

Design and Organizational Change in the Public Sector¹

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Introduction

Many countries still do not show clear and strong signs of recovery from the global economic downturn that started in 2008, which is causing a structural lack of resources, particularly affecting the public sector. The economic, demographic, social, and environmental long-term challenges call for deep changes, questioning many of the assumptions that have underpinned public services and posing new challenges for institutions, policy makers, civil servants, and communities. While austerity measures were adopted all over the world, societal challenges are intensifying: youth unemployment, elderly healthcare, immigration, social inclusion, and other wicked problems press public institutions with the contradictory request of delivering new services or restructuring the existing ones, achieving higher effectiveness with fewer resources.

As a few studies have pointed out (Ashworth, Boyne, and Delbridge, 2009; Diefenbach, 2009), the usual solution—cutting budgets and trying to make public organizations more efficient by transferring models and practices from the private sector—is limited.

Research on organizational management and social studies has a long tradition of binding the competitiveness of an enterprise to its capability to continuously change its culture by overcoming organizational dogmas and pursuing innovation (Drucker, 1995, 2002; Hamel and Prahalad, 1994; Hamel and Välikangas, 2003). While organizational change theories recognize the complexity of the phenomenon of change within organizations and therefore display a systematic and holistic attitude, the managerial practice is characterized by many models and techniques that seem to be derived from a reductionist way of thinking, thereby producing formulas that can be easily synthesized and turned into slogans and procedures applicable to a variety of situations with minimal adaptation. Even if there has been harsh criticism of the fast turnover of these managerial models and techniques that led analysts to describe many of them as fads, the practice still seems to prosper (Collins, 2003; Miller and Hartwick, 2002).

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In a more general frame, the very idea that managerial models and practices can be extracted from a context, abstracted, and turned into formulas that can be transferred somehow independently from the characteristic of the receiving context has often proved wrong. This did not occur just in the shift from the private to the public sector, but in the first place in the private sector itself (Miller and Hartwick, 2002). This is especially true for public organizations, where too often the transfer of models from the private sector is tried, assuming that what worked there could be simply replicated to reduce inefficiencies and enhance productivity. Recent studies underline how this assumption is fundamentally wrong, showing how the lack of grounding for these new processes and the unwillingness of participants to become involved play an important role in strengthening the natural resistance to change, often leading to unsuccessful transformations (Cunningham and Kemping, 2009; Lines, 2004). This phenomenon can be ascribed to many reasons, but we would note that the entrance in the public sector of the large managerial consultancies, always in need of ready-to-use formulas, is playing a quite relevant role.

Proposition

The adoption of nonsituated innovation recipes is quite distant from the mainstream of the design culture:

design literature strongly recognizes situatedness, human-centricity, and participation as the bases for building successful innovation processes and tools (Ehn, 2008; Gero, 1998; Schön, 1983).

The aim of this article is to build a link between this design perspective and the issue of organizational change in the public sector, highlighting the dynamic relation between the operative and the strategic levels of change, as a way to overcome some of the limits and inefficiencies of the established practices.

Our proposition is that the adoption of participatory design knowledge and tools in the development of public services—an emerging trend responding to a diffused need of building a new generation of more user-centered, efficient, and cost-effective services—requires (and implies) change in the organizations that deliver them and that the more the design practices are new to the organizations, the more the change should be relevant (Deserti and Rizzo, 2014).

Until today, the only notable investigation of this topic can be found in the work of Sabine Junginger, who connected the introduction of human-centered design practices in public bodies and in private companies and the change in organizations (Junginger, 2006, 2008; Junginger and Sangiorgi, 2009).

Even though we can document a few cases of public bodies that introduced design in their practices—

for example, the introduction of “experience-based design” in the UK National Health Service or the cases cited in Junginger (2006)—and the experimentations in this field now are flourishing, their focus is primarily on the changes to the services, while very little reflection is being produced on the change within the organizations that are supposed to manage them. There seems to be a widespread idea that the introduction of user-centered practices will work per se, without the need for facing the problem of change in the hosting organizations. Most of the changes obtained through the new practices are thus affecting the superficial level, while at deeper levels the established culture, mindset, habits, and practices are still dominant. The redesign of the interface of the public services is a clear example: we may have a number of new Web sites, applications, and touch points redesigned according to user-centered practices, but the back-office procedures and their underpinned culture often remain untouched. This might be interpreted as a matter of time because affecting the deeper levels can take a much longer period, but for sure there is also a question of integration and appropriation of the new practices within the organizations.

