

Planet Centric Design

Toolkit

Welcome to the Planet Centric Design Toolkit



What is the purpose of this toolkit?

This toolkit was designed to help you create products and services that do not harm the planet. It will help you create concepts that are desirable and profitable, but also put the planet in the centre of the design process.

We recognise that this is a challenging task as planetary systems are complex and intertwined in ways that humanity does not fully understand. So, this toolkit helps you live up to the challenge, by offering activities to navigate complexity, collaborate and create better solutions for society that fit within the Earth's boundaries.

Welcome to the new direction of design.

Who should use it?

You might be a designer, a strategist, a developer, or have any other background. You might work at a corporation, a public institution or a non-profit. You are probably interested in innovation approaches, project development or design methods. You probably work in a team setting, and you aim to integrate sustainability in your projects, but you are not sure how.

This toolkit is for anyone who wants to have sustainability built in to their projects. We designed it for co-creating projects with people from different backgrounds. Use it with your team, or with clients. Our goal is to enable collaboration and break down silos.

These canvases help you start conversations around complex topics that are hard to grasp at first. For example, what is your sustainability vision? How does your value chain look like? This toolkit helps you break down these obstacles and start working with sustainability.

How to use it?

The canvases are designed for teamwork. Use them by drawing each canvas on a big wall or whiteboard, so participants can gather around it and contribute actively. We recommend inviting a facilitator to help you keep track of time and navigate through the activities. The canvases are organised in a suggested order, but feel free to reorganise according to your needs. Each canvas has a broad estimate of time needed. However, this varies depending on your project, so the facilitator should decide how long to spend in each exercise.

Share your feedback!

The Planet Centric Design Methodology and this toolkit is a creation of teamwork and collaboration with various experts in the field of sustainability, IT and design at Vincit, Finland.

This toolkit is in constant iteration. Let us hear your thought on in! Send your ideas to:

planet-centric-design@vincit.fi

What sort of questions does this toolkit answer?

It takes you through the main stages of a project. There are five stages and a total of twenty canvases.



PREPARE

How might we prepare to work with sustainability?



UNDERSTAND

How might we understand the environmental impact of our organisation?



ENVISION

How might we define what sustainability means in our organisation?



CREATE

How might we create planet centric concepts?



RELEASE

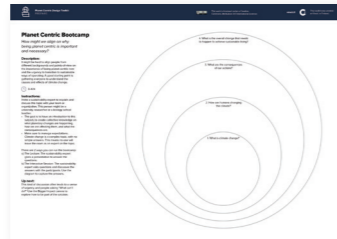
How might we empower others with our planet centric project?



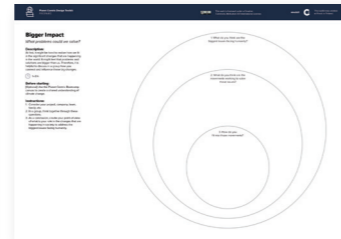
The canvases



PREPARE



Planet Centric Bootcamp



Bigger Impact



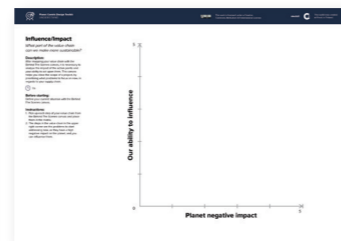
App Disruption



UNDERSTAND



Behind The Scenes



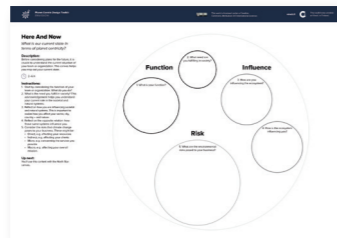
Influence/Impact



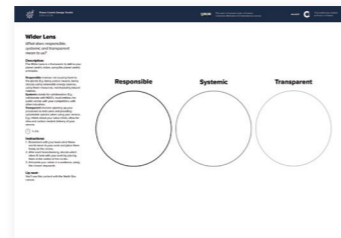
Planet Centric User Journey



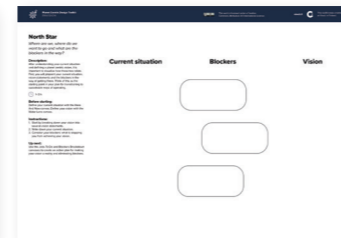
ENVISION



Here And Now



Wider Lens



North Star



Jobs To Do



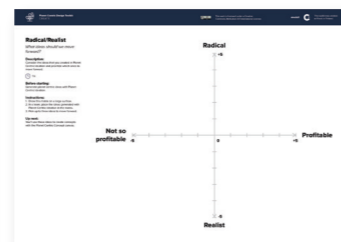
Blockers Breakdown



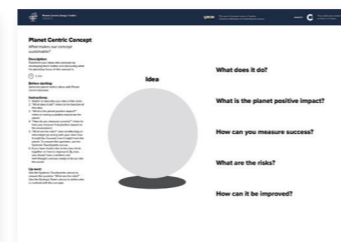
CREATE



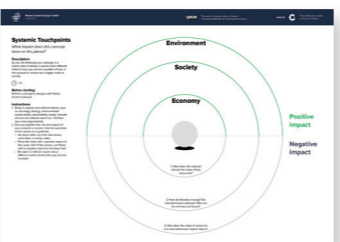
Planet Centric Ideation



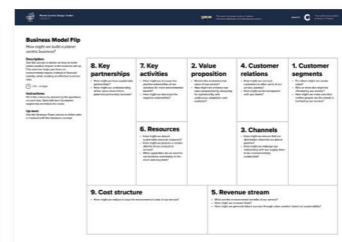
Radical/Realist



Planet Centric Concept



Systemic Touchpoints



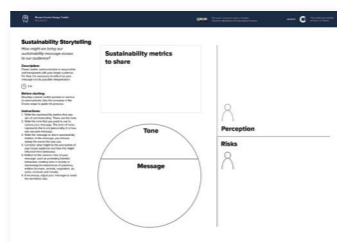
Business Model Flip



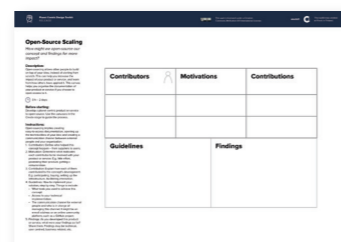
Strategic Team



RELEASE



Sustainability Storytelling



Open-Source Scaling



PREPARE

How might we prepare to work with sustainability?

Overview:

Before starting a project, there is a series of activities that help your team prepare to work with sustainability, overcome your climate anxiety and feel empowered to act. These help you create a shared understanding of the current world problems and the role of your organisation in solving them. The goal is to unblock people, generate collective motivation to tackle the unsustainability challenge and contribute to the solution.

Canvases:

- Planet Centric Bootcamp
- Bigger Impact
- App Disruption
- Planetary Entities Test

Up next:

Afterwards, you are ready to navigate the complex sustainability context of your business, in the Understand stage.



Planet Centric Bootcamp

How might we align on why being planet centric is important and necessary?

Description:

It might be hard to align people from different backgrounds and points-of-view on the importance of being planet centric now and the urgency to transition to sustainable ways of operating. A good starting point is gathering everyone to understand the causes and effects of climate change.

🕒 3–6 h

Instructions:

Invite a sustainability expert to explain and discuss this topic with your team or organization. This person might be a university researcher or a biology school teacher.

