



How to stimulate inclusivity through fashion

HEMA

Case Study

🕒 5 min.

Key results to date

- ✔ Empowered 24 social designers with lifelong skills in social design and social entrepreneurship.
- ✔ Seven diverse, low literacy concepts which have all entered into partnerships with diverse organizations for (further) development and implementation.
- ✔ One of the concepts, Buikpraat, went on to receive a subsidy from the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport to support the initiative for the next 1.5 years.
- ✔ Activated a core group of experts who were intensively involved in sharing knowledge, including the Municipality of Rotterdam, The Dutch Library (OBA), Association of Dutch Designers (BNO) and Radboud University.

“Aimforthemoon has been an enormously important partner during the HEMA Foundation accelerator.”

The challenge: Social

Our rapidly changing society has brought many inclusivity challenges to the surface. Systemic issues that are complex to navigate have no defined beginning or end and have multiple stakeholders competing for limited resources. Put simply, issues that can't be fixed with any single solution.

Take, for example, low levels of literacy: passed down from generation to generation, low literacy often begins before a child reaches the age of four and nearly 25% of children born in the Netherlands start school with a language gap.

Just like many systemic social challenges, low literacy leads to other inclusivity issues including social vulnerability, poverty and an environment where not everyone can fully participate in daily life.

To address these complex social challenges requires new, unique approaches: ones characterized by social innovation, creative design and collaboration.

Yet, many of those dedicated to creating social impact are not equipped with the tools to bring their ideas to life. And as a direct result, their social impact may be left unrealized.

“Many talented designers find it difficult to take their ideas to the next step, which involves concretizing the idea and building it into a business case. Most of them have no entrepreneurial experience and it does not help that they often don't speak the organizational language either,”
– Marloes Bloemert, manager of the HEMA Foundation.



Solution

Building on HEMA's position at the heart of Dutch society and its unique design, the HEMA Foundation believes that by looking at social issues through design glasses, it's possible to create innovative ideas to organize daily life better.

Together with the HEMA Foundation and Reframing Studio, we saw an opportunity not only to address social issues, like low literacy, but to incubate the next generation of social designers at the same time.

How? By creating and delivering a social design accelerator program to turn talented designers into entrepreneurial social designers and masters of execution.

“There are a lot of good ideas for a better world, but in the end it stands or falls



with a good execution.”
— Marloes Bloemert — Manager of HEMA Foundation

The HEMA Foundation Accelerator

The HEMA Foundation Accelerator is a training and coaching program focused on training young designers and other up-and-coming talent who want to make a positive impact on the world and helping them become entrepreneurial social designers.

The first HEMA Foundation Accelerator ran over a 9-month period and confronted a challenge which affects the everyday life of millions across the Netherlands: low literacy and language skills.

Together, we set out to invent meaningful solutions that contribute to the development of children's literacy and empower young designers in the process. The acceleration process followed three main steps:

- ✔ **Selection process.** We began by selecting 24 recent design graduates and segmenting them into seven teams. Each team was matched with a topic that motivated them and was tasked with designing a future-proof solution.
- ✔ **Reframe the challenge.** The first part of the accelerator, facilitated by Reframing Studio, was to reframe the challenge and look into the future. By developing a solid future perspective, the teams could then adapt their social design, core mission and future positioning to the challenges of tomorrow.
- ✔ **Dream big, start small.** After dreaming big, Aimforthemoon helped the designers start small by taking their first steps to connect these future perspectives with today's market for beneficiaries. Here, they learned how to turn their bold visions into feasible social business models, giving these social designers an important training in entrepreneurship.

Each step in the process was facilitated by Aimforthemoon and Reframing Studio's coaches to guide the teams, help them set clear goals, interview target customers, set up experiments to test their assumptions and build their business model.



The results

During an intense program over 9 months — including 16 workshop days, multiple coaching sessions and a demo day — the teams developed seven innovative, social design concepts.

- Below are a few examples of the concepts which emerged from the accelerator:
- ✔ **Buikpraat** stimulates communication between babies, educators, and their environment from the moment of conception to the second year of life
 - ✔ **Klets & Kous** encourages children to develop a curious attitude towards learning, where learning is about a process and not about final goals
 - ✔ **Klinker** is a platform for tools and inspiration in the field of language development for educators of infants

Beyond this, 24 social designers were equipped with the entrepreneurial skill set to turn their ideas into strong business cases, and understand the entrepreneurial journey into the future.

After the success of the first edition of the social design accelerator, the HEMA Foundation is currently running its second batch. This time focused on low literacy in and around the family.



Want to know more?

Get in touch with Niek Karsmakers Co-Founder of Aimforthemoon
niek@oud.aimforthemoon.com

Contact