

**do**

**you**

**know**

**what**

**you're**

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# Preface: Positioning Myself Within the Industry

A personal summary on navigating Design Management, filmmaking, and the future of creative work.

## Project Rationale

**Why This Project Exists: Empowering emerging creatives to adapt and thrive in an evolving film industry shaped by AI.**

Over the course of my studies in **Design Management**, I have come to perceive the world as a collection of interconnected systems, where human interactions form intricate networks. As a design manager, I've recognised my role as one that fosters empathy, bridges gaps, and connects people through research. Throughout my academic journey especially, I've taken on roles that reflect this responsibility, applying design management principles to facilitate collaboration and problem-solving in various projects.

My practice is rooted in a deep interest in human behaviour and the systemic factors that influence our daily lives. When I studied Strategic Management and Design at Parsons School of Design in The New School (TNS) before transferring to UAL in 2024, I took a course called Creative Team Dynamics. This course introduced me to the theoretical frameworks of organisational settings and human dynamics within them, including feedback, incentives, and rewards (The New School, 2025). This exposure inspired me to see design management as a discipline that not only builds solutions but also nurtures human interactions. My passion for problem-solving through collaboration in this particular time solidified my commitment to this field, motivating me to become a leader who fosters community and advocated for human-centred design.

This perspective shaped the motivation behind my Final Major Project (FMP), leading me to explore an industry close to my heart: **the film industry**. Having grown up surrounded by this field (my father worked as a line producer since my childhood) I have built a strong personal and professional connection to it. Film is more than just an art form but I believe it's a cultural force that fosters storytelling, creativity, and collective experience.

During the summer of 2024, I had the opportunity to intern at FutureFrank, a production agency based in Amsterdam, Netherlands. This experience strengthened my connection to the film industry as I worked on producing a generative AI and live-action hybrid film. Beyond expanding my knowledge of film production, it exposed me to the evolving role of AI in filmmaking. Attending *CICLOPE*, a festival dedicated to film and craft in October 2024, further solidified my awareness of this transformation. During a talk by Sebastian Strasser on directing the first fully AI-generated advertisement, I realised that AI was not just an emerging tool but a disruptive force actively reshaping industry practices. Conversations with panellists and industry professionals highlighted growing concerns about the integration of AI, signalling a shift that many within the industry were still trying to comprehend and adapt to.

Further research confirmed these concerns, revealing that the rapid integration of AI is reshaping traditional workflows, potentially displacing jobs, and altering the industry's future trajectory (NEWO.AI, 2024) (Valossa, 2024). The industry is still grappling with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and many professionals are experiencing uncertainty about their careers. Moreover, aspiring filmmakers and students entering the industry now face a landscape that may look vastly different from what they once envisioned.

In a time of rapid transformation, adaptability is crucial but productive adaptability is only possible through knowledge and awareness. As stated earlier, culture and community are at the core of my practice. Film is not just a business and it's a vehicle for cultural preservation, creativity, and shared experiences. My FMP is designed with these principles in mind, ensuring that young professionals entering the industry are equipped with the knowledge and support they need to navigate this evolving space. My FMP not only reflects the insights and skills I have gained throughout my educational journey, but also serves as a launchpad for my career. With a deep interest in film production, creative direction, and even AI integration in media, I aspire to become a creative producer or a production manager, leveraging my education and experiences to contribute meaningfully to the future of filmmaking.

Young people play a critical role in shaping the industry's future. With this project, I aim to **empower current students and recent graduates, providing them with insights, resources, and a sense of community that will encourage sustainable practices and continued innovation in filmmaking**. By fostering a culture of resilience and adaptability, my project seeks to ensure that emerging creatives feel both inspired and prepared to contribute meaningfully to the industry, despite its ongoing disruptions. Ultimately, my objective is to inspire the next generation to embrace human-centredness, sustain culture within the industry, and confidently accelerate their careers in a time of uncertainty and transformation.

# Project Approach

The structure that empowers emerging filmmakers to navigate the evolving industry, from empathy to delivery.

The project management timeline is divided into 4 key stages, largely influenced by the Design Council's Double Diamond Framework (2005). This framework, which emphasises both problem-finding and problem-solving, provides a structured yet flexible approach to navigating the complexities of this project. I've adapted this framework to align with my personal and professional goals, ensuring that I remain grounded in my desire to bridge the gap between people and technology.

## 1. Empathise

At the heart of my project is the human-centred approach. In this phase, I aim to understand the needs, concerns, and experiences of emerging filmmakers navigating the evolving role of AI in the film industry. This empathy will guide my design, ensuring that it's grounded in real-world insights and not just theoretical assumptions. This stage is particularly important to me as I aspire to bridge the gap between creative professionals and technology, ensuring that filmmakers can effectively engage with AI tools while preserving the human, emotional essence of storytelling.

A key moment in shaping my approach occurred during a class field trip visit to the **Design Museum** in London in November 2024, where I encountered a statement that resonated deeply with my process: *"Good design is less tangible. It might be something that is capable of provoking an emotional response – perhaps through beauty or wonder. What is good design is open to interpretation."* This reinforced my belief in the moral responsibility of designers and to sustain the cultural and creative roots of industries like film. In an age of rapidly advancing technologies like AI, it's essential that designers ensure these technologies don't diminish the creative essence of film production.

## 2. Outline

Following the *Empathise* phase, I'll outline the key challenges and opportunities based on the insights gathered. This phase focuses on identifying the core problem and ensuring that this is a problem that connects to varying concerns of young filmmakers and film professionals grappling with AI's impact on the industry. Drawing from my background, I aim to keep creative integrity at the forefront, ensuring that AI is used as an enabler, not a disruptor.

## 3. Ideate

The Ideate stage will focus on generating innovative solutions and prototypes that can help future filmmakers navigate AI's integration into their workflow. These ideas will centre on fostering adaptability within the industry, ensuring that filmmakers can creatively and intelligently embrace new technologies while remaining true to the cultural roots and creativity that define film.

## 4. Deliver

In the final stage, I'll implement the insights and solutions derived from the previous phases, creating the final resource that empower emerging filmmakers to engage with AI while preserving the human-centred essence of their craft. This phase aims to ensure that they are supported and feel confident in adapting to the evolving landscape of filmmaking.

### Aligning My Project with Career Goals

Throughout this process, I will be reinforcing my goal to become a producer or production manager who serves as a mediator between people and technology. My objective is to ensure that the film industry can adapt intelligently to AI's rise while maintaining its creative integrity. By focusing on **empathy, adaptability, and innovation**, I aim to help filmmakers not just survive but thrive in this new landscape.

This project serves as a foundation for my future career, where I plan to continue leading the way in integrating new technologies into the creative process while ensuring that humanity remains at the centre of film production.

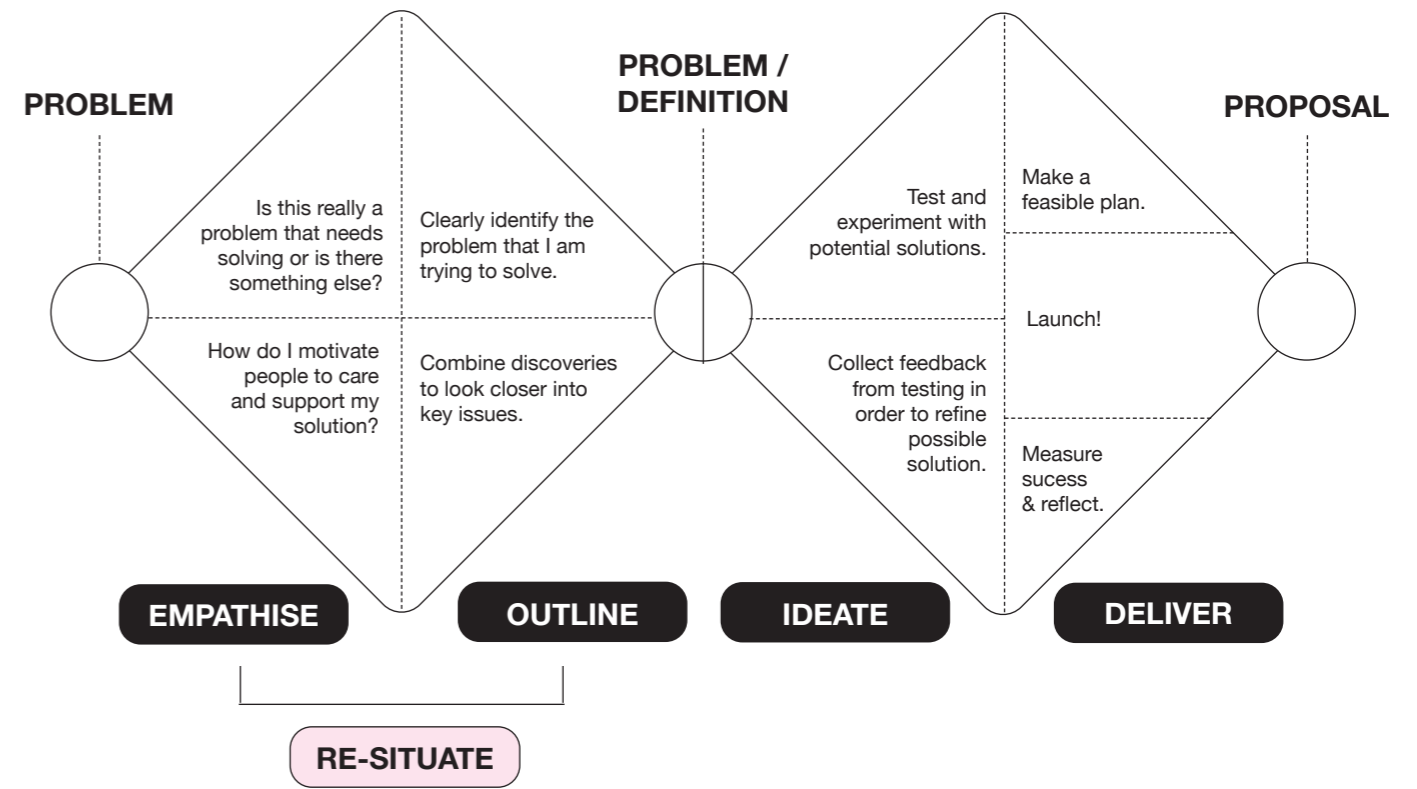


Fig. 2. A visual representation of my iterative design process (2025).

### “Re-Situating”

In line with my project's emphasis on human-centredness and adaptability, the *Double Diamond Framework* (Figure 2) has been crucial to my process. Within this framework, a key phase that emerged was the “re-situating” phase, which became essential to refining my approach.

Given the rapidly changing landscape of **AI integration** in filmmaking, I realised that my initial assumptions would not remain static. As I engaged with industry professionals and delved deeper into secondary research, I found that my understanding and approach needed to be flexible. The “re-situating” phase allowed me to continually **refine** my assumptions and **realign** my focus based on **emerging insights**.

This phase was particularly significant during my December 2024 exhibition and visual ethnography, where I highlighted how this adaptability was crucial in ensuring that the project stayed relevant to the needs of the film industry and its stakeholders. Through this iterative process, I not only redefined my problem statement but also refined my research methods, shifting from purely desk research to actively engaging with field research and direct conversations with industry figures.

### Why This Works for my FMP

Given the rapid pace at which AI is influencing filmmaking, I realised that sticking to initial assumptions or a fixed course of action was not enough. Instead, flexibility and adaptation are crucial. The “re-situating” phase became vital in recalibrating my focus, refining my assumptions, and making informed adjustments based on new insights.

An important aspect of this phase was the consistent need to fall back on empathising with my audience of emerging filmmakers navigating AI's growing presence in the industry. As new insights emerged through secondary research and direct engagement with industry professionals, I realised that keeping the focus on the needs, concerns, and experiences of these filmmakers was essential to ensure my approach remained relevant and impactful. This emphasis on **empathy** allowed me to align my project with the **real-world challenges** they face and adjust my strategies accordingly.

