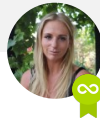


Self-assessment by Ella Walding

SUBMITTED ON 16 MAY 2023



A summary about me:

Ella is the Head of Service Design at Innovation Unit and has a particular interest in using service design to achieve social justice by redesigning system boundaries and social structures. Ella is experienced in using service design to make changes in complex systems and grow the conditions, mindsets, capabilities and structures that enable transformation change to happen. She has led teams and supported leaders across mental health, children's social care, justice and local and central government. Ella also co-leads the Innovation Unit Design Academy to provide high level design skills, confidence and experience for professionals working in social innovation and public service transformation.

I currently work as a/at:

Head of service design, Innovation Unit

<https://www.innovationunit.org/>

My LinkedIn profile:

<https://uk.linkedin.com/in/ella-walding-7939a2108>

My social media channels:

<https://twitter.com/ellawalding?lang=en>

My educational background:

Master's degree, Service Design, Royal College of Art, 2015 - 2017

Bachelor's Degree, Drama, University of Exeter, 2010 - 2013

The following theories are the key components of my approach to service design:

Using design to challenge social structures that create injustice:

Design processes enable us to engage people in a way that is collaborative and equalising. Designers are able to create level playing fields by including people across communities and seniority and flattening hierarchies. We redesign boundaries in systems and break down power dynamics by giving more agency to those who previously had none, both individuals and organisations. The values and behaviours that underpin design create long lasting change culturally and socially. We are intentional about acknowledging our own power and are empathetic to systemic challenges. We seek out and amplify unheard, multiple and marginalised voices, are participatory, and create spaces that are inclusive and empowering. We pay attention to injustice, the root causes of inequality, and the people and places that are too often overlooked.

Building movements of social change: Designers don't just develop shiny new solutions, we are constantly growing and remaking the conditions



that make solutions stick. We grow design communities to drive forward change and sustain the ongoing improvement of services and systems. In design practice, we learn by doing, so we give people the permission, tools and processes to move from thinking to experimentation and action. We take the time to understand the context and grow conditions, mindsets, capabilities and structures that enable change to happen and continue to happen. We encourage leadership that demonstrates compassion, courage and humility and takes people on a journey towards better services and systems. Design is something that anyone can understand and apply to make change. Designers work best when they train others in design processes, so that people can create changes in their worlds after we're gone.

Transforming systems, not just services: I currently lead the design team at Innovation Unit and have led the development of the Innovation Unit's vision for service design with staff and leaders. Innovation Unit's mission is to grow and scale the boldest and best innovations that deliver long-term impact for people, address persistent inequalities, and transform the systems that surround them. Because of this, working as a service designer at Innovation Unit often goes beyond the remit of services. Innovation Unit design work is expansive and emergent. It involves thinking about systems, how different people and organisations interact with one another, and most importantly how long term social impact can be created at scale. Service Design is used across Innovation Unit's work to disrupt, remake, reimagine and (re)design. We are strategic in our approach. We get up on the balcony to understand the challenges faced by our clients and the constraints they face. At the same time we are able to help them to create interventions, tools and touchpoints that realise new possibilities. We move between moments and experiences to system ecology and relationships - paying particular attention to inequality. Our focus is on defining, then reaching, the desired impact and we draw from our suite of design methodologies, tools and frameworks - including from complementary disciplines. We bring energy and optimism to imagining future scenarios that reinvent (sometimes radically) how we think about growing solutions and creating change. We make these future scenarios tangible, so that others can contribute to the vision and move forward together. We understand that the process you use, determines the future you create. So we build methodologies and work in a way that models the culture, values and practice we want to see lived. What underpins this work, is the approach designers bring to a project - a deep valuing of the voice of lived experience, the bringing together of multidisciplinary groups to coproduce something better and an ongoing process of co-creation, synthesis, learning and iteration.

