Co-designing Ethical Support for Sociotechnical Practitioners



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ABSTRACT

In this project, we used a digital co-creation approach to provide a supportive environment in which technology practitioners were able to explore new means of ethical support and construct their own "ethics toolkits" to deploy in their area of practice. The workshop is designed and hosted in a collaborative digital whiteboard environment.

The workshop engages technology practitioners in a three-hour workshop, using a series of activities to help them realize, articulate, and visualize their engagement with ethical complexity. The workshop is designed in the form of a house, which has four floors and multiple rooms with different activities for the participants to explore. The first floor invites participants to reflect on ethical issues faced in past industry experience through a list of ethical lenses, and identify a problem context to focus on for the toolkit creation process. The second floor uses the metaphor of a shop where participants can shop for building blocks to use in their toolkits. The third floor includes toolkit DIY and Evaluation stations, and finally, the gallery on the top floor provides a space for participants to share individual ethics toolkits with the group. These activities form a foundation for future engagement with technology practitioners, through which scholars and educators can support ethically-aware design decisions.

BACKGROUND

Consumers are increasingly aware of the societal impact of technology. Technology practitioners from multiple disciplines have a direct impact on the design, use, evaluation, and regulation of designed outcomes. However, beyond the disciplinary codes of ethics, little is known about how to engage technology practitioners in becoming more ethically aware and being equipped to translate awareness to ethically-wise actions in everyday work.

Through a series of in-depth observations of design practitioner work and a set of interviews with expert practitioners, we have identified areas of emergent ethical complexity. Although many ethics-focused methods are being developed in academia to provide ethical supports, technology practitioners felt there is a lack of resources at their disposal that can support ethical actions at work



One challenge that has been there for me is like finding the relevant resources to get started on thinking, like, I know these problems exist. Like I want to talk about ethics, I've been talking about it, but I don't know like how to do it actionably.

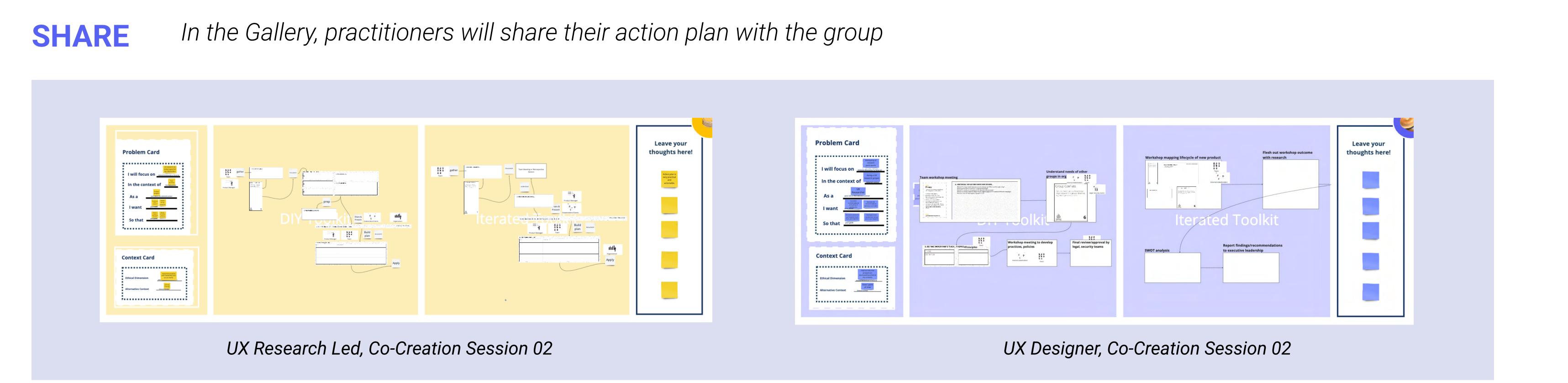




REFLECT

Finally, practitioners will reflect on the co-creation experience through three guiding questions

- What did you learn from your experience of creating your action plan?
- What are some things you wish you had time to do but couldn't?
- What are things you learned about your own design practices?



TEST DRIVE ROOM

Start Your Test Run

Get in a group with a new partner
Create your context card

4. Iterate your action plan

REFLECT

dimension to focus on

b. Choose an alternative context to

3. Talk with your partner about how would your action plan apply in a new context

5. Discuss with your partner about your

i. Ex. heads-down time; team meeting; client meeting, etc.

