DESIGN!PUBLIC

Trust, Participation, Innovation

Third Edition: 20th April, 2012, New Delhi

An Invitation to Dialogue

The Design Public Conclave is a high-level conversation among a select group of thinkers, decision-makers and opinion-leaders who seek to use innovation in order to advance the Public Interest. The third edition of the Design Public Conclave will be held in New Delhi on the 20th of April 2012, and it has as its theme 'Trust, Participation, Innovation.'

Concept and Background

Over the past two decades, India's economic growth and concomitant social change has followed the trajectory of what we might call a classic emerging economy: India has achieved widespread mediatization and informationalization under conditions of limited or partial industrialization. Over the past three years, however, its further robust and continuous growth has faced increasing doubt and uncertainty. It would now appear that continued growth will not be achieved merely through deregulation -- and even that is now in doubt -- but through wholly new ways of creating value, which will necessarily center around innovation.

In India today many decision makers still doubt the very possibility of routinized and structured innovation. Even those who affirm its value are innocent of the specific steps and stages involved in bringing novelty to the world in the form of new products, services and experiences. In the absence of well-established practices and processes of innovation, however, a society may list and linger, endlessly debating points of ideology, without making substantive progress on the grand challenges facing it. We believe, however, that innovation as a process of participatory problem solving can deepen and strengthen the inclusive principles and values of a democratic society. Innovation can be taught and learnt; it is a fire that can be tamed but one must know how to do it. This is why better knowledge about innovation – both general and specific – is such a pressing need.

If in India the pressing challenge around innovation has to do with knowledge and understanding, elsewhere in the world deficits of trust and the absence of opportunities to truly participate in one's economy and society have inhibited innovation. From Tahrir Square in Egypt to the Ram Lila grounds in New Delhi, and on over to Zuccotti Park in New York, something has happened, something has changed. In this crisis, both governments and multinational corporations have found themselves against the tide.

Citizens the world over appear to be demonstrating a burning desire to participate in making change happen, but there are no established avenues or channels for participation, and they must improvise. Social media platforms provide such an avenue, and in fact all of the many protests of the past year have been organized and intensified, at least to some degree, due to social media. Participation in social media involves cautious optimism, mutual reinforcement and the slow and gradual development of trust and even reputation within one's mobile and social networks. Moreover, the use of social media in the Occupy Movement has shown us just how creative individuals can be at using social media to generate new content and new ideas, to share and distribute those ideas, and to sustain the overall goals of the movement despite the absence of a charismatic leader.

This creativity, in large part, would not have been possible without the new paradigm of trust brought about by social networks and online communication. Creativity, and therefore innovation, cannot arise in the absence of trust. Contemporary institutions have much to learn about allowing and enabling public participation in ways that are mutually beneficial. One of the goals of this third edition of the Design Public Conclave is to figure out just how this can be done.

In the absence of adequate degrees of trust at various points in the public-private continuum, three adverse consequences arise: First, the energy and investment of the public is misspent, second outstanding challenges in society remain unsolved, and third and most unfortunately, failures of trust multiply, leading to a vicious and regressive circular pattern. An innovation paradigm, however, can invert this cycle, leading to opposite outcomes: new and innovation means of solving long-standing problems, greater proximity between recipients and providers of products and services, and more effective practices of participatory, collaborative and co-creative innovation. This is the larger objective of the Design Public Conclave.

Event Details

Design Public is a conversation among a select group of high level thinkers, decision-makers and opinion-leaders who seek to use innovation in order to advance the Public Interest. No more than 100 persons will be in attendance. Presentations will be brief. Panel discussants will intersperse with the other participants for greater involvement and equal opportunity for dialogue and response.

The third edition of the Design Public Conclave will be held in New Delhi on the 20th of April.

There will be a pre-conference innovation training program on the 19th of April, for which participants may register separately in advance.

Expected Participants

Leading thinkers in the area of innovation, design, development, entrepreneurship and public policy are being invited to this edition of Design Public. These include:

