Inclusive Citizenship in a world in Transformation: Co-Designing for Democracy

INCITE
-DEM

Inclusive Citizenship in a world in Transformation: Co-Designing for Democracy

D4.1 Generative Design Toolkit for the Democracy Labs

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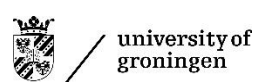| Organisation	Type	Country
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Executive summary

INCITE-DEM is a three-year EU-funded Horizon Europe project that aims to enhance inclusive participation from citizens and communities, addressing the current challenges and opportunities for our societies while co-designing democratic innovations and mechanisms. INCITE-DEM is implemented by ten partners in 9 countries and runs from March 2023 to February 2026. The Democracy Labs approach is at the heart of the project, and is an approach conceptualized by the INCITE-DEM team to enable an inclusive and dynamic co-creation process that results in democratic innovations.

This deliverable summarises the methodology for the Democracy Labs, providing a detailed toolkit for the innovative approach being developed in the context of the INCITE-DEM project. Democracy Labs are configured as experimental generative collective creative sensemaking and ideation spaces for developing democratic innovations iterated in six countries: Norway, Germany, Slovenia, Italy, Spain, and Portugal.

The document aims to offer a step-by-step guideline for INCITE-DEM researchers and practitioners who will be engaged in the implementation of the democracy labs in each country. As such, the document offers guidance regarding the recruitment of the participants, the selection of the venues, the materials to be used, the procedures to be implemented, and an overall and detailed schedule of the activities, roles, and responsibilities of the research team members. Insights into how findings will be consolidated and presented are also lightly touched upon. Appendixes include samples of the materials, as well as ethical-related documents to be used (following INCITE-DEM's ethical framework presented in D8.2), namely the information sheet, the informed consent form, and the debriefing sheet.

Despite its focus on INCITE-DEM's democracy labs, the methodological plan and toolkit provided in this document are applicable and can be easily adapted to other transdisciplinary projects and contexts.

1   Introduction

In recent years, we have seen many challenges and tests for democratic regimes worldwide, with Europe not an exception. Despite enjoying a uniquely peaceful and democratic period in European history (Stagnell, 2012), different crises and challenges are leading to a rise in populist movements (Noury & Roland, 2020; Milner, 2021), democratic regression (Diamond, 2021; Khoma & Vdovychyn, 2021), and the general decline of democratic attitudes and trust (Hooghe & Okolikj, 2020; Kriesi, 2020).

INCITE-DEM aims to enhance inclusive participation and civic engagement in different countries while expanding existing democratic innovations and dynamic feedback mechanisms by bringing together the different citizen perspectives in the European Union. Democratic innovations (Jäske & Setälä, 2020) are fundamental to deal with complex and persistent problems such as the climate crisis, biodiversity loss and ecological degradation. These innovations can be defined "as processes or institutions developed to reimagine and deepen the role of citizens in governance processes by increasing opportunities for participation, deliberation and influence" (Elstub and Escobar 2019, p.14). INCITE-DEM's deliverables D1.1 and D1.2 offer detailed insights into democratic innovations, including historical examples.

A key aspect to achieving the goals of INCITE-DEM is thus to develop approaches that motivate and empower citizens to become the main contributors to the democratic innovations. Democracy Labs enable a co-creation space for the co-production of inclusive democratic innovations, engaging citizens policymakers, civil society, and other stakeholders, in developing democratic innovations that effectively help address key wicked problems and their complex social, environmental, and economic sustainability challenges.

INCITE-DEM proposes to deploy Democracy Labs as experimental generative collective creative sensemaking and ideation spaces for developing democratic innovation insights and future possibilities. Although other methods could be applied to implement democracy labs, INCITE-DEM's approach is based on the deployment of a large-scale generative design research study (Sanders & Stappers, 2012; Sanders, 2008; Sanders & Chan, 2007), an approach that stems from the well-established participatory design practice and theory that focuses on evoking and sustaining creative thinking and systematising the transformation of the generated ideas into tangible innovative outcomes. As Figure 1 shows, generative design research is situated firmly in the participatory mindset and balanced between design-led and expert-led approaches, combining the best of each mindset while still oriented towards design outcomes. This positioning renders the approach particularly effective for democratic innovative thinking (Corbett & Le Dantec, 2021, 2019; Lavender et al., 2020).
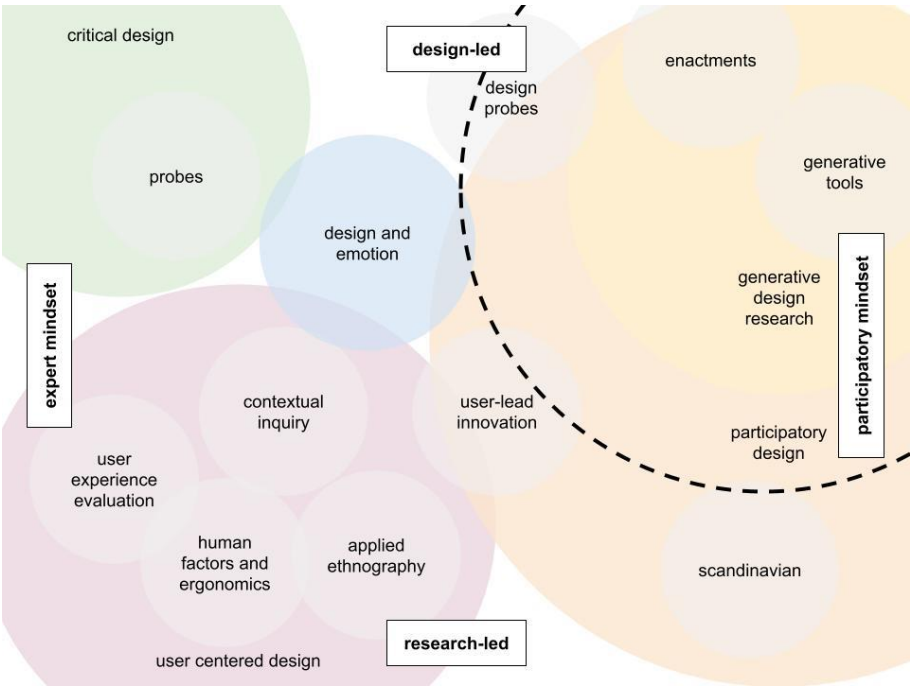

Figure 1: A design research landscape

Thus, this document describes the generative design research study co-created to support the deployment of INCITE-DEM's Democracy Labs. It is meant to serve as a reference guide and help researchers and practitioners prepare and facilitate the activities of the Democracy Labs.

The procedure of the study (repeated in each of the six participating countries) includes a preamble, a period of two weeks for sensitising activities, a two-day generative workshop and a postamble. The procedure is facilitated by a distributed research team, supported by carefully selected and crafted materials, and planned with detail.

While the goal of this document has been to produce a step-by-step guide to account for the cultural and sociodemographic specificities of the six target countries where the Democracy Labs will first be implemented in the context of INCITE-DEM (i.e. involving around 180 participants in Norway, Germany, Slovenia, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, as illustrated in Figure 2), the toolkit also enables sufficient flexibility to adapt the approach to other countries and contexts. Thus, this methodological toolkit can be equally adapted to other contexts, at the national or local level, and guide the overall implementation of Democracy Labs as a novel methodological approach to developing democratic innovations.

The document is structured as follows: In section 2, the approach is thoroughly described. After initial elaboration on the theoretical framing presented above, this section dives into the details of the most pertinent specificities of the study, namely the participants, venue, materials, procedure, and data collection details. Section 3 provides an overview of the execution plan for this study, while in section 4, the team and its roles are presented and elaborated upon. The document closes with generic considerations about the developed guidelines and plan, the co-creation approach, as well as considerations about the foreseen consolidation and presentation of outcomes.

Figure 2: Hosting countries

2   Methodology

In response to the unique challenges democratic governments face within the EU and elsewhere, INCITE-DEM seeks to foster active citizen participation in the democratic process, offering a path towards creative and innovative engagement with democratic institutions and mechanisms. The Democracy Labs are conceptualized as a process that enables addressing the challenge of an inclusive participation and engagement of citizens and communities in democratic decision-making, with a specific focus on sustainability challenges. As such, Democracy Labs can be defined as co-creation citizen-centred and multi-stakeholder activities and processes for re-conceptualizing inclusive democratic innovations[1]. To implement Democracy Labs, INCITE-DEM's methodology has taken stock of a generative design approach. From a generative design

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[1] A forthcoming conceptual article is being produced by the INCITE-DEM consortium to further elaborate on the relevance of developing spaces for co-creating democratic innovations that can address complex and wicked problems.

perspective, Democracy Labs are experimental, generative, collective, creative sensemaking and ideation spaces. Generative design research methods and techniques enable these spaces to become places for collective creativity, insight generation and innovation development.

Generative design research is a methodology that arose from the more extensive participatory design methodologies that aimed to close the gap between the different stakeholders involved in the design process (Bødker & Kyng, 2018). Developed within the Scandinavian design tradition, participatory design is anchored in the lean hierarchy and democratic customs and has long been hailed as a valuable approach to democratic innovation and engagement (Bødker & Zander., 2015; Björgvinsson et al., 2010).

Generative design research, as proposed by Sanders and Stappers in their Convivial Toolbox (2012), is well placed within the participatory design tradition but has a more profound commitment to both the participatory mindset, in common with the Scandinavian tradition and shares a deep commitment to design-led orientation, in common with other approaches like Critical Design (Bardzell et al., 2018, Bardzell & Bardzell, 2013) which are not intrinsically participatory. This combination of orientation and mindset places generative design research strongly in a democratic but critical and innovative-minded position.

Generative design research approaches were developed as an answer to a changing environment for design, where designers are tasked with addressing more complex and socially significant issues that require the experience and expertise of many different stakeholders, many of whom may not feel as creative. Building on the work of creativity scholars (Sanders & Stappers, 2012) like Florida on creative economies (2002), Pink on creative thinking (2005), Martin on Design Thinking (2009) and psychologists like Koestler (2014) and specially Boden (2004), generative design research expressly states that "all people are creative". Indeed, this is easily understood when we review how we all engage with our daily tasks and solve the challenges that come our way.