Here we should underline that, even if starting from Nonaka and Takeuchi (1996), a quite strong line of thinking looks at innovation as a problem of knowledge creation and

management, and most of the approaches to innovation focus on the change of the offering more than on the change in the organizations. In this respect, participatory design practices display an even stronger bias because they draw attention to the end users and see solutions as a result of their context of destination rather than as a result of their context of origin. This bias is opposite to that of the self-referential attitude of public organizations, and per se this could be good because it can create a positive clash, leading to the change of an established attitude. At the same time, the focus on the exterior (citizens or end users) and the claim for an outside-in transformation poses the problem that little reflection is being made on how public organizations can internalize and integrate the new knowledge and how the change process can be fostered or managed: this omission could easily lead to rejection of the new practices or confinement of them to a cosmetic role.

We also note that, even if the body of knowledge on the introduction of design in organizations is quite strong, it was primarily developed with reference to private companies, with a particular emphasis on large multinational corporations that was only recently extended to small and medium-sized enterprises (Acklin, 2011). The interaction between the introduction of design as a new approach in public organizations and the management of their change thus

appears as a relevant node that should be investigated. In our perspective, this investigation can lead not just to finding ways of combining the already existing change management knowledge and practices with the already existing service design knowledge and practices, but to the construction of a new frame, in which both disciplines can influence each other, introducing elements of novelty for both.

Design and the ambidextrous organization

The existence of a constant tension between innovation and preservation within organizations is widely recognized in innovation studies. Literature highlights how established organizations tend to defend their status quo and how innovation must fight its way up to emerge (Ansoff, 1990; Rumelt, 1995). The reasons for this conservative attitude have been explored (Schalk, Campbell, and Freese, 1998; Schein, 2004; Zeffane, 1996) and connected to many internal and external factors, which all turn into a general lack of incentive to abandon a certain present for an uncertain future, generating a quite common situation in which business as usual tends to overcome innovation. In this frame, innovation and change are often regarded as a last chance that most organizations embrace only when the established practices do not work anymore. Hamel and Välikangas

(2003) note that organizations should develop resilience—the capability to “continuously anticipate and adjust to changes that threaten their core earning power, and change before the need becomes desperately obvious” (p. 52). In most cases, radical change as a last attempt to survive actually comes too late: the competitors have already acquired a dominant position, the resources are too limited, the time is too short, and so on. In this respect, Treacy (2004) argues that breakthrough innovation should be pursued as the last growth strategy because in the long run, “radical changes usually get beaten by the slow and steady approach of the incremental innovation” (p. 29). Building on this, Norman and Verganti (2014) recently reconnected incremental and breakthrough innovation to two different design approaches, questioning some of the traditional assumptions around user-centered design.

The idea that the capacity of managing the established practices and that of innovating and changing in a reactive or proactive way can be balanced was actually discussed in organizational studies many years ago, with the introduction of the concept of ambidextrous organization (Duncan, 1976; March, 1991). Ambidexterity can be primarily described as the balance of exploitation and exploration, which makes organizations capable of relying on efficient and profitable solutions while continuously searching for new

and better ones. Even if the concept is established, the ambidextrous organization faces quite a few structural, cultural, and operative problems in shifting from the theoretical model to its implementation.

