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Value Dimensions in Creative Collaborations for Social Innovation

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Abstract
Designers are increasingly involved in creative multi-stakeholder collaborations for social innovation, developing interventions to address complex societal challenges. Traditional impact measurement of social innovation often focuses on the measurable impact or value of the intervention on societal indicators. However, the complexity of creative multi-stakeholder collaborations requires a broader perspective on what is considered valuable beyond measurable societal impact. We studied the subjectively anticipated and experienced value of ten creative multi-stakeholder social innovation projects, as well as the value conflicts they generated. The most commonly reported value dimensions were innovation value, commercial value, network value, identity value, and learning value. Value conflicts arose from differences in how the innovation process was valued versus how the innovation outcome was valued. From a complexity perspective on social innovation, we argue that value assessments of creative multi-stakeholder collaborations should include additional value dimensions that support continuous social innovation. We discuss how network value and learning value are essential for continuous social innovation, and how these forms of value are captured both individually and collectively. The collective nature of value capture strengthens the argument that social innovation requires long-term commitment from design practitioners, extending beyond single design projects.

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Introduction

To tackle complex societal challenges in areas such as health, social justice, food, crime, work and education, there is growing recognition of the need for innovative and collaborative approaches. Social innovation is a practice that brings these two approaches together and has gained increasing attention over the past decade.[1] This growing attention is reflected in government investments in cultural and creative industries, most notably the European Commission's New European Bauhaus initiative, which explicitly calls for the inclusion of the arts and cultural sector in achieving the sustainability goals of the Green Deal.[2]

Social Innovation: A Collaborative and Innovative Approach

Collaboration is needed because complex societal challenges can be characterized as "open, complex, dynamic and networked,"[3]—commonly known as wicked problems.[4] Such problems are interrelated: one problem can be a symptom of another,[5] and these interdependencies create a system "where one small local decision can lead to lots of repercussions and chain effects in other seemingly unrelated areas."[6] Because of the interrelated nature, these problem situations require collaboration across multiple stakeholders. John Bryson and colleagues[7] argue that cross-sectoral collaboration is necessary to tackle tough social problems involving actors such as businesses, non-profit organizations, philanthropies, the media, the community, and the government. Each stakeholder provides a different perspective on the problem at hand while also bringing different strengths, expertise, and mandates to develop and implement solutions.

This study focuses on a specific type of cross-sector collaboration that is increasingly being formed: creative multi-stakeholder collaborations aimed at addressing societal challenges. In these collaborations, design and other cultural and creative industries are engaged by public and private organizations to support social innovation practices. Various practices within the creative and cultural industries make their involvement attractive for social innovation. For example, designers are involved for their expertise in framing complex challenges,[8] iterative prototyping and experimentation,[9] together with users and citizens in co-creation,[10] and human-centered design.[11]

In the context of social innovation, innovation refers not only to cutting-edge technology but also to new ways of solving social problems.[12] The guide to social innovation prepared by the European Commission[13] states that "social innovation can be defined as the development and implementation of new ideas (products, services, and models) to meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations." Such new ideas can be seen as "a novel solution … for which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals."[14]

It could be argued that this idea of social innovation is still produced from a business innovation mindset, rather than a social one. Others, such as Ezio Manzini, define social innovation as a practice within a social context, where innovation capacities of that context are enhanced, producing, in the words of Geoff Mulgan, "new ideas that work."[15] One could argue that the two

1 The need for social innovation has been identified by, for example, European Commission, "Guide to Social Innovation" (report, published by the European Union, Brussels, 2013), accessed October 8, 2024, https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/guides/2013/guide-to-social-innovation; Robert van der Have and Luis Rubalcaba, "Social Innovation Research: An Emerging Area of Innovation Studies?," *Research Policy* 45, no. 9 (2016): 1923–35, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2016.06.010; James A. Phills, Jr., Kriss Deiglmeier, and Dale T. Miller, "Rediscovering Social Innovation," *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Fall 2008): online, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/rediscovering_social_innovation.

2 European Union, "Beautiful, Sustainable, Together," *New European Bauhaus*, accessed October 7, 2024, https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index_en.

3 Kees Dorst, *Frame Innovation: Create New Thinking by Design* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015).

4 Horst W. J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (1973): 155–69, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01405730.

5 Ibid.

6 Dorst, *Frame Innovation*, 10.

7 John M. Bryson, Barbara C. Crosby, and Melissa Middleton Stone, "The Design and Implementation of Cross-Sector Collaborations: Propositions from the Literature," *Public Administration Review* 66, no. s1 (2006): 44–55, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2006.00665.x.

8 The role of problem framing beyond the traditional design field, see Kees Dorst, "The Core of 'Design Thinking' and Its Application," *Design Studies* 32, no. 6 (2011): 521–32, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.destud.2011.07.006; Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer, "Problem Framing Expertise in Public and Social Innovation," *She Ji: The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation* 5, no. 1 (2019): 29–43, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sheji.2019.01.003.

9 Design Council, "Design for Public Good" (report, published by the Design Council, 2013), accessed October 8, 2024, https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-resources/archive/reports-resources/design-public-good/.

10 The value of citizen-participation in design for social innovation has been shown by, for example, Christian Bason, *Leading Public Sector Innovation: Co-creating for a Better Society* (Bristol, UK: Policy Press, 2010); Olga Camacho Duarte, Rohan

approaches are opposites, or at least have opposite starting points. However, we view social innovation as incorporating both approaches, not necessarily as opposites but as part of the same social system that produces the societal issue. We view social innovation as a practice embedded in a social context, where social relationships, cohesion, and shared context or different beliefs co-exist, and where different people and organizations purposefully come together to improve society through deliberate innovative practices. Hence, we consider business practices to be part of the social system, while acknowledging that commercial success should not be the main driver or pursued value.

Value Measurement

To legitimize the investment in social innovation, it is important to measure the value and impact of such collaborations.[16] Manzini[17] argues that, to be credible, "design for social innovation must lead to concrete and *verifiable* results." In public sector organizations, traditional impact measurement focuses on measured output and its effect on societal outcomes through measurable indicators.[18] However, Joyce Yee et al. state that "cause and effect mechanisms usually linked to results-oriented methods are especially problematic in initiatives that aim to be transformative, due to its engagement with complex systems, sectors, and communities."[19] In a complex space, we need to expand the measurement of value beyond predefined, measurable societal indicators to encompass a broader understanding of what is considered valuable. For example, Chris Larkin[20] mentions that "the challenge is to look beyond the solution itself that we've been brought in to work on and to see what else an organization [has] gained." This requires a different type of value and impact measurement. Second, Candy et al. discussed in their roundtable[21] how the collective nature of social innovation makes it difficult to agree on parameters of success, noting that "the philanthropy and social sectors that fund and commission this work turn to measurement frameworks that do not always align with 'designerly approaches of knowing.'"[22] It is important to define these measurement frameworks. In the field of designerly ways of knowing, the Design Council—based in the UK—proposed a holistic framework on Design Value,[23] which includes four value domains: socio-cultural, financial, environmental, and democratic. They note that a holistic value framework is "important for designers wanting to work systemically and tackle complex challenges, as they will need to work with other designers (and non-designers) and across multiple values."[24] Regarding measuring value, they state that, aside from economic value, measurement is not a straightforward task. And, although the value of the creative and cultural industries is intuitively understood by many, empirical research on measuring the value and impact of design and cultural and creative industries in social innovation remains scarce.[25]

The goal of this study is to understand the types of value or "value dimensions" that are generated in creative multi-stakeholder collaborations for social innovation. We studied value in ten creative multi-stakeholder projects funded by the Dutch government through the IDOLS* program. This program aimed to leverage the potential of cultural and creative professionals to tackle complex societal challenges. Each of the ten consortia in the Netherlands tackled a

Lulham, and Lucy Kaldor, "Co-designing out Crime," *CoDesign* 7, no. 3-4 (2011): 155–68, http://hdl.handle.net/10453/18745.