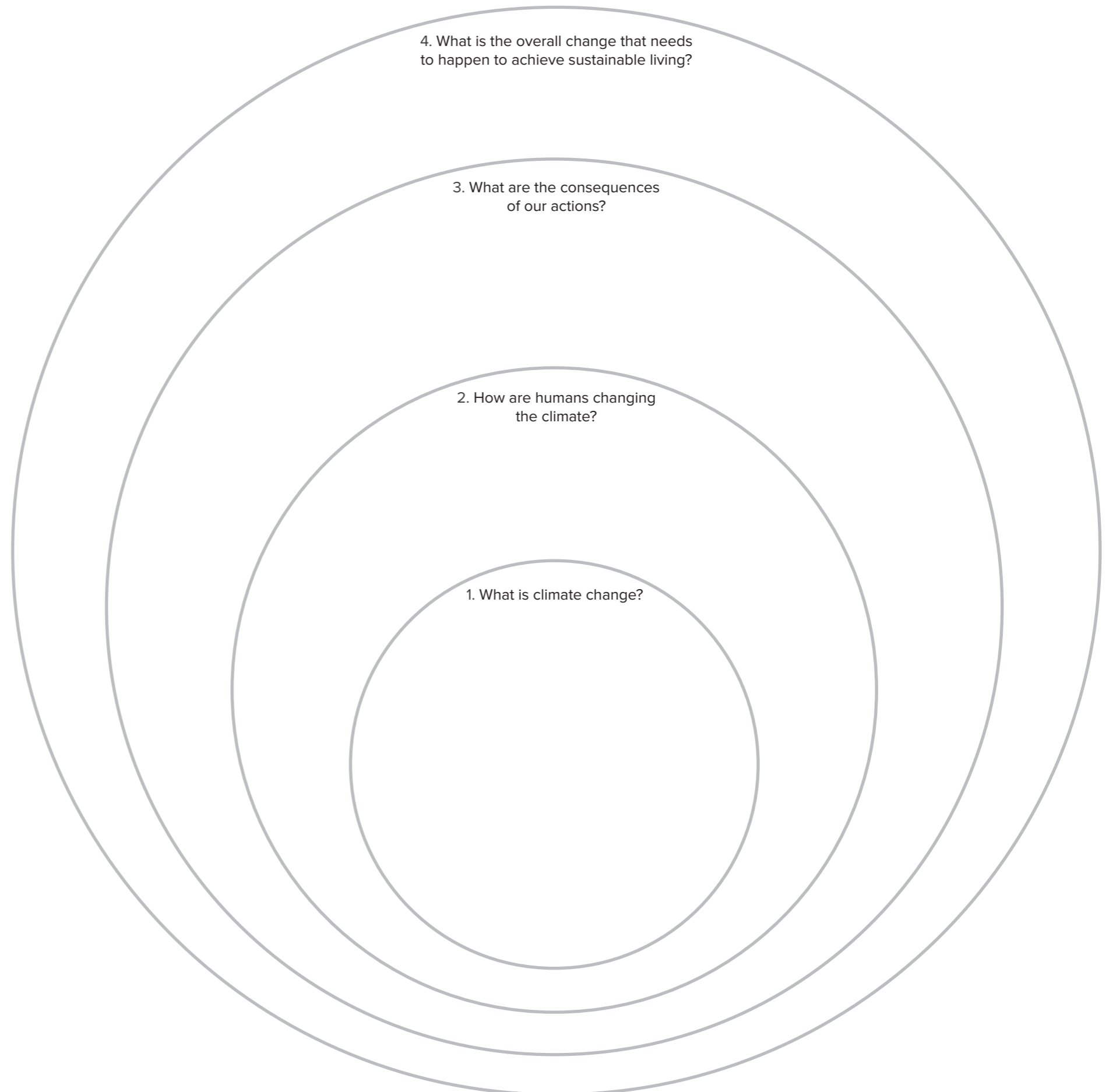
- The goal is to have an introduction to this subject, to create collective knowledge on what planetary changes are happening, how we are affecting them, and what the consequences are.
- Make sure to manage expectations. Climate change is a complex topic, with no simple answers. This means no one will leave the room as an expert on the topic.

There are 2 ways you can run the bootcamp:

- a) The Lecture: The sustainability expert gives a presentation to answer the questions.
- b) The Interactive Session: The sustainability expert asks questions and discusses the answers with the participants. Use the diagram to capture the answers.

Up next:

This kind of discussion often leads to a sense of urgency and people asking “What can I do?” Use the Bigger Impact canvas to explore how to be part of the solution.





Bigger Impact

What problems could we solve?

Description:

At first, it might be hard to realize how we fit in the significant changes that are happening in the world. It might feel that problems and solutions are bigger than us. Therefore, it is helpful to discuss in a group how you connect and influence these big changes.

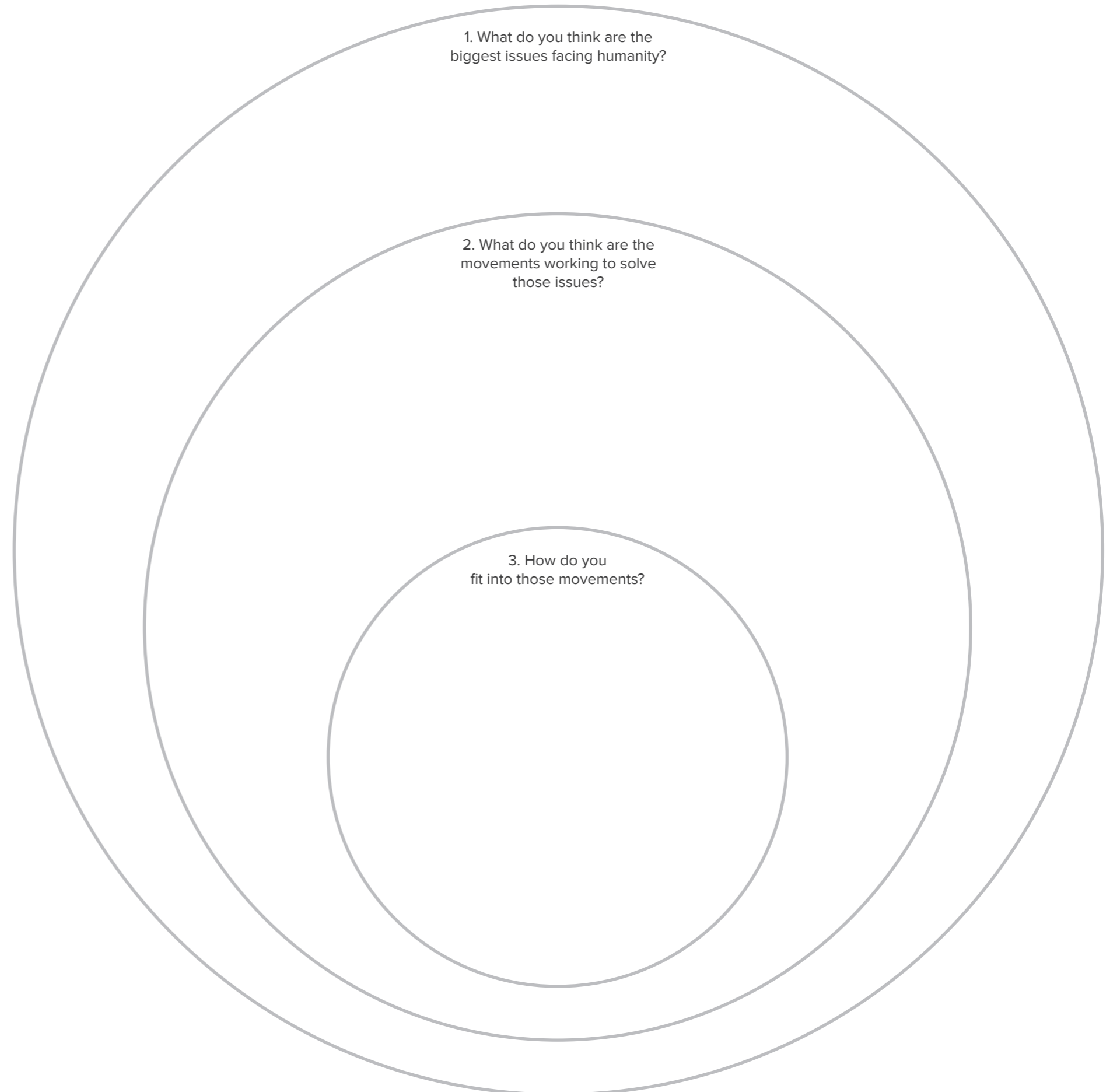
 1–3 h

Before starting:

[Optional] Use the Planet Centric Bootcamp canvas to create a shared understanding of climate change.

Instructions:

1. Consider your project, company, team, family, etc.
2. In a group, think together through these questions.
3. As a conclusion, create your point-of-view of what is your role in the changes that are happening in society to address the biggest issues facing humanity.





App Disruption

How can digital services reduce their impact?

Description:

Digital services are designed to be seamless and easy to use. This purpose adds a lot of convenience to our everyday life, but it often hides the fact that there is a physical value chain behind the interface, that impacts the planet. In order to design planet centric services, you can start by realizing how current services could be less environmentally harmful.

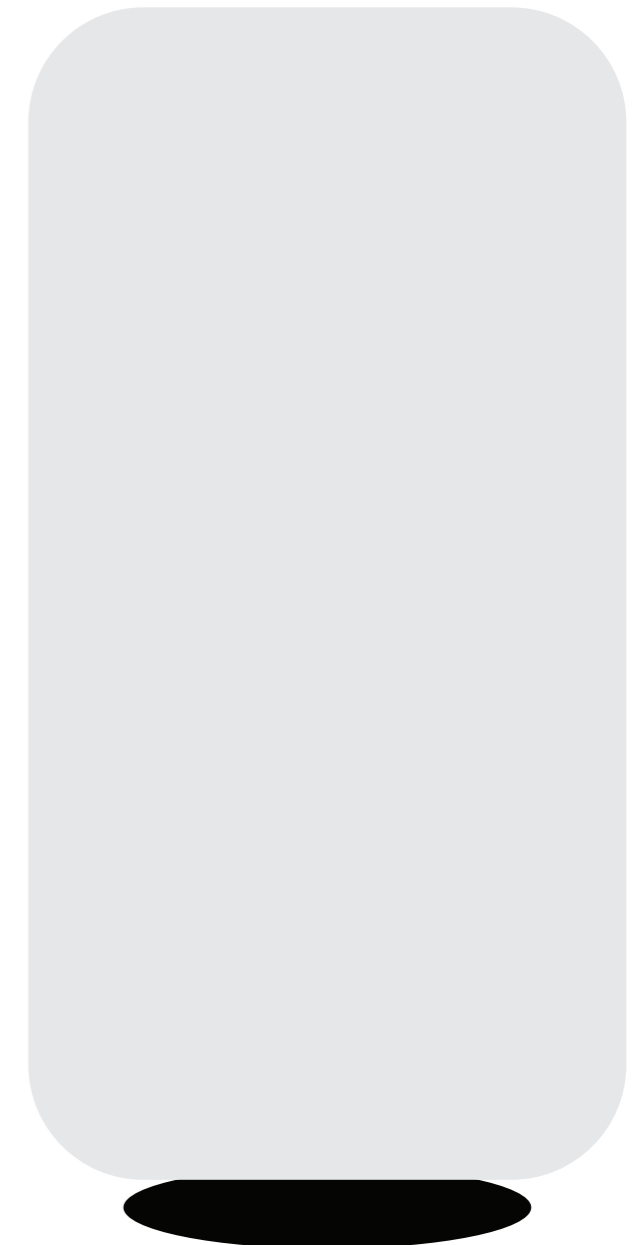
🕒 3 h

Instructions:

