

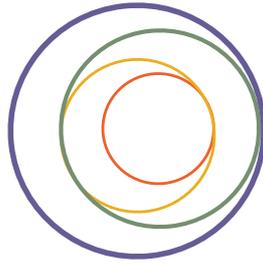
not a toolkit!

Fair Collaboration in Cultural Relations A ReflAction

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TOWARDS THIS IS NOT A TOOLKIT – FAIR COLLABORATION IN CULTURAL RELATIONS

A Design-led Approach

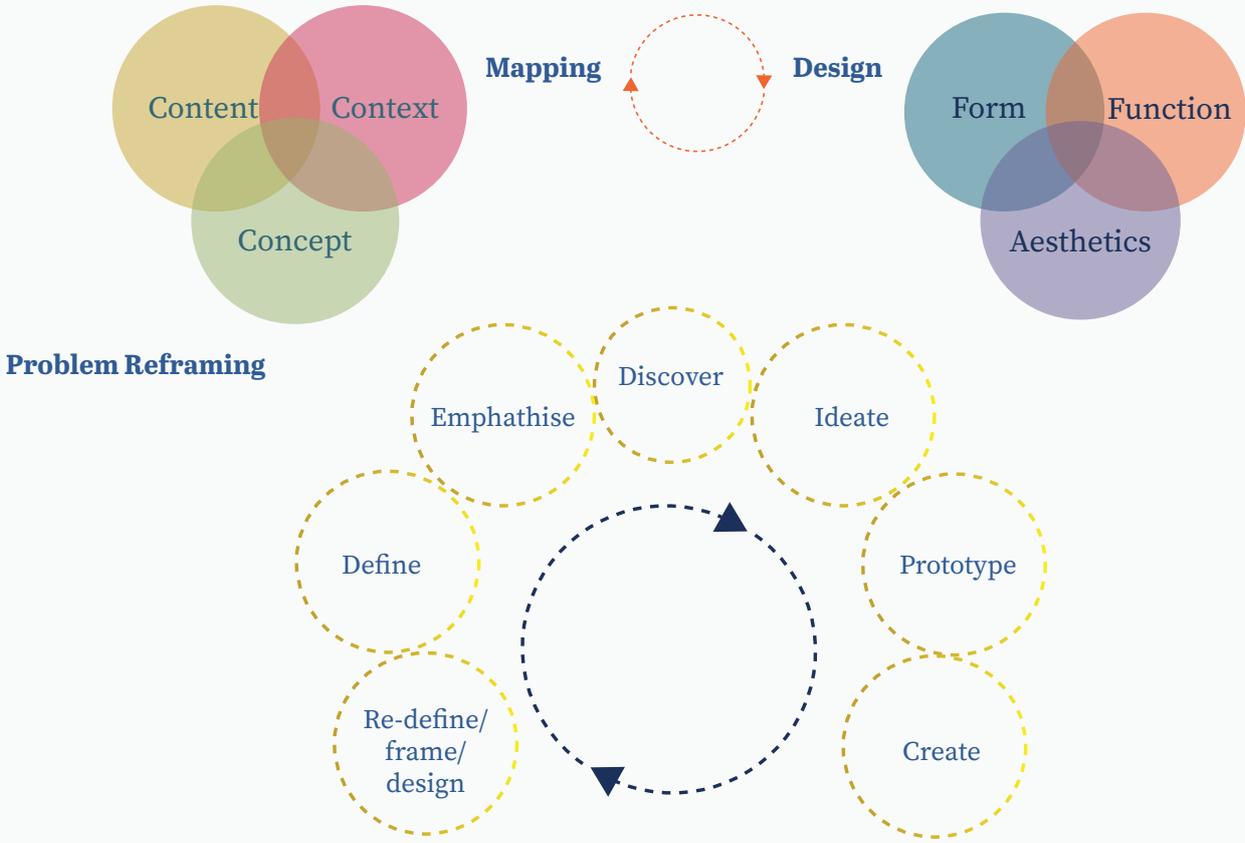
Contrary to the common misconception of 'design' as a static outcome making the toolkit look pretty and attractive after the content is written, our idea of using design has been to question, challenge and shift the very foundation of the work and use design as a dynamic glue, a binder, an inter-connector at every part of the process.