11 In previous work we showed how human-centered design plays a strategic role in a public and social innovation context. Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer, "Designing for Social Infrastructures in Complex Service Systems: A Human-Centered and Social Systems Perspective on Service Design," *She Ji: The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation* 3, no. 3 (2017): 183–97, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sheji.2017.11.002.

12 Van der Have and Rubalcaba describe how social "innovation is not about cutting-edge technology but about solving social problems," see van der Have and Rubalcaba, "Social Innovation Research," 1923.

13 European Commission, "Guide to Social Innovation," 6.

14 Phills et al., "Rediscovering Social Innovation," 36.

15 Geoff Mulgan et al., *Social Innovation: What It Is, Why It Matters and How It Can Be Accelerated* (London: The Basingstoke Press, 2007), 7, https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Social-Innovation-what-it-is-why-it-matters-how-it-can-be-accelerated-March-2007.pdf.
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16 The importance of social impact measurement is argued for in the context of the public sector (Rogers, 2008), firms (OECD, 2010) as well as social enterprise (Dufour, 2019). Patricia J. Rogers, "Using Programme Theory to Evaluate Complicated and Complex Aspects of Interventions," *Evaluation* 14, no. 1 (2008): 29–48, https://doi.org/10.1177/1356389007084674; OECD, *Measuring Innovation: A New Perspective* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2010), https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264059474-en; Bryan Dufour, "Social Impact Measurement: What Can Impact Investment Practices and the Policy Evaluation Paradigm Learn from Each Other?," *Research in International Business and Finance* 47 (January 2019): 18–30, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ribaf.2018.02.003.

17 Gjoko Muratovski, "In Conversation with Ezio Manzini: Design for Social Innovation — What We've Learned So Far," *She Ji: The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation* 9, no. 1 (2023): 84, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sheji.2022.12.003.

18 Public sector organizations refer to social impact measurement as program or policy evaluation, see Dufour, "Social Impact Measurement."

19 Joyce Yee, Yoko Akama, and Khemmiga Teerapong, "Being Community and Culturally-Led: Tensions and Pluralities

specific complex societal challenge, involving one or more design and creative industry partners, along with partners from the public, private, or both sectors.

In the next section, we present a literature review on value and measuring value in social innovation and multi-stakeholder collaborations. The outcomes of this review are used to develop our research design for the empirical study of value in the IDOLS* program. In the findings, we present the identified value dimensions and value conflicts. In the discussion, we reflect on these value dimensions and explore value and value measurement in relation to long-term, continuous social innovation.

Measuring Value in Multi-Stakeholder Projects for Social Innovation

Value as a guiding principle is often found in psychology, sociology, anthropology, and philosophy literature. Value refers to criteria or guiding principles that people use to evaluate and select their behavior, giving meaning to what they consider important in life.[26] Miia Martinsuo[27] refers to this concept as "values as beliefs," which influence the expectations of project value that individuals may express during the early stages of the project. As defined by Mulgan, social innovation only exists when the guiding principle is social, not economic. However, value in social innovation can also be the "worth" in contribution to the societal goal. The latter is the type of value studied in this paper. However, we consider value as worth beyond *economic* worth and short-term measurable outcomes, as outlined below.

Value Dimensions in Multi-Stakeholder Settings and Design for Social Innovation

To understand value dimensions for *collaborative design* for *social innovation*, we can draw from theories in the fields of multi-stakeholder innovation and transdisciplinary studies. In a multi-stakeholder innovation context, Marina Bos-de Vos[28] distinguishes both value as a guiding principle and value as qualities of worth. Bos-de Vos[29] explains that scholars from economic and management disciplines predominantly view value as the worth of project — or its outputs and outcomes — which can be measured and managed as the quotient of benefits and costs. This economic conceptualization of value holds a prominent place in the design and innovation literature, as well as in social innovation impact measurement. Value as worth can refer to various value dimensions, in different fields. In the field of management studies, Cliff Bowman and Véronique Ambrosini[30] distinguish between two important dimensions of value: use value and exchange value. Use value refers to the customer's subjective perception of the qualities or utility of activities, products, or services,[31] while exchange value (often expressed in economic terms) is the price paid by the customer at the time of exchange.[32] Bos-de Vos et al.[33] highlight the importance of not only focusing on economic exchange value and use value of collaborative projects, but also considering professional value beyond profit. Professional value includes reputation, development — which encompasses knowledge and commercial relationships — and work pleasure, which relates to joy, appropriateness, and appreciation. In its 2010 measurement agenda for

in Evaluating Social Innovation," in *ServDes.2020: Tensions, Paradoxes, Plurality* (Linköping: Linköping University Electronic Press, 2020), 459, https://ep.liu.se/en/conference-article.aspx?series=ecp&issue=173&Article_No=42.

20 Stuart Candy, Joyce Yee, and Mariana V. Amatullo, "Measuring Impact," in *Design for Social Innovation: Case Studies from Around the World*, ed. Mariana Amatullo et al. (London: Routledge, 2022), 284.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid., 280.

23 Design Council, "The Design Value Framework" (report, published as part of their Design Economy research, 2021), accessed October 8, 2024, https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/fileadmin/uploads/dc/Tools_and_Frameworks/DC_DE_Design_Value_Framework.pdf.

24 Design Council, "Design Value Framework," 9.

25 Geoff Mulgan claimed that there is very little hard evidence on 'what works' in design for public and social innovation, and more recently, Candy et al. stated that "while there is a growing body of research in design for social innovation, we still suffer from a lack of cumulative learning." See Geoff Mulgan, "Design in Public and Social Innovation: What Works and What Could Work Better" (report, published by Nesta, 2014), accessed October 8, 2024, http://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/design_in_public_and_social_innovation.pdf; Candy et al., "Measuring Impact," 279.

26 Marina Bos-de Vos, "A Framework for Designing for Divergent Values," in *Synergy: DRS International Conference 2020*, ed. S. Boess, M. Cheung, and R. Cain (London: Design Research Society, 2020), 39–53, https://dl.designresearchsociety.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1220&context=drs-conference-papers.

27 Miia Martinsuo, "The Management of Values in Project Business: Adjusting Beliefs to Transform Project Practices and Outcomes," *Project Management Journal* 51, no. 4 (2020): 389–99, https://doi.org/10.1177/8756972820927890.

28 Bos-de Vos, "Framework for Designing."

29 Ibid., 4.

30 Cliff Bowman and Véronique Ambrosini, "Value Creation Versus Value Capture: Towards a Coherent Definition of Value in Strategy," *British Journal of Management* 11, no. 1 (2000): 1–15, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.00147.

31 Ibid., 2.

32 Ibid., 3.

33 Marina Bos-de Vos, J.W.F. Hans Wamelink, and Leentje Volker, "Trade-Offs in the

innovation,[34] the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also suggests that more attention should be paid to social indicators of success, alongside economic performance. Finally, Martinsuo[35] describes a wide variety of value dimensions in multi-stakeholder collaborations, including economic, environmental, social, technological, political, symbolic, or aesthetic dimensions, commercial, intellectual and collaborative dimensions.

