

Design for social inclusion

community-based design

This is a Design Directions Plus project

Design Directions Plus offers participants the benefit of valuable input on their project from key experts and stakeholders. It will expose them and their project concept to advice, feedback and input from people who are active in the field.

This RSA brief is both supported and inspired by the Dott Cornwall programme

Dott Cornwall

Dott Cornwall is a Partnership established by the Design Council, Cornwall Council and University College Falmouth to deliver a series of design-led community engagement projects, addressing some of the challenging social and economic issues facing people in Cornwall today.

Dott Cornwall taps into the creativity and ingenuity of local communities to help them shape their own future. The Dott methodology is based on a 'bottom-up' approach; it encourages people to co-create solutions to local challenges and take ownership of the process and outcomes, therefore creating a better chance of the project becoming embedded in the community.

Dott Cornwall will include public design commissions – these are projects which provide the opportunity for broad community involvement, a significant skills and innovation programme partnered with University College Falmouth, showcasing progress and results, and an Eco-design Challenge for schools:
www.designcouncil.org.uk/en/Case-Studies/All-Case-Studies/Eco-Design-Challenge/

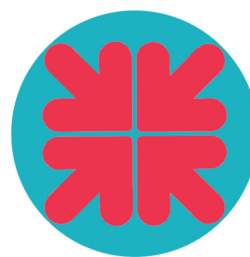
The collaboration with the RSA on this brief

As a region, Cornwall faces a range of challenges and unique opportunities. As this brief is inspired by the Dott Cornwall programme, participants may wish to focus on a specific community in this county. However, those based in another region may find a community in their local area that has either region-specific challenges in the way that Cornwall does, or a more generic challenge that is seen across all areas across the UK.

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Design is often associated with high value goods and services targeted to appeal to a narrow group of consumers with higher than average income



DesignDirections+



and spending power. But what about the people that are left out, for whatever reason, for whom good design is less available, yet whose needs and problems are equally worthy of well designed solutions?

These people typically fall outside of the boundaries of a traditional design brief. We would like you to look beyond the mass market to develop an understanding of the needs of those who are excluded, often inadvertently, and to develop a response that meets their needs and increases their quality of life.

Exclusion in the context of this brief can be a broad church. They could be socially, economically, physically or geographically excluded. For example, people and groups which operate on the fringes of society, or fall between its cracks, and for whom the normal interactions and touch points of daily life do not feature. Equally they may be temporarily excluded from their normal community because they have lost their job, retired from work or moved to a new place. Think also of other possible causes of exclusion such as living in rural or isolated areas. These are a few different examples. This is an opportunity to select the focus of your brief and define what it is on which you particularly wish to concentrate.

Exclusion has been described as 'the process of becoming detached from the organisation and communities of which the society is composed and from the rights and obligations that they embody', exclusion occurs when people are unable to access the benefits of living in a community.

Examples might be those without work, disenfranchised or disenfranchised teenagers, homeless people, migrant communities, seasonal workers, those with drug or alcohol dependency, those with poor literacy skills – these are a few. Who are the others?

How might you help identify ways to reach and support these individuals and groups and, through a user-centred process, co-design solutions that improve their quality of life?

1 Beyond the threshold: the measurement and analysis of social exclusion ed G Room, 1995, The Policy Press, Bristol

What are the effects of exclusion on individuals and groups? Research how it happens, but don't take for granted common views on the causes of exclusion. Look beyond the stereotypes to see the issues from the point of view of the individual rather than a media or politically motivated representation. One person's ASBO is another person's badge of honour.

Brief

Having decided upon the area on which you intend to focus, propose how design could be used to support and empower individuals and/or groups within this area, who are presently excluded, through the process of engagement and co-design. The Dott approach to working with communities, and the approach you should take when working on this brief, is outlined below. You can find out more about previous Dott projects from the Dott 07 website: <http://www.dott07.com/>

Throughout your project, capture and map what you do in any way you choose. This may include the use of storyboards, photographs, stories, film or any other medium you think is useful. This is central to the project and important for several reasons:

- it will be the method by which you communicate the progress of the project to the group you work with
- it will form part of the work you submit as your Design Directions entry
- it is a record of your process and it should act as a guide, tool kit or set of instructions that someone else could use to create a similar change

Scoping your project

The brief is deliberately open at this stage to allow you to identify existing research and activity about the issue that interests you and the individuals/ group you want to work with. You need then to establish what are their main issues, concerns and challenges. Is the problem they define a symptom rather than a cause? Does it need re-defining?

You may consider working on this project as part of a small cross-disciplinary design team or individually – it is up to you. Think about the diversity of the cultures, backgrounds, skills and abilities you might encounter and ensure you respond appropriately within this context.

The end of this stage should result in a brief, aligned to the priorities and issues of the individuals/group.

Co-discovery

This is the point to broaden out your research with a wider group of stakeholders to help uncover insights that will inform the development of the project. You should also think about the tools and methods you use in helping to gain a deeper understanding of the individuals/group and their relationship to the issue identified. These should be appropriate, and adapted to ensure you gain the highest level of participation possible, such as film, observation, interviews, cultural probes, journey mapping and workshops.

