

# SOCIAL INNOVATION BY DESIGN?

## A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ABOUT THE PRACTICES OF DESIGNING SOCIAL INNOVATION IN THE NETHERLANDS



*Figure 1 – De Coupé, source: Gert Jan van Rooij (2012)*

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## ABSTRACT

There is growing awareness of the fact that economic growth fails to solve the great challenges of our times. Social innovation (SI) is a widely used concept in academia and contemporary policy debates and can be seen as part of an important shift towards an alternative economy or society. This concept's development is related to the cultural and creative industries (CCI) in general and design in specific. Especially design seems capable to foster SI, but the practice of designing for SI is not investigated from the perspective of the practitioners themselves. The research, therefore, aims to provide answers to the central question: *What are the practices of individuals who design for social innovation projects?* This qualitative study aims to increase understanding of the practices of designing for SI. Nine in-depth interviews are being held with individuals involved in designing SI in the Netherlands. The conclusion summarises the most important findings and limitations. The study concludes that the practice of designing for SI characterised by (1) great diversity in what kind of methods or strategies individuals use, (2) by collaboration with users (and less crucially with other parties) and an open approach (in the form of a flexible process, shared information and an open-ended result). Moreover, the practice entails (3) constantly striking a crucial balance between opposite activities and qualities such as listening and ignoring, or letting go – keeping control. The research adds not only to academia, but also individual creative including other designers, policy makers and other stakeholders who are involved in the practice of designing SI.

**Keywords:** cultural and creative industries, design, social innovation, practice, collaboration, user-centred design, social design, openness, user



## PERSONAL MOTIVATION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My personal motivation to conduct this research is fourfold. Firstly, the relevance and different roles of the arts and culture for individuals and society fascinate me. I enjoy reflecting on the cultural, social and economic values of the arts and culture while also diving into a broad spectrum of art forms in daily life. Secondly, as an aspiring cultural economist, I am interested in the intersection of the arts, society, and the market, particularly with regard to the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI). Thirdly, I am eager to learn more about alternative pathways towards a more sustainable economy and society such as transition studies and social innovation (SI). Fourthly and lastly, this master thesis follows up my previous (premaster) thesis on SI and the cultural sector.

Along the journey of this master thesis, I had the pleasure to meet inspiring and helpful people, some of who deserve distinctive acknowledgement for their help. First and foremost, I would like to express my deep gratefulness for my supervisor Dr. Mariangela Lavanga. Her council and trust in my work were a strong source of motivation and I benefited greatly from her critical and straightforward feedback. Furthermore, I would like to thank the interviewees for their participation and the inspiring conversations. Without them, my research would not have been possible: Fiona de Bel, Mickael Boulay, Yvonne Dröge Wendel, Tabo Goudswaard, Lino Hellings, Neele Kistemakers, Bas Kools, Christian Nold, Astrid van Roij-Lubsen and Marise Schot (in alphabetical order). Lastly, I am grateful to my friends Renée Raeven and Olga Nierenberg as well as my sister Lena Schütze for providing me with constructive and helpful feedback on preliminary versions of this thesis.

Anyone moderately familiar with the rigours of composition will not need to be told the story in detail; how he wrote and it seemed good; read and it seemed vile; corrected and tore up; cut out; put in; was in ecstasy; in despair; had his good nights and bad mornings; snatched at ideas and lost them; saw his book plain before him and it vanished; acted people's parts as he ate; mouthed them as he walked; now cried; now laughed; ... and could not decide whether he was the divinest genius or the greatest fool in the world.

Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT & RESEARCH QUESTION

Today's world knows pressing social challenges. These demand complex solutions which are not taken care of by the current society or economy (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008). At a European level the challenges have worsened through the financial crisis. This situation creates increasing awareness of the fact that economic growth is not infinite, nor is it the ultimate indicator for a successful society or economy. In fact, demand for a post-growth economy is visible (Paech, 2012) and both social and cultural values gain esteem again (Klamer, 2002; Throsby, 1999). As a contribution to a possible alternative, social innovation (SI) is now a widely used concept in academia and contemporary policy debates. Social innovations (SIs) are “both social in their ends and in their means” (Murray, Caulier-Grice, & Mulgan, 2010, p. 3) and address “complex problems [that] ask for complex solutions” (Phills et al., 2008, p. 40). It is common, for instance, that boundaries between public, private and other sectors are blurred. In contrast to traditional innovation, social value instead of economic value stands centre stage (Seelos & Mair, 2005; Yusuf, 2009). Moreover, SI empowers civil society – and thus is not left for the triple helix (academia, governments and businesses) only.

This development is related to the cultural and creative industries (CCI) in general and design in specific in at least two ways. Firstly, individual artists can have a central role in fostering and designing SI (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013). Secondly, it assembles relatively new developments in design and other creative industries. These include co-creation (Thomassen, 2012), produsage (Bruns, 2013) and peer-to-peer systems (Bauwens, 2009) – concepts that connect well to fostering SI in terms of Lavanga and Schützle (2013). These authors developed a framework of three main pillars, which contribute to fostering SI. Thirdly, design seems especially capable to foster SI because of the professionals' pronounced problem solving skills. More importantly, however, the design industry has shifted clearly from industrial product design to design for the (quasi-) public good. Except for a number of articles (Chick, 2012; Hillgren, Seravalli, & Emilson, 2011; Morelli, 2007; Thomassen, 2012), which establish the connection between SI and design, this practice is not investigated from the perspective of those designing SI themselves. The research, therefore, aims to provide answers to the central question of this research: *What are the practices of individuals who design for social innovation projects?*

## 1.2 SCIENTIFIC AND SOCIETAL RELEVANCE

This thesis aims to contribute to filling this gap with respect to both empirical as well as theoretical research into the practice of designing for SI. It leads to a greater understanding of this practice from the point of view of the ones designing in an explorative manner. This does not only benefit the sciences directly involved in SI and design, but also other areas in cultural economics. It can be a basis for research into models of how the CCI, cultural organisations and artistic individuals involve the audience or user more actively in their work. In terms of empirics, this research uses in-depth interviews instead of protocol studies, which are mostly used to analyse design practice. This has the advantage that one gains insights from the perspective of the interviewees. In addition, one can extract information about the past and present from such interviews instead of capturing only a moment in time. Furthermore, the interviewer can steer the conversation in such a way that in-depth understanding can be developed.

This research is not only beneficial to academia, but for those involved in the practice of designing for SI, too. First, designers and other creative individuals can learn from each other's good practices as well as struggles. For instance, they learn more about the openness and collaboration. Second, policy-makers learn how to meaningfully support SI through design instead of blindly applying policies to the phenomenon in the hope that the practitioners will solve the pressing problems of our times on their own. The same is true for other stakeholders that are involved in such design processes. Gaining insights about the practice they contribute to, the first step towards a shared goal and language to communicate with each other. Through these three groups, lastly, the civil society or final user of SIs benefits from this research. After all, an increased understanding of the practice of designing for SI improves its processes and results.

## 1.3 DISSEMINATION AND POLICY RELEVANCE

The dissemination and policy relevance can be described in four themes. First of all, other creative individuals or organisations who want to involve their audience user or who want to become more socially engaged can learn from the findings in this thesis. It provides inspiration, but also confrontation with difficulties of the practice, which serves for a nuanced image of such work. Second, at a policy level, this research adds to the knowledge on how SI is fostered. Seen the topic's complexity, this text does not give a universal solution which can be copy-pasted by governments around the world. Instead, it provides a thorough understanding of how individuals

who design for SI reflect on their practices. Consequently, the insights provided can add to improved collaborations or lead to more meaningful, complex transitions.

Further, the findings from this research are not only useful for practitioners, policy-makers and others who are interested in the practice of designing SI. Other fields within cultural economics benefit, too. Museums and theatres, for instance, currently seek a more participative relationship with their audience and therefore gain from this research. Lastly, this thesis can serve as a basis for further research in the form of a PhD programme. The parallel development in society, economy, as well as in the arts and culture sector seems to be a movement away from top-down, hierarchy thinking and towards a more bottom-up, horizontal one. In each of these fields, civil society, the consumer or the audience plays an increasingly active role. It is interesting to find out more about the dynamics behind these changes, but also its relevance and consequences for the cultural economics realm.

#### 1.4 STRUCTURE THESIS

The thesis consists of five main parts. After this section, the *theoretical framework* discusses empirical and theoretical literature and thereby covers the concepts of design, innovation and SI. The concluding section of this chapter provides a useful anchor and reference point for the whole study. The next chapter, *methods*, elaborates on the way this research is executed. The reader learns about the methodology and sample selection, how data was collected and analysed as well as the limitations of this research. The fourth chapter presents the *results* of the analysis. Lastly, the *conclusion* returns to the research questions and answers it by discussing both the theory and the novel empirics of this study. The appendices contain additional documents, such as background information on the interviewees and their projects, the interview schemes as well as the transcripts.

## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework is concerned with “what has previously been learned about a particular topic”, thus putting it into perspective (Babbie, 2011, p. 476). It shows how this research is connected to already existing literature (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, this chapter functions as an anchor and reference point throughout the thesis. Moreover, the exploratory approach of this study requires a literature review which “does not constrain the views of participants” (Creswell, 2009, p. 45). This means that concepts emerge in the qualitative data analysis and ultimately develop (part of) a new theory. Even though little has been written on the exact topic of this study, the various subordinated concepts are introduced and defined to draw a comprehensive framework (Babbie, 2011; Creswell, 2009).

Starting with design, the first section is organised in three parts. First, the text introduces the CCI as the context of the design discipline, which is characterised by a tension between cultural and economic values. The second and third section define design and review empirical studies, which analyse design practices. The third section introduces and defines innovation. Further, it points out the link between innovation, on the one hand, and the CCI and design, on the other. The fourth part of the theoretical framework moves on to SI. After defining this concept and sketching its context, the relation between SI and the CCI as well as design is clarified. The conclusion of this chapter presents the findings of previous studies critically and pinpoints towards controversies and inconsistencies within this newly emerging field.

### 2.1 DESIGN

#### 2.1.1 DEFINING THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The basis of defining the CCI lies in the Creative Industries Mapping Document (1998) by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in the UK. This was the first document explicitly identifying the particular industries which belong to the CCI: “advertising, architecture, art and antiques, craft, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software, television and radio” (DCMS, 1998, as cited in Towse, 2010, p. 378). Yet, there are other definitions, too.

Throsby (2008a) provides an overview of six influential models: the one by DCMS, the Symbolic Texts Model, the Concentric Circles Model, the WIPO Copyright Model, the one by UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Americans for the Arts Model. All these models have their

own definitions, which complicates standard listing and analysis of these industries as Throsby (2008a) points out. The model found most useful for this research is the Concentric Circle Model developed by Throsby (2008b). The author (2008b) used empirical data from five countries (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK, and USA) to be able to select this model.

The Concentric Circles Model contains four distinct circles which move from “the core creative arts” outwards, representing the declining cultural value produced the further one moves away from the core (Throsby, 2008b, p. 149). The model presents the CCI as being driven predominantly by distinguishing “primary creative ideas” (Throsby, 2008b, p. 156). The diffusion of ideas happens across the circles, since some individuals work in various circles or industries at the same time. The model, therefore, reflects one moment in time, whereas people and ideas actually move and change throughout time. Defining professions, therefore, is difficult since people have multiple jobs or tasks. On the one hand, this is a potential shortcoming in complexity, on the other, the model allows for a comprehensive reflection of the reality in one moment of time.

The CCI gained increasing attention by policy-makers and academia (Best, 1990). According to Towse (2010) it seems difficult to classify the CCI as a sector, since the industries are characterised by highly heterogeneous projects. Caves (2000) uses contract theory to explore the CCI and their functioning. He discovers that among the different types of contracts, incomplete contracts seem to prevail in the CCI. From there, Caves (2000) arrives at various characteristics of the CCI among others the fact that “nobody knows”, whether a project will be embraced by the audience or not (p. 392). Similar to how Throsby (2008b), who defines the CCI as combining or balancing between cultural and economic value, Caves (2000) and Sunley, Pinch, Reimer, and Macmillen (2008) describe this tension, too. Towse (2010) confirms that market forces play an important role in the CCI. At the same time, the author warns for normative statements such as regarding this influence of the private sector and the consumer side as a negative one.

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### 2.1.2 DEFINING DESIGN

Design gained great popularity recently (Power, 2009), but understanding of the concept is still rather vague (Bell & Jayre, 2003). In order to fully grasp the content of this thesis it is vital to know what is meant by the term design. In the context of the CCI, design is mostly situated within the creative industries instead of the cultural ones (Caves, 2000; DCMS, 1998). Within the Concentric Circle Model by Throsby (2008b), design is positioned in the in the outer circle industries. The commercial emphasis makes it potentially fruitful to use in this research because this mind-set is

also needed when bringing SI to the market. The Oxford English Dictionary (<http://www.oed.com/>) provides a range of definitions among which the following fit best:

1. A plan or scheme conceived in the mind and intended for subsequent execution; the preliminary conception of an idea that is to be carried into effect by action; a project. ...

7. a. The art of drawing or sketching; (hence) the process, practice, or art of devising, planning, or constructing something (as a work of art, structure, device, etc.) according to aesthetic or functional criteria; (also) this as a subject of study or examination.

7. b. The completed product or result of this process; the arrangement of features in something planned or produced according to aesthetic or functional criteria; a particular shape, style, or model.

*Source: Oxford English Dictionary [OED] (2014)*

Following this definition, design can be regarded as an idea, which is realised, as the process of realising this idea, and as the result of this process. Moreover, the definition implies that design (as the process or the product) is characterised by both aesthetic and functional aspects.

Traditionally, there has been a focus on the second aspect, design as a product. When regarding design as a product, Towse (2010) argues that designers produce crafts on a small scale instead of producing mass marketable goods. This conflicts with the idea that design balances the economic and the cultural value side. Power (2009) mentions the idea of design as intangible and makes a distinction between design, which happens between businesses and their clients, on the one hand, and between various businesses, on the other. The former is said to involve design products, while the latter constitutes design service. In the context of design as a process, design can be seen as a sector, as a process or creative activity, or as an innovation “that incrementally changes already existing goods or areas” (Leslie & Rantisi, 2009, p. 182). This research investigates design at a micro, individual level focusing on design as a process of creative activity or innovation (Leslie & Rantisi, 2009). The outcomes of such a process are “tangible (product) or intangible (service)” (Von Stamm, 2008, p. 17).

There are various design disciplines and a first overview is given to illustrate that design is related to and useful in the context of SI. Table 1 presents a list of design disciplines, which have parallels with SI. Even though the design discipline does not matter as long as the process results in

SI, this list helps to understand a preliminary link between design and SI. The list is by no means exhaustive, but gives a short overview of some of such disciplines in alphabetical order. In the section on SI the reader learns more about the way existing literature established a relationship between design and SI.

