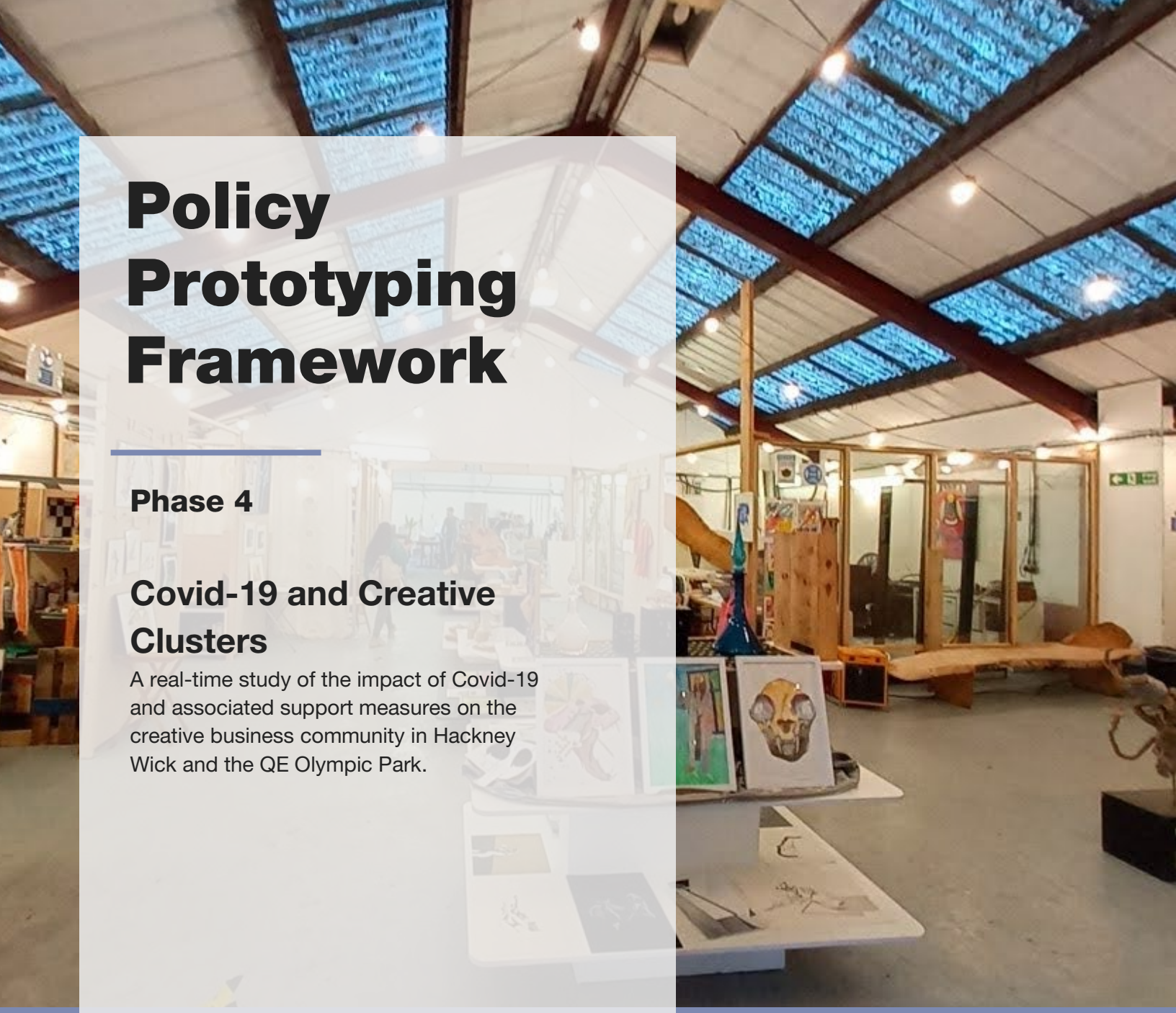

Policy Prototyping Framework

Phase 4

Covid-19 and Creative Clusters

A real-time study of the impact of Covid-19 and associated support measures on the creative business community in Hackney Wick and the QE Olympic Park.