Ambidexterity can be built by devoting a part of the organization to innovation while keeping the rest focused on exploitation or by introducing the attitude of innovating in a pervasive way that involves all the components of the organization in the exploration activities. The adoption of both the solutions must be carefully considered: the first may encounter problems of integration because it may lead to the creation of innovation units or areas operating (or perceived) as separate bodies; the second may encounter problems of prioritization because the usual daily activities may prevail over the ones dedicated to innovation. Another relevant problem is that exploration and exploitation employ different thinking modes, very difficult to run simultaneously. Here is where design gets into the picture, because it is used to playing in the intermediate ground between exploration, typically represented by its capacity of dealing with the chaotic front end of innovation, and exploitation, typically represented by its capacity of dealing with new product development and engineering. According to Martin (2009), the use of a complex mix of deductive, inductive, and abductive logic is a typical trait of design thinking that makes it useful not just

to bring sparks of creativity into staid organizations, but also to balance exploration and exploitation, overcoming the typical “bias toward reliability” (Martin, 2009; Sutton, 2001) that characterizes established organizations.

The introduction of design practices in the public sector

The demand for smarter solutions by a new generation of citizen-centered services is leading to an increasingly systematic exploration of what design can do for public organizations. The rapid growth of service and experience design spread the idea that design is not just focused on tangible artifacts, but also on processes and interactions that can be effectively developed by assuming the perspective of the end users, putting them at the center of the projects and involving them as actors rather than as clients (Bannon, 1991) and opening the way for advanced participatory practices (Ehn, 2008; Manzini and Rizzo, 2011).

In many countries, public organizations are introducing design to foster innovation and change, with a particular emphasis on the development of a more user-centered approach.

Over the last 10 years, quite a few service design consultancies have specialized in working for the public sector: Thinkpublic, Live|Work; Design Continuum, Experientia, Engine, Reboot, and Snook, to men-

tion just a few. Even IDEO, a big player, now features “Public Sector” (but also “Organizational Design”) within the range of its expertise. These consultancies are involved in small service projects and in large policy reforms and are helping public organizations to assume a new perspective, overcoming established practices.

Governmental organizations and NGOs such as Nesta and the Design Council in the United Kingdom or Mindlab in Denmark are also playing a relevant role in pushing the design approach to the innovation of public services, brokering the experimentation of design-led projects and de-risking the introduction of new practices in a sector that has always been quite conservative. The strategic guidelines of the European Union on “Design for Growth and Prosperity” (Thomson and Koskinen, 2012) enforced this trajectory, underlying the importance of a human-centered perspective in the innovation of public services to build a better society. The report “Restarting Britain 2: Design and the Public Services” (UK Design Commission, 2013) emphasizes the role of design in the transformation of the public service system, presenting it as a fresh approach to rethinking policy, professional practice, and service delivery.

In our view, experiments with the application of design in the public sector are being applied in two different but complementary

directions. The first can be called “people-centered services”: it stretches from traditional user-centered design to the co-design method, relying on the intensive involvement of end users in research, prototyping, testing, and implementing the services, with the aim of improving usability, quality of interaction, and users’ experiences. The second can be called “people-led services”: it stretches from co-design to co-production and aims at developing new public-private-people partnerships to co-produce solutions with users/citizens.

Along these two directions, we can document the blooming of initiatives, professional structures, projects, programs, and recommendations. At the same time, even if there is some long-term experience (Junginger, 2006), we have to underline that the introduction of design culture in the public sector is still in its initial phases: design methods and tools are still largely unknown by public institutions, and design knowledge is still far from having entered public organizations on a large scale, affecting daily processes and underlying culture. The European Commission’s (2009) public consultation pointed out that the most serious barrier to the better use of design in Europe (78 percent of responses) is “lack of awareness and understanding of the potential of design among policy makers” (p. 7). Even if much has

been done, recent studies point out the difficulty of legitimating design in the new field:

It is important to remember that for the public sector to commission design agencies to address social challenges was, and still is, a big leap in thinking. Design is not typically associated with creating social solutions within the public sector. Without the backing of key organisations like Nesta and the Design Council, and the promotion of innovation (i.e. trying new processes and methods to produce innovative results) by the Government, a design agency proposing to tackle an inadequate public service or improve a health or social inequality would have seemed absurd. Even with the work of these key organisations and the innovation agenda, for many it still is. (Cook, 2011, p. 25)

Moreover, we have to remark that the ongoing initiatives and experiments of introduction of design in the public sector are primarily focused on the direct results: there is a wide and documented interest in how design can change public services, making them more accessible, usable, effective, participatory, money saving, and so on. Other than introducing generic objectives such as making public organizations more citizen-centric or more efficient, up until now there has been almost no concern about how the change of the services and of the practices adopted in their development should be

reconnected to that of the public institutions.

