



Open
Minds

OPEN MINDS CURRICULUM

Co-authored by MTF Labs, ACCAC, Polis, INESC-TEC, FABLAB

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Open Minds Curriculum Descriptor

Course description

This informal education module aimed at students aged 16-29 explores and develops radical inclusion in design. The course is structured in six key phases, delivered in two 3-hour meetings and one week-long Creative Innovation Lab.

Course objectives

This course aims to introduce the concept of Radical Inclusion in the design process. The main aim of the course is to provide students with an understanding and awareness of radical inclusion (limitations, existing solutions, standards, etc.) and to develop skills in co-design methodologies to facilitate radical inclusion through design, prototyping, cross-domain innovation and collaboration. Students will design practical projects that address issues of accessibility and inclusion as well as address UN Societal Development Goals.

Prerequisites and corequisites

There are no prior educational requirements to undertake this course. Students must be aged 16 - 30, and the selection of students must focus on a broad diversity of backgrounds.

Students can use the course and their creative designs developed during the course to work on relevant projects they are already working on as part of their regular studies, given sufficient overlap.

Registration

Prospective students complete a form in which they provide their name, email, etc., as well as gender (male, female, non-binary, prefer not to say), allergies and dietary function, different needs for wheelchair use and accessibility, language, translation and interpretation needs, whether they identify as having a disability, any other personal information that the students believe the facilitators should take into account. Registration includes GDPR information and video/photography permission or waiver for group presentations at Creative Innovation Lab.

Student selection

Selection of the students is based on prioritising diversity of interests, backgrounds, abilities and expertise. Each taught group must include at least 10% students that identify as having a disability.



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Course delivery

Fifty students are selected in each participating country, and the preparation meetings can be divided into smaller groups. The Creative Innovation Labs will take place simultaneously across all five partner countries (Sweden, Finland, Portugal, Croatia, and Albania) with presentations, interaction and communication between students live-streamed between venues. Courses are delivered in a mix of local languages and, for some shared elements, in English. Translation and interpretation will be available where required.

Course structure

The course is divided into six phases, delivered in sequence. These sessions are ideally delivered in person, but some elements of the delivery can be adapted for online or hybrid learning modes. This also allows for remote learning by international students and for facilitators to respond flexibly to changing public health situations and other issues.

- Scenario building
- Research
- Assumption testing
- Solution proposal
- Prototyping
- Testing and demonstration
- Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to identify and define real accessible solutions that take radical inclusion into account from the beginning or as a fundamental design feature of retrofits. Students will demonstrate a better understanding of how to cooperate with people with different abilities, needs and backgrounds collaboratively, rather than merely through consultation.

Evaluation methodology

Students will present in groups their prototype and complete an online learning diary in blog/video/podcast form. Each student receives a Youthpass in recognition of successful completion of the course.

Skills developed include:

- Technological prototyping
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Increased awareness of radical inclusion and accessibility
- Design skills
- Research skills
- Teaching Resources



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For Phases 1 to 3, students will use a **card-game-based ideation methodology** explicitly designed for this programme. The cards are divided into four categories: person, context, environment and obstacle. Selected card combinations provide the parameters for the challenge to be addressed by the students.

For Phases 4 to 6 in the Creative Innovation Labs, students will be introduced to the **Open Minds Toolkit**, a hexagonal physical computing prototyping platform that addresses a range of senses and abilities. The students can also use additional materials and supplies to build the prototype of their proposed solution that uses the Open Minds Toolkit.

Schedule of learning:

- **Recruitment for the education** - April/May/June
- **Meeting 1** - aim for the end of August 2023
- **Meeting 2** - aim for mid-September 2023
- **Week-long Creative Innovation Lab** - mid-Oct 2023

Preparation for Creative Innovation Labs

Meeting 1 - best in person, but possible online.

It will be possible, or even desirable, to break the 50-student group into 2 or 3 break-out sessions of smaller 'class' size.

Introduction and Scenario Building (Hour 1 & 2)

- Course Introduction
- Group formation (emphasising complementary skill and knowledge sets)
- Open Minds cards
- Group learning diaries introduction (blog / video / podcast)

COFFEE BREAK

Phase 2 - Research (Hour 3)

- Research introduction - (can be pre-recorded) - 5 mins
- Overview of design principles - (can be pre-recorded) - 5 mins
- Field and practice-based research - (can be pre-recorded) - 5 mins
- Digital asset gathering - (can be pre-recorded) - 5 mins

NOTE: Pre-recorded material can be subtitled in local languages

Assignment of background reading/resources

Students should reflect upon these resources in their online research diaries.



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- Formation of the prototype challenge ("what is your research question?")
- Setting of assignment for next meeting: collection of digital assets (these can be uploaded to a shared repository linked to the online platform for research diary)

Meeting 2 (in person): Assumption testing (3 hours)

- Presentation of group research and prototype challenge
- 'Reality check' - feedback and development of challenge in the light of peer and external panel discussion.

Facilitation of discussion - the whole class gives feedback to every project idea but foreground and highlight the voices of those who have identified as having a disability. An external panel or independent expert is selected and invited by facilitators to challenge the students' assumptions.

Creative Innovation Labs (CIL)

Solution proposal - Monday

Students have reviewed and amended their group project proposal and challenge in light of the feedback received in Phase 3.

- Welcome, orientation, etc.
- Introductions and group presentations of proposed solutions and revised challenges
- Introduction of Open Minds Toolkit - (can be pre-recorded with Tom)
- Idea generation for the proposed solution (hands-on experimentation with toolkit)
- Review of Toolkit documentation to support hands-on experimentation and facilitator coaching
- Solution design using **Open Minds Toolkit**

Prototyping - Tuesday - Thursday

Presentations: Prototyping and documentation workshop

Inspirational presentations about design, accessibility, and inclusion (in-person or video presentations of 15-20 mins). Presentations are included to spark new ideas, take projects in interesting new directions, and add inspiration or new ways of thinking about inclusive design. Some presentations will be specific to the local group CIL, while others will be live streamed to all simultaneous labs. Presentations can also include creative performances and art pieces and consist of live or pre-recorded material.

Activities:

- Groupwork making with the toolkit
- Testing & Demonstration - Friday
- Final testing of the prototype with target group/individual



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- Group presentation of the working prototype
- Group feedback on design solutions
- Submission of completed research blog / video / podcast
- Feedback and evaluations by students completed

Bibliography

Recommendations for background reading include:

- **Maisel, J** (2017) Inclusive Design
- **Nicole, C** (2001) Inclusive Design Guidelines for HCI
- **Iacofano, D** (2018) Streets Reconsidered
- **Raheja, G** (2016), Enabling Environments for the Mobility Impaired in the Rural Areas
- **Wiley, J and Sons** (2013), Interaction Design Beyond Human-Computer Interaction
- **Foster, R** (2012) The Pedagogy of Recognition. Dancing Identity and Mutuality. Tampere: Tampere University Press. <https://trepo.tuni.fi/handle/10024/66961>

*"Listening and seeing are the hardest things in the world. We don't want to see - we don't want to look because we might change. Awakening does not require energy, strength or youthfulness, not even a lot of intelligence. What is needed most is the readiness to learn something new. We are not afraid of the unknown, but of losing the known." - **Anthony de Mello**.*

Radical inclusion is first a journey of thought and attitude. For us, "radical" really means "thinking outside our habits." It means seeing the abundance in what we can do instead of the limitations of what we can't or won't do. It's easy to think that things that are familiar form the boundary of what is possible. - [Barbershop Harmony Society](#)