

NEW YORK CREATIVITY ODYSSEY™

WE ENVISION A WORLD ACTIVATED BY
CREATIVITY, DESIGN AND EDUCATION

Core77 Design Awards 2016
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Yi Kai Chen

18 years
High School Student,
Hangzhou, China

“

My dream is to study design in the United States. I am trying very hard to convince my parents, but they are unconvinced. They often ask me a lot of questions, to which I don't have the answers, like - What is the future of design? Is it a safe profession to consider? Do designers earn enough money? What work will you do as a designer?

PROBLEM DEFINITION



Kai's Challenge

Kai is an only child, whose parents, both from business backgrounds, would like him to get a degree in business. Unsure about his options, Kai has for the last 2 years been preparing simultaneously for Gao-Kao, China's National College Entrance Exam, and the SAT. For the last 1.5 years, heeding to parental pressure, and compelled to follow other aspiring

art and design students, Kai has been attending multiple tutoring lessons in sketching and painting.

In addition, Kai also had to work on developing his portfolio by taking classes at a portfolio agency, English courses at an ESL learning centre and regular sessions with career consultants and immigration agents.

Navigating the transition to an art and design college can seem so daunting that nearly every Chinese family hires an education consultant. But in the midst of multiple tutoring lessons and consulting sessions, Kai, like most high-school students from China, is still unable to discover his true sense of direction and purpose in life.

FIELD RESEARCH

Our partners Tangora Communications commissioned an Independent Agency in China to research the Art and Design Education Market.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Market Development

- To map out the market landscape of art and design education

Brand Performance

- To evaluate the brand performance of major market players, and unveil business challenges and future opportunities

STP Strategy

- To gain insight into the customer segment and customer 5Ws, aiming to identify the target consumer segment

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

SHANGHAI
BEIJING
GUANGZHOU
AND THEIR NEIGHBORING CITIES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Secondary Research

- Industry report, government statistics, internal database and past study reference

Market Visit

- Visit to the key market players to understand competitive intelligence

Expert In-depth Interview

- 10 IDIs with experts in art and design education, including educators, school headmasters, university professors and school teachers

Consumer Focus Group Discussion

- 6 FGDs in three key cities; 1 Parent group and 1 student group in each city

Consumer Quantitative Interview

- 600 face-to-face interviews with students in the 3 key cities and the neighboring cities.

RESPONDENT CRITERIA

Experts: Currently working in the education industry and have more than 5-year experience in the art and design education industry

Students: High-school students who are interested in applying to art and design training schools or colleges, with mid to high household income in key cities

Parents: With mid to high household income in key cities, and have children studying in high schools who are interested in applying to art and design training schools or colleges.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Primary Motivation for Taking Art and Design Courses

- 1 Personal interest and passion for art and design
- 2 To be more artistically accomplished
- 3 Planning to apply for art and design college education
- 4 Planning to engage in art and design related career

Market Development and Growth

10%

Growth in market size in the past 5 years for art and design education sector

100

Billion CNY - Estimated market size in the next 5 years, considering 20% yearly market volume and growth

Consumer Usage and Attitude

51.2%

Students interviewed are interested in Fine Art courses,

7825

CNY -Average price paid by students for one Art and Design course

44.1%

Students interviewed are interested in Fashion Design

Customer satisfaction with current Art and Design Courses

24%

Students interviewed were dissatisfied with their current art and design course experience

41%

students neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

We began by outlining the gap between students expectations and the service provided by educational agencies. Our research findings also helped us develop insights to better understand the root cause of this problem.

■ **Students have limited knowledge of art and design careers**

Students have limited access to reliable information, both online and offline, partially due to China's internet censorship and the language barrier. Even after enrolling the services of educational agencies, many students expressed difficulty navigating their career options and career paths.

■ **Agencies have limited knowledge of the art and design ecosystem**

Agencies are often focussed on traditional design disciplines, while students are keen on experimental, technology based programs. Amongst students interviewed, an average of **63%** of students weren't fully satisfied by the services offered by educational agencies.

■ **Absence of reliable mentors and support for students**

Students are often self-motivated to pursue art and design careers. Amongst students interviewed, an average of **60%** students are independent decision makers, while about **20%** decided with their parents. Students found their friends and high-school teachers to be the most reliable information channels, and were unsatisfied by the advice received from consultants.

■ **Parents are unconvinced of art and design as a career option**

Parents spend up to **\$50,000 a year** on their children's art tutoring lessons, ESL courses, career consulting sessions and meetings with immigration agents. Yet, many parents expressed reservations over their children choosing careers in art and design, partly because they weren't aware of what a creative career entails.

HOW MIGHT WE...?