The introduction of design methods and tools in the redesign of public services: case studies

In order to deepen these aspects, in the following we examine three cases of redesign of public services, with the perspective of reconnecting the introduction of new design knowledge to the change in organizations:

- The design of new services for neighborhood-based communities in the frame of the My-Neighbourhood European research project
- The design of new services for active aging, which is being conducted in Helsinki within the frame of the DAA European research project
- The introduction of public-social partnerships (PSPs) in the development of new public services in Scotland

These three cases are representative of three different ways and levels of experimenting with the introduction of design culture in public contexts through small experiments or projects for a new generation of public services. MyNeighbourhood is piloting public and collaborative services for neighborhood-based communities experimenting with a participatory approach and looking for ways to scale up the solutions. DAA is

collecting evidence from already-conducted experiments attempting to affect the policy level. The PSP project of the Scottish Government is experimenting with new forms of partnerships to deliver public services, introducing design knowledge into the construction of networks of participants.

These three cases will be discussed to derive empirical evidence and key findings, which will be reconnected to a theoretical framework to build new knowledge and to stimulate future studies.

Case 1. MyNeighbourhood: The design of new services for neighborhood-based communities

MyNeighbourhood is an EU-funded research project (www.my-neighbourhood.eu) started in January 2013 with the goal of applying service design methods and tools in four different European neighborhoods to identify and support the establishment and the scaling-up of grassroots and community-based initiatives, through the adoption of a Web-based service platform. The project is operating in a typical information and communication technologies research area, introducing the idea that advanced participatory design methods can foster the innovation of public services.

At the core of the MyNeighbourhood vision is the idea of collaborative services (Baek, Manzini, and Rizzo, 2010) as solutions that may match the need of balancing the

technical “smartness” of cities with that of increasing participation through the development of softer solutions based on public–people partnerships (Rizzo and Deserti, 2014).

Through the co-design activities conducted in the four piloting sites, MyNeighbourhood developed innovative partnerships, deeply challenging the public institutions by involving them in unprecedented dialogue and interaction activities.

In Milan, the project delivered two collaborative services—Quarto Food Club and Quarto Gardening—currently under experimentation in Quarto Oggiaro, one of the city’s most run-down peripheral districts.

Quarto Food Club matches the need of delivering food to elderly people who are not in a condition to self-prepare it with that of their social inclusion. The service idea is to deliver meals to a group of elders living in the neighborhood, creating for the occasion a kind of social space in the local hotel and catering management schools, where elderly people can enjoy the meal together, getting in touch with each other and with the students who take part in the experiment as they carry out their own practical training activities.

Quarto Gardening is based on the same structure and gives to the municipality the possibility of exploiting the competences of the students of the local agricultural school to take care of some of the

green areas in the neighborhood. This service is made possible thanks to the agreement between the management of collective green areas (Municipality of Milan and Public Institute for Social Housing of Milan) and the local agricultural high school.

Both services also respond to the second neighborhood issue—young people’s unemployment woes—exploiting the involvement of the students from the local schools, who receive credits for the practical training and, at the same time, the possibility of real work experience.

Fostering new principles of mutual partnership, MyNeighbourhood is experimenting with the idea of providing local services and creating partnerships between public bodies and the local citizenry and operators, introducing a new rationale bound to the public–private–people partnerships as the result of complex participatory design processes.

