



IDE Master Graduation

Project team, Procedural checks and personal Project brief

This document contains the agreements made between student and supervisory team about the student's IDE Master Graduation Project. This document can also include the involvement of an external organisation, however, it does not cover any legal employment relationship that the student and the client (might) agree upon. Next to that, this document facilitates the required procedural checks. In this document:

- The student defines the team, what he/she is going to do/deliver and how that will come about.
- SSC E&SA (Shared Service Center, Education & Student Affairs) reports on the student's registration and study progress.
- IDE's Board of Examiners confirms if the student is allowed to start the Graduation Project.

! USE ADOBE ACROBAT READER TO OPEN, EDIT AND SAVE THIS DOCUMENT

Download again and reopen in case you tried other software, such as Preview (Mac) or a webbrowser.

STUDENT DATA & MASTER PROGRAMME

Save this form according the format "IDE Master Graduation Project Brief_familyname_firstname_studentnumber_dd-mm-yyyy".

Complete all blue parts of the form and include the approved Project Brief in your Graduation Report as Appendix 1 !



family name Sathish Kumar

initials NSK given name Nivedhitha

student number 5555159

street & no. _____

zipcode & city _____

country _____

phone _____

email _____

Your master programme (only select the options that apply to you):

IDE master(s): IPD Dfl SPD

2nd non-IDE master: _____

individual programme: _____ (give date of approval)

honours programme: Honours Programme Master

specialisation / annotation: Medisign

Tech. in Sustainable Design

Entrepreneurship

SUPERVISORY TEAM **

Fill in the required data for the supervisory team members. Please check the instructions on the right !

** chair Dr. Euiyoung Kim dept. / section: DOS / MCR

** mentor Ir. Katrina Heijne dept. / section: DOS / MOD

2nd mentor _____

organisation: _____

city: _____ country: _____

comments (optional)
:
:
:

Chair should request the IDE Board of Examiners for approval of a non-IDE mentor, including a motivation letter and c.v..



Second mentor only applies in case the assignment is hosted by an external organisation.



Ensure a heterogeneous team. In case you wish to include two team members from the same section, please explain why.

APPROVAL PROJECT BRIEF

To be filled in by the chair of the supervisory team.

chair Dr. Euiyoung Kim date - -

CHECK STUDY PROGRESS

To be filled in by the SSC E&SA (Shared Service Center, Education & Student Affairs), after approval of the project brief by the Chair. The study progress will be checked for a 2nd time just before the green light meeting.

Master electives no. of EC accumulated in total: _____ EC

Of which, taking the conditional requirements into account, can be part of the exam programme _____ EC

List of electives obtained before the third semester without approval of the BoE

YES all 1st year master courses passed

NO missing 1st year master courses are:

name _____ date - - signature _____

FORMAL APPROVAL GRADUATION PROJECT

To be filled in by the Board of Examiners of IDE TU Delft. Please check the supervisory team and study the parts of the brief marked **. Next, please assess, (dis)approve and sign this Project Brief, by using the criteria below.

- Does the project fit within the (MSc)-programme of the student (taking into account, if described, the activities done next to the obligatory MSc specific courses)?
- Is the level of the project challenging enough for a MSc IDE graduating student?
- Is the project expected to be doable within 100 working days/20 weeks ?
- Does the composition of the supervisory team comply with the regulations and fit the assignment ?

Content: APPROVED NOT APPROVED

Procedure: APPROVED NOT APPROVED

comments

name _____ date - - signature _____

Building trust for consultancy- client relationships project title

Please state the title of your graduation project (above) and the start date and end date (below). Keep the title compact and simple. Do not use abbreviations. The remainder of this document allows you to define and clarify your graduation project.

start date 07 - 03 - 2023 24 - 08 - 2023 end date

INTRODUCTION **

Please describe, the context of your project, and address the main stakeholders (interests) within this context in a concise yet complete manner. Who are involved, what do they value and how do they currently operate within the given context? What are the main opportunities and limitations you are currently aware of (cultural- and social norms, resources (time, money,...), technology, ...).

Providing customers with operational guidance has been the primary way that "conventional" consultancies have operated for many years. However, due to the changing market demands that prioritize a human-centered approach toward complex problems, there has been a surge in the acquisition of design consultancies by larger companies and the emergence of independent consultancies (Roxburgh, 2016). Design consultancies not only strive to deliver excellent results but also introduce innovative ways of thinking and a design mindset through their process-driven approach (Building a Design-driven Culture, 2015). This is different from the conventional result-driven approach that client organizations are generally accustomed to, posing a new challenge for design consultancies to tackle. Moreover, design consultancies enable clients to view things from a fresh perspective, which can be challenging when they are constrained by preconceived notions. As a solution, design consultancies are implementing several practices to establish trust with their clients.

The primary aim of design consultancies is to offer unique solutions that clients may not have considered on their own. For this reason, it is essential to establish a strong relationship based on trust to ensure that information flows freely and appropriately between the client and consultancy, and for creating a working environment that can foster excellent design outcomes. This requires implementing best practices to foster trust between the two parties.