Understanding various contexts to be inclusive, locating invisible and unheard voices to accommodate multiple positionalities and considering people and their experiential perspectives as reservoirs of wisdom from many centres, as opposed to only existing textual or Eurocentric knowledge, became a way to decolonise our very ways of seeing, thinking and knowing.

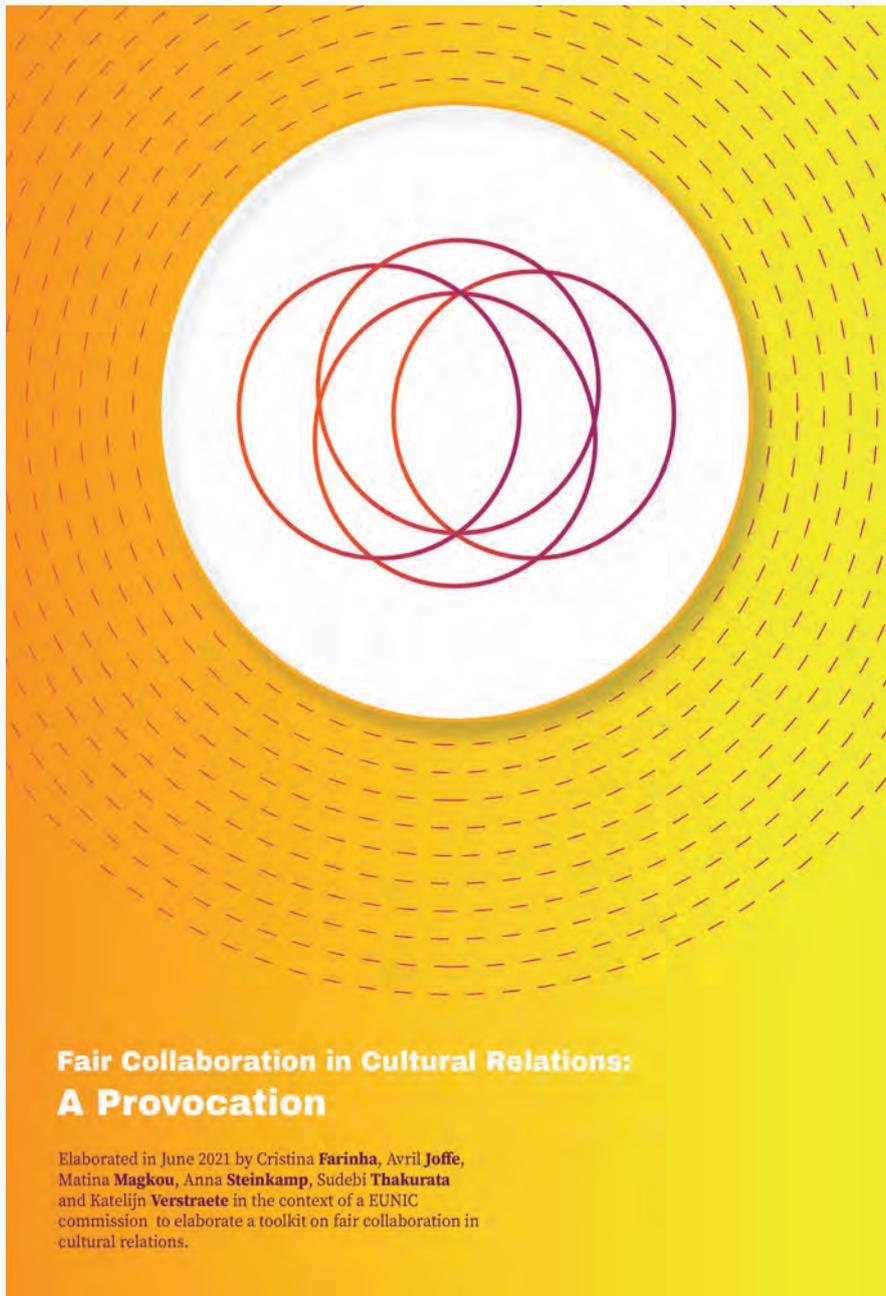
Visuals played a pivotal role in transcending linguistic barriers and metaphors and meaning became more important than the media or the message trapped in words. Framing questions and letting questions guide our process have been a pivotal aspect of our entire process.

