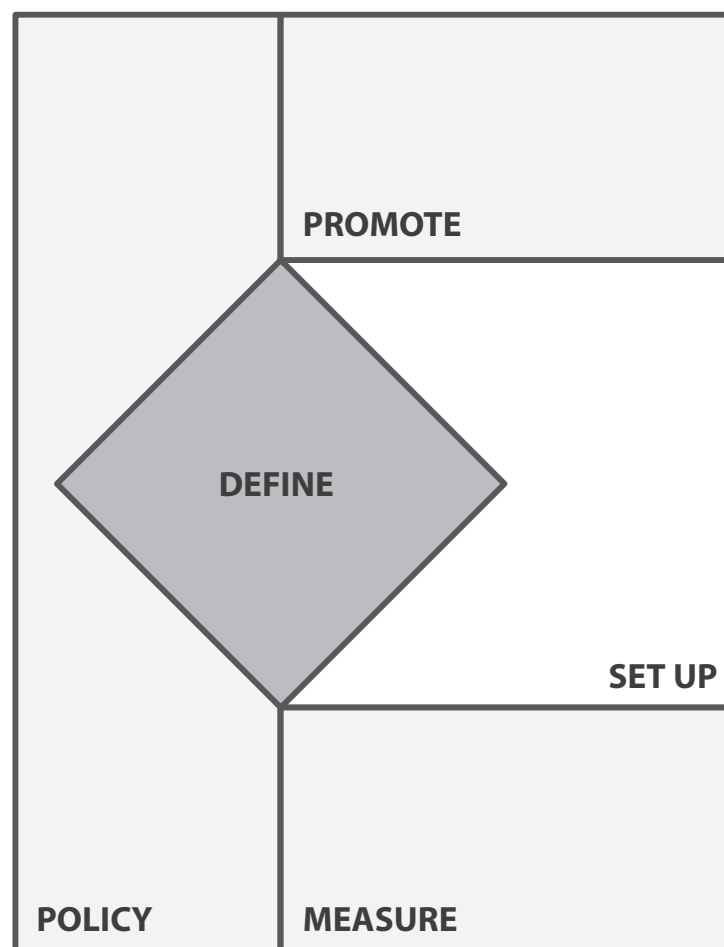
Most programmes are likely to be only part funded from the public purse. Business planning should take account of different sources of funding and the degree to which participating businesses should contribute to delivery.

Are you in a position to influence policy?

Use investment, evaluation and impact metrics to support the development of your business case and, if you are starting a new programme, to shape a logic model for reporting, measurement and evaluation from the outset. The clearer the alignment with policy the easier it is to develop the innovation and design conversations at that level.

IxD In Ireland there was no design policy and within existing innovation policy there was little reference to design as a driver for innovation. The Centre for Design Innovation had a three-legged strategic focus around proof (that the application of design has an economic benefit), product (programmes or offers that helped organisations integrate design into their activities) and promotion (of the tangible benefits of design-led development). From our research we found that most companies didn't have the skills to implement design at a strategic level and the Innovation by Design (IxI) programme was a response to that need. We had a budget of €100k for a fully-funded pilot.

BUSINESS SUPPORT CANVAS



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DEFINE

The researching, shaping and definition of the programme specification.