DECEMBER 13

#HWCRAIC
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1. Introduction

This report offers an account of the CRAIC research project's fourth and last phase: **Prototype** (see Figure 1). This phase focussed on developing a framework for prototyping early-stage policy ideas to support the creative communities in Hackney Wick, Fish Island (HW/FI) and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (QEOP).

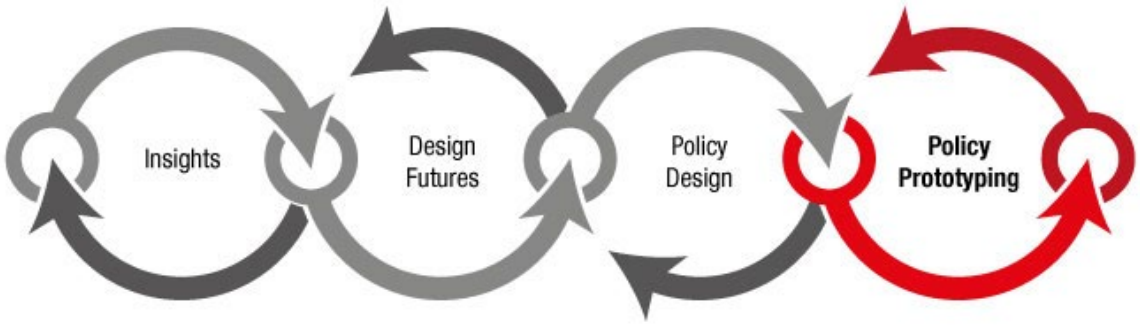

Figure 1: Four phases of the research approach

In a global scenario of increasing complexity, design has gained renewed momentum for its potential as a strategic tool to promote innovation in the public sector[1]. While not generally understood in design terms, scholars argue that policymaking is essentially a design activity[2]. In this context, design has become central to some public organisations, employing designers and introducing notions of design thinking across the stages of the policymaking cycle[3]. Already in 2014, the UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence report titled 'Design Thinking for Public Service Excellence'[4] claimed the merits for such introduction on design thinking's core principles, namely

- human and user-centredness;
- empathic, co-creative, and iterative process; and
- experimental (testing and prototyping) approaches.

However, during the early stages of this project, it became apparent that prototyping has not been necessarily embraced when designing policies to support the creative industries of the area of study. In this regard, the researchers looked at offering local policymakers and representatives from local agencies a brief introduction to the main concepts behind policy prototyping as well as a framework for its implementation in HWFI and the QEOP. Whereas the former took place during an online session on September 8, 2021, with participants from the London Legacy Development Corporation, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, and London Borough of Hackney, this report presents the latter.

The policy prototyping framework here presented looks at aiding in the formulation and implementation of support mechanisms by offering guidance on how to test the assumptions on

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[1] Junginger, S. (2014). Towards Policymaking as Designing: Policymaking Beyond Problem-solving and Decision-making. In C. Bason, *Design for Policy*. Surrey UK and Burlington USA: Gower Publishing Limited and Ashgate Publishing Company.
[2] Junginger, S. (2013). Design and Innovation in the Public Sector: Matters of Design in Policy-Making and Policy Implementation. *Annual Review of Policy Design, 1*(1), 1-11.
[3] Junginger, S. (2017). *Transforming Public Services by Design*. Oxon: Routledge.
[4] Allio, L. (2014). Design thinking for public service excellence. UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence.

which the interventions are based and inquiry on the validity of the proposed measures. The potential prototypes can range from low to high fidelity and be tested with various stakeholders, including local creatives, policymakers, and frontline staff operationalising services and support instruments at local agencies. Likewise, this framework is based on the learnings from the project's first two phases and utilises the preliminary policy ideas co-develop during phase 3 as examples. In this way, the project's fourth phase looked at embedding the situated knowledge previously captured into practical solutions to alleviate some of the issues faced by the local creative communities whilst enhancing their resilience.

After this introduction, section 2 offers a brief note on prototyping in the context of policymaking. Next, section 3 introduces the suggested policy prototyping framework. Lastly, section 4 provides guidance in the framework's application and an example based on a preliminary policy idea from Phase 3[5].