By revisiting and refining my approach with a deeper understanding of my audience's evolving needs, I ensured that my project was not just reactive, but proactive in addressing those needs. The iterative nature of this process, combined with the human-centred approach of the Double Diamond, ensures that my work stays grounded in empathy while remaining adaptable to the rapidly changing landscape of AI in film.

**What challenges do emerging entry- and junior- level filmmakers face regarding their professional futures amidst the rise of AI?**

**And how can they defensively accelerate their careers by intentionally leveraging AI tools while preserving the cultural and people-centered foundations of the film industry?**

## Research Question

### Framing the challenge with a question.

The two research questions serve as an anchor throughout my project, helping me stay focused and grounded, especially when the scope of my FMP felt overwhelming. They act as a constant reminder of why I'm undertaking this work and the impact I hope to achieve.

The phrase "**defensively-accelerate**" (aka d/acc) first came to my attention during a conversation with a co-worker at *1.4*, a film journalism magazine, and later led me to research its origins. Coined by Vitalik Buterin, co-founder of *Ethereum*, "defensive acceleration" refers to the idea of intentionally steering technological development in a way that balances cautious innovation with human-centred values (Buterin, 2023). In Buterin's philosophy, the goal is to accelerate progress without losing sight of cultural preservation, autonomy, and decentralisation.

While the d/acc philosophy doesn't directly apply to filmmaking, I found it compelling in the context of my project because it reflects my stance on integrating AI in a way that supports the film industry's creative roots. The aim is not to blindly embrace AI but to leverage it intentionally, ensuring that filmmakers can adapt to technological change without sacrificing the human, emotional aspects that define great storytelling.

This philosophy is central to my approach. My research question reflects my belief that emerging filmmakers can defend against potential industry disruption by learning to strategically integrate AI tools and create a balanced, adaptable future without losing sight of the essence of their craft.

# Project Timeline

**Structuring the Process: A dynamic, iterative timeline designed to balance research, prototyping, and delivery with empathy at its core.**

As part of my project, I implemented a Gantt Chart (a visual project management tool first popularised by Henry Gantt) to map out my process in a way that remains clear and comprehensible (Figure 3). I structured my timeline around four key phases: **Empathise, Outline, Ideate, and Deliver**, aligning it with my *Double Diamond* framework.

A crucial aspect of this timeline was the presence of two distinct sprints which mark my pivots. **Sprint 1** focused on contextual and field research during the *Empathise* phase, culminating in my December 2024 exhibition and visual ethnography. At that point, I felt I had a solid understanding of my audience. However, as I moved into the *Outline* phase, I realised that ongoing engagement and refinement were necessary. This marked the beginning of **Sprint 2**, which became more individually focused so I went on to emphasise the direct experiences, concerns, and workflows of emerging filmmakers. This sprint incorporated deeper empathy mapping and journey mapping, ensuring that my project addressed both industry-wide trends and personal, human-level challenges.

This iterative process directly reflects my re-situating phase, which emerged as a core component of my methodology. By consistently reassessing my assumptions and returning to my audience's needs, I ensured that my project remained adaptable and rooted in the realities of the film industry. Ultimately, this timeline not only guided my workflow but also served as a living document that was flexible enough to accommodate new insights and pivots while keeping the project's vision and deliverables on track.

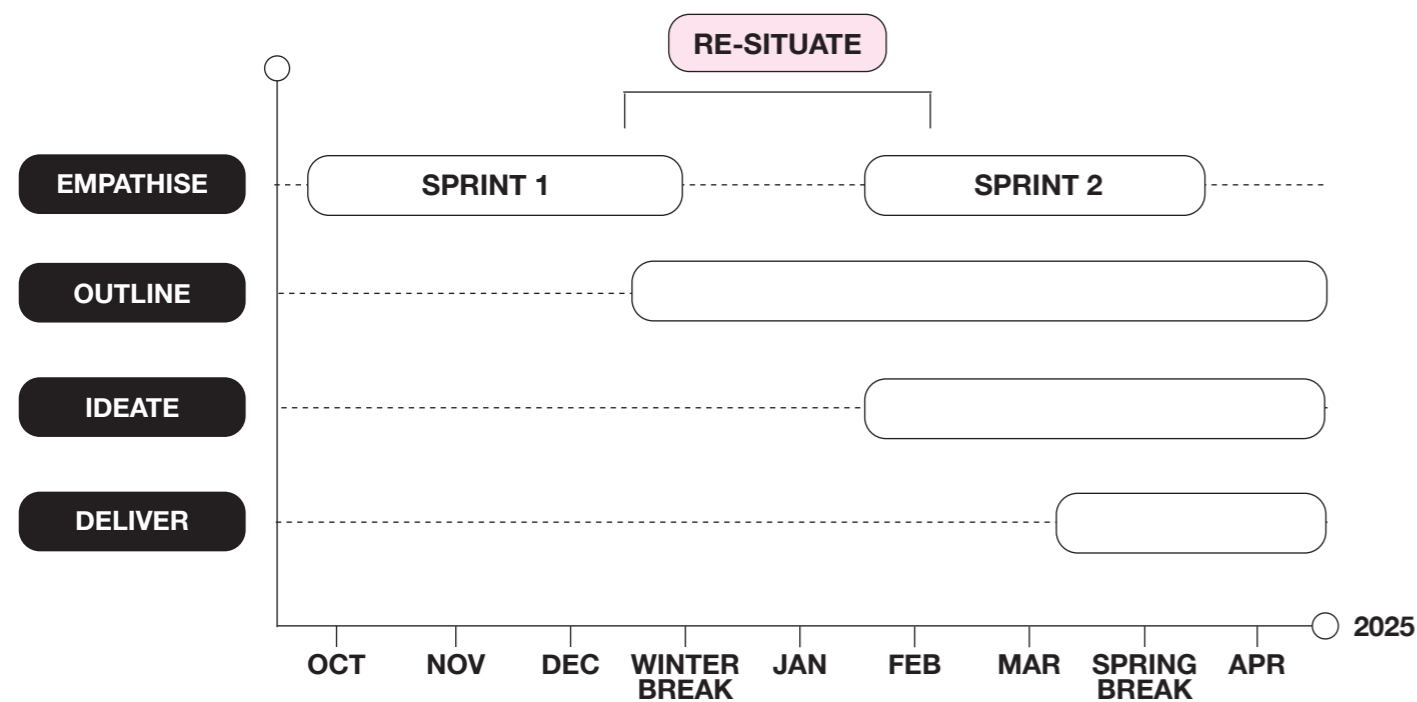


Fig. 3. A visual representation of my project timeline visualised as a Gantt Chart (2025).

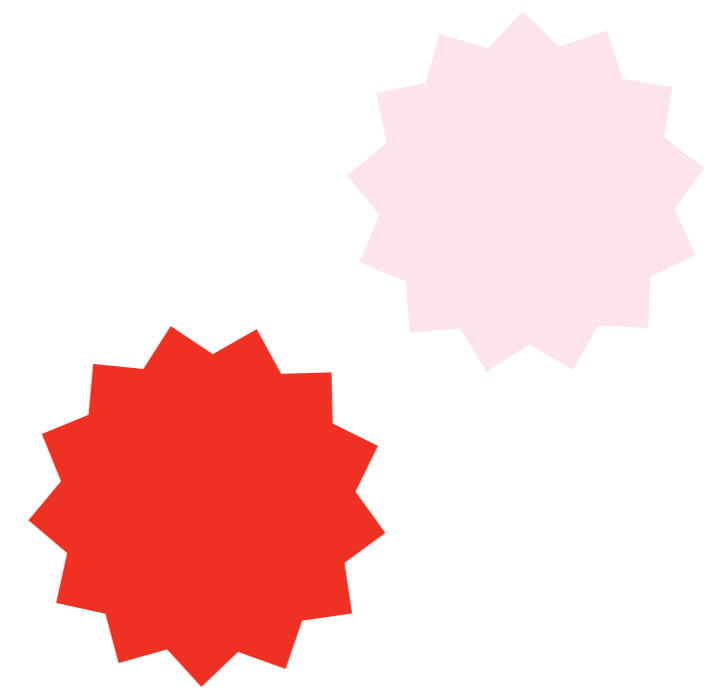
# Project Management Approach

**Structuring the journey by building resilience, adaptability, and intention through design-led project management.**

Beyond structuring my FMP through design methodologies like the *Double Diamond Framework* and *Gantt Chart*, I also leaned heavily on practical project management tools to stay organised and on track. I used **Notion** and **Google Workspace**, particularly **Google Docs** and **Google Slides**, to consistently track tasks, compare areas of research, and ensure that each phase of my work remained balanced and cohesive to my project. This helped me monitor how my research connected to my final delivery of the process book, making sure nothing felt disjointed, incomplete, or out of touch with the film industry.

Alongside these tools, I also used AI assisting tools including ChatGPT as a consistent support system. It acted not only as a way to clarify my writing and correct grammar across interviews and transcripts, but also as a memory bank that helped me stay connected to earlier stages of my project when I was juggling multiple research threads and shifting insights.

When unexpected shifts in my research emerged, whether through new insights from interviews or changes in industry developments, I returned to my personal values and project goals to reassess my direction. This mindset of continual "re-situating" allowed me to adapt thoughtfully, making sure that every pivot aligned with my broader intention: to **create meaningful, human-centred work that could positively impact the film industry**. I also relied on peer-led



reviews, both in class and informally outside of class, to gather feedback, challenge my assumptions, and refine my approach throughout the project.

Managing this project solo also required me to push beyond familiar roles. While I am confident in leadership positions such as Project Manager or Team Lead, I have historically felt less secure in hands-on prototyping and final production. Taking ownership of the *Deliver* phase challenged me to build something tangible on my own, which initially felt intimidating. In the past, I often relied on others to execute the final stages of a project. However, this time I held myself accountable, recognising and learning from mistakes while staying committed to completion. From the start, I was intentional about the scope of this project, setting realistic boundaries to avoid overextending myself or the project's outcomes (a practice informed by **Paul Meyers'** teachings in the Design Management course on Scope Management). I prioritised creating something focused and achievable rather than promising an unrealistic or unsustainable solution. This mindset kept me grounded, even when progress felt uncertain.

Ultimately, I hope that the project management skills I demonstrated throughout this FMP, including organisation, adaptability, accountability and resilience, reflect my readiness to grow into a career as a producer or production manager in the film industry.

