

NO MINOR

THING



INTRODUCTION



NO MINOR THING



WHAT CAN DESIGNERS DO TO COMBAT SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN? THAT IS THE QUESTION RAISED BY THE DUTCH PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE (DPPS) AND THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND SECURITY, TOGETHER WITH DESIGN PLATFORM WHAT DESIGN CAN DO (WDCD), IN AN INVITATION-ONLY DESIGN CHALLENGE.

01. SEEKING UNEXPECTED INTERVENTIONS

In 'No Minor Thing: The What Design Can Do Challenge to Combat Sexual Exploitation of Children', selected design teams and academies have an opportunity to come up with new ways of tackling this issue. Participants are introduced to experts and 'problem-owners' who can help put ideas into practice. With the Refugee Challenge (2016) and the Climate Action Challenge (2017), WDCD has developed an effective method of challenging designers to come up with meaningful interventions that can make a genuine difference to complex social issues.

02. AN URGENT PROBLEM

Sexual exploitation happens everywhere, but it happens under the radar, out of sight of everyone. The National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking says that just 1 in 9 girls who are sexually exploited appear in the reports of police and justice system. There are even fewer reports of male exploitation, where the actual figure is even harder to estimate. Because this is such a complex problem, it needs the valuable insights of designers who have the ability to transform abstract things into something tangible. But that is just the start of what designers can do in addressing this exceptionally difficult problem, which exercises the minds of many experts and professionals. Sexual exploitation must become a shared problem that everybody in society is aware of and wants to combat. Designers can play a role here. Sexual exploitation concerns young males and females who, often through blackmail, are forced to provide sexual services. Most of them end up in this work unnoticed. And even though it is illegal, there are enough adults who are willing to pay for these sexual services. The mental and physical harm done to children is enormous. This problem calls for innovative solutions.

03.

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR DESIGNERS


How can designers make a genuine difference in such difficult and complex situations that are largely hidden from view in the world of illegality? That's what we asked ourselves at the start of the collaboration between WDCD, the Dutch Public Prosecution Service (DPPS) and the Ministry of Justice and Security.

With its design research partner STBY, WDCD has previously developed challenges that address complex subjects. Those previous projects have resulted in a framework for a thorough process, based on desk research, expert interviews and workshops. The process focuses on formulating questions that point the way towards possible meaningful interventions and contributions from designers working in collaboration with experts. Together they can make a difference to complex problems.

Sexual exploitation of children is such a problem that we cannot easily solve, but we could intervene in meaningful ways if we work together in a focused manner, drawing on input from experts and looking from the perspective of a designer. All this has led WDCD, the DPPS, the Ministry of Justice and Security and STBY to develop No Minor Thing, which defines different directions for interventions, as expressed in the form of five questions:

- How can parents and guardians teach every child that it is in charge of their own body?
- How can we enhance the protection of young people online and systematically thwart those seeking to exploit them?
- How can we help professionals to detect even the subtlest signs of sexual exploitation and to take action?
- How can we help victims and their social environment to report sexual exploitation earlier?
- How can we confront those directly involved in sexual exploitation with the consequences for themselves?

**SEXUAL EXPLOITATION
CONCERNS YOUNG MALES
AND FEMALES WHO,
OFTEN THROUGH
BLACKMAIL, ARE FORCED
TO PROVIDE SEXUAL
SERVICES.**



04.

FIVE BRIEFS

WITH BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The five questions are just the titles of the briefs, each of which describes the problem and the challenge it presents. In addition to the main question, we have included a series of more specific and related questions that arose during the preliminary research conducted with experts. Participants are of course free to explore totally different specific questions. By way of background information, a list of the main insights gained during the preliminary research is included, along with links to sources where these insights were found. Each brief also describes who is involved in a specific problem, and who could be affected by newly designed interventions. A number of quotes from stories of sexual exploitation add a more personal aspect to the brief. Finally, we have added one or more examples of projects that have inspired us.

We have thus tried to strike a balance between pointing out a direction where change is possible, needed and desirable, and creating new space for designers to come up with totally new interventions.

Each of the five briefs provides a lot of information. Each design team chooses to work on one of the briefs. With a subject like this, it is very important to be well informed and not too naïve when you get to work, even though offering a ‘fresh perspective’ is one of the strengths of designers. That’s why we have included an extra document that supports all briefs: ‘Worth knowing before you start’. This contains the specific language mostly used when discussing the sexual exploitation of children, a short summary of all parties involved and what is generally known about those involved. Reading this material will clarify that much remains unknown because exploitation usually takes place in secret. At the same time it makes clear that so much more can and needs to be done, despite the great effort and commitment of all experts with whom we have worked to draw up the briefs, and many others.

05.

CREATIVE IDEAS

FOR A COMPLEX PROBLEM

Designers often find it natural to view the world around them in a different way. That gift enables them to see problems from a fresh perspective, and that can form the starting point for a new approach. Designers call that ‘reframing’ a problem. This strength is badly needed when it comes to a complex problem like the sexual exploitation of children. In addition, designers are more capable than anybody else of working with experts with a thorough knowledge of the subject, including people who themselves experienced sexual exploitation as children, to come up with new ideas to prevent and combat the problem, or to support victims, and who knows what else. Designers can therefore make invaluable contributions that others cannot offer. But we cannot do that alone. That’s why WDCD and the DPPS set up this ‘design challenge’. The challenge provides a framework that makes it possible for experts to work together on this extremely difficult subject. Luckily, designers are specialists at working together with other disciplines and ensuring that various disciplines work with one another. The research that preceded No Minor Thing has already been put through a design process similar to the one described here. Now it’s down to the invited design teams to propose meaningful interventions.

06. CRITERIA FOR SUCCESSFUL IDEAS

Clarity

It's clear who the idea will benefit, how it will add to existing ideas, and who will execute the idea.

Tangibility

The idea is not too abstract. It's clear to imagine how the idea would work. Prototypes can be a great way to show your idea!

Feasibility

The idea is feasible, even if it avoids the well-beaten path or focuses on unexpected, unusual partnerships.

Innovation

The idea provides an innovative way to tackle the sexual exploitation of children and inspires others to take action.

Scalability

The idea can be executed by multiple people for multiple people in several different locations. The concept has the potential for growth.

Thoughtfulness

The idea is thoughtful and demonstrates an understanding of the complex nature of the subject in question – it's positive without being naïve.

Continued relevance

The idea has the potential to stay relevant for an extended period of time. Developments in the public sector often need some time to land. The idea shouldn't depend on trends.

07. PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Briefing Designers – 16 May

In a first meeting all participants will receive further information about the briefs and the structure of the challenge.

Launch – 24 May

The challenge kicks off at WDCD Live Amsterdam (24 & 25 May) with a workshop at the Balie debate centre during which various experts will provide input.

Feedback – 28 June & 28 August

Design teams have the possibility to receive feedback on their concepts by experts.

Deadline – 10 September

Deadline concept proposals.

Improvement – 20 September

20 September – 18 October:

The participants are given the opportunity to improve their concepts to final proposals based on the feedback of experts.

Presentation – 20 November

In the beginning of November the proposals will be presented on the WDCD platform. The participants will showcase their final proposals live, during the Innovation Congress of the Ministry of Justice & Security on 20 November 2018.

Execution – 2019

The Public Prosecution Service commits to the intention of connecting each project team to relevant partners and to put at least one project actually into practice. Executed projects will be showcased during WDCD 2019.