Abstract
Teachers, locals, a designer, communities, students, materials and co-design are the resources of this written report. These elements have tried to find a balance between each other during the process to stimulate the core of the project: a sustainable future in the local community of Älmhult. Starting of through of changing the global perspective of education to a more local sharing-learning experiences, the project made a turn to focus more on a problematic community namely that of Älmhult, Sweden. This local community has in the recent years changed dramatically because of growth in population and cultures. The community in which international and local do not mingle enough, has split. Instead of using these possibilities of learning from each other’s cultures and languages they have decided to live in mostly separate communities. Through the course of this project a network was built of people from both these communities to start building a stronger community in Älmhult. Education has been used as tool to stimulate this change, bringing the local community to the students. Teaching the students about strong communities they are the tool to develop this into the future. Thereby the student is the seed of change. The project has worked with co-design, using the tools to connect teachers and local initiators to create these meetings between student and local community. The research can be a learning tool to build communities, by using the knowledge of its inhabitants.

Keywords
Education, Localisation, Älmhult, Community, Design, Co-design
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A special thanks to all people involved throughout the project, especially those who have made the co-design meeting a success:

Emmelie Lindner for inviting me to the International school of Älmhult.
Jenny Herz for sharing her contacts and knowledge on the local community of Älmhult.
Therese Karlsson for also for sharing all her contacts and knowledge on the community of Älmhult.
Jeanette Guttenberg, Etienne Stefansson, Peter Sagun, Emmelie Lindner, Selin Öz Hult,
Krista Baker, Therese Karlsson, Julianne Lindner and Marie Sterte. Inga-lill Newkumit for joining the co-design meeting.
Julianne Lindner and Carla van der Hoeven for correcting my thesis throughout the process.
Åsa Ståhl, Eric Snodgrass, Anders Emilsson for their time and guidance during tutoring sessions.
A project on ‘building communities’ through education researches the possibilities of locality as a tool to educate students on responsibility towards the future of communities. Being a part of the local community development, the students get a chance to understand how they can make a difference. The project is based on co-designing with teachers, a designer and locals within the town of Älmhult in Småland, Sweden. The town is most known for being the birthplace of one of the largest furniture retailers in the world, IKEA. Today IKEA and their multicultural employees are still partly located in Älmhult, creating two communities in a very small town. Whiles one community has a very global perspective, there is also a community that is still quite locally active. The project works to create a sense of belonging for both communities. The teachers as collaborator in the project, are there to provide the knowledge about and their experience of education. The locals are the connection to the local community therefore they create the opportunities for the students to intertwine with local development. The designer will be the guide and the toolmaker throughout the process, with the future as stakeholder. Throughout the process the designer is the connector between education and local community, handing out tools to provide a way to gather the towns knowledge and experience in “building communities”. The project wants to plant a seed of change in the educational system that is mostly focused on general knowledge and self-development. A seed for change stands symbolic for starting projects that create change in the long run, building something today is building something for the future. The design research process is connected to the literature of educational philosopher Kieran Egan (2008) who explains that the questions, “Who are we?”, should be more considered in nowadays education. The design process is mostly connected to the texts by Elizabeth Sanders and Jan-Pieter Stappers (2014) that talk about co-design meetings and different tools to generate information from the participant. The design process is based on the idea that education is a tool to reach the future and that local communities are the tools to connect education to change.
PLANT SEED OF CHANGE

EDUCATION

FUTURE
Biking through the small town in the south of Sweden on a Monday morning, you will see a couple of shops, with just a few people on the street. Some children are biking to school for their first class. With just four supermarkets, a quite limited range of clothes shops and two bakeries, the town has the feeling of being small and rural. The train station, which looks a bit abandoned, lies in the middle of the town. The train tracks following the town are the reason why Älmhult became a municipality of its own. In the 19th century the town was chosen as one of the five train stops for the trainline build through the landscapes of Skåne and Småland. Älmhult became a place for train maintenance and trade in goods. The local community grew, building more houses and shops (Älmhult Kommun 2018). Back to today’s Älmhult, the town is yet again growing bigger. When you wait just a couple of minutes, until 07.50, you will get blown away by people gushing out of the train. The train almost empty now continues. The group of people left on the train platform, push each other further, up the stairs to the other side of the train station.