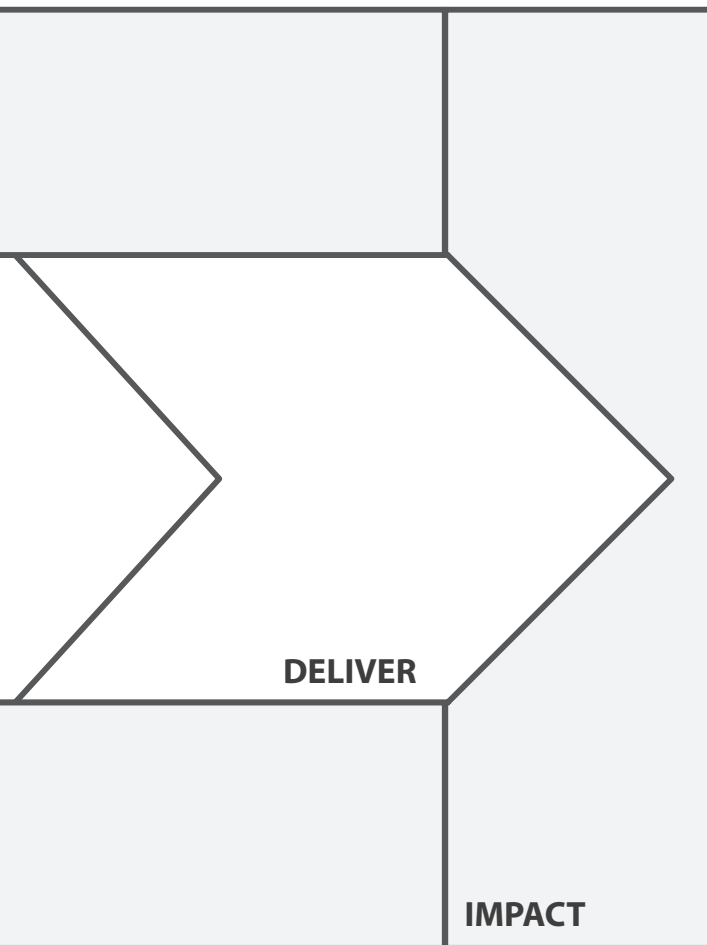
What is our ambition?

Are we prototyping, piloting or scaling?

Use a 'new' Canvas at each stage of a programme development. Imagine them running end to end as you move from stage to stage.

Based on ambition and the policy context, what is the offer?

Is it to be a broad spectrum offer: any design so long as it is right for the business, like the UK's Generate programme? Or is it a narrow spectrum offer directly aligned to specific policy like some of the regional sustainable design programmes? Experience suggests that the narrower the offer the more difficult it is to recruit.



Designmine Ltd. & Verticalbones Ltd., 2010

What are the different levels of service?

It is standard practice in business support to have a client journey where there is a progression from light touch activities through deeper interventions. Most programme designers start at one level (not always the first) but plan to be able to expand the offer to give a full service offer once content and process have been proven.

Who will develop the content?

Where will the content come from?

The degree of interest in this field and the increasing numbers of practitioners give plenty of opportunity for collaboration in development and knowledge exchange with obvious efficiencies in resource and time.

How are we managing any intellectual property in content?

All content will have a value but is it better to put a price on it or exploit the developmental benefits of Creative Commons?

Is client readiness defined?

Failure to understand the profile of businesses that will make the most appropriate clients will jeopardise a programme's success. Establish client readiness criteria and make them visible to everyone who is involved in a programme's delivery.

If it's a mentored programme who is going to work with the businesses?

Are the specialist mentors available who will be needed to put the programme into action? Programmes like the UK's Designing Demand put as much effort into recruiting and training their Design Associates as they do into developing the content.

Do we have the funding to develop and deliver that offer?

Prepare a detailed financial model alongside your business or project plan. Do a risk analysis.

ixD It was clear in Ireland that this was a pilot.

In order to do this without prototyping first, we turned to a number of individuals that had developed and run programmes before and hosted an event to draft an appropriate programme for Ireland.

We determined the programme would take on a Design Associate model as we wanted the participating companies to identify a project and implement it. We budgeted for 5 days of design associate time over a period of 15 months and relied on experienced Design Associates to draw on experience and existing tools to accelerate time to market.

We took the approach of licensing new content under Creative Commons as we wanted to encourage the exploration and building upon the work we were doing.

SET-UP

Getting from programme definition, through set-up to having clients recruited and ready for action.

What is free and what do clients need to pay for?

Make it clear from the outset if a client has to contribute to programme costs and state any level of investment businesses will be expected to make in implementing projects. Separate agency and consultancy fees from capital expenditure.

What resources do we need?

Project managers and advisers may need to be recruited and trained. Depending on the scale and scope of a programme, premises or specialist equipment may be needed.