Here we would underline that MyNeighbourhood is experimenting with service design not only as a method to design innovative and people-centered services but also as a set of competences that may trigger changes in the public organizations involved in the development and the delivery of the new services. The new processes are transferred and internalized by the employees through a long-term process of engagement in the design experiments. The team working on the implementation of the new

services is composed of researchers (the authors of this paper among them), professional designers, and employees from the Milano municipality. The project is thus matching grassroots experimentation with the larger strategic goal of introducing a systemic perspective in which the public sector, citizens, and local stakeholders work together in envisioning and co-producing new solutions. This perspective gives to the public actors the opportunity of interacting and dialoguing with citizens without losing contact with the real problems (bottom-up trajectory), while at the same time defining priorities and building solutions around a meaningful long-term vision beyond the acknowledgment of local needs (top-down approach), thus revealing unexplored space for democratic governance.

Case 2. DAA: Design-led innovation for active aging

DAA is an EU-funded research project (<http://daaproject.eu>) that aims at scaling innovative and yet sustainable solutions for elderly care, combining the expertise of care specialists with that of service designers. The project involves a network of cities acting as pilot sites in which to experiment with the development of new policies.

The EU 2020 Strategy identifies demographic aging as one of the main European long-term challenges, requiring innovative solutions

and improved policies to enable better social and healthcare services with less money and fewer caretakers. In this frame, the new forms of value networks, directly involving the citizens as co-producers within a public–private–people partnership scheme, are seen as promising practices that could be upscaled to obtain a systemic change (Murray, Caulier-Grice, and Mulgan, 2010).

The DAA project goes one step beyond the ongoing hands-on experiments of designing social innovation, because its goal is not introducing new services, but learning from already-established innovative solutions, improving the innovation capacity of the city administrations and public-sector policies. The expected outputs of the project thus include eight city implementation plans and a guidebook on the introduction of design practices in the public sector. The case of Helsinki, one of the piloting sites, will offer a better understanding of the overall project.

In Helsinki, the target group is people over the age of 65 who are receiving informal care in their own homes and regular and temporary clients of home-care support services. The project aims at diffusing a new, more flexible service provision model involving personal budgeting and creating a network of service providers to support it. With this new kind of service planning and budgeting, the elderly can organize their own support and services in a

more independent way. The main goal of the project is to identify the leverage points within a complex senior care system—that is, policy areas and management practices within the city of Helsinki and service departments of the national government—in which a shift will be needed to sustain and scale the new model. The overall objective of the design intervention in Helsinki is to make policy makers and managers understand on a strategic level their importance and role in the innovation process. To achieve this objective, the project aims at making changes in three different but connected layers: policy and strategy creation, service delivery, and people and communities.

In the frame of this project, the interaction among actors operating within these three layers is seen as a key factor in aligning different perspectives and ways of perceiving the problems and evaluating the solutions. Because the project has just started, results are still to be obtained and evaluated, but this trajectory draws attention to the construction and management of complex networks of public and private operators—the focus of the following case.

Case 3. The PSP project of the Scottish Government

The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that the third sector is able to play a full role in public service reform through greater involvement in service design and

delivery. To tackle this vision, it has put in place the PSP project (Scottish Government, 2011b), aiming at encouraging routine use of co-production in the design of public services and supporting the development of PSPs:

The purpose of the PSP Project is to select partnerships to co-plan and pilot the design of services which contribute to the delivery of national and local outcomes. These designs were intended to inform the specification for future services, which the lead public authority was expected to procure at the end of the process. (Scottish Government, 2011a, p. 6)

The underlined project assumption is that PSPs can enable the delivery of public services more efficiently and with more human-centered outcomes for the users of services by putting co-production at the heart of service design.

The project is structured in three main stages:

- Third-sector organizations work with public sector purchasers to design a service.
- A consortium of public sector and third-sector organizations may conduct a short-term pilot, helping to refine service delivery parameters.
- The service is further developed to maximize community benefit before being competitively tendered.

A period of PSP piloting is thus meant to help experimenting with the new practices before implementing future solutions. The project successfully met its objective of selecting pilot partnerships, within which the application of service design methods and tools could be experimented.

The project was thus turned into a structured program led by the Ready for Business consortium, which includes governmental institutions and private partners, with the aim of bringing on the experimentation to build strategic exemplar PSPs.

Besides the centrality of co-production, PSPs have the added benefit of giving all partners the opportunity to test out new service designs through piloting. This allows operational issues to be addressed and user feedback to be incorporated into the final design of the service.