Sanders and Sappers identify four levels of creativity, depicted on the left side of Figure 3, namely:

> ⟩ (i) doing, which refers to problem-solving;

> ⟩ (ii) adapting, which refers to improving or personalising something;

> ⟩ (iii) making, which requires skill and enjoyment, either a hobby or specific professional skill that we enjoy exercising; and finally

> ⟩ (iv) creating, which is the highest level and requires commitment to "dream" something novel. Within generative design research, "all people are capable of reaching higher levels of creativity, but they need the passion and the experience to do so" (Sanders & Stappers, p.40, 2012).
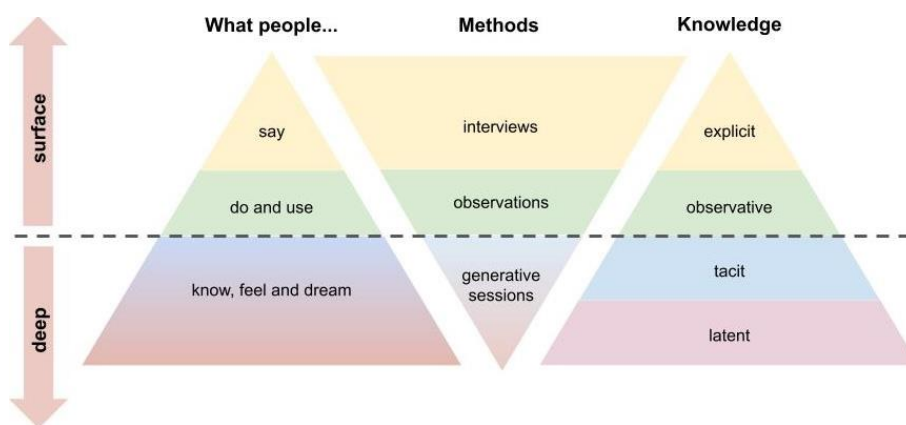

Figure 3: Generative design research

Thus, the question for fostering creativity is how to generate and sustain it better. For generative design research, "individual creativity is not only in the head but in the heart as well", and careful consideration to prepare a time and environment appropriate for creativity is vital. Within generative design research, careful orchestration and materials form the scaffolding environment that generates the creative mindset.

Key to the assertion of preparing a time and a space for creativity is the idea that "creativity requires time" and "we cannot expect everyday people to be instantly creative" (Sanders & Stappers, 2012, pp..50-51). Thus, a key consideration for generative design research approaches is the preparation and incubation process required not only to prepare the mindset but also to prepare and prime the productive mindset.

Following this point, a second foundational idea from generative design research is acknowledging the different levels of knowledge we all possess and the critical importance of a diverse set of participants that bring their additional wealth of knowledge to the co-creation activities.

Thus, generative design research identifies four different levels of knowledge present in all of us:

› (i) explicit knowledge which we know that we know and can express confidently;

› (ii) observable knowledge, which is the one that can be ascertained from observation of our actions (either self-observation or by a third person),

› (iii) tacit knowledge, which refers to things we know but don't have the words or tools to express and finally,

› (iv) latent knowledge, which refers to things *we don't know* we know. Generative design research was developed to give people the means to ascertain and make tangible their tacit and latent knowledge (Morrison, 2023; Sanders & Stappers, 2012).

Generative design research therefore offers a way to elicit and generate knowledge from these elusive sources via **sensitising activities** and **generative workshops**.

The concept of "sensitising" originated from Social Sciences, specifically Blumer's critical epistemology (1954), and was adapted to design research as a way for designers to situate their mindsets within a specific context and design space and to articulate their design knowledge in a directed way (Waern & Rajkowska, 2022; Waern et al., 2020). In the context of generative design research, sensitising is the process of immersing participants into the process and challenges at hand. It uses tools like diaries or workbooks that empower and motivate participants to engage in self-observation and emotional preparation for a creative workshop. This period is vital to allow participants to awaken memories, associations and dreams that will offer them a "path of expression" depicted in Figure 4, allowing them to find ways to express and crystallise their tacit and latent knowledge (Sanders & Stappers, 2012, pp. 54-55).
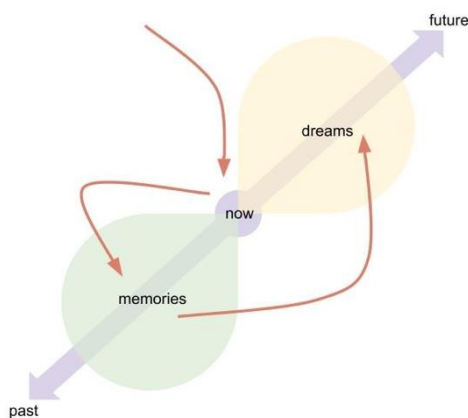

Figure 4: The path of expression

Generative design research offers an overall approach to the Implementation of Democracy Labs in INCITE-DEM. As such, generative design plays also the function of weaving together other methods and tools that are planned to be used in the INCITE-DEM Democracy Labs studies, and which are therefore presented in other project reports (e.g., a questionnaire to discover participants' visions for an inclusive democratic future, with the results being presented in D4.3; the "provotypes", to be presented in D4.2, and the agent-based model Dialogue Tool, presented in D3.1). Therefore, when describing the generative design approach proposed for the Democracy Labs, this document refers also to the additional tools and methods that are integrated. There is, however, a significant flexibility in the Democracy Labs approach, and other future projects and practitioners who opt to implement the approach, may choose to exclude those methods and/or include others.

In the context of the INCITE-DEM's planned activities for the Democracy Labs, **sensitising activities** comprise exploring scenarios with the Dialogue Tool, reflecting on personal experiences supported by a **sensitising toolkit**, and responding to a questionnaire. The sensitising period happens before the generative workshop and is essential to prime participants for the workshop activities.

Immediately after the sensitising period, participants come together for the **generative workshop**. During the workshop, the participants will generate collective imaginaries of democratic innovations through a scaffolding process that supports their creativity and expression. This process involves two days of activities organised around **sensemaking**, **provotyping** and **collective dreaming** activities.

Sensemaking is the complement of sensitising. Tacit and latent knowledge is, to a degree, experiential, therefore pre-linguistic, and often unstructured. Sensemaking activities involve embodied experiences that connect feelings and cognition through expressions that can serve as exploratory structures that enable individuals and groups to *make sense* of ambiguous issues, complex situations, hidden patterns, or critical insights (McCarthy & Wright, 2004; Blackler et al., 2018).

The set of **sensemaking** activities of the workshop enables participants to build a common ground for understanding and communicating with each other. It gives them the confidence, tools, and space to engage in constructive collaboration and adopt the co-creation mindset required for the generative workshop. Thus, sensemaking, the opening activity of the generative workshop, serves as a lens to focus the vision and efforts of the participants, as well as a trust-building activity preparing them for the remaining activities of the workshop. A sensemaking toolkit supports these activities.

Immediately after sensemaking, participants engage with **provotyping**, which is an activity that will support them in challenging assumptions and preconceptions that may impede or constrain their creativity in subsequent workshop activities (provotyping is to be presented in detail and discussed in deliverable D4.2).

Finally, participants engage in **collective dreaming** of democratic innovations, jointly imagining and speculating about hypothetical future democratic innovations. These activities are set up as a space for opportunity and innovation in democratic thinking. It is during the **collective dreaming** activities that tacit and latent knowledge can be expressed and turned into **concrete proposals**, empowering the participants to follow their path of expression and ideate about novel means for democratic participation and innovation. The examples of such tangible proposals may include institutional features of citizen involvement mechanisms and principles to be applied in the implementation of such a mechanism (e.g., a participatory budget). The proposed mechanisms may be also supplemented by enablers, including technology and infrastructure. Furthermore, democratic innovation proposals should be guided by principles of inclusivity (i.e. representativeness of all diverse population groups), dynamic participation (ensuring dialogue and feedback mechanisms) and legitimacy (proposals can be integrated into real-life policy frameworks).

To enable participants to generate concrete proposals of democratic innovations, we build the activities and toolkits upon the dimensions of democratic innovation. The framework of democratic innovation builds on the work of Smith and Sorice (Smith, 2009; Sorice, 2020) and includes the following dimensions upon which the participants can gradually build their discussion and propose innovations:

〉 **Formality** the degree of institutionalisation of the democratic innovations in the legal or constitutional system, by opposition to remaining informal or experimental;

〉 **Initiative** whether it is initiated by public institutions, civil society actors, or both;

〉 **Inclusiveness** the extent to which democratic innovations involve a representative or diverse sample of the affected population;

〉 **Control** the level of influence and empowerment that participants have over the agenda, process, and outcomes of democratic innovations;

〉 **Deliberation** the quality of communication and reasoning that takes place within democratic innovations;

〉 **Transparency** the degree to which democratic innovations enable a clear understanding about the conditions under which citizens participate and are able to scrutinise the proceedings;

〉 **Impact** the degree to which it produces binding or non-binding outcomes, and whether it affects the political culture or the public opinion;

〉 **Efficiency** the feasibility of the administrative costs and the burden placed on citizens by democratic innovations;

〉 **Transferability** the extent to which democratic innovations effectively transfer across different levels of governance and contexts;

〉 **Enablers** the factors or conditions that facilitate or support their development, implementation, and impact; and

〉 **Barriers** the factors or conditions that may hinder or prevent their development, implementation, and impact.

Participants will be presented with tangible artefacts that offer fictional visions of potential utopian futures, in this case, a collection of headlines and news pieces showcasing a world where democratic participation and decision-making are in a virtuous reinforcing loop, making the world a better place. This image of a future world serves as a framework for collective exploration of democratic innovations that could accomplish such futures. A futuring toolkit (i.e., design fiction) supports these activities.