Trust is an abstract yet crucial factor that can shape the relationship between two entities. Trust has a subjective meaning for each individual and organization, which stems from several factors that add up to create trust. Building trust with an external organization has a significant advantage for consultancies as it helps gain credibility and create mutual reliability (Mauerer, 2018). I believe this has a strong impact on improving brand loyalty and customer retention. The client-consultancy relationship depends on creating, building, and maintaining trust from project acquisition to building loyalty. Currently, design consultancies utilize design's strengths, such as bringing clarity and limiting risks through research, to develop trust-building practices. However, through the course of this graduation, project, I aim to find other practices that significantly help in building trust. It is also crucial to account for challenges like brand reputation and level of client engagement in the project scope.

For my graduation thesis, I aim to design a trust framework by conducting research with designers from top design consultancies. The framework's focus is on identifying and developing key practices that organizations can follow to establish and maintain trust in their client relationships, with a secondary emphasis on anticipating the evolving nature of these relationships in the future.

Roxburgh, H. (2016, May 12). Why big consultancies buy design agencies | Analysis. Campaign Asia. Retrieved April 3, 2022, from <https://www.campaignasia.com/article/why-big-consultancies-buy-design-agencies/407973>

Building a design-driven culture. (2015, September 1). McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/growth-marketing-and-sales/our-insights/building-a-design-driven-culture>

space available for images / figures on next page

introduction (continued): space for images

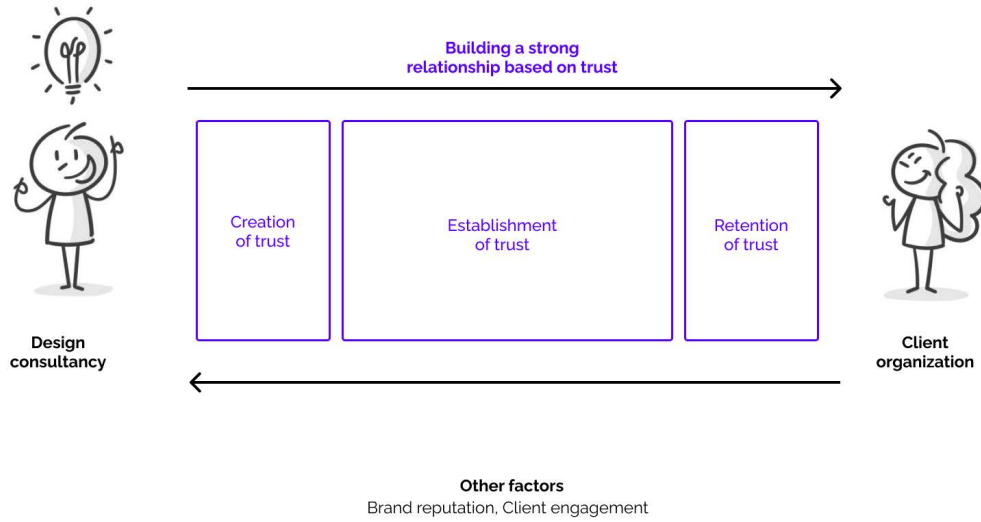


image / figure 1: The phases of building trust with clients

image / figure 2: _____

PROBLEM DEFINITION **

Limit and define the scope and solution space of your project to one that is manageable within one Master Graduation Project of 30 EC (= 20 full time weeks or 100 working days) and clearly indicate what issue(s) should be addressed in this project.

Design consultancies aim to deliver the best outcome for their clients. To do so, consultancies need to build a relationship based on trust with the clients. There has been a lack of a standardized way to build trust in different stages of engagement with clients. Thus for the timeframe of the master's graduation project, I will be focussing on:

Primary focus

- Going in-depth into what trust means through research insights. What is trust in the context of consultancy and client relationships? What are some key factors that determine trust building?
- Capturing the unique practices that establish trust from literature review and user interviews. What are some key practices that help establish trust? What makes one practice better than the other?

Secondary focus

- Understanding the holistic ecosystem of project work of consultancies with clients. Framing a standardized blueprint of how a project is acquired to being delivered, with the processes and the key decision-making points.
- Diving into the trends of client organization's demands of the future. How to incorporate the future demands of users that would essentially help the consultancy stay relevant? What skills can they equip with to continue to build trust?

Tertiary focus

- Trust building's impact on sustaining long-term relationships: Based consultancies willingness to share, how have some key practices helped them sustain relationships with clients?

ASSIGNMENT **

State in 2 or 3 sentences what you are going to research, design, create and / or generate, that will solve (part of) the issue(s) pointed out in "problem definition". Then illustrate this assignment by indicating what kind of solution you expect and / or aim to deliver, for instance: a product, a product-service combination, a strategy illustrated through product or product-service combination ideas, In case of a Specialisation and/or Annotation, make sure the assignment reflects this/these.

