



Young Finnish Design®

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**ELISA LUOTO, CEO & HEIDI MARIA HUOVINEN, CREATIVE DIRECTOR**  
COFOUNDERS OF YOUNG FINNISH DESIGN OY

BA & MA Aalto University, furniture design & interior architecture

New York, Wanted Design 2016

London Design 100%, 2016

Habitare Protoshop, 2016

Multiple grants SKR, Aalto, Taike

Kiuas Accelerator 2018

Tempo funding, Business Finland 2018

Habitare, Alberto Alessi award 2019

INTO pitch honorary award 2022

VISA, She's NEXT 2023 grant

Suomi areena, MTV3 Katsomo 2023

Kasvu Open Marketing & Sales programme 2023

Market Explorer funding, Business Finland 2023

Multiple articles in Finnish and international design media

# OUR AIM IS TO MOTIVATE YOU!

WHO WE ARE

WHY WE ARE HERE

WHAT WE DO

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

WHAT WE DID WELL

WHAT WE DID NOT SO WELL

WHAT WE WISHED WE HAD KNOWN

WHAT WE ENCOURAGE YOU NOT TO DO

WHAT WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO DO



# OUR STORY

What we do

Mission

Our story: fairs .. grants.. found the problem

Uncomfort zone, be comfortable with being uncomfortable

Passion to research and mold the problem

Started with furniture design - now interior, service, brand, product design services

How we solve the problem, examples

Now vs future goals

## Notes:

Be ready to evolve and change



# CLIENTS HIGHLIGHTS



**unikulma**

**VM Carpet®**

**JOUITSEN**



**NIIMAR**

**lekolar®**

# AWARDS / GRANTS

**-18**

Kiuas Accelerator -  
ensimmäinen  
design-tiimi 2018,  
  
mukaan valittiin 15  
tiimiä

**-19**

Alberto Alessin  
palkinto -  
Habitaressa

**-22**

Into Pitch,  
kunniamaininta

**-23**

VISA She's NEXT  
apuraha naisyrittäjät  
Pohjoismaissa,  
  
3 yritystä sai  
apurahan Suomesta

**-23**

Suomi Areena  
Stipendi, NEXT-  
brändin  
julkistaminen  
  
suorassa  
lähetyksessä MTV3  
:ssa kesäkuu 2023

**-23**

Yritys valittiin  
Kasvuopenin  
Myynnin &  
Markkinoin sparraus-  
ohjelmaan

**KIUAS**

**ALESSI**

**into**  
SEINÄJOKI

**VISA**

**SUOMI  
AREENA**

**KASVU OPEN®**

# ADVISOR BOARD



**Paula Makkonen**

Partneri,  
Inse Consulting Oy



**Antti Olin**

Muotoilujohtaja, Luova  
johtaja



**Petro Lahtinen**

Founder of  
Woodio

## **Uncertainties**

Being confused

comparison, overwhelmed, enjoyment of the process

Focus in which career areas you should be developing yourself

portfolio

ppl skills

design is just a part of the project

many of designers aren't confident in having a conversation about design work, skills, explaining about own work, pricing, negotiating,

## **How to:**

Learn by doing: do it now with your friend

Think about yourself as one of the team players

Start thinking about yourself as part of the corporate world, not separate





## **Designers' responsibility**

- Find the tools that are going to make you profit from your education
- Learn how to make your case: how to justify your work and its worth to your customers  
Data, numbers, research materials
- Be active! more is better
- Fail a lot, failing is the best lesson
- Example: YFD competition: Metropolia was the most active
- Be interested: be interested in what and how your cooperators and customers work, what they offer, what they do, and respect their roles, be more interested!



## **Companies responsibilities in a nutshell**

- jobs
- pension
- product development
- marketing
- sales.. €€€
- inventory
- shipping
- packing



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## **If you are to be a freelancer/entrepreneur:**

### **Possess / learn**

- listen to your customer and you are more likely to succeed
- take pride in your work
- possess negotiation skills
- Learn to listen to the customer and make it your inspiration, how to solve the problem for them in a creative way
- dont push your ideas to them who dont want them, design is about listening and making the solution best for your customer, if your customer doesnt like it, then you have failed
- design is a process it is a tool its not the end goal, your part is important but its not the most important



**Don't seek happiness, its like an orgasm, when you seek it it's likely to go away**

- you will fail at some point, thats good! dont be afraid to fail!
- learn to cope with failing, learn to learn from failing, learn to love failing
- entrepreneurship: its mostly shit and then the non shit is golden
- the process itself is the most fun! Make the most of it!

