Co-production Teatime

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1. Workshop Organizer/s

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ABSTRACT

Co-production Teatime is a prototype developed to support inquiry processes in co-production- the close collaboration and co-creation of knowledge between academic researchers and partners from industry and municipalities. In an attempt to bridge gaps between stakeholders with different interests, expectations and knowledge horizons, the teatime explores dialogue-based inquiry and the use of visual creative tools. Through odd experiences and anomalous objects, the teatime provokes playful interactions amongst participants. This aims to encourage the sharing of diverse perspectives and to deepen an understanding for ways of co-producing.

2. Context of Workshop

INTRODUCTION

Co-production Teatime explores new forms of inquiry between partners in co-production. Co-production is the close collaboration between university and partners from industry and municipality in order to produce knowledge which is valuable for the parties involved and society as a whole [1]. A fundamental difference between these partners is that most enterprises are motivated to solve specific problems and produce shareholder value.

Academia, on the other hand, aims to produce knowledge recognized as valid and a contribution to existing scientific knowledge. Building a shared culture or community of practice can be a challenge and there is a need to develop ways to work across boundaries which are both meaningful and useful to each stakeholder [2].

The teatime explores this issue through dialogue-based inquiry, to discuss different perspectives, knowledge horizons, expectations, and interests in a co-production. Based on *communities of inquiry* [3] and *democratic dialogue* [4], the teatime sets out to create spaces which inspire participants to express diverse perspectives, to listen, and elaborate on each other's ideas. This is important in processes of co-production in order to secure validation and useful results.

To create spaces for inquiry about co-production, the teatime uses creative visual tools and methods from Participatory Design. This aims to test whether and how creative and visual activities are beneficial or perhaps a hindrance for inquiry about co-production between cross-sectorial partners. A key function of the teatime is that of a *playful trigger*, which uses *odd experiences* and *anomalous objects* "to dramatically expand creative and interpretive engagement between people, providing platforms where diverse interpretations can be generated" [5]. Provocative, poetic, tactile, ambiguous artefacts are used to prompt receptive modes of engagement [6] which are non-verbal, intuitive, and perceptual, in order to challenge conventional way of doing, seeing and articulating things. Creating metaphors are central part in playful triggers, to stimulate new perceptions and understandings. Stimulating diverse interpretations and metaphors, the artefacts "served" in the teatime function as boundary objects [7], use to promote a shared understanding of various perspectives in and about co-production.

Co-production Teatime is a prototype developed in Gottlieb's PhD project. This design-oriented research explores the use of creative visual tools for inquiry in co-production.

BACKGROUND

The Co-production Teatime originates from Gottlieb's Masters project at the Royal College of Art, London, which explores the role of artefacts in the context of a tea ritual to introduce and discuss philosophical ideas. Various themes and approaches have been explored through the philosophical teatimes, for example, Heidegger's ideas about death through a "metaphorical" tea set (fig.1), as well as the topics of time and technology through everyday objects (fig.2). More about these teatimes can be found on the project's website [8].

Figure 1: Menu and tea set introducing Heidegger's existential philosophy

Figure 2: Exploring thoughts and feelings about the everyday through everyday objects

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3. Planned Activities and Expected Outcomes

Since the participants are most likely not in a collaborative project together, the discussion will focus on co-production in general. The expected outcome is for the participants to leave with a deeper understanding about what co-production is and different ways of co-producing.

Extract from Co-production Teatime *(work-in-progress)*:

- 7 participants are invited for a co-production teatime
- The teatime takes place around a round table. The table is set with placemats, a tea set, and a tea chest with a variety of loose teas.
- After an introduction, the participants write down what co-production means to them and share this to the group.
- Time to select teas. Participants are invited to smell the array of teas in the tea chest.
- Together, the participants make a co-production tea.
- The selection of teas are mixed together and steeped in hot water. This blend is served to all the participants.
- Further questions about co-production follow.

This prototype will be further developed during spring 2018.

4. Intended Audience

The workshop is ideal for 7 participants, but could range between 3-10 participants. The intended audience is the conference participants, but could also to extend to participants outside of the conference, for instance, from the local municipality and/or businesses.

5. Length of Workshop

Participants from the conference are invited to partake in this 90 minutes workshop. This time frame is required for the tea stimulus at the start of the workshop and to introduce questions and discussions about co-production as the tea ritual evolves.

6. Space and Equipment Required

It would be preferable to locate Co-production Teatime in the exhibition space, as the concept could then be shared with more of the conference participants. It could the also share "traces" from the workshop, e.g. the tea created by the workshop participants could be served to the other conference participants. The placement of workshop within the exhibition space will need to consider the noise level and other spatial elements that may provide better conditions for dialogue.

The organizers of the workshop will bring all the materials for the teatime (tea set, tea, placemats), but would ask for the possibility to borrow a (preferably round) table and 8 chairs.

7. Potential Outputs

Co-production Teatime will offer an engaging and different format for conference participants to discuss cross sectorial collaborations and co-create of knowledge. As an exhibited object, the teatime could attract and prompt random encounters between other conference participants.

The workshop will result in publications (conference and journal) and contribute to the development of the Co-production Teatime prototype.

About the Organizers:

Laura Gottlieb, PhD Candidate, has a background in Philosophy and Information Experience Design. She is a trained facilitator in philosophical inquiry; a method that she uses in her

design-oriented research. In her PhD, Laura explores the use of creative visual tools in the context of co-productive inquiry.

PhD Jennie Schaeffer is senior lecturer in Information design at the School of Innovation, Design and Engineering (IDT). As a member of the Information Design Research group her research is exploring how visual representations can support group discussions on innovation.

Yvonne Eriksson is Professor and holding the chair in Information Design and chair of the Information Design Research group. She is the head of MDH Living Lab@IPR, in which the research environment Innovation and Product Realisation (IPR) and the undergraduate education develop method for co-creation between academia and external organizations.