

Pathways in Design for Social Innovation

Overview

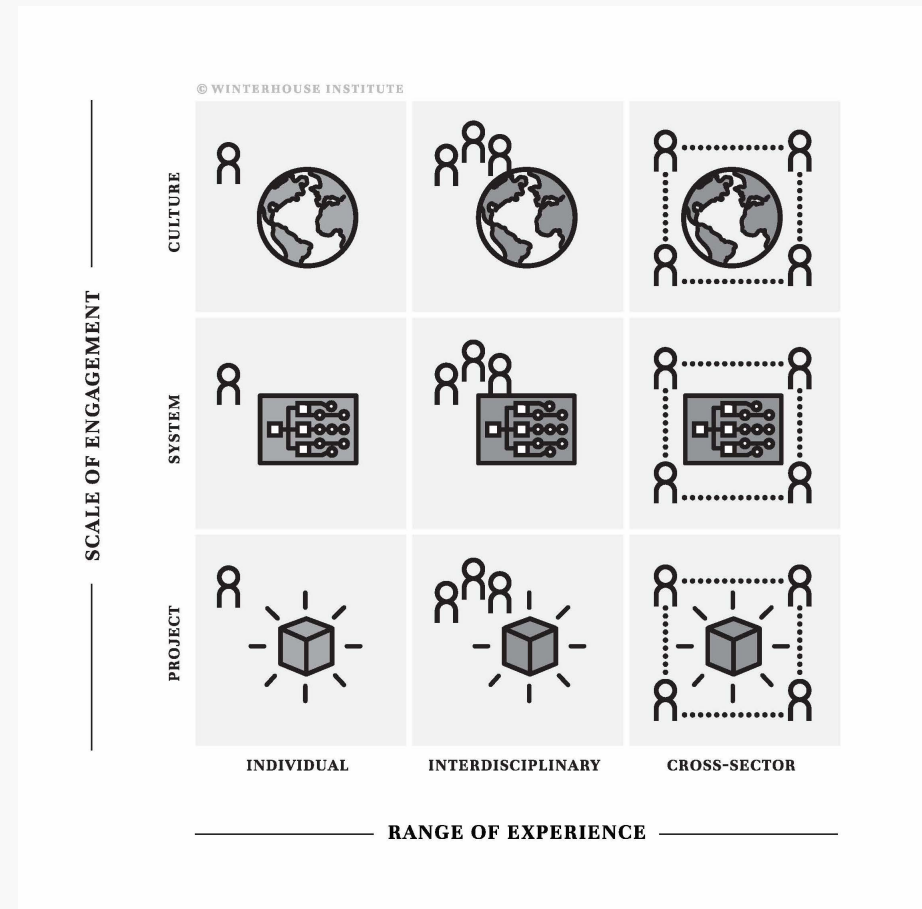
The Social Design Pathways matrix is a useful tool for clarifying the terrain, stakeholders and potential impacts of social design projects. It acknowledges the fact that design for social impact, as an emerging field, can be complex and multi-dimensional, and that a process for mapping its many ingredients can be instructive and beneficial.

The matrix can help reveal the skills required for action, the kinds of participants and partners required for rigorous work, the scales of engagement, and the possible outcomes for a given social impact challenge.

Problem solvers can use the Social Design Pathways matrix to see the distant but clear edges of the total landscape of social design practices, to expand their perspective, and to inform the solution strategies that they choose to pursue.

The Social Design Pathways matrix was developed at the 2013 Winterhouse Symposium for Design Education and Social Change.