Have we identified key client touch points?

Define the client journey in detail and make it visible to everyone involved in the programme.

How will we manage the client selection process?

A recruitment process is more easily managed if it has a degree of rigor: a well designed application form; application closing dates; expert selection panel; explicit selection criteria; formal go/no-go responses; and a programme launch date.

DELIVER

Running a programme.

What tangible projects will it deliver?

Make sure that everyone involved knows what will make the programme 'live'.

How is implementation managed?

Who will manage delivery?

Can it be run only by the adviser team? Understand the risks associated with appointing a third party as a delivery partner.

What are the key milestones?

Plan events, workshops and promotional activity well in advance. Make sure the recruitment and project completion profiles are visible in your timetable.

Does it scale over time?

Understand if economies or cost and complexity come with increasing the scale of delivery.

What does a finished project look like?

For the UK's Designing Demand a clients participation in a programme isn't deemed to be complete until a design project has been signed off and is being implemented.

Will there be a closing event?

A final programme event helps build your alumni network and is an opportunity for promotion.

IxD The IxD programme was punctuated by three workshops on user-centred design, branding and service design. Through the application of user research, each company would identify the most relevant project to their own business. Delivery was managed by a Design Associate who worked individually with each company for five days and together with all companies for another five. We worked on a ratio of one design associate to three companies and that was how we looked at the ratio for scaling up the programme.

The programme milestones were clearly laid out for all participants at the beginning of the programme and every event began with "where are we in the programme." The ideal project was of a strategic fit to the company and able to be implemented within the confines of the programme. Sequencing of workshops may not have been ideal, as beginning with brand or service may have been more easily received as it is more familiar and tangible vs. user-centred design research.

PROMOTE

Every programme should have a businesslike marketing and campaign strategy in place from the outset with clarity, simplicity and creativity being the keys to success.

Which are the key referral networks?

In business support, effective client referral networks are critical to a programme's success. It is essential that relationships between other business promotion and support agencies are strong and are proactively managed.

Is there a marketing campaign?

The nature of promotion and the audiences that should be targeted will change over the lifetime of a programme. Plan the campaign from the outset, applying design principles throughout.

Do we have the right messaging?

Don't assume that one message fits all. Politicians, other support agencies, innovation and design practitioners and the client businesses may all respond to different messages about the programme and expect it to be delivered through different media. Avoiding jargon will pay dividends.

Are we telling a compelling story?

Plan from the outset how you are going to record and broadcast your success stories. It is unlikely that anyone will want to understand every detail of each businesses' path through the programme so it is essential that colourful and compelling success stories are quickly identified as they develop and that they are recorded as they go.

What are the key target markets or sectors?

Research the markets and sectors that best fit both policy and your client selection criteria, ideally alongside your referral networks.

IxD We made a conscious choice to include regional business support bodies and consultants in the upfront planning of the project. This allowed us to build an initial list of potential companies to approach on the programme and also allowed us to be more targeted in our invitations. Based on people with previous experience, we were able to gauge client readiness.

We deliberately looked across a range of sectors, though picked sectors or clusters that were of high priority and visibility within the region. Our messaging could have been better and language always seems to come up as an issue. The referral networks were a big help as participants were taking a leap of faith in a new programme and a new Centre.

The story was compelling but could have been even more tailored to a small and medium-sized business owner.