This is the area of IKEA. IKEA buildings, an IKEA hotel and an even recently added IKEA museum. Älmhult is the town where one of the largest furniture shops in the world was founded by Ingvar Kamprad in 1943. It is therefore also the place where the first ready-to-assemble products were produced, the reason why IKEA became so popular in the rest of the world (IKEA, 2016). Keeping a part of the company in Älmhult, Ingvar Kamprad has created a second community in the small town. A large group of international people have moved to Älmhult, new people arriving every year. An international school was raised from the ground and activities especially for the international community are organised. The dense population of international people (Information om Sverige 2016) is the cause of the town being more focused on global change in the recent years. For this reason, local development has grown via the international state of mind. A local international community has arisen, where people are looking more outward. Having two communities in a small town has its pros and cons. On the one hand, having so many nationalities together creates opportunities and learning curves for the people in the community, but on the other hand the two communities do not mingle enough to create these opportunities. The city centre, on the one side of the train station for example, shows in no way that it has anything to do with IKEA. Being such a small community next to a big company creates a threat to lose the town’s identity. The IKEA area, on the other side of the trainstation, tries to create an international business vibe, with professional looking infrastructure. By not locating the main centre of IKEA of Sweden in a bigger city but in such a small town, the company needs to emphasise their cultural vibe and professionality in order to attract the right employees that rather live in the big city. Many of IKEA’s employees live in Malmö, the third biggest city of Sweden, and travel everyday to Älmhult (Smålandsposten, 2010). It is difficult to feel a sense of belonging for the people of both communities due to this and it makes mingling much harder. This is also caust by a language barrier. But in spite of all of this both communities need each other. IKEA has had plans in the past to move away from Älmhult (HD, 2015), but to leave Älmhult would be to lose part of their identity. The local community needs IKEA as many people are employed by the company (Smålandsposten, 2010), and many houses are build for IKEA’s employees. A lost of IKEA would mean an empty town. There is a need to collaborate and build a community that has the feeling of belonging.
There are more places in the world with this split community because of multinational companies. Microsoft, founded in Redmond, King county, Washington, has build a large campus in the middle of the small city and is planning to grow even bigger. The future village can host over 12000 people and it will have many recreational elements (Microsoft 2017). Margaret O’Mara, a professor in history who has written about these technology hubs describes how inequality occurs in these communities. The employees of these companies have often a high education and when they become a part of the city's society they generally all use the same restaurants, bars and entertainment. As they have a high income, the original local community can not afford these recreations (O’mara, 2005). Another example is Silicon Valley, a place for many online programmes and other technologies, such as Apple, has taken over a large part of the region. The authors Heather Mcleod Grant and Alexa Córtes Culwell of the book *The Giving Code* (2016) have researched these areas and they also see these splitted groups, mostly related to inequality and lack of cooperation.

A community that does show a great collaboration in a sustainable mingling of two communities is that of Billund, Denmark. It is known for Lego and therefore it calls itself “capital of children”. The municipality and the company have a great cooperation and they use each other's strength to build this community. The lego community is part of the town and the town is part of the company. Their vision is to build a better coherence between the many features of the town, but also to make it accessible for all the people of the community. They organised “citizens meetings”, as they call it, and had workshops for all ages to create a plan for the town's development with focus on adults as well as children (Capital of children, 2015). What the town of Älmhult can learn from these examples is that when building a sustainable community there is a need to involve all groups in the town, to talk and discuss the opportunities. This creates a sense of belonging for all groups. It's therefore also important that not only the municipality but also IKEA contributes to this development.
Returning to the image of me on my bike riding around Älmhult, I reflected that although I am one of the international people that moved to the town, I am also one of the few that does not have a relation to IKEA. Being in this situation and having met both groups I can use my knowledge and experience as a designer to help the town. As I worked on building communities before through a project related to Återbruksbyn in Växjö (a project on building villages of artists and designers around a recycling station to stimulate reusing materials) I have previous experience. My role as designer in this process can be to find and connect people. In the end, the community uses their own knowledge and experience to strengthen the community. Building a stronger community among the citizens has to come from within the community and its resources. In this process I see myself as a toolmaker. As designers, we namely provide the tools required in society. Thereby we have the ability to help steer society in the right direction, using the tools we hand out. During this process I will use my knowledge to help steer the communities of Älmhult in the right direction, by using the skills I have developed as a designer. My task is to educate the people of Älmhult to use each others strengths, knowledge and experience to build one community in which all groups have a feeling of belonging. Both groups in Älmhult are needed to stimulate change, to make a more sustainable place to live. There are other people in the town that have tried to integrate the two groups. Through events like language cafés and evenings with cultural mingling, they have tried to connect both communities. On the work of these initiators I can build my ongoing project, contacting them and involving their experience in the process.

