Leaving no one behind:
An introduction to
inclusive design

Julian Thompson
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STUDENT RSA DESIGN AWARDS
Since 1924
1. SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
2. RIGOROUS RESEARCH AND COMPELLING INSIGHTS
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4. VIABILITY
5. CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION
1x A3 Hero Image
poster image + project title &
1 sentence description

1x A3 Written Summary
1 page summary of your big idea in the
following format: Problem (50 words) –
Process (75 words) – Solution (50 words)

4x A3 Boards Outlining Your Proposal
4 pages describing your proposal and demonstrating
you have met the 5 judging criteria

4x A3 Pages of Supporting Material
Up to 4 pages illustrating your development process
COMPETITION TIMELINE

AUG 2019
Briefs launch online

MON, 20 JAN 2020
Competition opens for submissions online

4 PM GMT, WED 12 FEB 2020
Deadline for Early Bird submission at £25

4 PM GMT, WED 11 MAR 2020
Final deadline for online registration and submission (£35 entry fee)

MAR - APR 2020
Judging stage 1: shortlisting

APR - MAY 2020
Judging stage 2: interviews with finalists

LATE MAY 2020
Winners announced online!

LATE JUNE 2020
Awards Ceremony at the RSA in London
Hello
Wah gwan!
About me

Julian Thompson
Design Researcher & Strategist
Founder: Rooted By Design
Service Design Lead: Citizens Advice
LLB & Policy MA
I’ve spent 8 + years, exploring how I can put an inclusive design lens over my design practice....
Where the needs and voice of all people, communities and included in what the world looks and feels like

Where the experience of services and products makes it clear to everyone that you matter and belong

Where inclusive and empowering experiences restores peoples and communities belief in participation and the power of their contribution
Disclaimers

- This is all evolving work based on my experience and practice.
- Inclusive design is much about us as people and how we see the world as much as it is about what we design.
- It’s a journey...enjoy it.
What we will cover in this introductory session?
● Why are we talking about this?
● Understanding exclusion, why it happens and what are its causes
● Inclusive Design theory and practice
● Group discussions
Why are we talking about this?
Designers are shaping and enabling the future, we are the bridges, facilitators and enablers of change for everyone.
The Direction of Design

- Industrial Design (Product)
- Services
- Policy
- Systems

Check out: Design Council: Design Economy 2018 (The state of UK)
“To design is to devise courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones”

Herbert Simon
“With great power come great responsibility”
“Everything is designed few things are designed well”

-(Brian Reed)
Understanding Exclusion
Why does exclusion happen?
Our Biases

- Our biases are shaped by our experiences, what we are familiar with, our backgrounds - they shape our decisions, what we value and what we see.

- Our biases can be helpful points of reference, but they also narrow down our thinking. We hold many of these biases unconsciously, which is danger as they are shaping our design decisions which can be exclusive.
Relationship deficit

- Without the networks needed to make connections to a diverse group of people and communities.
- It takes time and energy to build these relationships which our briefs may not allow for.
• We always need to be learning and thinking about what causes exclusion, so that we can design it out of our projects and practices.
What does exclusion cause?
Inequality

- Not including people, means they don’t participate in the change they need, which means the change (or solutions) created won’t be for them, leaving them behind.

- The more people and excluded communities over time, the more likely the inequality they experience will be generational and the harder it is to solve.
Inertia + lack of trust

Being excluded creates distance, frustration and a lack of hope that is difficult to overcome. It requires time, patience and recognition that we need to have a huge amount of empathy.
Lack of innovation

Without the diversity of perspectives, thoughts and experiences we lack the ‘material’ to be creative, sparks genius and solve problems.
So what is Inclusive Design?
What it isn’t

● Inclusive design is not just about accessibility and disability

● It is not just a theory, it is a practice/discipline

● It doesn’t mean you are designing one thing for all people

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So what is Inclusive Design?
(1 mins to reflect)
Designing a diversity of ways to participate so that everyone has a sense of belonging.

(Kate Holmes)
Things to note about this definition:
Inclusive design does not suggest that it is always possible (or appropriate) to design one product to address the needs of the entire population. Instead, inclusive design guides an appropriate design response.
“Diversity is being asked to the party, inclusion is being asked to dance.”

It’s not enough to talk to different people or have representation, those people, especially if not normally included need to enable to participate equally in the design process.
The elements

- Design introspection
- Design Methods
- Design Mindset
Design introspection
Surfacing our biases early

- What have we assumed about who this problem impacts?
- Who is not in the room and why?
- Where is my lived experience useful in this brief?
- Where could my lived experience be unhelpful in this brief?
- How will I hold myself account for my biases?
- Who can I bring with the lived experience
Design methods
Practice

- Understanding the context: Context mapping
- Building relationships: Relationship Mapping
- Shaping an inclusive experience: Building on what’s strong and familiar
- Leaving something behind: Leaving something behind

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“For me context is the key - from that comes the understanding of everything.”

KENNETH NOLAND
Breakout session (25 mins)

- What are the challenges you face around inclusive design?
- Which method or approach will be most valuable?
- Which of the mindsets will you need most reminding about?
Design mindsets
Mindset (principles)

- Humility (no one person has all the answers)
- We enable, not dominate
- Ask questions, avoid statements
- Build on what’s strong, not wrong
- We are all learning and unlearning
So what’s the outcome?
Involving those typically marginalised, giving them a voice and enabling a sense of belonging and contribution.

Creating new connections, learning and cohesion across different groups of people.

Innovation.
“If we want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together”

(African proverb)
Thank you

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