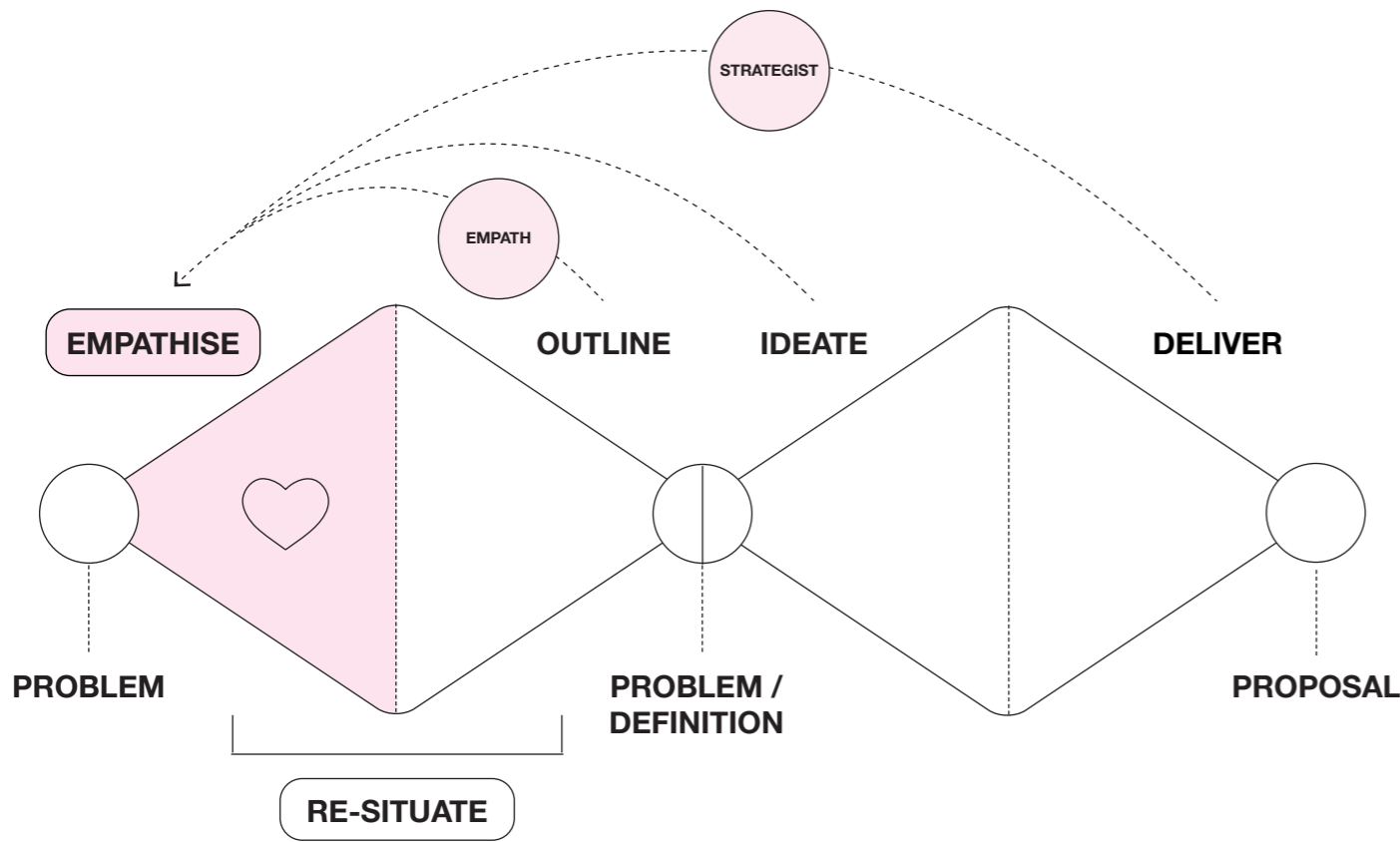


Fig. 4. A visual of my process, with empathy driving each stage and keeping human needs central (2025).

# Personal Design Assessment

**Leading with Empathy and Strategy: A reflection on my strengths, growth, and design identity.**

Stepping into my FMP on AI's influence in the film industry, I consider myself a designer who **thrives on complexity but approaches it with clarity and organisation**. Throughout my time in Design Management at UAL, and across various professional ventures, I've consistently gravitated towards roles where leadership, collaboration, and communication were essential. My practice thrives when values are shared, dialogue is clear, and the end goal is collective and not always individual. Whether working within a team or independently, I approach projects with a mindset rooted in community and cultural sustainability.

While the shift towards a self-initiated, independent process was initially daunting, understanding my own values and ways of working motivated me to test my capabilities and challenge my assumptions about what I could achieve. Early in this process, I identified strongly with two designer archetypes: the **Empath** and the **Strategist**. The Empath leads with emotional intelligence and a deep understanding of human needs, while the Strategist thrives on clarity, systems thinking, and long-term vision. These identities became foundational to my work, allowing me to navigate an industry issue that is as much about people as it is about technology.

Throughout this project, these archetypes shaped not only how I managed my workflow but also how I stayed connected to my purpose. I made a deliberate effort to never lose sight of what I wanted to contribute to the film industry and to keep my primary audience of emerging filmmakers at the heart of my decision-making. I believe my strengths as a designer emerged most clearly through this sustained focus and adaptability. Even as my project pivoted and evolved, I remained calm, intentional, and driven by a clear sense of purpose.

At the same time, this process also revealed areas for growth. A key weakness I recognised was my tendency to overcommit to the research and empathy phases and wanting to understand every nuance of the problem before moving forward. While this reflects my desire to create meaningful, human-centred solutions, it also occasionally slowed my momentum in prototyping and delivering. Acknowledging this helped me find more balance between research and execution as the project progressed.

# Ethics Statement

**Centering emerging creatives and responsible innovation at every stage of the process with DEI (Design, Equality, + Inclusion).**

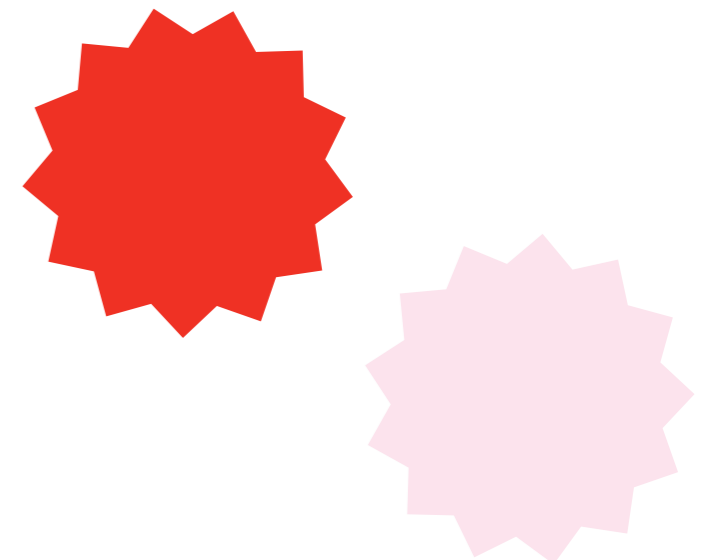
Just as my archetypes values have shaped my design process, they also directly inform my ethical commitments to this work. My role as a designer within this project is not just to produce an outcome, but to do so responsibly to ensure that the culture of the film industry is sustained, protected, and made accessible for future generations.

A core ethical principle I commit to is ensuring that emerging filmmakers are not excluded from the industry's future, particularly as AI and other technological disruptions continue to reshape its landscape. I do not want to contribute to the industry's decline or gatekeeping. Instead, my work aims to provide support systems and resources that help early-career creatives not only enter the field but stay, grow, and thrive within it, especially those who are motivated, talented, and passionate about storytelling as both a craft and a cultural practice.

To honor this commitment, **empathy remains central to every phase of my project**. From research to delivery, I continuously return to the voices and experiences of my target audience, ensuring that my solutions respond directly to their challenges and aspirations. I view this as an ongoing cycle where checking back in with real people is not just a phase, but an ethical responsibility.

This ethical approach aligns with my broader belief in **defensive acceleration** and ensuring that **technological change is met with intentional, human-centered design strategies**. I also anticipate ethical challenges, particularly in ensuring that my work doesn't unintentionally cater to a narrow demographic of filmmakers, excluding those from less resourced or underrepresented backgrounds. To address this, I've remained open to critique and have actively sought out diverse perspectives throughout my research. I see this as a continuous, unfinished process that requires me to keep questioning, listening, and adapting in order to uphold the human-centered values at the core of my practice.

Ultimately, my **personal ethics** as a designer are inseparable from the purpose of this project: to create tools and insights that help filmmakers defend the **cultural heart** of their industry, even as they adapt to a **rapidly changing future**: workflows, potentially displacing jobs, and altering the industry's future trajectory (insert statistics to support this claim). The industry is still grappling with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and many professionals are experiencing uncertainty about their careers. Moreover, aspiring filmmakers and students entering the industry now face a landscape that may look vastly different from what they once envisioned.



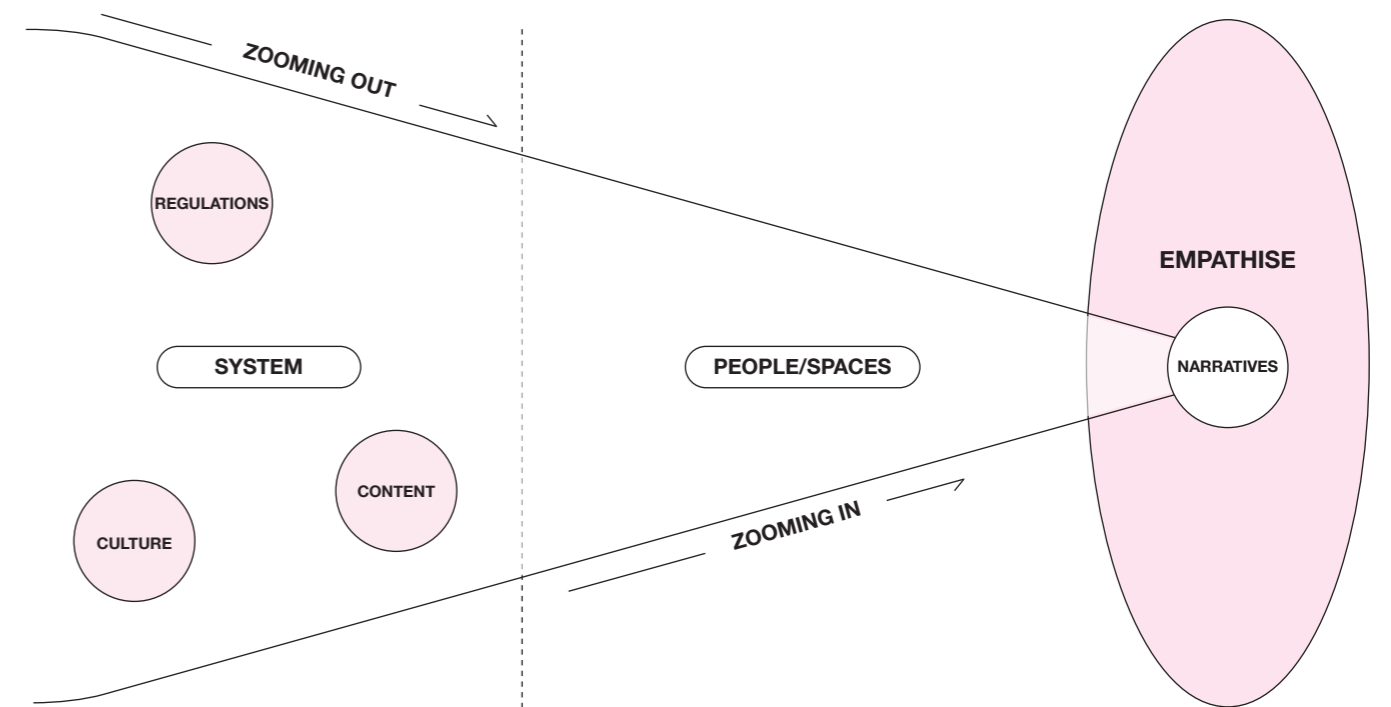


Fig. 6. Process visualization adapted from a framework featured in *Circular Design for Fashion*, reinterpreted to fit the “Empathise” phase of my project (2025).

## Empathise: Exploring the Landscape of Change

Uncovering insights across industry, people, space, and practice.

### “Empathise”

**This chapter (phase) is about building a meaningful understanding of the people, systems, and challenges shaping filmmaking in the age of AI.**

In this chapter, I will outline the key insights I aim to gather through different research methods as I work to deeply empathise with my project’s focus in the *Empathise* phase of my *Double Diamond Framework*. As I mentioned in my preface, my aim in this phase will be to understand the needs, concerns, and experiences of emerging filmmakers navigating the evolving role of AI in the film industry. Empathy will sit at the core of this work, ensuring that my design is grounded in real-world insights, not just theoretical assumptions.

Due to the limited availability of existing research and resources on this specific intersection of AI and emerging filmmakers, I will rely heavily on primary research to guide this phase. Direct engagement (through interviews, surveys, and fieldwork) will become essential in generating relevant insights that secondary research cannot fully provide.

This chapter will be broken into three main sections reflecting the process shown in the diagram above (Figure 6), followed by a short reflective passage before transitioning into the next phase of my research.