**How to:**

if someone else can cope with the uncertainty, you will too. You just have to face it first, face it so many times it doesnt bother you anymore

You will hear a lot of doubters, it sucks and they suck, but they will always be there, zone them out.

You can do this, you will become comfortable with this and you will be fine

**Mike Tyson "everybody has a plan to get punched in the face."**



## **Create your dream job**

-You have so many skills, not just one, believe it.

### **How to:**

- List all your capabilities and productize your skills, dont stand just on one leg
- Find inspiring people and examples
- Start doing, no excuses
- Be your dream everyday, become it
- Believe it, believe it, believe it, play the game of believing

### **Our experience:**

- we have built our own career
- making a change in the design field, it has to be us designers!
- meaningful work
- compromising, it's hard, but necessary.
- dreams evolve, dont fight against it

### **Food for thought:**

The more creative you are and can think outside the box the more chances you will create for yourself and for your future. Do research, be interested, talk, attend, be brave, visit.. The world is your oyster!



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## **Bigger picture**

- you are going to become what you envision for yourself, stay calm and see the big picture
- small daily steps are the most valuable, be persistent
- Set clear goals: goal to succeed in what you are about to do

Example: when art is set to be a hobby, that's all it's going to be: then you are most likely not going to make it (competitors) You may just as well dream big or small

## **About dream jobs:**

- Usually aren't offered on a silver platter: you might have to create it for yourself seek it, build it, become it
- Change of mindset: think about going towards your dream, working for it and it will come
- Seek for the good things in the position which isn't the dream position, what kind of a role does it have in the bigger picture?
- Usually the dream job isn't as dreamy as you had thought

## **Money or no money..?**

- The jobs that are "not perfect enough"
- Your own boundaries, what do you want to do vs can do, sometimes you just can't take a low paying project
- visibility and low paying cases have a role = make the most of it
- visibility is OK but it doesn't pay your bills

To us sharing our career path here in Aalto has also been part of our dream :)



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## **Contracts, yikes!**

- there is no right or wrong answers here
- get to know the company you are making contracts with: royalty contract vs other contracts

## **Negotiating**

Our experiences of negotiating

## **Pricing**

- 50 vs 500€
- the vision you are building in the clients head
- Cheap = cheap quality
- change pricing later

## **Running start:**

- Dont waste time in just building your portfolio
- Invest in communication and building network, Start now! Today!
- Us designers think that after the product etc is done then the money starts flying in.. its not true



**Create your own possibilities, see them, feel them, make them real**

**YFD story:**

5 years ago founded

Now we invest in building the company

Business Finland Tempo, now Market explorer

We have sold our shares to investors (angel) advisors and board members

Antti, Petro. Paula, Petra

Looking to raise more money to invest in building the company

This is about long term goals

**How to:**

Think about long term goals, value your everyday steps towards your dream, do them with even more great passion. Know more also about things outside the design scene, businesses, people, learn from them

**Our passion:**

We have a personal mission, we really want to change things



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## **What makes a difference:**

Be excited about your career that is the only thing that matters

Build a clear vision= a hobby or career? You decide

The only thing that matters is you and your vision, nobody is going to do that for you = create your own possibilities, see them, feel them, make them real

## **What drives you? Really?**



## **What does our work days look like?**

- Fun, hard, long
- We have decided to invest a lot of time, money in this
- When you are working with your friend you are also responsible of his/her/their career and future dreams
- In the beginning you need to put 110% of your time into it
- We work in Kamppi
- Our team
- What drives us : making a change, creating something new, freedom

## **Patience is a virtue**

- Be it
- Process might take long or short time
- Find a way to move forward that suits you there is no right or wrong
- Do your best and be better tomorrow, be more interested, be excited
- Be patient if there isnt sales immediately, everyone doesnt know you and your brand immediately
- You will learn how much you dont know when you go forward



## **Tips!**

- Start building network, look around you: cooperators, customers, partners, advisors
- Dont spend time here in school competing against each other
- School is the easiest part and the most fun
- get to know EVERYONE
- discuss and share everything
- Be kind to everyone, people want to cooperate with nice people in the business world
- Think about yourself as an equal with your customers, cooperators and partners, you are not better or worse than them
- Be kind to yourself, you are amazing, you are in the beginning and you have so many options ahead of you! Getting into business will only broaden your possibilities so make the most of it!



# THANK YOU

[www.youngfinnishdesign.com](http://www.youngfinnishdesign.com)

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