The design-led user-driven approach began with problem-framing: DEFINING the notion of fair collaboration in the context of its potential users in cultural relations. It was also to understand the contexts in which they would use the learnings: their unique and differentiated needs, challenges and risks and the changing contexts of use, characterised by a VOLATILE, UNCERTAIN, COMPLEX and AMBIGUOUS world, and how these changing contexts shape the needs, risks, barriers and enablers and hence the choices.

THE OVERARCHING DESIGN-LED APPROACH



—> The Provocation Paper, designed through an interconnected web of questions and concepts, was the first entry point for discussion, exchange and critical reflection mediated by the 4 inter-connected facilitated Roundtables, which marked the beginning of the EMPATHISING and DISCOVERY phase, in order to re-define and re-frame some of the initial ideas.



—> The mapping of the profile of participants was an important aspect considered in bringing in contextual framing within the Roundtables. The Roundtables were designed in an iterative way, where one Roundtable led to the other and the findings from each shaped the design of the structure of the next.



—> The video-ask survey also added to the DISCOVERY. The Roundtables then acted as an intermediary to validate the concepts articulated in the Provocation Paper, take directional calls with respect to imagined forms by revealing contexts and indicate potential content and also help in deciding who to interview, by mapping the gaps in perspectives.

We also engaged in various engagement strategies throughout to gain insights, along with having a global reference team and advisory board from EUNIC for feedback.

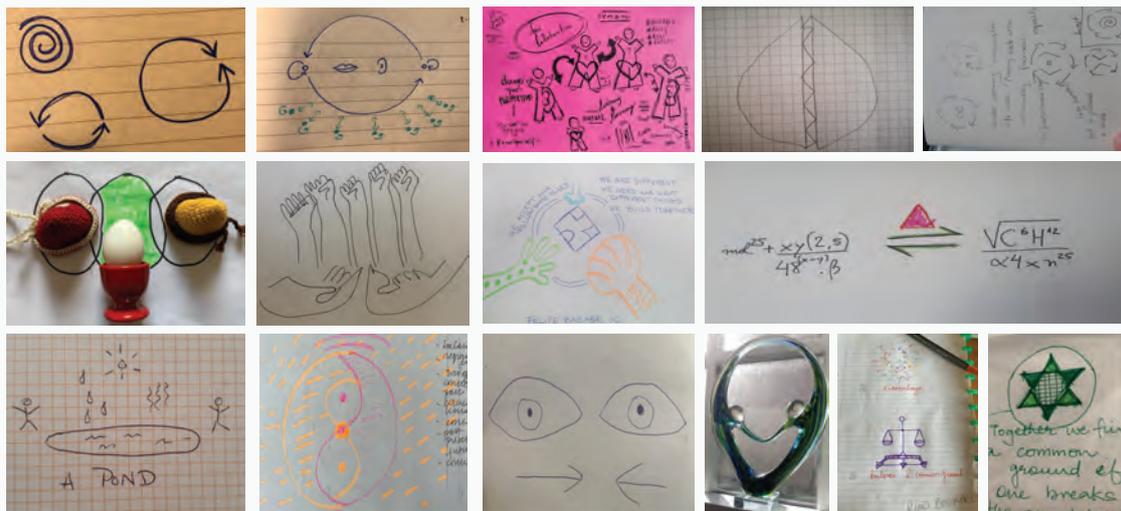


→ The phases of DISCOVERY and EMPATHISING with the users, were a process of inquiry-led MAPPING of the concepts, contexts and content. We then wanted to use a design-led collaborative approach to create the form, blending aesthetics using different modes and media to serve the function, guided by the context and content. This also led to directional calls in terms of the identity, visual language and storytelling around the toolkit (shapes, colours, metaphors, framing, imageries, symbols etc.).