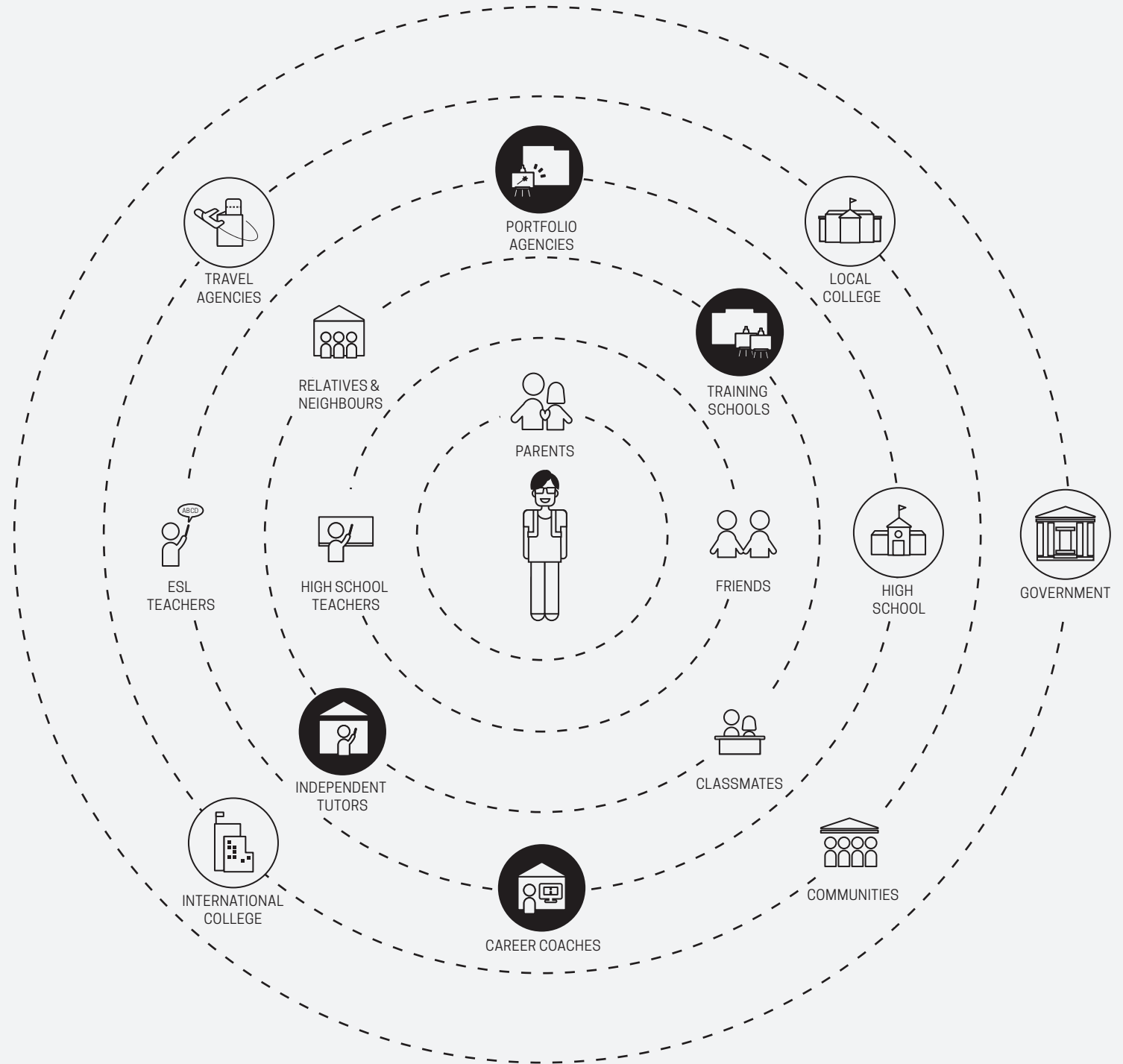
How might we empower prospective art and design pre-college students to use their personal skills and knowledge to navigate their career options, make an informed choice and develop a roadmap for the future?

OUR OPPORTUNITY

We wanted to go beyond providing career based information to college-bound students, and design a service that would prepare them to triumph in today's complex world, by helping them develop their sense of direction and purpose. We realized that the student's creative potential is bright, but their options for self discovery and expressing that potential is often limited. Empowering these young people would begin by guiding them through a journey of self-discovery, help them make an informed choice and ultimately develop a roadmap for the future.

In today's complex world, creative skills are increasingly being recognized as the skills that separate individuals who are prepared for increasingly complex lives in the 21st century, and those who are not.

Our program would therefore rise to this challenge by offering an intensive and innovative program for students who are interested in being empowered through design. We decided to teach creative skills to students using the human-centered design approach - teaching students how to unlock their creative potential through design thinking and collaboration.



Our Mission - We work to ensure every individual's success in this complex 21st century world

We understood the challenges faced by college bound student in China. With our mission statement in hand, we created 5 core goals to guide our project - working to develop a unique service offering specifically for college-bound students interested in art and design careers.

OUR 5 CORE GOALS

1 To prepare college-bound students to triumph in the global skills race by teaching them the necessary and relevant 21st century skills.