MEASURE

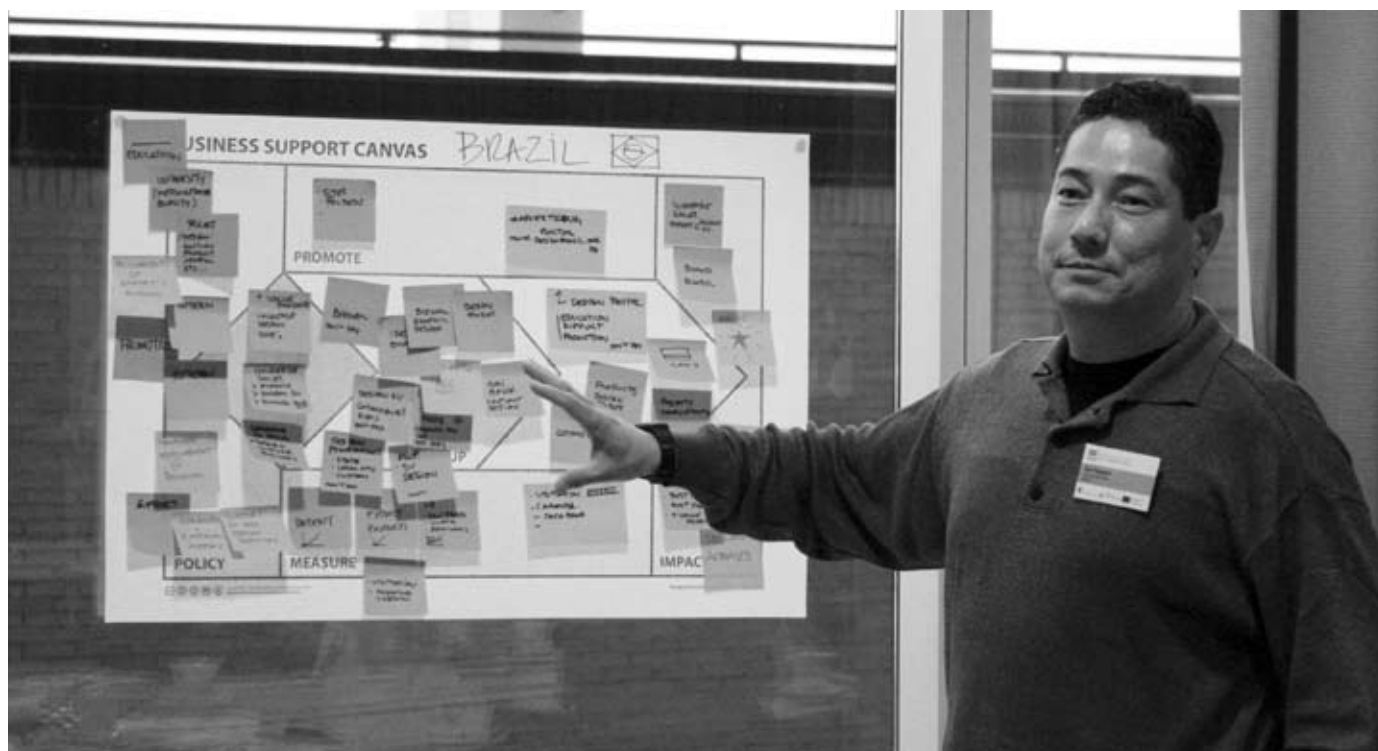
Reporting and recording, measuring and evaluating programme activity. Most will draw from some or all of these in establishing the measure for a programme:

- Number of completed projects
- Economic impact (Profit, Turnover, GVA)
- Jobs created or saved
- Efficiency and savings
- Numbers of case studies
- Process improvements
- Cultural change
- Social impact
- Environmental impact

Are there reporting mechanisms in place?

How often will progress be recorded?

Make it as straightforward as possible to comply with your reporting requirements. Use technology to support a robust and efficient client management system.



Ken Fonseca presents *Criação Paraná* using the Business Support Canvas

At what stages will the programme be evaluated?

As a minimum a programme should be formally evaluated before the first client interaction, once a project is complete and at a period after a new brand, product or service has been launched. Evaluation during the delivery and at extended periods after launch will give greater insight into both impact and legacy.

Who will perform evaluation?

To ensure its validity, programme evaluation should be carried out by independent specialists.

IxD The Design Associates had a tightly regulated reporting structure with reports being filed after every company visit. In addition to being able to highlight any problems, it was much easier to capture key quotes when they were happening.

We planned for three evaluation stages. There was qualitative and quantitative measure taken before the start of the programme. An evaluation midway looking to see had client attitudes toward design changed and was there any significant cultural change taking place. We did qualitative evaluation and detailed interviews at the end of the programme for the case studies, but failed in doing the final quantitative analysis. This decision was influenced by the onset of a recession which likely would have skewed the data.