1. In a team, think together what service apps you use the most. E.g. food delivery, online shopping, e-learning, travelling.
2. Choose a service app everyone is familiar with. Place it in the circle.
3. What needs of yours does this app fulfil? Write them down, then cluster them into themes.
4. What resources does the app use? Write them down, then cluster them into themes.
5. Brainstorm how the needs can be met differently, more sustainably. E.g. the app can provide more sustainable options for delivering a service. Also, it can be transparent by informing users on what it takes to bring this service to them.
6. Brainstorm how to use fewer resources. E.g. they can also disrupt their value chains, making them less environmentally harmful.
7. In the end, taking into account your ideas for fulfilling needs differently and resource use, draw how this app could be more planet centric.

| | |
|---|---|
| <h2>The app</h2> <p>1. What apps do you use the most? <i>Excluding communication apps</i></p> | |
| | |
| <h2>Needs</h2> <p>3. What needs does the app cater to? <i>Cluster into themes.</i></p> | <h2>Resources</h2> <p>4. What resources does the app use? <i>Cluster into themes.</i></p> |
| <p>5. Can these needs be satisfied differently? How?</p> | <p>6. Can the resources used be reduced or not used at all? How?</p> |

7. After brainstorming more sustainable alternatives in steps 5 and 6, brainstorm and draw how that would look like in the actual app.





UNDERSTAND

How might we understand the environmental impact of our organisation?

Overview:

This is a retrospective set of canvases that you use to analyse your current operations. It gives you a bird's-eye view of what it takes to make your product or service happen. The goal is to help you pinpoint those parts of your value chain and user experience that harm the planet. You define what problems to address now, where to focus your efforts, and where you can create a more meaningful impact.

Canvases:

- Behind The Scenes
- Influence/Impact
- Planet Centric User Journey

Up next:

After pinpointing your product or service's sustainability-related problems, you can define your sustainability vision in the Envision stage.




Behind The Scenes

What does it take to deliver our service?

Description:

It is important to have an overview of your value chain, to understand the operations problems of your organisation. With this canvas, you will build your value chain map to later analyse its environmental impact.

 3 h – 2 days

Instructions:

In the steps below, write each step in your value chain on a separate sticky note. Rearrange them as you go until it looks right.

1. Before: Consider what happens before the production of your service or product. E.g. your providers' production and the transport of resources to you.
2. During: Discuss what happens during the production phase. E.g. your production process and the delivery of your product to retailers.
3. After: Consider what happens when your product or service is discarded. E.g. what happens to the product after use, if it is recycled or not, and consider where it is 10 years from now.

Up next:

You will use this content with the Influence/Impact canvas.

Before

During

After





Influence/Impact

What part of the value chain can we make more sustainable?

Description:

After mapping your value chain with the Behind The Scenes canvas, it is necessary to analyse the impact of the action points and your ability to act upon them. This canvas helps you close the scope of a project, by prioritising what problems to focus on now, in regards to your supply chain.

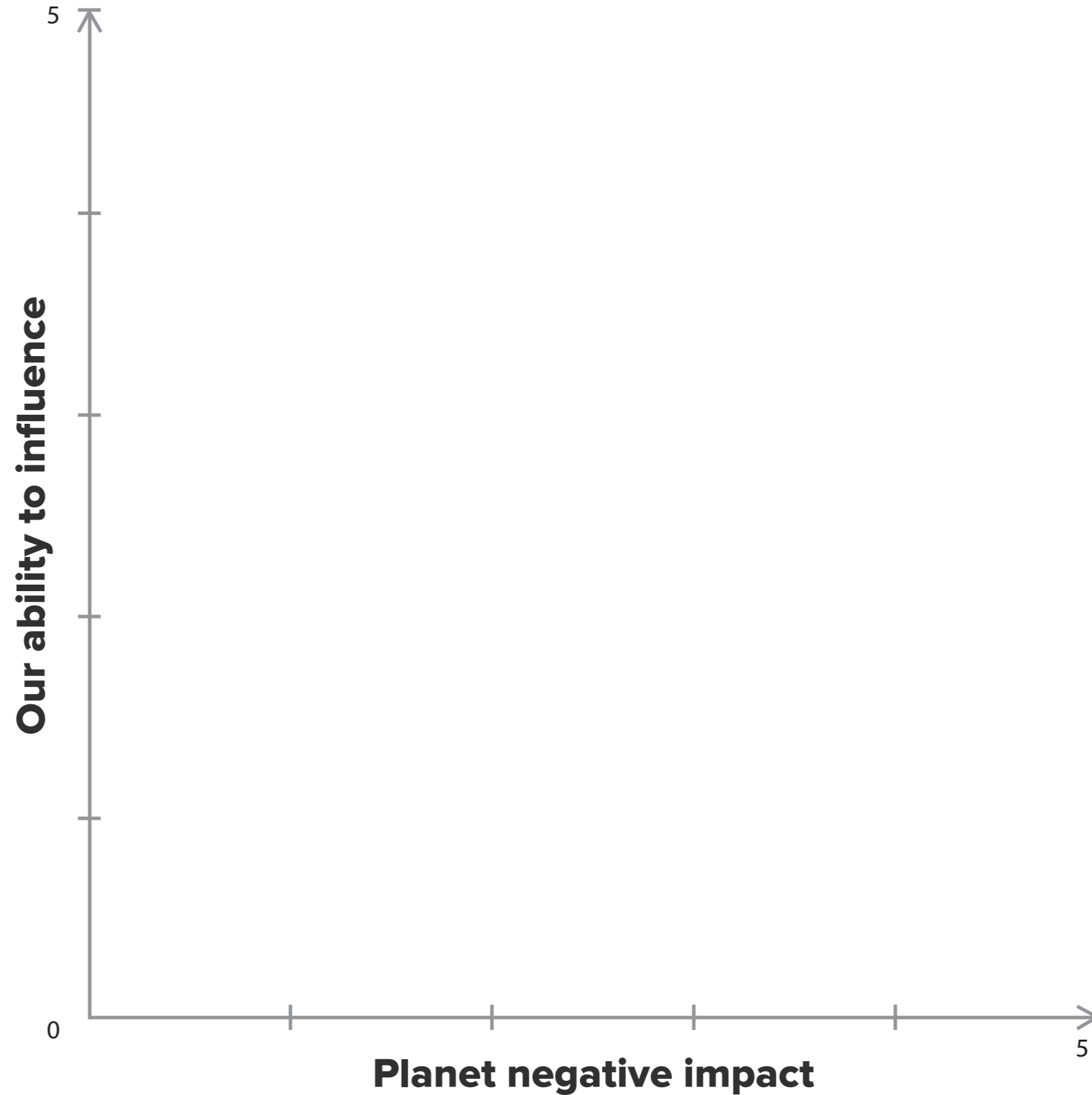
🕒 1 h

Before starting:

Define your current situation with the Behind The Scenes canvas.

Instructions:

1. Pick up each step of your value chain from the Behind The Scenes canvas and place them in the matrix.
2. The steps in the value chain in the upper right corner are the problems to start addressing now, as they have a high negative impact on the planet, and you can influence them.





Planet Centric User Journey

How sustainable are our user's actions?

Description:

This canvas supports you at considering how your product or service is used by consumers, as you have the power to influence their behaviour to be planet positive or planet negative. Also, it helps you close the scope of your project. Here you can prioritise what problems to focus on now, in regards to your user experience.