*Table 1 - Selection of design disciplines related to designing for SI (non-exhaustive)*

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Definition</b>
embodied design	This form of design acknowledges the importance of bodily experiences in the learning process (Abrahamson & Lindgren, n.d.).
emotional design	These are “design products that target specific types of emotions” that are first investigated (Desmet, Overbeeke, & Tax, 2007, p. 142).
design thinking	This design method has been related to SI before, but should not be confused with designing for SI (Brown & Wyatt, 2010; Kimbell, 2011).
industrial design or product design	Industrial design can be understood as the design “of products in which aesthetic appearance and convenience in use are very important” (Archer, 1967, p. 47). It “is the solving of a design problem from the assignment to the final product design.” (Langeveld, 2011, p. 121)
interaction design	This sort of design is meant “to support the way people communicate and interact in their everyday and working lives” (Rogers, Sharp, & Preece, 2011, p. xi).
positive design	Positive design can be seen as an “umbrella term” for design for happiness and other design forms which focus “on the subjective well-being of individuals and communities” (Desmet & Pohlmeier, 2013, p. 6).
social design	Instead of aiming for the market, “the foremost intent of social design is the satisfaction of human needs” (Margolin & Margolin, 2002, p. 25).
sustainable design	In this case, design “seeks to maximize the quality of the built environment, while minimizing or eliminating negative impact to the natural environment” (McLennan, 2004, p. 4).

*Source: own elaboration from different sources*

### 2.1.3 ANALYSING DESIGN PRACTICES

Before reviewing ways to analyse design practices it is useful to first define what is meant by the concept of practice. Green (2009) argues that professional practice can be defined in four different senses. The author further states that regardless the definition, professional practice always comes down to the following three aspects: activities, experiences and the contexts of a practice.

Goodman, Stolterman, and Wakkary (2011) offer a useful definition of design practice. They aim to understand the interaction between design practices, motivated by the gap between research and the

practice. In line with their analysis, the authors define practice as “professional design activities intended to create commercial products” (Goodman et al., 2011, p. 1062). In addition, the product could be differentiated between tangible and intangible.

Goodman et al. (2011) argue that there is a “rich and extensive tradition of “practice theory” in design (p. 1062). They provide several data collection methods: survey, mixed method surveys, participant observation, reported practice (interviews), cases and first-person research (where the designer is the primary informant as well as the researcher). The focus in the article by Goodman et al. (2011) is on interaction design. The authors themselves conducted a six months study of interaction designers using in-situ observation and interviews

Despite the diverse approaches to analyse practices (in design), the focus on activity leads to a particular sort of research in numerous cases: constructivist protocol studies. Dorst and Dijkhuis (1995) compare a positivist approach to protocol studies called “technical rationality” and the constructivist “process of reflection-in-action” (p. 262). The former regards the design process as a rational problem solving process and organises the protocol into short units with the same length of time. It is hard, here, to score these units topic-wise and to capture the vagueness and subtleties of the practice. In contrast, the constructivist approach uses units, which are based on happenings of the study which allows for a valuable description close to how designers experience it themselves. In this approach, there is less clarity or objectivity though (Dorst & Dijkhuis, 1995).

Both individual designers and teams can be analysed. Goldschmidt (1995) investigates the question whether a team or a single designer is better in working with a protocol study and concludes that there are no significant differences to find. Valkenburg & Dorst (1998) for instance investigate the practice of two design teams in a competition. They use videotaping and protocol analysis of the conversations as well as general descriptions of the teams. Similarly, Cross and Clayburn-Cross (1995) made observations of teamwork and social processes in design practice. Besides a protocol study, they also use interviews to learn about the reflections of some designers directly. The authors conclude that social processes have a significant relationship with technical or cognitive processes.

Other studies do not rely on protocol analysis, but experiments for instance (Dorst & Cross, 2001; Kirschner, Carr, Merriënboer & Sloep, 2002). Dorst and Cross (2001) research creativity in the design process in an experiment setting. Again, they lay the focus on the individual. Protocol analyses lead, among others, to the conclusion that the “‘problem-solving’ aspect of design can be described ... [as] co-evolution of problem and solution spaces” (Dorst & Cross, 2001, p. 436). One of the most exhaustive studies is by Badke-Schaub and Frankenberger (1999) who aim to develop a



model of collaborative design work in practice by identifying main factors, which influence design work. They do this by observing 4 design processes for 28 weeks using interviews, surveys, observations and protocols amongst others to gain a coherent picture. Newman and Landay (2000) use field visits and interviews to investigate the practice of web design because they regard the personal contact as crucial.

Lastly, quantitative surveys were used to analyse design practices as well. Vredenburg, Mao, Smith, and Carey (2002), for example, focus on user-centred design practice. They aim to investigate the “actual use of user-centred design methods in practice” by surveying designers (Vredenburg et al., 2002, p. 471). Mao, Vredenburg, Smith, and Carey (2005) use surveys to give an overview of the state of the art in user-centred design practice. Nicolini (2009) presents a useful, but rather extensive framework that is useful to analyse design practice. The author suggests to switch between a close, detailed look and a broader view on the practice. Other than the previous studies, this approach is highly flexible and open to possible changes or opportunities during the process. Yet it can be hard at times to investigate because a practice is deeply embedded in the day-to-day context.

## 2.2 INNOVATION

### 2.2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

Schumpeter (1934) created the basis for a thorough understanding of innovation. In *The Theory of Economic Development* (1934) he clarifies the difference between innovation and invention. Fagerberg (2003), too, distinguished between innovation and inventions. According to him, innovation takes place mostly in commercial firms and inventions can take place anywhere. His definition of the two concepts is as follows: “Invention is the first occurrence of an idea for a new product or process. Innovation is the first commercialization of the idea.” (Fagerberg, 2003, p. 3). Similarly, Pratt and Jeffcutt (2009) argue that a focus on the number of patents as a measure for innovation can “miss-identify innovation processes” (p. 4).

Traditional economics emphasise innovation as new products and new production methods. Equally, Schumpeter (1939) for instance distinguishes between product and process innovation, but also suggests other forms of innovation. Kline and Rosenberg (1986) focus on product innovation. Nonetheless, they provide a similar list which adds possible innovations: a “new process of production”, “substitution of cheaper material”, “internal reorganization”, and an “improvement

[of] instruments and methods for innovation” (Kline & Rosenberg, 1986, p. 279). While Schumpeter (1939) stresses the aspects of seeking new markets, Kline and Rosenberg (1986) emphasise improving tools for innovation (Kline & Rosenberg). Yusuf (2009) also states that there are various forms of innovation, including product, process, but also, for instance, organisational innovation. According to Fagerberg (2003), this can emerge at the level of the firm as well as the whole industry.

Network effects play a role in innovation, too. The phenomenon implies that one additional unit of in a network leads to multiple benefits and more value for the whole network. To give an example, Choi, Kim and Lee (2010) found in a quantitative study that the diffusion of innovations is influenced positively by highly clustered networks. These are externalities only when the network effects are not planned into the project.

Whatever the form, an innovation is complex and “highly uncertain” which makes management of this ambiguity key (Kline & Rosenberg, 1986, p. 275). It also means that even though speaking of innovation as an entity, in reality it is often constituted of a number of interrelated innovations (Fagerberg, 2003). Moreover, instead of a linear model, the chain-linked model by Kline & Rosenberg (1986) is particular useful. It allows for nuance and flexibility in the innovation process. This is because the model is not only about the end result itself, but also about other impacts innovation has on, for instance, environment.

Fagerberg (2003) mentions points out the resistance to radical innovation or “inertia” (p. 6). This can be related to Schumpeter’s concept of the “innovator” and the “imitator” (Fagerberg, 2003, p. 5). Another crucial aspect is creative destruction (Fagerberg 2003; Schumpeter, 1939). When a firm innovates and has a monopoly on that innovation, it can be subject to path-dependency. This entails either advantages because it is first in the market or risks because is more difficult to change timely enough to beat the competition of imitators. According to Fagerberg (2003) the imitator is also important and can foster incremental and organisational innovations. Similarly, Kline and Rosenberg (1986) argue that both revolutionary and evolutionary innovations are important, the former for long-term and the latter for short-term success.

Open innovation is a reaction on traditional innovation. This kind of innovation is defined as “the use of purposive inflows and outflows of knowledge to accelerate internal innovation, and expand the markets for external use of innovation, respectively” (Chesbrough, 2006, as cited in Huizingh, 2010, p. 2). These flows represent two types of open innovation: inbound and outbound. Inbound open innovation refers to internal innovations which are inspired by “the input of outsiders”, while outbound open innovation seeks “outside commercialization opportunities” for

internal developments (Huizingh, 2010, p. 2). None of these processes are in themselves new, but there seems to be renewed attention for it because of new management forms through changes at social and economic level.

Outbound open innovation is related to Von Hippel's (1986) concept of lead user innovation or democratised innovation. Lead users play an essential role, here, and user-centred innovation systems can build on them, especially now that innovation tools such as the Internet are readily available and accessible (Von Hippel, 1986). Combined with the available capability and knowledge of people, this leads to efficient, meaningful innovation and a democratised opportunity to innovate. In practice, this means that manufacturers leave (digital) design for the users or that they step out of production, too (e.g. open source software). In the practice of lead-user innovation, these individuals deliver input, which the manufacturer then produces, diffuses en-mass and then distribute to all users.

Innovation is commonly regarded as a potential catalyst for generating economic growth (Kline & Rosenberg, 1986; Yusuf, 2009). In his article 'From creativity to innovation' Yusuf (2009) writes about how to make a creative society also innovative. Consequently, this text is less at the firm or individual level. Instead, it focuses on (institutional) incentives to foster innovation as well as research to sustain such innovations. In the model of Yusuf (2009), creativity and stock of knowledge are at the basis of innovation, and innovation in turn is at the basis of economic growth.

While Schumpeter focuses on the individual innovator and his or her importance for fostering innovation via creativity, Fagerberg (2003) points out the importance of teamwork. Montuori and Purser (1995) also emphasise the social dimensions of creativity (which ultimately can lead to innovation). Nonetheless, working in an organisation or team can also slow down innovation due to of "organisational memory" and routine activities (Fagerberg, 2003, p. 8). Within firms, pluralistic leadership is helpful (Fagerberg, 2003).

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### 2.2.2 INNOVATION AND CCI & DESIGN

As the former section shows, creativity is an important basis for innovation. This section establishes the link between innovation and the CCI in general as well as design in specific. Both technological innovation, such as digitalisation, as well as the creation of experiences are important in the CCI. Pratt and Jeffcutt (2009) argue that especially non-technological innovation is closely linked to the arts and culture. Interestingly, Green and Miles (2008) write about hidden innovations within the CCI. Such innovations are hidden because they are not traditional or technological, but e.g.

innovative in “organisational forms or business models”, “novel combinations of existing processes”, and “on-the-job innovations” (Green & Miles, 2008, p. 6). The CCI are also regarded as a fruitful source or medium to engender innovation outside the own borders. Nonetheless, this idea is criticised in academia because there is no empirical proof of this cross-fertilisation of the CCI and the economy as a whole.

Jaanieste (2009) attempts to place the CCI within the innovation framework. There are several options as to where to locate the industries, some of which are particularly interesting for this research because of their relationship with the social domain. One of the main conclusions the author draws is that the CCI are highly differentiated which makes detailed mapping necessary, but complex. In line with that, the sort of knowledge that is needed, is described as “expressive-reflective” instead of only “technical rational” (Jaanieste, 2009, p. 225).

Several scholars argue that design initiates innovation (Kline & Rosenberg, 1986; Sunley et al., 2008; Thomassen, 2012). In particular, Kline and Rosenberg (1986) write about analytic design and the talent of making new combinations. One of the definitions of design, which Leslie and Rantisi (2009) develop, entails that it is a “gradual process of innovation” that can bring changes and improvements (p. 182). Thomassen (2012) argues that design is said to archive new combinations (by providing solutions) in innovation. A new trend is that designers (or design teams) find novel solutions to problems by paying close attention to user needs. Hence, design is a driver for SI, though more research is needed “to sustain these innovations” (Thomassen, 2012, p. 123). The next section will elaborate on this topic in more detail after introducing the concept of SI in general.

## 2.3 SOCIAL INNOVATION

### 2.3.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

Now that the theoretical framework thoroughly defined innovation, it is time to move towards SI. This concept has a long history in practice, but a relative short one in academia (Ghys & Oosterlynck, 2013). To illustrate this, most literature on SI as defined below stems from 2006 onwards. Mulgan (2006) was one of the first to write about SI, arguing that the concept “has received little attention and rarely goes beyond anecdotes and vague generalizations” (p. 146). This section defines what is meant by SI, as well as the way SI is said to be fostered.

So, what is SI actually? Simply put, these are innovations which are “both social in their ends and in their means” (Murray et al., 2010, p. 3). Hence, the end result contributes to a social good and citizens or final users are closely involved in the process to achieve that goal (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013). There are several aspects where most literature agrees on. Firstly, SI solves pressing societal challenges of our times, especially in fields such as healthcare, poverty, and the environment (Murray et al., 2010; Phills et al., 2008; Lavanga & Schützle, 2013). Secondly, SI crosses private and public sectors. In fact, it is at its best when blurring “boundaries between sectors” (Murray et al., 2010, p. 3). This is because the concept addresses “complex problems [that] ask for complex solutions” (Phills et al., 2008, p. 40). The emphasis is on the main aim of the innovation, which is striving for a common social good instead of seeking maximisation of profit (Mulgan, Tucker, Ali, & Sanders, 2007; Mulgan, 2006). At the same time, Mulgan (2006) admits that there are certainly cases that are on the edge between social and business innovation.

In their analysis of SI, Lavanga and Schützle (2013) identify the central goal of SI as finding a solution to a societal challenge, which is followed by three main pillars: *Civil Society in Charge*, *Multi-Disciplinarity*, and *Transparency* (Figure 2). The first concept, *Civil Society in Charge*, implies that instead of a tight bond between only academia, governments, and businesses, a fourth party is of great importance in SI: the civil society or final user. Such a *Quadruple Helix* (academia, governments, businesses, and civil society) indirectly empowers the civil society because these individuals are now taken into consideration in big decisions, too (Arnkil, Jarvensivu, Koski, & Purainen, 2010). This can also happen more directly, when the civil society or user is involved in the production process from the beginning onwards. Then, the *User as Designer* has the power to influence the development of SI to make it truly meaningful.

The second concept, *Multi-Disciplinarity*, reflects the variety of disciplines and perspectives often seen in SI. On the one hand, individuals from outside the field bring unexpected solutions because of their novel *Alien's Perspective*. On the other, a *Diversified Chain* of contributors (sectors, organisations, individuals, etc.) can serve for complex solutions by inspiring and challenging each other. The third concept, *Transparency*, focuses on openness. SIs are characterised by *Open Data*, which enables the generation of new insights and solutions because information is not kept secret, but shared on a reciprocal basis. This literally opens opportunities to create something useful with this information. Besides, *Open Design* can be seen as openness (and therefore fairness) about the production chain and features of an innovation, but also as an open-ended process. In the latter case, people are given the chance to do something with the project, which links back towards the first pillar, since civil society is given more influence or power.