I have chosen to focus on finding a way to integrate the students of Älmhult in the local community, and by doing so make the core of the community more sustainable. What we educate the students of Älmhult today will help to create the community in the future, if the children of both communities are connected to local Älmhult through education it can be a tool to “build communities”.
When I decided that I wanted to help build a stronger community through education it was important to research how the students were already intertwined in the community of Älmhult. For this I went to the International school of Älmhult, two workshops were given, both workshops were based on mind mapping and designing. The first workshop was with students during the after-school activities, therefore the group had a lot of different ages (between 6-10-year olds). Together we (the group of students and the designer) started of by making a mind map on the topic of Älmhult. The answers were quite general and not that much connected to the local community. In the mind map you saw a real disconnection between the town and the students from the international school. After the brainstorm we used the technique described in the text: Contextualising: Experiences from practise (2011) that uses designing as a tool to generate information. It lets the participator design an artefact that they later explain. This gives them the opportunity to process their experiences and thoughts on the matter. The artefact I asked them to make was generated through the question: What does Älmhult need? Much more than the group mind map, the children started to draw and produce things related to the town and local community. The children designed communal trampolines, zoos and airports. The ideas were still quite general but all students had a reason why Älmhult needed their design and this made the connection to the local community much broader.

The second workshop I did had the same structure as the first one. I worked with students aged 14, during an art class at the international school. This time I asked them to make mind maps in groups. More complex relationships to the local community were put down on paper (compared with the first workshop), but there was still no personal experience reflected in the mind maps. They summed up shops, sport clubs, nature and IKEA relations. To steer the mind map to a more personal connection to the community I asking them the questions: “What was the first thing you saw of Älmhult when you arrived here for the very first time?”. This helped them to associate Älmhult with their own experiences. Answers like: the empty train station and the big chair next to the highway were given. These answers are less general, as everyone’s answer was very particular. After this I gave the students the task to individually reflect what Älmhult needs. Most students were very negative about Älmhult. Results were lists of things that are missing in Älmhult instead of opportunities to develop the local community. It seems like they did not feel a part of the community because there was too little to do for them in the community.
A school that is very much integrated into the local community and that can be seen as case study for this design process, is Green school. The School is an initiative in Bali that wants to educate the students for the future. It has strong connections to the nature and the culture in which the students live. This connection is achieved by letting the students grow their own vegetables, building dams using the resilience of the surroundings and by applying the tools and knowledge of the local community (Green School Bali 2016). The classes, based on Waldorf education, are there to teach from the reality, from the world around them (Zhao, He, & Meng 2015). Waldorf schools are built on the educational principles of Anthroposophy, a term created by the founder Rudolf Steiner, it sees children as having a spiritual, universal, and cosmic existence (Goldshmidt 2017). Not only do the students at Green school learn about the nature around them but the school is also strongly connected to the local community, for example by using the local repair shop for a class (Hardy 2012). Having this strong connection to the local community brings a feeling of responsibility to the students. Most education given at schools in the Western world are connected to global knowledge; the knowledge from literature, and individual development; the development to make the student successful in his or her future. In this school the student are educated in the question “Who are we”. This question is an important one to answer in the design process as it helps the students to understand the value of the community. Answering this question will create a sense of belonging in the community as it makes a stronger identity for the town.