 3–8 h

Instructions:

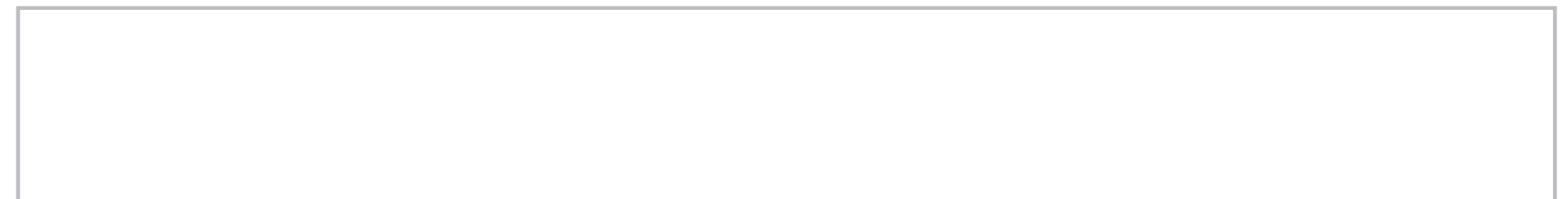
1. This canvas requires a lot of space. Draw it on a wall or large paper and gather your team around it.
2. Step into your user's shoes and consider their experience step by step. Write each step in your user's journey on a separate sticky note. Start with how users get familiar with your product or service. Add all actions until they dispose of your product or service. E.g. how they get to know it, how they acquire it, how they use it, and how they dispose of it.
3. After adding all the actions, discuss if these are planet positive, negative or neutral. Move them up or down to evaluate their impact.
4. Consider what opportunities there might be to improve this service. E.g. it might be the planet negative actions that you can influence. Also, there might not be any planet positive actions at all, and you should consider how to empower your users to be planet positive while using your product or service.

Planet positive

Actions

Planet negative

Opportunities





ENVISION

How might we define what sustainability means in our organisation?

Overview:

In this stage, you define your pathway in the sustainability transition. You create a compelling and robust point-of-view of your role in climate change. Here you can set your sustainability vision, integrated with your organisation's strategy. These canvases also help you plan the actions you need to take to achieve your vision.

Canvases:

- Here And Now
- Wider Lens
- North Star
- Jobs To Do
- Blockers Breakdown

Up next:

After defining your sustainability vision and the plan to achieve it, you can conceptualise planet centric products and services in the Create stage.



Here And Now

What is our current state in terms of planet centricity?

Description:

Before considering plans for the future, it is crucial to understand the current situation of your team or organization. This canvas helps you map out your current state.

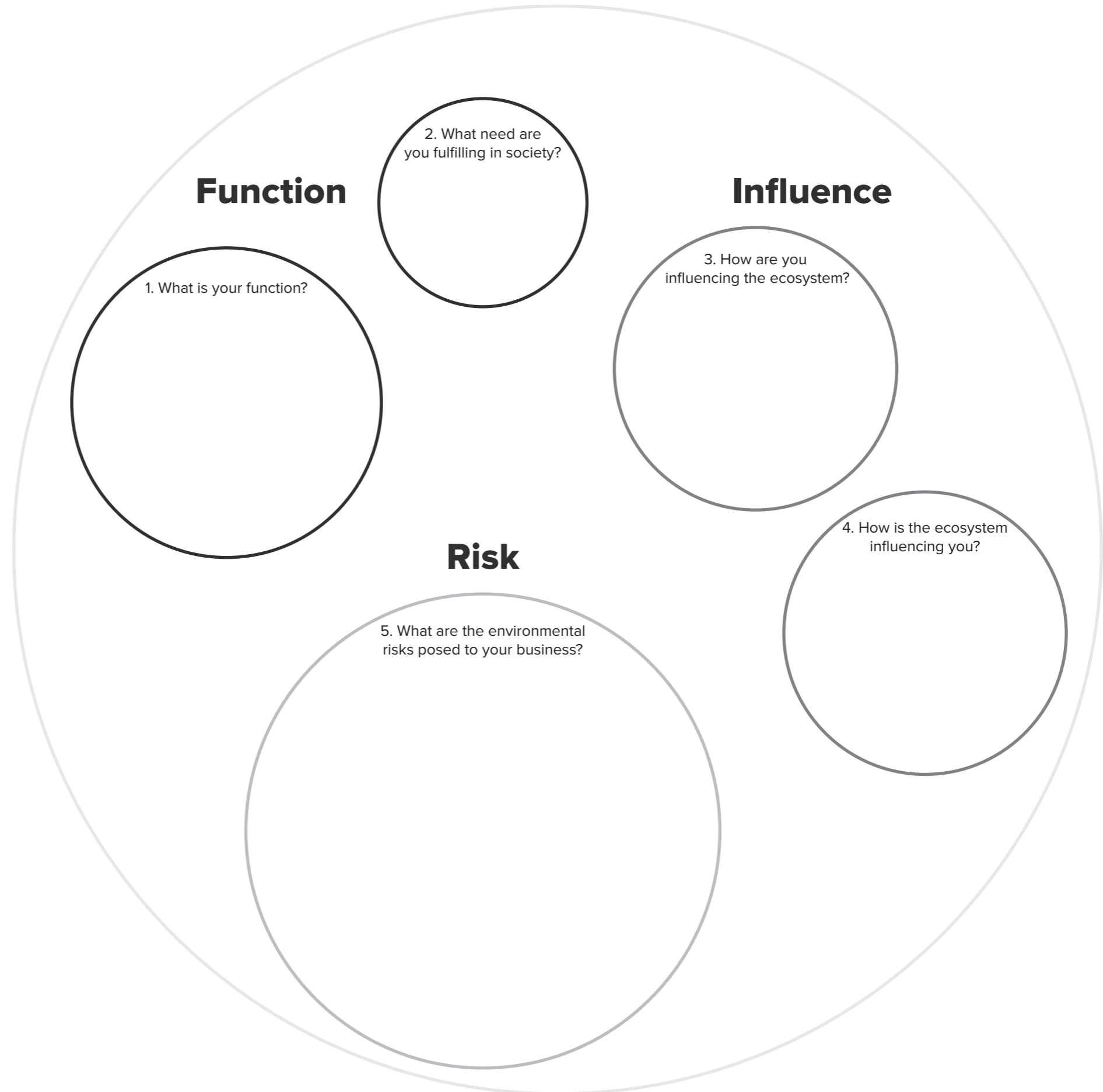
🕒 2–6 h

Instructions:

1. Start by considering the function of your team or organization. What do you do?
2. What is the need you fulfill in society? This acknowledgement helps you understand your current role in the societal and natural systems.
3. Reflect on how you are influencing societal and natural systems. This is important to realize how you affect your sector, city, country – and nature.
4. Reflect on the opposite relation: how those same systems influence you.
5. Consider the risks that climate change poses to your business. These might be:
 - Direct, e.g. affecting your resources
 - Indirect, e.g. affecting your clients
 - Micro, e.g. concerning the service you provide
 - Macro, e.g. affecting your overall mission.

Up next:

You'll use this content with the North Star canvas.





Wider Lens

What does responsible, systemic and transparent mean to us?

Description:

The Wider Lens is a framework to define your planet centric vision, using the planet centric principles.

Responsible involves not causing harm to the planet. E.g. being carbon neutral, being circular, using renewable energy sources, using fewer resources, not impacting natural habitats.

Systemic stands for collaboration. E.g. collaborate with NGO's, local entities, the public sector, with your competitors, with other industries.

Transparent involves opening up your processes to end users and providing sustainable options when using your service. E.g. inform about your value chain, allow for slow and carbon neutral delivery of your service.

 1–3 h

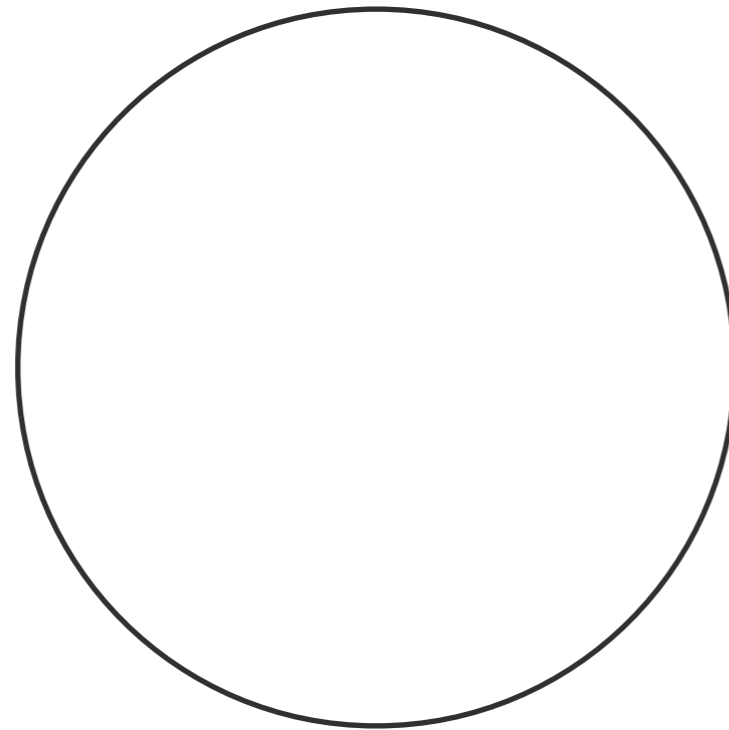
Instructions:

1. Brainstorm with your team what these words mean in your work and place them freely on the circles.
2. After each brainstorming, decide which ideas fit best with your work by placing them in the centre of the circles.
3. Articulate your vision in a sentence, using the chosen keywords.