We can also draw on value dimensions from an adjacent field that studies collaboration, namely transdisciplinary studies. In this field, Cynthia Mitchell and colleagues[36] attribute value to three different "outcomes spaces": (1) improving the situation at hand, (2) knowledge, and (3) learning.

Improving the situation at hand can refer to the uptake of a new model that addresses water, energy, or transport demand and supply options equally. Knowledge relates to tangible and accessible knowledge artifacts, such as peer-reviewed publications, websites, and policies. Learning means that collaborators gain new perspectives, orientations, strategies, and tools—seeing and doing things differently as a result of their experience of transdisciplinary research. Building on Mitchell et al., Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer[37] adds a fourth outcome dimension: (4) the impact on relationships between collaborators, acknowledging that strong relationships enhance collaboration and collective learning. In the context of our study, we focused on the value dimensions related to the anticipated societal impact of the innovation—improving the situation at hand—as well as the professional value that contributes to social innovation projects, including knowledge, learning, and relationships.

Finally, subjectivity regarding which value dimensions matter most can lead to various tensions between actors in a multi-stakeholder collaboration.[38] Martinsuo[39] argues that any of the value dimensions could be considered in the success of a project. For example, Martinsuo[40] explains that the aesthetic or symbolic value of a product might be considered in an infrastructure project with societal significance, while knowledge development and learning may be more central to other types of projects. Value dimensions are not fixed criteria for social innovation projects and should be carefully considered within their context. Martinsuo argues that "the idea of project value remains incomplete and under tension throughout the life cycle of the project, and this tension requires constant adjustments from the people involved in the project."[41]

Challenges of Value Measurement

Funders, non-profit executives, and policymakers have become very enthusiastic about measuring social value.[42] Social entrepreneurs use impact measurement methods for this purpose while public sector organizations measure social value through program or policy evaluation.[43] Both approaches focus on measuring output and long-term outcomes.[44] For example, in a certain health initiative, the output may refer to the number of participants, while the long-term outcome is the measured impact on public health. However, measuring value in complex contexts is problematic because societal changes can never be precisely attributed to a specific intervention. Various scholars argue that a linear cause-effect perspective is unsuitable for addressing the complex nature of the challenges in social innovation.[45] Patricia Rogers[46] explains that "logic models" are causal models that link program inputs and activities

Value Capture of Architectural Firms: The Significance of Professional Value," *Construction Management and Economics* 34, no. 1 (2016): 21–34, https://doi.org/10.1080/01446193.2016.1177192.

34 OECD, "Measuring Innovation," 16.

35 Martinsuo, "Management of Values in Project Business."

36 Cynthia Mitchell, Dana Cordell, and Dena Fam, "Beginning at the End: The Outcome Spaces Framework to Guide Purposive Transdisciplinary Research," *Futures* 65 (January 2015): 86–96, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2014.10.007.

37 Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer, "Design, One Piece of the Puzzle: A Conceptual and Practical Perspective on Transdisciplinary Design," in *DRS2022: Bilbao*, ed. Dan Lockton et al. (London: DRS Digital Library, 2022), article no. 112, https://doi.org/10.21606/drs.2022.402.

38 Such tensions are described by, for example, see Bos-de Vos, "Framework for Designing"; Martinsuo, "Management of Values in Project Business"; Inge Oskam, Bart Bossink, and Ard-Pieter de Man, "Valuing Value in Innovation Ecosystems: How Cross-Sector Actors Overcome Tensions in Collaborative Sustainable Business Model Development," *Business & Society* (2020): 1–33, https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650320907145.

39 Martinsuo, "Management of Values in Project Business," 391.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid., 393.

42 Geoff Mulgan, "Measuring Social Value," *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Summer 2010): online, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/measuring_social_value.

43 Dufour, "Social Impact Measurement."

44 Rogers, "Using Programme Theory."

45 Yee et al., "Being Community and Culturally-Led," 2; Paul M. Weaver and René Kemp, "A Review of Evaluation Methods Relevant for Social Innovation: With Suggestions for the Use and Development" (Transit Working Paper #14, July 2017), http://www.transitsocialinnovation.eu/resource-hub/a-review-of-evaluation-methods-relevant-for-social-innovation-with-suggestions-for-their-use-and-development-transit-working-paper-14-july-2017.

46 Rogers, "Using Programme Theory."

47 Ibid.
48 Yee et al., "Being Community and Culturally-Led," 2, 4.
49 Design Council, "Design Value Framework."
50 Ibid., 25.
51 Martinsuo, "Management of Values in Project Business"; David P. Lepak, Ken G. Smith, and M. Susan Taylor, "Value Creation and Value Capture: A Multilevel Perspective," *Academy of Management Review* 32, no. 1 (2007): 180–94, https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.23464011.
52 Mulgan, "Measuring Social Value."
53 Ibid., 43.
54 Martinsuo, "Management of Values in Project Business."
55 Ibid., 391.

to a chain of intended or observed outcomes, also referred to as "theory of change." Such logic models are often simple and risk overstating the causal contribution of the intervention, rather than recognizing the complex, nonlinear nature of contexts and their emergent outcomes. For example, the previously mentioned evaluation aimed at improving public health might ignore the interrelatedness of contributing factors. Instead, complex contexts require more flexible theories of change that are continuously developed in tandem with the intervention itself.[47] Yee et al.[48] observed a more emergent evaluative approach in social innovation: "In contrast to traditional evaluation that assumes or predefines what 'success' is and seeks to evaluate it as an outcome of a project, the [social innovation] practitioners that we observed are continually reframing what 'success' means."

In the design field, empirical studies of measuring value of social innovation — especially beyond economic or direct societal value — are scarce. The value framework from the UK's Design Council[49] is one of the few frameworks that addresses value dimensions of design for societal impact. The framework presents four value categories: socio-cultural, democratic, planet, and financial. On value measurement, it explicitly states that "wider value" refers to the impact of design that extends beyond what can be easily measured or captured — often called spillover value or indirect benefits. They note that no set "list" or specified indicators exist for measuring wider value, which may result in wider value not even being named because we lack the tools to do so.[50] This type of value, often emerging from collaboration and the different interactions within a collaborative social innovation process, is not attributable to a single action. In this study, we also aim to include this type of value with different value dimensions.

Finally, measuring the value of multi-stakeholder social innovation projects presents two additional challenges. First is the subjective nature of value, as described in both project management[51] and social innovation literature.[52] What one stakeholder perceives as valuable might not be considered valuable by another. Mulgan[53] argues that: "Anyone who wants to finance social goods and anyone who wants to provide them … should abandon metrics … that pretend to offer spurious objectivity." Second, value of worth is dynamic in nature.[54] Value can fluctuate over time, and differences may arise between anticipated value in the pre-project phase and experienced or "captured" value at the end of a project. "Measures of project value cannot necessarily be considered at the time of project completion, but their achievement may imply months, years, or even decades of follow-up."[55] We agree that social innovation requires an emergent evaluative approach. We argue that such evaluations could benefit from insights into the value dimensions to consider, as well as from understanding the value tensions within these collaborations.

Research Design

The goal of this study was to understand the anticipated and experienced value dimensions in creative multi-stakeholder collaborations for social innovation. The specific research questions were: (1) What are the most commonly reported anticipated and experienced value dimensions? (2) How do differences

in expectations and experiences of the different value dimensions influence the collaborations?