For example:

Shapes: The most common visuals throughout all the drawings had circles, hands, movement and fluidity shown through dotted lines, water, boat, arrows etc. The metaphors had balance, dialogue, connections, many of which we are actively considering in our visual language, symbols and icons.

Balance, Connection, Dialogue, Circularity



Colours: Participants did mention they would ideally not like to see only the EUNIC colours commonly associated with a specific blue and white and instead shared what kind of emotions they would like to be evoked.



Purple
dignity, loyalty, magic, creativity



Yellow
equity, warmth, openness, optimism,
hope, clarity, remembrance



Orange
vibrance, new life, enthusiasm, balance,
expression, stimulation, energy, freedom



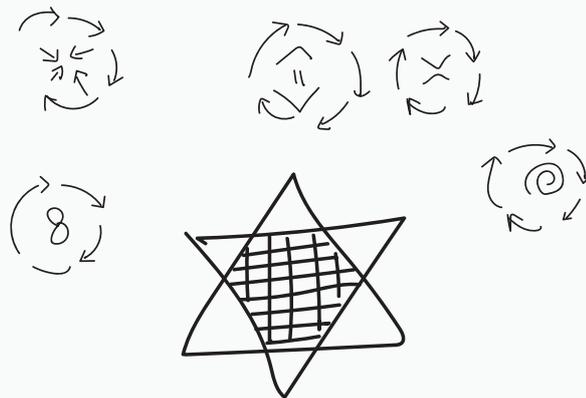
Green
space, growth, harmony, ecology, fertility,
peace, calmness, renewal, safety



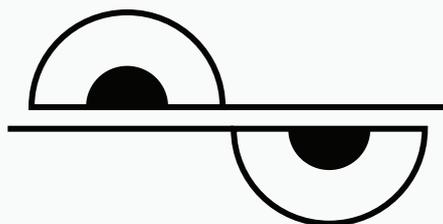
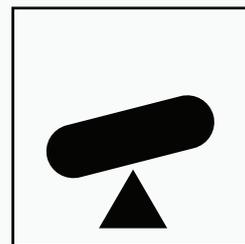
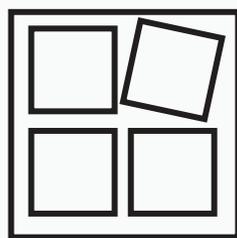
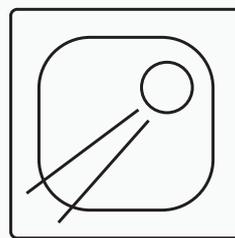
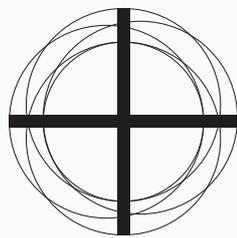
Blue
trust, loyalty, freedom, justice, intuition,
imagination, understanding, inspiration



Icons and symbols: The icons, symbols, visual metaphors used throughout the various components (for example, the cards in Values and Dilemmas, Fairness Checker, Glossary) are all derived from the various inputs we got from participants in the roundtables and surveys.



(sketching of symbols derived from roundtable)



(symbol ideations)

—> We first built our prototypes, working on various components of the Non-toolkit and also testing with users and then incorporated those feedback into building the final components.

The IDEATION of content guiding the form, has been shaped by traditional and non-traditional modes of research. The process of CREATION of the final toolkit was meant to be an incremental, iterative, co-creative one guided by the values of deep listening, dialogues, discourses, empathy, joint capacity building, reflection, leadership development, taking into consideration principles of design, complex systems thinking, decolonisation, pedagogy, adult learning, inter-cultural mind-set and inclusion. Design-led facilitation and facilitated processes of design have been an enabler of this.