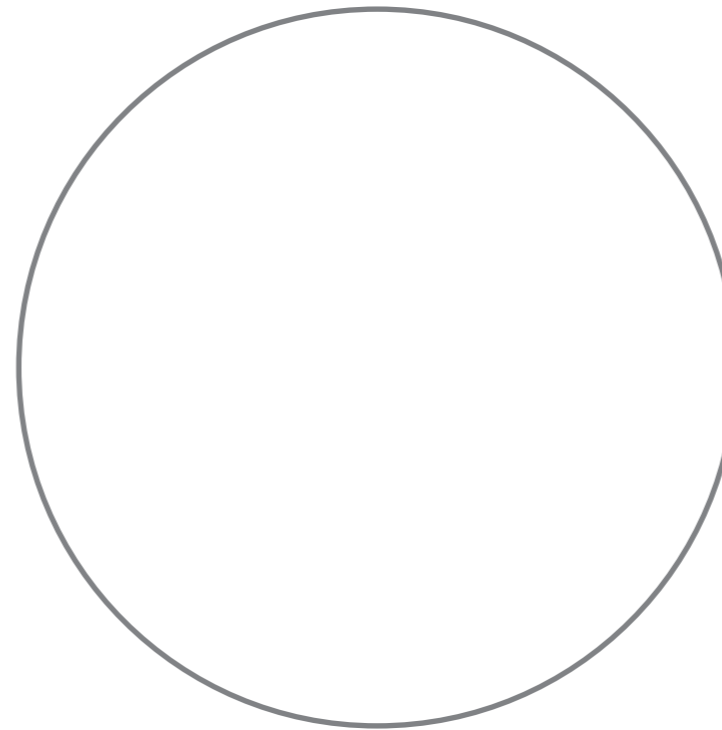
Up next:

You'll use this content with the North Star canvas.

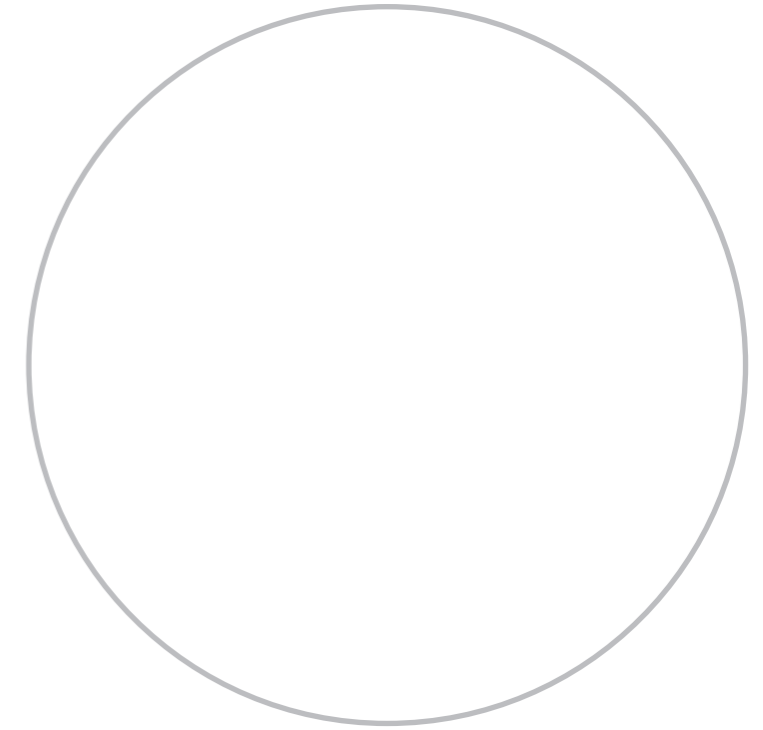
Responsible



Systemic



Transparent





North Star

Where are we, where do we want to go and what are the blockers in the way?

Description:

After understanding your current situation and defining a planet centric vision, it is important to visualise how these two relate. First, you will pinpoint your current situation, vision statements and the blockers in the way of getting there. Think of this as the starting point in your plan for transitioning to sustainable ways of operating.

 1-3 h

Before starting:

Define your current situation with the Here And Now canvas. Define your vision with the Wider Lens canvas.

Instructions:

1. Start by breaking down your vision into several vision statements.
2. Write down your current situation.
3. Consider your blockers: what is stopping you from achieving your vision.

Up next:

Use the Jobs To Do and Blockers Breakdown canvases to create an action plan for making your vision a reality and eliminating blockers.

Current situation

Blockers

Vision



CREATE

How might we create planet centric concepts?

Overview:

These canvases help you hack the concept development process, infusing it with planet centricity. They support you in creating planet centric concepts, refining them and identifying the team to help you develop them.

Canvases:

- Planet Centric Ideation
- Radical/Realist
- Planet Centric Concept
- Systemic Touchpoints
- Business Model Flip
- Strategic Team

Up next:

After defining the concept for a new product or service, it is time to bring it to the market. The Release stage helps you communicate it transparently and create more impact.



Planet Centric Ideation

How might we generate planet centric ideas?

Description:

To generate planet centric ideas, you can use the planet centric principles to guide your ideation session.

Responsible involves not causing harm to the planet. E.g. being carbon neutral, being circular, using renewable energy sources, using fewer resources, not impacting natural habitats.

Systemic stands for collaboration. E.g. collaborate with NGO's, local entities, the public sector, with your competitors, with other industries.

Transparent involves opening up your processes to end users and providing sustainable options when using your service. E.g. inform about your value chain, allow for slow and carbon neutral delivery of your service.

🕒 1-3 h

Instructions:

1. Write down your value proposition. What is the value your organization, service or product delivers? E.g. the value proposition of Airbnb is "to deliver the opportunity of truly local experiences to travellers".
2. Apply the value proposition to the three questions and do an ideation session for each question. There are several ways to ideate, such as brainstorming and brainwriting. In the end of the 3 ideation sessions, you should have generated many ideas for each question.
3. To create responsible, systemic and transparent ideas, combine the most environmental ideas that came up. Do not worry, you do not have to arrive at the final solution yet! Just combine the many different ideas that you consider more impactful into several mash-ups.

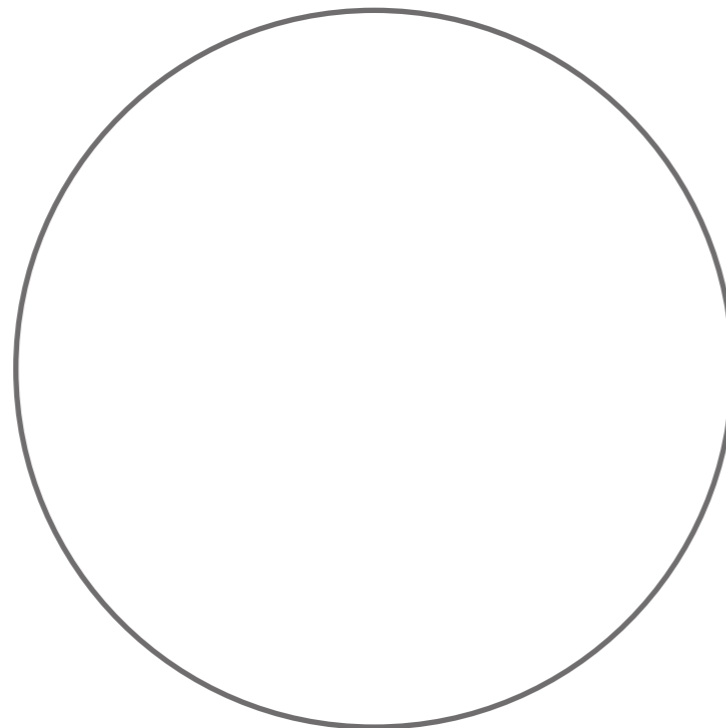
Up next:

You will use this content with the Radical/Realist canvas, and these ideas will fuel the concepts created with the Planet Centric Concept canvas.

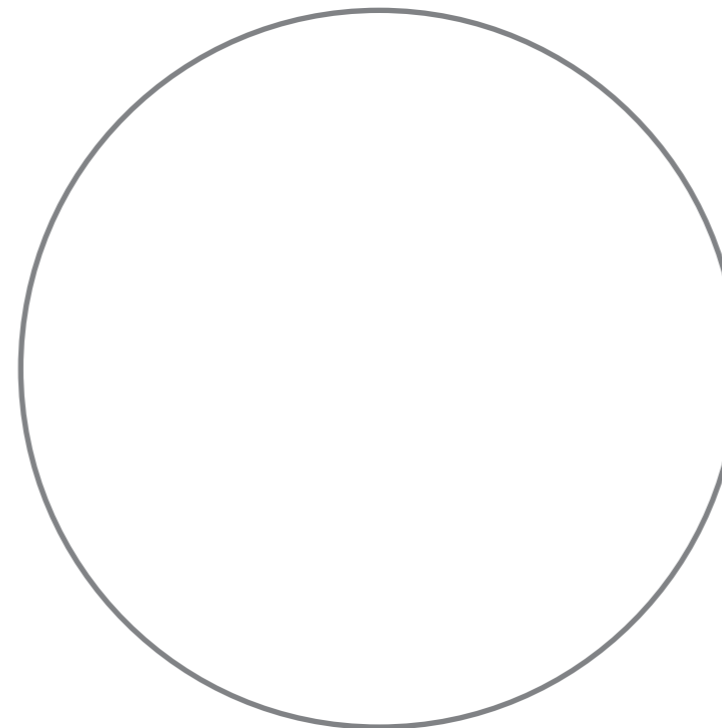
How might we...