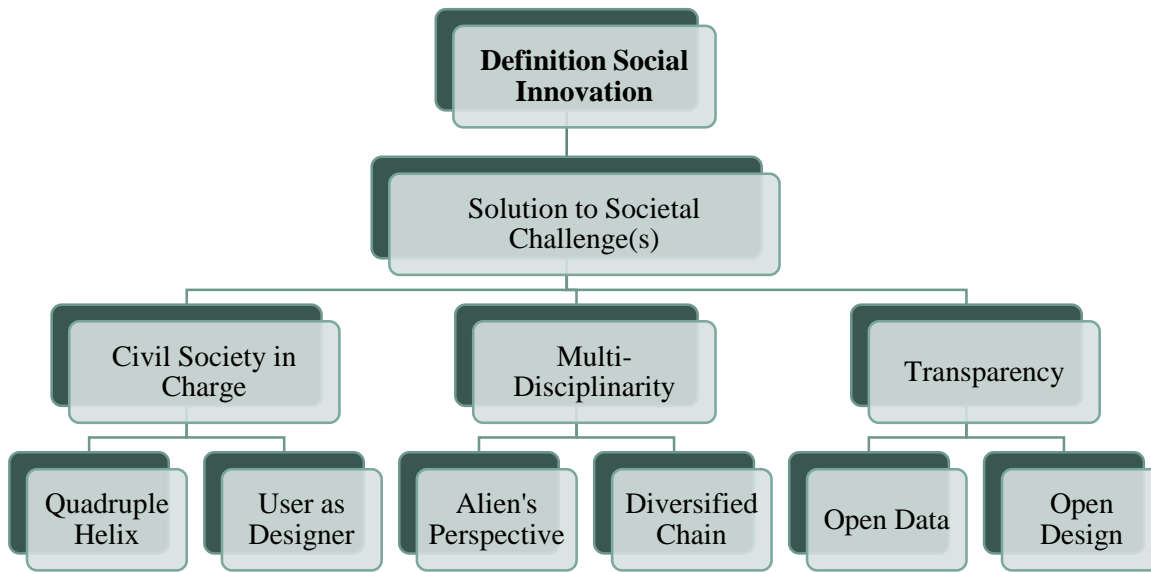


Figure 2 - Definition of SI (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013)

Mulgan (2006) addresses the question of how SI develops and who actually *does* it. This idea can help identify the way designers might work on SI projects. Similar to innovation, SI can be fostered by individuals as well as groups of people. In some cases, individuals play an important, almost heroic, role in SIs. In other, there are movements, which are carried by a broader group and not just one star. None of the two perspectives, however, allows for explaining the complexity of social change, which is why Mulgan (2006) himself gives it a try. He identifies four phases, which do not have to happen in a linear manner. This list, however, seems to apply to any innovation, not just SI.

In Lavanga and Schützle (2013), fostering SI is described by three main concepts: *Treat User as Designer*, *Facilitate Connections* and *Open up* (Figure 3). These aspects of fostering SI roughly reflect those of the definition of SI drawn from this research. The first concept, *Treat User as Designer*, means that the civil society or final user is indirectly or directly empowered. The final user provides input for a project from the beginning on (*Involve User*). That way, the person indirectly (through people who work with their input) influences the innovation in the making. In the concept *Inform User*, the final user or civil society is provided with the tools and information to improve their own lives. Hence, they are directly empowered.

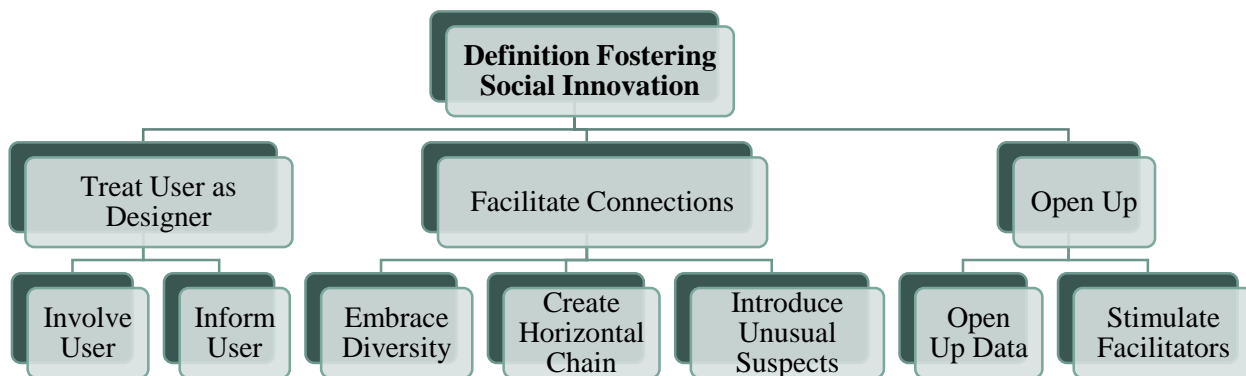


Figure 3 – Definition of fostering SI (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013)

The second concept, *Facilitate Connections*, emphasises connections at three levels: inside organisations (*Embrace Diversity*), among different organisations (*Create Horizontal Chain*) and between a person and the organisation (*Introduce Unusual Suspects*). All of these are methods, which contribute to mutual inspiration, flexibility, but also complexity in the solutions which are to be developed by bringing together diverse collaborators.

The third concept, *Open up*, is a challenging step for some organisations because it goes against traditional business models. *Open Up Data* means that information about the development of a project or product is accessible, but also that the final result is open itself. Both strategies allow for the civil society or final user to take adjust and take ownership of this result. Individuals and other parties can also *Stimulate Facilitators*, thus motivate policy-makers or platforms to open up and trust in the wisdom, but above all skill and knowledge, of the crowd.

### 2.3.2 THE RISE OF ATTENTION FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

There are several possible aspects why SI increasingly gains attention nowadays. Firstly, a global financial crisis made it clear that economic growth is finite and insufficient to solve the great societal problems of our times. Secondly, the latter problems became increasingly challenging and therefore demanding solutions as soon as possible. What also contributes to the buzz around SI is that policies at European level regard this concept as an important solution to such challenges.

At a European as well as a national level policy-makers predominantly support “innovation in business and technology” instead of SI (Mulgan, 2006, p. 147). In the Netherlands, Arnoldus (2014) questions the unexpectedly low score of the Top Sector of the CCI with respect to SI. There

seem to be at least two major problems in the procedure of this Top Sectors policy (Government of the Netherlands, n.d.). Firstly, the definition focuses on internal innovation processes such as working place innovation, which is not what the creative Top Sector understands under SI. Secondly the way of measuring excludes many creative firms because of the kind of questions asked and the size of the enterprises included in the research.

As part of the Europe 2020 initiative, a pilot was started to enhance SI in Europe (European Commission, 2014). In this context various programmes were developed to orient towards a “social market economy” (Pulford, 2010 p. 7). Pulford (2010) presents ten exemplary projects of SI in Europe. These aim to demonstrate the fruitful ground for SIs in Europe as well as the potential for future similar endeavours. The cases were selected if the initiative was useful, meaningful for both supply and demand side and lastly if they established novel and “effective relationships” (Pulford, 2010, p. 13).

It is debatable, whether the concept of SI is a real added value to policy-makers, academia, and practice or whether it is just a hype (Pol & Ville, 2009). Pol and Ville (2009) distinguish SI from business innovation in that the former is not created “with the purpose of making money” (p. 883). Nonetheless, the overlap between the two, also called “bifocal innovation”, is considerable (Pol & Ville, 2009, p. 884). Most importantly, in this context, the authors argue that SI, when used in a comprehensive way, is highly useful and valuable, and it is the governments’ task to create incentives for developing such innovations. It cannot be stressed too firmly, however, that the use of this concept should be accompanied by a critical approach and conscious understanding of what SI really means in a certain context.

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### 2.3.3 WHAT SOCIAL INNOVATION IS *NOT*

As implied in the former section, the rise of attention for SI has also brought along misunderstandings of what is meant by the concept. To enhance clarity in this study, the following examples stress what is not considered to be SI. Firstly, despite articles in that direction, SI should not be confused with workplace innovation, which improves the atmosphere in the office. This tendency is visible especially in America, but also in the Netherlands SI is often seen as a new way of working and thus as an innovation within a company (Ghys & Oosterlynck, 2013; Pot, 2012). Secondly, social media like Facebook or Twitter are not considered SI, even though they are social and innovative. Such online platforms miss the ultimate goal to contribute to the greater good. One can argue that the main goal of social media is not the societal good, but making money.



Thirdly, SI should not be confused with the concept of social impacts of the arts, with regard to the practice of designing for SI. Social impacts became increasingly popular from the 1980s onwards and policy-makers embraced and adopted the concept widely. Yet, thorough criticism within the academic realm was uttered, especially, because the arts were in danger to be instrumentalised to serve the social sector. Moreover, measurement of such impacts was flawed (Evans, 2005). Lastly, social entrepreneurship is not interchangeable with SI. Seelos and Mair (2005), describe social entrepreneurship similar to SI, as addressing “basic human needs that remain unsatisfied by current economic and social institutions” (pp. 243-244). The focus is on value accrued for society as a whole instead of the private profit. According to Phills et al. (2008), however, distance the concept of social entrepreneurship from SI. They argue that the former stresses the individual entrepreneurs and firms too much, instead of the important result achieved by them.

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#### 2.3.4 SOCIAL INNOVATION AND DESIGN

In spite of the few researches on the relation between SI and the CCI, first findings suggest that it is fruitful to engage individuals from these industries in SI projects. Lavanga and Schützle (2013) identify three ways how the arts and SI are related. Among others, artists can contribute to fostering SI thanks to their creativity and different way of thinking. Noteworthy, not every creative individual is suitable for this work and it is not sufficient to recruit an artist to develop SI (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013). As implied above, especially design seems useful to help, support, and enable SI (Thomassen, 2012; Chick, 2012). This section clarifies the parallels between SI and design using the definition of SI by Lavanga and Schützle (2013) as a basis.

Lavanga and Schützle (2013) define SI as a solution to a societal challenge, addressed by putting civil society or the user centre stage, creating a multidisciplinary chain, as well as staying transparent. The text allocates characteristics of design to these definitional parts. According to various literature sources, design, can be seen as a creative process leading to a solution for problems in a human-centred way (inclusive, participatory, etc.), it creates and thrives on networks and connections, and has an open process or even result.

Firstly, design is traditionally regarded as a discipline to solve problems by creating something new and useful (Preston & Thomassen, 2010). The practice of designing usually aims to solve problems or challenges in contemporary society, making it a perfect method to trigger SI. Von Stamm (2008) states that the key of design is to think out of the box and to find solutions to current

problems. Keates and Clarkson (2003) mention that a characteristic for design is to identify and solve needs, as well as evaluate whether the solution was successful. Morelli (2007), too, describes an important shift in design, which makes designers particularly suitable to work on SI. Among others, he argues that design can be seen as “solution platforms”, not only the invention of products (Morelli, 2007, p. 19).

Secondly, Morelli (2007) repeatedly mentions the empowerment and involvement of the user in design, bringing forth disciplines such as social, inclusive, participatory and user-driven design. Especially social design focuses on human demands (Preston & Thomassen, 2010), but also inclusive design (Keates & Clarkson, 2003) and participatory design (Manzini & Rizzo, 2011). The latter does not see the final user as a consumer with problems, which need solving, but “actors that bring local knowledge, specific competences and ideas for solutions” (Manzini & Rizzo, 2011, p. 201). Equally, Bauwens (2009) describes the peer to peer (P2P) design strategy where the final user plays an active role in the different phases of the design production cycle. Bruns (2013) illustrates a development in the CCI from prosumption to produsage. He argues that the aforementioned disciplines harness the customer or user in a one-sided (power) relationship. Produsage, in the contrary, allows for user-driven design where the user is empowered, instead of exploited.

Thirdly, design is a creative process, which is enhanced by networks and new connections (Thomassen, 2012). The concept of blurring boundaries between sectors and disciplines is reflected in a “distance between market-based and socially oriented initiative” (Morelli, 2007, p. 19). Elsbach and Flynn (2013) studied collaboration among toy designers. They found out that fruitful collaborations depend on the personal rather than the social identity. Similarly, Kilker (1999) argued that designers could become problems in groups, when there are contrasting ideals in a team. These ideals clash and make it hard or impossible to continue the teamwork. The question is how to prevent such situation. Among others, Ravasi and Stigliani (2012) investigate how collaborations between managers and designers can be improved. The article is written in the form of a literature review including both empirical and theoretical studies. Likewise, Mozota (2012) elaborates on the bridge between managers and designers as well as how the latter can gain the acknowledgement they deserve in such a relationship. She also introduces the Balanced Score Cardtoolkit (BSC), a strategy to find a shared language between the design and the management world.

Lastly, the open characteristics of design – with respect to the idea, the process and in the final result – deserve attention, here. Hillgren et al. (2011) emphasise that next to participation, openness is key in SI. Making prototypes is mentioned as an important part of this open character. Despite the advantages, the authors also mention possible disadvantages of such an approach, such

as the open-ended and flexible process, which is difficult to manage or control for. Cipolla & Manzini (2009) argue that the designers' role is to design interaction and service interface, but that it cannot be totally previewed and controlled or fully designed. Such processes can also be open in the sense of open source and involvement of final users (Bauwens, 2009). Even though Bruns (2013) addresses user-led content in an *online* environment, the concept of “unfinished artefacts” and “continuing process” correspond with the open-ended results and processes of designing for SI (Bruns, 2013, p. 71). Strikingly both Morelli (2007) and Chick (2012) do not elaborate on this aspect of openness. These authors focused more strictly on the social aspects in the sense of inter-human relations.

## 2.4 CONCLUSIONS THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to structure the topic of this thesis, the theoretical framework moved from the CCI to design and from innovation to SI. It also connected these two main lines, which results in the last section about how SI and design are connected in existing literature. To sum up, this section points out the main controversies and inconsistent findings as well as the gap to be filled by this study.

SI has gained much attention in academia, policy-making and practice and it is likely that more and more national and local governments pay attention to SI and how to foster it. Does that mean SI and design is merely a hype? This study assumes that the concepts are popular (partially) for a good reason. This is because these concepts do not stand alone, but are part of a broader development in today's societies and economies. In using the concept, however, it is crucial to be clear what exactly one is talking about.

In this research, the working definition follows the one by Lavanga and Schützle (2013), which is backed up by other literature, too. Moreover, it functions as an anchor of understanding for later phases of the research, too. SI is an innovation, which is social in its ultimate aim as well as its strategy to reach this result. In other words, it is a novel *solution to societal challenges*, where *Civil Society* is empowered, there are blurring boundaries between disciplines and sectors (*Multi-Disciplinarity*) and knowledge is shared and open for useful external influences (*Transparency*).

One way to foster SI is through design. The table below illustrates some of the reasons why these concepts are simple to relate to each other (Table 2). Design is both functional and problem solving as well as aesthetic; it is increasingly human-centred, it engenders collaborations and can have an open process. It seems important that individuals who design for SI are (also) intrinsically motivated to make a difference in society instead of merely going where the (subsidy) money is.

One of the issues with regard to this theoretical framework is whether there is a need to call the phenomenon at hand designing for SI. After all, there is a design discipline called social design already. At a first glance, this might be true; yet designing for SI is kept broader on purpose. Here, to be a designer by profession or education is less important. Instead, the focus is on the SI, which is designed or realised by any person or team. In the following text, therefore, the interviewees are described as designers, but also as designing individuals.

