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EMERGING MEDIA EXPLORATION

Creative methods for emerging media

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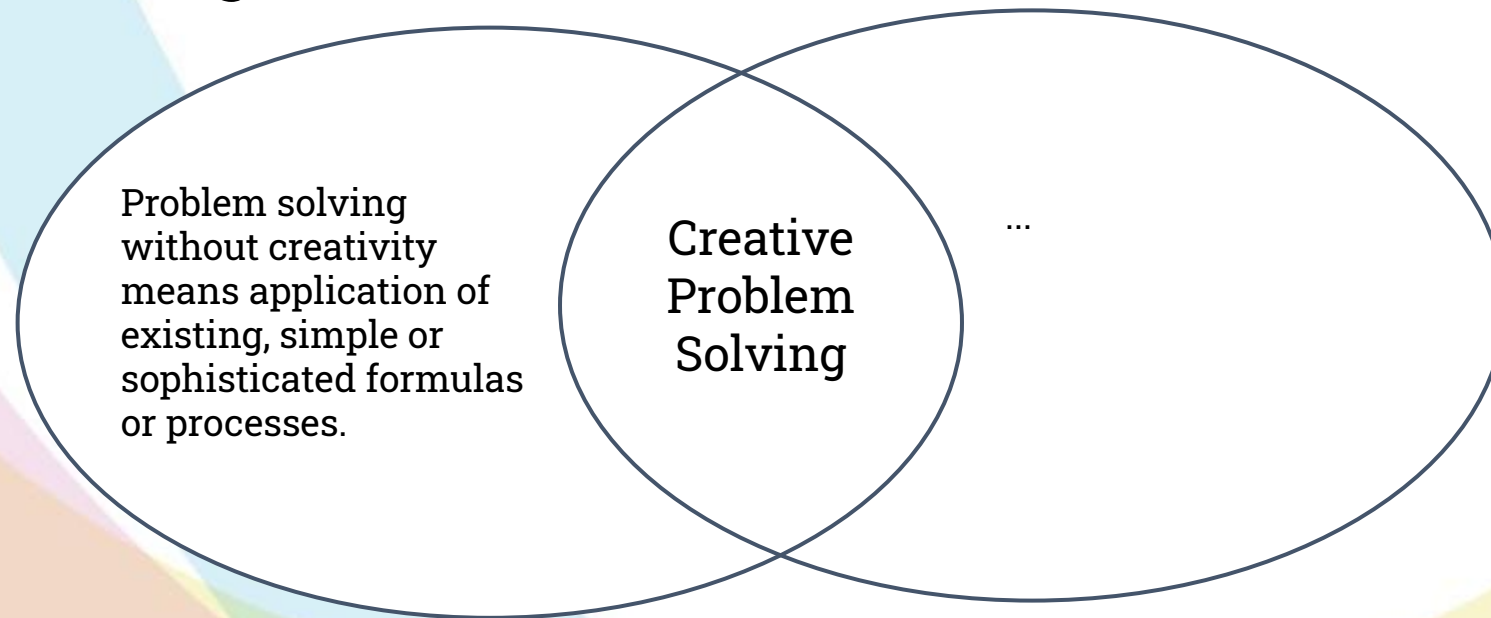
I. Creativity is a Process

Some think creativity is a gift and some have it, some not. It looks like there are people churning out ideas ad lib, while others never feel the true enlightenment of creativity. This is not true. Creativity is always a lengthy process, there are just people who are better at hiding their sweat.

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Problem Solving / Creative Process

Problem Solving

The Creative Process

Problem solving without creativity means application of existing, simple or sophisticated formulas or processes.

Creative Problem Solving

…

The relationship between problem solving and creative problem solving.

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II. In fact, a lot of processes

The processes are executed in iterative loops. There is a constant alternation between the generation of solutions and ideas and the discarding of those. You open up your mind to new possibilities, evaluate and exclude until you end up with a detailed refinement.