2 To create a safe learning environment, where students can increase their self awareness by learning about their strengths, capabilities, and unique purpose in life

3 To introduce students to the fundamentals of the human-centered design process through real world challenges and hands-on training

4 To provide career guidance and mentorship by helping students navigate their career options and develop a roadmap for the future.

5 To create an inspiring and enjoyable New York City experience for the students, by exposing them to the diverse art and design hotspots and vibrant cultures.

OUR SOLUTION



WHO ARE WE ?

The New York Creativity Odyssey (NYCO) is an educational start-up, working to empower college-bound students who are interested in pursuing careers in art and design - by providing them with an opportunity to fuel their creativity, and the necessary tools to unlock their potential, define their goals and achieve their dreams.

NEW YORK CREATIVITY ODYSSEY

Established in 2015, NYCO offers 14-day intensive programs to pre-college from China and Taiwan. The program combines four immersive learning modules of Explore, Learn, Create and Discover, into the unique art and design context of New York City. Along with guided tours of the city, students visit renowned art and design colleges and companies, and receive intensive portfolio development training and personalized career counseling.

By teaching students the most relevant of 21st century skills - from critical thinking, creative problem solving, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and effective communication; NYCO also provides participants with an opportunity to learn a human-focused, prototype driven design process that cultivates enterprising leaders, creative thinkers and collaborative doers.

The NYCO program has been endorsed by the Transdisciplinary Design Program at Parsons School of Design, and 14-day intensive programs are conducted at the Parsons campus in New York City.

PROGRAM DETAILS



EXPLORE

Experience New York City through guided tours with experts, and be inspired by the vast art and design resources - from museums, art galleries, shows, events and public spaces.



Museums and Galleries



Shows and Events



Food and Shopping



Neighborhood and Culture



CREATE

Transform unconventional thinking into impressive work, by building a NYCO project portfolio, and utilize storytelling and effective communication tools and methods to craft a compelling final presentation for design experts.



Portfolio creation



Effective Presentations



LEARN

Learn critical thinking and creative problem solving methodologies, and work collaboratively in teams to conduct research, develop insights, learn the art of ideation and practice rapid prototyping.



Empathize



Define



Ideate



Prototype



DISCOVER

Visit renowned art and design companies and colleges, and increase self awareness by identifying personal strengths and weaknesses, and discover ideal career options through personalized career counseling and mentorship.