Nonetheless, it is crucial to stay critical towards SI and thus designing for SI. In order to solve the great societal challenges of our times it is not enough to rely on some designing individuals who foster SI. In fact, it is not enough to rely on SI alone because it is (part of) a broader movement, which empowers the civil society and acknowledges the rich knowledge and expertise of everybody instead of planning in a top-down and hierarchical manner. Individuals' knowledge is used to improve the situation for the community as a whole.

Yet, as implied above, SI is – just like other concepts, which were popular in academic or policy realms before – expectedly a temporary phenomenon. Whenever working with the term, therefore, one should not only look at the immediate environment and context, but also have a broader perspective. What can one learn from the practice of designing for SI, for instance, which is useful in other situations, too? Furthermore, the fact that (some) creative individuals are good at designing SI, should not mean that this is one of the only ways the CCI can be valuable for society and the economy. There is a risk to forget other disciplines or individuals and ruining a potentially fruitful culture of creativity.

Three expected findings are highlighted, here. Firstly, it is crucial, but also difficult, to find a balance between an open, horizontal design process and controlling for a desired outcome of the design project. Secondly, it is essential to communicate differently depending on the individuals and parties involved. The interaction with various stakeholders, in other words, plays an important role in bringing the project to a successful end. The third expected result is related to the concepts used in this study. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, SI gained much attention quite rapidly, just as social design. Theory and practice, however, are likely to conflict. Consequently, interviewees are expected to disagree with some descriptions and reject some of the definitions.

Table 2 - Overview of concepts and shared characteristics from theoretical framework

	<b>Design</b>	<b>Innovation</b>	<b>SI</b>
<b>Form</b>	product/service, process	product, process, system	--*
<b>Artistic vs. functional</b>	creative (process) and problem solving, expressive and functional	creativity - innovation - economic value	solving societal challenges (ends) (partially through CCI/ design)
<b>Cultural/ social vs. economic value</b>	cultural and economic value		--*
<b>Human-centred</b>	human-centred (inclusive, participatory, P2P, produsage)	lead-user innovation (outbound open innovation) / democratised?	civil society in charge, involving and informing users
<b>Collaboration</b>	networks and connections	in team not only lone innovator, complexity of inn.	across sectors and disciplines, multi-disciplinarity, team or group, complex problems and solutions
<b>Open</b>	open (process)	not linear, uncertainty, open innovation	open (process), transparency
<b>Innovation</b>		creative destruction	--*
		resistance (inertia)	--*
		revolutionary or evolutionary	--*

--\* These aspects returned in the interviews about designing for SI, but not in the theoretical framework, yet.

## 3 METHODS

This chapter offers an overview of this study and introduces the reader to the different steps, which together built up to a successful research. The decisions made are justified “in relation to the suitability of alternative designs” and organised into five sections (Seale, 2004, p. 130). Firstly, the text recites the research problem, the objective and central question of this study. The methodology is connected to this and describes how the research addresses this problem. Next, the method of data collection is presented, followed by the selection and the composition of the sample. In the fourth part, the method of data analysis gives a preview of how the collected data will be studied with NVivo and will be used to draw conclusions on the practice of designing for SI. This chapter ends with the limitations and ethical issues, which are present in these research methods.

### 3.1 METHODOLOGY

The theoretical framework arrived at the conclusion that ‘designing for SI’ is probable, since the two concepts share key characteristics, but not much literature had been written about this topic. SI is widely used in academia and contemporary policy debates and it contributes to a possible alternative to the current societal and economic system. SIs aim to solve societal challenges in new ways, characterised by three means: civil society plays a bigger role, different disciplines and sectors combine forces as well as both processes and final results open up for external influences (Lavanga & Schützle 2013). Relatively recent developments in the design industry, especially in the relatively young field of social design, mirror these aspects. In social design, for instance, the user is of central importance. Moreover, co-creation or collaboration, but also an open attitude towards the design process and end result, are key (Thomassen, 2012).

This study aims to investigate ‘designing for SI’ by, amongst other, exploring how these three main aspects influence this practice. The research question: *What are the practices of individuals who design for social innovation projects?* leads the further developments of this study. Since the specific topic at hand is still rather unsought, this research is of exploratory nature and will “start familiarize” the reader with the topic (Babbie, 2011, p. 95). In order to meet above mentioned aims as well as purposes, qualitative field research is conducted. This allows for an inductive approach (Babbie, 2011; Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2009), meaning that the research starts with observations before discovering “patterns that may point to relatively universal principles” (Babbie, 2011, pp. 56-57). Consequently, the research mainly develops a new theory instead of testing an existing one (Babbie, 2011; Bryman, 2012). More specifically, a case study design helps

to realise an “in-depth examination of a single instance of some social phenomenon” (Babbie, 2011, p. 329). The case to be researched in this study is the practice of ‘designing for SI’. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions help to learn about the participants’ own reflections on their practice. In an iterative process, the researcher moves “in and out of the literature before, during and after the case study has begun” (Zucker, 2009, p. 6).

Research into practices of designers is predominantly conducted in the form of protocol studies, mostly with multiple observation tools. Such long and complex observations were not conducted. Firstly, because of the time constraints which did not allow for the participants to “be directly observed” for a longer period of time (Creswell, 2009, p. 179). Secondly, since the research is particularly interested in the individuals’ reflections on their own practices. Interviews allow for such reflections on present, past, and future, while observations merely tell the researcher about a specific moment in time.

### 3.2 UNITS OF ANALYSIS OR SAMPLE

In order to meet above-mentioned objectives and answer the research question with the interviews, the researcher purposively selected a sample ( $N=9$ ). The unit of analysis is at the individual level and the sample selection is aimed identifying individuals who “design for SI in the Netherlands”. The selection criteria were established by looking at the Netherlands (1) and search for projects, which involve SI (2) in order to then identify the individuals engaged in the design process or practice (3).

The study is based in the Netherlands (1) for three reasons. Firstly, the country hosts Waag Society (<http://waag.org/nl>) in Amsterdam, which is recognised as an expert in the field of SI and the arts. They offer advice to and collaborate with cultural organisations, the European Commission, and others. Secondly, Dutch Design has developed into an internationally known brand, which stands for functional design works which are at the same time also autonomous (BNO, 2012; Grievink, 2010). Thirdly, the Netherlands’ policy concerning the so-called Top Sector Creative Industries supports endeavours between design and innovation for instance, in the context of the Top Sectors Policy (Government of the Netherlands, n.d.). The last reason bases on proximity because the researcher is based in the Netherlands, which allows to conduct the majority of the interviews in person.

To identify projects that *involve SI* (2) the researcher developed a checklist (Appendix A) based on the theoretical framework. That is because, on the one hand, SI projects are scarcely

described as such explicitly, and on the other, some projects, which are described as such do not fit the definition of SI this thesis. It provides a framework to identify projects, which are considered to entail SI. The three most important aspects are that the project provides a ‘solution to a societal challenge’, that it puts ‘social or societal value first’ instead of profit making, and that it ‘treats the user as a designer’ in the project (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013; Phills et al., 2008). Four other characteristics, which are ‘facilitating connections’, and ‘opening up’, as well as the characteristics ‘novelty’ or ‘improvement’ are included in the checklist (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013; Phills et al., 2008). These add to the value of the selection made if present, but they are not necessary elements for a SI project to be included in this research. Nonetheless, all these characteristics are difficult to determine by merely a quick Internet search. Information provided on a website is incomplete and biased in some cases. It is therefore essential to be aware that this checklist is merely a preliminary indication of whether to contact an individual for an interview or not. The preference goes to projects that are relatively advanced or completed, in order to allow the designing individual to reflect on as many phases of the project as possible. Unfortunately, this was not possible in all of the cases.

The selection criterion *designing* (3) is determined at the level of the individuals’ activities because it is not feasible to select only those who currently work as a designer. Furthermore, the focus is on the activity of designing for SI, no matter the function description of the person doing it. The nationality of the individual who designs for SI is not a criterion because the emphasis is on the practice (in the Netherlands), regardless further experience as a designer or citizen of a different country. Moreover, design education in the Netherlands is highly internationally oriented (e.g. Eindhoven Design Academy). Consequently, international designers or other creative’s are also likely to stay in this country.

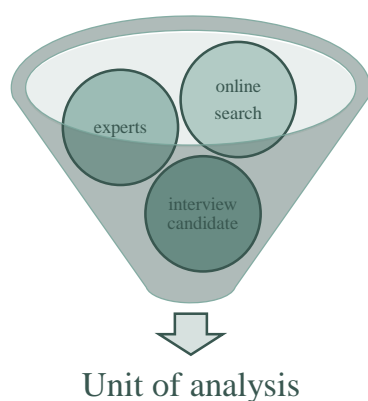


Figure 4 - Purposive sample selection



With these criteria in mind, the research undertakes three strategies to purposively select a sample of individuals who design for SI in the Netherlands: through experts, Internet search, and interview candidates themselves (Figure 4). These are verified with the preliminary checklist, which is symbolised by the funnel in Figure 4 which supports the decision whether to contact and interview an individual or not. The selection procedure started with snowball sampling through experts like Waag Society and other institutions. In a conversation with Sacha van Tongeren, who is closely involved in SI within Waag Society, she recommended a selection of five individuals to either interview or ask for further advice. Other potential sources for inspiration such as design academies in the Netherlands, organisations such as Het Nieuwe Instituut (<http://www.hetnieuweinstituut.nl/>) in Rotterdam or the conference What Design Can Do (<http://www.whatdesigncando.nl/were>) were contacted for advice. These did not contribute to the selection procedure in the end.

Besides, the researcher contacted two potential interviewees based on prior knowledge of a project of theirs as well as an Internet search. The above-mentioned preliminary checklist was used to verify the choice. The third step includes asking already contacted individuals for recommendations. In other words, snowball sampling was also used to find suitable participants. After each of these selection procedures, the selection was either confirmed or rejected based on a quick Internet search and the checklist described above. In case the selection was confirmed, as was in most cases, these individuals received an email, which introduced the research and kindly asked for their time for an interview. An example email can be found in the Appendix B.

Most of the individuals reacted relatively quickly. After three weeks, all interviews were planned between 30 April and 21 May 2014. Of the 22 individuals, which were contacted, ten answered the email positively and ultimately participated in the interviews. Three individuals had to cancel due to time constraints and two others turned out to not entirely fit the criteria. Both groups helped with recommendations for the sample. Seven individuals neither answered the initial email, nor a reminder sent to them later. Since other interviewees were already found, it was not necessary to contact them again. More information about the individuals can be found in Appendix C. Information about the sample can be found in the appendices. Appendix C provides an overview of the individuals, while Appendix D summarises the subsequent projects. Most of the interviewees are designers and others are artists. Moreover, the scope and size of projects is diverse, since some of the interviewees work in a company while others work for themselves.

### 3.2 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The research is a cross-sectional study, which allows the researcher to collect data “at one point in time” or a brief time frame (Babbie, 2011, p. 110). This study collected data from the end of April until the end of May 2014. Most of the semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face in different cities in the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Den Haag, Delft, and Breda). In two cases this was not possible due to logistics and time constraints, hence the conversation was held via Skype. One interviewee for instance lives in London and therefore a meeting in person was not possible.<sup>1</sup> The face-to-face interviews took place in an environment which is familiar to the participant, for instance in his or her studio or favourite (and quiet) café. The two Skype interviews depended less on the location; as long as both the interviewee and the interviewer were undisturbed. The interviews took between 60 and 85 minutes, with an average of 72.5 minutes. Finally, a total of almost eleven hours (10h 55min) of interviews have been conducted and recorded. The researcher conducted most of the interviews in Dutch. She herself speaks the language with (near-) native skills and most of the participants were Dutch or Dutch speaking. Two of the interviews with international designers involved in SI projects in the Netherlands, were conducted in English. The difference in language is not to be viewed as a problem. The professional command of both Dutch and English allows for a thorough analysis later on.

The development of the interview questions bases on the theoretical framework. The English version of the interview scheme can be found in Appendix E (the Dutch one is available in Appendix F). The first question in the interview helps to provide a picture of the educational and professional background of the interviewee. It serves to double-check the participants’ information shown in the overview in Appendix C. The next question concerns his/her view on the design practice in the Netherlands and in the third question, the interviewer probes for the individual’s understanding of and experience with SI. This is also to give a first indication of whether the selection of three aspects is useful to describe the practice of designing SI. In the following questions, the interview aims to focus on one project in particular. Firstly, the interviewee is asked to describe the project in detail. The interviewer probes not only for content, but also organisational issues, partners, novelty financial aspects of the project, etc. That way, the researcher gains a sufficiently detailed impression of the project at hand.

Next, the definition of (fostering) SI by Lavanga and Schützle (2013) is shortly introduced and discussed. Actually, this is adds to the earlier question about SI. Then the interview focuses on

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<sup>1</sup> For the project in the Netherlands he frequently visited the country to stay in and get familiar with the project’s area.

the particular project with questions regarding the three aspects of (fostering) SI as presented by Lavanga and Schützle (2013): the role of the final user or civil society in the project, the diverse collaborations and the possible openness in process or end result (e.g. open source). Firstly, the three aspects are controlled for – are these actually present or used in this project? If so (partially), the interviewer will further probe on the details. The focus, here, is on advantages, challenges, and necessary skills in such a way of designing. In the end, the practitioners will be asked to ponder on the design practice in five or ten years. It is a broad and difficult question to answer, but also an interesting one to draw the picture of designing for SI.

### 3.4 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Transcriptions were done using the online programme oTranscribe (<http://otranscribe.com/>). This programme allows simple and simultaneous management of both text and audio file in one screen. Transcribing verbatim means that every recorded word and sound is put into words and symbols without “tidying up” (Seale & Silverman, 1997, p. 381). This includes utterings like *mh* or *ehm* as well as pauses and background noises. For this report, the transcriptions are nearly verbatim and do not include background noises which did not matter to the conversation, for example. The transcription contains several symbols, which are based on Silverman (2013). The table below shows an overview of these.

*Table 3 - Symbols used in the transcriptions*

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
.	falling intonation
,	level intonation
?	rising intonation
-	abrupt cut-off (dash at the end of a word)
(...)	when speech could not be identified
[... ...]	the square brackets indicate when speech overlapped
( <i>text</i> )	round brackets where used to give additional information (e.g. about an interruption, an explanation of a word or a meaningful gesture)
..	short pauses
Ehm, eh	hesitation / thinking in speech
Mh, Mhmh	confirming sound

*Source: Silverman (2013) and own elaboration*

Once all interviews were transcribed, they were uploaded to the qualitative analysis programme NVivo 10 for Windows ([http://www.qsrinternational.com/products\\_nvivo.aspx](http://www.qsrinternational.com/products_nvivo.aspx)), which allows for thorough qualitative analysis. Thomas (2006) suggests a “general inductive approach” (p. 237), where the researcher goes back and forth in the data to come across patterns, which develop into concepts and theory (Babbie, 2011). This coding process starts with “general categories” based on the interview questions and from there it continues to create more “specific categories” which emerged from the interviews in a more iterative process (Thomas, 2006, p. 241). In NVivo, this is simply done by copying passages of text and pasting them into existing or new “nodes” or categories “to place meaning on different parts of the text” (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011, p. 74). During this process, memo’s help to keep track of ideas and thoughts about the categories and nodes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Thomas, 2006). What is also important for a focused and thorough analysis is critical observation and “regularly stepping out of coding” to revising the categories and nodes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013, p. 92).