(your value proposition here)

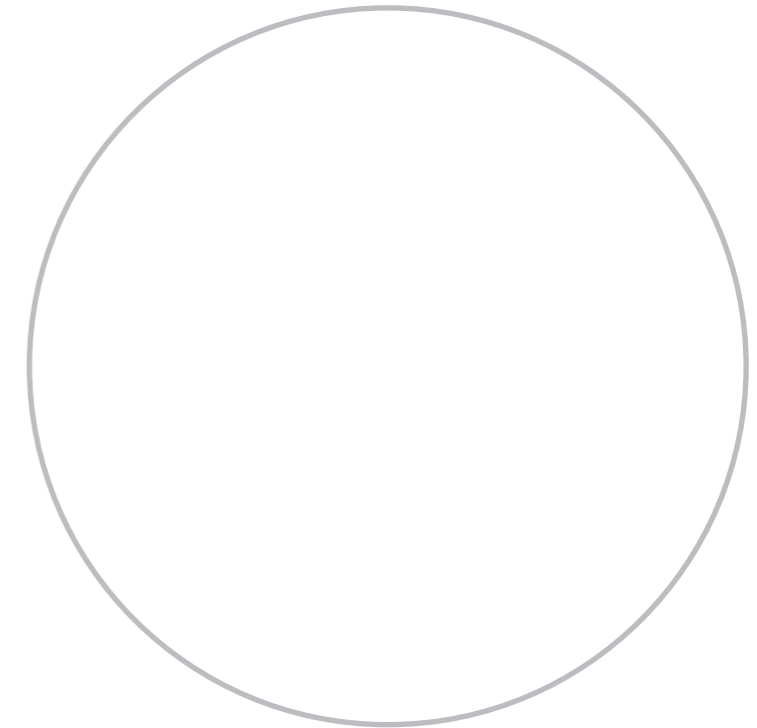
...responsibly?



...systemically?



...transparently?





Radical/Realist

What ideas should we move forward?

Description:

Consider the ideas that you created in Planet Centric Ideation and prioritize which ones to move forward.

🕒 1 h

Before starting:

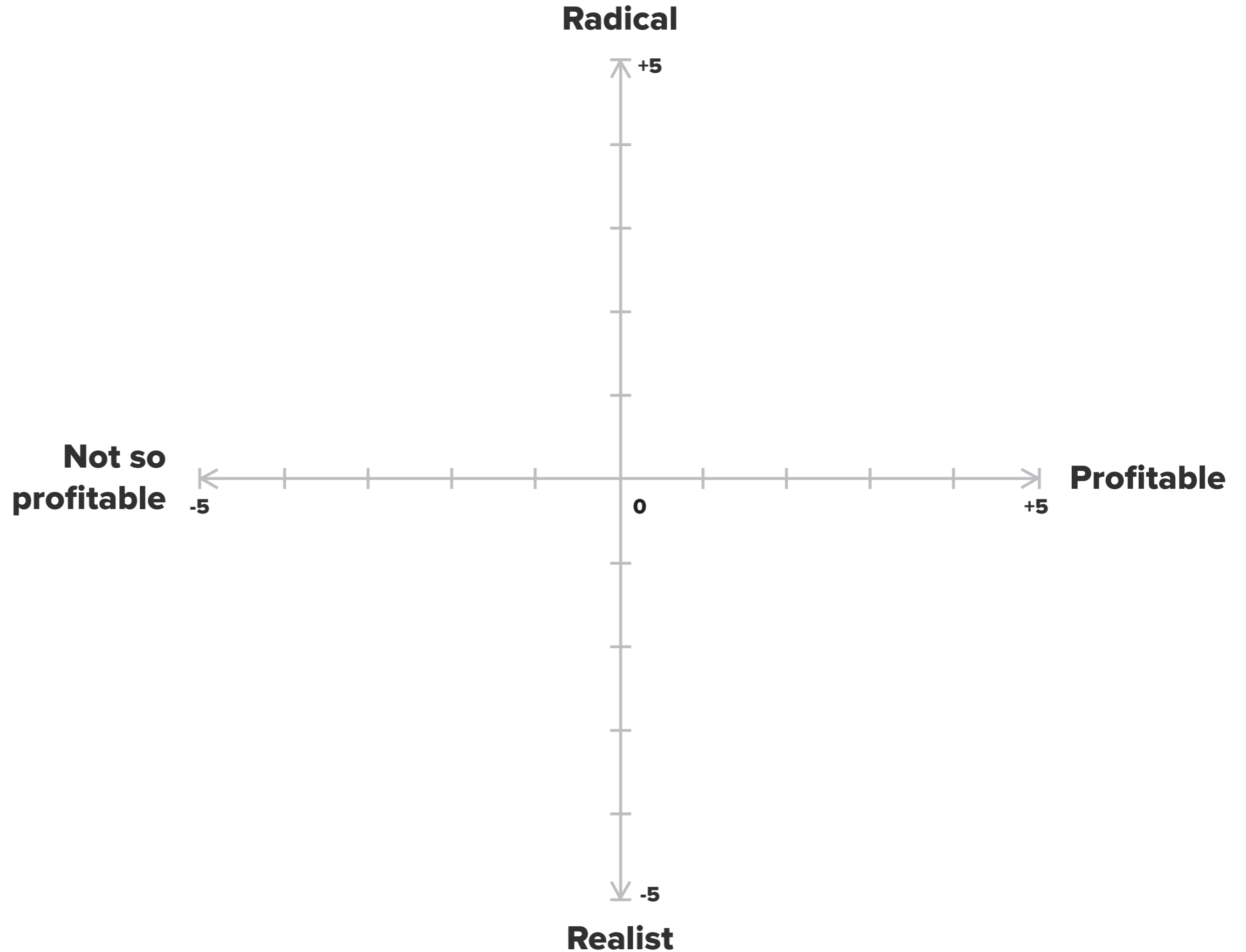
Generate planet centric ideas with Planet Centric Ideation.

Instructions:

1. Draw this matrix on a large surface.
2. In a team, place the ideas generated with Planet Centric Ideation in the matrix.
3. Pick up to three ideas to move forward.

Up next:

You'll use these ideas to create concepts with the Planet Centric Concept canvas.





Planet Centric Concept

*What makes our concept
sustainable?*

Description:

Transform your ideas into concepts by developing them further and discussing what the planetary focus of this concept is.

 1–3 h

Before starting:

Generate planet centric ideas with Planet Centric Ideation.

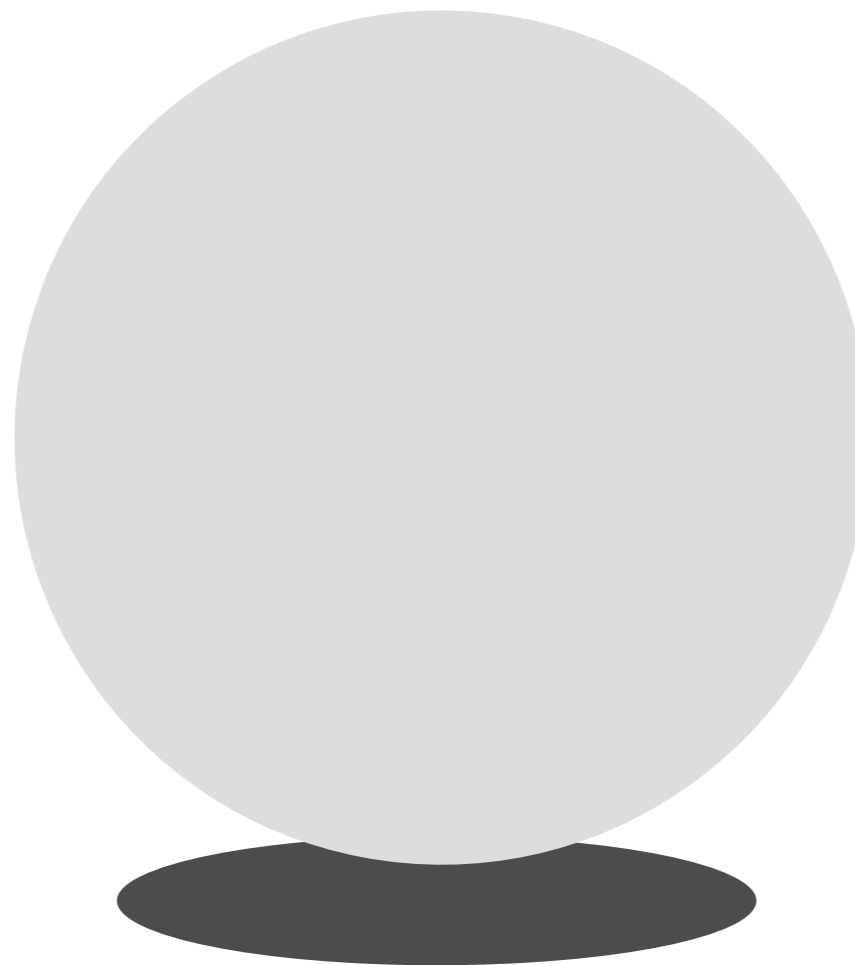
Instructions:

1. Sketch or describe your idea in the circle.
2. “What does it do?” refers to the function of this idea.
3. “What is the planet positive impact?” refers to having a positive impact on the planet.
4. “How do you measure success?” refers to how you measure that positive impact on the environment.
5. “What are the risks?” aims at reflecting on what might go wrong with your idea: how it might be misused, how it might harm the planet. To answer this question, use the Systemic Touchpoints canvas.
6. If you have found risks in this idea, think together on how to improve it. By now, you should have a resilient and well-thought concept, ready to be put into the world.

