

Eye of the Storm & Conversations Within – Applied Empathy for Design & Innovation.

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Workshop Concept

This workshop looks at highlighting and creating an understanding between the creative self and the environment. Creativity is often seen as an aesthetic experience. As an individual capability, an inherent talent or acquired skill, it is believed to help Artists and Designers explore individual skills and abilities to satisfy desires, their own as well as that of their audience/consumers. Each generation of artists and designers looks for innovative ways of articulating and expressing ideas.

Inadvertently, an understanding of the audience/consumers is considered essential for most design activity but its relevance in artistic practice is as relevant as in other places. This is becoming increasingly evident today, much more than before. Although artistic practice focuses primarily on the satisfaction of the self and design is seen as a consumer-focused activity, both pathways require, as their foundation, a need to formulate a bridge between the creative self and the socio-cultural environment they inhabit. An understanding of people, social norms, cultural and human behavior is therefore at the core of any creative endeavor, artistic practice or design thinking.

As a process and exercise in idea generation and articulation, Applied Empathy is seen as an essential ability that emerges out of experiential understanding of social and cultural environments, however it encompasses much more than design research, which is considered to complete the creative process and find innovation. Whether in the visual, written or performance, a concept or product, a strategic plan for a service, experience or a product designed or for ideation or visualization of an innovative ideas, design research is incomplete without the empathic approach. A particular precondition in human-centered design, the practice, ability and application of a structured, systematic and planned empathic approach is a pre-requisite for any product or service designed today. Empathic Design however requires an understanding of first and foremost the self, recognition of the cognitive abilities of the mind, a particular order of awareness, and a relentless involvement within the focus area; all this within the creative experience.

Applied Design Empathy is therefore employed to generate ideas and define innovative and sustainable solutions. This workshop facilitates an understanding of Applied Design Empathy and provides participants an opportunity to explore methods and techniques considered essential for this practice. It challenges participants and help them to decipher and discern fact from fiction; helping them find their own position within the larger social and creative framework. It helps them interpret collective ideas, define alternate perspectives, reinterpret them and articulate concepts for innovative practices within the creative practice.

Workshop Details

Who can participate: Anyone. No prior skills of drawing required; only willingness to participate.

No. of participants: Maximum 25, to be divided into groups of 5

Duration: 8 hours (one day)

Requirements:

1. Stationary for 5 groups (x 5 participants), one set each. Each set comprise of:

- a. 1 pack of A4 paper
 - b. 2 flip charts
 - c. 5 cartridge sheets
 - d. 2 each of red, black, blue and green markers
 - e. 5 highlighters
 - f. 5 sets of poster colours
 - g. round brushes, various numbers
 - h. colour pallets
 - i. water containers and cloth to wipe brushes
 - j. pencils 1 box
 - k. 5 erasers
 - l. 5 sharpeners
 - m. 5 pens
 - n. Old colour magazines x 5
 - o. Old newspapers x 10
 - p. Glue sticks x 5
2. Equipment & Space:
 - a. Photocopier
 - b. LCD projector
 - c. AV system
 - d. Space to accommodate the registered numbers
 - e. Tables and chairs to accommodate groups of 5
3. Drinking water
 4. Volunteers x 5