After coding all nine interviews, the real analysis could begin. The researcher paid attention to similarities and discrepancies within or between the categories and nodes, but also the number of interviewees who mentioned certain aspects. Suitable extracts from the categories function as illustrating quotes in the results. This way, the reader is drawn closer to the data. For these quotations, the raw transcription text is transformed into a readable text without redundant utterings such as *mh* and *ehm*. Finally, the quotation is translated into English if necessary.

### 3.5 LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL ISSUES

These research methods have certain advantages, but – as any research – limitations as well. Both are inevitably present in this section. The study “attempt[s] to reconstruct participants’ understanding of the social world” in a qualitative way (Zucker, 2009, p. 11). Consequently, the qualitative validity or “accuracy” of this study is relatively high (Creswell, 2009, p. 190). After all, the in-depth interviews allow for the researcher to probe until a deeper meaning is uncovered. This prevents concepts from being misinterpreted. Moreover, the study establishes “trustworthiness”, which means that the researcher makes sure the necessarily subjective findings can be relied on by the reader (Thomas, 2006, p. 244). As suggested by Bazeley and Jackson (2013) this was established through letting somebody else look over the coding and further analysis.

The methods of this study, however, make that external validity, the possibility to generalise the findings “across social settings”, is weak (Bryman, 2012, p. 390). Internal validity is

problematic, too. Both limitations, however, are due to the aim of the study to explore a phenomenon, instead of explaining and proving causal relationships. External and internal reliability are hard to achieve in qualitative research, too. The former measures whether one could repeat the research and receive the same outcome (Babbie, 2011). The latter states whether different observers have the same idea about the data and consequent analysis (Bryman, 2012). To compensate these limits of the study, Creswell (2009) suggests building on precision and accuracy instead. It is key to inform the reader as exhaustively as possible about the different decisions made in the research, which is done both in this chapter as well as in the research results (Creswell, 2009).

In this thesis, no main ethical issues play a role because no personal or intimate information was needed. In order to prevent any discomfort, the interviewees were asked for permission to audiotape the interviews and to use their full names in the thesis. The transcriptions of the interviews and a preliminary version of the analysis of those were sent to the participants so that they could rectify any misinterpretation. Furthermore, the collected data is exclusively used for scientific purpose.

### 3.6 CONCLUSIONS METHODS

The previous sections described the methods, which lead and facilitate this study. The theoretical framework in the chapter before evidenced only a small number of academic sources address the practice of designing SI. Nonetheless, it became clear that the diverse sub-concepts do provide a basis to build this research upon. Consequently, this study takes an exploratory, thus qualitative approach. Data is collected through open-ended and unstructured interviews with individuals who design for SI in the Netherlands. This interview design allows for in-depth understanding of the individual's perspective. Besides more general questions about the design practice in the Netherlands and SI, the theoretical framework inspires other interview questions. These are more restrictive, but enabled the researcher to learn more about the specifics of designing for SI, instead of designing in general. Due to the qualitative design of the study, validity and reliability are slightly problematic. The researcher reduces this issue as much as possible, also by establishing accuracy and trustworthiness throughout the study.

## 4 RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings of the analysis. The results are organised in three parts, which ultimately contribute to answer the research question: *What are the practices of individuals who design for social innovation projects?* The first section reflects and discusses the interviewees' perspective on the present and possible future of the practice of designing for SI in the Netherlands. Secondly, the participants' understanding of SI is presented and discussed. This is to find out whether the understanding of what SI entails is the same or at least similar in all the interviews. In the third part of this section, the interviewees' answers on the set of questions concerning *Civil society in Charge, Multidisciplinary and Transparency* (Lavanga & Schützle 2013). The conclusion summarises the findings as well as discusses and reflects upon them through previously given literature. Table 4 offers a small overview of the different nodes and categories. In cases where the coding process experienced complications or interesting changes in node names, this is mentioned in the footnotes. Furthermore, the results are emphasised with citations from the interview transcripts including the name of the interviewee cited. The transcripts can be found in Appendix G.

Table 4 – Overview of categories & nodes

Category	Node level 1	Node level 2
Design practice in the Netherlands	<i>current design practice in NL</i>	<i>way of working</i> <i>support environment</i>
	<i>vision on future</i>	<i>no idea</i> <i>vision</i> <i>current situation wish</i>
Understanding of SI	<i>societal aim</i>	
	<i>complex systems</i>	
	<i>collaboration</i>	<i>people focused</i> <i>multidisciplinary</i>
	<i>openness</i>	
Designing for SI	<i>civil society in charge</i>	
	<i>multidisciplinary</i>	
	<i>openness</i>	
	<i>role and skills designer</i>	<i>close - distant</i>
		<i>social</i>
		<i>design specific</i>
<i>motivational</i>		
<i>organisational</i>		

## 4.1 DESIGN PRACTICE IN THE NETHERLANDS

This section provides information on the design practice in the Netherlands as the interviewees describe it. Within the category “design practice in the Netherlands” two nodes emerged during the coding process: *current design practice in NL* (including the *way of working* and the *support environment*) and *vision on future* (with the nodes *no idea*, *vision*, *current situation*, and *wish*). In both categories the interviewees cover the practice of designing for SI more than other design disciplines. This is not surprising, since this is what they are most familiar with. At the same time, the categories reveal information, which is likely to be true for more design disciplines, such as the rather non-hierarchical culture in the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup>

The majority of interviewees (8/9) describes a certain *way of working* which is typical for the Dutch design practice, and which has to do with the culture of this country.<sup>3</sup> According to the interviewees the design practice in the Netherlands is characterised by a culture with flat hierarchies as well as a collaborative and consensus-seeking attitude. Additionally, it is solution oriented, thus creating answers to complex challenges and problems, which corresponds to Phillips et al. (2008). This is especially true for those individuals coming from a technical design education, whereas those coming from the academies rather start from an individual urge to create. Related to this, the third aspect mentioned here is the social element. The Dutch design practice seems to be leading in designing for SI and the common good in general: “Yes, in the Netherlands we are quite far with designing for social innovation. Designing to achieve something.” (Marise Schot).

The node *support environment* (6/9) refers to both the government and the industrial or business side.<sup>4</sup> They form the (financially) supportive context for SI projects with policies, funding or other means. Most of the responses, here, have a critical tone. Subsidy cuts (for certain projects) and other policies lead designers into the direction of functional or social orientation, which is seen as problematic. Not everybody wants to and is able to do so in a meaningful manner as was pointed

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<sup>2</sup> The category “Design practice in the Netherlands” contains the node called *image of and respect for designers*, but after examining all the nodes again it became clear that part of this node belonged to *support environment* and in the end only two, not particularly crucial utterances were left over. The researcher thus decided to eliminate this node out to keep the focus on significant and relevant issues.

<sup>3</sup> The node *way of working* was called *culture* before, but it became clear that the Dutch culture is only one possible explanation for the specifics of the design practice in that country and the name became broader.

<sup>4</sup> This node was called *funding environment* before it occurred to the researcher that not only money, more general understanding and valuing of the work was key, here. Therefore the specific word of funding was exchanged with the word support.

out in the theoretical framework, too (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013). Moreover, these cuts are accompanied by the expectation that design should find alternative financial sources in the private sector and thus become more entrepreneurial. Yet, on the business side, some interviewees argue that firstly, there is not much support for innovation, and secondly, the role of the designer is not sufficiently acknowledged. These statements clash with one interviewee who states that both public and private institutions in the Netherlands are open for experiments. Hence, this culture “it’s very encouraging because then you don’t hit a wall.” (Mickael Boulay). This comment demonstrates how important it is to put everything into perspective and to realise that this research cannot be generalised.

Christian Nold: “It depends what you are trying to, if you just want to work in a normal company ... , things have probably not changed massively. But if you're trying to do something that involves non-commercial kind of work, then I think it's gotten a little bit more difficult.”

As expected, the participants found it difficult to sketch a vision of how the design practice will look like in five or ten years from now. Four of the nine participants even literary stated that they had *no idea* (4/9). Only two individuals described a future *vision* (2/9). One mentioned that there will be change in general, while the other elaborated more on that idea. She described the future design practice as a movement towards design for happiness as well as more collaboration between designers and industry. In addition, the interviewee expects that the roles of the designer and the user change: the designer becomes an intermediary between different parties, while the user becomes more active.

Marise Schot: “The role of the designer is still changing. Instead of the one delivering a final product it will be someone who delivers half a product. The role of the user will change, he gets a more active role.”

Other participants started with describing what they saw happening now (*current situation*, 4/9) or with what they wished to happen in the future (*wish*, 8/9). Strikingly, what is mentioned in the former node tends to have a negative or critical tone. One can interpret this as an indirect formulation of a wish for the future. The fact that there are not much collaboration with businesses, for instance, expresses the desire to have more of such collaborations in the future. The same is true



for the answers about design education. The issues uttered imply a wish for future, where it is more acknowledged that not every design professional is suitable for designing SI and on the other side, that any individual, regardless his/her profession, has the potential to do so.

Fiona de Bel: “See, as an artist you get pushed in this direction, right. ... For example because subsidies for the individual artist are cut and the subsidiser also pushes you in a sort of policy. ... And of course not everybody is happy with that, since this is not for everyone. I also think that it is a true craft, you know ... with many facet’s you need to take into account.”

In the same line, interviewees directly expressed their wishes for the future design practice. The wishes mentioned here are quite diverse and cannot be summarised in a few words. It was mentioned that education should change in order to better prepare design students for their profession, but also that exemplary business models are needed which demonstrate how to make money despite, or even thanks to, an open, sharing approach. Others refer to the user and how one can develop strategies to involve and empower (inaccessible) users thus far that designing for SI becomes redundant. Moreover, one participant mentioned that communication between several parties should be improved, while another hopes for more collaboration between designing for SI and businesses, not only governments. Lastly, one interviewee mentioned necessary improvements at project level: it seems that the perfect form or scale for SI projects has not been found, yet. Long-term and large projects, for instance, potentially have more impact, but they are also less sustainable than short-term and small-scale projects.

Tabo Goudswaard: “What I see at academies is that there is a lot of interest for it [designing for SI]. In the case of clients, organisations, businesses, there is still a lot of ground to gain, it’s exciting to do that.”

## 4.2 UNDERSTANDING OF SI

Developing the nodes in the category of “Understanding of SI” was not simple. The interviewees described their definition of SI differently and many described their own practice to illustrate instead of conceptualising the definition more. In some cases SI is defined as or through social design, which is problematic in the sense that SI *can* be related to or fostered by design, but this is

not necessary. Furthermore, the participants used diverse terminology, which suggested the necessity for slightly other coding.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, the concept of SI is still rather vague when talking about it in practice and a definition emerges in this practice more implicitly. Despite these complications a second coding phase revealed that some nodes stand out: *societal aim* (6/9), *complex systems* (6/9), *collaboration* (9/9) (consisting of multidisciplinary and people focused), and *openness* (8/9). These five nodes help define SI according to the interview data.

Within *societal aim*, three participants argued that SI is a solution to a societal challenge as described in the model by Lavanga and Schützle (2013).<sup>6</sup> In contrast, other interviewees state that solving a problem is never the intention, but if at all present it is rather a by-product of good work. They also warn about the idea that society is makeable; an idea that historically had dangerous consequences in the form of fascism. Certainly, this is a reminder of the fact that SI, such as any innovation, is not intrinsically good. It bears beneficial as well as harmful sides and it is up to the people creating such innovations to steer into one or the other direction. Moreover, this aim seems to be an ideal rather than a standard target.

Bas Kools: “Well, of course this is the aim. The question is whether you always have a choice. To what extent can you really influence... Because this is about a sort of ideal that you have, and I believe that together we can work on a sort of evolution of this society.”

Others mention the effect in “socially relevant domains” (Mickael Boulay) or “social domain” (Tabo Goudswaard) as well as improving the “general quality of life” (Bas Kools) as the main objective of SI. Related to that, one individual argued that SI entails as little commercial parties’ involvement as possible. To sum up, this node is highly differentiated and slightly vague because concepts such as societal and social are used interchangeably and because the interviewees partially contradict each other.

The next node, *complex systems*, is related to both the challenges or problems addressed by SI as well as the way they are tackled. This issue is mentioned by five of the nine interviewees

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<sup>5</sup> These issues resulted in a long list of twelve nodes after the first coding phase in this category. The second phase of coding was to bring more clarity and focus into that category.<sup>5</sup> The next step was to give the subcategories or nodes more focus by a first glance at the number of sources mentioning the different aspects.

<sup>6</sup> The node *societal aim* was first described as *(No) aim to solve societal problem*, inspired by the Theoretical Framework (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013; Phills et al., 2008). This was changed because only some individuals describe SI as a solution to a societal problem.

directly.<sup>7</sup> They describe the multifaceted situation or system at hand (that supposedly needs improvement) and thus the solution, which is necessary to make a difference in that context. One additional participant argues that there is “no simple solution” in SI (Marise Schot). In this node, no explicit controversy exists.

The node *collaboration* functions as an umbrella code for *people focused* and *multidisciplinary* which both entail various “relationships” or collaborations (Christian Nold). This clarifies the important role of collaborations: especially with people who SI is aimed at, but also with other parties who can meaningfully contribute with resources in the form of ideas, expertise, as well as money. Notwithstanding, one should keep in mind that the most important element of SI seems to be the *people focused* approach.<sup>8</sup> This node and the other ones developed in the following paragraphs correspond more or less to the definition of Lavanga and Schützle (2013).

*People focused* was mentioned by all the interviewees in the sample (9/9). The needs and contexts of those people stand centre stage, and it is through them and their involvement that these needs are ultimately addressed and fulfilled. The next section about designing for SI goes more into depth with respect to making this possible. *Multidisciplinary* (6/9) is also related to the complex characteristic of SI and it is based on one of the main characteristics of SI according to Lavanga & Schützle (2013). According to these authors, SI typically entails diverse disciplines that work together and blur boundaries between different sectors. None of the interviewees, however, described such multidisciplinary as a condition or main characteristic for defining SI. Instead, six of them describe this factor as a practical side issue when designing for SI.

The second most mentioned characteristic of SI is *openness* (8/9). The interviews illustrate that SI is open at three levels: the flexible process of a project, shared information about process and result, as well as an open end which means that the result can be still adjusted and influenced by third parties. To begin with, all the respondents in this node found that a flexible process is key for SI (projects). This notion is closely related to a research attitude with an open view for what is present in the situation at hand and what is really needed. In the process and result of SI, there are two ways *openness* is described: either as shared information and data, or by continuous flexibility and experimentation. In the latter case SI seems to go on in often equally non-planned ways, once finalised, thus it has an open end.

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<sup>7</sup> With the Text Search Query in NVivo the words “complex” and “complicated” were searched in English and Dutch.