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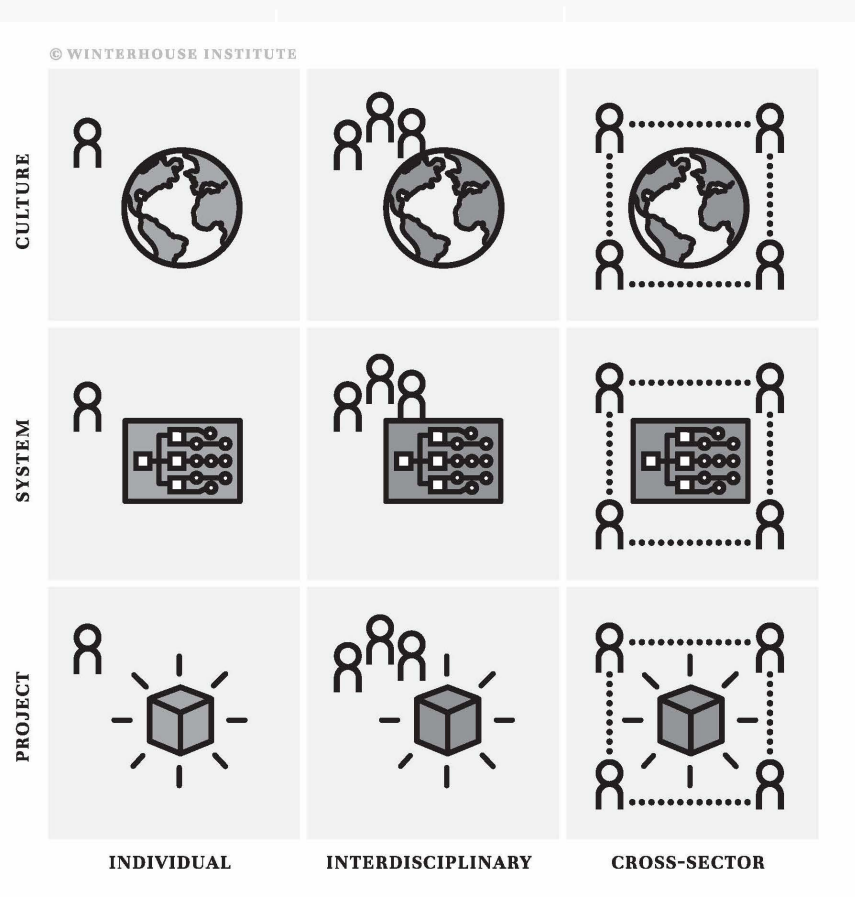
Pathways in Design for Social Innovation

RANGE OF EXPERTISE brought to bear on the project

Cultural (Transformation)
Changing the attitudes and behaviors of a community or organization.

System (Innovation)
Altering an existing system, or creating a new one, to deliver a better solution.

Stand-Alone (Intervention)
The introduction of a discrete product or service



SCALE OF (designer's or project's) ENGAGEMENT

Individual (Designer)

A lone person or discipline.

Interdisciplinary (Team)

A team made up of the necessary expertise.

Cross-Sector (Group)

Requires cross sector participation for ideation and execution.

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How you might use the Pathways matrix

If you are a teacher:

“I think you need to think way bigger or way smaller with your project. Run it through the pathways matrix and lets figure out what’s reasonable given your resources and expertise.”

If you are a student

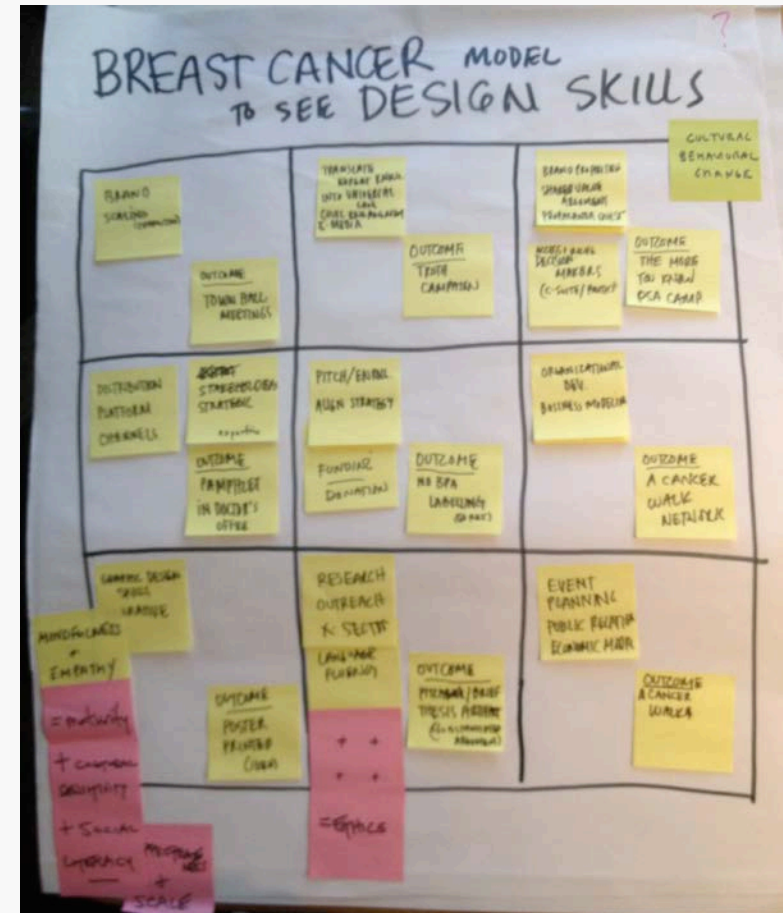
“I want to be a social designer, but I don’t know what skills I will need to be successful.