Aanchal Sodhani, British Council
Aditya Dev Sood, Center for Knowledge Societies
Aditya Mishra, Headstart Foundation
Amit Garg, MXV Consulting
Amit Syngle, Asian Paints
Amol Sharma, Wall Street Journal
Anant Shah, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Anjan Das, Confederation of Indian Industry
Anurag Singh Thakur, BJP Youth Wing
Aparna Piramal Raje, Design Thinker
Armel Guerin, Renault
Arun Maira, National Planning Commission
Ashish Nandy, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies
Ashok Alexander, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Ashwini Kumar, Minister of State for Industry
Ashwin Mahesh, Founder, Mapunity
Billy Stewart, UK Department for International Development
Bhairavi Jani, Young India
Chad Woolen, Vodafone
Chakshu Roy, Parliamentary Research Service
Dan Lloyd, Vodafone
Dilip Ranjekar, Azim Premji University
Geoff Mulgan, NESTA
Harsh Shrivastava, National Planning Commission
James Crabtree, Financial Times
Jayna Kothari, Ashira Law
Jeby Cherian, IBM
Julia Hobsbawm, Editorial Intelligence
Krishnan Narayanan, Infosys Labs
M. P. Ranjan, National Institute of Design
Mary Abdo, Young Foundation
Munesh Makhija, GE Healthcare
Naresh Narasimhan, Venkatraman Associates
Nishant Shah, Centre for Internet and Society
P.D. Rai, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha)
Parag Khanna, New America Foundation
Pratap Bhanu Mehta, Centre for Policy Research
Rexford Widmere, GE Healthcare
Riku Makela, Finnode
Rishikesha T. Krishnan, Indian Institute of Management Bangalore
Rob Lyens, British Council
Rohini Nilekani, Arghyam Foundation
Sam Miller, Writer

Sam Pitroda, National Innovation Council
Samanth Subramanian, Writer
Scott Burnham, Premsala
Shankar Annaswamy, IBM
Shiv Vishwanathan, Sociologist of Science
Sudhir Krishnaswamy, Centre for Law and Policy Research
Sukumar Rangaswamy, MINT Newspaper
Sunil Abraham, Centre for Internet and Society
Vikas Bajaj, New York Times
Vivek Maru, Namati Foundation and Centre for Policy Research
Usha Kiran, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
William Hammink, USAID
Zackery Denfeld, Pacific Northwest College of Art

Draft Conclave Agenda

9.30 Word of Welcome and Introductions

10.00 Trust 101

11.00 Understanding Public Participation

12.00 Imagining an Innovation Society

1.00 Lunch

2.00 The Nuts and Bolts of Innovation

3.00 Breakout Sessions: Can Corporations Help Solve the Grand Challenges of Society?

Tea Served During Breakout Sessions

4.30 Reports Back from Breakouts

5.30 Concluding Plenary: How can Innovation Build an Inclusive and Prosperous Society?

Expected Outcomes

The most important outcomes of the last two editions of the Design Public Conclave have been intellectual: the question of design and innovation in relation to the larger well-being of people and the state-society system in which they live has come to be understood in new ways. While we cannot predict exactly what we will learn over the course of Design Public III, we do know that it will advance our understandings and inform our conversations. The themes of trust, participation and innovation that will organize our thinking at the upcoming event have emerged out of the deliberations at both prior events.

Design Public III will be live-blogged and followed on u-stream, twitter and other social media. Summaries of each panel will be posted on the Design Public blog. As in the past, we expect that the event will receive critical attention from Indian and international media, the business press, as well as the blogging community.

Many new partnerships and joint activities have resulted from prior editions, and we would expect this upcoming event to be no different. The Bihar Innovation Lab, for instance, was an idea tested and deliberated at the first edition, and it will soon go to launch. The Chaia Innovation Accelerator was only an idea at Design Public II, and it too is now taking concrete shape. One of the most important insights emerging from the last event was the need for a better understanding of innovation processes and for innovation training resources. The upcoming event, therefore, will devote a pre-conference day to training in innovation. Our thoughts and words will define India's innovation agenda.

Opportunities for Sponsorship and Partnership

The Design Public consortium is now soliciting support and sponsorship from organizations, agencies and corporations that are interested in engaging thought leadership around these topics. We aim to work with premier organizations who can guide the further development of this agenda. Sponsorships follow the following tiered structure:

Institutional Sponsor   US $10,000/-
Dinner Sponsor   US $5,000/-
Event Partner   US $3,000/-

We will also welcome contributions of content and other kinds of support in kind that might allow the event to proceed to greater effect. These may include travel support for speakers, accommodation bursaries for worthy cases, student scholarships, sponsored dinners, paid breakfast tables and special expert and media access by arrangement.

Organizers

Center for Knowledge Societies (CKS)
Centre for Internet and Society (CIS)
Mint Newspaper (MN)
Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)

Founding Partners

Venkatraman Associates (VA)
Centre for Law and Policy Research (CLPR)
Headstart Foundation (HF)
Chaia Innovation Accelerator (ChIA)
MXV Consulting (MXV)

Individual Participation

Speakers and special invitees will be selected by the organizers, in dialogue with sponsors and other partners. A limited number of delegate tickets may also become available.

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