Design fiction as a method originates from the tradition of Research Through Design but focuses not on the world as it is, but as what it could be (Grand & Wiedmer, 2010) through the creation of tangible artefacts or experiences that project their audiences into a possibility space that they can explore, engage, and reflect upon. These are artefacts that focus on presenting a potential future and not a fixed narrative (Coulton et al, 2017) and can be either utopian or dystopian. Thus, "futuring" is an alternative design approach that does not aim to solve immediate problems but to probe possible futures and to produce not only artefacts or proposals but a body of knowledge of creative and even radical future possibilities (Kozubaev et al., 2020; Søndergaard et al., 2023). The fictional visions of potential utopian futures serve as the inspiration for generating and eliciting such a body of knowledge that can then be reappropriated and become the inspiration and sensitising material for future iterations of generative workshops or even practical innovation projects.
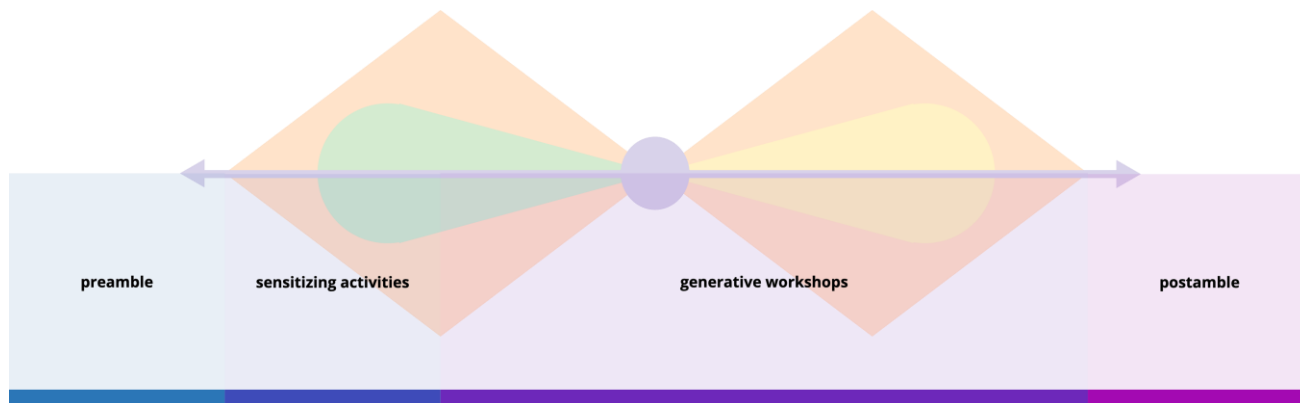
Figure 5: Scaffolding individual and collective paths of expression

As such, generative design research serves as the creativity scaffolding process to empower citizens to come together and express their whole knowledge in creative, tangible ways that can inspire others and themselves. It allows all the participants of the process to engage with their creativity by creating an environment and offering them tools to discover and express ideas and insights they may not have known they knew.

In the case of our study, the generative design research exercise comprises pre-study activities already involving the participants, conceptualised as a **preamble**, a period of two weeks for **sensitising activities**, a two-day **generative workshop**, and a **postamble** providing a temporal one-week window for eventual post-study retrospective interviews. Figure 5 attempts to capture this configuration and map it against a backdrop representing the path of expression and the periods of predominant divergent and convergent thinking typical of a design process. This cycle is repeated in each of the six participating countries.

2.1   Participants

The INCITE-DEM Democracy Labs aim to involve 180 participants from the six host countries. In each country, a purposive sample of 30 participants will be recruited according to the general requirements enunciated in Table 1. The suggested number of participants should be interpreted as guidance. Participants are recruited by the hosting partner[2] or a specialised subcontractor and must be available during the periods identified in Table 7 (see section 3). Whether participants receive any compensation (for instance gift vouchers) is the hosting partner's decision. Ethical forms (participant information sheet, informed consent, and debriefing sheet) will be provided, in compliance with ethical standards in research.

The selection criteria include diversity in age, gender, education, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Sample composition is, however, flexible and can accommodate country-related specificities, such as involving more representatives of democratic innovations, namely citizens, civil society organisations or policymakers that are actively engaged in developing or implementing democratic innovations, such as participatory budgets, citizen assemblies, collaborative governance, or others.

Table 1: Participants' profiles

Number of participants	Profile	General requirements	Required commitment

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[2] See the **INCITE-DEM Consortium Partners** table in the front matter of this document for partner details.

15	Undifferentiated citizens	The selection of the participants should ensure diversity of age, gender, ethnicity, faith, socioeconomic status, education level, occupation, and geographical residence (which should be within commuting range of the workshop's location). People unable to consent cannot participate.	Participants commit to joining and actively participating in a two-day workshop (7 hours per day, including breaks and lunch) and consent to be photographed and recorded in video. Participants also commit to spending 2 hours and 30 minutes in study-related activities during the ten consecutive working days (weekends and national or regional holidays excluded) preceding the workshop. Participants should also be informed that they might be invited for an interview in a few selected cases.
10	Representatives of democratic innovations	These participants either (1) lead or contribute to designing, implementing, or deploying democratic innovations or (2) whose institution or role relies upon existing or emerging democratic innovations.[3]	Participants commit to joining and actively participating in a two-day workshop (7 hours per day, including breaks and lunch) and consent to be photographed and recorded in video. Participants also commit to spending 2 hours and 30 minutes in study-related activities during the ten consecutive working days (weekends and national or regional holidays excluded) preceding the workshop. Participants should also be informed that they might be invited for an interview in a few selected cases.
5	Policymakers and bureaucrats	These participants make decisions about, support, or enforce the execution of the policies, laws and rules that govern society.	Participants commit to joining and actively participating in the activities (7 hours, including breaks) on the second day of the workshop and consent to be photographed and recorded in video. Participants should also be informed that they might be invited for an interview in a few selected cases.

Although these guidelines are focussed on the INCITE-DEM studies, they are also applicable to other researchers and practitioners who are interested in developing Democracy Labs in their region or country.

2.2   Venue

A fundamental part of this study takes place as a two-day workshop. A sketch of the recommended setting is provided in figure 6 to ensure adequate conditions. This is a fully accessible 60 to 100 m^2 room facility with plenty of natural light and well-lit, good sound quality in a quiet location, and naturally or mechanically ventilated. Wi-Fi needs to be effortlessly accessible, and there should be enough electricity outlets for everyone to charge their devices. This room should be easily accessible within the broader facility, and lavatories should not be too far away.

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[3] For a detailed review of democratic innovations and examples, including examples from historical research, please check INCITE-DEM D1.1 and D1.2
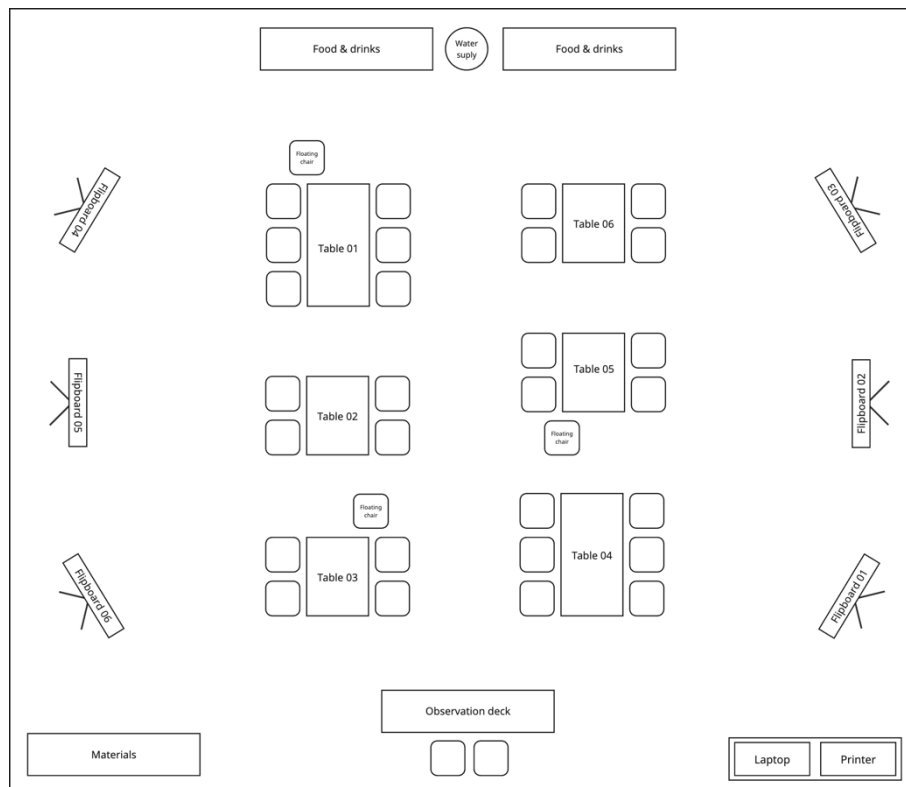
Figure 6: Recommended setting for the generative workshop

Besides the above-mentioned generic requirements, the following details should also be considered:

> **Furniture:** Tables and chairs should be easy to move around, creating little to no noise. Support tables or consoles should be sturdy. Quantities may vary but should meet the setup depicted in Figure 1. Chairs should be enough to seat all those involved in the workshop (participants, facilitators, etc.).

> **Equipment:** A computer with internet access and an A4 colour printer should be available in the room. A copy machine should be available in the broader facility. Six flip chart stands are needed to support group work. The free-standing flip charts can be waived if the room bears walls where material (primarily visual material) can be posted for all to see and act upon.

> **Stationery**[4]**:** Flip chart paper (to be used on the stands or the wall); six sets of flip-chart markers with at least four colours each; a ream of A4 printer paper; a large enough assortment of black and blue felt tip pens so that all participants can freely use them; six multicolour stacks of sticky notes; six rolls of white adhesive paper tape; and enough sticky tack to hold 24 sheets of flip chart paper on the wall, if stands are not available.

> **Catering:** Coffee, tea, water and diverse, quality finger food suitable to various diets and preferences should be available in the room throughout the two-day workshop. Tableware should be as silent as possible (in this case, paper is preferred over plastic or ceramic). A quality buffet-style lunch suitable to various diets and preferences should be

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[4] This refers to basic stationary only and does not include parts of any of the study's materials or data collection instruments.

served on both days. Ideally, this would be served in a nearby foyer to avoid disrupting ongoing conversations between participants while allowing for some necessary standing time. Tall tables are preferred.

Unrestricted access to the room is needed for the full two workshop days.

2.3   Materials

The materials supporting this study are diverse. As mentioned in Section 2, other methods are combined with generative design research in the scope of the INCITE-DEM Democracy Labs. Moreover, future applications of the Democracy Labs may equally take stock of additional support methods and/or exclude some of the tools and methods used in the INCITE-DEM Democracy Labs. This section, however, offers a specific overview of all the materials to be used in INCITE-DEM Democracy Labs, including online videos, software applications and questionnaires and several toolkits, which meant to scaffold the individual and collective paths of expression of participants:

〉 **Dialogue tool** (the agent-based model Dialogue Tool is provided in deliverable D3.1): This computer simulation model is implemented with a web interface. The simulation can be operated on a regular computer using a keyboard and a mouse. The simulation reflects the intricacies of community dynamics. Its web interface encompasses four key components: a control interface, a command interface, an output interface, and the simulated community. This tool is available online.