2. Prototyping and policymaking

Prototyping is a common practice in many disciplines. According to NESTA[6], prototyping is an approach to developing, testing, and improving ideas at an early stage before committing resources at large for its implementation. In the design field, prototyping is an iterative cycle (Build-Run-Analyse) with a major role in its process[7]. In its most basic conception, a prototype is a question rendered as an artefact. Designers prototype to get an answer to that question before moving to the next iteration in the design process. In other words, prototyping is

> *"rapidly creating an approximation of a design so that you can quickly get feedback. Prototyping is the pivotal activity that structures innovation, collaboration, and creativity in design. Prototypes embody design hypotheses and enable designers to test them. Successful design results from a series of conversations with materials. It's not the artifact; it's about feedback and iteration. You build some prototypes, evaluate them, and then use what you learned to drive the next design."*
>
> *Scott Klemmer, 2016[8]*

The basis for prototyping is that designers are unlikely to produce complete and effective solutions in a single iteration[9]; therefore, the trial-and-error approach allows them to learn in each iteration. Considering policymaking as a design activity, a similar premise could apply to those engaging in it. Although not necessarily a novel practice, policy prototyping has acquired a renewed momentum in the last decade. Its benefits for the field are manifold, including the communication, exploration, evaluation, and refinement of policy options before decision making and implementation. Interestingly, the notion of trial-and-error is not always welcome within a public sector, often

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[5] See HWCRAIC Report 3: Policy Design Workshop.
[6] NESTA's prototyping framework: https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/prototyping-framework/
[7] Villa Alvarez, D., Auricchio, V., and Mortati, M. (2020) Design prototyping for policymaking, in Boess, S., Cheung, M. and Cain, R. (eds.), *Synergy - DRS International Conference 2020*, 11-14 August, Held online. https://doi.org/10.21606/drs.2020.271
[8] The Power of Prototyping | HCI | Stanford University: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IyMT91wUO54&list=PLLssT5z_DsK_nusHL_Mjt87THSTlgrsyJ
[9] Wheelwright, S. C., & Clark, K. B. (1992*). Revolutionizing product development: quantum leaps in speed, efficiency, and quality.* Simon and Schuster.

described as being made of bureaucratic, hierarchical, and risk-averse[10] structures. However, it is precisely to de-risk the solution development process that prototyping makes sense in the first place.

Furthermore, capturing and developing insights into prototypes early allows for more robust solutions to form as preliminary policy ideas can be tested, trialled, and refined in an iterative process[11]. In this way, weak or unsubstantiated policy ideas show their flaws and are dropped earlier in the policy cycle, thus reducing the resources committed to them. Likewise, it can be helpful by mitigating the fear of failure to innovate by testing new policy options whilst offering a method to adapt the policy to its diverse targets[12].

Moreover, some design scholars argue that in engaging with prototypes, users can themselves spark new ideas overlooked by the designers[13]. In that sense, prototypes "can be agents that expand a conversation to be inclusive and reassert the relationship between designed objects and people"[14]. Also, in this regard, the evidence shows that participatory prototyping activities can help explore various perspectives and future implications of current and emerging policies by offering new foresight into the impact of potential solutions and resource allocation[15].

Figure 2: Prototyping materials from a design for policy session at Loughborough University London, 2019.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to notice that prototypes can significantly vary in their fidelity (see Figure 2) and, consequently, so will vary the feedback that can be obtained from users. The lowest the fidelity of a prototype, the easiest it is to obtain candid feedback and insights into potential needs and characteristics the users would favour. Equally, with lower fidelity prototypes, users are less likely to

[10] Sangiorgi, D. (2015). Designing for public sector innovation in the UK: design strategies for paradigm shifts. *Foresight*, 17(4), 332-348.
[11] Mintrom, M., & Luetjens, J. (2016). Design thinking in policymaking processes: Opportunities and challenges. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 75(3), 391-402.
[12] Clarke, A., & Craft, J. (2019). The twin faces of public sector design. *Governance*, 32(1), 5-21.
[13] Cross, N. (2011). Design thinking: Understanding how designers think and work. *Berg*.
[14] Roberts-Smith, J., Ruecker, S., and Radzikowska, M. (2021) Prototyping across the Disciplines. Designing Better Futures. Bristol: *Intellect. P.30.*
[15] Nogueira, A., & Schmidt, R. (2021). Participatory policy design: igniting systems change through prototyping. *Policy Design and Practice*, 1-19.

understand the purpose or features of the proposed design fully. Conversely, the higher the prototype's fidelity, the easier it is for users to engage with it and designers to identify failures[16].