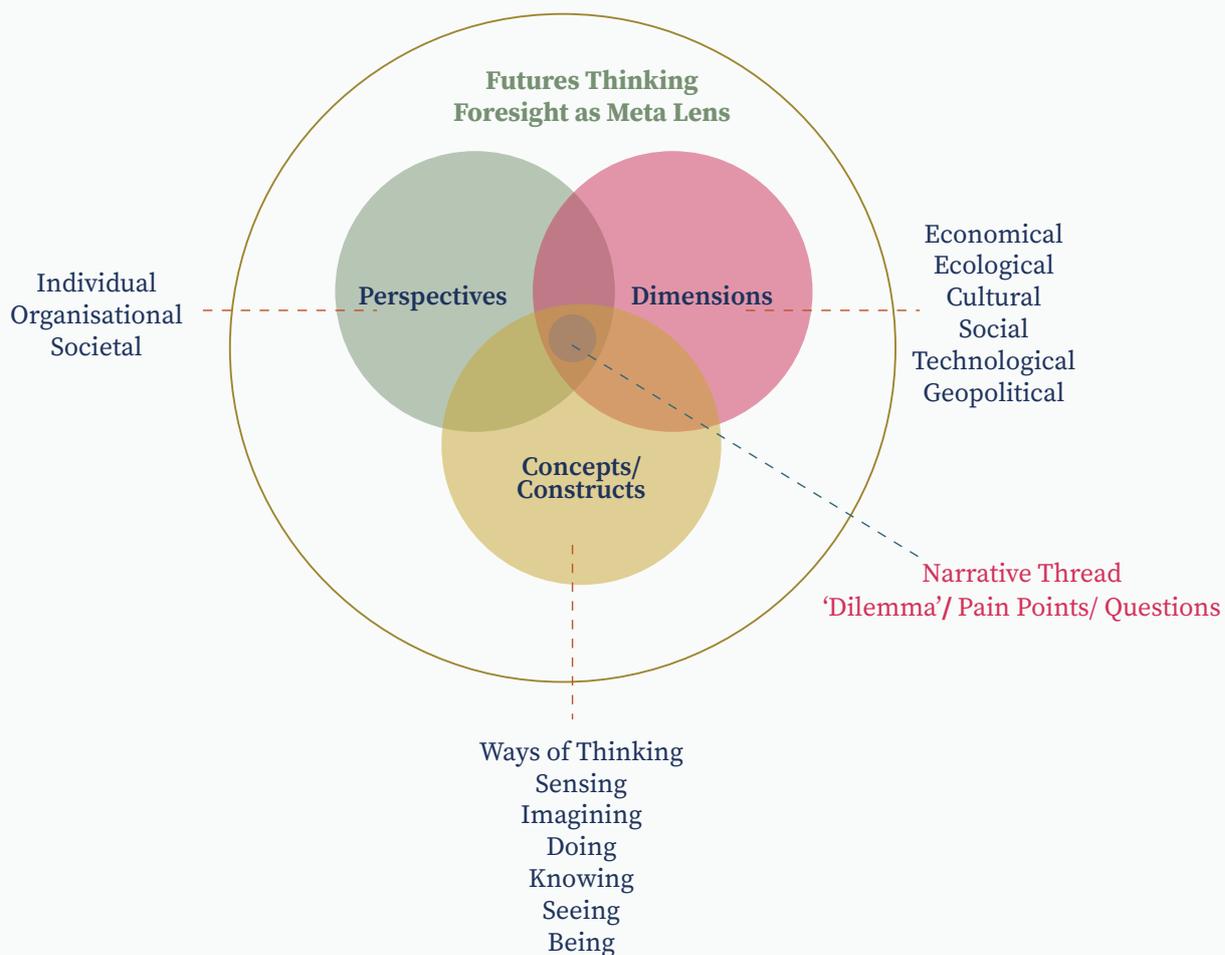
After mapping all the information, insights, interpretations we imagined our 'Not a Toolkit!' to have reflection, evaluation and action as reflAction.

It was decided that the key design principles of the toolkit should offer many lenses, perspectives, dimensions and prompts for actionable ideas, in a dialogic or conversational, suggestive and indicative tone, where the toolkit will be a living document focussed on process.