#### **Zooming Out: Understanding the System**

I will begin by zooming out to explore the film industry as a system. Through initial field research at three industry events, desk research, a literature review, and my first round of interviews with two industry professionals, I will work to

understand the larger contexts surrounding my audience (which is established later on). This will include social, economic, technological, and environmental dimensions, as well as the relationships between key players in the industry using Stakeholder Mapping.

#### **Zooming In: Understanding the Space/People**

Next, I will zoom in to focus on the people and organisations directly involved in shaping and being impacted by this challenge. Through stakeholder research, I will identify who I will be designing with and for, considering how these individuals and groups could contribute to potential solutions and what constraints I might face moving forward.

#### **Narrowing Focus: Individual Narratives**

Finally, I will narrow my focus to the individual experiences of emerging filmmakers themselves. Through a targeted survey, a second round of interviews with the intended audience to gather experiences, the creation of personas, and a journey map, I will aim to understand the lived realities of emerging filmmakers. These insights will be essential as I transition into the next stage of my process.

As stated in my *Preface*, this phase will be particularly meaningful to me, as I aim to bridge the gap between creative professionals and AI and ensuring that filmmakers can effectively engage with new tools while preserving the human, emotional essence of film culture.

Fig. 5 . A still captured from “Sisters” directed by Shana Purnama (2025).

# Zooming Out: Understanding the System

How was I introduced to this challenge and what did I learn by zooming out to understand the broader system of the film industry?

## Initial Exposure: Evolving My Focus

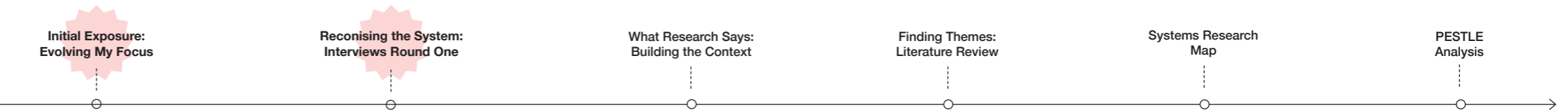
In late September 2024, I had just completed my internship at the film production agency *FutureFrank* in Amsterdam, NL. Over the course of 3 months, I worked across the branding and production departments, taking on various roles. Towards the end of my internship, I had the opportunity to produce a short film commissioned by the *NVision Latino Film and Music Festival* in collaboration with the AI film *Studio Aideal*, marking my first hands-on experience with AI in filmmaking. The film titled “*Infinite Dreams*” was a **hybrid production**, combining generative AI with live action footage, merging artificial and human-led processes in a way I had not encountered before.



Fig. 7. A BTS photograph of “*Infinite Dreams*” during production, (2024).

Before this, AI had only been a passing topic in conversations. A few months earlier in June, I attended *Cannes Lions 2024*, where I spoke with filmmakers and producers in the advertising sector. Although I noticed a palpable weariness around AI’s growing presence in the industry, at the time, I didn’t see this as a problem I wanted to explore for my FMP. The issue seemed too vast, too systemic to even begin tackling. **My instinct was to see AI as something to be removed rather than understood, and I struggled to see how I could approach it in a way that was meaningful and researchable.**

By the time I returned to London for the start of my course in October 2024, I had moved away from the film industry altogether, instead exploring sustainable design and biomimicry. My initial research focused on natural systems, human-centred design alternatives, and ecological preservation which were all questions that were rooted in my frustration with the slow progress of sustainability efforts in the design world. However, as I continued to refine my ideas, I found myself grappling with a growing sense of disconnect. The topics felt abstract, and **I couldn’t identify a clear, urgent, and personally meaningful challenge** that I could research effectively.



By Week 5, when I presented my *In-Progress Deck* (see *Appendix 1*), I realised that **I’d been avoiding a problem I was already deeply engaged with**. My experiences at *FutureFrank* and *Cannes Lions*, as well as the *CICLOPE Festival*, exposed me to real tensions within the film industry. As I revisited my early field notes and industry observations, I saw clear patterns emerge:

- AI was a **major source of tension** within the global film industry.
- Producers, filmmakers, and creatives were **grappling with its impact in real time**.
- There was no **clear consensus** as some saw AI as an opportunity, while others feared it would displace human creativity.

I realised that the film industry was not just researchable but it was something I already had deep knowledge and empathy for. Rather than avoiding AI as an overwhelming issue, **I saw an opportunity to examine how creatives and producers were actively negotiating their roles within this evolving system.**

With this realisation, **I shifted my research approach**. To fully understand the broader forces shaping the film industry’s adoption of AI, I began an initial phase of desk research, trend analysis, and a literature review, mapping out the larger system before zooming in further.

## Recognising the System: Interviews #1

Once I committed to investigating AI’s role in the film industry, I realised that I needed to move beyond my own assumptions and engage with those already navigating these changes. While I had encountered discussions about AI at industry events like *Cannes Lions* and *CICLOPE Festival*, I needed to understand what was happening on a deeper level and find out more beyond passing conversations or surface-level industry narratives. Given the short timeframe of my FMP, I knew I had to act quickly, identify key perspectives, and ensure my process remained embedded in empathy. Without that foundation, my research would lack the clarity and direction needed to move forward.

One of my first steps was reaching out to Executive Producer **Peter Grasse**, founder of the film production

company **Mr+Positive** in Tokyo, Japan. Beyond being my father, he has built a resilient business model in an industry that is constantly evolving, particularly during the economic challenges brought on by COVID-19. As a member of global production networks such as **GPN** (Global Production Network) and **SUPERCLUSTER**, as well as a global network of independent creative agencies named, **by The Network**, he was well positioned within conversations surrounding AI’s role in film production.

In our early conversations in October, he emphasised that AI was not something filmmakers could simply reject or ignore. Brands and clients were increasingly choosing AI-driven production models because of cost efficiency, often **overlooking the complexities of production and undervaluing creative expertise**. However, he pointed out that while many feared AI’s rise, human oversight remained crucial, high-quality production still required the depth, decision-making, and adaptability of experienced filmmakers.

**“Brands increasingly choose AI for its cost efficiency, often sidelining producers and creatives like artists and writers. It isn’t sustainable for anyone.”**

These insights were reinforced when I attended the **SHOTS Awards** in November, where I had the opportunity to speak with **Julia Weichinger**, lead director of the **Global Production Network** (GPN). With over 30 years of experience in the industry, she offered a broader historical perspective, particularly on how previous technological advancements had reshaped filmmaking.

Julia described how producers have always had to evolve with industry shifts, whether it was the transition from film to digital, the rise of streaming services, or now, the emergence of AI. However, she was also firm in stating that the role of the producer remains vital in keeping filmmaking human-centred, arguing that AI alone cannot replicate the depth of real-world production, problem-solving, and creative leadership.

**“If AI takes over and creates all commercials and everything in a computer that spits out everything ready, no need to shoot anything [...] We must keep our process as producers human-centred. We cannot rely on artificial decision-making and leadership. This is a human system, and it’s important to keep us at the core.”**

These conversations led me to a key realisation: AI was not a passing trend or a temporary disruption but it was a **systemic transformation**. This challenged my earlier assumption that filmmakers might be able to simply resist or avoid AI’s presence in the industry. Instead, it became clear that automation was advancing rapidly, and those within the industry would need to **defensively accelerate** which means to adapt to technological change while maintaining creative integrity.



Fig. 8. A photograph of myself with Peter Grasse and Julia Weichinger, (2024).

At the same time, I began to consider the historical patterns of automation in creative industries. **If filmmakers and producers were now facing an industry-wide transformation, were there lessons to be learned from previous shifts in media and production? Had there been similar moments in the past where automation threatened to displace creative roles? And, if so, what strategies have allowed industries to remain human-centred despite technological change?**

These early observations shaped the next stage of my process, where I began investigating the film industry as **a system under transformation**, and seeking to identify patterns, precedents, and potential approaches to maintaining human creativity in an AI-driven landscape.





After conducting industry exposure and primary interviews with key figures in film production, it became necessary to examine the broader discourse surrounding AI's role in filmmaking. While these conversations provided valuable first-hand insights, they also raised larger systemic questions:

- *Was AI-driven automation a unique challenge to this moment in time, or had creative industries faced similar disruptions before?*
- *How were researchers, industry analysts, and policy-makers framing AI's role in creative work?*
- *What structural patterns and gaps existed in discussions about AI and film production?*

To investigate these questions further, I conducted secondary research, examining industry reports, academic discussions, and journal articles to identify key themes. This stage of research allowed me to situate my findings within a wider discourse, validating and expanding on the perspectives gathered from industry professionals. Additionally, it enabled me to map out recurring patterns, contradictions, and gaps in existing knowledge, which became critical in shaping my next steps.

Given that AI's role in filmmaking is an evolving issue, secondary research also helped in identifying historical parallels and case studies that could provide insight into how industries have adapted to technological shifts in the past. Since my FMP is primarily rooted in primary research, this upcoming section acted as a foundational guide, ensuring that my next steps were not based on assumptions but on a critical understanding of existing discussions and knowledge gaps.

In this section, I present the **desk research and literature review** that informed my project, outlining the key academic and industry perspectives that shaped my approach moving forward.

### What Research Says: Building the Context

AI is increasingly integrated into the film industry, influencing various stages of production. This section contextualizes the subject through collected statistics from online sources in a way that remains general and unbiased, setting the stage for the literature review that follows.

Reports indicate that as of 2023, up to 80% of companies in the film, television, and animation sectors have adopted or plan to adopt generative AI technologies (Stoll, 2024). Additionally, the global AI market in media and entertainment is projected to grow by \$30.72 billion between 2024 and 2028, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 26.4% (Technavio, 2024).

While AI-driven automation increases efficiency in areas such as script analysis, automated casting, visual effects, and post-production editing (Newo.Ai, 2024) (Valossa, 2024), its growing role has also prompted broader discussions about its impact on creative labor and industry workflows. AI technologies can now generate synthetic voices, modify actors' appearances, and automate repetitive editing tasks which are all advancements that enhance production efficiency but also provoke debates over artistic authenticity and human oversight. A recent example is Brady Corbet's Oscar nominated *The Brutalist*, which sparked controversy regarding AI-generated performances (Alexander, Balevic and Edmonds, 2025).



Fig. 9. A scene captured from "The Brutalist", (2024).

Economically, AI-driven automation could contribute an additional **\$80 billion to \$130 billion in annual revenue** across media and entertainment (Hua, 2024). However, its impact on employment remains complex. While studies from the *World Economic Forum* predict that **AI will displace 75 million jobs** globally by 2025, projections also suggest the **creation of 133 million new roles**, indicating a shift in required skill sets rather than an outright reduction in workforce demand (Russo, 2020). Within the film industry, this transition has fueled discussions about how AI adoption may redefine traditional creative roles.

Public sentiment toward AI in filmmaking remains divided. **While 42% of respondents support its use for special effects and actor modifications**, concerns persist regarding its potential influence on creative authenticity

(Alexander, Balevic and Edmonds, 2025). These debates underscore the necessity of critically examining AI's implications for creative labor, industry workflows, and the evolving role of human oversight in production.

While data-driven projections offer insight into economic and technological shifts, they do not fully capture the nuanced discussions within creative industries. To bridge this gap, it is essential to analyze existing academic and industry research, which explores how AI is being framed, resisted, or adapted within filmmaking.

### Finding Themes: Literature Review

Conducting secondary research through a literature review is essential for understanding the broader perspectives on the disruptions occurring within the film industry. While industry professionals provide valuable first-hand insights, examining existing academic and industry research offers a more comprehensive view of **how AI is shaping creative labour, production workflows, and career opportunities**.

This stage of research is particularly important for collecting relevant and timely findings, as the role of AI in filmmaking is evolving rapidly. By synthesising insights from academic journals, industry reports, books, and other sources, I can identify key themes, debates, and gaps in the field, which will ultimately inform my own argument and shape the direction of my original research.