3. Prototyping policies for the creative industries in East London

The research's third phase offered a range of preliminary policy ideas[17]. Likewise, these ideas were developed within four themes (Change, Space, Knowledge, Networks) identified during phases 1 and 2[18], which framed the challenges co-creatively addressed by the members of the local communities. Despite the iterative co-design process that led to these ideas, none should be carried further without appropriate assessment. Without detriment to the usual appraisal procedures that each agency carries out, in the spirit of an approach based on design for policy, the researchers understand it necessary for the ideas generated through this process to be prototyped.

All prototypes have in common that they start with a question or hypothesis. Therefore, the first step in prototyping is defining what needs to be learned from this prototype or what will be tested. That will be the prototype's goal.

Once this question is clear, the next step is to define who would be able to provide an answer to this question or validate/refute the hypothesis. That is to say, who needs to be involved in prototyping? Notably, whilst some prototyping activities can be carried out internally within the project team, some will require a wider test group. Therefore, when deciding whom to involve in the testing, it is essential to consider:

- Who knows the target group well and would have the insight to share?
- Who has experience and knowledge that will build your understanding of the policy idea?
- Who might be involved in the policy in the future?

From the research's Phase 2, it became apparent that a number of existing formal and informal networks operating within HWFI and the QEOP could help answer the questions above[19]. Although this is likely to change in the future –especially given the area's rapid development— the researchers recommend engaging with these networks early in the prototyping process to ensure no users or stakeholder groups are overlooked. In addition, trusted links into networks and communities should be used to help in identifying and connecting with the right people.

Thirdly, the way in which this hypothesis will be tested needs to be defined. This can be done in several ways[20], but it is out of this report's scope to list a comprehensive set of prototyping methods. As a general note, it is important to emphasise that the prototype is not the policy and attachment to

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[16] Shafieyoun, Z., and Derksen, G. (2001). How industrial prototypes behave through structure, function, and material. In Roberts-Smith, J., Ruecker, S., and Radzikowska, M. (2021) *Prototyping across the Disciplines. Designing Better Futures*. Bristol: Intellect.
[17] See HWCRAIC Report 3: Policy Design Workshop.
[18] For an account of the developed themes, see HWCRAIC Report 1: Immersion Insights, and HWCRAIC Report 2: Design Futures.
[19] See HWCRAIC Report 1: Immersion Insights.
[20] For specific guidance on prototyping methods, see Cabinet Office. (2016). Open Policy Making toolkit. Online: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-policy-making-toolkit/4-delivery-prototyping-and-improving-ideas

it is typically counter-productive. On the contrary, these should be built in ways that ensure clearly communicating the hypothesis to the user who will interact with it whilst allowing them to provide an answer to it. This can be done by, for instance, building a small model with cardboard, paper, or children's blocks. A hypothesis can also be tested by acting out parts of the interactions with the target audience in a simple role-play dynamic with or without props.

Similarly, the policy idea can be drawn in a storyboard and tested with potential users or delivery teams. In some cases, the policy team may require some degree of support to prototype. Currently, there is a growing corpus of prototyping knowledge within the UK government that civil servants can access[21]. Moreover, in the particular case of HWFI and the QEOP, a large number of local creatives could be commissioned to help develop prototypes. In this way, an additional layer of community engagement could be added to the policy co-design process.

However, since time and resources are limited in every policy programme, deciding which parts should be prototyped is crucial for their timely development. Besides its general feasibility, policies can be prototyped to test their different aspects and components (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Aspect of a policy that prototyping can help test with users[22].

Equally, and depending on the degree of advancement of a policy idea, prototyping can help in two main ways:

- **Exploratory prototyping**, by testing the demand and viability of ideas; or
- **Developmental prototyping**, by testing components of a policy.

[21] Foale, E., and Bennet, S. (2021). Crowdsourcing policy: how can collective intelligence improve policymaking? Online: https://openpolicy.blog.gov.uk/2021/11/04/crowdsourcing-policy-how-can-collective-intelligence-improve-policymaking/

[22] Adapted from Nesta. 2011. Prototyping Public Services. An introduction to using prototyping in the development of public services: https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/prototyping-in-public-services/

Although both types of prototypes are meant to learn about the policy problem and proposed solution, each tackle different aspects. Likewise, these two approaches to prototyping can be carried out sequentially depending on the stage of the policy process (see Figure 4).