〉 **Sensitising toolkit:** This toolkit is meant to immerse the participants in the problem space of democratic innovations through observations and reflections about situations where they felt engaged or disengaged, empowered, or disenfranchised as citizens in what concerns their ability to participate in decision-making impacting their lives. The sensitising toolkit includes instructions and reflection templates organised as an easy-to-use booklet. See Appendix A for more details.

〉 **Questionnaire** (a description of this Questionnaire and its results will be provided in deliverable D4.3): This instrument captures insights into innovative democratic approaches that can address complex challenges through inclusive deliberation. This questionnaire will be implemented through an online self-administered questionnaire form in the six languages of the six participating countries.

〉 **Sensemaking toolkit:** The sensemaking toolkit scaffolds finding common ground through experience sharing while supporting participants in outgrowing their personal contexts and reflecting on broader challenges. The sensemaking toolkit comprises the experience canvas, persona templates, and associated materials. See Appendix B for more details.

〉 **Provotyping toolkit** (a description of the Provotyping Toolkit and its results are provided in deliverable D4.2): This toolkit contains a provotype and templates crafted to capture reactions, reflections, and envisioned solutions. The provotype is a diegetic provocative prototype conceived to challenge assumptions and conceptions.

〉 **Futuring toolkit:** This toolkit scaffolds participants when imagining and expressing their ideas and dreams about the future of democracy. The futuring toolkit comprises the democratic innovations wheel, storyboarding templates, and associated materials. See Appendix C for more details.

An overview of when these materials are used through each iteration of the procedure is presented in Figure 7.
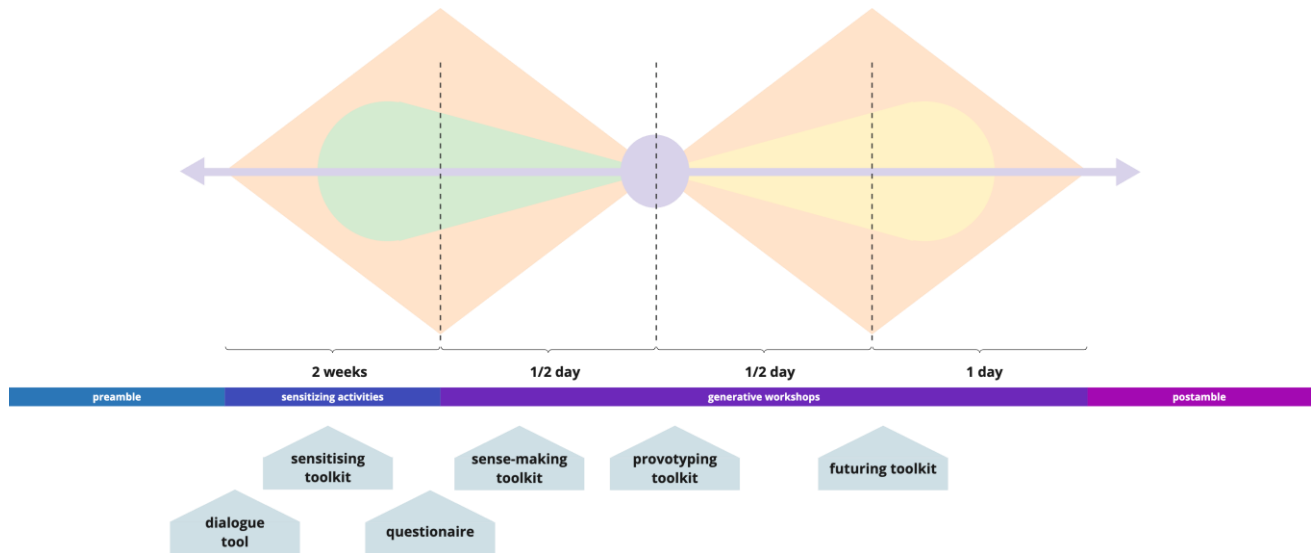
Figure 7: Materials used throughout the procedure

2.4   Procedure

The procedure comprises four phases and extends over four weeks (see Figure 8). This procedure is repeated in each of the six participating countries. The four stages are:

〉 **Preamble:** During the preamble, participants register and provide informed consent online. The detailed calendar of all activities is delivered, and the instructions about the sensitising activities are emailed. The same instructions and the sensitising toolkit are handed over or sent to participants.

〉 **Sensitising activities:** This is a period of independent individual work that comprises **exploring scenarios** with the dialogue tool, **reflecting on personal experiences** supported by the sensitising toolkit, and **futuring** by responding to the questionnaire.

〉 **Generative workshop:** The workshop unfolds over two days and comprises three sessions: a **sensemaking session** where participants get to know each other and, in groups, find common ground based on their personal experiences. A **provotyping session** where participants are provoked and challenged to explore possibilities without triggering too many of their innate psychological defence mechanisms. And a **collective dreaming session** where groups of participants address the challenge of **proposing democratic innovations**. The participants will be scaffolded through the process of making their ideas tangible through proposing **concrete democratic innovations** (for instance, participatory budget). All sessions involve sharing viewpoints and ideas, reasoning about them and engaging in constructive critique with peers.

〉 **Postamble:** After the workshop, when relevant, some participants might be invited to take part in a retrospective interview seeking to capture additional insights.
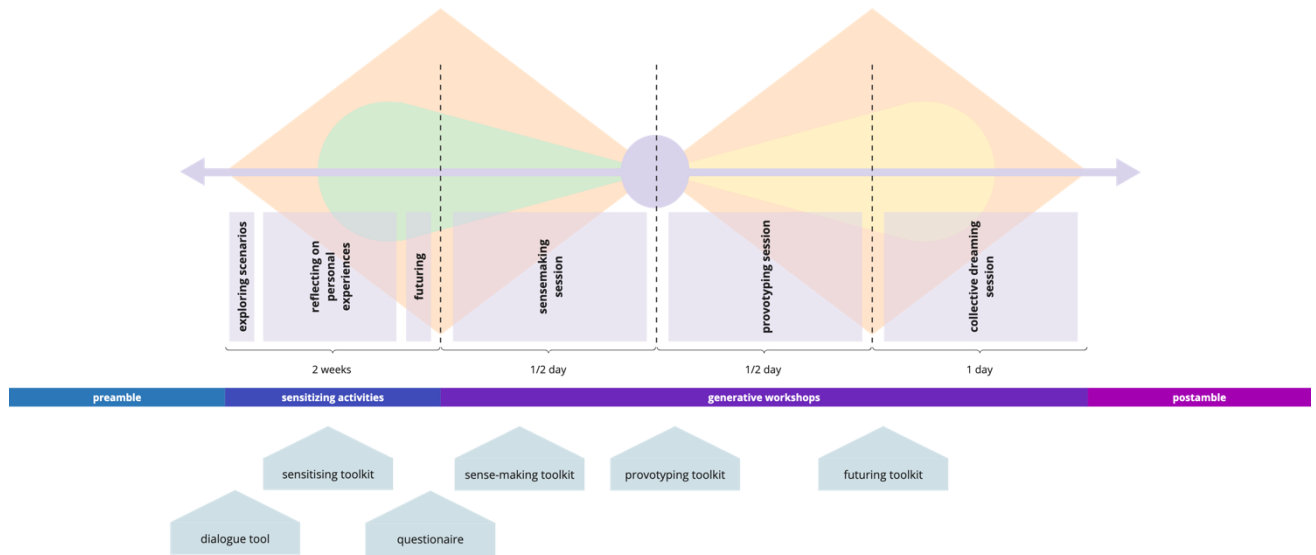
Figure 8: Overview of the procedure

Additional moments to consider include:

> **Participants and venue secured:** Securing an adequate venue and the required set of participants can be an unexpectedly long process.

> **Materials due:** Procedure aside, these are the primary inputs of the procedure. The moment is critical because many materials must be made available or sent to participants very early in the process.

> **Translated data due:** This is the main output of the procedure. Besides translation, it involves digitising, transcribing, annotating, and organising all data.

Table 2 provides an overview of the recommended scheduling of all activities together with a non-exhaustive checklist.

Table 2: Schedule of the procedure

Timeframe	Moment or phase	Checklist
At least 2 months before the generative workshop	Participants and venue secured	The availability of participants is confirmed.
		The room is visited, checked for compliance and booked. Equipment, stationery and catering have been rented or ordered.
At least 2 weeks before the sensitising activities begin	Materials due	Video instructions for using the dialogue tool are translated and available online.
		The questionnaire is translated and available online.
		Digital versions of instructions about the independent sensitising activities to be carried out by participants are translated, localised and ready to be printed.
		Digital versions of the sensitising, sensemaking, provotyping and futuring toolkits are translated, localised and ready to be printed.
		Updated instructions for facilitators are ready to be used.
The week before the sensitising activities	Preamble	Participants are registered and provided informed consent.
		Instructions about the independent sensitising activities to be carried out by participants are delivered.
		The sensitising toolkits are delivered.

10 working days preceding the workshop	Sensitising activities	Participants are nudged into engaging with the sensitising activities.
		Follow-up contacts take place to ensure active engagement with the sensitising activities.
		Participants are invited to attend to the questionnaire.
		Participants are reminded to bring the sensitising toolkit back when attending the workshop.
2 consecutive days	Generative workshop	The room and all that it entails is ready.
		Access to the room is sign-posted within the broader facility to guide participants.
		Printed versions of the sensemaking, provotyping and futuring toolkits printed and available on the workshop's premises.
		Active data collection instruments are ready and have been tested.
		By-products of the toolkits have been collected (these include reflection diaries, provotyping reflections and design artefacts such as personas, scenarios, mockups and storyboards).
		Photos, video recordings and notes are secured.
The week after the workshop	Postamble	Extraordinary contributions (at the discretion of the facilitator and data collector) are identified.
		Responsible participants are interviewed for additional insights.
At most 2 months after the generative workshop	Translated data due	Non-digital data is digitised.
		Audio data is transcribed.
		Data is translated, annotated and organised.
		Data is stored in a data container available to the whole team and is ready to be analysed.

2.4.1   Preamble

The preamble starts with the activation of the registration and informed consent forms. This is followed by several interactions by email between the facilitator and the participants:

〉 Facilitators introduce themselves and the rest of the team, ensuring the participants' smooth and trust-building engagement with the study.