The results of the experimentation conducted along the project are now being evaluated to give feedback on the adoption of the PSP model in the delivery of services on a larger scale. The lessons learned include considerations on the question of managing organizational change in parallel with the adoption of new procedures and the construction of partnerships and networks (Ready for Business, 2013). This must be seen as a long-term process, going far beyond single experiments and requiring years to be implemented to the stage of full adoption and internalization of the new knowledge.

Discussion

Previous initiatives around the introduction of design culture in public contexts have generally been more concerned with the structure of the offering than with the structure of the organization providing it. The above-presented cases document a different attitude, based on the awareness that the introduction of design culture may require explicit processes of organizational change.

In our perspective, the initiatives and the experimentations described in the cases introduced above can be interpreted as ways of building an ambidextrous frame around the public organizations, creating parent structures or embedded areas meant to introduce design knowledge within the systematic exploration of new ways of doing things.

With respect to this issue, the cases show different levels of elaboration. MyNeighbourhood is developing small-scale experiments; these risk not affecting the overall culture of the involved municipalities due to their size, and thus ways to scale up the solutions must be devised. DAA starts by recognizing that risk and tries to address it by developing frameworks for interpreting experiments and transferring insights that could affect the vision and the policies of the organization. The case of the PSPs in the Scottish Government shows a strong awareness that the change in services and that of the organizations cannot be untied and is

thus operating in a reverse way: from the policies to the experiments and back to the policies.

In our empirical experience with the MyNeighbourhood project (and with previous ones), the participatory construction and the prototyping of new services at a small scale appear to be a way of triggering a process of change in the public institutions that are about to introduce them. The small-scale experimentation may produce different effects—for example:

- Connecting a change to the competences of the organization by situating these experiments within its specific context and culture
- Engaging employees in the process of change by involving them in the development of the new solutions
- Introducing the idea that the change strategies must become dynamic and adaptive by constantly informing and assessing them through the results of the ongoing experimentation

The DAA case shows the possibility of building an intermediate playground, in which a participatory and situated approach can be introduced through the dynamic interaction between the operative and the strategic levels of organizational change. In this frame, organizational change can be described both as a precondition and as an effect of the introduction of new ways of doing things.

The case of the PSPs shows the need to shift the attention from the effectiveness of the single solutions to the possibility of pursuing a wider impact through the introduction of new policies aimed at designing and experimenting with new ways of delivering services and using the experiments to assess the policies and to foster change within the organizations involved.

The passage from the success of the experimental projects to the review of the policies is far from simple and automatic. Turning new solutions into new practices seems to require a different role for design: striving for a massive change of the processes through the dynamic integration of the operative and the governance levels, that is, informing the policies through the results of the experimentation. Within this frame, we see a major space to revise the processes of change of organizations: integrating bottom-up and top-down trajectories, breaking the borders between inside and outside, and introducing new forms of participated change management (Figure 1).

The cases show how the conception and delivery of the new services might be bound to the creation of networks and partnerships that in turn require the development of new policies. Some of the service design tools—for example, “actors mapping,” “stakeholders’ matrix,” “system mapping,” and “service blueprint” (Figure 2)—seem to

put both feet into the field of organizational change without a sound understanding of its complexity.

Organizational change issues are actually unknown to most of the designers: the abovementioned tools might guide them in defining conveniences and triggers for all the actors and stakeholders, but they seem to miss the awareness that change is not a mechanical process. Even if you find good motivations for change, that change will not necessarily be welcomed by the organizations that are supposed to undertake it.