These are the most relevant resources I base my work on and I recommend them as a body of knowledge in service design:

Radical Help, Hillary Cottam
Ron Hefitz, Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World
Cahn, Edgar, Using the co-production principle: No more throwaway kids
Design Council, Beyond Net Zero - a systemic design approach
Good Services - Lou Downe
Beyond Sticky Notes - Kelly Anne Mckercher
Markus Meissen - the nightmare of participation

I have X years of working experience in service design:

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My working experience in service design includes involvement in:

- Service design projects
- Service design consultancy
- Service design training

I have particular experience in the following service sectors:

Mental health, children's social care, justice, employment support, and local and central government

I have conducted X service design projects that aim at creating improvements or innovations within organisations:

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These are the service design projects I have successfully delivered:



Living Well UK (2018 - 2022)

Living Well UK was a four year programme that created new systems of community mental health support across the UK, inspired by a model developed in Lambeth, South London. The programme was awarded £3.4 million from The National Lottery Community Fund to support new local partnerships in Edinburgh, Luton, Salford, and Tameside & Glossop that worked to design their own version of a Living Well system.
<https://www.livingwellsystems.uk/>

Living Well Derbyshire (2019-now)

I am currently leading the work the Innovation Unit are doing with Derbyshire to articulate a bold vision for person-centred, holistic and community based care and support and transform how community mental health support is delivered, across their 8 localities.
<https://livingwellderbyshire.org.uk/>

Integrated employment support (2018 - 2019)

Innovation Unit worked with the Work and Health Unit and the Learning and Work Institute to create the Integrated Employment Support Programme, helping local areas support people unemployed due to health conditions back into meaningful work. We designed a service blueprint and handbook for a new employment support service.
Link:<https://www.innovationunit.org/projects/integrated-employment-support/>

Improving outcomes for care leavers facing prison sentences (2018 - 2019)

Funded by The Oak Foundation, Innovation Unit understood research to develop a deeper understanding of the issues facing care leavers given prison sentences and their experiences of being in custody and following release. This research led to the design of new solutions which are now being piloted.
Link:<https://www.innovationunit.org/thoughts/new-project-to-support-care-leavers-in-the-criminal-justice-system/>

Doncaster VCFS (2018)

Innovation Unit supported Doncaster to create a sustainable and thriving VCF sector. I led a piece of research to understand the views and aspirations of the voluntary community sector and led a number of workshops to explore new solutions to challenges, for example new collaborative commissioning structures.
<https://doncaster.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s20213/Project%20Specification.pdf>

Doncaster Children's Services Trust (2018)

Innovation Unit supported Doncaster Children's Service Trust to reduce demand at the Children's social care front door. We undertook system interviews, developed a system map, insights report and co-design new solutions against identified challenges.

Atom hub (2017 - 2018)

Wigan Council wanted all young people to become confident, resilient adults in family-based settings. Innovation Unit supported Wigan to develop the Atom Hub, a new residential and edge of care service inspired by North Yorkshire Council's No Wrong Door.
Link:<https://www.innovationunit.org/projects/asset-based-childrens-services/>

Save the children (2017 - 2018)

Organisation: Innovation Unit working with Save the Children

Topic: Families Living in Poverty

To enable Save the Children UK to become more of a listening organisation, we spent time with families to understand the triumphs and challenges of their daily lives. The research focused on how families tread the line between 'just about managing' and being unable to cope, and what this means for young children.

Link:<https://www.innovationunit.org/thoughts/innovation-unit-begins-research-with-save-the-children-uk/>

Coach4care (2017 - 2018)

Working with Guy's and St Thomas' Charity, I led Innovation Unit's work to bring together end of life care experts with members of the community to mobilise a vision for 'better endings'. I codesigned a service with carers - Coach4care- a peer led coaching service that builds carers' resilience and wellbeing. Link: <https://coach4care.squarespace.com/>



Servizz Design (2016 - 2017)

I led the work on Servizz Design - a set of tools aimed to create change in the Government of Malta, to enable different parts of Government to work seamlessly to meet citizens' needs. These tools are now used in Servizz.gov, a one stop shop that citizens use as a single point of contact for all public services.

Link: <https://www.service-design-network.org/headlines/service-design-award-finalist-servizz-design-by-ella-walding>

I have provided service design training sessions and/or other educational experiences for X years:

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My philosophy as a trainer is:

I have been leading the Innovation Unit Design Academy for the last two years and supporting clients to grow their service design capabilities for the last 5 years. I believe successful training includes:

A focus on service design methods, design thinking for system change and support to help people grow design confidence and leadership
Some theory and best practice examples, with a high focus on learning by doing, small group working activities and opportunities for peer learning

Coaching support to allow design students to develop their service design leadership, work on personalised skills development goals, and reflect on the type of designer they would like to be

Service design projects and learning by doing! Supporting students to apply the tools and approaches they have learnt to their day to day work.

These are the service design training sessions and/or other educational experiences I've facilitated within the last year:

I have led the innovation unit design academy for the last 2 years, alongside Aviv Katz. The IUDA is an 8 month course starting September 21 and September 22. It comprises 100+ hours of contact learning time, including 12 half or full day master classes, fortnightly 1 hour workshops, and 16 mentoring/coaching sessions per student. Those that complete the year will be accredited as SDN service design practitioners.