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Example methods to start with

1. **Mind Mapping**
2. **Inspirational Tool (Problem-Audience-Technology)**
3. **Morphological Analysis / Ideation Grid**
4. **Brainstorming (with Rules)**
5. **Picture Storming**

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*Tony Buzan, 1971
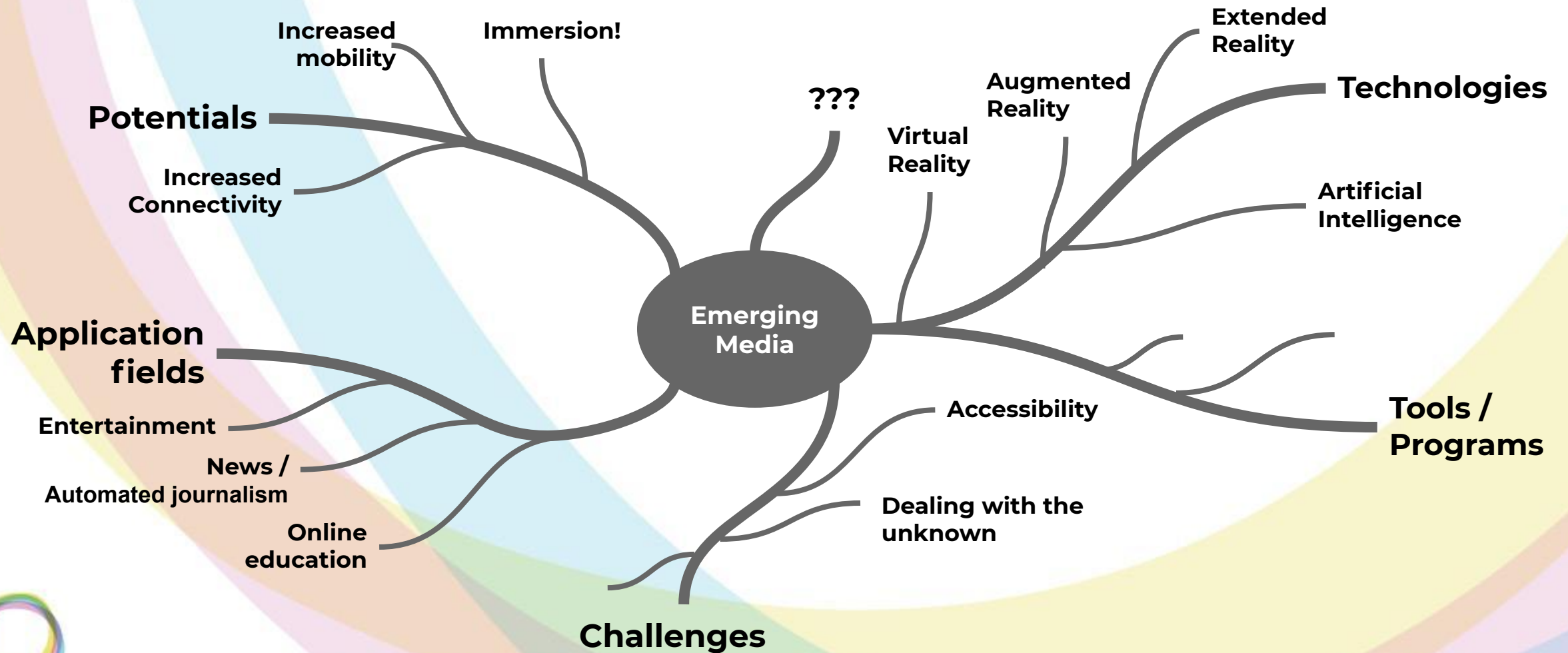
1. Mind Mapping

Brief description:

Mind mapping is an association technique in which idea generation is designed in the form of a visual thought map. In the process, all ideas are noted in the form of a tree structure and organized in terms of content:

- Center (tree trunk) – **Main subject / theme**
- More detailed to the outside (branches) – **subthemes, ideas**
  New ideas can be attached to existing ones at any time or become the main branch of new thoughts themselves.

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*Tony Buzan, 1971

Mind Map - Emerging Media*

Emerging Media

Potentials
- Increased mobility
- Immersion!
- Increased Connectivity

???

Virtual Reality

Augmented Reality

Extended Reality

Technologies

Artificial Intelligence

Application fields
- Entertainment
- News / Automated journalism
- Online education

Accessibility

Dealing with the unknown

Tools / Programs

Challenges

*Absolutely not completed, but can serve as a starting point.

How to start

1. Choose one of many free online Mind Mapping Tools or work on an online collaboration board (Mural/Miro/…).
2. Write your theme/project in the center.
3. Main areas are entered so that they lead away from the topic as main branches. Try to cover all relevant areas.
4. Keywords that belong to the areas then go off as sub-branches.