A text that is relevant to this question is the work of Kieran Egan. As a philosopher of education, he mostly writes about how we can develop education and how we are formed by tools in the educational system (SFU No date). He describes in his text *The Future of Education: Reimagining Our Schools from the Ground Up* (2008) how education has formed itself over time. In the text he talks about the question “Who are we” as a connection to socialisation, the very beginning of education itself. Socialisation is the start of language, a tool that was created to share stories. By sharing stories, you answer the questions: “Who are we?” and “Who are they?”, it builds a sense of a community. As language has become such an important tool in today’s rapid society, children pick up the values and norms from their surroundings quite early on in their lives. These first years of the child are very important for the rest of his or her life. Therefore, we should ask ourselves: What are the stories we tell our children today? The connection of telling stories on a local level in schools is lost, “Who are we?” is instead answered on a more global level. What is needed in my design process is to answers this question together with the local community, building a network to start intertwining the students in the community. As a designer I will be the connector between the student and the local community, finding the schools and local initiators to contribute to each other’s work. To find these I need to get deeper involved in the local community.
Bicycling from the train station, through the city centre I pass the public library on my bicycle, I see that a meeting is held by the municipality which is called: Älmhult 2050. They have organised a meeting in the local library to introduce the project to the locals. To get the municipality’s perspective on the future of Älmhult I decide to park my bike and attend the introduction of the project. The municipality of Älmhult just started a project very much connected to my design process. The project describes how they want to develop Älmhult in the next 32 years (Älmhult Kommun 2018). Walking through their exhibition I found myself in a small crowd of people all looking at posters of maps of Älmhult. The maps had lines, colours and for me it looked very complicated. On a small side table there were smaller maps of Älmhult that could be used to visualise own ideas. Next to these drawings were examples like a bicycle road across the city centre and elderly houses next to Möckeln (a lake in Älmhult). The people in the small area of the exhibition were above a certain age and the children in the library were not invited to be part of the ongoing conversations and “co-creation”. While I was looking around a lady who was looking at the same map looked up to me and said: “You are a little bit younger aren’t you? Are you from the local school here? She told me that she had been a teacher and did not see much educational development in the ideas of the municipality. Just like that I ended up in a conversation very linked to my ongoing project. The woman said that the local schools had very bad results on tests and that this should be improved as soon as possible and that in the development plan of the municipality there was nothing mentioned about this. Children are the future we agreed. We finished our conversation when she concluded that she would rather go upstairs to the art exhibition.

Visiting this exhibition made me understand that when developing a community there is a need to listen to the people involved. I need to build with the materials that already exists in the community. These materials can be people, by using their experience and knowledge, but also by using the locations and the projects that are already there. It is important to make to my project on Almhult a project of “us”, the local community. I had to reach out to the community and find opportunities to work with.

After placing a message at the local Facebook page, I came in contact with Jenny Hertz, one of organisers of Studieförbundet, Vuxenskolan Älmhult. Studieförbundet, Vuxenskolan is an organisation that sets up workshops and activities in the local communities. They work closely together with the organisations and initiators in the local communities (SV 2017). During the meeting we talked about different opportunities for students to be involved within the community of Älmhult. In the course of our conversation I started to understand that the project needs the experience and knowledge of the teachers to form the right interaction, an interaction that educates the students whiles working with the local community. The project needs teachers as they provide the knowledge about and their experience on education and students. Whiles locals are needed to build the connection to the local community and thereby creating opportunities for the students to intertwine with local development. The designer is the guide and the toolmaker throughout the process, with the future of the community as stakeholder. Summing up all these essential elements, a co-design meeting was created. In which all groups would be invited to discuss the topic and build a collaboration. Organising a co-design meeting to bring together teachers and local initiators and the designer will build a space to create opportunities to localise education within the community of Älmhult.
This design method uses the experience and knowledge of the user to design a product, service or system. The knowledge is gathered through a meeting in which the designer has the role of guiding the process by handing out tools. These tools can be adapted to suit the topic and the product. By using co-design you involve the people in the design process, by doing so there is a higher chance that the project will be a success and will integrate in the system. Using co-design a deeper relationship between citizens will grow. It also gives a voice to the citizens and the outcome is always understood by the user as it is made by the user. It triggers citizens critical thinking during the meeting. The user is no longer the user but the co-creator.

Some researches even suggest that in the future co-design will play a big part in the world. Elizabeth Sanders and Jan-Pieter Stappers (2014) have made a timeline indicating how design and product development will change in the nearby future. The user will get more and more in the centre of the design process. They see co-design as a tool to collaborate or as they call it: collective dreaming. They mean that by using co-design we can create a future in which everyone is part of its creation. In their timeline education plays a big part to accommodate the change in the product world, by educating students on the topic of co-design and it’s tools the process will play a bigger part in the users needs, experiences and knowledge. The change of the designers purpose shifts from creator and maker to tool facilitator. This means making new tools and handing out tools to groups of users to help them design the product.