Research Context

The context of our study was the IDOLS* program,[56] which funded ten multistakeholder projects in the Netherlands. Cultural and creative industry professionals (from here on, creative professionals) were coupled with other stakeholders to engage in a social innovation project. Each project ran for one year, between September 2019 and September 2020. The topics were diverse, from healthy teenagers to green in the public space or debt among youth. Table 1 contains the titles and topics of the ten projects. In each project, there were four different roles: project coordinator (PC), creative professional, problem owner (PO), and coach. The project coordinator, one of the creative professionals, was responsible for communication, administration, and reporting. Each consortium included multiple creative professionals, including designers responsible for co-developing innovations. One or multiple problem owners, sometimes referred to as "clients," from private or public organizations, co-funded the project. Finally, the coach role in the IDOLS* program was filled by eight experienced social innovators (four with a design background). Each coach mentored one or two consortia on collaboration and innovation processes.

Role of Design in the Cases

The ten projects were specifically set up to promote collaboration between cultural and creative industry partners and public and or private

56 **IDOLS*, "Project Idols: * Increasing Demand by Offering LearningS," Project IDOLS*, accessed October 8, 2024, https://projectidols.nl.**

Table 1 **Projects funded in the IDOLS* program 2019–2020.**

#	Project Title	Objective
1	Healthy Teenager 2033	Promoting a healthy lifestyle among 10–18 years old in a neighborhood in Amsterdam
2	Growth and Development of Vulnerable Flex Workers and Sole Traders	Address the financial vulnerability of sole traders and flexible workers
3	Everyone Participates!	Increase public participation
4	Kilometer Devourers	Reducing distance "travelled" by food from production to consumption
5	Cross Pollinators	Increasing green areas in the public spaces
6	Preparing the Netherlands for Informal Care	Promoting autonomy of the growing elderly population by increasing informal care
7	MONNIE	Addressing financial issues and debt among young people
8	No Minor Thing	Addressing sexual exploitation of minors
9	Resilience with Changemakers Rotterdam	Addressing opportunities and challenges of the energy transition to improve resilience of two Rotterdam neighborhoods
10	StreetNL	Promoting climate neutral urban areas

organizations. A variety of cultural and creative organizations and practices were involved, including museums and theatres, art collectives, and independent photographers or artists. However, there was an apparent dominance of designers and design organizations. In seven of the projects, a design organization took on the role of project coordinator. Four of the eight coaches had a design background. Furthermore, of the twenty-eight survey respondents from the creative and cultural industries, two-thirds identified with a design role — whether social, design, service design, design researcher, or facilitator of creative processes.

Research Method

The study was conducted using a mixed methods research approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data. We conducted sixteen in-depth interviews with selected participants to develop an initial framework of value dimensions and to explore value tensions. Subsequently, we conducted a survey among IDOLS* participants (N = 57) to investigate which value dimensions were considered most important before the projects (anticipated) and after the projects (experienced). While the qualitative data provided insights into the range and nature of value dimensions, the quantitative data offered insight into the extent to which these value dimensions were anticipated and experienced. The use of different methods ensured method triangulation and the validity of the results.

In line with the subjectivity of value, as outlined in the introduction, we chose a subjective analysis of value: participants reported their anticipated and experienced value. The interviews and survey were conducted in 2020, during the three months following the completion of the IDOLS* program. For practical reasons, we were unable to gather data on the anticipated value at the start of the projects. These limitations will be addressed in the discussion section.

Interviews

We conducted sixteen in-depth interviews with coaches and project coordinators. It was assumed that coaches and project coordinators had the broadest knowledge of the projects and were best positioned to oversee the different value dimensions. All eight coaches were interviewed, two of the coaches were involved in two projects. Nine of the ten project coordinators were interviewed. Three of the interviewed coaches also participated as creative professionals in a second project, one as project coordinator.

The interviews took place in June and July 2020, and each lasted between sixty and ninety minutes. The interviews were semi-structured, audio recorded, and fully transcribed and coded in Atlas software. Quotes were coded and an inductive analysis led to the identification of twenty-one value dimensions and various themes related to value tensions.

Value Framework and Survey

Based on theory and the interviews, we propose a value framework of twenty-one value dimensions(Figure 1), grouped into five categories: (1) innovation value, (2) commercial value, (3) network value, (4) identity value, and (5) learning value. We set up a survey in Qualtrics (see Appendix A for the survey

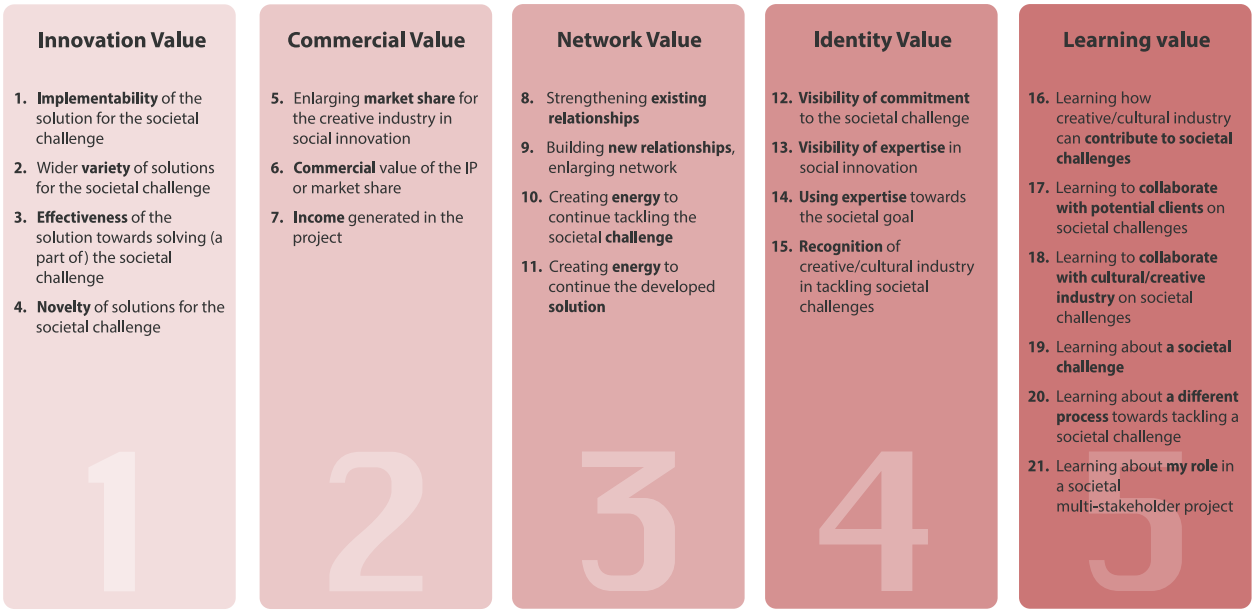

Figure 1
Value framework, with five value categories, for multi-stakeholder collaborations with the creative and cultural industry towards social innovation. © 2024 Jotte de Koning and Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer.

set-up) to test to the broader recognition of the twenty-one value dimensions among participants in the ten IDOLS* projects. We asked participants to select the three to five value dimensions that most motivated them to join the project (anticipated value) and the three to five value dimensions that they experienced most as a result of the project (experienced value). The survey was tailored to the role of each respondent in the project: (a) creative or cultural industry professional, (b) coach, or (c) problem owner. For coaches, nine of the value dimensions were not applicable, as they were not part of the project execution team. There were three value dimensions unique for the creative and cultural industry professionals and two unique to the problem owners.