Another relevant point that we can draw from the cases, confirming what we have already mentioned, is that the introduction of a user-centered perspective per se does not seem to be enough to establish adequate new practices. The DAA case clearly shows how the focus on the end user should be balanced with the understanding that the introduction of new practices requires a continuous mediation with already-established practices. From this we derive the idea that the very concept of participation should be revised, shifting from the traditional user-centered design perspective to that of “complex participatory design,” in which all the actors and stakeholders should be involved as co-designers. Building on this, cases also show that, when innovation is carried on through new forms of networking, the process of change should not affect only the

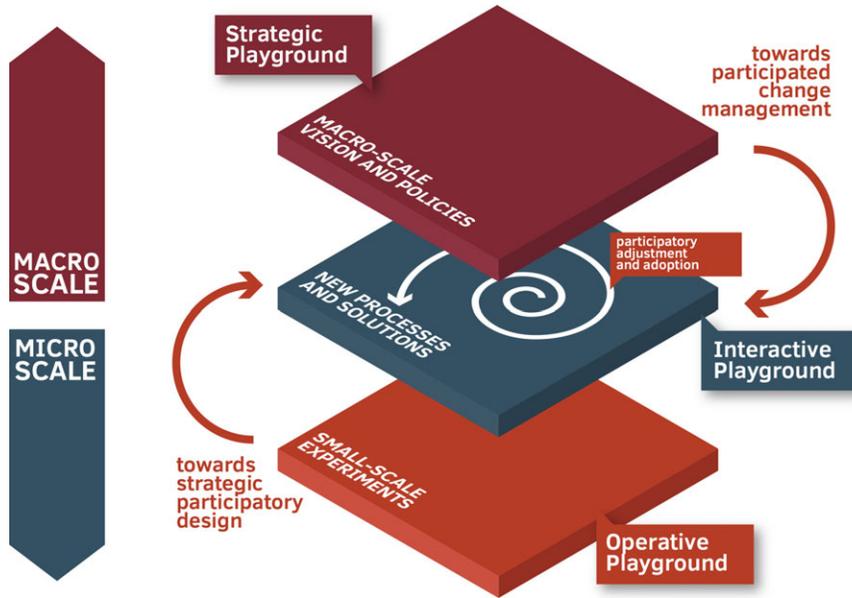


Figure 1. Participatory framework for organizational change.

public institutions leading it. In the case of the Scottish PSPs, the ongoing evaluation (Ready for Business, 2013) highlights that, to join the partnership, third-sector providers and public sector organizations both have to change their existing service models:

Whilst the public and social economy sectors appear to take a favourable view of the concept of PSP, in practice, it is apparent that there is a need for culture change within both sectors. The co-planning approach, the method recommended by this evaluation, requires participants in both sectors to enter into partnership as equals. There have been times, within all three pilots, where the importance of this, and the time it takes to make this happen, has been

underestimated. (McDonald, Wilson, and Jack, 2012, p. 3)

These new forms of partnership also highlight how public and private can be seen as a continuum rather than as opposites: the construction of complex partnerships calls for the capacity of change for both sides, rather than relying on the common view that the public can become efficient and cost-effective only by imitating the private.

The lesson learned during the experimentation with PSPs suggests conducting an internal analysis before committing to the change journey. The evaluation of the pilot project clearly identifies change management as one of the key issues, explaining that “if there currently is not the capability or capacity to properly drive through

this change in your organisation, then a change management plan can be drafted . . .” (Ready for Business, 2013, p. 5). We would say, in a stronger way, that, whenever a program of introduction of design knowledge takes place, a change management plan should be drafted.

Conclusion

The cases above show that embedding the practices of design in public bodies requires the management of their organizational change. If the introduction of design knowledge can trigger positive effects, there are also many issues that should be carefully considered.

The analysis of the cases shows that the trajectory of the small experiments is easier to implement because it does not affect the whole organization from the very beginning; however, it could be at the same time a source of major obstacles to the real integration of new knowledge within that organization because it might in effect create a binary system with potential conflicts between the new and the established culture. With respect to this risk, the cases show that concurrent strategies can be implemented, as with the design of an interactive playground in which the results of design projects can be managed together with long-term visions and strategies, to be integrated in the organizational practices within the perspective of a long-term cultural change.