Hint: Use colors and signs to stimulate your brain.

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Your project*

*Try to include all relevant areas. It probably might include more branches than shown here.
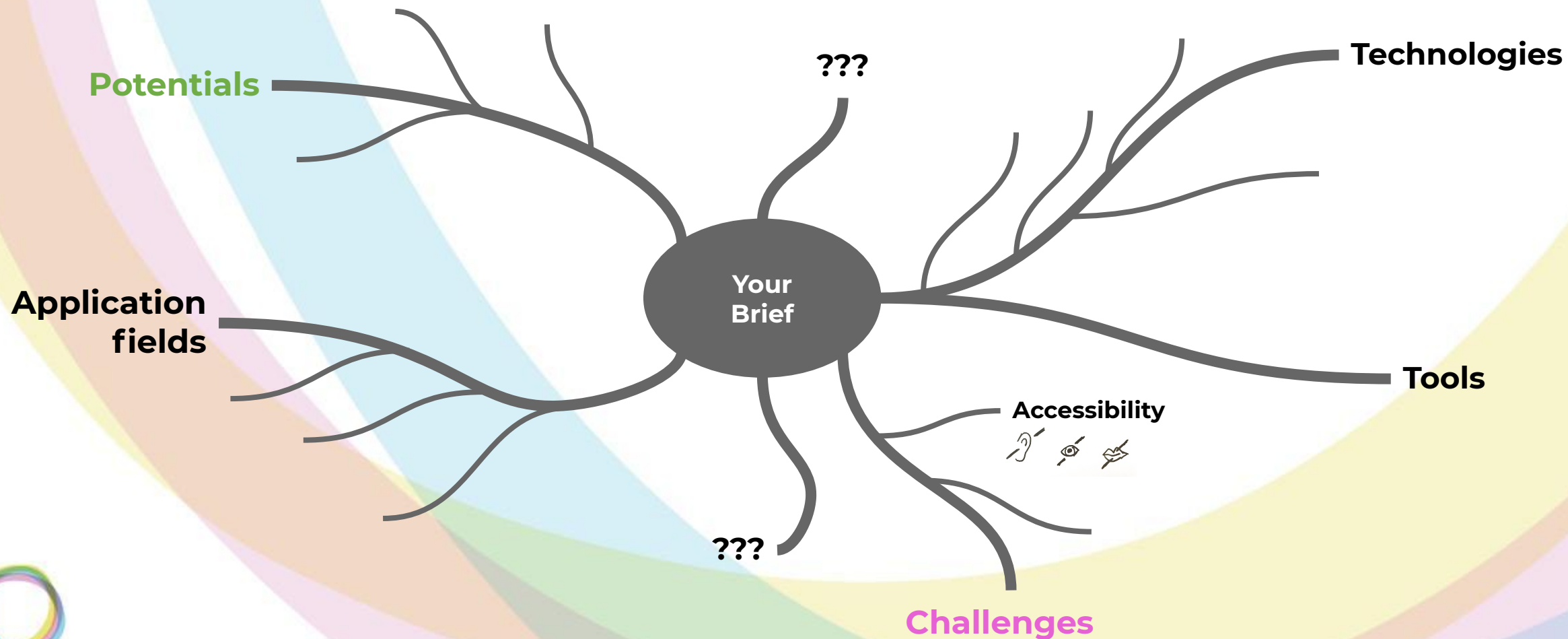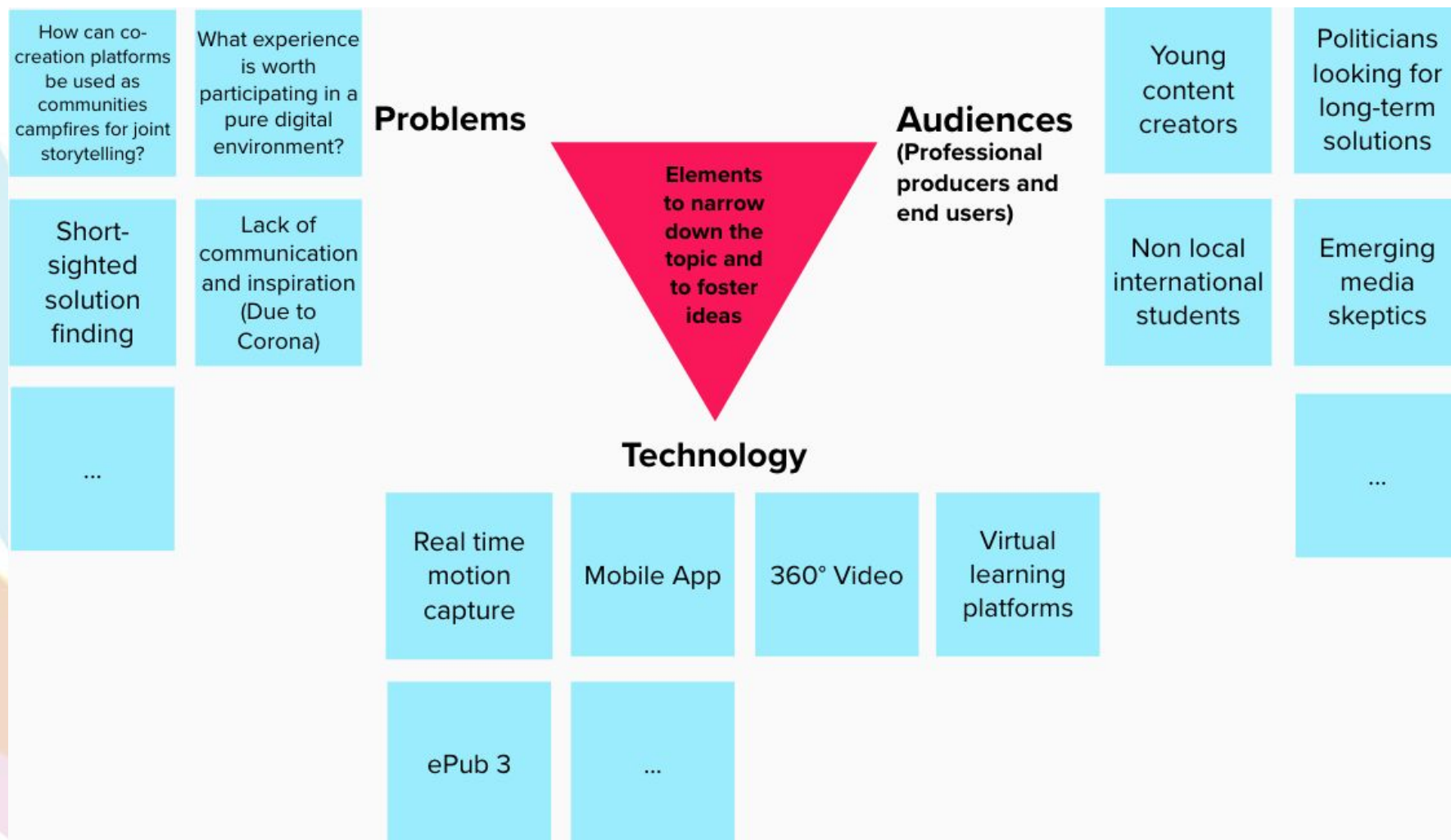
How to continue