All 110 participants of the IDOLS* program were invited to participate in the survey through a digital link sent by email in August 2020. We collected seventy-eight responses, of which twenty-one were excluded from the analysis due to being incomplete (see Table 2). Three respondents had dual roles, serving as both a coach in one project and a creative professional in another project, each involving different consortia and societal challenges. Respondents with dual roles provided two responses to the survey, one from each perspective. Responses were stratified according to relevance to the role of each respondent in the project.

Table 2 **Number of survey responses per role.**

Roles	Survey responses 57
Coaches	8
Creative professionals	28
Problem owners	21

Findings

In this section, we first present the insights on the anticipated and experienced value dimensions per category, based on the results from the survey and interviews. Then, we present and discuss the identified value tensions.

Anticipated and Experienced Value

We identified twenty-one value dimensions over five value categories in multi-stakeholder projects for social innovation. Table 3 shows the percentage of participants who ranked the value dimensions among their top three to five most valued anticipated and experienced outcomes. The four most shared anticipated value dimensions were (1) "extent to which the solution is implementable," (2) "variety of solutions," (3) "effectiveness of the solution towards solving (part of the) societal challenge," and (15) "recognition of the creative and cultural industry towards tackling societal challenges." The top five most commonly shared experienced value dimensions were: participants valued (4) "novelty of solutions" (62%), (10) "the energy to continue tackling the societal challenge" (46%), (21) "learning about one's role in a societal multi-stakeholder innovation project" (35%), (14) "being able to use expertise towards the project and societal challenge" (33%) and (9) "building new relationships and enlarging the network" (32%). Notably, the types of value people anticipated were not as diverse as those experienced. Three of the four most anticipated value dimensions fell under the innovation value category, whereas the five most experienced value dimensions were distributed across four different categories. These value dimensions and their associated categories are explained further below.

Innovation Value

Innovation value is the worth that is assigned to the innovation or solution that was generated in the project. Under the category of innovation value, we identified four value dimensions: (1) "extent to which the solution is implementable," (2) "variety of solutions," (3) "effectiveness of solutions," and (4) "novelty of solutions." The interviews revealed that participants often believed the diversity of stakeholders led to novel solutions for the challenge at hand.

> "Working with a cultural theatre group was the key to the success of the project around caregivers. We designed a 'caregiver's simulator,' a theatre show, in which you could experience what it was like to be a caregiver and to be cared for and that would never have been such a great success, or we would not have done it [without the theatre group]." (Interviewee 7, Coach)

A notable difference between anticipated and experienced value was found in the category of innovation value. A large portion (51%) of participants anticipated that the project would bring solutions to the societal challenge (anticipated value), but fewer mentioned experienced value (32%). The survey data does not indicate whether this was because the anticipated innovation value dimensions were not fully experienced or because other value dimensions proved to be more meaningful for participants.

Commercial Value

Commercial value is the direct or indirect monetary value that can be captured by project members because of the collaboration. Under the category of commercial value, we identified three value dimensions: (5) "enlarging the market share of the cultural and creative industry," (6) "commercial value

Table 3 **Results of the survey responses on anticipated and experienced value dimensions (highest total % highlighted).**

#	Value dimension and category	Percentage of participants who indicated the value dimension among their top 3–5 most anticipated dimensions				Percentage of participants who indicated the value dimension among their top 3–5 most experienced dimensions			
		Total N=57	CCI N=28	PO N=21	CO N=8	Total N=57	CCI N=28	PO N=21	CO N=8
Innovation value									
1	Extent to which the solution is implementable	23 (40%)	9 (32%)	10 (48%)	4 (50%)	13 (23%)	7 (25%)	5 (24%)	1 (13%)
2	Variety of solutions	24 (49%)	14 (50%)	10 (48%)	NA -	11 (22%)	6 (21%)	5 (24%)	NA -
3	Effectiveness of solution towards solving (a part of) the societal challenge	25 (44%)	15 (54%)	6 (29%)	4 (50%)	11 (22%)	4 (14%)	4 (19%)	3 (38%)
4	Novelty of solutions	NA -	NA -	15 (71%)	NA -	13 (62%)	8 (29%)	4 (19%)	1 (13%)
Commercial value									
5	Enlarging market share for the creative industry in social innovation	NA -	4 (14%)	NA -	NA -	NA -	1 (4%)	NA -	NA -
6	Commercial value of the IP or market share	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	3 (6%)	2 (7%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
7	Income generated in the project	17 (30%)	12 (43%)	1 (5%)	4 (50%)	13 (23%)	10 (36%)	1 (5%)	2 (25%)
Network value									
8	Strengthening existing relationships	3 (5%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (13%)	9 (16%)	3 (11%)	4 (19%)	2 (25%)
9	Building new relationships, enlarging network	10 (18%)	4 (14%)	4 (19%)	2 (25%)	18 (32%)	12 (43%)	6 (29%)	0 (0%)
10	Creating energy to continue tackling the societal challenge	NI** -	NI** -	NI** -	NI** -	26 (46%)	13 (46%)	10 (48%)	3 (38%)
11	Creating energy to continue the developed solution	NI** -	NI** -	NI** -	NI** -	9 (19%)*	4 (14%)	5 (24%)	NA -
Identity value									
12	Visibility of commitment to the societal challenge	9 (16%)	5 (18%)	4 (19%)	0 (0%)	4 (7%)	2 (7%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)
13	Visibility of expertise in social innovation	NA -	2 (7%)	NA -	NA -	NA -	1 (4%)	NA -	NA -
14	Using expertise towards the project and societal challenge	16 (28%)	11 (39%)	2 (10%)	3 (38%)	19 (33%)	12 (43%)	4 (19%)	3 (38%)
15	Recognition of CCI towards tackling societal challenges	15 (42%)*	11 (39%)	NA -	4 (50%)	6 (17%)*	6 (21%)	NA -	0 (0%)
Learning value									
16	Learning how CCI can contribute to societal challenges	19 (33%)	5 (18%)	12 (57%)	2 (25%)	17 (30%)	5 (18%)	11 (52%)	1 (13%)
17	Learning to collaborate with potential clients on societal challenges	NA -	4 (14%)	NA -	NA -	NA -	4 (14%)	NA -	NA -
18	Learning to collaborate with CCI on societal challenges	NA -	NA -	6 (29%)	NA -	NA -	NA -	6 (29%)	NA -
19	Learning about a societal challenge	7 (12%)	4 (14%)	2 (10%)	1 (13%)	13 (23%)	5 (18%)	5 (24%)	3 (38%)
20	Learning about a different process towards a societal challenge	15 (26%)	5 (18%)	6 (29%)	4 (50%)	11 (19%)	3 (11%)	6 (29%)	2 (25%)
21	Learning about my role in a societal multi-stakeholder project	6 (11%)	6 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	20 (35%)	10 (36%)	3 (14%)	7 (88%)

Notes: CCI = Creative and Cultural Industry Professional; PO = Problem Owner; CO = Coach.
* For value dimensions 11 and 15, the percentages refer to the total number of respondents in the two roles for whom the question was included in the survey.
** NI = Not included; the value dimensions 10 and 11 were not included as anticipated value, only experienced.
*** NA = not applicable value dimension for a specific category or role, i.e., not asked.

of intellectual property (IP) or market share," and (7) "income generated in the project." None of the interviewees mentioned that commercial value (value dimension 6) was a main motivator or important anticipated value of the projects. Anecdotally, one interviewee mentioned that they suspected it was an important value for another consortium member: "From the start, they were concerned about IP. They are continuously … working on how we can make more money out of this" (Interviewee 1, Coach). Another interviewee mentioned explicitly that commercial value was not an important motivator: "We all had a passion for it [the topic of youth poverty]. If you wanted to earn money, you would do something else" (Interviewee 9, Project Coordinator). However, the value dimension of income, different from commercial value from the IP or market share, was important. In the survey, 43% of the creative professionals reported the value of income (value dimension 7) to be among the most important anticipated value dimensions, and 36% reported it as an important experienced value dimension.