Fig. 1. Company of the company of th

GALLERY

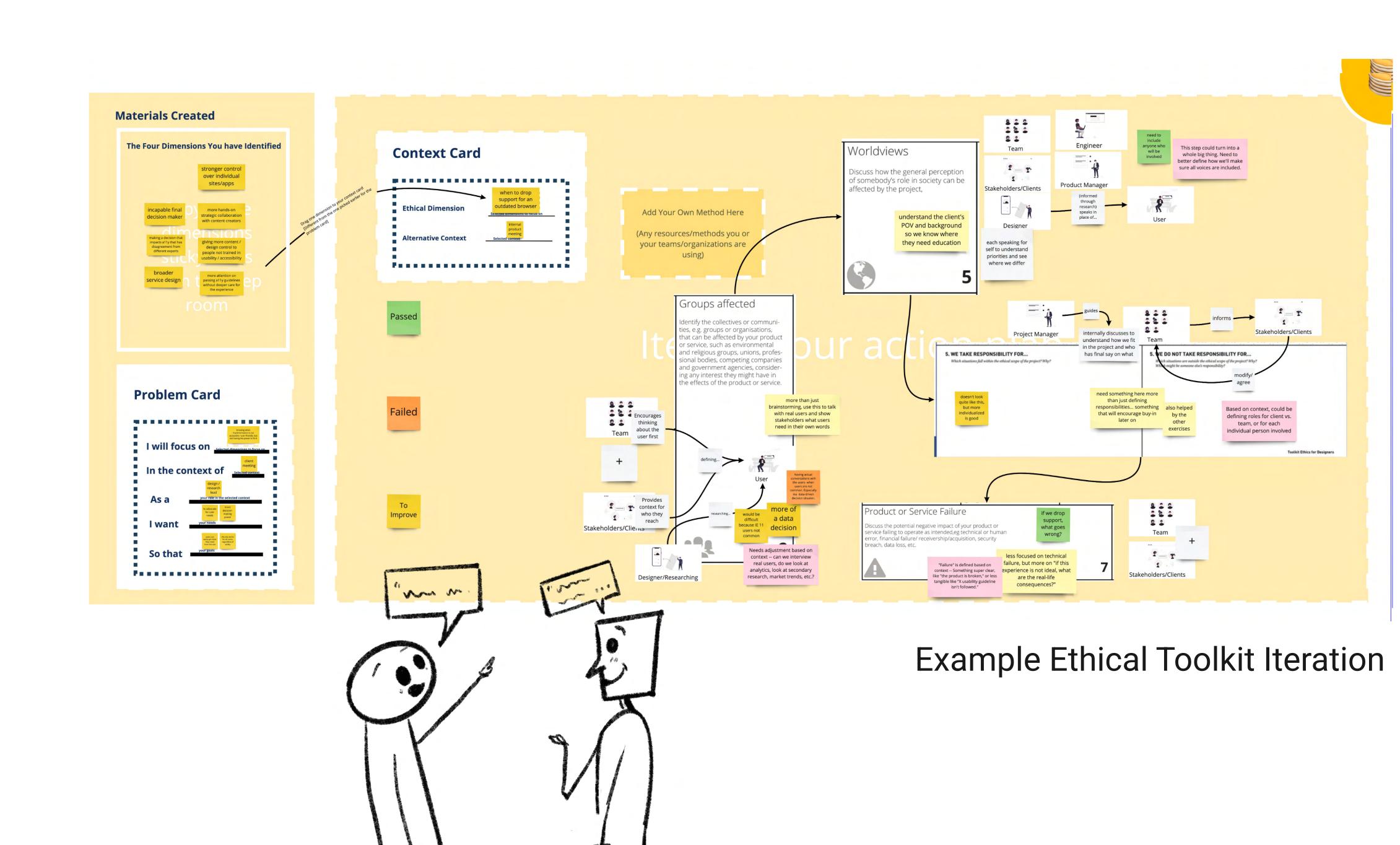
Shopping Guide 🛒

IDENTIFY

1. Add at least three tools to

2. Pick your icon below and

In the Test Drive Room, practitioners will work with a new partner to evaluate the transferability and practicality of their action plan in a new problem context.