<sup>8</sup> In fact, this node was called *people user* before, which literarily reflects the word choice of the interviewees who described the target groups of their SI project.

Lino Hellings: So for me social innovation consists much more of doing audience research in which you find yourself completely diving in a world that you want to get to know, just with a few simple rules. ... And you communicate that immediately ... with the outside world. Then you come across tracks that weren't known or thought of before."

#### 4.3 DESIGNING FOR SI

The category of "Designing for Social Innovation" contains three pre-set nodes derived from the theoretical framework just as a part of the interview questions: *civil society in charge*, *multidisciplinary*, *openness*.<sup>9</sup> All of the three pre-set nodes contain sub-nodes called *present or not*, *advantages*, *challenges* and *skills*. The answers on the latter node were gathered in one container for all three pre-set nodes. An additional section sheds light on these skills as well as the role, which the individual who designs for SI plays in this process. To begin with, however, the text returns briefly touches upon the topic of the *complexity* (6/9) which was mentioned above as a characteristic of SI.

In the theoretical framework, designing for SI was defined as a process rather than a product or service. In contrary, Astrid van Roij-Lubsen and Marise Schot argue that designing for SI means designing "product-service systems" (PSSs) instead of only a product or a service. This approach is helpful to describe the complex situation when designing for SI. Even though only two of the nine individuals mentioned this aspect explicitly, this concept seems to show that the process of designing is equally important as the potential product or service that it results in and, even more importantly, that they are inseparably related to each other. Future research should investigate more on the relationship between PSSs and designing for SI.

The illustration in Figure 5 shows how designing for SI starts with a certain problem or challenge which a designing individual addresses. This is done by firstly creating the plan or process (including collaboration and openness) to come to a product, service or process that helps facilitate SI. This product, service or process is tested and improved many times within the process. Therefore, there is a loop between these two parts. These try-outs also partially explain the relatively *small scale* (2/9) in numerous SI projects in the first phases. After the innovation has been

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<sup>9</sup> The last one, openness, was changed from *transparency* to *openness*, inspired by the category before, "Understanding of SI", where the open characteristic seemed to make more sense and was less misleading than transparency (which connoted with policy regulations rather than a voluntary open approach).

implemented or disseminated, new problems and challenges arise which can be addressed by someone designing for SI.

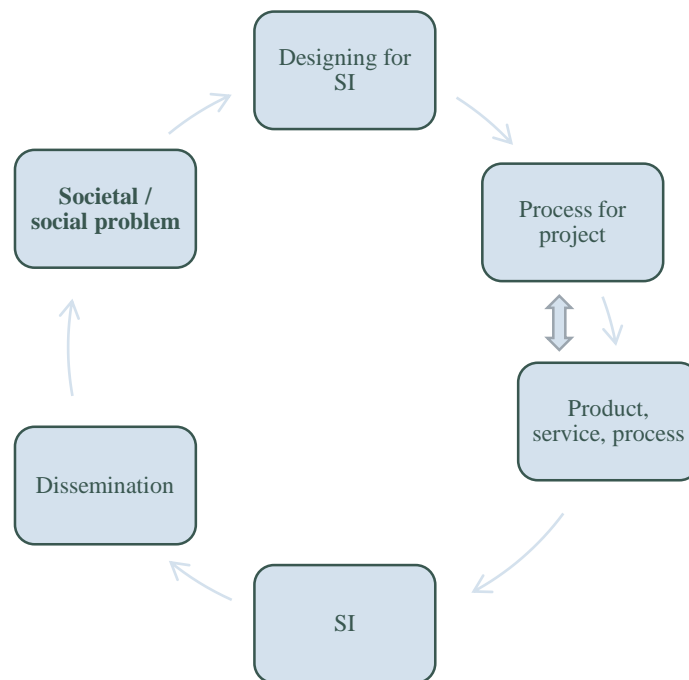


Figure 5 - System of designing for SI

#### 4.3.1 CIVIL SOCIETY IN CHARGE

While coding the first code, *civil society in charge*, a list was kept to write down the different terms used to describe the target group, user or people that the project should involve or inform: user, inhabitant, people, intern clients, end user – some of which were criticised and challenged by the interviewees. It became clear that the user is not a clear-cut term. For this analysis, users are the people within civil society most directly benefitting from the SI, while other civil society, industry, academia and governments are rather stakeholders or partners.

The aspect of *civil society in charge* was present in all nine interviews (9/9), which is not surprising since all nine also mentioned this aspect (in the form of the node *people focused*) as one of the characteristics of SI. Interestingly, the focus seems to be greatly on the method and the way the users inform and thus help the ones designing SI. In Lavanga & Schützle (2013) this part was called empowering the user indirectly, by involving him or her in the project. The individuals also talk about empowering the user directly, for instance when describing their projects.

Fiona de Bel: “It is with a lot of small steps that their world is enhanced and their horizon broadens. But you have to be very careful with that, take very little steps and always explain why.”

Some of the interviewees (where connections with the users were not apparent from the project description, yet) were asked how they got into contact with the users. The personal network or the organisation’s network combined with snowball sampling are mentioned here. Interestingly this seems to be true (also or especially) for individuals working in a big organisation like Waag Society as well as a design studio like Muzus. Using the same strategies, the companies seem to have an advantage compared to individuals. After all, the bigger one’s network, the bigger one’s pool of potential users. In other words, each additional network node stands for many more connections to users, which creates a network effect (Choi et al., 2010).

Neele Kistemaker: “But it didn’t really matter who these people were, so we recruited people through the network of the people at the province [Gelderland], the municipality Arnhem and through our own network.”

Advantages of the approach to put *civil society in charge* are the gathering and the generation of knowledge. The expertise of the users with regard to their own health problems, neighbourhood life, or other aspects of everyday life is highly valuable information when designing for SI. Instead of working with generalisations of users, there is attention for detail and nuance of real people’s situations – an important trigger for inspiration. On the other hand, this node entails the advantage that the user can become more informed and thus empowered and encouraged to actively improve his/her life conditions. Both the indirect and the direct empowerment give the user a sense of (partial) ownership and thus a greater support group, which stands behind a project.

Mickael Boulay: “The people are the experts ... if you’re talking about this device for diabetes, they are using the device. They are the person in the world who use the device most.”

Despite the seemingly positive and beneficial characteristics of this part of the practice of designing for SI, there are also challenges or problematic issues specific to this node. First of all, it seems difficult to coop with “inertia” since people like what they are used to (Fagerberg, 2003, p.

6). Even though users are treated as experts, the designer needs to translate their suggestions into projects, which create SI. Further, the participants argue that it is challenging at times to take the user along in this process without listening only to their ideas. As Neele Kistemaker mentioned: “Still this also means that people can easily disagree with you.” More practical problems are present when people have conditions that make it nearly impossible to interview them, a target group which is difficult to reach or work with and choosing the right group of people to work with.

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#### 4.3.2 MULTIDISCIPLINARY

*Multidisciplinary* was agreed to as an element of SI (8/9)<sup>10</sup>. Only one interview did not contain a lot of this node, since the interviewees had the opinion that they actually worked together with other experts, but that they did not follow their advices at all. Moreover, it was argued by them that the interdisciplinary aspect resides in themselves (academic and practical experience), not in external disciplines. It should be mentioned, though, that these interviews worked together as a team on the project, meaning that they were not working totally isolated by themselves. This also reflects one of the problematic issues of the node: the fact that the level of collaboration is differentiated (starting with two people and ending in an international collaboration of several organisations). The rest of the interviewees argued that such connections are value added to the design process (8/9). In other words, to refer back to the section *understanding of SI*, this aspect seems to be a frequently used strategy to design for SI, even though it is not a necessary part of defining SI.

The participants were also asked where they found potential collaborators (and what the criteria for one are). Not all of the interviews hold this question because in some cases collaborations came into existence through mere practical reasons. Those who were asked answered that they were either using the network and image that they or the organisation they worked for already had or they discovered new possibilities for collaborations on the way. Tabo Goudswaard mentioned that his connection to a consultancy bureau was helpful in creating trust in potential

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<sup>10</sup> Again, this term (*multidisciplinary*) might just as well be changed in the course of the research. Terms that were used by the interviewees were for instance: relationships, collaborations, interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary team, crossovers, stakeholders. The word collaboration (in Dutch  *Samenwerking*) and the related word collaborated (in Dutch  *samengewerkt*) were mentioned frequently (ten times) and it seems to fit to connections with all kinds of parties. That is, however, also the reason why this node will not be called collaboration itself, after all, collaborations with the user are still differentiated here.

clients. Additionally, as a criterion it seemed important to have a similar culture as the following quote demonstrates.

Christian Nold: “I think a lot of organisations pretend they are engaged with the local dynamics and sometimes they’re not. So I guess, ... [I prefer] the ones that are having ... a clear and strong agenda. And they are, for want of a better word, bottom-up, they are non-hierarchical.”

The advantages of collaborating with several parties reflect two main reasons: a valuable learning experience, and better chances on the market. First of all, working together with several parties and disciplines brings together various perspectives and insights. One benefits and learn from each other’s knowledge and expertise. Second of all, such collaborations enable a bigger scale, for instance at an international level. The involvement of numerous parties from different backgrounds lead to broad support and goodwill which in turn create innovations which are more successful on the market.

Mickael Boulay: “The advantage is that you make it more realistic. Because if you want to put a product on the market which is going to help people, you need all those different backgrounds, expertise’s, fields. ... You need all those cross-overs to make it really the real potential realistic solution.”

Clearly, there are challenges, too, with a multidisciplinary approach. The most apparent problem, here, seems to be that individuals or organisations other than the designer have a different way of looking at and understanding the world. A key challenge, therefore, is to achieve mutual understanding through a productive way of communicating. This is visible in a number of detailed issues, but especially the valuation of the work in terms of money. Interviewees report that it is complicated to bring the value of their work across. They feel as if they do not get enough money or other resources and opportunities to realise their projects. In addition to that, it can be a lot of, seemingly pointless, work to write the necessary applications, evaluations, and the like for subsidies. More practical issues are for instance the turnover of staff in the private or public sector which makes it necessary to start explaining the relevance and value of a certain project anew, in order for it to stay funded. Lastly, in some collaborations a hidden agenda cause complicated dynamics. For all these aspects, the participants stress that it is crucial but challenging to keep a



positive relationship where constructive communication and understanding for each other's domains exists.

Astrid van Roij-Lubsen: "It is indeed very important to explain to each other what our strengths and what our weaknesses are. ... When we talk about user research we very often talk about personal contact with people and a sort of equal role in the design project, whereas someone else thinks that it means to develop an application that is tested with ten thousand people or the like."

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#### 4.3.3 OPENNESS

As mentioned above, transparency seemed to be a word, which in some cases was connoted with policy jargon. It implies the idea of policy makers asking designers to be transparent about financial and other information in order to monitor their projects. *Openness* is seen either in the sense of a process which is flexible without steering to a pre-set result or a product. It can also be seen in the sense of a process, which publishes and shares all its information for others to learn, involve and make use of. The project can also be open-ended in that it allows others to interfere and change the result towards something new.

The interviewees use *openness* (9/9) and describe the advantages of it in two ways. On the one hand, the shared process or open result is seen as a valuable strategy. It is appreciated to share information about the process because it fosters an engaged community, which supports or inspires the project. Copying, moreover, makes that good things develop instead of somebody keeping them privately owned and thus useless. With regard to the flexible process, it is described as exciting and as yielding unexpected, but successful outcomes. Throughout the process, the designer is able to fail, learn from that and adjust a project to the better.

Yvonne Dröge Wendel: "And innovation, it's just incredible how people think about innovation in science because there you will be pushed, too. These researches have to be very specific .... So it is often totally the unrelated studies [that become successful], and you cannot determine what will be ultimately successful."

These advantages, however, are accompanied by some challenges. With respect to the shared process and shared or open result, it still seems difficult and risky to open up. It is difficult

because making this information comprehensive for others' use demands effort. Then there is the risk, since business models that demonstrate how to make this information accessible and simultaneously prosper from it still have to be developed. Furthermore, it is difficult to decide how and when to let go of the role of designer and let others take over. When working with an open, flexible process it is challenging to involve commissioners and other potential stakeholders because one cannot present an attractive final result of a project backed up with impressive numbers.

Astrid van Roij-Lubsen: "But with the documentation of products you don't only need a picture of the final product or the design sketches, but you also need to write a whole instruction about how to make it. Because the process, the making process is actually at least as important [as the final result]."

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#### 4.3.4 ROLE AND SKILLS DESIGNER

Besides the three pre-set nodes, the interviews revealed something about the specific role of the designer as well as the skills needed in designing for SI. Throughout this section about the nodes *role designer* (7/9) and *skills* (9/9) a central theme visible. Both in the role of the designer as well as the necessary skills, it seems that there is a constant alternation between submergence/identification (close) and distancing/abstraction (distant). Below, they are related to the different characteristics of SI as they were presented in the sections above.

With respect to the node *civil society in charge*, the user informs the designing individual indirectly (not knowing what the aim of the project is) or directly (aware of the aim of the project), but also tests and evaluates prototypes or initiates ideas. Even though the contribution of users is essential for designers, all the interviewees state that their position in designing for SI is at a different (higher) level than the user. They state that in all these situations the designer's role is to stay critical and translate the user's input and other additional knowledge into a design, as well as to communicate this (visually) back to all individuals. In the context of produsage, Bruns (2013), too argues that low hierarchies should "not be misunderstood as claiming complete equality for all contributors" (p. 72).

Bas Kools: "If you design something new, and if you go about it in a democratic way you won't get the best. You won't get the worst either. You get something that about 51 percent agrees with. ... So that is again the balance of how to develop such a process."

Looking at the *multidisciplinary* aspect, the designer functions as a switch between the several parties involved in a project. It is key to bring them together, let them understand and then learn from each other. Looking in detail, however, one discovers that every individual interviewee has a different strategy. It seems, for instance, as if individuals with a more artistic instead of technical background were keen on their autonomy and slightly more against the problem solving attitude or expectation. Comparably to *civil society in charge*, the *openness* of the process and result is still rather restricted. Here, it is the designer who warrants that information about the process is accessible, the process itself stays flexible and open-ended, just as the result, which stays open for external changes. Nonetheless, the degree of openness varies greatly and a productive balance needs to be found.



Figure 6 – Visualisation of the Word Frequency Query in NVivo about “Skills”

In order to successfully master this role, the designer benefits from having a selection of skills. The word cloud in Figure 6 gives a first impression of the most mentioned skills. From this study, four categories of skills can be identified: social, design specific, motivational, and organisational. Corresponding with the focus on the user, the most frequently returning skills are

social skills, which are related to the different relationships with the user. Just as in the case of the role of the designer, there are two sides to these skills: one about the close relationship with the user and one about the necessary distance at times. Thus, on the one hand, empathy and related terms are mentioned most often. The designers should have knowledge about people and be able to make contact easily and communicate well. On the other hand it is key to stay true to oneself and to be not too emotionally involved. That way the designer can keep an eye on the situation as a whole.

