

AMS
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Co-creation with marginalised communities: main research findings



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Research streams in CommuniCity



Focus on **ethical framework**:
analysing relevant dimensions
and criteria for inclusive
co-creation, integrating
cross-analysis between several
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This presentation!



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- Ambiguities of the term “group” or “community”
- (Initial) discussions on what we mean by “marginalised”

1. Deconstructing co-creation

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- **problem setting is driven by the target group...**

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- Yet, the literature shows a clear convergence, for instance:

Marginalized communities—such as racial, religious, and ethnic minorities; women; migrants and refugees; persons with disabilities; the elderly; the LGBTQ community; and people living in poverty—[...] lack agency to become stakeholders in the urban design process [...]; their existence is often neglected and their needs remain unheard.

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Three interpretations of tech solutions for marginalised groups

- For the individual benefit
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(community-oriented) “public” view?

Common core: “Who’s the problem owner?”

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 - Which people are the target of the co-design effort?
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- **Setting the problem-space** is a crucial phase of all design efforts, possibly the most meaningful for empowering marginalized communities – yet it **has a limited role in current practices.**
- **Setting the problem-space is key to “co-creation by” efforts.**

Why “co-creation by” is so difficult?

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- Possible explanations:
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 - navigation of solution space requires adequate knowledge,
 - follow-up on identified problems may require politically charged actions.

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- There is no, and possibly there cannot be, a clear procedure on how to deal with “**co-creation by**” efforts.
- However, we can facilitate **self-reflection mechanisms** meant to raise awareness on the current limitations.

Example of self-reflection mechanism

- We have revisited *Design Justice* principles in the co-creation context and formulated a number of **critical questions** to assess *inclusive co-creation*...

	Principle	Questions
WHY (our purpose, our vision and our values embedded in the pilot or co-creation activity)	1	Does the design have a social and equitable mission? Is it intended to improve social outcomes and correct systemic inequities?
	8	Does the design include a commitment to accountability to the communities? Is it designed by community members and does it include a sustainability component?
	9	Does the design have an environmental component to not only mitigate adverse impacts but nu... Does the design include a social, human rights, gender, or environmental impact assessment?
	10	Does the design include recognition of past work on the topic with an emphasis on locally generated knowledge, and practice? Does the design include a literature review, systematic review, interviews with local knowledge...
WHO (our actors, allies, and advocates embedded in our pilot or co-creation activity)	5	Who is conducting the design and how do they impact the work? What are the roles and responsibilities of the designer or other team members? Is the design process co-designed or co-implemented with the community in question? Are we... and capturing all perspectives from the project team and the studied community? Does the designer approach the design process, not as an expert, but as a facilitator who does r... knowledge of the community in question? Does the design recognize the blind spots of the designer?
	6	Does the design place value on the contributions of the team participants or communities as ex... experiences? Does the design allow for co-design, adaptation, or any way for participants to contribute to the...
HOW How are we conducting the pilot and co-creation activity? Reflecting on the process, and its impact can bring some realizations to steps along the way that can center the communities and participant voices who are considered the subject. This is a key element of ensuring the design process is just and equitable.	2	Reminder that the design both in its process and findings can have long-term effects on particip... Is the design centering their voices?
	3	Is the design's impact on the community prioritized over the design's intentions? Could there be unintended outcomes? What is the meaning of free, prior, and informed consen...
	4	Is there a commitment and series of actions that ensure that a design process is transparent, co... change-oriented? Is the design process evaluated continuously and iterated for increased accessibility, accountabi...
	7	Is there a mechanism for training and knowledge sharing with the communities that are being s... Does the design process include a component in which we report back to the communities and... productive and constructive process for everyone involved?

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- Proper inclusion of relevant stakeholders in co-creation naturally encompasses requirements as those stated eg. in the **AI act, data ethics** principles, etc.

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- Proper inclusion of relevant stakeholders in co-creation naturally encompasses requirements as those stated eg. in the **AI act, data ethics** principles, etc.
- Role of intermediaries is crucial, as they may provide (i) long-term monitoring during deployment, (ii) protecting communities, and also (iii) diffusing relevant expertise within society.

Conclusion: CommuniCity exposes strong tensions

- **Social** vs **Technical**
- **Local** (community engagement) vs **Global** (deployment of tech solutions)
- **Community enhancement** vs **Product improvement** (in co-creation efforts)
- **Bottom-up** vs **Top-down** processes
- **Empowerment** vs **Status-quo** (power relations)
- **Transformational** (purpose-driven, context-dependent) vs **Procedural** (eg. administrative) knowledge

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- A long-term partnership in digital transformation requires cultivating trust between public administration and civil society.

Conclusion: CommuniCity exposes strong tensions

- These tensions need to be acknowledged and taken into account.
- By definition, inclusive innovation for public good requires active and structural engagement of civil society.
- A long-term partnership in digital transformation requires cultivating trust between public administration and civil society.
- Getting co-creation right is an important step towards these goals.

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