Network Value

Under the category of network value, we grouped four value dimensions: (8) "strengthening existing relationships," (9) "building new relationships, enlarging network," (10) "creating energy to continue tackling the societal challenge," and (11) "creating energy to continue the developed solution." Both strengthening and expanding networks was frequently indicated as being a valuable outcome of the projects. Eight interviewees mentioned that the project helped them strengthen and/or expand their current relationships and network. Participants also indicated that the project network had direct value during, as well as beyond the project. For example, a creative professional mentioned in the survey: "Through this network, we had better access to people in the collaborating organizations, while we have had limited accessibility to them before this project."

The network value category shows the largest positive difference between the anticipated and experienced types of value. Not many participants mentioned one of these value dimensions as most important motivators, but (9) "building new relationships" was one of the five most frequently reported important value dimensions experienced by creative professionals (43%). Furthermore, from the interviews and survey, we also found that the value of creating a certain energy or motivation was often experienced. The energy that emerged among consortia members was seen as valuable for continuing the collaboration beyond the project.

For example, one of the interviewees mentioned, "[Person X] from the municipality seems to be very enthusiastic, and they connected us to a funding opportunity for follow-up work, so they were very positive" (PC). Finally, in the program, the emphasis was on exploring new collaborations. This was valued by many participants. Interesting exchanges between different participants and between different creative parties were experienced. However, some participants argued that working with existing relationships is better because it takes away some of the risk of a malfunctioning collaboration that hinders the results, and it enables a quick start.

> "You only just get to know each other and start building a relationship and now that feels like 'can't we find opportunities to bring this work farther.' The connection is here now, and it is easier to use that in other work that you do in the organization and to think about how we could use that [connection] in other ways." (Interviewee 13, Project Coordinator)

> "… this way you take away some of the risks of a mismatched team and money being burnt. With consortium [X] there were strong connections before IDOLS* that lead to a faster start." (Creative Professional, survey)

Identity Value

Identity value is the worth of the professional identity. Under the category of identity value, we identified four value dimensions: (12) "visibility of commitment to the societal issue," (13) "visibility of expertise in social innovation," (14) "using expertise and specific talents," and (15) "recognition of cultural and creative industry for social innovation." A particularly common anticipated value (39%) and experienced value (21%) for creative professionals was gaining recognition of the usefulness of the cultural and creative industry in tackling societal issues. As one interviewee noted, "I participated because I wanted to show what the value of the creative industry is for [innovation in] other sectors" (Interviewee 1, Coach). This recognition and reputation referred not only to the cultural and creative industry as a sector but also to individual organizations. Regarding reputation, we identified the value of demonstrating that their organization was committed to contributing to society. Some participants indicated this as one of their most important motivators (16%), but fewer mentioned it as an experienced value (7%).

While recognition and reputation relate to how others perceive professionals, an internal aspect of identity is self-actualization—using one's talent, knowledge, and skills in the project and challenge. This value was a particularly common anticipated value (39%) and experienced value (43%) for creative professionals.

> "The reason I participated in IDOLS* is that I could use everything I have in me towards these projects. So, the business side, the legal side, the creative side, and the coaching side. Everything I have in me featured in this program." (Interviewee 2, Coach)

Learning Value

Participants anticipated and valued various learning outcomes of the projects. We identified six anticipated and experienced learning value dimensions: (16) "learning how cultural and creative industry can contribute to societal challenges," (17) "learning to collaborate with potential clients on societal challenges," (18) "learning to collaborate with cultural and creative industry on societal challenges," (19) "learning about a societal challenge," (20) "learning about a different process towards a societal challenge," and (21) "learning about my role in a societal multi-stakeholder project." Thirty percent of all survey respondents, and 52% of the problem owners, particularly valued learning how the cultural and creative industry contributes to and can be used to tackle societal challenges. Learning about other processes

was also an important value dimension, with 19% of all survey respondents and 29% of the problem owners indicating that they valued what they learned about a different process to tackle a societal issue. Problem owners indicated they had learned from the creative process, while creative professionals indicated that they also learned from each other's processes.

> "[the most important thing I learned was] that creative parties really work in a different way: different thinking, different looking, and they also speak a different language. That during the process the outcome can change or is not achieved at all (and that needs getting used to)." (Problem Owner, survey)

Participants also learned how to collaborate in multi-stakeholder projects. Fourteen percent of the creative professionals in the survey valued learning how they could collaborate with potential clients on societal challenges, while 29% of the problem owners valued learning how to effectively collaborate with the cultural and creative industry on societal challenges. They indicated that they learned more about the importance of getting to know each other, sharing expectations, roles and interests, both at the start of a project and during the project. Twenty-three percent of all respondents valued learning more about the societal challenge in their projects. Finally, in the survey, 36% of the creative professionals and 88% of coaches valued what they learned about themselves and the roles they should or should not want to fulfil in a societal multi-stakeholder project.

> "I learned a lot about the content, so the problem situation of debt, how I look at debt, how debt has played a role in my own life, and what role it plays in society." (Interviewee 2, Coach and Project Coordinator)

> "I learned a lot about myself. That I need to take up this role and show more leadership." (Interviewee 1, Coach)

> "I'm a designer and I want to do what I am able of doing well: research and design. This project was mostly about funding acquisition and lobbying and this role did not suit me." (Creative Professional, survey)

Value Tensions in Multi-Stakeholder Social Innovation Collaboration

The interview and survey results show that participants were motivated by different value dimensions in social innovation projects. These differences sometimes led to conflicts between participants or groups of participants. Conflict can enhance the learning capacity of participants, but it can also be an unproductive contradiction that costs time and effort without yielding results. The more productive differences have been discussed under the learning value dimensions. Here, we discuss the conflicts that led to unproductive tensions. However, we recognize that if people are paying attention, these tensions can be transformed into learning moments. We identified five main areas of conflict, illustrated in Figure 2 and further explained below.

The most significant value conflicts occurred between participants focused on generating value through the collective process (e.g., learning together or building a network) and those focused on generating output (e.g., reaching a solution, commercial value, or individual identity value).