DIY ROOM

START HERE

WELCOME TO THE HOUSE

Workshop Overview: This workshop will engage 4-6

technology practitioners, in pairs, to collaboratively

build, iterate and disseminate ethics-focused a

personalized ethics toolkits based on provided

This workshop is meant to be a sharing of

experiences and expertise among everyone, so the

activities are designed to be open ended, and there's

Workshop Goals: The goal is to practitioners create

an effective action plan for dealing with ethical issues

in the workplace, so we encourage you to reflect back

Outcomes: At the end of the workshop, practitioners

will aquire a better understanding of the drivers for

ethical action in their everyday industry context and

design work. And a draft of a toolkit that is self-

designed through the co-design workshop to better

no right or wrong way to do anything.

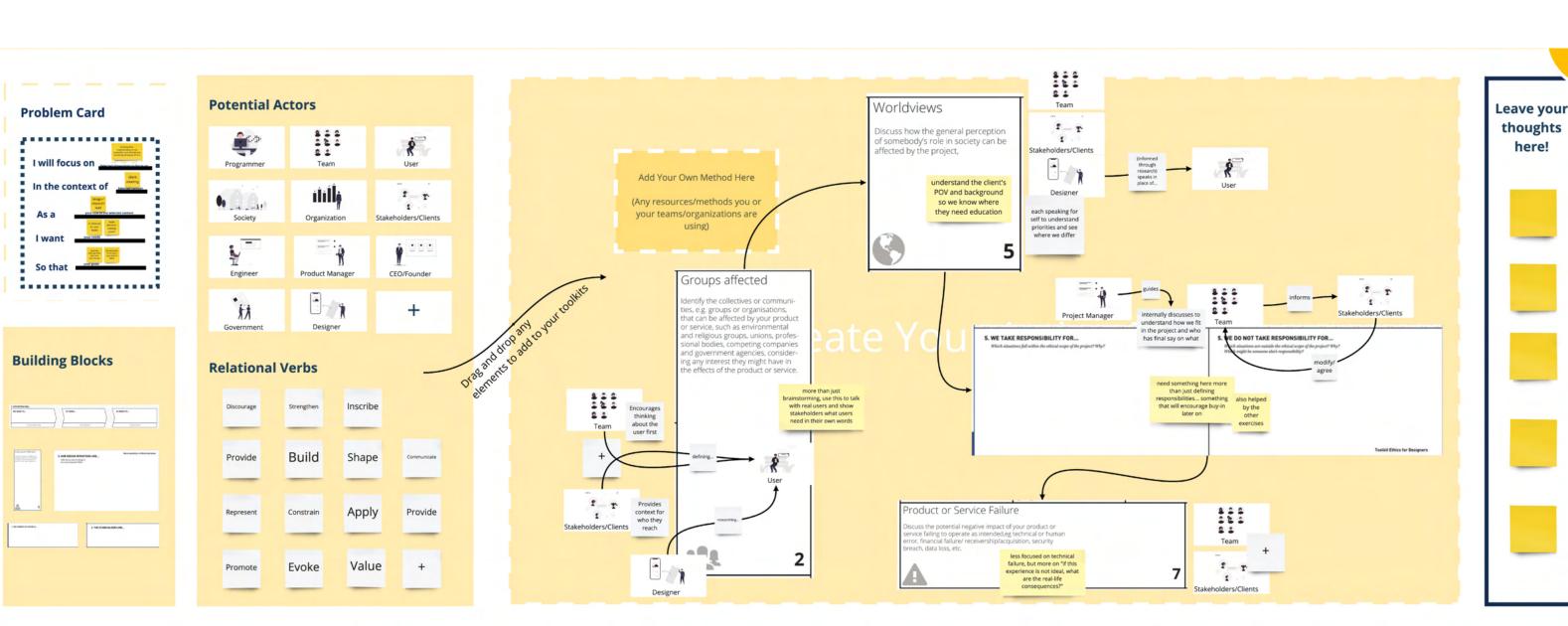
on your day to day work practices.

suit your everyday design work.

prompts and their personal/professional experiences.



In the DIY Station, practitioners will craft their ethically focused action plans using the building blocks selected earlier, along with resources from your organization or in your personal practice that can also assist them in assembling the action plans.