The following literature review is structured into four key themes: 1) Automation & Creative Labour, 2) AI & Human-Centred Creativity, and 3) Agents of Change: Role of Industry Leaders.

Additionally, I have included a **Systems Research Map** towards the end of this section to showcase all the research I conducted as I transition into my Key Findings & Analysis.

#### 1) Automation & Creative Labour

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in filmmaking is reshaping creative labour, raising both opportunities and challenges. AI-driven automation is being hailed as a tool that enhances efficiency and reduces costs, but it also sparks debates over its implications for traditional creative roles. **Jeffrey Katzenberg**, co-founder of *DreamWorks*, describes AI as an "amazing resource" that enhances

productivity and enables creators to "widen the diversity of their work, the quality of their work" (Bharade, 2024).

AI-driven creative automation is transforming workflows in the film industry, enhancing efficiency while raising questions about creative control. Automation tools are increasingly used in video editing, VFX generation, and scriptwriting assistance, streamlining processes that were once labour-intensive. For instance, **AI-powered platforms now allow studios to generate promotional content automatically**, personalising trailers and advertisements for different audiences (Bulatovic, 2024).

However, this shift has sparked debates about the diminished role of human creativity in AI-assisted production. Some professionals in the industry express concerns that AI tools can make creatives feel "**even less productive because it seems like AI tools can magically fix everything**" (Bulatovic, 2024). While automation speeds up repetitive tasks, it also risks devaluing traditional craftsmanship in filmmaking. Despite these concerns, creative automation is often framed as a collaborative tool rather than a replacement.

Despite these concerns, creative automation is often framed as a collaborative tool rather than a replacement. Academics J. Rocco Blais and Adam M. Jungdahl (2019) reinforce this perspective by emphasizing that "artificial intelligence is a means of describing computer programs capable of simulating human cognition, but not replacing it" (p.109). This distinction highlights AI's role as an assistive tool rather than a substitute for human-led creative processes. The integration of AI in post-production, special effects, and advertising has allowed filmmakers to push creative boundaries while focusing on human-led storytelling decisions. The challenge remains in ensuring that **AI enhances rather than dictates creative processes**, striking a balance between technological efficiency and artistic authenticity.

#### 2) AI & Human-Centred Creativity

The integration of AI into creative industries raises fundamental questions about **the role of human agency** in artistic expression. While AI has proven to be a valuable tool for augmenting creative processes, concerns persist about its potential to undermine human-led decision-making. The report, **The Art in the Artificial (2020)**, published by UK's Innovation Agency *Nesta* highlights that AI has opened new creative possibilities, particularly through



techniques like **Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs)** and style transfer, which enable artists to experiment with digital transformations previously unattainable. However, despite its capabilities, the report also notes that AI's direct applications in creative industries remain relatively limited, suggesting that human involvement is still crucial in shaping creative outputs. As shown in Figure 10, **AI applications in creative industries exist at the intersection of generative AI, broader AI applications, and traditional creative activities** (Davies et al., 2020). This visual representation underscores the complexity of AI's role in the creative field, highlighting the ongoing need for human oversight and intentional implementation of AI tools.

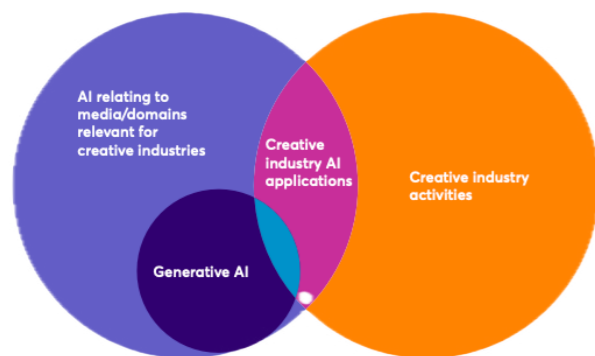


Fig. 10. "AI and Creative industry activity and applications" by Nesta, (2020).

The ethical and copyright issues surrounding AI-generated creativity further complicate this debate. The **Make It Fair campaign (2025)** highlights how AI models are scraping creative content from artists without permission or compensation, raising concerns over fair use and intellectual property. The campaign warns, "without fair reward, our creative industries simply won't survive," (Paine, 2025), emphasizing the need for clearer policies on AI-generated art, music, and film (GNM Press Office, 2025). This raises a pressing issue: should AI-generated works be credited to the machine, the developers, or the original artists whose work was used to train the AI?

Blais and Jungdahl caution that AI's increasing role in decision-making, if left unchecked, could disrupt long-standing industry norms. They argue that "AI is a revolutionary technological innovation with the potential to disrupt political, economic, and social relations around the world" (p.108). While AI democratizes access to powerful tools, these disruptions necessitate careful governance to protect human agency and intellectual property.

While the *Make It Fair* campaign advocates for fair compensation and recognition, international legal frameworks are also evolving. The **European Union's AI Act (2025)**, for instance, introduces regulatory guidelines on AI-generated content, requiring transparency on data sources and ownership (European Parliament, 2025). These legal considerations are crucial in ensuring that AI integration aligns with ethical and economic fairness.



Fig. 11. "Make It Fair" campaign (2025).

Japan's approach to AI in the creative sector provides a compelling case study in human-centred creativity. Unlike Hollywood, where rapid AI adoption has sparked industry-wide concerns about job displacement, Japan has emphasized collaborative AI, ensuring that human oversight remains at the core of creative decision-making. Norihiko Saeki, Director of Culture and Creative Industries at Japan's *Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI)*, argues that AI should "augment human decision-making, not override it," reflecting Japan's policy-driven approach to maintaining human artistry in filmmaking (Cvetkovikj, 2024). Initiatives such as the **Generative AI Accelerator Challenge** further promote ethical AI integration in Japan's film industry, reinforcing the idea that AI should function as a tool for enhancing creativity rather than replacing it.

**Case Study: AI in Music Video Production**

One of the more recent examples of AI's role in creative direction comes from Seungrim Yoon, a renowned K-pop music video director. In a recent interview published on Korean publication *Oh My Star*, Yoon described AI as an "irreversible trend," one that filmmakers must adapt to rather than resist (Oh My Star, 2025). Yoon, who directed award-winning music videos for artists such as Aespa and

IVE, highlighted how AI-assisted tools helped enhance visual storytelling without compromising artistic integrity.

However, Yoon acknowledged the challenges of balancing AI with human creativity, particularly in an industry where audience perception plays a crucial role. She explained that while AI can streamline processes like visual effects and post-production, filmmakers must justify the use of AI to the audience—ensuring that the technology is used to amplify the artist's vision rather than overshadow it. "AI is just another tool in my kit," she noted, "but the final creative decisions must always be human-led."

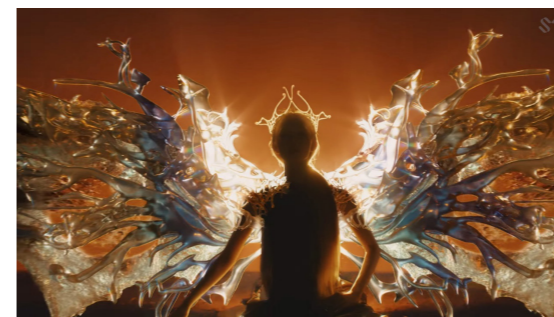


Fig. 12. A still captured from Aespa's "Armageddon" MV (2024).

Beyond the artistic implications, Yoon also **raised concerns about the lack of recognition for AI-assisted creative work**, particularly in industries where AI-generated content is treated as a product of the software rather than the human directing it. She emphasized that filmmakers must remain the guiding force behind AI integration, ensuring that technology serves the creative vision rather than dictates it. Her insights encapsulate the broader discussion on AI's role in film and music video production, reinforcing the notion that human ingenuity and artistic vision must remain at the forefront.

**3) Agents of Change: Role of Industry Leaders**

While it is proven that AI threatens traditional creative labor and the security that it has offered historically, industry professionals and advocacy groups in other creative industries are actively shaping its ethical integrations that need to be considered. The **creative industries have been reshaped by technological shifts**, with some embracing innovation while others resist automation to protect artistic integrity. Social media and AI-driven decision-making have disrupted traditional filmmaking, but key figures have emerged as change makers navigating these shifts.

The **rise of social media in the late 2000s and early 2010s** transformed film marketing and audience engagement. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube allowed filmmakers to interact with audiences directly, fostering fan-driven promotion through user-generated content (Behrens et al., 2021). YouTube reviews, fan-made trailers, and viral marketing campaigns altered how films were received, giving audiences an active role in shaping a film's success. While some have embraced AI's role in content creation, others resist its growing influence. The previously mentioned Make It Fair campaign warns against AI scraping creative content without permission or compensation. The campaign argues that AI firms should not be allowed to use copyrighted materials without clear consent and fair pay. This movement highlights the growing pushback against AI's unchecked expansion in the arts.

**Case Study: Meme, Myself and AI**

Chris Boyle's short film *Meme, Myself and AI* (2024) explores the intersection of AI, social media, and human creativity, questioning **how much of digital culture is authentically human versus algorithmically generated?** (Stout and Boyle, 2024).



Fig. 13. A still captured from "Meme, Myself, and I", (2024).

Boyle argues that AI should serve as a tool rather than a creative replacement, reinforcing that human intuition remains irreplaceable in storytelling. In an interview with film journalism magazine *1.4 (One Point Four)*, Boyle stated, "AI doesn't have lived experience, and that's what storytelling is: lived experience translated into art," highlighting the irreplaceable nature of human creativity in shaping compelling narratives.



### Systems Research Map

This *System's Research Map* (Figure 14) visualizes the types of information I engaged with while analyzing AI's impact on the film industry.

The X-axis represents the spectrum between industry relevance and academic research, distinguishing between sources that provide real-world insights and those that offer theoretical or historical analysis. The Y-axis measures the scope of impact, from lower-impact niche discussions to high-impact studies that influence broader technological, economic, and creative shifts. Mapping these sources allowed me to **assess the diversity of perspectives in my research**, ensuring a balanced understanding of AI's role in filmmaking.