If you are a practitioner

“It used to be that we reinvented the wheel with each new project, now we use the pathways matrix to help us understand the scope of the project at the start.”

If you are a critic

“Before using the pathways matrix, I frequently confused my ambition for a initiative with what that type of project could actually achieve.”



Example : Allan Chochinov, Charlie Cannon, Gala Narezo

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Example: Project Mapping

Cultural (Transformation)	Bring public attention to the larger problem. <u>Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution</u>	Change district food purchasing policies.	Implement an organic food standard
System (Innovation)	Change the food display in the cafeteria line. <u>NY Times</u>	Integrate staff efforts in a single school so students can eat what they grow <u>Edible Schoolyard</u>	Linking local farms to school cafeterias <u>Farm2School</u>
Stand-Alone (Intervention)	Redesign a cafeteria tray to guide portion control. Paige Kirstein	A Farm Supported Community <u>Corbin Hills Road Farm</u>	Vacant lot allotment gardens <u>Southside Community Land Trust</u>
	Individual (Designer)	Interdisciplinary (Team)	Cross-Sector (Group)

How can we address childhood obesity?

A lone designer may **redesign a cafeteria tray** to suggest portion sizes (A stand-alone design).

She may collaborate with the cafeteria staff to **change the display of food**, drawing on behavioral psychology (a system innovation).

She may engage a celebrity to help **bring public attention** to the larger cultural problem (a cultural transformation)

That same designer may **integrate staff efforts in a single school** so that food grown on site can be eaten by the kids that grew it (a system innovation requiring a team).

Or work across schools **to link farm-fresh produce to cafeterias** (a system innovation requiring cross-sector approval).

Moving from a single school, the designer may work to **change district food purchasing policies** (a cultural transformation driven by an interdisciplinary team)

And perhaps, work with her state government to **implement an organic food standard**.

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Example: Skills Mapping

Cultural (Transformation)	Brand as Experience	Translate expert knowledge into accessible language	Brand proposition
	Brand Scaling	Civic engagement	Shared value argument
	Holding Town Hall Meetings	Cross media strategy The Truth campaign	Access to decision makers A PSA campaign
System (Innovation)	Distribution, Platforms or Channels	Elevator pitch	Organizational Development
	Strategic Stakeholders	Strategy alignment	Business Modeling
	Distributing Self exam pamphlets	Funding models Starting a labeling campaign	A network of events
Stand-Alone (Intervention)	Graphic Design Skills	Research	Event planning
	Compelling narrative	Outreach	Public relations
	An awareness Poster	Team building Jargon-free fluency An evidenced based pitch book	A public event
	Individual (Designer)	Interdisciplinary (Team)	Cross-Sector (Group)

What skills might a graphic designer need to work on cancer awareness and reduction?

A lone designer may **design a cancer awareness poster** (A stand-alone design).

He may develop **a self exam pamphlet** to be distributed to doctor's offices (a system innovation).

She may engage her community by organizing and holding **town hall meetings** (a cultural transformation)

That same designer may work with scientists and public health experts to develop **an evidenced based pitch book for a public project**. (a stand alone project requiring a team).

Or work to get a company to **label its water bottles BPA free** (a system innovation requiring interdisciplinary expertise).

Or develop **a comprehensive ad campaign** (a cultural transformation driven by an interdisciplinary team)

And bring that campaign to a national audience through network **public service announcements** (a cross sector effort in cultural transformation)