Secondly, more specific expertise's are needed. Intuition plays an important role as well as mastering uncertainty throughout projects, which contribute to SI. Translation is crucial, which means that the designer collects information from various sources and transforms them into something new and useful. Besides, the of designing for SI demands him/her to be modest and serving at times, while decisive and strong in others. There are two more groups of skills, which come in handy when designing for SI. Firstly, the ability to become and stay motivated and enthusiastic is important because the work is hard and it can be difficult to get rewards from external sources. Lastly, organisational skills are of great importance, including time- and financial management. As mentioned by several interviewees, however, this skill can also be outsourced – after all, designing for SI is not done on one's own, but in collaboration.

Tabo Goudswaard: “What I think is very important is that you believe in what you are doing. ... Are you enthusiastic about what you are doing? ... Because you can use this enthusiasm, wherein you are also really curious about what is going to happen, to enthuse other people to join you in your discovery.”

#### 4.4 CONCLUSIONS RESULTS

This chapter has presented the results of this study organised in three sections. The first section presented the “Design practice in the Netherlands” as experienced by the interviewees. The picture that is drawn, here, is ambiguous. The main conclusion to be drawn from this is that the *way of working* seems fruitful for designing for SI thanks to a non-hierarchical and a functional design culture. Conversely, the *support environment*, both public and private parties, can be particularly problematic and restrictive at times. The node *vision on future* draws a comparable picture. It shows that most interviewees hope for change in various characteristics of the design practice in the Netherlands. Three poignant examples are a better education of future designers, new business

models that allow for designing for SI as well as making money, and lastly, greater recognition for the specific design practices.

The second section provides insights into the interviewees' "Understanding of SI". Strikingly, the individuals struggle to give clear-cut definitions of the concept and therefore illustrate it with their own practice. *Collaboration* with users as well as with other parties, and *openness* developed as important characteristics of SI. Others are a *societal aim* and the fact that SI is set up as, but that it also addresses, *complex systems*. Several issues arose within this category. Firstly, SI is not described as a solution to a societal challenge as scholars do (Lavanga & Schützle, 2013; Murray et al., 2010; Phills et al., 2008). Instead, this is merely the ideal case or goal, but never a standard result, which can be planned, let alone guaranteed. A possible explanation is that SI is local and small-scale, while at the same time addressing huge challenges and yielding the promise of a better world. Despite the apparent paradox, SI seems capable of playing a crucial role as long as one stays conscious of both of these sides. Secondly, it is debateable whether the interviewees describe SI or whether they have social design in mind. The two concepts are used almost interchangeably and the fact that SI and social design are both relatively young concepts in academia, which enjoy great attention at the moment does not make differentiation easier. Thirdly and lastly, with regard to the complexity of SI it is interesting to discover that SI can be usefully described as product-service systems instead of products or processes.

The third section first and foremost shows that the interviewees handle "Designing for SI" in a diversified way. This practice is interpreted and executed with diverse strategies and skills, but also challenges that are experienced. Notwithstanding, several common themes developed from the analysis. Figure 7 shows a rough overview of the practice of designing for SI. On the left, the designer collaborates with the users within civil society as well as others, such as industry, government, academia, other designers and non-users from civil society. Furthermore, and this is visible further to the right, this practice is characterised by openness. Firstly, the process is flexible, without a pre-set results or directions (see sign in the centre). Secondly, it is open in a sense that information and knowledge accrued is shared, in order to inspire new practices of designing for SI (upper arrow towards individuals who learn from the designer). Thirdly, the final result is open-ended since it can be adopted or changed by others (lower arrow). The final result is SI in whatever form.

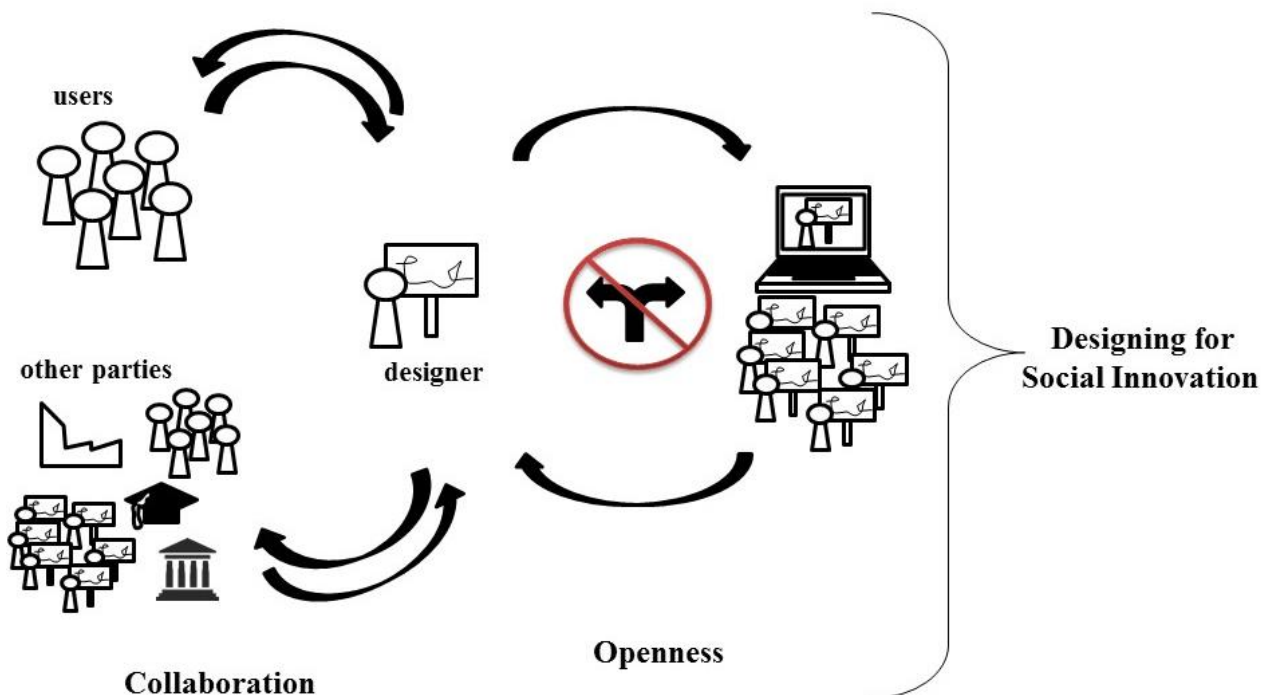


Figure 7 - Overview of the practice of designing for SI

All interviewees agree that designing for SI is focused on civil society or the user. The great majority, moreover, mentions that an open approach to the practice and all its facets is crucial in designing for SI. Still, this does not mean there is a clear-cut definition of this practice. The analysis actually suggests that the red threat in this practice is to strike a balance between non-hierarchical, experimental approach, on the one hand, and an authoritarian, decisive one on the other. Put differently, the findings show that words such as open, bottom-up, multidisciplinary, social or user-centred which are usually associated with SI are not as open, bottom-up, etcetera, as one might think. This has one main consequence: it is recommended that one has a critical and conscious attitude when using such words. As any elements of language, and strengthened by the context of designing for SI, these words have different meanings depending on their use and actualisation. As some interviewees mentioned, communication is key in order to achieve a successful, pleasant collaboration with as much openness as the several parties agree to. Collaboration or openness alone, however, tell us nothing.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this thesis was to provide answers to the question: *What are the practices of individuals who design for social innovation projects?* By taking an explorative approach this case study based on in-depth interviews created increasing understanding of this practice from the perspective of those designing for SI. The Theoretical framework framed the concept of designing for SI by existing empirical and theoretical literature. Therewith, it functioned as a basis and reference point throughout the research.

The research question can be answered in a way, which is layered in threefold. Firstly, the practices of individuals who design for SI are diverse, e.g. in personal strategies or skills. Secondly, all these practices have in common that the relationship with the user or civil society stands centre stage as well as the open approach to the work (Figure 7). The relationships to other parties seem slightly less crucial in designing for SI. Thirdly, within these collaborations and open practices, the designing individual moves between extremes: listening – ignoring, sharing – guarding, letting go – keeping control. Therewith, research demonstrated that the practice of designing SI is not always what one expects it to be. Its complex character is mentioned several times in this study, to begin with in the theoretical framework. Nonetheless, this qualitative research revealed in-depth insights into how complex it really is, while at the same time pointing out the challenges and opportunities for the future.

The expectations formulated in the end of that theoretical framework are only partially confirmed. Firstly, the interviewees seem to cope well with balancing between an open, horizontal design process and their – hardly mentioned – desired outcome of a design project. Instead, it is seen as common sense that the designer steers a project by gathering as much information as possible and then translating that into a design. Secondly, the communication between individuals and organisations is a problem as expected. Even though SI is said to blur the boundaries between sectors and disciplines, they still speak various languages, which need to be transgressed in a meaningful collaboration. Notwithstanding, the answers vary among participants and some developed useful ways to overcome such challenges. Thirdly, as formulated in the expectations definition issues occurred. The difference between SI and social design has not been clarified with this research, one could only say that often social design is a possible way to SI, but further research is needed to point out a useful direction, here.

There are a number of limitations to this research, parts of which inspire future research. First of all, reliability and validity are problematic in this research. The explorative, qualitative

approach of this study makes the findings not generalizable. The advantage of this approach, however, is the in-depth information that was gained.

The way of collecting the sample through, among others, snowball sampling, is limited because the sample is neither similar, nor representative for the population of individuals designing for SI. The differences between the individuals might have an influence on their answers, an effect that is not analysed in this study. Moreover, the participants are connected at times through other projects, previous education and more. This is most likely due to the snowball sampling method as well as the relatively compact design network in the Netherlands.

Another limitation of the study is the fact that the interviews were informed greatly by a collection of literature that steered the focus with respect to designing for SI towards three main aspects. It is possible that a more open approach might have revealed other aspects of this practice. This limitation, however, is minimised by keeping these question for the end and firstly checking the interviewees own understanding of SI. As the results show, there are not radical anomalies, here, which means that it can be assumed that the most important aspects of the practice of designing SI are covered.

The time constraints of this study made it impossible to observe long-term developments. Instead, one moment in time of designing for SI in the Netherlands was captured. Through the half-structured interview setting, however, interviewees were able to reflect on both past as well. To gain richer data, further research should take a longer time span to elaborate on developments in time. To gather especially rich data it is recommended that the interviews are combined with a qualitative protocol study. Furthermore, it would be interesting to see differences in the practice of designing for SI among countries. Nearly the same research design could be adopted to study the phenomenon again.



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## APPENDIX A - PRELIMINARY CHECKLIST INTERVIEWEES

<b>Interviewee Project</b>	<b>Solution societal challenge*</b>	<b>Value society (not for profit)*</b>	<b>Novelty / Improvement*</b>	<b>Treat user as designer (involve/ inform user)*</b>	<b>Facilitate connections (embrace diversity, horizontal chain, unusual suspect)*</b>	<b>Open up (open up data – process or result, stimulate facilitators)*</b>
Christian Nold <i>Bijlmer Euro</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes?***	Yes	Yes	Yes
Astrid van Roij-Lubsen <i>Express to Connect</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes?***
L. Hellings / Y. Dröge Wendel <i>De Coupé</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes?***	Yes
Marise Schot <i>Mood Room</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mickael Boulay <i>Measuring Less to Feel More</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes?***	No?***
Neele Kistemaker <i>Reizen rondom Arnhem</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes?***	Yes	Yes	No?***
Tabo Goudswaard <i>No Show Gouda</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes?***	Yes	Yes?***	Yes?***
Bas Kools <i>De Wijkbekijker</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes?***	No?***
Fiona de Bel <i>Kolenkitbuurt</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

\*These aspects are based on Lavanga and Schützle (2013) as well as Phills et al. (2008) and were set-up in an early stage of the research.

\*\*The question marks symbolise that it was not clear from prior information and Internet research whether these aspects were present or not.



## APPENDIX B - DRAFT EMAIL POTENTIAL INTERVIEWEE

Dear [NAME 1],

Last year I researched social innovation and the arts in general. For my graduation research in the Master programme Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship at Erasmus University Rotterdam I now specifically look at design and social innovation.

The research is about the practice of designers who work on social innovation projects. With this research I aim to generate in-depth understanding of this practice, which can be of great value for designers themselves, policymakers as well as academia.

Your colleague [NAME 2] recommended me to get in contact with you. Your work fits well to what I want to research and I am curious to get to know your stories about it. Is it possible to talk to you about your work?

The interview would ideally take place in the end of April or the beginning of May and it won't last longer than an hour. If you prefer to speak to my thesis supervisor Dr. Mariangela Lavanga first, you can find her contact details below. There you can also find a link to an article I published about my prior research on social innovation and the arts.

I will ask [NAME 3] and [NAME 4] for an interview, too. In the end I need about ten interviews, so if you know any other designers who work on social innovation it would be great if you could let me know. Thank you very much in advance!

I'm looking forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,  
Sarah Schütze  
T: 06-84321304

Contact details supervisor:  
Dr. Mariangela Lavanga  
T: +31 10 4082459  
E: [lavanga@eshcc.eur.nl](mailto:lavanga@eshcc.eur.nl)

Link to the article 'Social innovation and the arts. Artists alone are not enough':  
<http://www.tafterjournal.it/2013/08/02/social-innovation-and-the-arts-artists-alone-are-not-enough/>

## APPENDIX C - BACKGROUND INTERVIEWEES

Nr.	Interviewees (letter transcript)	Nationality	Project based in	Education / work experience / project
1	Christian Nold (A)	British	Amsterdam (NL)	Education: Fine Art (intermedium), MA at Royal College of Art (interaction design) Work experience: interaction designer (computer systems and websites), independent artist, PhD (EU research project) Project: Bijlmer Euro (based in
2	Astrid van Roij-Lubsen (B)	Dutch	Amsterdam (NL)	Education: (industrial design), Fab Academy at MIT Work experience: user-research at Waag Society, Expolab and Citilab in Barcelona, coordination Open Design Lab Waag Society Project: Express to Connect
3/4	Lino Hellings / Yvonne Dröge Wendel (L, Y)	Dutch / German	Delft (NL)	Lino Hellings Dutch, based in Amsterdam (artist, researcher) Education: Sociology Work experience: co-founder and work at theatre group Dogtroep (17 years), art commissions (15 years), work at research project PAPA  Yvonne Dröge Wendel German, based in Amsterdam (artist, researcher) Education: English, Textile and Art History at Rietveld Academy, Rijksakademie Work experience: sculptor (in broadest sense), art commissions, PhD  Project: De Coupé
5	Marise Schot (E)	Dutch	Amsterdam (NL)	Education: Industrial Design at TU Delft graduated in Design for Happiness) Work experience: designer at Waag Society and own studio Schot, freelancer Project: Mood Room
6	Mickael Boulay	French	Amsterdam (NL)	Education: BA Industrial Design in Paris, BA at Design Academy Eindhoven Work experience: designer at Waag Society

	(F)			Project: Measuring Less to Feel More
7	Neele Kistemaker (G)	Dutch	Arnhem (NL)	Education: Industrial design at TU Delft Work experience: co-founder and work at Muzus Project: Reizen rondom Arnhem (Travelling around Arnhem)
8	Tabo Goudswaard (H)	Dutch	Amsterdam (NL)	Education: Culturele en Maatschappelijke Vorming at Social Academy, Autonomous Visual Art at Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam, MA at No Academy Work experience: designer, consultant Project: No Show Gouda
9	Bas Kools (I)	Dutch	Breda (NL)	Education: Product Design at ArtEZ in Arnhem, Royal College of Art in London Work experience: lecturer and workshops, work for Het Instituut as a designer, Project: De Wijkbekijker
10	Fiona de Bel (J)	Dutch	Amsterdam (NL)	Education: Lecturer in Fine Arts and Design at Maastricht Academy, Work experience: in theatre group Dogtroep, founder and work at Cascoland Project: Kolenkitbuurt

## APPENDIX D - BACKGROUND PROJECTS

In this appendix, the projects of the interviewees are introduced in more detail. They had two functions in the research. First and foremost, they were used in the second half of the interview as a concrete reference point for the questions posed there. Secondly, these projects serve as (good) examples for projects that were designed for SI. Unfortunately, it was not possible to analyse these examples in-depth due to time and space limitations of this research. In the following, however, an overview is provided: the projects' content, aim, benefiter, where the initiative came from, method, scale, partners and finances. The information stems from online and offline informational material as well as the interviews.