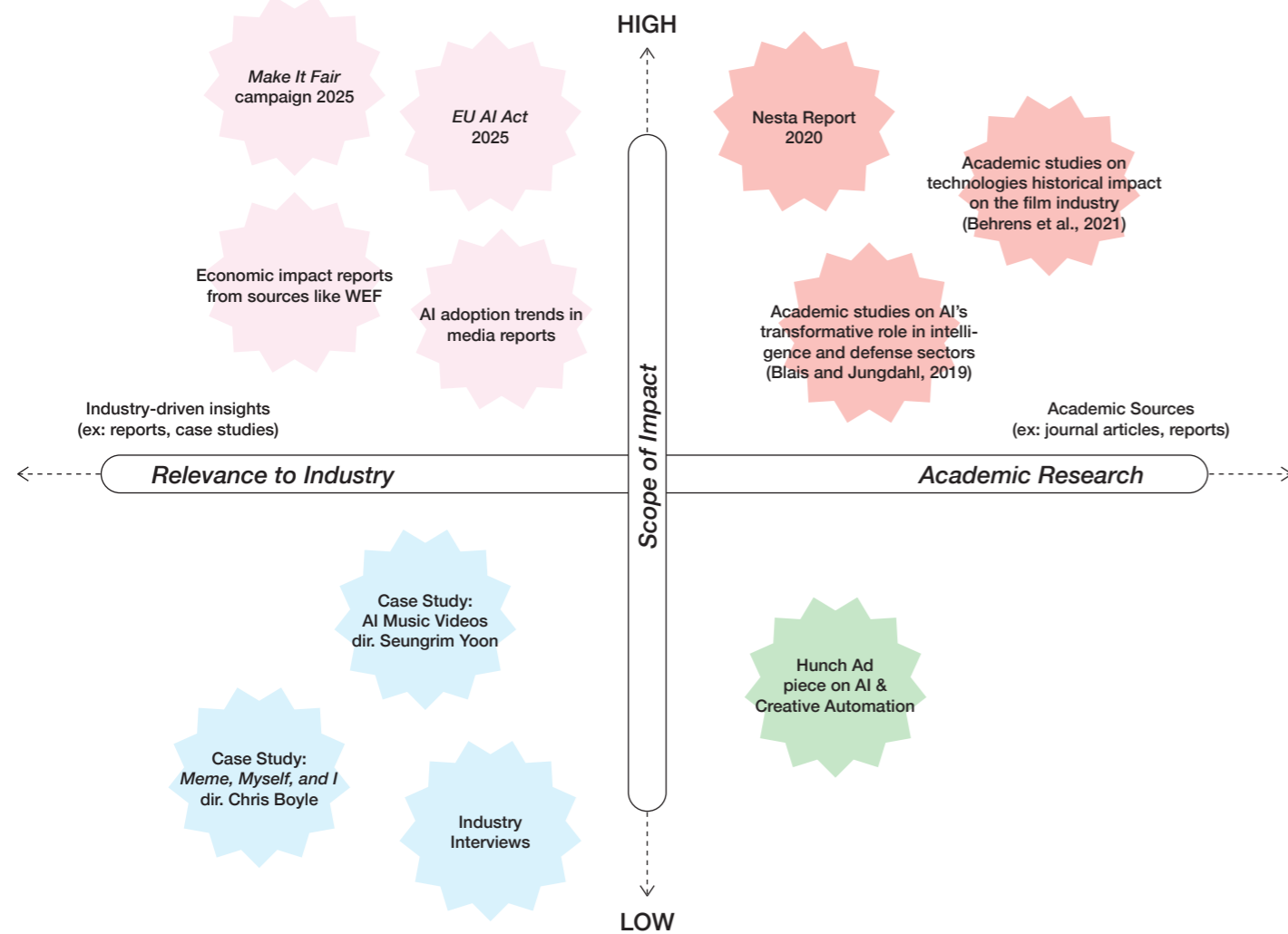


Fig. 14. A visualisation of my Systems Research Map in understanding where the research came from when assessing the broader system (2025).

### Research Context: PESTLE Analysis

Contextual research was conducted to paint a picture of the global film production industry in relation to the rise of emerging technology, particularly AI.

Although AI can reduce the need for travel and physical construction of sets, its environmental cost is often overlooked. Training large models consumes vast energy, much of it non-renewable. As computer scientist Emma Strubell notes, **“training a single AI model can emit as much carbon as five cars in their lifetimes”** (Strubell, Ganesh and McCallum, 2020, p.1). With AI adoption accelerating in creative industries, its carbon footprint remains largely unexamined, raising concerns around sustainability in digital production.

Recent policy developments such as the **EU AI Act (2025)** require transparency around AI-generated content and data usage in the creative sectors (European Parliament, 2025). Additionally, **creative labour unions** such as WGA and SAG-AFTRA have taken collective action against the unchecked use of generative tools, highlighting the need for regulatory protections in AI-assisted production (Maddaus, 2023). These movements reflect growing political attention to the ethics and fairness of automation in media.

The legal status of AI-generated work is evolving, with ongoing debates over **authorship, copyright, and training data consent**. The **EU AI Act (2025)** mandates clearer labelling of AI-generated material, while international cases highlight tensions around ownership and fair use. The “Make It Fair” campaign further draws attention to unpaid artistic labour embedded in generative AI models, prompting calls for regulation to protect creative professionals (GNM Press Office, 2025).

AI is increasingly integrated into filmmaking processes, from script generation and casting to real-time editing and voice replication. Technologies such as **Midjourney** and **Valossa** are capable of producing synthetic media at scale (Newo.Ai, 2024). Real world creative houses like **Aideal** or directors like **Sebastian Strasser** are amongst those who are already using them. However, industry interviews highlight that human oversight remains crucial. Producers warn against over-reliance on AI, citing risks of creative homogenisation and loss of spontaneity in production.

AI's growing role in film has generated public debate around creativity and authenticity. While 42% of surveyed audiences support AI for visual effects or character enhancement, others raise concerns about eroding the emotional and human quality of storytelling (Alexander, Balevic and Edmonds, 2025). Creatives like **Seungrim Yoon** and **Chris Boyle** have advocated for AI to be treated as a support tool, not a creative replacement. Meanwhile, initiatives such as the **Make It Fair** campaign call for clearer attribution and compensation when AI is trained on artists' work without consent (Paine, 2025).

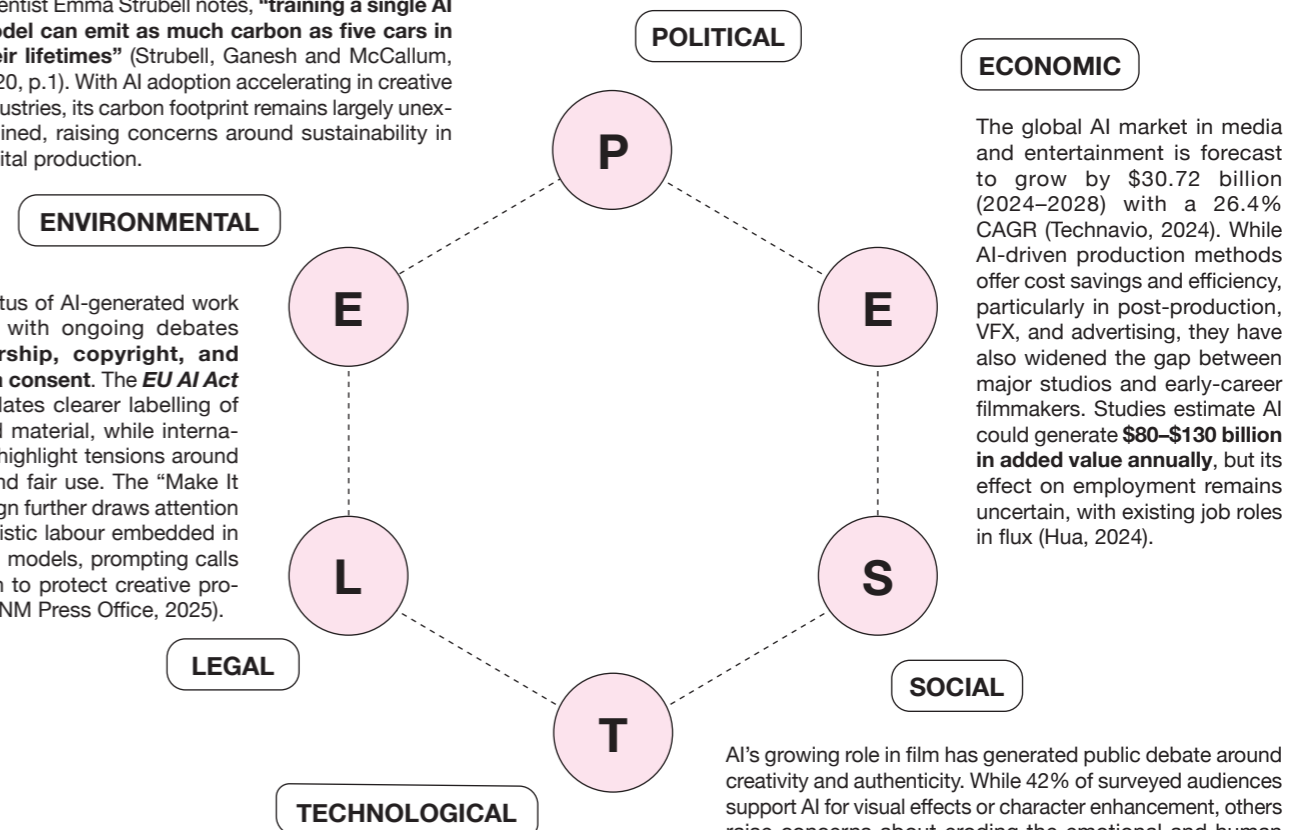


Fig. 15. PESTLE Analysis on the global film production industry in relation to the rise of emerging technology, particularly AI (2025).

# Zooming In: Understanding the Space/People

What patterns, behaviours, and power dynamics shape the spaces and spaces within the film industry in relation to emerging filmmakers?

## Direct Observation: FOCUS LONDON

After assessing the broader system of the film production industry in relation to AI it became clear that systemic change is deeply tied to lived experience. To ground my research in real-world conditions, I turned my focus toward the physical spaces and people navigating this change on the ground. In December 2024, I conducted field research through direct observation at **FOCUS LONDON**, a trade event for those working across the creation, production, and promotion of on-screen media (FOCUS, 2024).



Fig. 16. Meet the makers, FOCUS LONDON (2024).

At the event, I attended industry talks and panel discussions, most notably one led by **Dr Jodi Nelson-Tabor** (Final Pixel Academy) and **Emma Turner** (ScreenSkills), both of whom are engaged in reshaping industry training and upskilling through accessible learning platforms (see notes in Appendix 2). I was particularly struck by Dr Jodi Nelson-Tabor, with over 20 years of experience in creative industries strategy and training, she offered a clear and forward-thinking perspective on the skills required to navigate a changing industry. In her talk at **FOCUS LONDON**, she emphasised the importance of “stacking techniques” and developing adaptable, transferable skills that respond to the demands of emerging technologies like AI.

Her use of a Concentric Circles Diagram, with AI at the centre, surrounded by technology, short form (content), and film, as seen in Figure 17, it visually reinforced her message: that **AI is no longer peripheral. It is embedded at the core of the industry, with its influence radiating outward across modes of production.** This visual metaphor helped me transition from observing the industry as a macro system to analysing how specific people and spaces are navigating these pressures in real time.

Direct Observation:  
FOCUS LONDON

A Closer Look:  
London Film Job Fair

Considering  
Stakeholders

Reassessing  
the System

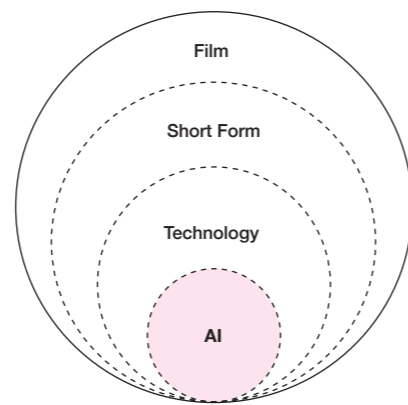


Fig. 17. My adaptation of Dr. Nelson-Tabor's concentric diagram presented at FOCUS LONDON (2025).

## A Closer Look: London Film Job Fair

Building on my insights from **FOCUS LONDON**, I turned to the **London Film Job Fair** held in late-March 2025 to observe how aspiring young professionals are navigating entry points into an industry shaped by technological change. The **London Film Job Fair**, held by **Cine Circle**; an organisation that aims to connect, educate, and provide work and funding opportunities for independent filmmakers, offered a space where young people came with the goal of networking and finding work (Cine Circle, n.d.). I had the opportunity to speak with a dozen film production companies, mentor programmes, talent agents, recruiters, and industry services about their current projects and initiatives.



Fig. 18. Cine Circle, London Film & Job Fair (2025).

One company that stood out to me was **FILMD**, a platform designed to help filmmakers build a digital portfolio and

connect with collaborators and clients. I spoke with their Head of Communications, **Malitho** (last name not recorded), and asked what he thought about how the platform came to be. He explained that **FILMD** had only launched in July 2024, and that it first began when the company's founder (an actor based in London) noticed a shared struggle among young filmmakers. Particularly in the wake of the pandemic and the rise of AI, many actors, editors, producers, and directors found themselves unable to network their way into working and paid opportunities. He described how production companies, especially in the commercial sector, are under increasing pressure from stakeholders like brand clients who fund the work and that this has led them to become more risk-averse and “**gate-keep**” about who they collaborate with. “*It's become really private,*” he said, noting that this has created even greater barriers for independent creatives trying to break in. In response to this shift, **FILMD** was developed to actively support filmmakers through networking tools, access to job opportunities, occasional project funding, and a shared community feed that helps creatives remain visible and connected.