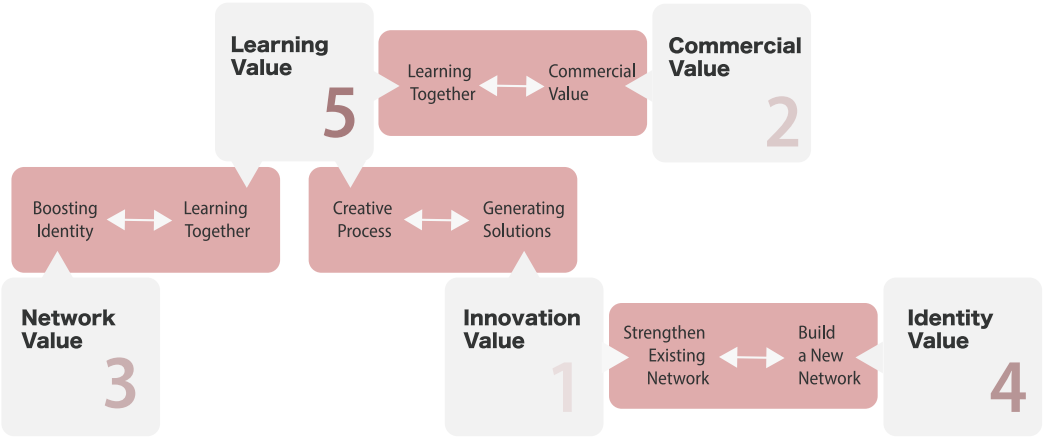

Figure 2
The identified value tensions. © 2024 Jotte de Koning and Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer.

At the beginning of the ten projects, there was no certainty of what the developed innovation would be. The IDOLS* program deliberately allowed for a process of "searching openly" (a term used by interviewees). This freedom enabled participants to explore, learn together, and accomplish things they had not previously thought possible. However, many problem owners had formed specific expectations about the result of the project, which caused friction during the creative stakeholders' process. Several participants indicated that the emphasis on learning and "searching openly" sometimes overpowered the value of achieving concrete results. Conversely, those focused on learning experienced friction with participants who prioritized commercial value. In some cases, it also created tension within individuals: some participants were eager to learn and grow, spending more time than planned, but those hours were unpaid. Finally, tensions emerged between partner organizations that mainly valued the reputation of being seen as investors in the challenge and other partners who valued achieving good outcomes and learning together.

> "As if it did not matter what the outcomes would be, as long as we would learn. I think that there should have been more requirements for good end results." (Coach, survey)

> "I very often explained that we are also learning together, and of course, I understand that the project coordinator also wanted to deliver a product, but from the start they were mostly concerned about the IP, from who that is." (Interviewee 1, Coach)

> "We experienced tension once, I think, when we … I think that everyone quite exceeded their budget, and that was maybe also part of the learning experience.… But with the idea of IDOLS to increase the earning potential of the creative industry, this is maybe strange because I think we went 50% over budget. That does not happen often in the normal projects we do. But, ok, it was learning experience." (Interviewee 10, Project Coordinator)

> "… they were always there for just ten minutes, always had to leave early, sent someone else. So, with that organization I thought a bit like, yeah, they did

their job, because they put down some money, maybe it is a bit of window dressing, I do not know." (Interviewee 1, Coach)

Discussion

In this discussion, we reflect on the results of value measurement in ten social innovation projects. Second, we reflect on the five value categories and the twenty-one value dimensions that we identified. Finally, we discuss how our findings support a call for a continuous social innovation perspective and what this means for the assessment of and reflection on project value creation and capture.

Limitations

Please note that our study strictly addressed the subjectively experienced and anticipated value from the perspective of people actively involved in value creation. Future research on relevant value dimensions in social innovation collaborations should also consider other perspectives, such as those of external stakeholders directly or indirectly affected by social innovation, including citizens, the broader society, future generations, and the environment. Additionally, our study focused on the importance of value dimensions, rather than the extent to which value was created or captured in relation to these specific dimensions. For future research, some of the identified dimensions could be measured quantitatively, while others — such as the learning dimensions — will require more qualitative measurement methods.

Results on Anticipated and Experienced Value and Dealing with Value Conflict

We studied value and value dimensions in creative multi-stakeholder collaborations for social innovation. We identified twenty-one value dimensions across five value categories: commercial, innovation, network, identity, and learning category. Together, these twenty-one values make up for our value framework for creative multi-stakeholder collaborations for social innovation.

The results of the study show that the collaborations produced different types of value dimensions. The survey showed that the most anticipated value dimensions were different and less diverse from those most experienced. Three out of the four most anticipated value dimensions were in the category of innovation value, whereas the five most experienced value dimensions spanned over four different categories. The survey does not show whether this was due to the anticipated value dimensions not being captured towards the end of the project, or because other value dimensions were deemed more valuable at that stage.

However, the interviews revealed that not all collaborations clearly resulted in direct innovation value or direct societal impact value. Using traditional measurement methods, one might have concluded little value was produced from the collaborations, either because no direct innovation value was generated or because more time was needed for the innovations to generate impact. However, both reasons originate from a short-term perspective

and overlook the value generated over the long term. Simply put, it takes more time for the impact of the innovation to take effect, and measurement often occurs before the value created has had an effect yet. Or — and less easily captured — value may also emerge in the future, as the value created through the collaborative process can positively affect value dimensions, creating new innovations or the acceptance of new innovations. These long-term value dimensions are much more indirect, with different value dimensions acting as intervening variables towards future dynamics. Our study is unique because it captures different value dimensions for this long-term effect, beyond the direct innovation, impact, economic, or commercial value.

We found that most conflicts arise from differences in expectations of what people consider valuable outcomes of projects caused by differences in goals and interests. Most notably, a difference in emphasis on creating learning and process value or more individual and outcome value. Such tensions between different actors and organizations are commonly described in management and innovation literature.[57] From this perspective, the findings did not surprise us. However, some of the tensions might be even more pronounced in social innovation, where some participants are more focused on short-term quick fixes, while others prioritize creating value for continuous, long-term social innovation — such as learning and network building — acknowledging that complex challenges cannot be fixed within the timeframe of a single project and may change over time.

Collaborative tensions have the potential to "both enabling and jeopardizing value creation and capture."[58] A certain level of tension or polarity between participants can be beneficial for team creativity during earlier conceptualization phases.[59] However, in later phases of development or less complex contexts, such polarity can hinder creative performance.[60] To prevent conflicts and frustration detrimental to project learning and outcomes, it is important to address these through negotiation, cooperation, co-creation, and problem solving,[61] as well as and formal and informal agreements between individual actors.[62] Here, we would like to highlight the potential of reflexive learning processes to address value tensions and mitigate conflict. As Martinsuo[63] argues, individuals' expectations of project value are based on underlying values as beliefs. Reflexive learning and conversation formats allow for deeper exploration, with reflexivity defined as "ongoing scrutiny of the choices that are made when identifying and integrating diverse value dimensions, priorities, worldviews, expertise, and knowledge."[64] The value framework presented in this article can be used for such reflexive processes throughout social innovation projects and programs. It can help make value expectations and underlying beliefs explicit, nurturing collaboration towards continuous and impactful social innovation.

Reflecting on the Value Framework towards Continuous Social Innovation

We began the article by stating that it is increasingly recognized that complex societal challenges require innovative and collaborative approaches, because complex problems always require multiple stakeholders across different and beyond disciplines. To understand the potential value of these new

57 Lepak et al., "Value Creation and Value Capture"; Martinsuo, "Management of Values in Project Business"; Oskam et al., Valuing Value in Innovation Ecosystems"; Yee et al., "Being Community and Culturally-Led."

58 Martinsuo, "Management of Values in Project Business," 393.

59 Kratzer, Leenders, and Van Engelen show that "in the conceptualization phase of R&D efforts polarity positively influences the creative performance of R&D teams, whereas at lower degrees of complexity or in situations later in the development cycle polarity negatively impacts the creative performance of R&D teams." Jan Kratzer, Roger Leenders, and Jo van Engelen, "Team Polarity and Creative Performance in Innovation Teams," abstract, *Creativity and Innovation Management* 15, no. 1 (2006): 96, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8691.2006.00372.x.