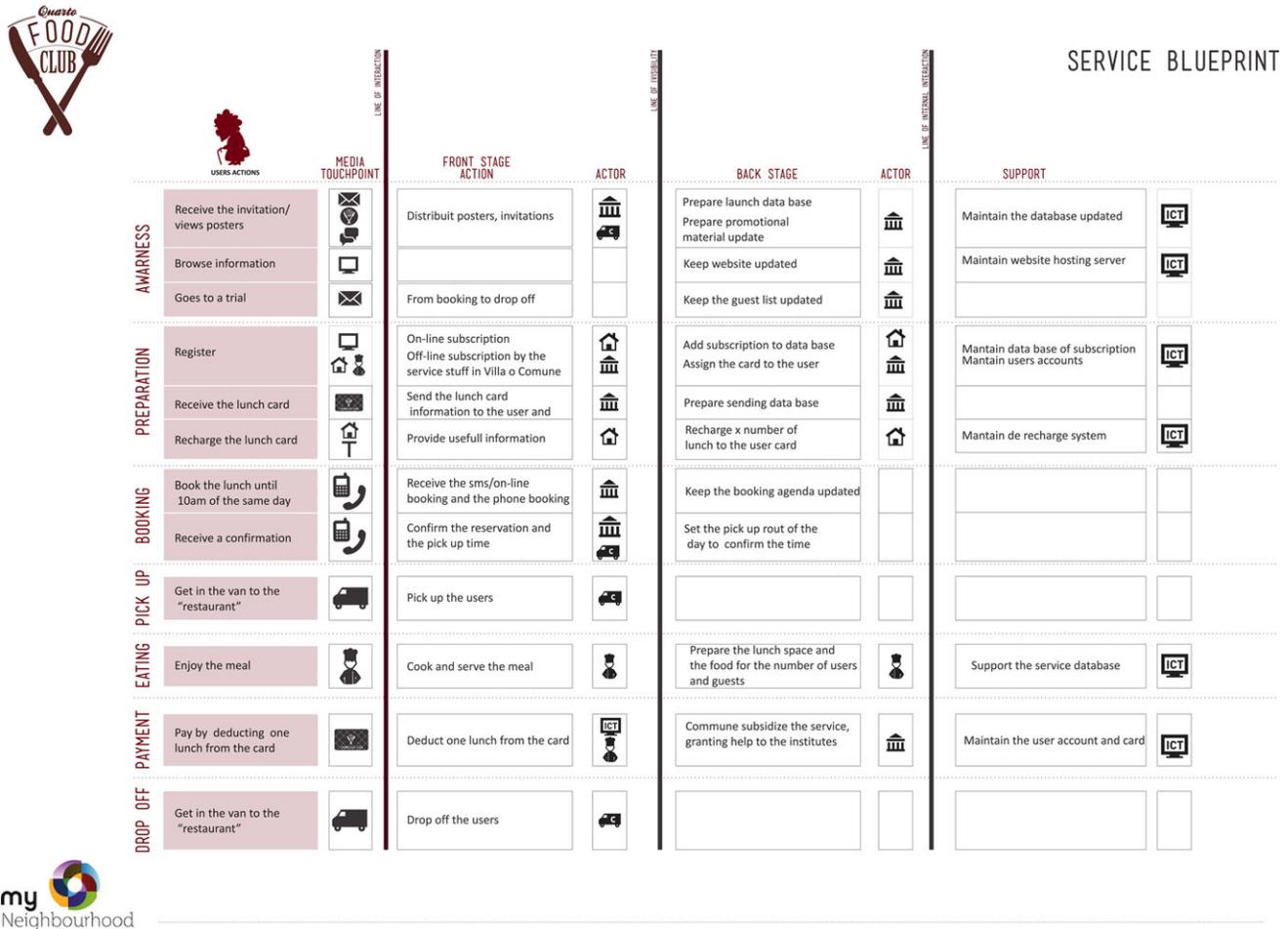


Figure 2. A "service blueprint" developed in the MyNeighbourhood project to configure organizational structures and processes.

With this paper, we want to provide a new frame for the investigation of a participatory approach to organizational change, introducing an interdisciplinary perspective. Disciplines dealing with innovation should consider the interaction between the renewal of the offering and the change in structure and processes, promoting the interchange of knowledge with the disciplines dealing with organizational change.

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