As a part of our design-led approach we had located the pain points of users as 'Dilemmas' based on tension, mis-alignments between different levels and using these 'Dilemmas' across various components. Using 'Dilemma' rather than 'Problem' as a design principle and inquiries rather than opinions/absolute statements, we wanted to acknowledge the plurality of perspectives and perceptions and also the complexity of every choice having both intended and unintended

consequences, while every potential solution for some people being a problem for someone else.

We also wanted to enable the users to have a future driven way of looking at the present and past, which can help in taking action.



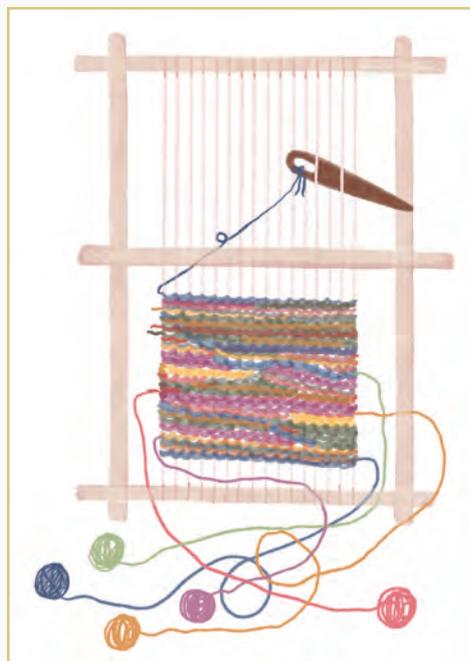
—> There are individual, organisational and societal perspectives across different dimensions like economic, ecological, cultural and social with technological and geo-political aspects adding to the systems thinking approach. Different kinds of 'Dilemmas' are manifested through different forms, making the various components of *Not a toolkit!- Fair Collaboration in Cultural Relations : A ReflAction*.

Diagramming has also been used as a common tool of sense-making and also externalising thinking, especially abstract ideas. While questions are supposed to help in making navigational choices or even customising the toolkit.

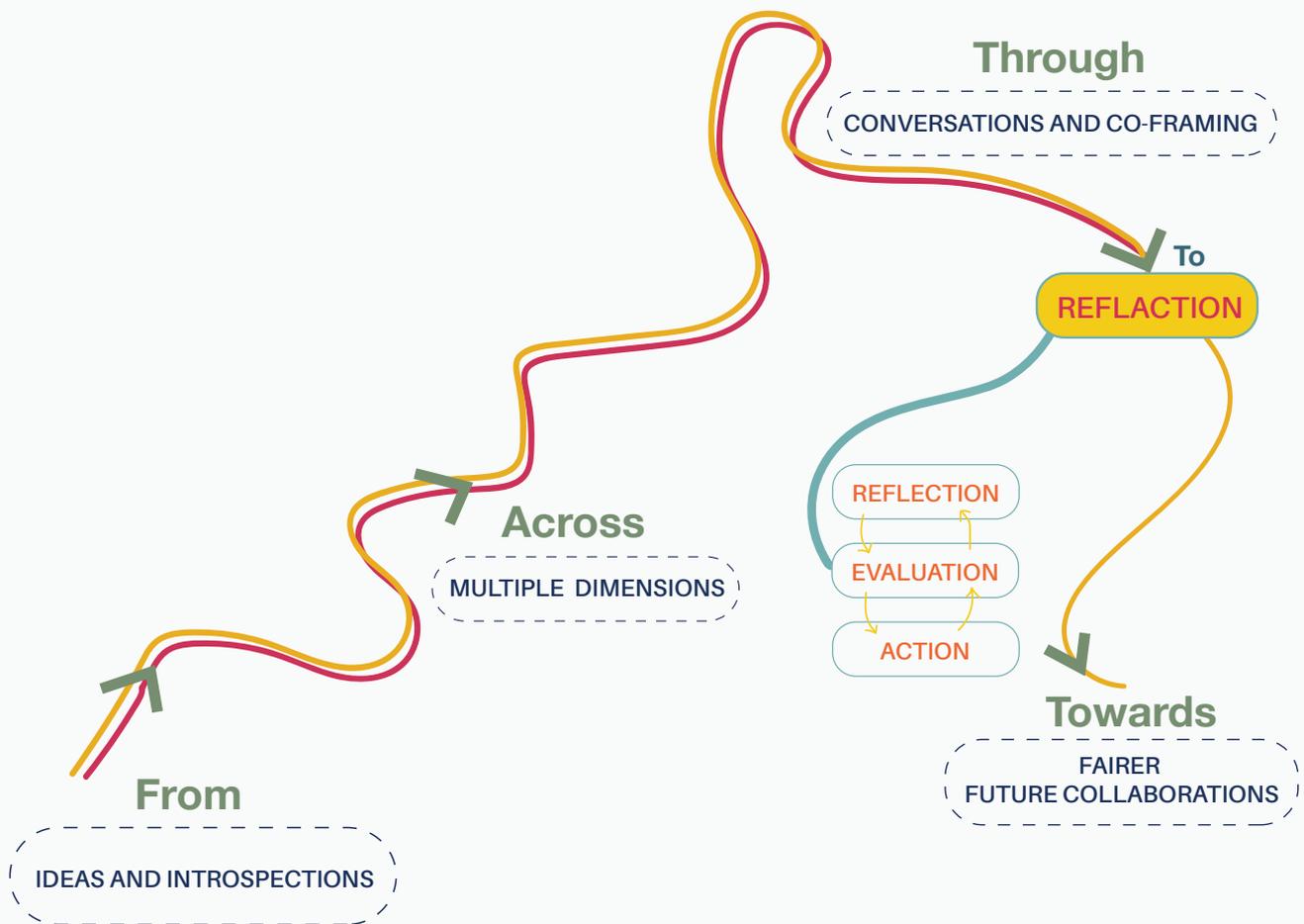
In this really complex and challenging project, it is indeed 'design' as facilitation, where the generated insights in a facilitated, complex and layered research process that led to further possibilities.

