



(PROJECT)

DESIGN THINKING:
CREATING A MORE
INCLUSIVE CITY

DR. NICOLE KALMS
ZOE CONDLIFFE
ALLI EDWARDS

THE
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- 01. Group shot of the diverse participants and the assembled city
- 02. Finding themes from the initial brainstorm
- 03. Strategising and planning towards a preferred future
- 04. Prototyping the impact the idea would have
- 05. Illustrating a proposal in a human-centred way
- 06. Sharing the ideas for a safer, more inclusive city

BUILDING A SAFER CITY

MADA's XYX Lab, in conjunction with Plan International, , Crowd Spot, and supported by City of Melbourne, ran a design thinking workshop that brought together diverse members of the community to create actionable impacts based upon the data from 'Free to Be,' a user generated, cultural mapping app.

The 'Free to Be' app let users digitally mark where in Melbourne they felt safe or unsafe and share stories about why. This allowed participants, primarily young women, to share information about the spaces that made them feel or unsafe, and enabled them to report sexual harassment anonymously and outside of traditional reporting systems. This is vital, since according to the Australian Personal Safety Survey, "more than 8 out of 10 female victims of sexual assault by a male perpetrator did not report the most recent incident" (2005).

The workshop brought together youth activists and stakeholders such as members of the police force, representatives from City of Melbourne, Public Transport Victoria and Victoria Health (fig 1). It leveraged design based methodologies to help participants think of events, physical interventions, policy recommendations, and technologically based initiatives that could build upon the data from the map to help make Melbourne a safer, more inclusive city. The ideas presented were the result of a process of divergent, emergent, and convergent thinking that was guided by the designerly activities and materials throughout the workshop. These included experiential games, prompted brainstorming, affinity diagramming (fig 2), re-writing multiple ways, visualising systems using gears and shapes, sketching abstractly, strategizing using timeline templates (fig 3), future oriented prototyping (fig 5), and presenting and discussing ideas based upon the physical artefacts (fig 6).

Participants were guided through this creative and hands on process in order to think through ideas in human centred and future focused ways. The workshop itself was designed to help the diverse participants work together, using bespoke materials that helped visualise competing ideas side by side, and activities that navigated conflict in playful and speculative ways. This more oblique and

material approach to design thinking encouraged well thought out and creative ideas that will influence future projects and policies. The collaborative, social learning that took place resulted in an immediate impact. Many PTV, City of Melbourne, and police representatives expressed a deepened understanding and heightened sense of accountability, working towards a safer, more inclusive city.

Ideas that emerged and were explored in this workshop:

- 1. Education program about gender and diversity in urban space
- 2. App and agency to immediately report sexual harassment in real time
- 3. Community platform(s) for open contribution to Free To Be map
- 4. Physical safe space for sharing and connecting
- 5. Regulating and incentivising the removal of sexist messaging
- 6. Public transport initiative to prevent sexual harassment
- 7. Urban planning to include young voices in meaningful ways
- 8. Awareness building event around social responsibility in public space

1. <http://www.abs.gov.au>, Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006)



06.