IMPACT

A successful business support programme should leave a lasting legacy of economic improvement and cultural change both within a participating business and the market sectors or region where it has been delivered. No legacy, no future.

What is the desired impact?

State the results you expect from the programme at the outset.

What stories will we want to tell and to whom? Who is the audience for the evaluation?

It is likely that the stories will have to be presented in different styles for different audiences: fully researched case studies for academia; press releases; on-line; broadsheet and specialist press; Ministers and other Government officials.

Are measures in place to quantify impact?

Use investment, evaluation and impact metrics to support the development of your business case and if you are starting a new programme shape a logic model to support reporting, measurement and evaluation from the outset.

IxD The desired impact of the programme was to create case studies documenting each companies participation and the positive effect the resulting projects had on their businesses. The case studies would serve two audiences: Business peers who would look on the experiences of those initial companies as a reason to engage in future implementations of the programme; and proof that design-led programmes are integral to the implementation of design policy and warrant future funding. We had qualitative and quantitative pre-programme measurements made of each participating organisation.

Start using the Canvas

The Business Support Canvas is licensed under Creative Commons because we want organisations to freely apply it and share how the framework is being used. Share your experiences and learn more at www.businesssupportcanvas.com

In 2001, the Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications commissioned a working group to come up with a design policy suitable for Estonia. Of central importance in this process was a study, financed by the Danish government and conducted by a study group led by Per Mollerup, that analysed the current state and development prospects of Estonian design, and which set out a proposed vision of Estonian design for 2010 and a design policy designed to accomplish the vision.

Based on the study, in 2003 the ministry prepared a document entitled "Estonia: a design country? Proposals for promoting applied design in Estonia", in which specific proposals were set forth for developing the field of design and recommended the creation of an Estonian design information centre as the central institution for implementing design policy. From the outset, the implementation of the proposals adopted by the government hit a snag - differences of opinion over funding and the "design country" proposals were put aside on the state level.

In 2006/2007, the Estonian Academy of Arts held an extensive publicity campaign called "The Year of Design", as a result of which, in April 2008, the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn University of Technology, the Estonian Designers Union and the Estonian Design Institute founded the Estonian Design Centre. The goal of the Estonian Design Centre is to influence all aspects of design and related product development in order to create an inspirational, innovative, collaboration-oriented environment. The Centre is actively involved in lobbying for political decisions that help promote and support design.

Instead of developing a broad based design strategy the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications decided in 2010 to prepare a design orientated activity plan for innovation strategy, which will hopefully be completed and adopted along with a respective budget in 2011. The activity plan is based on the Estonian Research and Development and Innovation Strategy 2007-2013, where the need to increase the role of design is highlighted in both a public and private sector context:

- The state has an important role to play - as a role model and knowledgeable innovation consumer - in developing an innovation-based economy - emphasis is placed on novelty, quality and good design in the goods and services it commissions.
- The prerequisite for improved quality of life is growth in economic value added. Greater value added will be created by innovative enterprise that successfully implements knowledge, technologies and professional design in its products and services.

To achieve these aims, the strategy provides for the development of the following measures:

- To support traditional sectors, new measures will be developed, aimed among other things at professional design and making use of competitive advantages.
- Support for development projects for new, competitive technologies, products, service and processes will be continued and increased. Support will be offered for

projects related to testing and certification, design and productivity management.

- Support will be provided for growth of the awareness and competence necessary for strategic innovation management and development in companies, including supporting the recruitment of development personnel (including designers) from both Estonia and abroad, along with training, consultation and diagnostics. The knowledge and awareness of companies regarding intellectual property shall be increased.
- Professional practices that value professional design shall be distributed among organisers of public procurements.

The knowledge-based Estonia strategy includes the implementation of some support measures (experimental development grant, export grant, development personnel secondment grant), in the framework of which companies may receive grants for such things as implementing design. Measures that directly increase awareness of design and support implementation of design in the private and public sector have not yet been developed. In the opinion of the Estonian Design Centre, the greatest shortcoming lies in actual design-related consultation support for implementation within companies.