The entire toolkit, which is available on the EUNIC site, is bound together in the form of a visual reflective journal as a series of interactive non-linear file with downloadable and printable resources, which could be used both as a printed version and through online collaborative tools like Miro by using the digital forms. The tone of this reflAction journal is done primarily in 'first person: singular and plural' almost as if someone is having a dialogic relationship, while navigating through a journey of fairness. The dialogues could be internal or could be done externally with a group, using the various tools and frameworks offered in the journal. It would be done interweaving all components, helping in the navigation through all the complexities in various paradigms and landscapes, with canvases, frameworks and graphic organisers combining annotated readings and resources, ideation for action, focusing on intentional-unintentional, visible-invisible, identifiable-unidentifiable, dystopic-utopic aspects around fairness in cultural relations.

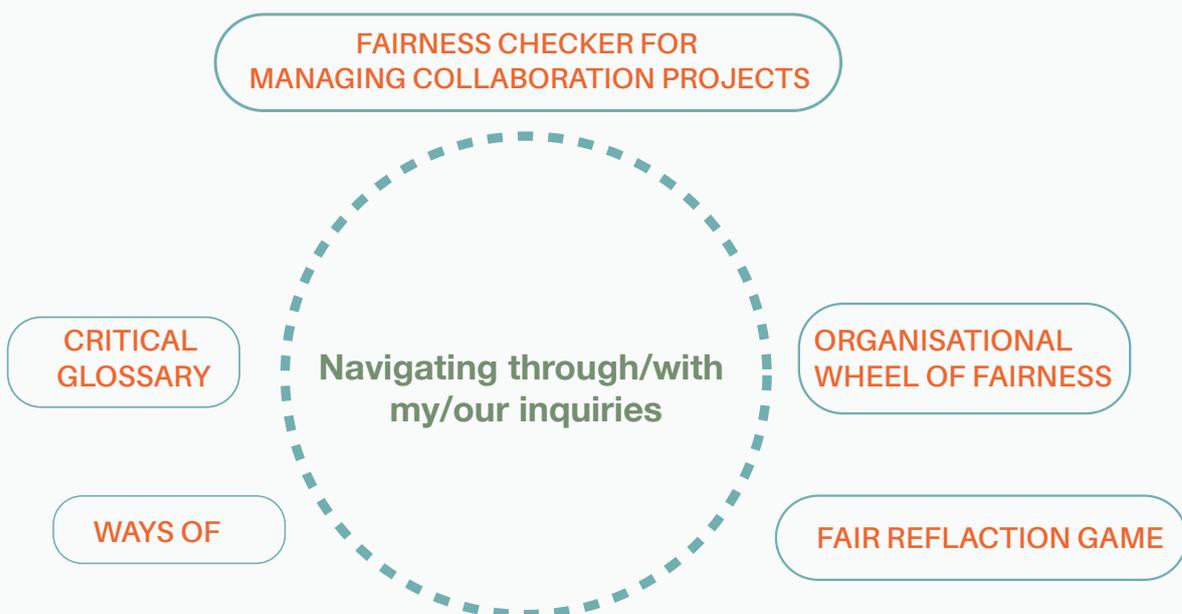
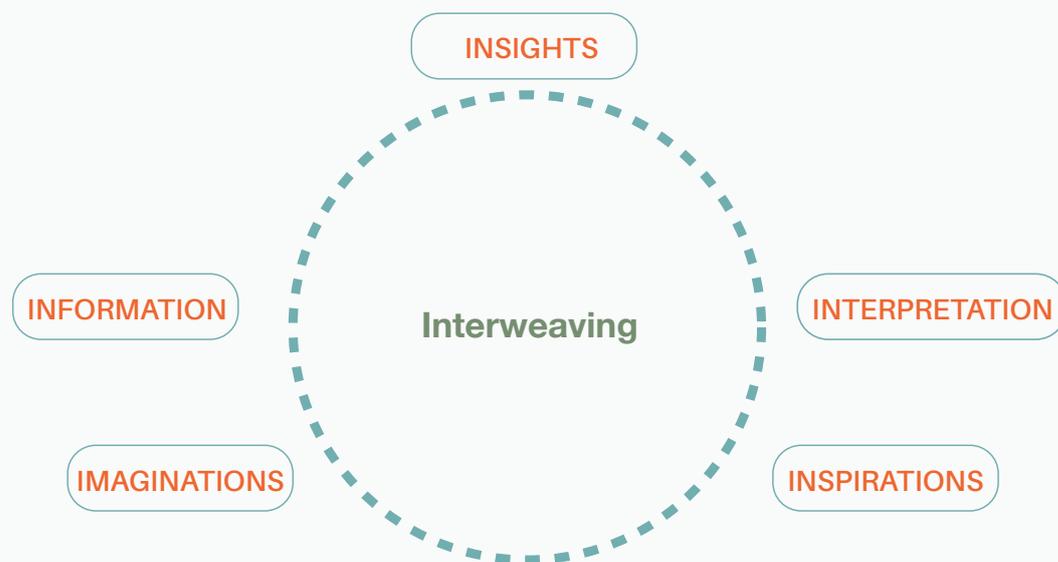
—▶ The reflAction process could also be done at times through conversations and collective unpacking of a set of provocative illustrations, all connected to the idea of Fair Collaboration. These images were also derived from our understanding of some of the inter-related and important concepts like Dialogue, Mutuality, Inter-dependence. Equity-equality, Relationships and the like, which seemed important to our users and target audience.



MAPPING THE FAIRNESS JOURNEY: MY/OUR REFLECTION JOURNAL



—> It would mediate between the individual and the system, philosophical and practical, personal and professional. It will help one track one's own trajectory on fairness in all processes and develop a systemic understanding, help in documenting narratives of change and develop one's own understanding and definition of fairness in their own context. It is called Mapping the Fairness Journey: My/our ReflAction Journal which helps people reflect, evaluate and act upon how fairness gets manifested.



Each component of the **Not a Toolkit! Fair Collaboration in Cultural Relations : A ReflAction** is connected to all other components.