- If you have covered all relevant areas, you can start with the actual ideation process.
- Use e.g. the Inspirational Tool or continue with a Morphological Analysis / Ideation Grit or do both (see following slides).

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2. Inspirational Tool
(Problem-Audience-Technology)

Generic example of the Inspirational Tool

Problems

How can co-creation platforms be used as communities campfires for joint storytelling?

What experience is worth participating in a pure digital environment?

Short-sighted solution finding

Lack of communication and inspiration (Due to Corona)

...

Elements to narrow down the topic and to foster ideas

Technology

Real time motion capture

Mobile App

360° Video

Virtual learning platforms

ePub 3

...

Audiences (Professional producers and end users)

Young content creators

Politicians looking for long-term solutions

Non local international students

Emerging media skeptics

...

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How to start

1. Collect problems, audiences and technologies that interest you and fit the project brief on a collaboration workspace.
2. Be specific with the descriptions (much more specific than in the generic example).
3. When finished with the collection, take one of each element and formulate a "How might we...?" question. Example: How can we convince politicians to pursue long-term solutions and communicate better them?

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How to continue

- Create as many "How might we...? questions as possible.
- Discuss them. A good way would be by using evaluation methods.
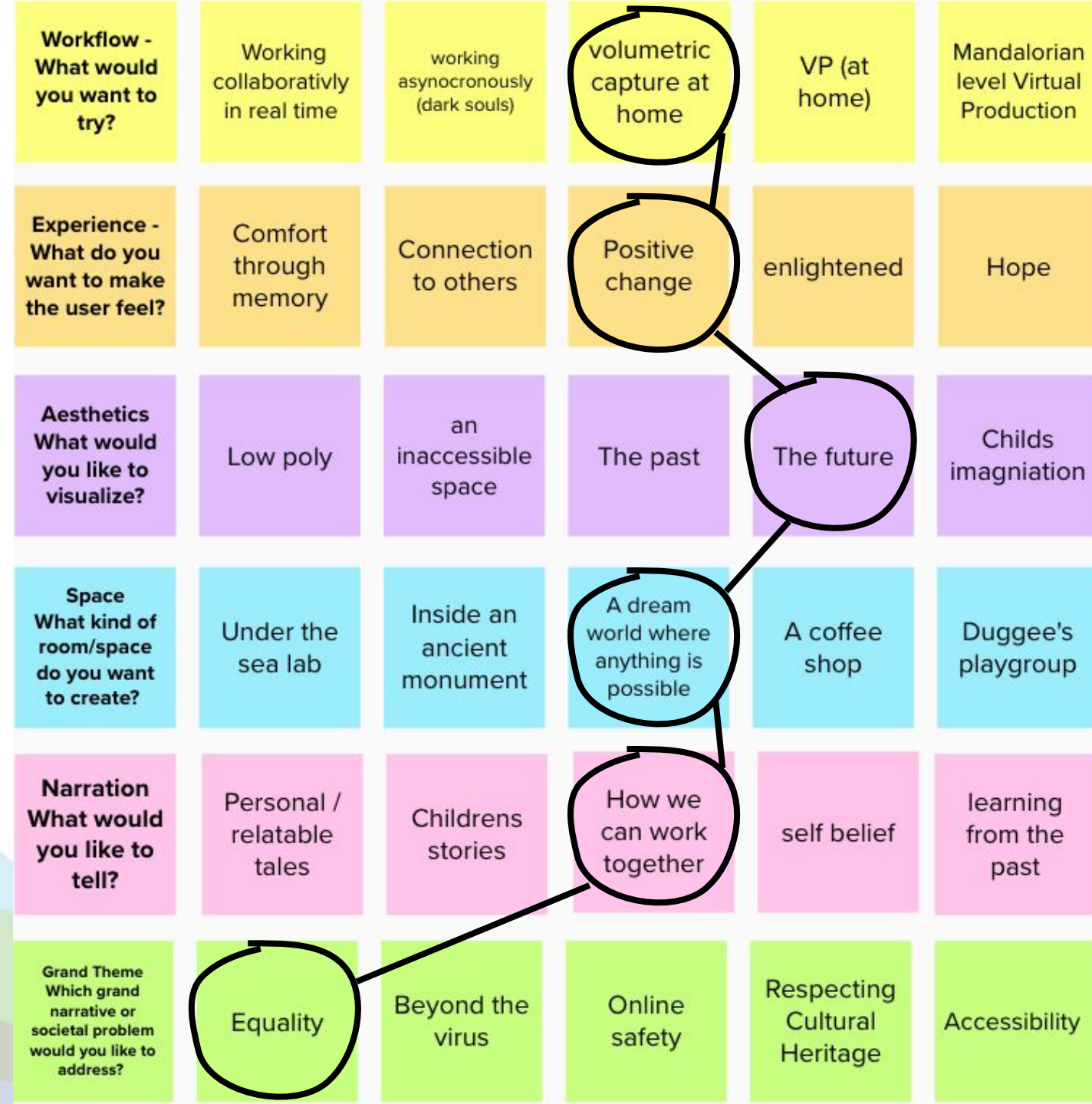- Decide on one or more options to continue ideation with.

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3. Morphological analysis / Ideation Grid

The morphological box is a classic idea technique that first breaks down a task into its essential elements and then looks for different alternatives for each element. Subsequently, solution combinations are searched for from the alternatives found.

	Idea 1	Idea 2	Idea 3	Idea 4	Idea 5
Technology					
Application field					
Challenge/ Problem					
...?					

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Ideation Grid for Virtual Production

From each line, an idea is outlined that should preferably be incorporated into a solution. Thus a first of many possible solution combinations is formed.