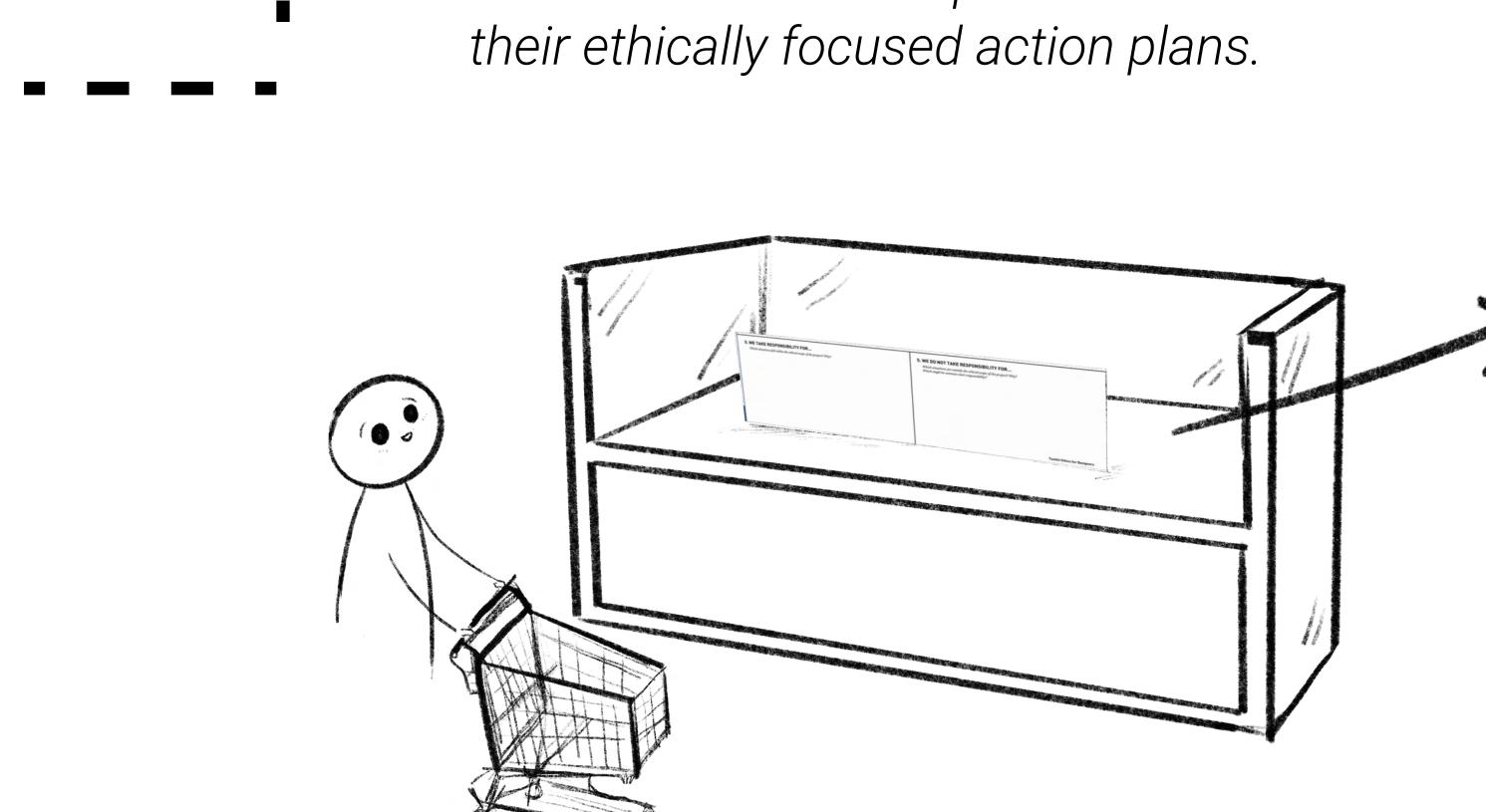


Example action plan from Co-Creation Session 02

ROOM

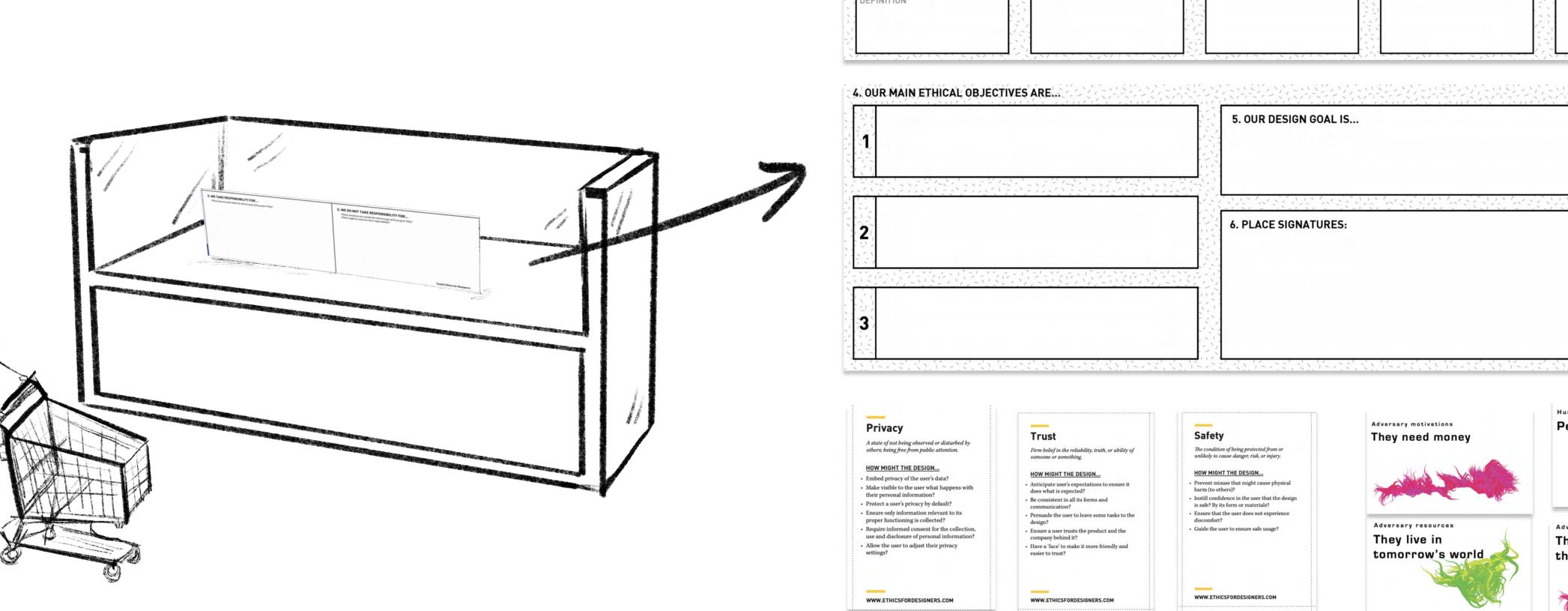


Practitioners will select "building blocks" that will help them form



The building blocks are pieces of existing methods and tools that our lab has collected.

Example "building blocks"



In this shop, there are 23 building blocks to select from. These building blocks are organized on 3 different shelves based on their main functions:

(1) reimagine the design space (2) identify ways to make your practice more ethically focused (3) decide which values are relevant to the design work.

