

Outer Connections



The Environment around the Box

- Exploring Stakeholder needs & knowledge
- Exploring environmental responses to change

The objective

Starting from and looking beyond responsible architectural design in an environment, toward engaging with the communities of interest, their resources and conflicts, as design elements in a participatory engagement with them.

Simple example

An owner may identify a way the project's particular resources can address a particular community need. It might be a publisher, deciding to commit a certain number of staff hours to facilitate an information exchange for its neighborhood's or a citywide group's sustainability learning process. That kind of thing can contribute to a project's long term impact compensations and also pay for themselves in terms of the long term process of building connections that expose new opportunities.

The creative cycle

Develop a catalog of environmental stakeholders

Repeat for each project phase a review of the catalog, an exploration of its connections & likely ways of responding to the project, as a cyclic growth process of exploratory environmental thinking [...]

Exploration | Combination | Refinement

Using each phase as a little ramp of discovering, building connections.

For Living systems there are several levels

- the City & its Institutions
- the Natural Networks of Markets & Communities
- the Ecologies
- the Biological and Cultural 'Spirits' of a Place

... but to explore them one needs a method of guiding many people searching many things that is both comprehensive and manageable, accumulative and shared. You want some broad spectrum search, to whatever comfortable limit time and interest allows, looking for hiding places for the unexpected relationships. You want some focused search, seeking out people with long term immersion in the subject to help you as a guide.

Finding Communities of Interest

One can start with the human living systems, for example, the various stakeholder groups in the outcome of the project. To sweep through a project's stakeholders and their involvements ask:

- Whose feet go through the door, and whose money?
- What work and user groups do they belong to and what are their affinities?
- How do those groups relate to each other, can you get input from them to understand how they think of each other?
- Where do they interact, how do they remain invisible, do they have unmet needs or unrecognized conflicts, misunderstandings about each other?
- Where do they need cooperation, recognition, restraint, support, information, independence, partnership?

C o n n e c t i o n - Outer Connections

- How do the networks within each stakeholder community hold together, or fall apart?
- How can you engage with them in their own chosen independent interests?

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