Art and Design College

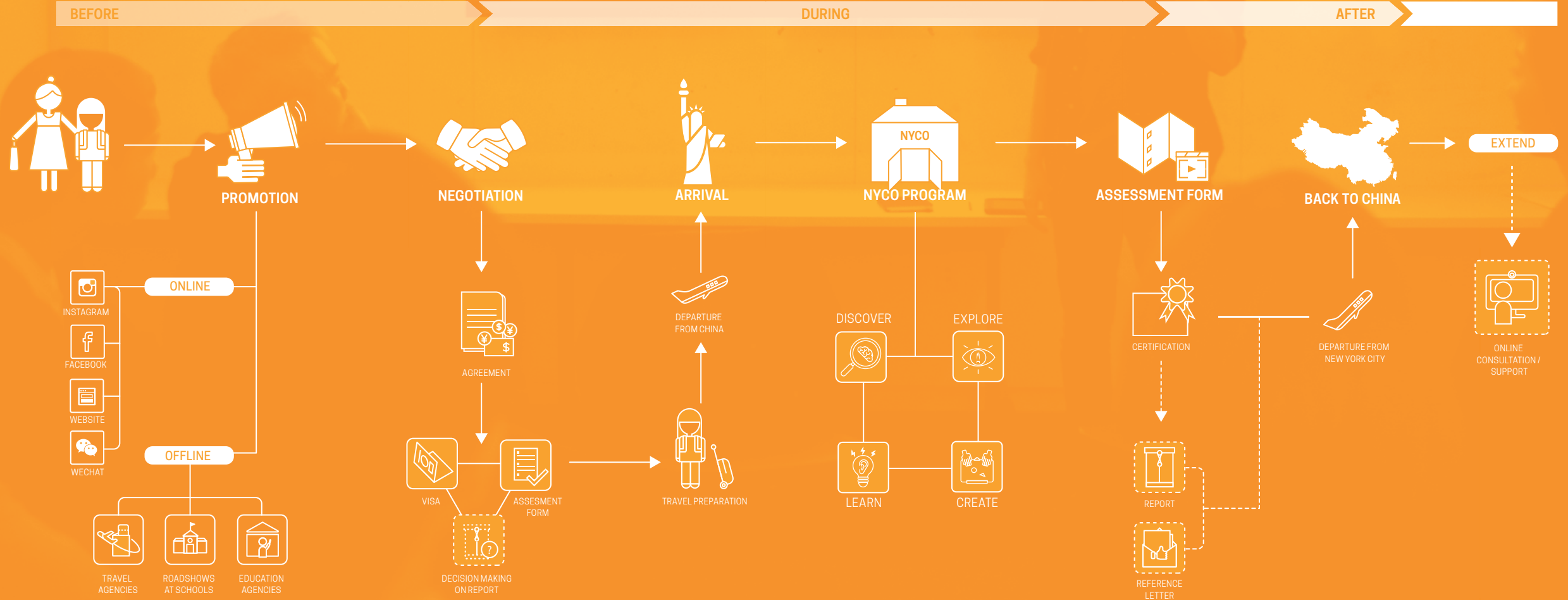


Art and Design Companies



Career Development

STUDENT JOURNEY MAP





01

02

03

04

05

06

01 Exclusive Events - VIP tickets to a fashion show at the New York Fashion Week, February 2016

02 Shopping - Exploring trendy upscale boutique stores in the Cast-Iron Historic District of SoHo

03 Neighborhood Visit - Guided tour of NYC's famed Garment District, and interacting with textile manufacturers

04 Museum Visit - Learning more about contemporary art at MoMa PS1 (Museum of Modern Art), located in the borough of Queens

05 Neighborhood Visit - Experiencing the diverse neighborhood and culture of New York City

06 Public Spaces - A walk over the famed Brooklyn Bridge, one of the oldest suspension bridges in United States.

Some activities: Museums and Galleries - Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Cooper Hewitt Museum, Chelsea Art Galleries; Shows and Events - Broadway Show, Sleep No More; Shopping - boutique stores in SoHo; Public Spaces - The High Line, Grand Central Station, Brooklyn Bridge

EXPLORE

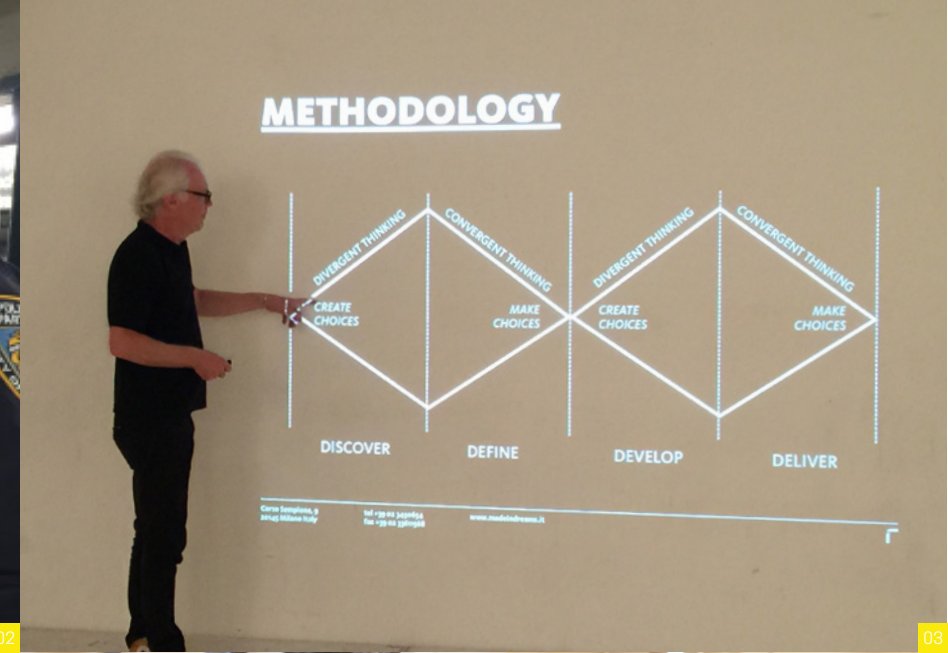




01



02



03



04



05



06

- 01 Design Charrette - Intensive design exercises to get the students to be comfortable with the design process
- 02 Design Challenge - Interviewing New York City subway users, as part of the design research phase of the project
- 03 Guest Lecture - 'Introduction to Design Process' by Tucker Viemeister, Founder of Viemeister Industries

- 04 Design Challenge - Sketching User Journey Maps to visually communicate users' current interaction with the New York City subway
- 05 Design Challenge - Collecting, organizing and synthesizing the findings, to make meaning of the research
- 06 Design Challenge - Quickly transforming an idea into physical form by Rapid Prototyping, to be able to further clarify the design and get early feedback

Some activities: Design Research - Observation, Documentation and Interviews, Mood Board, 5 Why's Exercise, Prototyping - Rapid and Refined, User Journey Map, Ideation - Clustering





- 01 Presentation Deck - Scripting the presentation along with the presentation deck, and practicing how to tell a compelling story
- 02 Presentation Deck - Learning to build an effective presentation using pitch deck, for their final Design Challenge presentation
- 03 Design charrette group presentations - Intensive design exercises to get the students to be comfortable with the design process

- 04 Portfolio Development - Being taught how to structure, organize and build a project portfolio from the NYCO Design Challenge
- 05 Final Presentation - Pitching their project to design experts, NYCO instructors, and their peers

Some activities: *Portfolio Development - Format, Content, Organization; Effective Presentation - Pitch Deck, Storyboarding, Story Arc*