I will research the creation and retention of trust in client-consultancy relationships. It will entail defining essential practices from qualitative research and literature review on a framework for building trust. By the end of the project, the framework shall be used to create a hypothetical design consultancy grounded on trust with a focus on how the relationships will evolve in the future.

I aim to create a trust framework within a speculated design consultancy of the future. It highlights critical practices that remain relevant to building trust for now and in the future.

1. A trust framework will be defined based on a literature review that highlights key themes of consideration.
2. Report on the research and findings of consultancy-client processes, activities, and practices that revolve around trust creation and retention.
3. A trust-building framework is defined based on insights (key practices, protocols, activities, and processes) from qualitative and literature research.
4. A scenario that portrays the new-age design consultancy formed on the grounds of trust building.

Personal Project Brief - IDE Master Graduation

PLANNING AND APPROACH **

Include a Gantt Chart (replace the example below - more examples can be found in Manual 2) that shows the different phases of your project, deliverables you have in mind, meetings, and how you plan to spend your time. Please note that all activities should fit within the given net time of 30 EC = 20 full time weeks or 100 working days, and your planning should include a kick-off meeting, mid-term meeting, green light meeting and graduation ceremony. Illustrate your Gantt Chart by, for instance, explaining your approach, and please indicate periods of part-time activities and/or periods of not spending time on your graduation project, if any, for instance because of holidays or parallel activities.

start date 7 - 3 - 2023

24 - 8 - 2023 end date

Months	MARCH					APRIL					MAY					JUNE					JULY					AUGUST							
Calendar Week	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34								
Date Range	6-12	13-19	20-26	27-Mar	3-9	10-16	17-23	24-30	1-7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-May	5-11	12-18	19-25	26-Jun	3-9	10-16	17-23	24-30	31-Jul	7-13	14-20	21-27								
Project Week	Mar	Mar	Mar	2-Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	May	May	May	May	4-Jun	Jun	Jun	Jun	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26							
Holidays					Good Friday (7-Apr)	Easter Monday (10-Apr)	Kings Day (27-Apr)		Liberation Day (5-May)		Ascension Day (18/19-May)	White Monday (29-May)																					
Working days	3	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	3	4	-	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	100								
Important Days	7-Mar									10-May									12-Jul										24-Aug				
Initiating Project	Literature Review																																
	Defining trust																																
	Curate practices																																
	Research scouting																																
	Defining Problem Statement																																
	Field research prep																																
	Method research																																
	Interviews / reflection																																
Analysis					Research Analysis																												
					Insight Generation																												
Ideation					Problem reframing																												
					Outcome Ideation																												
					Framework creation																												
					Trust Framework																												
Concept					Validation																												
					Concept Iteration																												
					Final Prototyping																												
Report and final Deliverables					Report Writing																												
					Other deliverables																												

MOTIVATION AND PERSONAL AMBITIONS

Explain why you set up this project, what competences you want to prove and learn. For example: acquired competences from your MSc programme, the elective semester, extra-curricular activities (etc.) and point out the competences you have yet developed. Optionally, describe which personal learning ambitions you explicitly want to address in this project, on top of the learning objectives of the Graduation Project, such as: in depth knowledge a on specific subject, broadening your competences or experimenting with a specific tool and/or methodology, Stick to no more than five ambitions.

From working at five different company settings, I took a keen interest in working with a design consultancy. The breadth of topics from a vast pool of domains tackled by a systemic design process intrigued me. Throughout my MSc, I focused on expanding my horizon by exploring new topics and building on my design process. During my internship quarter, I got the opportunity to put the skills learned to use and realize the practicalities of a consultancy.

Strategic Product Design courses and the additional electives have given me the skillset to work as a strategic designer. I am able to envision future innovation for organizations through processes, methods, and tools. To see a potential career in a consultancy, I aim to gain bring in a holistic view of how a project comes to birth. From acquiring customers to building trust, improving brand credibility, and retaining clients for long-term relationships, can add to my skill set.

With my capabilities gained until now, I look to use the next few months I am spending on my thesis to achieve these personal goals

- The competencies strategic designers possess seem abstract and generalized, although has a great power to create powerful outcomes. Uncertainty is a dwelling factor that questions the belief in the capabilities a designer can provide. Through my thesis project, I want to create an outcome, that signifies the potential design can provide, and how to hold a belief in the design process to give out strong capable outcomes.
- The new changing times and the introduction of new ways of thinking are what make the design process difficult to communicate. As designers, we fail to provide the transparency needed for others to embed a design culture way of working. Through my project, I aim to bridge the communication gap through methods that create lasting relationships based on trust.
- I want this chance to build something that incorporates the academic/theoretical side of the practical and professional world. Frameworks have been generally preserved in the academic world. I hope through my project, I can build a strong pragmatic framework that can guide consultancies to create better relationships.
- In my future career trajectory, I wish to have my own design consultancy. I hope to use my thesis time to get a head start on the processes and ongoings of a consultancy and their dynamics with clients to foresee how my consultancy would be like.

FINAL COMMENTS

In case your project brief needs final comments, please add any information you think is relevant.