Create a visual representation of the issue and the insights you discover, in order to help to convey the real human experiences and stories at the heart of your project – and so arrive at meaningful proposals at the end of it.

Co-design

This stage is where you work with your group to co-design and prototype new ideas. Together, identify who needs to be involved at the various points. What would they see, do and feel at the various stages, and how can you design ways to support them through these stages? Keep checking back against the original issue. You are likely to get lots of suggestions that you would like to act upon; these are important to capture but it may not be possible to act upon them all.

Consider, if your design solution were to go ahead, who would be the decision-makers? Whose backing, agreement or assistance is essential for the project to work?

Capturing all this information and activity is important so involve people in creating visual records of the change so everyone will better understand the process and the role they play in owning it. Together, think about what needs to happen to make sure the change is successful and lasting.

Co-develop

Taking the key ideas you have co-designed, you now need to begin creating tangible aspects to the project so they can be communicated and prototyped. This is essential in order to test which ideas will not work, to iterate and refine others, before deciding which will go forward for implementation.

Deliver

This is the stage at which the ownership of the project is given to those with whom you have co-designed the proposal. This can only be successful if your group has been involved throughout the entire process and therefore has a sense of ownership and pride in what has been achieved.

Legacy

A successful project can be measured by the extent to which the ideas and practices that emerge, remain and continue being used by the individuals who participated on the project. The project participants become champions for design, sharing new approaches of thinking and doing in their communities.

Things to bear in mind throughout the project:

- you will meet with different individuals and groups over the period. Don't underestimate the time it takes to build a relationship and enough trust to start to 'think outside the box'
- avoid stereotypes and hidden assumptions by engaging with real people
- think about novel ways to get beyond the obvious answers
- think about what you can give to the group when the project finishes. What you leave behind after the process should help your group to continue to own and lead the change (bear in mind the group may have little or no finances)
- the people you are talking to will have expectations so be realistic with your aims, and consider framing the project as an exercise rather than a live project in order to manage expectations

Submission details

How it works

1 Hand in

You will have an extension on the usual hand-in date for Design Directions projects:

Friday 8 January 2010

The process through which you engage, involve and work with the individuals or group on the chosen issue will be critical to the success of your project and is likely to be around 40% of your activity on the project. Therefore, the assessment of the project you submit will be based on the record you make of this process – so give this careful consideration. As has already been stated, this can be in any form you choose.

The remaining 60% will be based on the solution that emerges from the process. Place special emphasis on how you describe the solution so that the benefits are clearly aligned to the needs you identified in the brief.

Your submission at this initial stage will be judged on the value to the people involved, and the wider community. Find a way of recording and presenting the benefits of this work in creative ways.

When presenting flat work you should use A3 lightweight boards (max. 5). You should also include a typewritten report. For film submitted on DVD, please clearly list loading and relevant viewing instructions. All submitted work should carry an RSA label on the back; this is to ensure the safety of your work whilst in storage and that it can be displayed for judging.

It should include an A4 typewritten executive summary which shows:

- a clear statement of the problem/issue and how you identified it
- b details of your proposal
- c how you conducted the research, the users you have consulted, and how it helped you understand the issues and how this led to your proposal – this could be a mix of visuals and words. It may also be in the form of a journal, a blog, or a video diary but it must be easily accessible for judging purposes

2 Shortlist

Once the preliminary judging is completed, shortlisted students, whose projects are deemed to have potential for development, will be invited to take part in a one-day expert-led workshop. This workshop is likely to take place in Cornwall – potentially at the Eden Project.

Here you will have the unique opportunity to work with key stakeholders in the project area in order to develop the project into robust, meaningful and user-centred outcomes. All reasonable costs will be covered.

Likely to be during the week of 22 March 2010 (this may change)

3 The final stage will be a presentation of the developed project to the judging panel.

Candidates will be given details of what is required nearer the time.

May/June 2010

Schedule

Dates for submission of entry forms, fees and work

Thursday 19 November 2009

Deadline for Entry Form(s)/Fee(s) for all projects

(including *Directions Plus*)

Entry Forms/Fees should be sent under separate cover

– **not** with your entry – to:

RSA Design Directions Registrations
8 John Adam Street
London WC2N 6EZ
UK

Monday 16 November
– Friday 11 December 2009

Submission period for all project entries

(except *Design Directions Plus**)

Entries will be accepted at Brooks Transport Services Ltd on any weekday within the dates stated between 08:00-18:00, excluding weekends and bank holidays. Entries arriving after 18:00 on Friday 11 December 2009 may not be accepted

Please remember that all entries should be sent or delivered to:

Brooks Transport Services Ltd
Unit 2/15
Second Avenue
Bluebridge Industrial Estate
Halstead
Essex CO9 2SU
UK

All Entry Forms/Fees should be sent or delivered to:

RSA Design Directions Registrations
8 John Adam Street
London WC2N 6EZ
UK

**Design Directions Plus* – Submission date for entries for these projects is:
Friday 8 January 2010