Up next:

Use the Systemic Touchpoints canvas to answer the question “What are the risks?”
Use the Strategic Team canvas to define who is involved with this concept.

Idea



What does it do?

What is the planet positive impact?

How can you measure success?

What are the risks?

How can it be improved?



Systemic Touchpoints

What impact does this concept have on the planet?

Description:

As you are finalising your concept, it is constructive to bring in experts from different fields to help you see the possible effects of this product or service on a bigger scale in society.

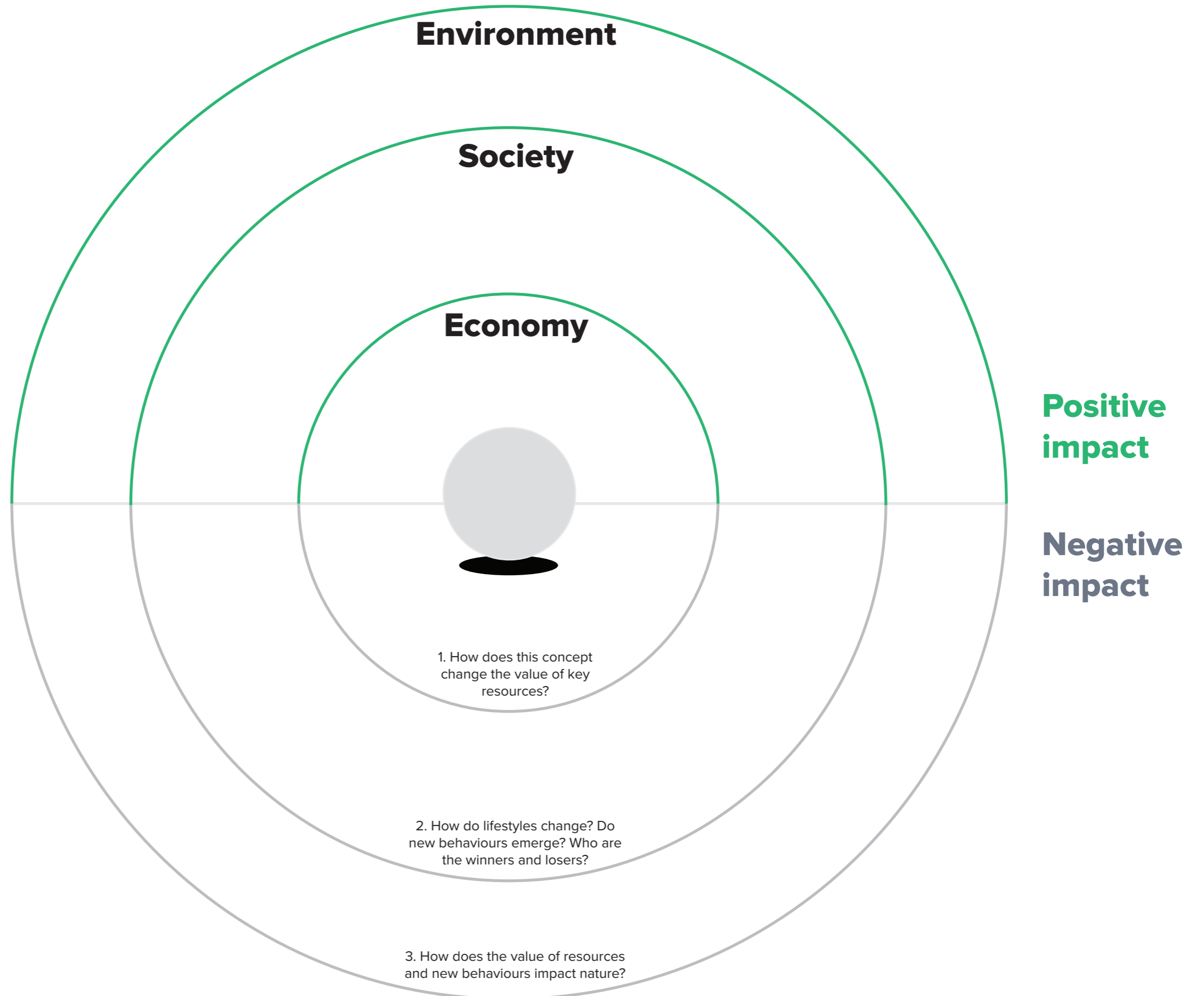
🕒 3 h

Before starting:

Define a concept to analyse with Planet Centric Concept.

Instructions:

1. Bring in experts from different fields, such as sociology, biology, environmental sustainability, sustainability design. Include at least one outside expert (i.e. not from your own organisation).
2. Discuss together the role and impact of your product or service. Use the questions in the canvas as a guideline.
 - As ideas come up in the discussion, write them on sticky notes.
 - Place the ideas with a positive impact in the upper half of the canvas, and those with a negative impact in the lower half.
 - Be open to criticism. Learn about different points-of-view that you did not consider.





Business Model Flip

How might we build a planet centric business?

Description:

Use this canvas to ideate on how to make planet positive impact, in the business set up. This exercise helps you focus on environmental impact, instead of financial viability, while creating an effective business idea.

🕒 3 h – 2 days

Instructions:

Fill in the canvas by answering the questions on each box. Start with box 1 (customer segments) and follow the order.

Up next:

Use the Strategic Team canvas to define who is involved with this business concept.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <h2>8. Key partnerships</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might we have sustainable partnerships? • How might our understanding of the value chain inform potential partnership decision? | <h2>7. Key activities</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might we increase the positive externalities of our activities for more environmental benefit? • How might we decrease the negative externalities? | <h2>2. Value proposition</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the environmental value of our service? • How might we enhance our value proposition by designing for sustainability and continuous adaptation and evolution? | <h2>4. Customer relations</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might we connect customers to other parts of our service journey? • How might we be transparent with our clients? | <h2>1. Customer segments</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For whom might we create value? • Who or what else might be affected by our service? • How might we make sure that neither people nor the planet is harmed by our service? |
| | <h2>6. Resources</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might we ensure sustainable physical resources? • How might we provide a circular afterlife of our product or service? • What capabilities do we need to run business sustainably in the short and long term? | | <h2>3. Channels</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might we ensure that our distribution channels are planet positive? • How might we redesign our relationship with our supply chain to be environmentally sustainable? | |
| <h2>9. Cost structure</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might we reduce or stop the environmental costs of our service? | | <h2>5. Revenue stream</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the environmental benefits of our service? • How might we increase them? • How might we generate future success through value creation based on sustainability? | | |



Strategic Team

Who is involved in making this business concept happen?

Description:

When developing a concept into a real product or service, it is necessary to decide who is involved. If planet centric work is a new topic that you are addressing in your organization, it is essential to consider who is playing in your favour and who is resisting the initiative.