A project that is related to my ongoing design process: working with co-design as tool to stimulate social innovation is TRANSPLACE. It researched how different social actors shape places. Like community building, it had the goal to develop an area. Place-sharing did this by giving an identity to an area by remodeling the whole area's infrastructure. It worked with repackaging the area by finding what it is unique in its surroundings. The project of TRANSPLACE consisted of three different areas in the world that are strongly connected to environmental change. Together with academics and non-academics, from these three different parts of the world, they discussed the issues through co-design and co-learning. Through this discussion they could study the concept of place-shaping. They needed the people from the places to define what the actual context of their place was and how to make use of their knowledge about and experience of that place. Connected to my design research there is a need to define the question “Who are we?” before we can start introducing the community to the students. In the text Connecting people to place: sustainable place-shaping practices as transformative power, written as a report to support the project (Horling 2016), they explain how sustainable problems and local challenges can lead to inequality, dependencies and competition amongst the locals something that can be absolutely coupled to a place like Älmhult. Because of the split in the two communities they see each other as a competition, as I described earlier in the text. They are both afraid to lose their culture. In the TRANSPLACE text they believe it is important to state the collective values of the places through the eyes of the locals in their process. Using the knowledge and experience of the people in the places, they mapped the common values and motivations. The result of their co-design meeting was a connection between places and people, they also build networks of knowledge consisting of the participants and thereby making the connection of making a stronger relationship between them. This project is an example of what is needed in the ongoing design process, the projects needs to establish what the values of the town and it’s different places are. The co-design meeting that will be organised is there to connect people and to stimulate them to use their experience and knowledge to build a more sustainable community in Älmhult.
“When you start to do co-design you have to look at the quality of the interaction between the different people involved. In particular I think by looking at the relationships that they have built between each other. If these are trusted relationships, that are long lasting as well, then I think co-design has done a really good job. In establishing new ways of collaborating between those people that are necessary to deliver a kind of service or a product-service system that they have created together.”

Dr. Bas Raijmakers, (Proud Europe 2014)
Following the steps of a co-design meeting by the book: Contextmapping: experiences from practice (2005), I started by planting a ‘Cultural Probe’ at three different schools in teacher rooms. A cultural probe is a technique to trigger the potential participants to think about the topic in questions, it is often placed in the front end of the design process to start a conversation between designer and the participant (Contextmapping: experiences from practice 2005). The probe collects information from participants through self documentation in for example pictures made by or writing done by the participant (Celikoglu, Ogut & Krippendorff 2017).

The cultural Probe was placed at the schools to trigger teachers to think about how important locality is in their ongoing educational programme and how important it should be. The probe consisted of three boxes with questions connected to this topic. The questions were: “What do we teach our students?”, “How is Älmhult part of our education?” and “What can our education give to Älmhult?”. During the designing of these probes I considered making probes that are used by the teachers individually over a time span of a week. However, through experience working with teachers they do not have a lot time to spare. Placing the boxes in the teacher room gives them a choice to join in a less time-consuming interaction. The design of the boxes had to attract the teachers, I also wanted to give the vibe of a co-design meeting by adding speech bubbles for the questions and answers (like a conversation). After a couple of days, I collected the boxes. The boxes were less full than I would have wanted but there were still very good answers among the speech bubbles. The perspective of the teachers on what they educate the students was mostly connected to personal development in contrast with the society, like teaching the students to be critical thinkers. On the questions what education can give to Älmhult the teachers saw the school as a way to bring Älmhult to a more global perspective. The last question how is Älmhult part of our education the teachers gave two very different answers. One person said that the students and teachers learned a lot about different cultures in Älmhult, whiles the other said that Älmhult is just a place in a whole. These answers were not meant to gather information but mainly to trigger the teachers, but the answers also gave me a small insight in the perspectives of the teachers and how to approach the co-design meeting. A critical note for this step in the process is that the questions asked could have been more specific and directed to the teacher instead of education in Älmhult in itself.
Inviting method

The step that I found most important when creating the co-design meeting was to find and invite people. As it was a meeting about localising education, it was very important to keep the local vibe to the whole design process. Searching the internet and writing down everyone I had already worked with in previous activities I made a list of participants. The participants were chosen because of their work in the community or their experience in education. Also, to get people involved I wanted to let them feel special to be selected to my design meeting. So for all potential participants I designed personal invitations with the person’s name and the reason why they were needed in the co-design meeting. Next step was to deliver the invitations to the people.

Back to my bicycle again I started to ride around Älmhult with the invitations in my pocket. I went from person to person and from organisation to organisation. Bringing together people became more and more the design of the project. Although it was sometimes difficult to find the people on my invitations it was a great tool to make the project tangible. Not only the people I visited but also I, myself became very enthusiastic when inviting them. Instead of mailing everyone it became a tangible project, with real people and real places.

Connected to the invitation was a Facebook group and event to keep people interested and reminded of the upcoming event. The Facebook group also worked as a Cultural probe as it kept triggering the participators to think about the topic. Every couple of days I posted something related to the topic, also introducing myself and the co-design meeting. The Facebook page became already a network in itself.