The Bijlmer Euro ([www.bijlmereuro.net](http://www.bijlmereuro.net)) is a temporary (five months) local currency in a neighbourhood of Amsterdam developed by Christian Nold together with Imagine IC and Waag Society. Its aim is to strengthen the local economy and to make the local social and economic network visible. Instead of a completely new currency, the Bijlmer Euro is a normal Euro note to which a RFID code is added (the ones present in OV-chip cards in the Netherlands) that enables to follow the banknote wherever it is used (scanned in a partaking shop). Benefiteres are the shopkeepers who potentially can make more money, consumers who benefit from discounts, but also the neighbourhood or community as a whole. Imagine IC also financed the project and was one of the partners besides Waag Society and the shopkeepers. The first initiative came from Imagine IC who asked Nold to do a bio-mapping project as he had done several ones of these in the past. Then they agreed to make a project that is fit to the local needs and characteristics by ethnographic design research.

Express to Connect (<http://waag.org/en/project/express-connect>) can be seen a facilitator and stimulator for individual storytelling. It consists of several iPad games for elderly people that foster storytelling as well as communication, aiming to fight loneliness and isolation within this target group. The Express to Connect consortium, which was a collaboration between four countries (Finland, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands), addressed a general goal of the European Commission, funder of the project, to decrease loneliness amongst the older generations. Not only the elderly people themselves, but also family members (and institutions?) benefit from this projects in making these elderly people feel better and less alone because this issue can be addressed in a comfortable way. The method entailed close collaboration with potential users for both informing and testing the different stages of the project and end products. The games are accessible through the Appstore still. The partners involved in this project are: Forum Virium Helsinki, Laurea,

Halmstad Living Lab, Halmstad Municipality, Substanz A/S, Copenhagen Living Lab, and Multi Media Tafels BV

De Coupé ([www.bies.nu](http://www.bies.nu)) was a project in Bieslandhof Delft, a nursing home. After a long process, the result was a train compartment within this nursing home. In the windows of this coupé, Dutch landscapes pass by on video screens (see front page of this thesis). The aim is that the elderly can enjoy a pleasant way of passivity and contemplation. The initiative and financial support came from SKOR who commissioned the work with care institution Peter de Foreest. Benefiters are the nursing home, but foremost the residents. The project was realised through an open, researching approach that allowed for the situation (including the residents and employees) to steer this process. Despite great interest throughout the Netherlands, there is no mass production of this product, also because Helling and Dröge Wendel regard this as a project which is uniquely made for this situation.

Mood Room (<http://waag.org/nl/blog/how-are-you-today>) is a project that results in an installation which enables children or teenagers to express feelings and moods more easily. It works through Kinect, a sensor device that allows the individual to adjust the visual and audible characteristics of the screen by moving the hands in front of it. The children and teenagers themselves, as well as their environment and those facilitating it benefit from this project. Schot, for instance, mentions the Mood Room to be valuable in coaching situations. The context for this project was facilitated by COMMIT (an initiative by the European Union) within the section Play which also provided financial support. At the moment the Mood Room is not on the market, yet, because there has not been a partner willing and able to take over. Here, too, the method was based on research and collaboration with the target group in order to inform and test the project in its various phases.

Mickael Boulay graduated with Measuring less to feel more (<http://mickaelboulay.fr/index.php?/measuring-less/content/>), which he initiated himself, and continued the work on it within Waag Society. It investigates new ways of designing tools created for care for Diabetes type II. The aim is to develop a device that feels good instead of stresses the user (and thus worsening the problem potentially). The device that is being developed focuses more on the feeling and essential information provided than on precise measuring: instead of numbers, the device has LED lights and their position indicate the blood sugar level (high, low, balanced). Clearly, the users are benefiters here and it is also them who inspired, informed and tested the versions of the device until now. It has not yet been commercialised, which is why the device

(glucose meter) is currently build up from scratch in Waag Society. The financial support comes from COMMIT as well. In this projects, the partners involved are Inreda Diabetic BV, Universiteit Twente, Universiteit Utrecht, Hogeschool van Amsterdam, CGI, and Philips Research.

Reizen rondom Arnhem (Travelling around Arnhem) (<http://www.muzus.nl/cases/social-design/prov-gelderland/>), a project by Muzus (Neele Kistemaker) was initiated by the province of Gelderland in the Netherlands. The aim was to develop a priority list of measures to improve the problematic travel situation (including the options train, car, and bike) around the city of Arnhem. As Kistemaker mentions herself in the interview, this is not the most typical subject for SI (because it does not seem to involve underserved groups). Nevertheless, by involving both travellers as well as intern employees from the province of Gelderland Muzus seemed to contribute in making a valuable contribution to society. The group of people benefiting from this project is constituted of the side of the commissioner (Gelderland) as well as all individuals who travel around Arnhem. Finally, the province took (parts of) the project over.

In No Show Gouda (<http://www.noshowgouda.nl/>), which Tabo Goudswaard initiated himself during the study programme No Academy, he investigated a new way to address neighbourhood in Gouda. This area had a particularly bad image and the aim was to make a difference by treating the area as a real life show decorum. Residents in the neighbourhood became the TV-stars of their own show. There was no pre-written script and residents were able to tell their own stories. The partners and at the same time the benefiteres are the housing corporation, the neighbourhood team (Wijkteam), the municipality, but also all residents of this neighbourhood which changed in image.

Bas Kools and his colleagues developed De Wijkbekijker (<http://dewijkbekijker.blogspot.nl/>), a digital tool for art education in schools that triggers understanding and development of public space. The aim of this programme is to add valuable art education to the curriculum without demanding great amounts of extra preparation time by the teachers. The initiative came from cultural centre Stichting Nieuwe Veste in Breda, the Netherlands, who also provided a budget for this project. The ones benefitting from this project are mainly the pupils and teachers who will use the programme. They were also used as a source of inspiration, information and testing throughout the method of the process.

Fiona de Bal introduced the Kolenkitbuurt project which is one of the first long-term projects of Cascoland. It is one big project commissioned and financed by ministry of Education, Culture and Science, stadsdeel Amsterdam West, woningcorporatie Rochdale en Koers Nieuw

West. This big general project consists of various smaller projects that are developed throughout time. It is done in an open manner wherein the residents of this neighbourhood are actively involved – not only in generating ideas, but also in taking over or organising elements of the projects and activities.

## APPENDIX E - INTERVIEW SCHEME (ENGLISH)

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

### **Instructions for the interviewer:**

- Permission voice recorder (for transcription and analysis, only for the research)
- Set up voice recorder (and audio recorder laptop) and switch it on
- Thank the interviewee for time and interview
- Introduction research (name, master, thesis topic)
- Introduce interview (semi-structured, add anything that comes to mind)

### **Possible ice breaking questions**

- Location
- King's Day
- What Design Can Do (conference)



## *Interview*

### **1. Background Designer**

- a. Education and work experience

### **2. Design practice in the Netherlands**

- a. What does it mean to work as a designer in the Netherlands?
- b. What are the main issues?

### **3. Social innovation & designing SI in general**

- a. What does social innovation mean according to you?
- b. Would you say that you design social innovation?

Yes:

- a. When did you start doing so?
- b. Why are you working on a project for social innovation?
- c. What does it mean to design social innovation?
- d. What are the main issues when designing social innovation?

No:

- e. probe on social? societal?
- f. probe on innovation? (new, adopted, ...)

### **4. Background project >Name Project<**

- a. Initiative / content project / aim / method / scale / context / partners / finance / who benefitted
- b. What distinguishes this project from other (comparable) ones?
- c. Adopted and used (real innovation)?
- d. Do you evaluate your projects? If so how / what criteria? If not why / when is something successful?

### **5. Explain working definition social innovation and fostering social innovation**

- a. (Novel) solution to societal challenge
- b. Civil Society stands centre stage (Treat user as designer)
- c. Multi-disciplinarity (Facilitate connections)
- d. Transparency (Open up)

### **6. Zoom into project >Name Project< regarding practice with the user as designer (inform/direct or involve/indirect)**

- a. What is the role of the final user in this project?

In which phase is the final user involved (discovery, design exploration, design refinement, production)

- b. How do you find them? Do you have criteria for participants?
- c. What are the advantages of working together with final users?
- d. What are the challenges of working together with final users?
- e. What skills do you need as a designer to make this collaboration successful?

**7. Zoom into project regarding practice of *blurring boundaries* (within orga / between orgas/ individual & orga)**

- a. Who else is an important collaborator to your project and how? (financially, content-wise, etc.)
- b. How do you find them? Do you have criteria with whom to collaborate?
- c. What are the advantages of working together with these different parties?
- d. What are the challenges of working together with different parties?
- e. What skills do you need as a designer to make this collaboration successful?

**8. Zoom into project regarding practice of *opening up* (process / final product or facilitate)**

- a. Is the process / end result of the project open for influence by others / users?
- b. How do you accomplish that?
- c. What are the advantages of working with this strategy?
- d. What are the challenges of working with this strategy?
- e. What skills do you need as a designer to make this successful?

**9. Future vision**

- a. How do you see the practice of designing social innovation in 5 to 10 years?  
What would you like to have achieved in that field by then?

**Concluding questions:**

- [In case I have further questions, may I call you? (yes / no)]
- Permission to use name in thesis? (yes / no)
- Interested in the end result? (yes / no)
  
- Thank you very much for taking the time for this interview.

## APPENDIX F - INTERVIEW SCHEME (DUTCH)

Datum:

Plaats:

Interviewer:

Geïnterviewde:

### **Instructies voor de interviewer:**

- Toestemming voice recorder (voor transcriptie en analyse, alleen voor onderzoek)
- Leg voice recorder (en audio recorder laptop) klaar en zet beide aan
- Dank de geïnterviewde voor de tijd en het interview
- Introductie research (naam, master, scriptie onderwerp)
- Leidt interview in (semi-gestructureerd, breng vooral in wat je te binnen schiet)

### **Mogelijke “ice breaking” vragen:**

- Locatie
- Koningsdag
- What Design Can Do (conferentie)

## *Interview*

### **1. Achtergrond ontwerper**

- a. Opleiding en werkervaring

### **2. Ontwerp praktijk in Nederland**

- a. Wat betekent het om als ontwerper in Nederland te werken?
- b. Wat zijn de belangrijkste kwesties / uitdagingen?

### **3. Sociale innovatie & SI ontwerpen in het algemeen**

- a. Wat betekent sociale innovatie volgens jou?
- b. Zou je zeggen dat je aan sociale innovatie werkt?

Ja:

- c. Wanneer ben je daarmee begonnen?
- d. Waarom werk je aan sociale innovatie?
- e. Wat betekent het om sociale innovatie te ontwerpen?
- f. Wat zijn de belangrijkste kwesties / uitdagingen als je SI ontwerpt?

Nee:

- g. vraag naar sociaal? maatschappelijk?
- h. vraag naar innovatie? (nieuw, overgenomen in praktijk?, ...)

### **4. Achtergrond project >Naam Project<**

- a. Initiatief / inhoud project / doel / methode / schaal / context / partners / financieen / wie heeft er baat aan
- b. Wat onderscheidt dit project van andere (vergelijkbare) projecten?
- c. Overgenomen en gebruikt (echte innovatie?)?
- d. Evalueer je zo'n project? Zo ja, hoe / met welke criteria? Zo niet, waarom / wanneer ben je met iets tevreden?

### **5. Leg werk definities sociale innovatie en sociale innovatie bevorderen uit**

- a. (Nieuwe) oplossing voor een maatschappelijke uitdaging
- b. Civil Society stands centre stage (Treat user as designer)
- c. Multi-disciplinarity (Facilitate connections)
- d. Transparency (Open up)

### **6. Zoom in op project m.b.t. de praktijk met de *user as designer* (betrekken/indirect of informeren/direct)**

- a. Wat is de rol van de eindgebruiker in dit project?

In welke fase speelt de eindgebruiker een rol?

- b. Hoe vind je deze eindgebruikers? Heb je bepaalde criteria voor deelnemers?
- c. Wat zijn de voordelen van de samenwerking met eindgebruikers?
- d. Wat zijn de uitdagingen in de samenwerking met eindgebruikers?
- e. Wat voor vaardigheden heb je nodig om deze samenwerking succesvol te laten verlopen?

**7. Zoom in op project m.b.t. de praktijk van *blurring boundaries* (binnen orga, tussen orgas, individu en organisatie)**

- a. Behalve de eindgebruiker, wie zijn de belangrijke samenwerkingspartners voor dit project en wat dragen zij bij? (financieel, inhoudelijk, etc.)
- b. Hoe vind je deze samenwerkingspartners? Heb je bepaalde selectiecriteria?
- c. Wat zijn de voordelen van de samenwerking met deze samenwerkingspartners?
- d. Wat zijn de uitdagingen in de samenwerking met deze samenwerkingspartners?
- e. Wat voor vaardigheden heb je nodig om deze samenwerking(en) succesvol te laten verlopen?

**8. Zoom in op project m.b.t. de praktijk van *opening up* (proces/ eindproduct of anderen stimuleren)**

- a. Zijn proces/eindresultaat van het project open voor invloed van anderen/gebruikers?
- b. Hoe krijg je dat voor elkaar?
- c. Wat zijn de voordelen van deze strategie?
- d. Wat zijn de uitdagingen van deze strategie?
- e. Wat voor vaardigheden heb je nodig om dit succesvol te laten verlopen?

**9. Toekomst visie**

- a. Hoe zie je de praktijk van sociale innovatie ontwerpen in 5 tot 10 jaar?  
Wat zou je rond die tijd willen hebben bereikt?

**Afsluitende vragen:**

- [Mag ik je bellen als ik nog vragen heb (over interview etc.)? (ja / nee)]
- Toestemming om de naam in scriptie te gebruiken? (ja / nee)
- Geïnteresseerd in het eindresultaat? (ja / nee)
  
- Hartelijk bedankt voor je tijd en dit interview!

## APPENDIX G - TRANSCRIPTS INTERVIEWS

Please find the transcripts of the interviews in the CD-ROM attached to this document.