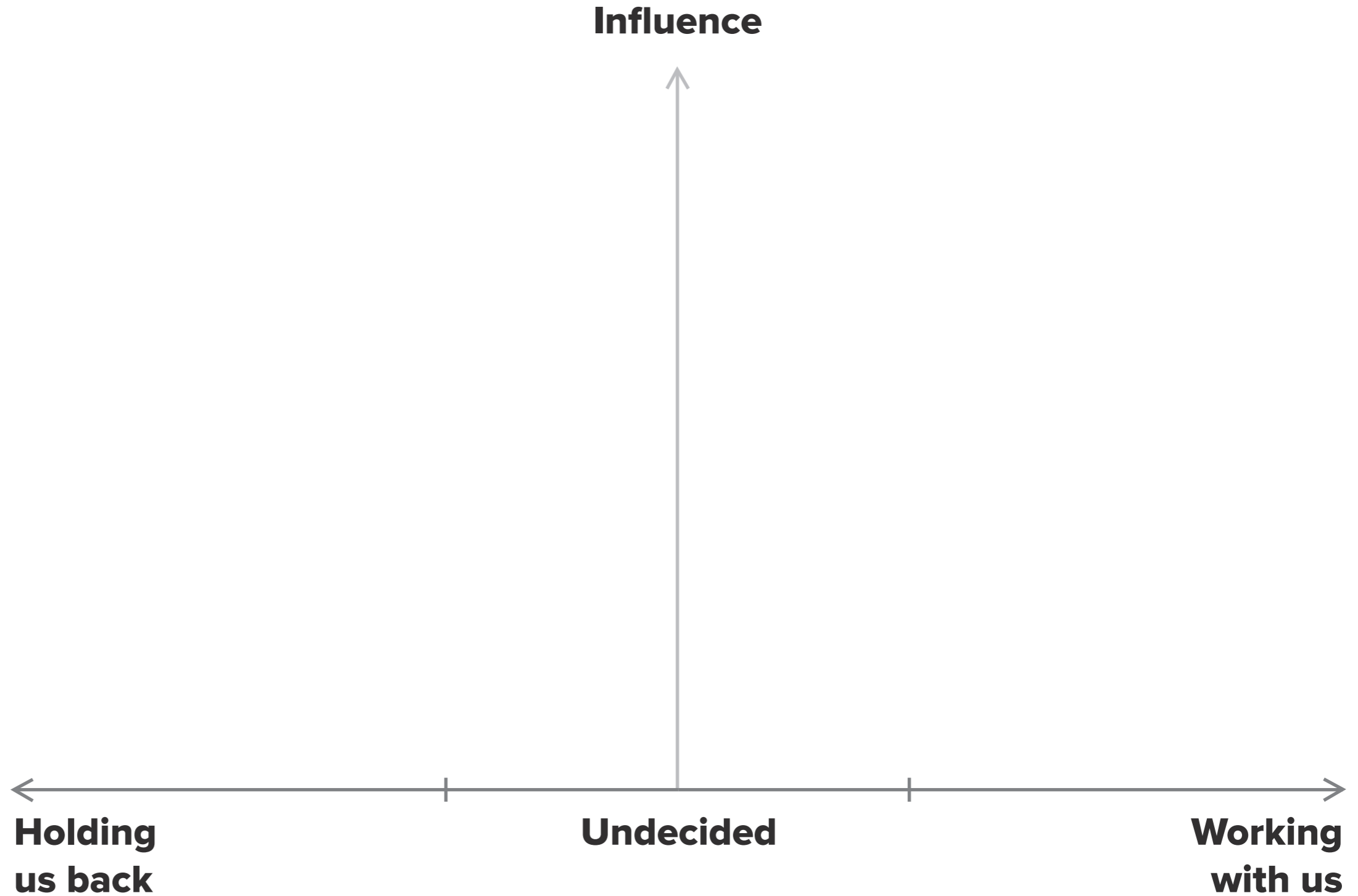
🕒 3 h

Before starting:

Define a concept for a new service or product with the Planet Centric Concept canvas or the Business Model Flip canvas.

Instructions:

1. List people who will help you make it happen. Place them freely on the right side of the canvas for now. These people might be inside or outside of your organization. E.g. marketing manager, key resource provider, city mayor.
2. Consider people who are undecided or have mixed feelings about your concept. Place them in the middle.
3. List people who oppose the concept. Place them on the left side.
4. Discuss how influential these people are. Move the more influential people near the top of the canvas. Move the less influential people closer to the bottom.
5. Reflect together on who will be involved as you bring this concept to the market. Define who you need next to you and who will be in the way.





RELEASE

How might we empower others with our planet centric project?

Overview:

This stage is about building a closer relationship with clients through transparent and responsible communication. It also aims at scaling up the impact of your solutions by open-sourcing them.

Canvases:

- Sustainability Storytelling
- Open-Source Scaling



Sustainability Storytelling

How might we bring our sustainability message across to our audience?

Description:

Planet centric communication is responsible and transparent with your target audience. For that, it is necessary to reflect on your message and its possible interpretation.

3 h

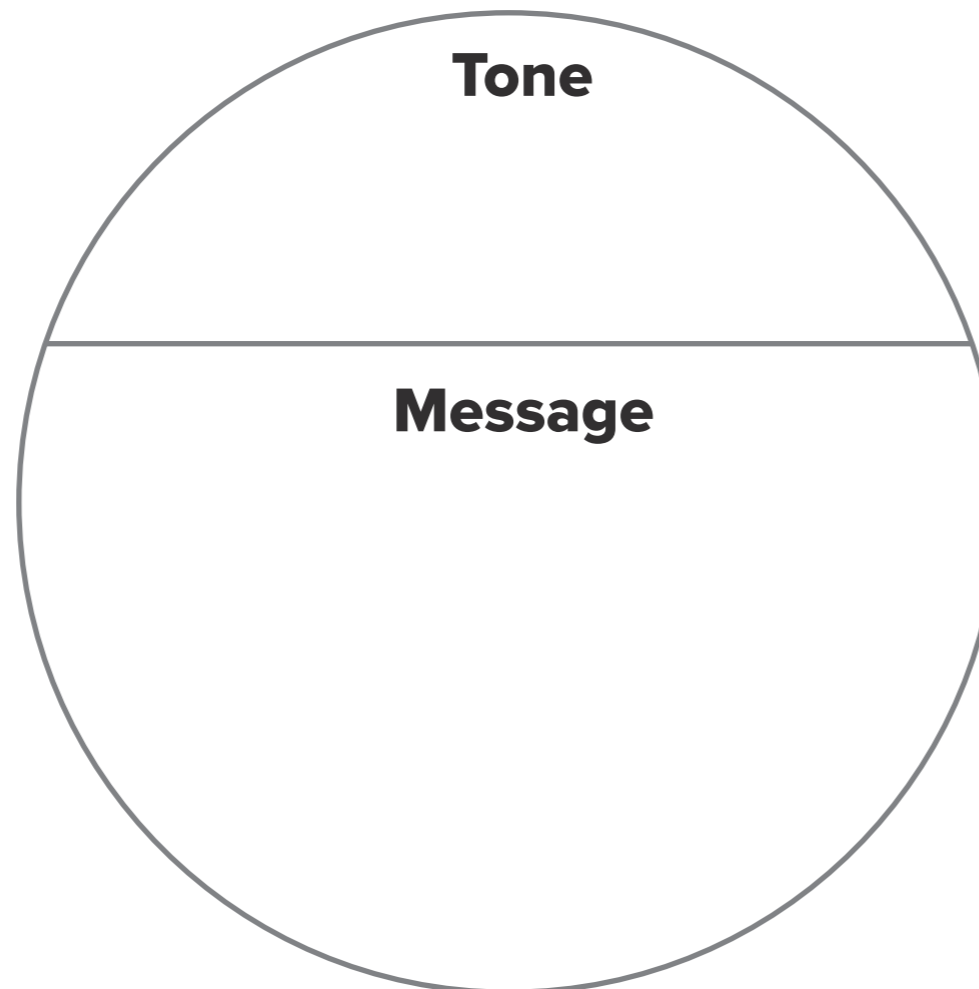
Before starting:

Develop a planet centric product or service to communicate. Use the canvases in the Create stage to guide the process.

Instructions:

1. Write the sustainability metrics that you aim at communicating. These are the facts.
2. Write the tone that you want to use to convey your message. The tone of voice represents the brand personality; it is how you say your message.
3. Write the message to share sustainability metrics. In the message, you choose wisely the words that you use.
4. Consider what might be the perception of your target audience and how this might influence their behaviour.
5. Reflect on the adverse risks of your message, such as promoting harmful behaviour, creating silos in society or decreasing the importance of planetary entities (humans, animals, vegetation, air, water, minerals and metals).
6. If necessary, adjust your message to avoid the identified risks.

Sustainability metrics to share



Perception



Risks



Open-Source Scaling

How might we open-source our concept and findings for more impact?

Description:

Open-sourcing allows other people to build on top of your idea, instead of starting from scratch. This can help you increase the impact of your product or service, and learn from how others have applied it. This canvas helps you organise the documentation of your product or service if you choose to open access to it.

3 h – 2 days

Before starting:

Develop a planet centric product or service to open-source. Use the canvases in the Create stage to guide the process.

Instructions:

Open-sourcing implies creating easy-to-access documentation, opening up the technicalities of your idea and creating a communication channel between external people and your organisation.

1. Contributors: Define who helped this concept happen – from suppliers to users.
2. Motivation: Determine what motivates each contributor to be involved with your product or service. E.g. little effort, promoting their product, getting a remuneration.
3. Contribution: Explain how each of them contributed to the concept's development. E.g. participating, buying, setting up the infrastructure, facilitating interaction.
4. Guidelines: How to implement your solution, step by step. Things to include:
 - What tools you used to achieve this concept.
 - Access to your technical implementation.
 - The communication channel for external people and who is in charge of managing this channel. It might be an e-mail address or an online community platform, such as a GitHub project.
5. Findings: As you developed this product or service, what were your findings so far? Share them. Findings may be technical, user centred, business related, etc.

| Contributors  | Motivations | Contributions |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| Guidelines | | Findings |