Whereas in *exploratory prototyping,* the goal is to validate the need, demand, recipients, and challenge a policy is addressing, in *developmental prototyping,* the objective is to test different elements of a policy idea to develop a more precise specification for its implementation.

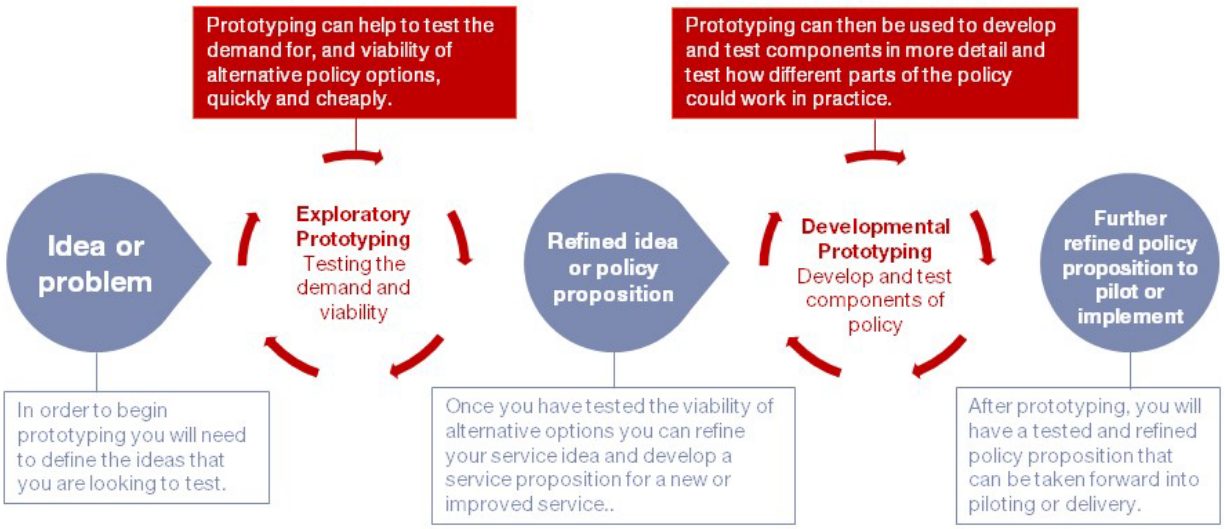

Figure 4: Exploratory and developmental prototyping, adapted from NESTA and ThinkPublic[23]

With exploratory prototyping, the purpose is to use prototypes to test the fundamental building blocks of the policy idea to build a more robust and concise policy specification.

After deciding which elements of the policy idea require further clarification, the policy team should determine how to communicate and discuss them with other users and stakeholders. Although the policy ideas can be vaguely defined at this stage, it is essential to prioritise what answers will validate or refute the hypothesis sustaining it. In doing so, it is not unusual to break down policy ideas into their constituents parts to test them individually. However, the team should keep in mind that interacting with users and other stakeholders is often a demanding task, and these activities should be planned to ensure that the team's questions are answered without making undue demands on them. This is of importance since the team may need to go through several iterations of exploratory prototyping before moving into the developmental stage.

Once the learnings from the exploratory prototyping have been gathered, and a validated policy specification achieved, the team can move towards developmental prototyping, where the policy components will be tested. Although developmental prototyping is not piloting, at this stage, the prototypes should provide people testing the policy ideas with more defined versions of it. In addition, with developmental prototyping, the team should be looking at getting more 'real world' feedback from the users, including observations of the users' interactions with the prototypes as well as their verbal feedback.

[23] NESTA and ThinkPublic. (2013). Prototyping framework: A guide to prototyping new ideas. Online: https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/prototyping_framework.pdf

4. Applying the policy prototyping framework

From the above, we have distilled prototyping guidelines to assist local agencies embarking on policy prototyping.

As a starting point, the policy team should begin by answering:

Is the policy idea fully defined?	
No	**Yes**
then	
Engage in exploratory prototyping	Engage in developmental prototyping

Subsequently, in both cases, the policy teams should answer:

- What are the questions/hypotheses to be tested?
- With whom should the hypothesis be tested?
- How will the hypothesis be tested?