〉 Participants are provided with this study's information sheet and invited to register and provide informed consent to the terms of participation (see Appendix D and E).

〉 Participants receive a detailed calendar of all activities.

〉 Participants receive instructions about the independent sensitising activities to be carried out.

Finally, participants receive the exact instructions by post or are personally handed over on paper with the sensitising toolkit.

Towards the end of the period set aside for the preamble, the facilitator supports otherwise challenged participants and thanks all once these initial activities are verified and deemed completed. The registration and informed consent forms are de-activated.

At the facilitator's discretion, the interaction by email can be replaced or complemented with face-to-face or online meetings.

2.4.2 Sensitising activities

Sensitising activities are individually conducted over the ten working days preceding the generative workshop. Sensitising activities have three activities:

〉 **Exploring scenarios:** In this activity and after watching an online video with instructions, participants engage in a range of scenarios where all community members have the right to vote either in favour of or against the plan affecting them all. The goal is to raise participants' awareness about the effect of the community's characteristics on its decision-making dynamics and consequent outcomes. This activity is supported by the **dialogue tool** introduced in section 2.3. We estimate participants will need about 30 minutes to explore the scenarios adequately.

〉 **Reflecting on personal experiences:** In this activity, participants make observations about their engagement in past and recent decision-making processes and reflect on its multi-faceted, multi-level implications. This activity is supported by the **sensitising toolkit** introduced in section 2.3. We estimate participants will spend 10 minutes per day, over eight workdays, to address the toolkit's challenges.

〉 **Futuring:** In this activity, participants provide individual insights into innovative democratic approaches that can address complex changes through inclusive deliberation. This activity is supported by the **questionnaire** introduced in section 2.3, in which participants respond online. We estimate participants will need about 40 minutes to address all questions.

The facilitator triggers the start of the activities and occasionally monitors the participants' progress over email. Table 3 provides a detailed schedule and non-exhaustive checklist of the sensitising activities.

Table 3: Schedule of the sensitising activities

Time	Action	Checklist
Day 1	Kick-start the sensitising activities	Thanks again, participants, for their willingness to participate in the study. Recall the instructions sent by email.
Day 1 (30 minutes)	Get participants to engage with the **dialogue tool**	Guide participants to **explore scenarios** with the dialogue tool, summarising the instructions, encouraging them to watch the introductory video mentioned in the instructions, and reminding them all about how to get to the dialogue tool.
Day 2	Get participants to engage with the **sensitising toolkit**	Guide participants to **reflect on personal experiences** with the sensitising toolkit, summarising the instructions and encouraging them to engage with the task at hand.
Days 2 to 9 (10 minutes per day)		Occasionally, nudge participants into sharing their progress and any eventual challenges when dealing with the sensitising toolkit.
Day 10 (40 minutes)	Get participants to engage with the **questionnaire**	Activate the questionnaire. Guide participants to **futuring** supported by the questionnaire available online summarising the instructions and reminding all about how to get to it
Day 10 (end-of-day)	Conclude the sensitising activities	De-activate the questionnaire. Thank participants for their engagement so far. Evoke the instructions sent by email. Remind all about the location and schedule of the workshop.

2.4.3 Generative workshop

The generative workshop takes place over the course of two consecutive days. It consists of two half-day sessions and one full-day session. These are the sensemaking, provotyping and collective dreaming sessions, addressed in detail in sections 2.4.3.1, 2.4.3.2 and 2.4.3.3. The general schedule[5] of the generative workshop is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: General schedule of the generative workshop

Period	First day	Second day
8:30 to 9:00	Welcoming participants	Welcoming participants
9:00 to 10:20	Sensemaking session (part 1)	Collective dreaming session (part 1)
10:20 to 10:40	Morning leg-stretching break	Morning leg-stretching break
10:40 to 12:00	Sensemaking session (part 2)	Collective dreaming session (part 2)
12:00 to 13:00	Lunch break	Lunch break
13:00 to 14:20	Provotyping session (part 1)	Collective dreaming session (part 3)
14:20 to 14:40	Afternoon leg-stretching break	Afternoon leg-stretching break
14:40 to 16:00	Provotyping session (part 2)	Collective dreaming session (part 4)

2.4.3.1 Sensemaking session

This is the first session of the generative workshop, and as such, it is a crucial moment for the entire procedure. It might also be the first time participants meet the facilitator in person, with whom they have been interacting by email for more than two weeks.

During this session, participants get to know each other, team up, share their thoughts about the increasing deficit of democracy and reflect on its multi-faceted, multi-level implications, illustrating their reflections with observations collected with the support of the sensitising toolkit; and engage in co-creation of personas and scenarios, synthesising their common appraisal of the status quo. The main purpose is to engage participants in outgrowing their personal contexts and reflecting on the broader challenges of participatory democracy. This is supported by the **sensemaking toolkit** introduced in section 2.3.

Table 5 provides a detailed schedule and non-exhaustive checklist of the sensemaking session.

Table 5: Schedule of the half-day sensemaking session

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[5] The schedule might be shifted one or two hours later to fit local practices. None-the-less, the overall pattern prevails.

Time	Action	Checklist
20 minutes	Introductions	The facilitator and data collector are introduced, as well as any other team members in the room, with a clear description of their role.
		A brief overview of the facilities is provided.
		The structure of the workshop is reviewed.
		Participants are invited to briefly introduce themselves.
		Participants are distributed into 5 or 6 groups, which will remain the same throughout the workshop.
10 minutes	Introduction to the sensemaking session	The goal of the session is stated.
		The timeline of the session is presented.
		Basic rules (such as "you are the expert of your personal experiences" and "only constructive criticism is allowed").
10 minutes	Description of the first group activity	**Experience canvases,** together with associated materials, are shared with the participants.
		In groups and based on the observations collected with the support of the sensitising toolkit, participants are asked to synthesise their common appraisal of the status quo, reflecting on their engagement in past and recent decision-making processes and illustrating their outcomes in a shared **experience canvas**.
40 minutes	Group work	All participants actively engage in group work.
20 minutes	Morning leg-stretching break	
10 minutes	Description of the second group activity	**Persona templates,** together with associated materials, are shared with the participants.
		Personas are explained using examples.
		In groups, participants are challenged to describe those involved in the situations captured in the sensitising toolkit and now synthesised in the shared **experience canvas**.
20 minutes	Group work	All participants actively engage in group work.
40 minutes	Group discussion	All groups present and react to each other's outcomes.
10 minutes	Closing comments	All experience-sharing, personas and scenario templates are collected.
		Participants are thanked, and directions are provided about where lunch is served.

2.4.3.2 Provotyping session

During the provotyping session, participants are exposed to a narrative provotype crafted especially to provide alternative and thought-provoking experiences. The provotype to be used in this session is intentionally designed to provoke resistance and reflection, and while the results may result in ideas for products or services, this is not its main purpose.

The main purpose is to take participants further in their reflections on the challenges of democracy within a context of socio-ecological crises and rapid technological transformations. Further, the provotype is based on

a masked real case of regional planning and major development project and includes several environmental dilemmas. This is supported by the **provotyping toolkit**[6] mentioned in section 2.3.

Table 6 provides a detailed schedule and non-exhaustive checklist of the provotyping session.

Table 6: Schedule of the half-day provotyping session

Time	Action	Checklist
10 minutes	Introduction to the provotyping session	The goal of the session is stated.
		The timeline of the session is presented.
		Basic rules (such as "only constructive criticism is allowed").
20 minutes	Presentation of the provotype	Individual copies of the **provotype** are available for all participants.
		The provotype is thoroughly presented.
10 minutes	Description of the first group activity	Group **reflection templates** are shared with the participants.
		In groups, participants are challenged to appraise the extent to which the decision-making process was open, transparent, and promoted inclusiveness and citizen participation and engagement, stimulating critical thinking and participants' questioning of existing norms and practices.
20 minutes	Group work	All participants actively engage in group work.
20 minutes	Group discussion	All groups present and react to each other's reflections about the provotype.
20 minutes	Afternoon leg-stretching break	
10 minutes	Description of the second group activity	Group **reflection templates** are shared with the participants.
		In groups, participants are challenged to ideate about alternative open, transparent, and inclusive decision-making processes that potentially stimulating citizen's participation and engagement.
30 minutes	Group work	All participants actively engage in group work.
30 minutes	Group discussion	All groups present and react to each other's reflections about the proposed ideas.
10 minutes	Closing comments	All reflection forms are collected.
		Participants are thanked and dismissed for the day.

2.4.3.3   Collective dreaming session

Finally, during the collective dreaming session and building on the insights enabled by the previous sessions, participants engage in imagining and expressing their ideas and dreams about the future of democracy, co-producing concrete proposals of inclusive democratic innovations that ensure constructive and informed dialogue and a sharing of control between citizens and traditional institutions of representative democracy.

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[6] A description of the Provotyping Toolkit is provided in deliverable D4.2

This session will harness the collective imaginaries of participants about democratic innovations capable of enabling meaningful participation for citizens from all ages, faiths, ethnicities, gender, and educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. Participants will address a challenge triggered by an hypothetical utopian future shared with the group, supported by fictional news excerpts, and informed by their personal experiences and the lessons learnt through their engagement with all preceding activities in this process. This is supported by the **futuring toolkit** introduced in section 2.3.

These collective imaginaries of democratic innovations are co-created by participants working in groups and expressed conceptually and process-wise. Conceptualizations are captured through multifaced mind-mapping scaffolded by the **democratic innovations' wheel** template (presented in Appendix C). Processes and inherent procedures, enablers and barriers are expressed through comprehensive storyboarding supported by the **storyboard** template (presented in Appendix C).

This is the last session of the generative workshop so the facilitator will debrief participants (see Appendix D) before dismissing them.

Table 7 provides a detailed schedule and non-exhaustive checklist of the collective dreaming session.