Annelotte Lindner, tool maker and designer, invites you, the teachers from the international school of Älmhult, to join her co-design meeting on the topic of building futures through education and localisation. The meeting will gather teachers, local initiators and designers to discuss the topic and the beginning of building a network. We would very much like to invite you to be a participator in this meeting because your experience in and knowledge about students and education and to create an opportunity to conduct possible collaborations.

Date: 5th of April        Time: 15.00 -17.00    Place: Elmeskolan
Please sign up via: buildingfutures.almhult@gmail.com (before 2nd of April) more info on:
On the 5th of April 2018 the co-design meeting was held at the Elmeskolan in Älmhult. The meeting brought together 14 participants to build a network to integrate the local community into the education of Älmhult. The accommodation was chosen as it would make it easier for teachers to join. Before the meeting started, the participants got a name tag and a list of participants before we sat down with coffee and a cinnamon bun. Starting with a small introduction on why I had brought them together: to start a network of collaboration between the local community and about co-design as method. We continued the meeting using the tools I had created. The group was quite diverse being from both communities (international and local) but also from schools and local organisations. The participants and their organisations were:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organiser:</th>
<th>Annelotte Lindner, Design+Change (Linné universitetet)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeanette Guttenberg</td>
<td>Local initiator working with food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etienne Stefansson</td>
<td>Science and design Teachers ISÅ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Sagun</td>
<td>Head of PYP ISÅ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emmelie Lindner</td>
<td>Design and art Teacher ISÅ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selin Hult</td>
<td>Developer of Handelsplatsen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Krista Baker</td>
<td>Head of DP programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Therese Karlsson</td>
<td>ABF and Folketshus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Julianne Lindner</td>
<td>Teacher ISÅ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marie Sterte</td>
<td>Local and design teacher at LNU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inga-ill Newkumit</td>
<td>Art teacher at Haganässkolan</td>
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<td>Stefan Thörn</td>
<td>IKEA Aktivitets huset</td>
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<td>Lena Madar</td>
<td>IKEA Aktivitets huset</td>
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<tr>
<td>Else-Marie Bengtsson</td>
<td>Röda Korset</td>
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<td>Agneta Ohmes</td>
<td>Röda Korset</td>
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</table>
A case study that inspired the main tool (a walk through Älmhult) was the project Sustainable street 2030 by Corpus. The goal of this project was to experiment with and develop new integrative modalities of knowledge brokerage at the science-policy interface. They used research eddone on sustainable consumption to visualise future scenarios. One of their methods (Snapshot of the future) involved building a sustainable street of the future using different posters of the present and looking into how they will possibly develop in the future. In this, they research how sustainable living in the future will look like in the day-to-day. The street (pictures) consists of sustainable products, shops, advertising and services. The participants were triggered to leave notes with comments and reactions building the street together (SDS 2013). The method they used was to create something for the future using today’s knowledge. It looked into what we already have and how to build on it. This was also a step that I need to make during the co-design meeting: to generate what is already there in Älmhult and to use these resources to build the network. By putting up pictures of Älmhult connected to the participants workplaces in the community and other places of interest I built a street representing the community. In a three step process we would establish who we are and what resources we could work with.

To start the process of designing, the team of participants were ask to find the place that represented their work in the community on a wall with 20 different locations in Älmhult. The places that they could choose from were schools, organisations, companies, streets, housing projects, etc. Having found their place they were asked to write down the values of this place on post-it notes. Questions like “Who are we?” and “What do you want to achieve?” were asked to help forming their values. Some of the participants had relations to more than one picture of Älmhult using experiences from their living areas, working places and leisure activities. In a short time a whole network of values was created in the local community of Älmhult. After this the places were presented by the participants, explaining what their values in the community are, often in a form of resources or developments. Already during the conversation the participants started to connect and discuss ideas of collaboration, associating their own values and needs to the other participants presentation.

The next step during the method a walk through Älmhult the participants were asked to continue associating their needs and values to the other places. Using the post-its the participants were asked to write down ideas of collaboration and common values. During this phase two extra people arrived and they could generate ideas by reading the post-its on the posters. The group also started to discuss and create ideas among themselves during this step. The end result of these tools was the answer to the question “Who are we”, by visualising the town, it’s places and their values. It was very clear for everyone after this round what the different places could offer. During the process the steps could have been a bit more clear for the participants as they already in the first step associated with the values of other places. Also during the presentation round I could have been more strict in how long the presentation had to be.
A WALK THROUGH ALMHULT
**Results of a walk through Älmhult**

**Haganässkolan:**  
Creativity and skills in image and form  
Workplace for people from different cultures.  
Teamwork and sharing!  
Schools as links  
Swimming education, youth and integration  
Sustainability

**Gemöskolan:**  
A school I went to as a child, but now only pass by.  
Sometimes birthday parties in the gym hall.  
School for kids from different cultures.