4.1. Exploratory Prototyping

For exploratory prototyping, it is often helpful to consider those aspects cross-cutting to all policy options, such as the actors involved in its ownership and funding. The questions in Table 1 could help determine the policy idea's demand and viability:

	Ownership: who should own and deliver the policy?	**Funding**: who should pay for the policy?	**Liability**: Who should be responsible for the policy and any safeguarding?
Individual citizen			
Informal social sector			
Formal social sector			
Private sector			
Public sector			

Table 1: Initial questions for exploratory prototyping[24].

In many cases, the answers to the questions above are based on the policy team's assumptions; therefore, part of the exploratory prototyping should look at validating those aspects of the policy ideas.

Likewise, helpful at this stage is listing the elements required to implement the policy, including

- Activities;

[24] Adapted from Nesta and ThinkPublic. (2013). Mapping the social business model for your new service idea. Online: https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/prototyping_toolkit_mappingscales.pdf

- Resources;
- People; and
- Materials.

For each answer, the policy team should identify the implicit assumptions and determine if a specific prototype is required to test it.

4.2. Developmental Prototyping

As previously mentioned, developmental prototyping typically engages with more clearly defined policy ideas and prototypes that demand tailored testing propositions. However, some general aspects could still be worth testing at this stage. This process can be facilitated by looking at the users' interaction with the policy at three distinct moments: before, during, and after becoming beneficiaries (see Table 2).

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
e.g., How do creatives hear about this policy?	e.g., How do creatives claim/use the proposed policy?	e.g., What are the obligations of the beneficiaries?
e.g., What are the requirements for creatives wanting to claim/use the policy?	e.g., How long does the application process take?	e.g., How are creatives expected to report the benefits/policy results?

Table 2: Stages of interaction with the proposed policy[25]

Often, what users say, think or do, is different from how they actually interact with the prototypes. Empathy maps help capture user feedback when using the prototypes. Empathy maps offer a more holistic glimpse into how a user interacts with a prototype and are not meant to be sequential or chronological in their reporting. Traditionally, empathy maps are used to understand users at the early stages of the design process and are split into four quadrants (Says, Thinks, Does, and Feels), with the user in the centre[26].

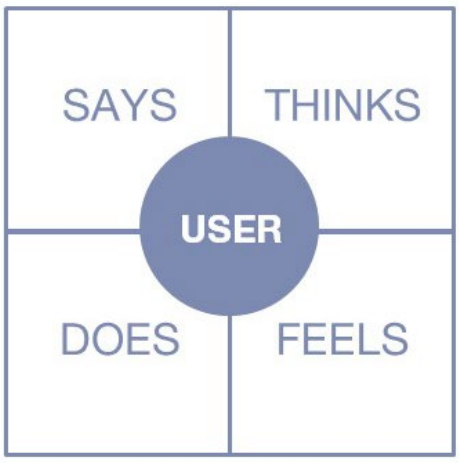

Figure 5: Empathy map

The 'Says' quadrant captures what the user says aloud during the testing session. When possible, it should include direct quotes.

The 'Thinks' quadrant is filled with what the user is thinking throughout the testing but may not vocalise. Naturally, this requires interpretation. Attempt to make inferences on the user's intentions when interacting with the prototypes.

The 'Does' quadrant includes the user's actions during the testing. What does the user physically do? To what extent do they interact expectedly?

The 'Feels' quadrant encloses the user's emotional state during the testing session. This is often represented as an adjective plus a short sentence for context. Do they seem worried? What does the user get excited about?

[25] Adapted from Nesta and ThinkPublic. (2013). Prototyping Toolkit: Activity Sheet 2. Online: https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/prototyping_toolkit_activity_sheet_2.pdf
[26] For a detailed account of the Empathy Map tools, see Gibbons, S. (2018). Empathy Mapping: The First Step in Design Thinking. *Nielsen Norman Group*. Online: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/empathy-mapping/

4.3 Testing the framework

To exemplify the use of the policy prototyping framework, we will resort to one of the preliminary policy ideas generated during the policy co-design workshop in Phase 3. During the workshop, the group working on the theme of *Networks* proposed

> *Develop an online hyperlocal creative directory supported by HW/FI CEZ and the big new players in the area (e.g., Here East, V&A, Sadler's Wells) to increase their visibility and reach.*

As it stands, the policy idea is not fully defined since, for example, it is unclear how this directory would operate—Will it require software development, or could it be based on social media platforms? What type of support is expected from the CEZ?