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Workflow - What would you want to try?	Working collaborativly in real time	working asynocronously (dark souls)	volumetric capture at home	VP (at home)	Mandalorian level Virtual Production
Experience - What do you want to make the user feel?	Comfort through memory	Connection to others	Positive change	enlightened	Hope
Aesthetics What would you like to visualize?	Low poly	an inaccessible space	The past	The future	Childs imagniation
Space What kind of room/space do you want to create?	Under the sea lab	Inside an ancient monument	A dream world where anything is possible	A coffee shop	Duggee's playgroup
Narration What would you like to tell?	Personal / relatable tales	Childrens stories	How we can work together	self belief	learning from the past
Grand Theme Which grand narrative or societal problem would you like to address?	Equality	Beyond the virus	Online safety	Respecting Cultural Heritage	Accessibility

How to start

- Create an ideation grit that covers all the main elements (1st column) of your brief/project.
- They can be derived from a previously created mind map.
- You can fill out the grit individually or as a group.
- Come up with minimum 3 and up to 8 answers in each row.
- Combine the ideas by picking an idea of each row and note the combination.

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How to continue

- The combinations favored by the group members are evaluated in a joint process.
- You can simply vote or use further methods to evaluate your ideas.
- Formulate your combinations as "How might we…?" questions

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4. Brainstorming / -writing

- You can brainstorm on every problem you have.
- Brainstorming and brainwriting (individual brainstorming) are very similar, but brainstorming usually refers to a version in which participants express their ideas aloud and these are then written down on a board. Whereas in brainwriting, individual participants first note down their ideas, which are presented later on.
- Several studies have shown that individual brainstorming produces more – and often better – ideas than group brainstorming. So it is a good idea to start with that.
- Individual brainstorming is most effective when you need to solve a simple problem, generate a list of ideas, or focus on a broad issue. Group brainstorming is often more effective for solving complex problems.

→ For both versions: Clearly define the problem that you want to solve, and lay out any needed criteria.

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Rules for Brainstorming (-writing)

- Defer judgment
- Build on the ideas of others
- Encourage wild ideas
- One conversation at a time
- Stay on topic
- Go for quantity
- Be visual → see also: Picture Storming

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5. Picture Storming

- Whenever creating visual outputs you should try picture storming.
- Example topics you might use this for:
  - What images inspire us?
  - What aesthetics do we want to use?
  - What kind of pictures underline or complement our story?
- For picturestorming most of the brainstorming rules apply as well (Defer judgment, Build on the ideas of others, Encourage wild ideas, Go for quantity).

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Problem Framing

- Solutions are easier to talk about, but they don't invite new thinking (focus on the problem).
- When defining your problems make sure they are descriptive enough for others to read and understand.
- Make sure the problems are neither too narrow or too broad. A narrowly scoped challenge won't offer enough room to explore creative solutions. And a broadly scoped challenge won't give you any idea where to start.
- Problems need to have focus and a clear link to the long-term goal.
- What problems, needs and motivations do people have?
- Is the problem worth solving?
- Prioritise your problems.

Fall in love with a problem and not a solution.

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Many, varied and unusual ideas

- Produce many, varied, and unusual ideas increases the chances to come up with a truly innovative idea.
- In the following comparison and weighing the ideas against each other, it becomes clear which idea has the most potential.

"The way to get good ideas is to get lots of ideas, and throw the bad ones away."

– Linus Pauling

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III. Ideas must evolve

Ideas are creative, if they are surprising and unexpected. They must be original and useful. What is the potential in relation to the future is the question you need to ask yourself. Don't stick with your first idea, but let your ideas change and evolve with every step.

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Methods to narrow down your idea(s)

- ## The 5 Why's (5Ys)
  Get a deeper understanding of the problem and discover the source of it
  See e.g.: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_5W.htm

- ## 6 Thinking hats
  On the basis of a role play, you will look at and discuss a situation from 6 different perspectives (roles). It helps to make thorough evaluations.
 See e.g.: https://www.toolshero.com/decision-making/six-thinking-hats-de-bono/

- ## Walt Disney Method
  Similar to the 6 thinking hats, but with just 3 perscpectices.
  See e.g.: https://www.designmethodsfinder.com/methods/walt-disney-method

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Our first idea is NOT the best

- It can be, but it is usually not.
- Check if and why your problem is a real problem (see previous slide).
- Does it meet the needs and expectations of your target group?
- Re-frame your problem.
- Go back to the ideation methods or your defined theme and exchange elements and go through the process again to see how the perspective changes.
- You will go back and forth for quite a while. Don't settle for certain ideas to fast, but capture promising ideas and then go back and create more ideas.