<https://www.iuda.org.uk/>

I mostly provide my training offerings in the following language(s):

English

I mostly provide my training offerings in the following countries/cities:

United Kingdom

I cover the following topics during my training offerings:

- History of service design
- Definition of service design
- Differentiation of service design to other approaches like design thinking, service marketing and service branding
- User research/deep customer insights
- Designing and conducting co-creation workshops
- Creativity and ideation processes
- Visualisation techniques
- Facilitation skills for service design
- Prototyping of services
- Implementation of service design concepts
- Leadership/management of service design projects
- Building in-house service design capabilities
- Working with complex service systems
- Exploration of systems



- Service design for cultural change
- Organisational development

My training participants typically have the following level of experience:

- Novice (new to service design)
- Fundamental (basic knowledge)
- Advanced (practical application)

These are my favourite cases I use to inform participants about the impact and value of service design:

Mostly I draw upon innovation unit projects, to talk directly about work Innovation Unit have delivered. Projects include:

- Living Well: <https://www.innovationunit.org/projects/living-well-uk/>
- Coach4care: <https://coach4care.squarespace.com/>
- Employment support: <https://www.innovationunit.org/projects/integrated-employment-support/>
- St Johns Ambulance: <https://www.innovationunit.org/projects/young-responders-with-st-john-ambulance/>

I also draw on external projects & horizon scans e.g patients hotel as examples of innovative service design.

These are the service design methods and tools that I use during my sessions:

Design research & participatory research
Ethnographic research
Personas
Storytelling
Visualising with confidence
Customer journeys
Service blueprints
Prototyping
System mapping
Design in complex systems
Design methodologies
Coproducton
System imagination
Design leadership
Public narrative

After successfully attending my training sessions, participants will typically be able to:

They will have:

- Greater confidence and competence in applying a range of service design methods and techniques, including design research methods, facilitation of co-design processes, prototyping, journey mapping and storyboarding.
- Enhanced vocabulary and confidence in applying design thinking to complex, systemic challenges
- Experience and competence in leading designers, clients and projects through a design process

<https://www.iuda.org.uk/curriculum>

I apply the following evaluation tools to make sure the participants have understood the content of my sessions and gained the expected competencies and skills:

At the IU Design Academy we have regular crits, in which students present their work and receive feedback. At the end of the course each student receives a full report of their progress and achievement. Opportunities for feedback include:

- Post session feedback
- Final project presentations
- Case study



- Portfolio exhibition
- SDN accreditation process

I systematically evaluate and improve my offerings based on feedback. These are examples of feedback that have led to improvements:

- students described a blurring between two forms of 'service design breakfasts' which we have made more distinctive
- increased opportunities for peer feedback and reflection during final projects in response to feedback that this would be helpful
- evaluating each masterclass and responding to specific feedback e.g making sessions more practical, allowing more time for activities etc.

I have participated in the following service design-related activities in order to stay up to date, share my experiences with peers and receive their supervision within the last 12 months:

- In the last 12 months, I have not attended myself but sent my SD team to attend the SDGC and the SDN leadership academy course

I actively support the local or national service design community through:

Supporting the next generation of service designers (through the IUDA and speaking at/collaborating with the RCA MA service design students)

I have participated as a speaker in the following events:

Future of housing conference 2017, 'using service design to imagine new futures'

Care leavers conference, 2018, 'designing new futures for care leavers given prison sentences'

Presenting to Royal college of Art MA students, 'using service design to deliver social impact', June 2022 & May 2023

I have published the following books/articles on service design and related fields:

Service design postcard, award winner: <https://www.podchaser.com/podcasts/service-design-podcast-217596/episodes/episode-21-awards-winners-ella-26314312>

Using Co-production and design to disrupt power in systems - <https://www.livingwellsystems.uk/post/how-does-giving-up-power-transform-mental-health-systems-let-s-look-at-how-real-co-production-takes>

The importance of understanding people and place when undertaking design and innovation <https://www.innovationunit.org/thoughts/how-to-understand-people-and-places/>

The need to generate deep insights for care leavers facing prison sentences in order to design new solutions - <https://www.russellwebster.com/careleavers/>

The power of a story - <https://www.livingwellsystems.uk/post/how-do-we-mobilise-and-sustain-transformation-let-s-talk-about-the-power-of-story>

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