**Röda korset:**  
Sustainability  
Homework support, practice  
Swedish, first aid, integration, unaccompanied)  
Everyone is welcome  
Haganässkolan design/image, sustainability project, get more youth to go to the red cross.  
Caretaking Help, kindness, integration and togetherness Circularit

**The International School of Älmhult:**  
To develop inquiring, knowledge. Able and caring, young people who help to create a better more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.  
We should have: Equality, tolerance, fairness, intellectual honesty and grit (courage and determination despite difficulty).  
Collaboration+Different projects haganäs-international school  
Älmhults vävstugan might be interested in collaboration  
Cooperation focus groups with different nationalities in the region of Älmhult → Handelsplatsen  
Sustainability

**Linnéskolan:**  
How do we live up to the goal: the best school of Sweden (all the schools of Älmhult)  
Our future  
Cooperation focus groups for Älmhult handelsplats  
Sustainability

**Aktivitetshuset IKEA:**  
Fun, food, activity, meeting place and family  
Togetherness, meningsfull fritids.

**Folketshus and ABF:**  
To learn from each other through a study circle A place for people in need of help  
A cinema meeting place  
Public education. One house for everyone  
Outside cinema, a collaboration with Älmhult handelsplats  
After school movie club; show movies related to education that schools can visit  
Collaboration with events  
Integration  
Haganäs school: ideas, design / art / creative,producing  
Film in the new folketshus.  
Students/Teachers as focus group

**Muff**  
A place to socialize  
Sharing knowledge  
Social entrepreneurship  
Different Meeting platforms  
Togetherness + Sharing  
Core of Älmhult  
Be part of their unique skill of food.  
Connect with international school: food design unit + Art exhibition (already in the planning)
Handelsplatsen:
Ålmhult handelsplats. Ikea centres “A natural meeting place”
A place for everyone. In the future we want this place to be where you want to go.
Values: For everyone “for the many people”
Today? Tomorrow?
Educational entrepreneurship
A place to swap things
Repair café / Redesigning old furniture
I really like to shop at Willy’s, but I do not like this big area of huge parking lots.
Art project+get together Haganäs students “Real” life
Collaboration on events
Community garden including schools in realisation

Old children hospital:
Possibilities
History
Ingvar Kamprad 30 March 1926

Häradsbäck:
Find applications to rural areas and small companies
Living rural area
Preserve trade in the rural area
Cult
A surprise in the middle of nowhere

Vattentornet (water tower):
Symbol of Ålmhult
Infrastructure
Before a fantastic restaurant
Water
New area of use like a café
Wayfinder “lighthouse”

IKEA:
DP design technology course, students help solve design problems
Some form of tour, find out what goes on day-to-day
Home furnishing for everyone
The motor of Ålmhult together with IKEA of Sweden and other companies

Municipality:
Respect + Part taxing
Commonalities
More cooperation in the people and associations in the community
Opening up for the public

City centre:
Calm and pleasant centre
Teach local history
New street, city centre

Ikea of Sweden:
More sharing, collaboration with haganässkolan art + design project.
DP visual course → Artist mentor a student?
The motor of Ålmhult together with the department store
More sharing
Possible IKEA-ISÄ collaboration in our maker-centred classroom. Strategies: Design process, embedded into the classroom practice.

New housing:
Better living houses?
DP DAS areas
New, growing area, inspiring to follow.

Hallaryd:
Culture, a living rural area
Beautiful nature
The next step in forming the network was to build their rules and expectations. This was done through the method, White Box in which the box represented their collaboration. Through the questions: “What are the values of our collaboration?”, “Why do we want to collaborate?”, “Do we need rules and what would the rules be?” and “What are our personal/organisation needs?” the base of the network was build. Important aspects were discussed and written down. During the discussion one group even named the box Vi-Älmhult (We-Älmhult). As we worked in groups there were different result, but they had a lot in common. A new meeting should develop the white box more.

Group 1:
The network should consist of municipality, companies and students, they together should work to solve problems. It stands for the benefit of sharing resources, open mindedness, flexibility and commitment/dedication. It needs to work with frameworks, communication and it should be time bounded. Everyone is welcome and is equal. The network should also try to meet the interests of youth in the community of Älmhult.