In addition to these conversations, I also took time to observe the layout, movement, and spatial dynamics of the job fair itself. I was interested in how the physical

environment shaped interactions, who was approached, who wasn't, and how access seemed to correlate with visibility, branding, or status. While the fair was technically open to all attendees, certain booths attracted long queues, while others remained quiet and approachable. This asymmetry seemed to mirror broader patterns of power and opportunity in the film industry, where visibility and access are often unequally distributed.

To better understand these dynamics, I created a **Spatial Mapping Diagram** (Figure 19) that visualises how different types of organisations (production companies, mentoring initiatives, services, and platforms like **FILMD**) were positioned within the space and how attendees gravitated toward them. I gathered that most young filmmakers were drawn to the **Networking Area**, the **Career Resources and Opportunities** exhibitors, and the **Production Companies** which indicated to me, a strong desire not just for exposure, but for connection and guidance into industry workflows. This behaviour reflected a kind of strategic navigation that many emerging filmmakers were prioritising spaces that offered tangible pathways into employment, mentorship, or collaboration, rather than aspirational or distant opportunities. This mapping became a tool to reflect on how **creative labour, ambition,** and

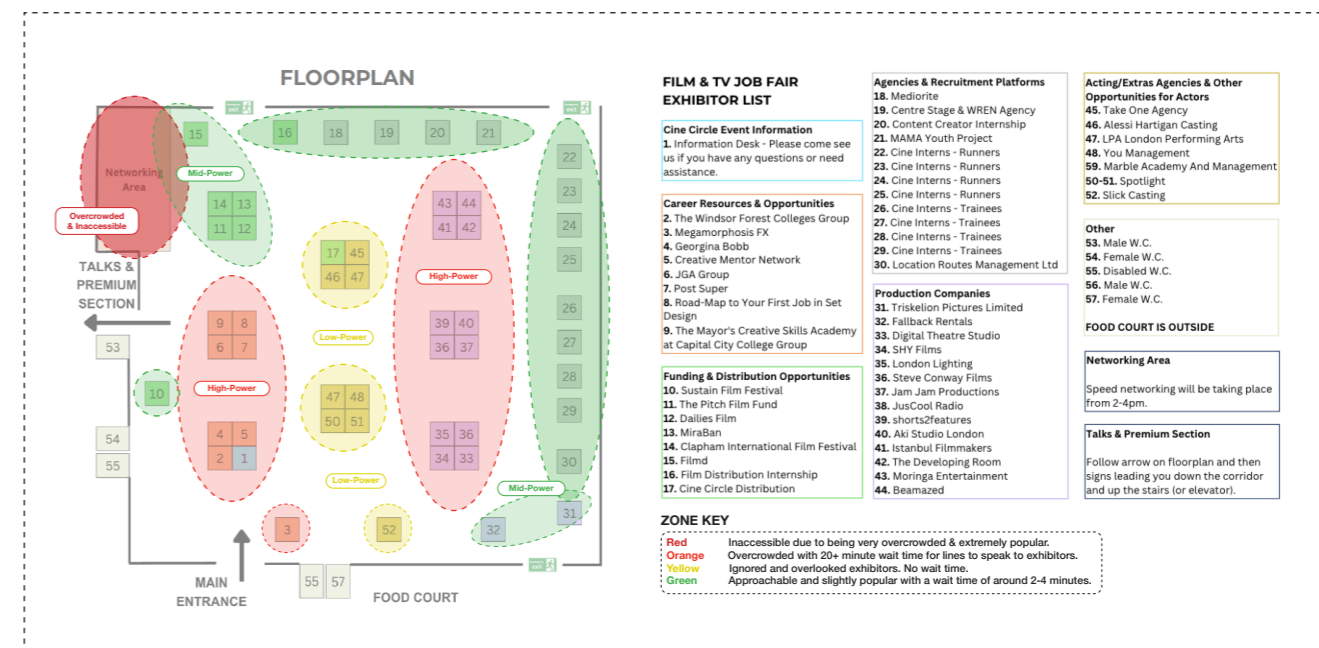


Fig. 19. A spatial interpretation of the Cine Circle London Film Job Fair, illustrating how the room layout and booth visibility shaped interaction, access, and perceived power (2025).

Direct Observation:  
FOCUS LONDON

A Closer Look:  
London Film Job Fair

Considering  
Stakeholders

Reassessing  
the System

**hierarchy** are made visible in moments of live industry interaction. Having spent time listening, observing, and mapping the lived experiences of those entering the industry, I began to see patterns in who held power, who had interest, and where disconnects were forming. From the high-traffic areas at the job fair and conversations with career building organisations like *FILMD*, it became clear that while emerging creatives are full of ambition and curiosity, many of the structures they're entering remain hierarchical or closed off due to the inaccessible aspects of the industry.

### Considering Stakeholders

To consolidate the insights I gathered from *FOCUS LONDON*, the *Cine Circle London Film Job Fair*, my conversation with *FILMD*, and my Spatial Mapping Diagram (Figure 19) I created a **Power/Interest Matrix** (Figure 20) as a way to step back and assess the broader system through a strategic lens. This tool allowed me to map out the key stakeholders shaping the industry, positioning them according to **how much power they hold** and **how much interest they show in supporting or influencing emerging technology, in this case AI**. This matrix helped me clarify who holds influence, who is being overlooked, and where the most critical disconnects lie for young creatives navigating the industry.

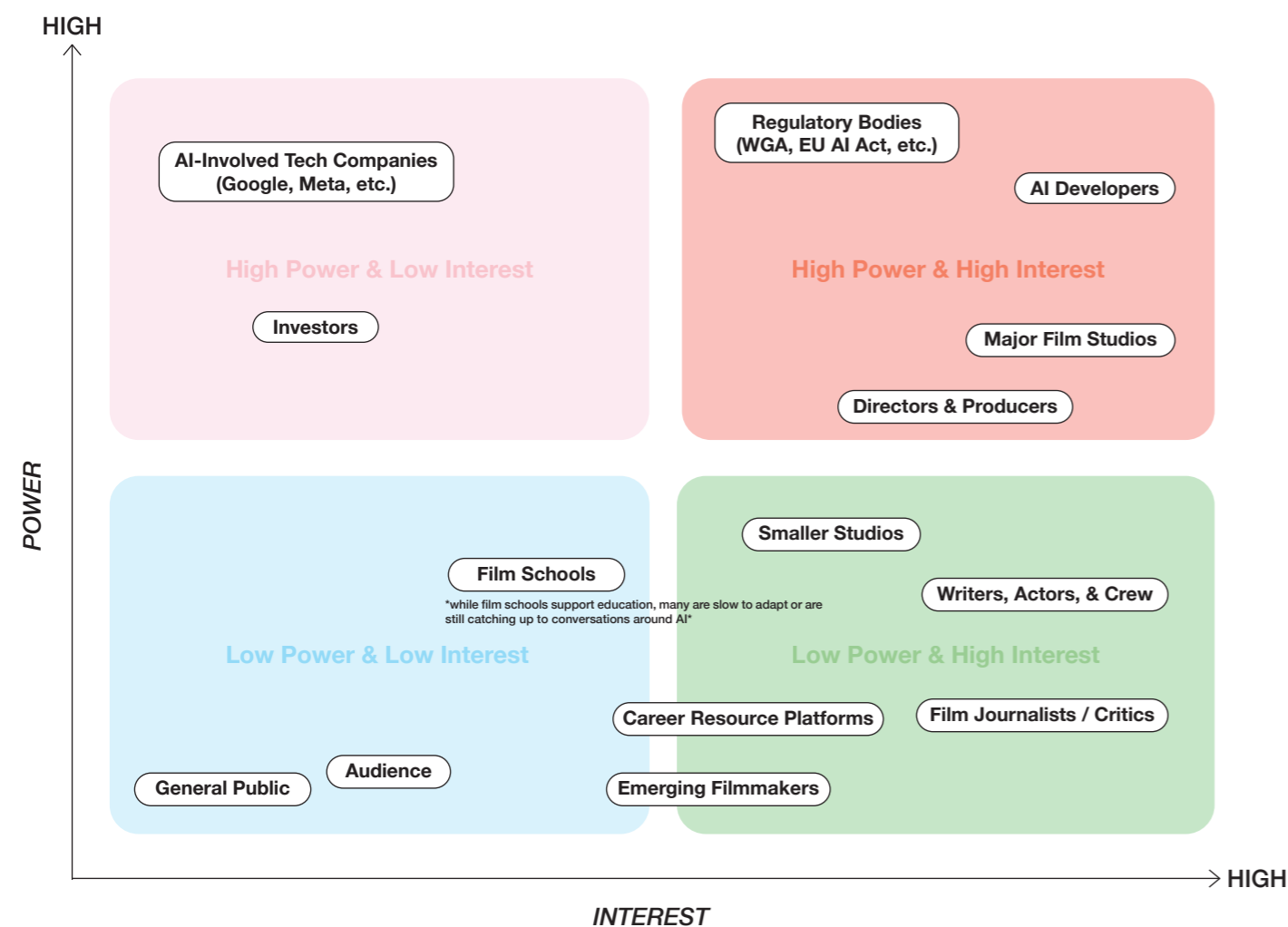


Fig. 20. Power/Interest Matrix mapping key stakeholders in relation to AI in the film industry (2025).

Among the many stakeholder groups I encountered in my early research, emerging filmmakers began to stand out. They were **visibly present, strategically navigating, but structurally under-supported**. This became particularly clear through my direct observation at the *London Film Job Fair* and *FOCUS LONDON*, where I noticed their consistent presence in spaces of opportunity: networking zones, career resource booths, and production-facing platforms like *FILMD*. Although I hadn't yet spoken with them directly (yet), I observed their eagerness to engage with evolving technologies, especially AI, and their desire to find viable entry points into a rapidly shifting industry.

While the Power/Interest Matrix (Figure 20) clarified who holds institutional influence over emerging tech in film, it didn't fully capture how some groups (like emerging filmmakers) are moving across domains, actively experimenting at the edges of disruption. To visualise this fluidity,

I created a **Layered Stakeholder Influence Map** (Figure 21), building on Dr. Nelson-Tabor's Concentric Circular Diagram (Figure 17) from her talk at *FOCUS LONDON*. By positioning emerging filmmakers at the intersection of short-form content and technology, I wanted to signal not only their interest in new formats and tools, but also the in-between, often-overlooked position they occupy within the broader ecosystem.

The map helped me see emerging filmmakers not as passive recipients of change, but as **active experimenters**: people already shaping new modes of production, but often without the institutional scaffolding to support them. Their placement in this diagram reflects a key insight from my field research: **they are close to change, but far from power**. And it is this combination that led me to choose them as the core audience for my next phase which comes after me reassessing the whole system.