Consequently, we will treat the policy idea as requiring exploratory prototyping to test its viability.

Next, we should respond to questions in three categories:

Online hyperlocal creative directory		
What are the questions/hypotheses to be tested?	**With whom should the hypothesis be tested?**	**How will the hypothesis be tested?**
Will an online directory increase exposure/sales of local creatives?	Potential customers	Desk research and an online survey.
What are the basic features the directory should offer?	Local creatives	Workshop
	Potential customers	Online survey through official local channels
How many local creatives are willing to join?	Local creatives	Online survey through CIG and workspace providers
	Workspace providers	1-2-1 meetings
Are they willing to pay for the service? How much?	Local creatives	Online survey through CIG and workspace providers
	Workspace providers	1-2-1 meetings
Does integrating the directory put creatives at risk?	Councils' legal teams, HMRC	1-2-1 meetings
	CDT	1-2-1 meeting with Chair
	Local creatives	Open consultation through CIG and surveys

Having determined the main exploratory questions regarding the policy idea, we can move towards determining its operating principles in terms of ownership, funding, and liability:

Online hyperlocal creative directory			
	Ownership: who should own and deliver the policy?	**Funding**: who should pay for the policy?	**Liability**: Who should be responsible for the policy and any safeguarding?
Individual citizen	-	Local creatives to pay a one-off registration fee.	-
Informal social sector	-	-	-

Formal social sector	Partner with The Wick newspaper to implement the directory in paper and digital version.	The Wick newspaper is in charge of making the hyperlocal creative directory sustainable beyond the pilot.	The Wick newspaper is partially legally liable during the first year of operation and fully legally accountable for the directory afterwards.
Private sector	-	Local workspaces are to be offered discounted rates for their tenants.	-
Public sector	The CEZ owns the programme but delegates its operation.	The CEZ funds the programme for a year (as a pilot), in which sustainable sources of income must be found.	The CEZ is partially legally accountable for the directory during the duration of the pilot.

Lastly, we would aim at determining the *activities, resources, people, and materials* required to develop and implement the proposed policy idea:

Online hyperlocal creative directory				
	Description	**Assumptions**	**Needs to be tested?**	**How?**
Activities	Survey all creatives in HWFI & QEOP.	The CEZ can conduct this activity.	No	-
		It is possible to capture all relevant data from the different creatives through an online form.	No	-
	Establish a contract with The Wick newspaper for the directory's operation.	The Wick Newspaper is interested in assuming this role.	Yes	Legal advice from the local Councils and 1-2-1 meeting with The Wick newspaper management team.
Resources	Funds to develop and run the directory.	CEZ funds for the pilot are available.	No	-
		The partner will secure funding to sustain the directory beyond the pilot.	No	-
People	Local creatives.	There is a considerable mass of creatives willing to join the directory.	Yes	Through the survey.
	The CEZ Manager.	The manager has enough time available to undertake this project.	No	-
	The partner's staff.	The Wick newspaper has staff available or	Yes	1-2-1 meeting with The Wick newspaper

		will find staff to operate the directory.		management team.
Materials	Online domain.	The CEZ will be able to register an online domain for the directory.	No	-
	Online hosting.	The Wick newspaper has an online hosting capable of supporting the directory.	Yes	1-2-1 meeting with The Wick newspaper management team.
	Visual material for the directory.	Local creatives will be willing to give up the image rights to their work to be part of the directory.	Yes	Through the survey.

Having responded to the questions above, we are ready to engage in exploratory prototyping to develop an 'online hyperlocal creative directory'. This exercise does not pretend to showcase an exhaustive analysis of the particular case but rather illustrate the steps to engage in policy prototyping.

As previously mentioned, adopting this framework does not imply abandoning other means of policy appraisal and due diligence the local agencies would typically carry out as part of their policymaking process. On the contrary, it looks at complementing their toolkits with an agile methodology aiming at ensuring support measures for creatives in Hackney Wick, Fish Island, and the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park are co-design with users front and centre.