Table 7: Schedule of the full-day collective dreaming session

Time	Action	Checklist
20 minutes	Introduction to the collective dreaming session	Goal of the session is stated.
		Core democratic innovations concepts are recalled.
		Examples of democratic innovations are provided.
		Timeline of the session is presented.
		Basic rules (such as "you are the expert of your personal experiences", "only constructive criticism is allowed" and "this is just an exercise, there are no hills worth dying for").
20 minutes	Description of the first group activity	A vision of a hypothetical utopian future is shared with the participants, supported by fictional news excerpts.
		In groups, participants are empowered and challenged to imagine a democratic innovation bringing us closer to the previously introduced utopian future.
		The templates of the **democratic innovations' wheel** together with associated materials, are shared with the participants.
		The use of the **democratic innovations' wheel** is explained.
		Participants are asked to describe their idea for a democratic innovation using the **democratic innovations' wheel**.
40 minutes	Group work	All participants actively engage in group work.
20 minutes	Morning leg-stretching break	
10 minutes	Description of the second group activity	The "six thinking hats" technique is explained to participants.
		In groups, participants are challenged to critique their own work and to iterate their ideas until a consensual understanding is achieved.
		Groups are asked to update their ideas in the **democratic innovations' wheel**.
40 minutes	Group work	All participants actively engage in group work.
30 minutes	Group discussion	All groups present their idea for a democratic innovation and react to each other's.
60 minutes	Lunch	

10 minutes	Description of the third group activity	**Storyboarding** templates together with associated materials and an instant camera are shared with the participants.
		The use of the **storyboarding** template and the instant camera are explained.
		Groups are asked to illustrate their idea for a democratic innovation in action and describing it through an episode portrait through the **storyboard** template.
		To achieve this, participants are asked to enact key moments of the innovation in action, documenting their activities with the instant camera.
60 minutes	Group work	All participants actively engage in group work.
10 minutes	Group work	All groups wrap-up and tend to last minute details.
20 minutes	Afternoon leg-stretching break	
10 minutes	Group work	All groups prepare to present their ideas about democratic innovations.
60 minutes	Group discussion	All groups present their imagined democratic innovations and react to each other's ideas.
10 minutes	Closing comments	All **democratic innovations' wheel**, and **storyboards** are collected.
		Participants are debriefed, thanked, and dismissed.

2.4.4 Postamble

As mentioned before, the postamble of this procedure is reserved for carrying out retrospective interviews at the discretion of the facilitator or the data collector.

Running a retrospective interview involves asking participants to recall and describe their past experiences, actions, or decisions related to specific moments or by-products of the sensemaking, provotyping or collective dreaming sessions.

These interviews allow for additional insights into extraordinary phenomena observed during the generative workshop. Adequately supported by prompts extracted from the data collected through the workshop, they can provide detailed data about the participants' personal histories, motivations, challenges, and achievements.

They can reveal the processes and strategies participants used to engage with the activities throughout the workshop.

Ideally, all retrospective interviews will be carried out through videoconferencing, enabling the simultaneous recording of the prompts used to guide the conversation and the conversation itself.

2.5 Data collection

Data collection takes place throughout each iteration of this study. Data collection aims to document the process leading to generating collective imaginaries of democratic innovations.

In each iteration, there are 13 data collection moments. These moments are identified in Figure 9 through downwards pointing arrows. Data collection is classified as passive or active:

> **Passive data collection:** Passive data collection relies on participants' compliance in filing in structured data collection instruments such as forms and questionnaires and in providing input into semi-structured templates.

> **Active data collection:** Active data collection occurs through observation and occasional retrospective interviews. Observation comprises mapping the room's composition, taking notes of relevant attitudes and behaviours, photographing the co-creation of design artefacts, and recording videos of critical moments, such as presentations.
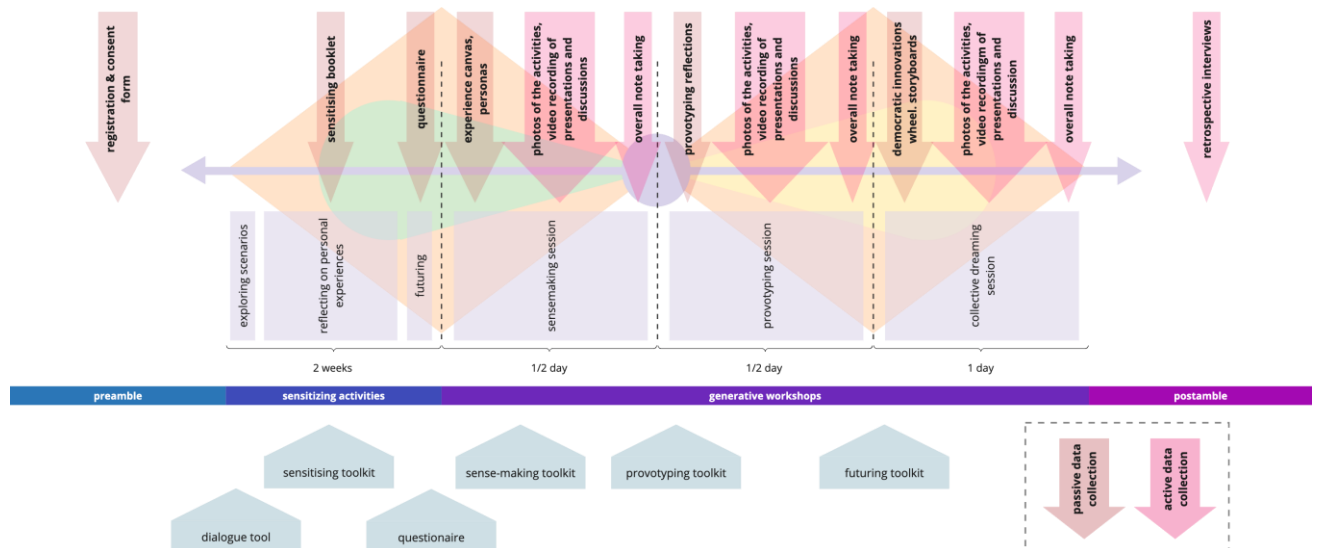

Figure 9: Data collection instruments used throughout the procedure

Passive data collection moments are when data is collected through:

> Answers provided on the **registration and informed consent form**, recorded digitally.

> Contributions written in the **sensitising booklet**, later collected during the generative workshop.

> Answers provided on the **questionnaire**, recorded digitally.

> Co-creation of sets of **experience canvases** and **personas**, gathered at the end of the generative workshop.

> Writing-up **provotyping reflections**, collected at the end of the generative workshop.

> Co-creation of sets of **democratic innovations' wheels** and **storyboards**, collected at the end of the generative workshop.

Active data collection moments are:

> **Photos of the activities, video recording of presentations and discussions**, digitally recorded during the sensitising, provotyping and collective dreaming sessions.

> Purposeful **notetaking**, during the sensitising, provotyping and collective dreaming sessions.

> Eventual **retrospective interviews**, conducted after the generative workshop.

Whereas passive data collection is achieved through the materials supporting each iteration of this study, active data collection requires additional instruments such as:

> A logbook to sketch annotated maps of the room's composition and to take notes of relevant moments, attitudes, and behaviours.

> A photo camera or mobile phone with a suitable camera to photograph the co-creation of design artefacts.

> A video camera on a tripod with a microphone suitable to record presentations and discussions from a static viewpoint.

> A voice recorder or mobile phone with a suitable microphone to record eventual retrospective interviews.

> A videoconferencing facility[7] allowing screensharing and video-conference recording.

Upon conclusion of activities, all data collected through physical artefacts is annotated, organised, and digitised so that it can be easily handled. Digital data is also annotated and organised.

All collected data will be transcribed (when relevant), translated and stored in a data container available to the whole team and compliant with the broader project's data management plan.

3   Schedule

Finally, the overarching schedule of this study is presented in Table 7. In each case, a complete iteration of the procedure is executed. Although all dates were extensively negotiated with all partners, changes are possible.

The schedule includes a training moment to get the entire team, but specially all facilitators, familiar with the materials and the tacit detail of the procedure.

Concurrent activities were minimised in our schedule. Avoiding overlaps allows for gradual translation and localisation of materials, enables incremental fine-tuning of the approach, and avoids overloading the subsequent data analysis process. Although the present schedule is for the planned INCITE-DEM Democracy Labs, key principles such as avoiding overlaps when conducting Democracy Labs in several countries and/or regions, are Important and should be equally considered in other contexts where Democracy Labs may be implemented and informed by this toolkit.

Table 8: Overarching schedule of the study

Host country	Location	Participants and venue secured	Materials due[8]	Preamble[9]	Sensitising activities	Generative workshop	Postamble[10]	Translated data due

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[7] Usually, a software license or subscription.

[8] Translation and localization included.

[9] Participants have registered and provided informed consent.

[10] Eventual retrospective interviews.

Training	Groningen	14.02	21.02	Week 07	21.02 to 05.03	06.03	07.03 to 22.03	Not applicable
Norway (pilot)	Trondheim	01.03	29.03	Week 14	Weeks 14 and 15	Week 16	Week 17	31.05
Portugal	Lisbon	29.03	06.04	Week 18	Weeks 18 and 19	Week 20	Week 21	28.06
Italy	Rome	26.04	10.05	Week 22	Weeks 22 and 23	Week 24	Week 25	02.08
Germany	Potsdam	23.08	06.09	Week 37	16.09 to 30.09	01.10 and 02.10	Week 41	06.12
Spain	Barcelona	13.09	20.09	Week 40	04.10 to 17.10	17.10 and 18.10	Week 43	20.12
Slovenia	Ljubljana	27.09	18.10	Week 44	Weeks 44 and 45	Week 46	Week 47	27.12

4   Team

This study is supported by a distributed team comprising elements from the six hosting partners[11] and the partner organising this study. The roles and responsibilities of team members are depicted in Table 8.

Table 9: Roles in the study's team

Role	Responsibilities	Comments
Coordination	Facilitates the co-creation of the study. Runs a training pilot of the study. Monitors the execution of the study. Promotes reflection and critique for the improvement of the overall approach. Enables on-the-run adjustments, ensuring compliance with the overarching goal of the study. Promotes the orchestration of global team efforts.	Global (1)
Focal point	Actively participates in the co-creation of the study. Organises the recruitment of participants. Secures an adequate venue, ensuring compliance with the set recommendations and requirements. Orchestrates local team efforts. Promotes communication between local team, global team, support and coordination.	One per host country (6)
Facilitator	Actively participates in the co-creation of the study. Interacts with participants from the very first moment until participation ceases, ensuring registration and consent, promoting active involvement in sensitising activities and generative workshop, and organising eventual retrospective interviews. Organises timely delivery of the materials supporting the sensitising activities. Organises timely availability of the materials of the generative workshop. Facilitates the workshop.	One per host country (6)

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[11] See the **INCITE-DEM Consortium Partners** table in the front matter of this document for partner details.