- 01 Company Visit - Office tour of HLW, an award-winning architecture, engineering, and interior design firm
- 02 Company Visit - Visit to the New York office of IDEO, an award winning design and innovation consultancy
- 03 College Tour - Student-led tour of Pratt Institute's campus in Brooklyn, learning how to research for colleges

- 04 Guest Lecture - 'Explorations of Light and Space' presentation by Lighting Designer, James Clotfelter
- 05 Career Development - NYCO instructors in a One-on-one consulting session with the students, discussing their career options and pathways
- 06 Career Development - Self Discovery and Awareness session with NYCO students, where the students identify their personal strengths and weakness, and increase their self awareness

Some activities: College Tour of Parsons School of Design, Pratt Institute, Visit to Design and Innovation Companies, Career Exploration and Development - Personality Test, Self Discovery and Awareness, Design Ecosystem, One-on-one Career Consulting

DESIGN CHALLENGE

HOW MIGHT WE COMBINE THE ART AND CULTURE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD TO CREATE A MORE SAFE SUBWAY SYSTEM?

OPPORTUNITY

Trash-strewn subway tracks are a primary cause of fires inside stations, which prompts thousands of delays throughout the transit system. The students therefore decided to take on the challenge of creating a clean and culturally distinct subway experience for the Delancy St. community.

DESIGN + PROTOTYPE

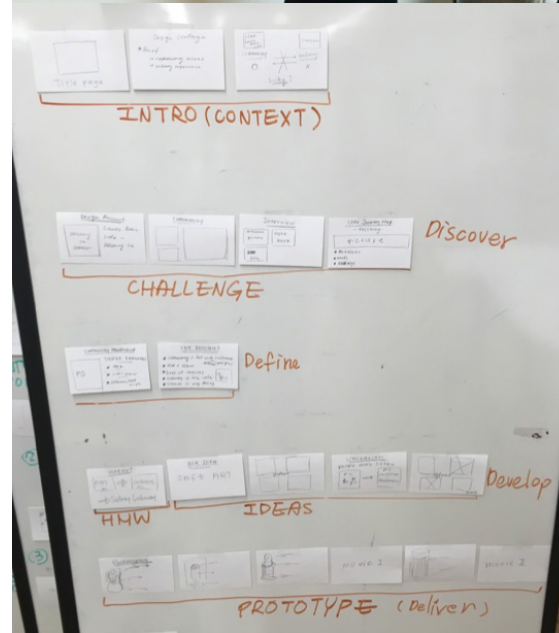
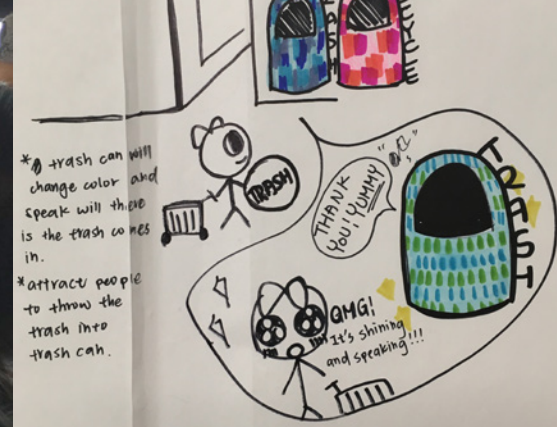
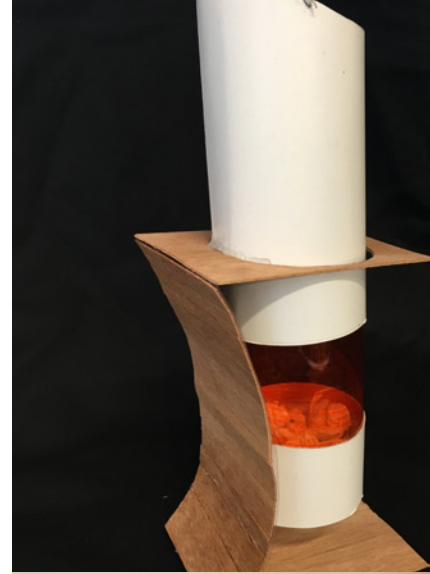
The students focussed their efforts on leveraging existing community resources. Rather than force people to throw into the trashcan and punish them if they don't follow the rules, the students suggested a rather novel approach.