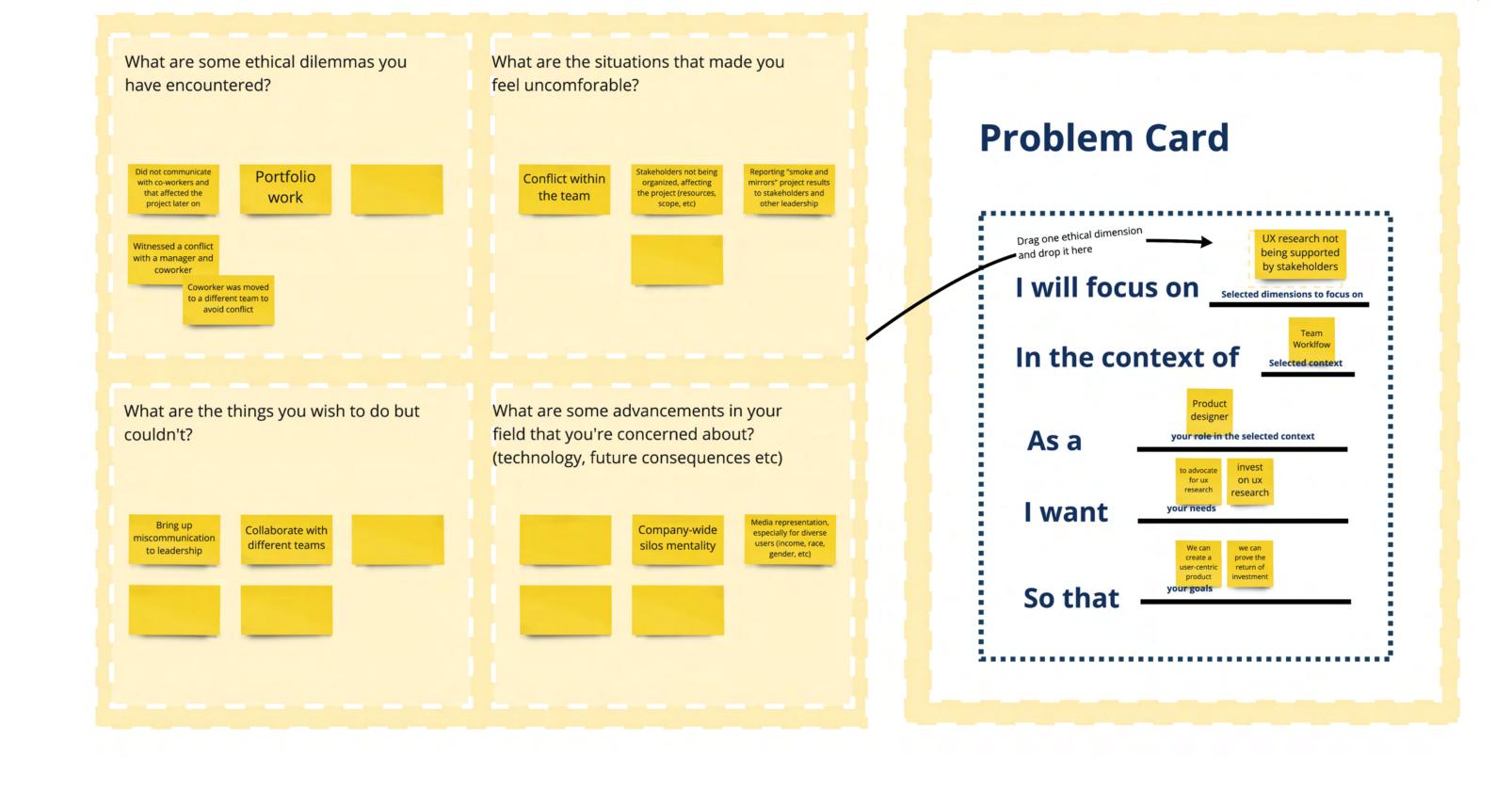
The building blocks in each shelf are further divided into four buckets based on potential use cases. You can use these in situations like Identifying your area of focus, Building Alignment with Your Team in an Organization, Creating Design Opportunities Lastly, Evaluating.