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Data collector	Actively participates in the co-creation of the study. Collects, annotates and organises all the sensitising activities and generative workshop's physical outcomes. Acts as a passive participant[12] observer, mapping the room's composition, taking notes of relevant attitudes and behaviours, and recording images and videos of critical moments. Carries out eventual retrospective interviews. Annotates and organises all data resulting from observing the workshop.	One per host country (6)
Translator & localiser	Translates or verifies the translation and localises the materials used during the sensitising activities and the workshop. Transcribes and translates or verifies the translation of relevant recordings. Translates or confirms the translation of the sensitising activity and generative workshop's outcomes.	One per host country (6)
Supporter	Supports coordination. Promotes communication with focal points. Prepares, revises and sends materials to focal points. Receives collected data from focal points. Supports local teams remotely and on location during the workshop.	Global (2)

The exact size of the global team is variable as some roles can be accumulated and responsibilities delegated. Considering the procedure, it is safe to say that a team member cannot facilitate and simultaneously collect data. As such, the global team comprises at least 15 members. For the same reasons, local teams are at least two members strong.

5   Closing remarks

The Democracy Labs serve as a unique space for engaging in collective creative sensemaking and ideation. Generative Research Design processes are particularly well suited to address challenging issues by focusing on first generating a creative mindset on participants empowering them to find inspired ways of expressing the whole body of knowledge and experiences that they have accumulated and bring them to the collective table, where they can make sense of how to understand and address different challenges and possibilities as a collective. It is an approach that embodies democratic values of putting people and their ideas first and supporting them through a set of tools and processes to engage in coordinated design actions.

Generative design research is stronger when it comes from a diverse group of people, with diverse backgrounds. It is precisely under this context that the true power of collective sensemaking and ideation shine. By involving participants from six different countries and from different avenues of like within their societies we can tap into a wealth of experiences and perspectives that will form the basis of a rich data collection in the form of design artefacts (outputs from the toolkits, sketches, insights), notes, observations, recordings, and interviews.

Among the key expected outcomes of the democracy labs are a set of proposals of democratic innovations, described conceptually and as processes, to be further worked through subsequent project research (i.e., in WP5), where the feasibility of these proposals will be explored with a wider public (I.e. through a choice experiment survey conducted in diverse EU countries) and presented to policymakers in at least nine countries, through an interactive fora event with policymakers.

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[12] In the sense that the data collector does not take part in the activities but is acknowledge as having an observer's role during the workshop.

The rich collection of outcomes from this study will also be the key input for the creation of four final design fictions (short films with supporting materials) that will be used for broader dissemination to inspire and foster our democratic ambition and imagination, and to showcase the actual potential of democratic innovations and the world that they could help build. INCITE-DEM's design fiction artefacts will result from worldbuilding exercises informed by the results of the study described in this document.

Finally, as it is presented now, this document describes a plan co-created with contributions from all team members. As this study is not a controlled experiment but rather a large-scale generative research exercise, each iteration will inform the configuration of the subsequent one. Deviations to this plan are not only expected and even welcomed because they enable fine-tuning the approach.

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Appendixes

A   Sensitising toolkit

The purpose of the sensitising toolkit is to guide participants in revisiting past and recent events where they felt engaged or disengaged, empowered or disenfranchised as citizens in what concerns their ability to participate in decision making processes impacting their lives. This is achieved through the booklet illustrate in Figure A.1.

This booklet invites participants to reflect about four such moments in their past and recent life perceived by them as frustrating or encouraging. Alternating between past and recent times, frustrating or encouraging situations, the booklet invites participants to shortly present each event, to describe their feelings in that regard, and to reflect on what they would change in each case to avoid or further improve similar processes in the future.

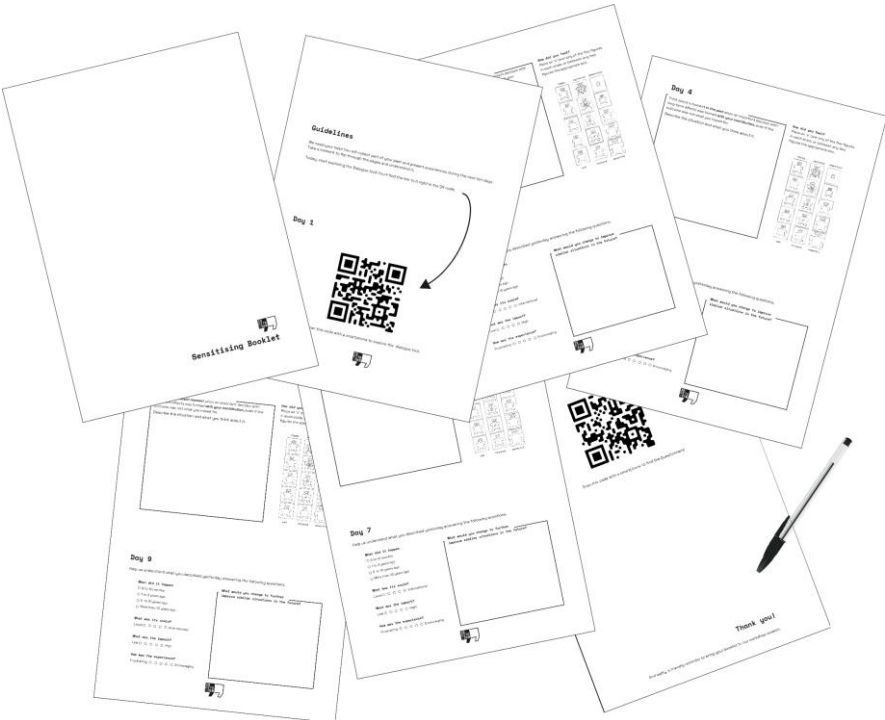The booklet also includes QR codes and instructions to access the Dialogue Tool and the questionnaire.

Figure A.1: Sensitising booklet

B   Sensemaking toolkit

The sensemaking comprises two templates. The experience canvas template, illustrated in Figure B.1 and the persona template.

The purpose the sensemaking toolkit fosters common ground among participants while eliciting fragments of their past experiences. The structure of the experience canvas allows participants to create a shared experience space and understanding. The persona template captures anonymised traces of the stakeholders deem relevant by the participants in each case. Participants will be encouraged to synthesise and to finds commonalities, but this cannot be ensured.
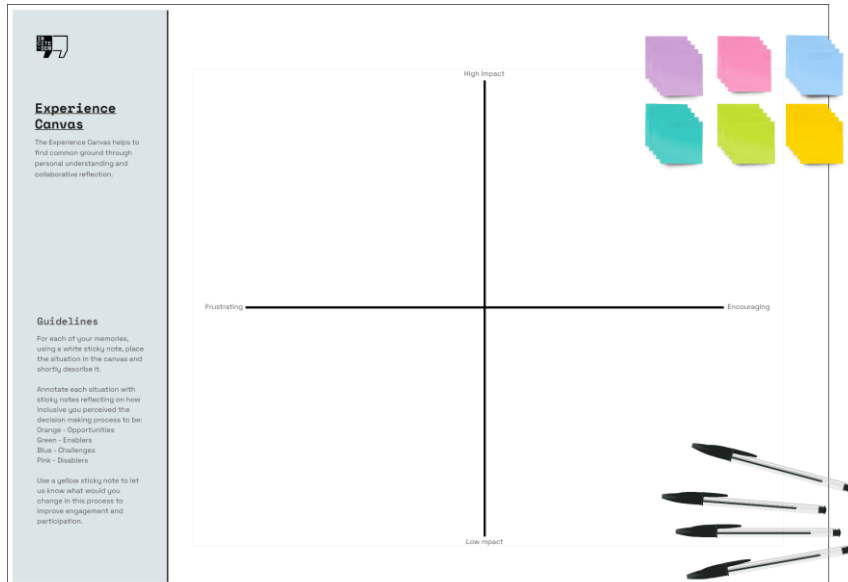

Figure B.1: Experience canvas template

Figure B.2: Persona template

Recommended checklist for facilitators to enable the activity:

> One Experience Canvas template per group

> 3 Persona templates per group

> 6 pens, 6 pencils, 2 erasers per group

> 3 packs of sticky notes of each colour (white, yellow, green, orange, blue, pink) per each group

> Plenty of empty A4 paper

C   Futuring toolkit

Through carefully crafted news pieces, participants are temporarily transported to a future where democracy is not limited to elections, but extends to every aspect of social life, such as work, education, culture, and media. People have direct and equal say in the decisions that affect them, and participate in various forms of self-governance, deliberation, and cooperation.

Table C.1: Examples of fictional headlines and newspieces

Headline	News pieces
Global Citizens' OS Passes Landmark Climate Law	In a historic referendum, the Global Citizens' OS (GCOS), a participatory platform that allows people from all over the world to propose and vote on global issues, passed a landmark climate law that sets binding targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning to renewable energy sources. The law, which was supported by 75% of the voters, also establishes a global fund for climate justice, which will provide financial and technical assistance to the most vulnerable and affected communities. The GCOS, which was launched in 2028 by a coalition of civil society organisations, has been hailed as a breakthrough for global democracy and environmental action.
Citizens' Assembly Votes to Abolish Nuclear Weapons Worldwide	In a historic decision, the global citizens' assembly on disarmament voted unanimously to abolish all nuclear weapons and dismantle the existing arsenals. The assembly, composed of randomly selected representatives from every country, deliberated for six months on the issue, hearing from experts, activists, and survivors of nuclear attacks. The decision was ratified by the United Nations and welcomed by millions of people who celebrated in the streets. "This is a victory for democracy, peace, and humanity," said Fatima Khan, a delegate from Pakistan.
Cooperative Economy Surpasses Capitalist Economy in Global GDP	A new report by the World Bank has revealed that the cooperative economy, which consists of enterprises that are owned and managed by their workers, members, or customers, has surpassed the capitalist economy in terms of global gross domestic product (GDP). The report attributes this remarkable achievement to the superior performance, resilience, and innovation of the cooperative sector, which has been able to meet the diverse and changing needs of its stakeholders, while also contributing to social and environmental goals. The report also highlights the role of the International Cooperative Alliance, which has supported the development and networking of cooperatives around the world.

Brought back to reality, they are offered unlimited resources to contribute towards bringing our society closer to such utopian world through the generation of democratic innovations addressing the pressing challenges of ensuring equitable and efficient distribution of resources, ensuring production oriented towards meeting human needs and safeguarding respect for the environment.