NO PUNISHMENT - CREATE INCENTIVE FOR THE USER

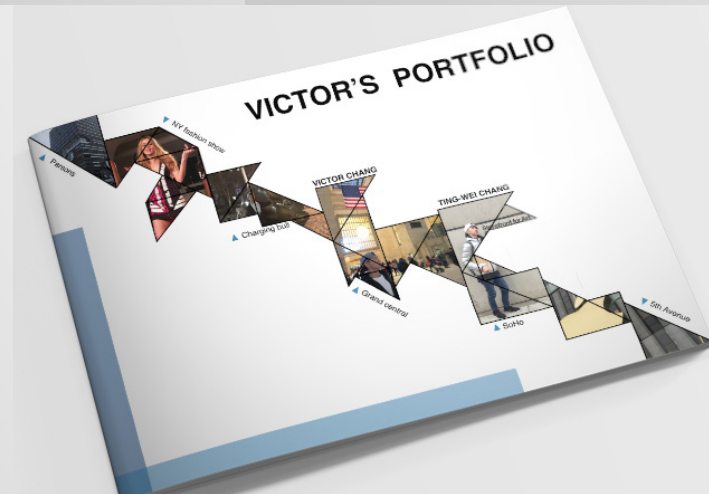
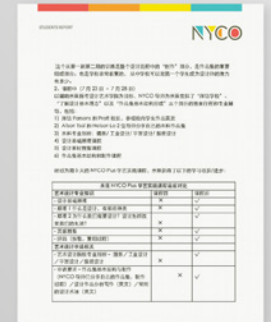
The idea was therefore to design an interactive trashcan, a way to encourage people to throw their trash into the trashcan. The students developed prototypes of their design - a trashcan that would light-up and play music when somebody throws trash inside.

OUTCOME

Siri Betts-Sonstegard, a Service Designer at IBM and a guest critic at the final presentation, was amazed by the student's projects and congratulated them. After the presentation, students built a portfolio to showcase their NYCO project.



WHAT YOU'LL GET



- PROGRAM GUIDEBOOK** A guidebook with the program overview, activities and resources; so that students can continue learning long after completing the course
- GRADUATE CERTIFICATE** A certificate of completion for participants, endorsed by the Transdisciplinary Design program at Parsons School of Design

- REFERENCE LETTER** A reference letter for the most outstanding students, outlining the student's strengths, capacities and performance during the NYCO program
- STUDENT REPORT** A detailed personalized report summarizing the student's strengths, capacities and potential career options (add-on package)
- STUDENT PORTFOLIO** A personal portfolio of creative works completed during the NYCO program, so that students can share with others

PROGRAM VALUE



“

NYCO's creative coding session allowed me to see the latest trend in creative industry. I have decided to pursue interaction design. Thank you NYCO. I found my path through this program.

- Kai, High-School Student, and NYCO Program participant

The value of this program lies in empowering college-bound students to discover their personal strengths and skills, make an informed career choice and begin to develop a roadmap towards their future.

- Preparing them to triumph in the world, by teaching them the relevant 21st century skills
- Helping increase their self awareness, by learning about their strengths, capabilities, and unique purpose in life
- Navigating their career options and interests, and developing a roadmap for the future.
- Providing inspiration, by exposing them to the diverse art and design resources and vibrant culture of New York City.
- Helping them effectively communicate their career options and interests with their parents, friends and others

FEEDBACK



“ NYCO improved my observation skills. After the program I started noticing things that I would overlook earlier. It helped me discover my strengths and what I want to do in life. I also learnt how to communicate my ideas to other people.”

- Miko Chang, High-school student and NYCO Program participant



“ Before I came to the program, I was unclear about my future. Visiting Parsons and Pratt, and experiencing an open teaching and studying approach, made me re-think my understanding of architectural design, and also helped strengthen my passion for it.”

-Hao-Ai Wang (Tamina), High-school student and NYCO Program participant



“ NYCO helped me understand the connection between design, business and technology. I was really happy to get a glimpse of interdisciplinary design. Also NYCO's 3D video making session breaks the rules of traditional film. Very creative!”

-Yi, BA 2nd Year Media & Communication student, and NYCO Program participant



“ NYCO helped me realize that design is not only about painting, and architectural design is not only about making models and building a house, but one has to consider the interaction between space and the surrounding environment. Mentors gave me lots of support.”

-Ching-Wen Chen (Jimmy), High-school student and NYCO Program participant



RESULTS



Thank you, NYCO instructors. The program has led Tamina to realize her future academic pursuit, allowing her to understand that rather than only focusing on professional capabilities, she needs to interact and collaborate with others in order to achieve successful results.

- Amy Wang, Parent of Hao-Ai Wang (Tamina), NYCO Program participant

	WHAT WORKS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain one consistent theme throughout the program Streamline the course to keep the focus on the design challenge Classes and tasks are connected to one another, leading towards final presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesign the final design challenge presentation as the grand finale for the program Consider minimizing company visits, and weave the NYCO theme into the company visit
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants attending the program with a clear personal learning objectives were most benefited Meeting professionals from diverse disciplines immensely helped students later, while making a career choice The collaborative 'learning by doing' process helped students to improve their communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One dedicated translator (mostly English to Mandarin) throughout the course Redesign the Guidebook to include English and Chinese Mentors should continue supporting students, and help build confidence to speak in English
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students were pleasantly surprised that they could build a portfolio in under 2 weeks. Highpoint was receiving a certificate at the end of the program, endorsed by Parsons Transdisciplinary Design Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portfolio development should be staggered throughout the course Enhance student portfolios by adding museum and college visit, and holiday derive projects
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A basic tutorial on organizing information in digital files / folders and using online sharing tools helped the students collaborate better with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students should be informed in advance that bringing a laptop to the program is mandatory, and basic software list to be provided
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students explored the city on most days, thus balancing out the rigorous design challenge activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live closer to the city to minimize travel time Expose students to more diverse food options