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How Desirable, Feasible and Viable is your idea?
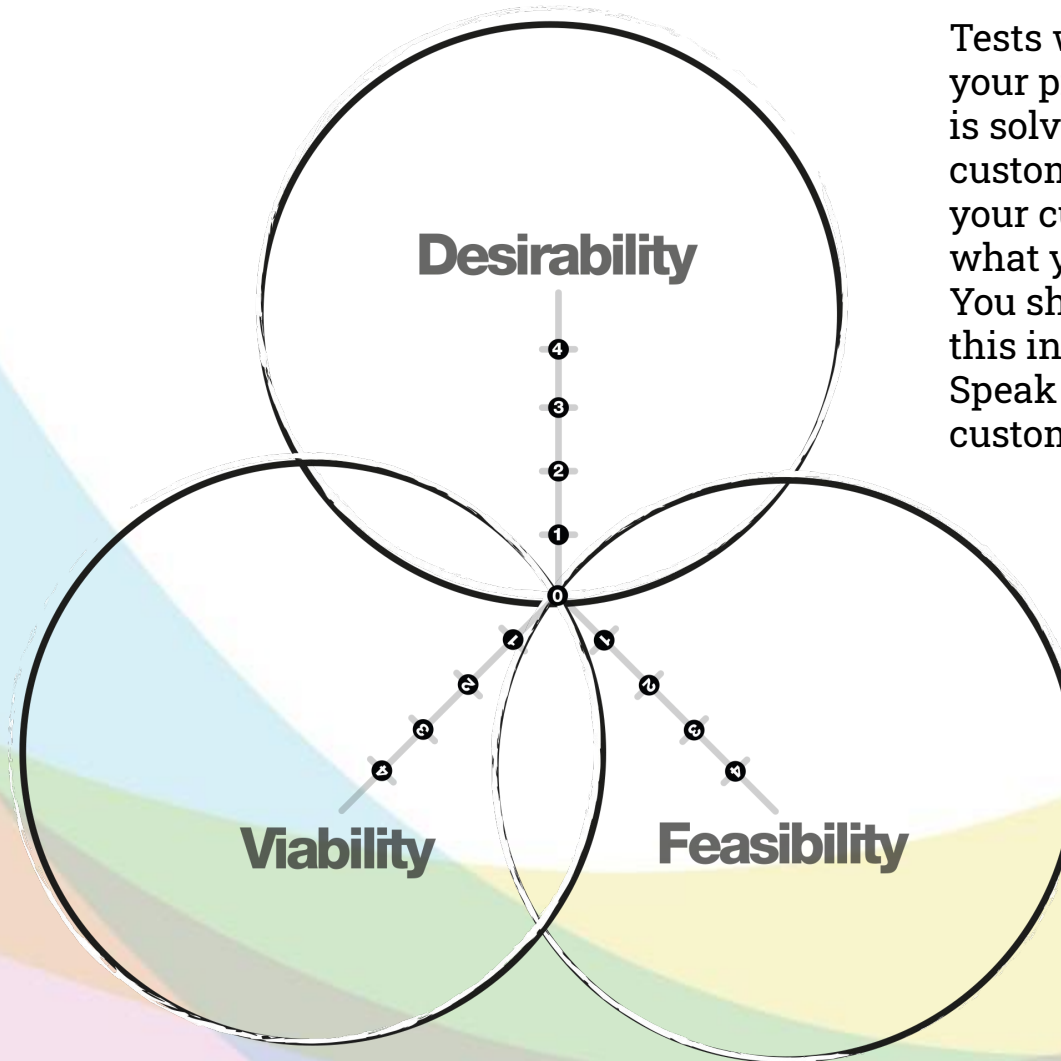
Tests whether you your product/ services is solving the right customer problem. Do your customers desire what you are offering? You should think about this information. Speak to your customers.

Tests your approach for long-term sustainability. Is it future proof? Does your solution provide short term profit without considering the long-term impact?

Is it feasible? How can we do this? Do we have the resources? How do we minimise the risks?