This toolkit scaffolds participants when imagining and expressing their ideas and dreams about the future of democracy. The futuring toolkit comprises the democratic innovations wheel and storyboarding templates shown in Figures C.1 an C.2.
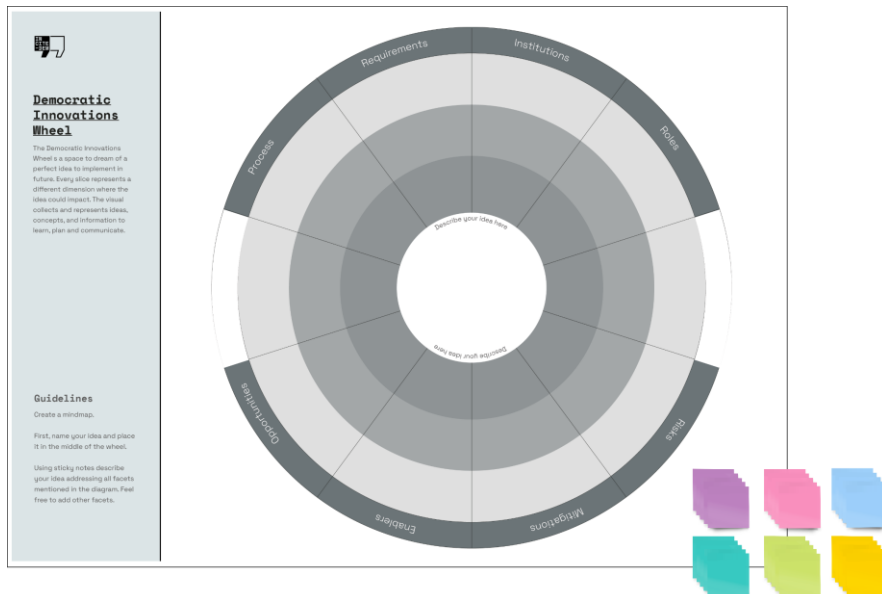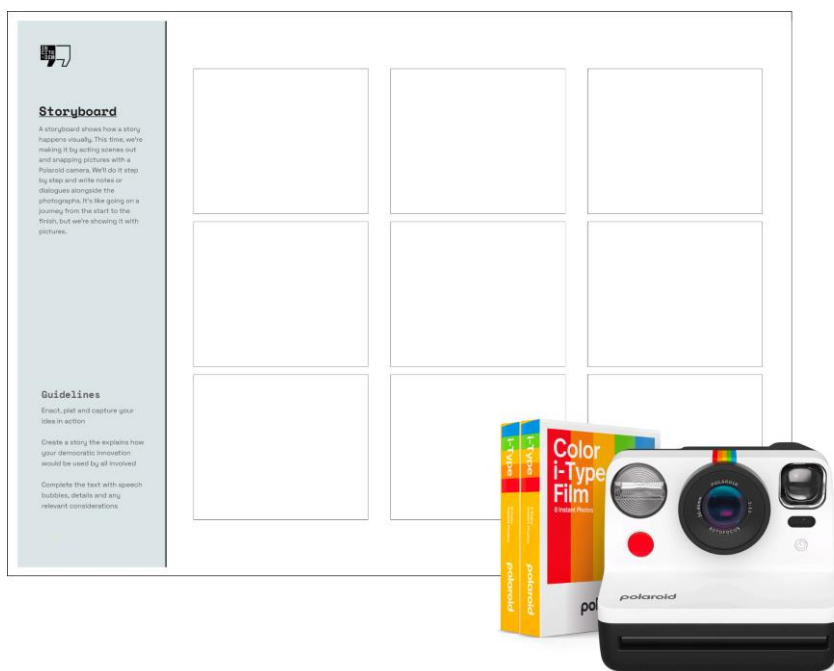
Figure C.1: Democratic innovations wheel

Figure C.2: Storyboard template

Recommended checklist for facilitators to enable the activity:

> One Democratic Innovation wheel template per group

> One Storyboard template per group

> Printed set of newspieces per group

> 6 pens, 6 pencils, 2 erasers per group

› 3 packs of sticky notes of each colour (white, yellow, green, orange, blue, pink) per each group

› Plenty of empty A4 paper

› One polaroid camera loaded with film per each group

E   Information sheet

We are pleased to invite you to participate in our study. Our study is part of the part of the INCITE-DEM project, which focuses on understanding the processes and models of civic participation and citizenship engagement within democratic life, with an inclusive focus and targeting social and environmental sustainability. Before you decide whether to participate, we would like to present you with further details about this research, its aims, its potential usefulness and what it implies to participate. A member of the research team will answer any doubts you might have.

1 – What is the aim of such research on democratic innovations?

This research aims to understand the conditions that foster civic participation and a more inclusive engagement of citizens in our society's democratic life, focusing on the discussion of key objectives for the social and environmental sustainability. You can learn more about this project online (https://incite-dem.eu).

2 – Do I have to participate in this study?

Participation is voluntary. If you agree to participate, you will provide informed consent and receive a copy of the current document as well as a copy of the informed consent form.

3 – What if I wish to back down from this research?

You are free to quit, at any time, without providing any explanation or justification.

4 – What will I have to do as part of the research?

You will participate in a study that consists of individual and group activities. The individual activities should be completed within the two weeks preceding to group activities. The group activities will last for two full consecutive days.

During the individual activities you will be asked to explore an online tool, to reflect on past and recent experiences and to answer a questionnaire.

During the group activities you will engage in creating different artefacts with other participants. No specific skills are required.

5 – What are the disadvantages and risks of participating?

No associated risks are anticipated, and the research team's expectation is that the sessions in which you participate will be a pleasant experience for the participants.

6 – What are the possible benefits of participating?

In our experience, people like to participate in studies that promote communication with scientists. Your involvement will help to understand the conditions for more inclusive citizen engagement and civic participation that will help advance goals for environmental and social sustainability.

7 – What happens when the research is finished?

Data analysis will end in March 2026. Study results will be published in conferences and academic journals. If you would like to know details about the results and implications of the study, we will send you a copy of the research report, but not before April 2026.

8 – What if a problem occurs?

If you have any concerns about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the research coordinator, Inês Campos, who will do her best to clarify and answer your questions, by phone (+351.934972377) or email

(iscampos@fc.ul.pt). If you are dissatisfied or want to file a formal complaint, you can do so by contacting the Director of the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Lisbon (direccao@fc.ul.pt).

9 – Will my information be kept private?

Yes. We will follow all ethical and legal practices and all information about you will be treated with absolute confidentiality. To ensure anonymity, personal records will only be available in their entirety to the researcher in charge, and the members of the research team will only have access to the data they need to know. If your data is used for publications or presentations, it will be completely anonymised, without any direct or indirect reference to your identity. If photographs are taken with the intention to use them in any presentation, you will be asked for prior permission. If you allow us to use photographs or videos for this purpose, we will first ask you to sign specific releases for such objectives.

10 – Did the study go through a review process?

Indeed, the research activities within INCITE-DEM were reviewed by the Science Ethics Committee (https://ciencias.ulisboa.pt/pt/comissao-etica-ciencias). This committee analysed the overall plan, and raised no objections from an ethical point of view.

11 – Who may I contact about this study?

[Add the name and email address of the responsible researcher in the host country]

Principal researcher (David Lamas at david.lamas@tlu.ee)

Research coordinator (Inês Campos at iscampos@fc.ul.pt)

Thank you for taking your time and for considering participating in this study.

D   Informed consent form

If you have any questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

[Add the name and email address of the responsible researcher in the host country]

Principal researcher (David Lamas at david.lamas@tlu.ee)

Research coordinator (Inês Campos at iscampos@fc.ul.pt)

We thank you for your interest and willingness to participate in this study. Please fill the following form, checking each statement, marking your agreement with an X and signing it. You will receive a copy of this form and of the participant information sheet.

	Statement	Yes
1	I confirm that I have read and understood the project's Participant Information Sheet, and I am aware of who is organising, who is funding and what are the purposes of the research, and the expected duration of my participation.	
2	I had the opportunity to read and question the presented information, and I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction.	
3	I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.	
4	I understand that the data I provide during the study may be available to other consortium team members, when required for research purposes. I hereby allow the members of the research team to have access to this data.	
5	I am aware of the procedures adopted to ensure my data protection, including the duration of storage of personal data, and I have been informed about what will happen to the results of the research.	
6	I wish to receive the final research report. My email address is:	
7	I would like to be contacted about any further related research, through the above-mentioned email.	
8	I declare I have not mentioned any potential reason that can become a potential risk for my health or physical integrity.	
9	I declare that I will participate in this study without any remuneration or compensation/counterpart, besides eventual required and agreed expenses reimbursement or a symbolic compensation for my time.	
10	I declare that I accept the recording, in audio or video, of my participation and interviews.	
11	I declare that I take this decision completely free of any constraints.	
12	I agree to participate in the research.	

Participant's name, signature and date.

In my opinion the participant understands the relevant aspects of the research information and can make an informed decision.
Name of the responsible researcher in the host country, signature, and date.

F   Debriefing sheet

We are very thankful for your participation in this study.

The INCITE-DEM project aims at enhancing inclusive participation and civic engagement, while expanding democratic innovation and dynamic feedback mechanisms between citizens and institutional actors in representative democracies.

Thus, we greatly appreciate your participation.

As stated in the INCITE-DEM's information sheet which was handed to you before securing your informed consent to participate in this study, any personal data that has been provided by you will remain confidential, will not be shared with third parties, nor transferred between countries, and will be destroyed at the end of the project.

You have the right to withdraw future participation, or to ask us to redraw from the project the analysis of any or all the data that has been provided and you require no justification for doing so. The results of this study will be provided to you at the end of the project, and we welcome any feedback from you.

All feedback we receive from you will be integrated, as much as possible, and an updated version of the documents will be returned to you.

All research data will be kept at institutional servers. This data includes the final outputs, namely deliverables to the European Union and scientific articles published in mainly open-access peer-reviewed journals. Final deliverables and articles or other publications will be sent to you in digital form if you stated the wish to receive these documents in your informed consent form.

Thank you for your time and interest in participating in this research. We hope this has been a pleasant experience. Please provide us with any feedback you would like to give. Your opinion is very important to us and will be thoughtfully considered.

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Principal researcher (David Lamas at david.lamas@tlu.ee)

Research coordinator (Inês Campos at iscampos@fc.ul.pt)

Again, thank you for your participation.

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