OUR APPROACH

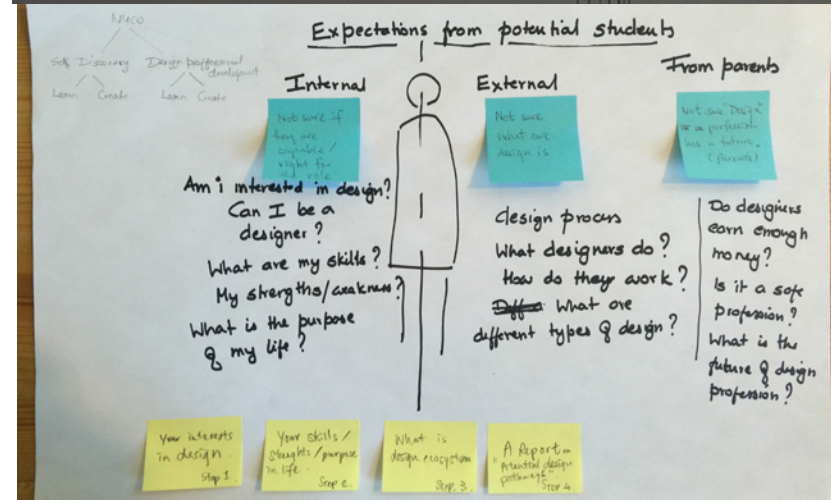
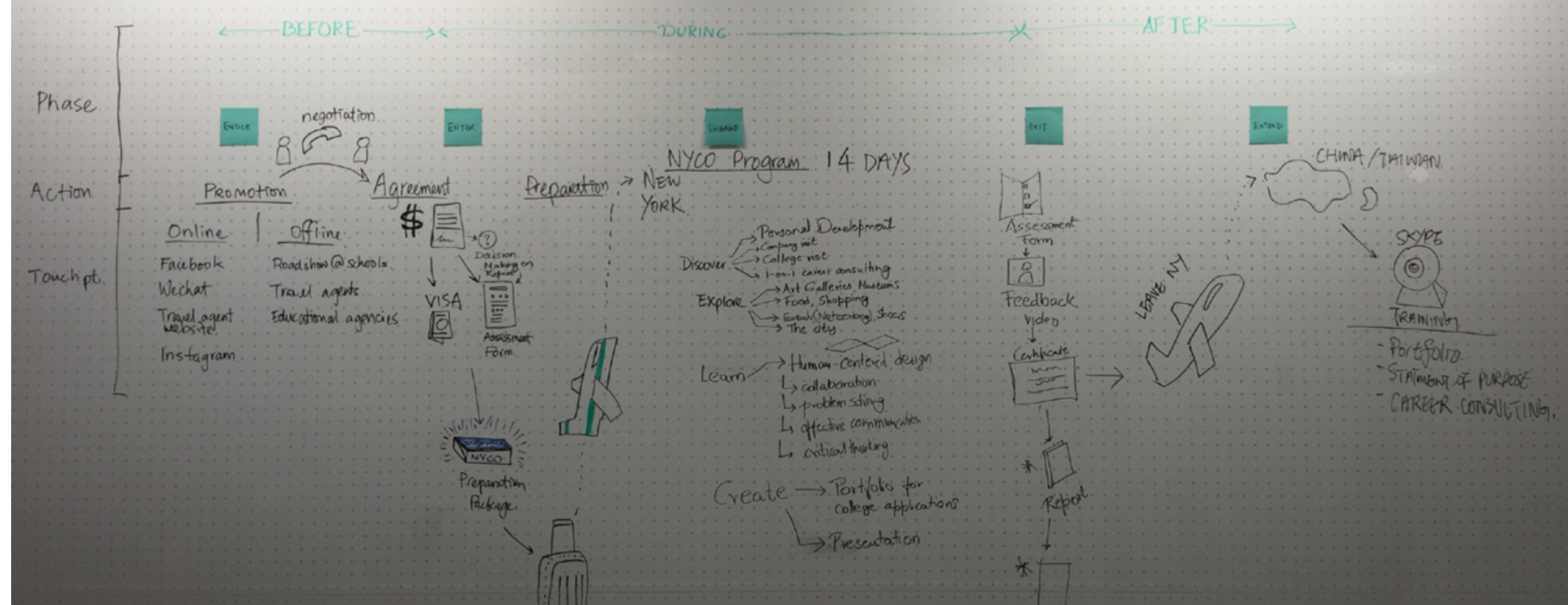
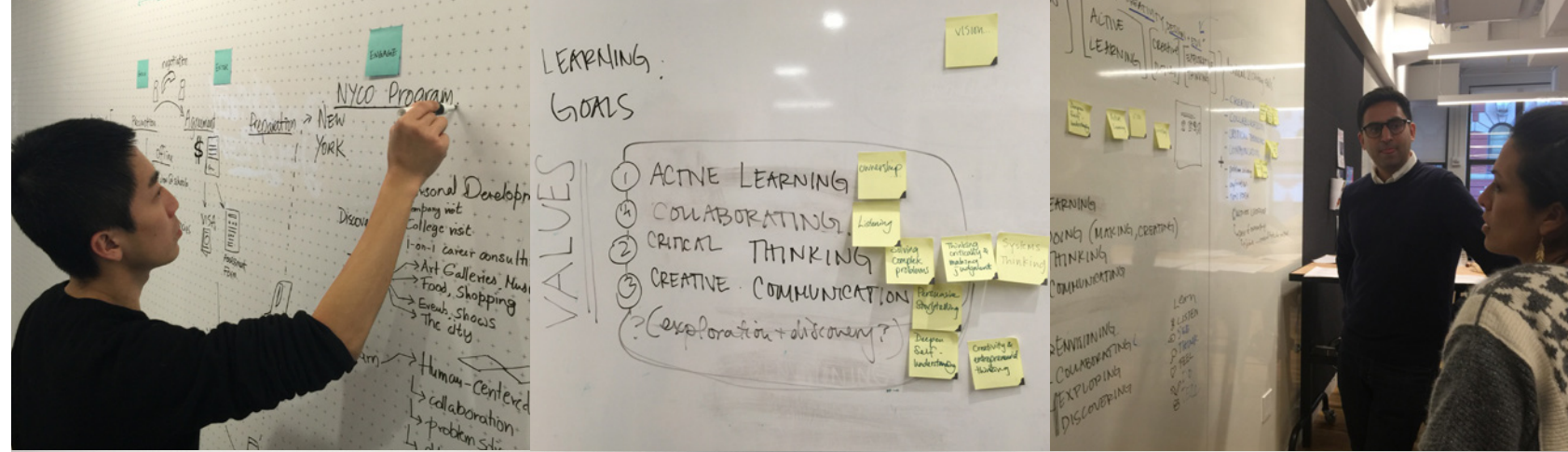
Timeline