Group 2: Vi-Älmhult
The network should work for involvement with the community and create a community feeling. It should work with locals that are interested in collaborating with schools. As Älmhult is an international community the network should break down language and cultural barriers. The network works as one common playground with goals and it is set in frameworks. It should provide a way into the local organisations and schools. There is a need for mutual rewards, expectations and commitment from all stakeholders involved.
The last step in the co-design meeting was to generate ideas in groups and form the network. How will we continue to work was the main question. The group got a variety of materials to create a mindmap. The first step was to find ways to work together with the people around the table and express those ideas on the paper. Connecting these collaborations formed a network. There were two teams working to form the network and collaborations:

**Group 1: Krista Baker, Etienne Stefansson, Therese Karlsson, Lina Madar and Selin Hult:**

This group started by placing themselves and their organisation on the map, drawing connections between each other, they came up with ideas of collaborations. They for example came up with the idea to use the skills of the students to organise events and workshops at the local shopping area (Älmhults Handelsplats). The possibility of using each other’s resources were also discussed during this step.

**Group 2: Emmelie Lindner, Inga-lill New kumit, Marie Sterte, Stefan Thörn, Julianne Lindner and Jeanette Guttenberg:**

This group worked with how we as a network can make people belong in the community of Älmhult. They talked about the need of belonging and the feeling of home and being proud of your community. They saw IKEA as a resource of knowledge as they have experience in creating a functioning community with people from different backgrounds in culture and language in there work environment. The group made a circle of playmobil figures representing their places and illustrating how the network works. They also talked about when creating a more intercultural network a need to preserve respect towards the history and culture of Älmhult should be addressed. During the conversation they also talked about giving and taking. When being part of the community you need to give as much as take. Language sharing was one example for the international community to give back to the local community.
This design process is just the beginning of advocating change in the community of Ålmhult. In this, the co-meeting was the first step of building a network to involve the students of Ålmhult in the local community. During the meeting we met for the first time and talked about the possibility of collaborating between the local community and its schools. The next step is to find opportunities to work with each other and from there build a bigger network by finding more stakeholders. The most important aspect of the network is to be able to find each other and know each others assets and resources.

I would like to continue my work in Ålmhult by starting a workgroup that contributes to this interaction. Building a Facebook page to promote the projects and events organised through these collaborations. You can think of fashion shows made by students using reused materials gathered by Röda Korset or a community garden at Ålmhult Handelsplats organised by teachers, students and locals or even a Yearly language festival in the city centre. An research project in Göteborg that has worked with giving a voice to the citizens is Mellanplats (Mellanplats, 2013). This project in comparison to the project in Ålmhult is a government based collaboration. The organisers are a collected group individuals from different disciplines, but they have all the same focus on city development. To set up a group of locals in Ålmhult with the common goal to develop the area, but with different backgrounds and knowledge about various disciplines, would be a good base of the future of this. Giving the inhabitants a voice, of many languages and thereby give them opportunities to be part of Ålmhults community. During the co-design meeting a third community within Ålmhult was mentioned. In the last couple of years a refugee community has arisen in the town. This community also needs to get involved in the future of this project as well. The town, as the theory of place sharing introduced in this text, needs a stronger identity, but most of all one identity for the whole community. Using the elements that are already there to build on them. For this the municipality also needs to be involved, untill now they did not show any interest in the project, but I hope to involve them in the future of this project. We also need the tools of co-design to get many perspectives in a city of so many cultures. Through the first co-design method via the interaction of the participants this need of mingle became clear, during the meeting the sense of belonging came back a couple of times in their conversation. But also when inviting the participants to the meeting there was already a sense of wanting to be part of a community, both from me and from others I met. The tool of inviting people to the co-design meeting helped me to understand what building a community includes, in a way inviting the people to the meeting was already a sense of building a micro community. In the future it is important to keep the student as close to the local development as possible, by doing so the community feeling can grow even bigger in the future. Also what has been mentioned earlier in the text it is needed to stimulate the students knowledge development not only through literature and personal development, but also the local perspective.

To start this mingling I would like to organise an exhibition (Let’s Mingle) in the city centre of the town. Through a co-design tool I want to stimulate the inhabitants of Ålmhult to get in contact and start to work together. In this project I would of course introduce the student’s relationship to the local community.


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Proud Europe. 2014. Understanding Design Series: Dr Bas Raijmakers. [ONLINE] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5PoT3oIz70. [Accessed 30 of March 2018]


Appendix

Exhibition at Konsthallen Växjö
Satellite at Stortorget, Älmhult