THE LOBBY

PREP ROOM

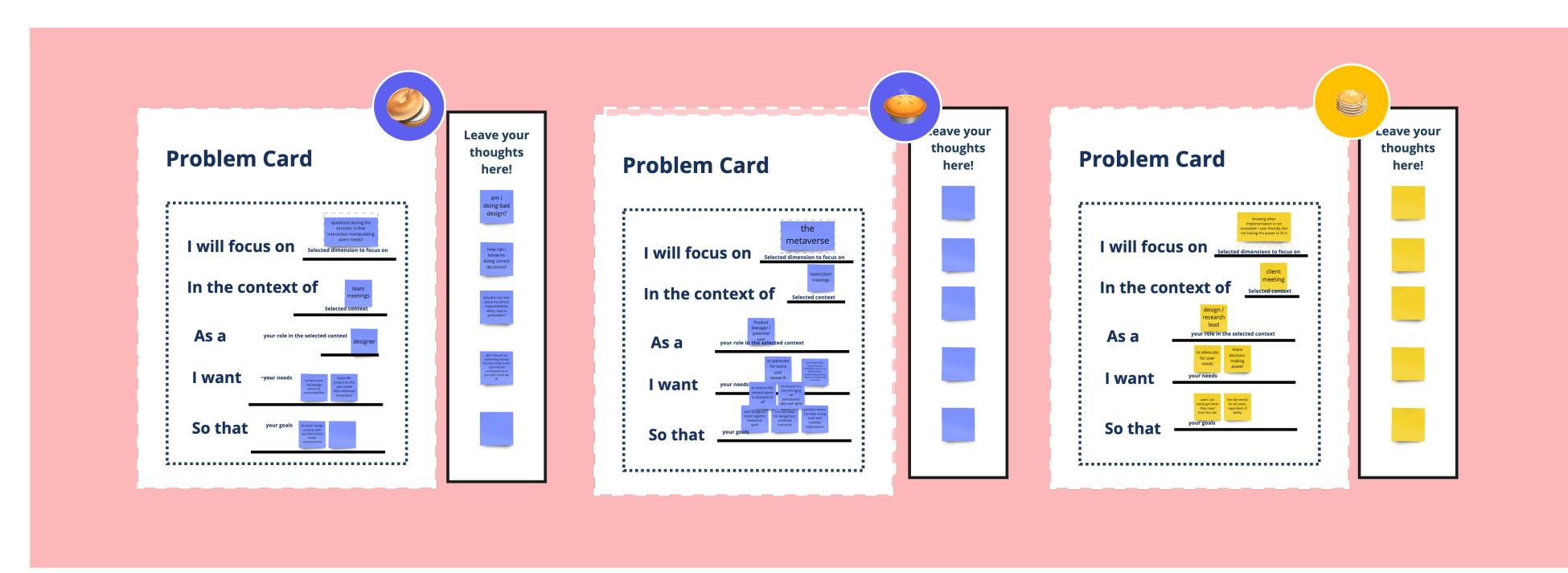
In the preparation room, the practitioners will first reflect on their industry experience through a list of ethical lenses.

Then, create a problem card that will assist practitioners in framing the ethical dilemmas and future action plan.



SOLIDIFY

The lobby provides an opportunity practitioners to receive feedback from each other, and make final edits to the problem cards



Individual problem cards are displayed on a shared board for feedback

"I want to talk about ethics, I've been talking about it, but I don't know like how to do it actionably. so I think like, just seeing these like resources classified as like for getting team alignment or for like sessions. So seeing [the workshop] as like a stepby-step thing, I think that's been

"I would love like access to an easier way like this to just like, you know, pick out resources and then start

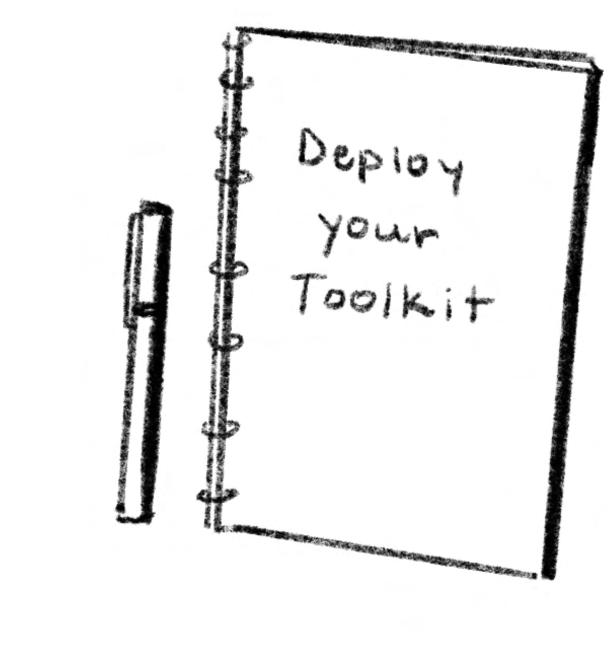
think for my part, just like taking a step back and thinking, like seeing these exercises and thinking of it as like these are conversations that we can actually be having with every project."

FUTURE WORK

The goal of the co-creation workshop is to help industry practitioners acquire ethical sensitivity and in turn produce ethical and responsible products for people. The UXP2 lab is working on disseminating the workshop in a way that's adaptable to companies. The dissemination strategies include an ethics-focused method website, physical co-creation workshops, and diary studies that ask the practitioner to try out their ethical toolkits in their work environment.







Ethics-focused method website

Physical co-creation workshop

Diary study