- Field Research: February to March 2015
- Synthesizing Findings and Developing Insights: April 2015
- Generating and Refining Ideas: April 2015
- Developing Design and Prototyping: May and June 2015
- Design Testing: NYCO Summer Program - July 19 to August 01, 2015
- Reflecting and Evaluating: August 2015
- Evolving Design and Prototyping: November 2015 to January 2016
- Design Testing: NYCO Winter Program - Feb 10 to February 23, 2016
- Reflecting and Evaluating: March 2016

Nelson, an entrepreneur and designer, has always been taking on new challenges. His initial interest in this problem was sparked by informal conversations with close friends, many of whom were creative professionals from China. Reminded of his own arduous journey of selecting a design college and pursuing his creative passions meant that Nelson now felt the need to 'pay it forward' by helping other students discover their passion and choose their career path.

Nelson developed the NYCO program in collaboration with other Transdisciplinary Design alumni from Parsons School of Design - a program that works to address complex problems by turning them into design possibilities, where the resolution of the problem belongs to no single design field.

The NYCO core team used the human-centered design methodology and service design tools to understand and define the problem, create and test solutions, and are currently working towards delivering an effective service.



OUR TEAM AND COLLABORATORS

Some of our guest speakers

Lara Penin
Director of Transdisciplinary Design MFA at Parsons School for Design

Liz Burow
Director of Strategy and Discovery, Associate Principal at HLW

Lawrence Abrahamson
Senior Design Lead at IDEO

Tucker Viemeister
Industrial Designer, Founder of Viemeister Industries

Sara Kozlowski
Director of Education and Professional Development at CFDA

Takao Urehama
Art Director at Amplify Education

Gene Kogan
Creative Coder and Programmer

James Clotfelter
Lighting Designer

Based in New York City and Shanghai, the NYCO team consists of multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural professionals with diverse experiences. The NYCO program is endorsed by the Transdisciplinary Design program at Parsons School of Design, and our 14-day intensive programs are conducted at the Parsons campus in New York City.

NYCO is endorsed by
THE NEW SCHOOL

PARSONS
TRANSDISCIPLINARY DESIGN MFA



NELSON LO
Founder, Lead Instructor



Lulu Zhao
Program Manager



Subodh Divekar
Program Strategist, Lead Instructor



Sophie Lan-Hou
Program Designer, Lead Instructor



Sha Huang
Program Manager, Instructor



Lilian Tong
Instructor



Holly Zhang
Brand Manager



Nina Huang
Marketing Director



Patrick Tong
General Manager - Marketing



Spring Pan
Brand and Marketing



Yuhang Chen
Designer, Creator



Janet Yin
Graphic Design Intern