Meeting of Minds workshop

The Estonian Design Centre has, in the course of participating in the Sharing Experience Europe (SEE) project, become acquainted with the experiences of partners that have dealt with design policy developments and has gathered valuable contacts and knowledge. At the same time, the Estonian Design Centre took part in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications design activity plan working group, which needed a thorough analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of various programmes. In gathering information from the SEE partners, it became evident that they too required comparative analysis for planning further steps. In cooperation with the Irish partner, the Centre for Design Innovation, the Estonian Design Centre held a workshop called Meeting of Minds, which analysed current design support programmes and generated further development possibilities.

The workshop was planned and facilitated by Jonathan Ball and Justin Knecht who created the Business Support Canvas, a tool for analysing design support programmes. Everyone who took part in the workshop took away new ideas and methods for taking their programmes to the next level.

The participants agreed that regardless of whether the focus of a programme is on products, services or social innovation, mapping the situation is of critical importance, as is professional counselling and thorough knowledge of the programme beneficiaries.

The part of the Meeting of Minds workshop with the greatest practical value for Estonia was undoubtedly two outline support programmes for implementing design, designed specially for Estonia.

From its introduction at the Estonian workshop, the Business Support Canvas was used by the Danish Design Centre to evaluate their current programme offering and identify improvements for future delivery.

“The business support canvas forced us to focus on impact and measurements. Many of our ideas were related to content and programme definition, and the canvas made it very clear to everybody that we needed to address all the components and their relationships to each other. From a team point of view, the canvas gave us a common language to facilitate the process.”

Christina Melander, *Dansk Design Center*

The Canvas was also presented along with outputs from the SEE project at Design Korea 2010 and the International Design Centres Exchange (IDCEX) in Seoul, Korea.

It is our hope that more organisations will share their application of the Canvas to improving development and delivery of business support programmes. Similar to our own beliefs that workshops aren't nearly as effective in delivering impact as a sole activity, the same analogy applies to a publication like this.

Six programmes is hardly an exhaustive survey of design support programmes around the globe, but the approach at distilling them in detail with a common framework was novel. This document should serve as an invitation to continue the dialogue and create a network of practitioners uncovering next practice within business support.

It probably isn't surprising that the two days confirmed we share many common challenges. It also highlighted the fact that we could do a more regular job sharing our learnings and mistakes within the community. Invariably this knowledge will help us to develop “short cuts” to market, and like any good design process, iterate better, more suitable outcomes that deliver impact.

DO bring back the magic. Design can be absolutely fantastic. Alongside all of the process, tools and techniques ... there's something intangible, that only this profession can bring - what design can bring. It's brilliance. Magic. And we need to get back around to the storytelling and the enthusiasm with which we tell these stories.



Sight seeing in the snowy centre of Tallinn. (l-r) Linzi Ryan, Ken Fonseca, Judith Thompson, Herke Vaarmann, Christina Melander, Anna Whicher (2-r) Mart Laatsit, Paul Thurston, Ruth-Helene Melioranski, Justin Knecht, Jonathan Ball, Martin Pärn

SEE Project

This SEE publication is an output of the SEE project, a network of eleven design organisations in Europe, examining how to integrate design into regional, national and European policies. The SEE project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the INTERREG IVC programme.

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Acknowledgements
Special thanks to Dr Gisele Raulik-Murphy and Gavin Cawood of Design Wales.

This SEE Policy Booklet is printed alcohol free using vegetable-based inks on 100% recycled paper made from post-consumer waste. Reproduction of parts of this publication may be made without seeking permission from SEE partners, on condition that reference is clearly made to the source of the material.

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FOLLOW UP IN SELECTION PROCESS

DO
INVEST TIME IN SELECTION PROCESS

DO
RIGHT GROUP SIZE

DO
BRING BACK
THE MAGIC



DO
FOCUS ON
BOTH SUPPLY
(DESIGNERS) &
DEMAND
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