60 Ibid.

61 Martinsuo, "Management of Values in Project Business," 4.

62 Oskam et al., "Valuing Value in Innovation Ecosystems."

63 Martinsuo, "Management of Values in Project Business," 394.

64 Merrit Polk, "Transdisciplinary Co-production: Designing and Testing a Transdisciplinary Research Framework for Societal Problem Solving," *Futures* 65 (January 2015): 114, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2014.11.001.

approaches, it is important to measure value and experiment with value measurement on different and new dimensions. To build the value framework, we drew on theory regarding on value dimensions from social innovation, creative industries, and collaboration approaches, while also conducting the necessary empirical work to support the framework.

The continuous social innovation perspective means that we consider both direct and less direct value dimensions. In the framework, the more direct value dimensions for social innovation can be found under the categories of commercial value and innovation value. In our framework, commercial value pertains to direct and indirect economic value, while the innovation value category aligns most closely with "value creation" as described in the management literature — referring to the incremental value created through a new task, product, or service for a user, organization or for society.[65] However, we consider three other categories, linked to what the UK's Design Council refers to as wider value — value that could lead to spillover, ultimately feeding continuous social innovation. First, learning value — adhering to Mitchell et al.'s[66] third category on learning. Second, network value, building on van der Bijl-Brouwer's[67] fourth dimension of outcomes — "*the impact on relationships between collaborators*." Finally, we consider identity value. Identity value in our study also relates to the professional value capture dimension as described by Bos-de Vos et al.[68] But we argue that this value is not just captured by individuals, it is also value captured by the collaborating network towards continuous and long-term social innovation. Identity value is linked to network value and learning value, as they can also be considered a type of professional value capture for individuals and organizations. For example, the identified value dimensions in the network value category likely support a smoother collaboration in future projects.

From the perspective of continuous social innovation, we argue that network value and learning value extend beyond individual stakeholders, as they can create fertile ground for future successful social innovation initiatives by the network of stakeholders. For example, the network value dimension of "energy to continue working on the societal challenge" is an essential resource for successful future collaborations, while at the same time being a type of collective intrinsic motivation that an actor gains or loses once they join or leave the network. Learning value dimensions include elements particularly relevant to individual actors, such as "learning about a societal challenge," while other learning elements — such as learning how to collaborate — constitute "organizational learning" value for the collaborative network. This insight strengthens the growing view that designers should commit long-term to social innovation domains, rather than a consultancy model in which they jump from one domain to another.[69] Such long-term commitment allows designers to build the required relationships with other system stakeholders, as well as develop a strong knowledge base and repertoire within the domain.

Towards Continuous Social Innovation

Our framework answers the call for more empirical studies and specification of value dimensions for long-term, continuous social innovation — defined as "wider value" by the UK's Design Council in their 2022 value framework

65 Lepak et al., "Value Creation and Value Capture."
66 Mitchell et al., "Beginning at the End."
67 Van der Bijl-Brouwer, "Design, One Piece of the Puzzle."
68 Bos-de Vos et al., "Trade-Offs in the Value Capture."
69 Mieke van der Bijl-Brouwer, Giedre Kligyte, and Tyler Key, "A Co-evolutionary, Transdisciplinary Approach to Innovation in Complex Contexts: Improving University Well-Being, a Case Study," *She Ji: The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation* 7, no. 4 (2021): 584, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sheji.2021.10.004.

or as "spillover effects." We combined different aspects of collaboration, innovation, learning, and social innovation into one measurement set. The application of the twenty-one dimensions in exploring value across ten collaborative projects proved effective. It provides a concrete example of this wider approach to measuring value for others, including those outside academia.

Our work aligns with a complex and continuous perspective on social innovation — viewing it as a process of continuous development, implementation, and learning from innovative initiatives intentionally aimed at addressing complex societal challenges.[70] This perspective acknowledges the need to move away from one-off quick fixes developed in single, isolated design projects, towards a more continuous approach to social innovation in complex contexts.[71] From this perspective, the value of individual projects is not limited to their immediate societal impact but also includes the extent to which they contribute to future social innovation collaborations or creates spillover effects.[72] This perspective changes how we view and assess the value of individual social innovation projects and initiatives. Joyce Yee in Candy et al.,[73] mentions that "Typically, a design project has a start and an end point … [in a social innovation context]. Problems encountered by the community persist prior to and extend beyond the duration.… It then becomes really important to consider how your interventions play out over time, beyond their contribution." Continuous social innovation complements the consideration of long-term impact with the idea that complex contexts need a steady flow of innovations to enable system adaptation and transformation.[74]

Conclusion

Our study revealed a broad spectrum of twenty-one value dimensions over five categories in creative multi-stakeholder collaborations towards social innovation. This value framework is unique in that it makes value dimensions explicit, including both collaborative values and social innovation values beyond the scope of single project, towards a continuous social innovation perspective. The framework takes a complexity perspective, with a long-term orientation, acknowledging the dynamic nature of societal challenges and focusing on both individual and collective value capture.

Second, the value of the study lies in combining theory building with empirical case analysis. We applied the framework to understand anticipated and experienced value in ten social innovation projects. We found significant differences between anticipated and experienced values. Anticipated value was more frequently aligned with the innovation value category, while experienced value dimensions were more often found in the learning and network value categories. We also found that different tensions arose from differences between anticipated and experienced value dimensions between actors, particularly between valuing learning from a creative process and valuing the output of the innovation process. We conclude that value creation for continuous social innovation is dynamic, emerging over time throughout the process, and is captured not only by individual actors but also by the collaborative network. This perspective strengthens the view that, to enable the societal impact of design practice, designers need to commit long-term to social

70 Definition based on the Canadian Social Innovation Generation program, which refers to a culture of "continuous social innovation." Geraldine Cahill and Kelsey Spitz, eds., *Social Innovation Generation: Fostering a Canadian Ecosystem for Systems Change* (Montreal: J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, 2017).

71 Van der Bijl-Brouwer et al., "Co-evolutionary, Transdisciplinary Approach," 584.

72 Design Council, "Design Value Framework."

73 Candy et al., "Measuring Impact," 286.

74 Moore and Westley argue that "the capacity of any society to create a steady flow of social innovation […] has profound implications on the capacity of a linked social ecological system to both adapt and transform." Michelle-Lee Moore and Frances Westley, "Surmountable Chasms: Networks and Social Innovation for Resilient Systems," *Ecology and Society* 16, no. 1 (2011): article no. 5, http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol16/iss1/art5/.

innovation domains, build and nurture networks, and engage in reflexive learning processes throughout projects.

Finally, the study demonstrates that, to evaluate the success of social innovation projects, evaluators—such as funders—should use assessment frameworks that extend beyond the societal and economic impact of the innovation alone. Moreover, it should be adjusted to the context of the project or program, or both. More focus and attention must be paid to those factors that can foster social innovation in the long term, such as learning and network value dimensions. The framework aims to help navigate the complexity of value in social innovation collaborations. Identifying the twenty-one value dimensions helps to specify value production and value capture in social innovation. This is not only for academics and funders but also for social innovators, enabling them to think and reflect collectively on their actions. We hope to see future applications that enhance its applicability and support conversations towards more fruitful collaboration.

Declaration of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest involved in this article.

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Appendix: Supplementary Materials

Supplementary materials to this article can be found online at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sheji.2024.10.002.

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