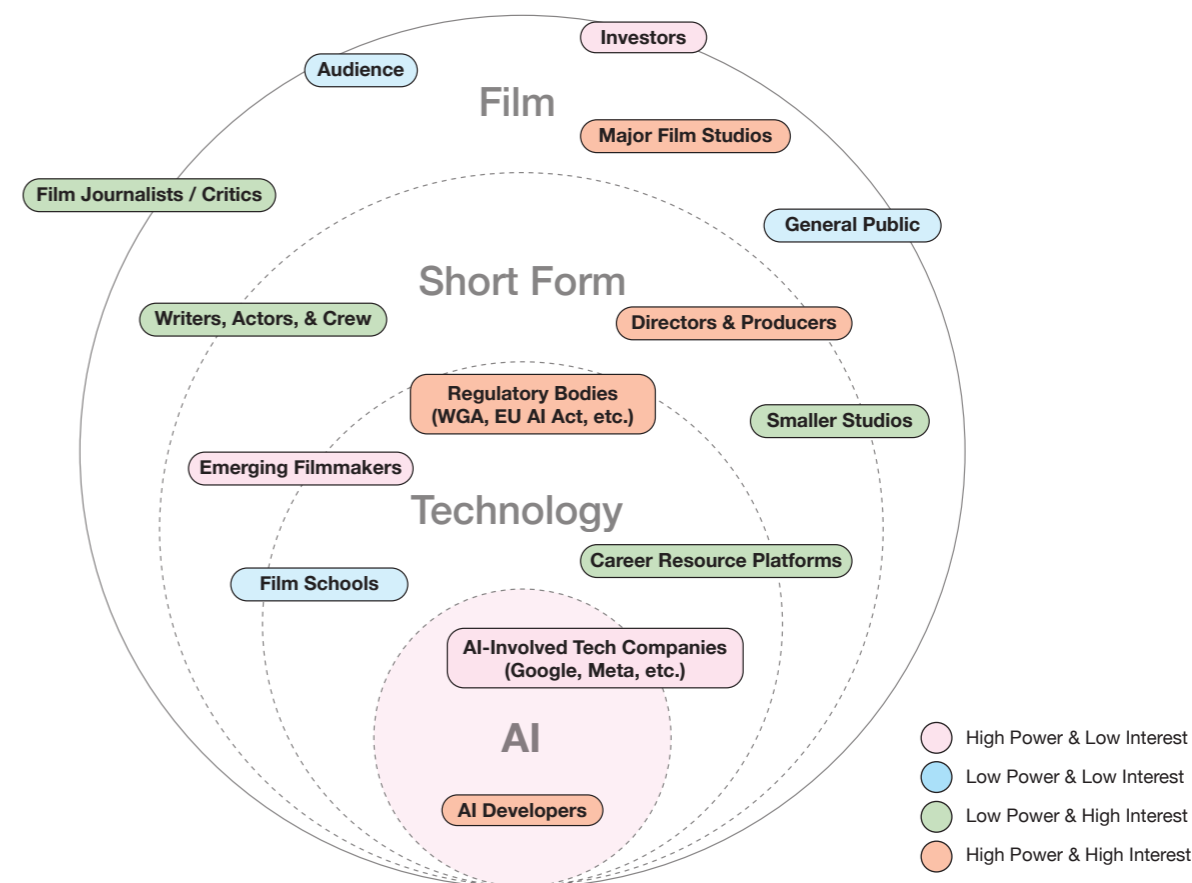


Fig. 21. Layered Stakeholder Influence Map visualising stakeholder placement across concentric industry layers, adapted from Dr. Nelson-Tabor's model (2025).

Direct Observation:  
FOCUS LONDON

A Closer Look:  
London Film Job Fair

Considering  
Stakeholders

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the System

### Reassessing the System

The hand-drawn system map below (Figure 22) became a moment of reflective intuition because it served as a tool to map the broader ecosystem. I also purposely mapped this diagram from memory and instinct, rather than notes so I could test what I understood thus far in my project and what other insights I was missing and needed further exploring. Furthermore, it helped me to distinguish the people navigating creative disruption from an “emerging” position like those I defined as **Emerging Filmmakers** from those already established within the industry.

This clarity led me to articulate what makes emerging filmmakers distinct. The visual on the right (Figure 23) defines this group as film students, recent graduates, and early-career creatives, existing in a mix of institutions, professional spaces, as well as communal spaces. **My assumption** at this point of my process is that *they are still building their creative identity and professional networks and often navigating between personal ambitions and systemic barriers.*

These 2 diagrams helped me centre my work on emerging filmmakers as potential target audiences that at this point, felt meaningful and strategic in trying to solve a broad problem.



Fig. 22. System Mapping from Intuition (2025).

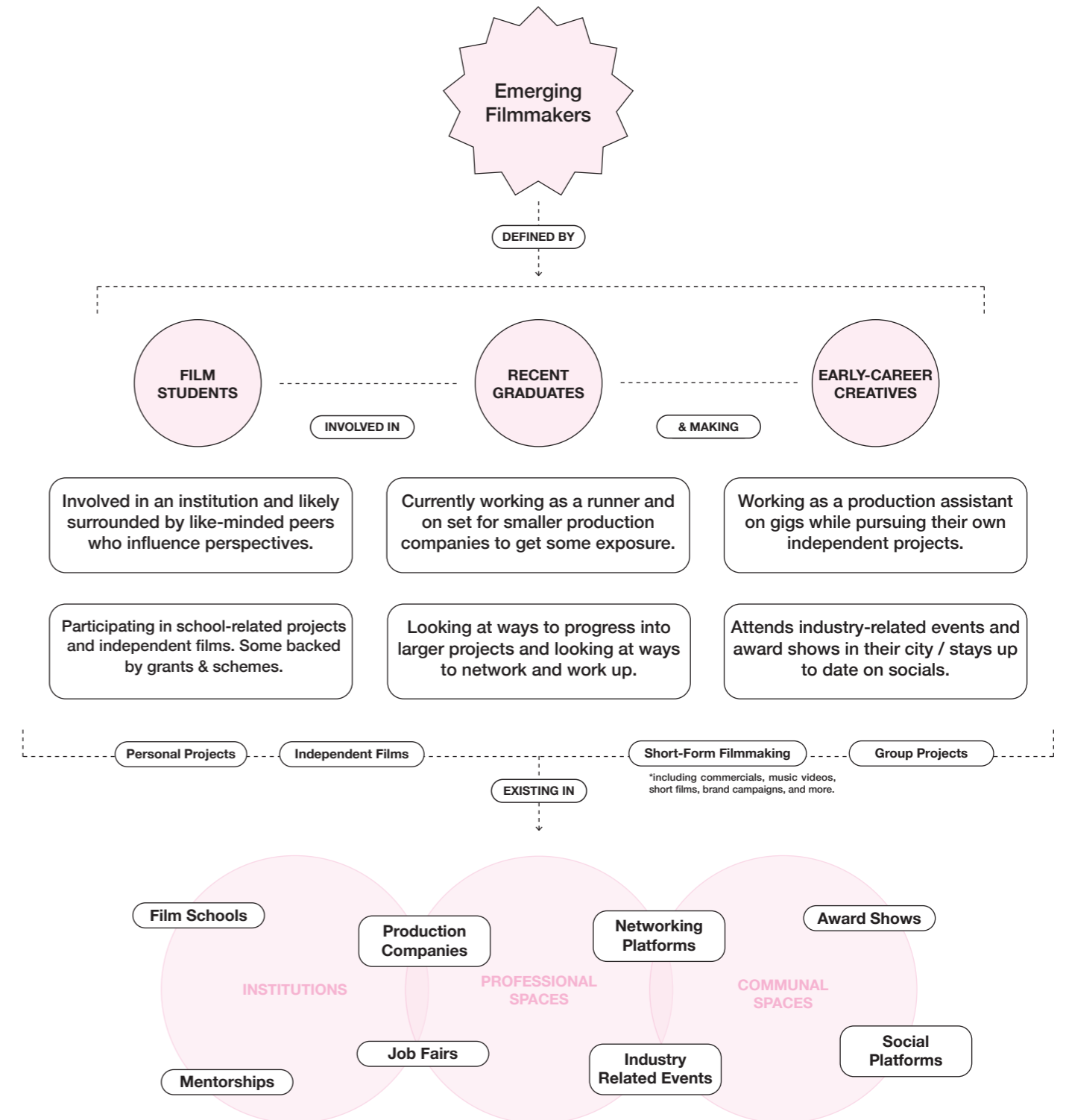


Fig. 23. Visual Breakdown of the Emerging Filmmaker (2025).

# Narrowing Focus: Individual Narratives

Who are the emerging filmmakers that are currently navigating disruption and why did I choose to focus on them?

## Establishing Target Audience

Emerging filmmakers (defined by film students and early graduates looking to pursue a career in film) surfaced throughout my research as one of the most visible, ambitious, and structurally under-supported groups in the industry. They appeared in crowded networking areas, career-facing platforms, and short-form experimental spaces: curious to engage with new tools like AI, but often distanced from the traditional pathways into creative work and influenced by pressure within the industry. For the purposes of this project, this audience specifically includes **early-career creatives aged 20–30 who are based in urban creative hubs** such as London, Rotterdam, Berlin, and Tokyo. These individuals are often still in education or recently graduated, and are now navigating entry into the film industry while developing their own creative identity. While I did not focus this project around specific identity groups, my research acknowledges that emerging filmmakers bring a range of lived experiences, access levels, and

cultural influences into their practice. What connects them is not a single background, but a shared sense of ambition and curiosity particularly in how they approach new technologies and the evolving culture of film production.

This section narrows the focus of my project toward this audience. By establishing who emerging filmmakers are, I aim to clarify the scope of my design research going forward. To support this, I introduce a **Bulls-Eye Stakeholder Influence Map** (Figure 24) that visualises the ecosystem from their perspective, highlighting the adjacent players they collaborate with, depend on, or find themselves disconnected from. With this map in mind, I moved forward by investigating the broader conditions shaping this group’s experience by starting with collective patterns, then gradually narrowing focus into personal narratives and lived realities.

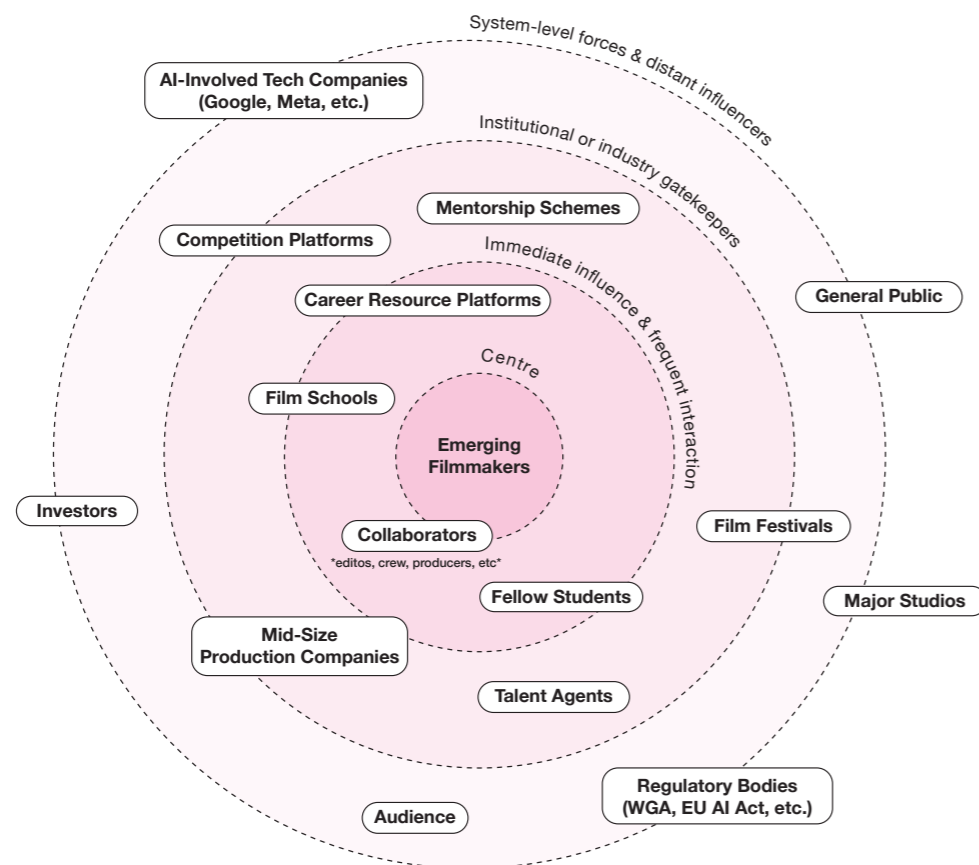


Fig. 24. Bulls-Eye Stakeholder Influence Map adapted for emerging filmmakers, mapping surrounding actors based on proximity of influence and access (2025).

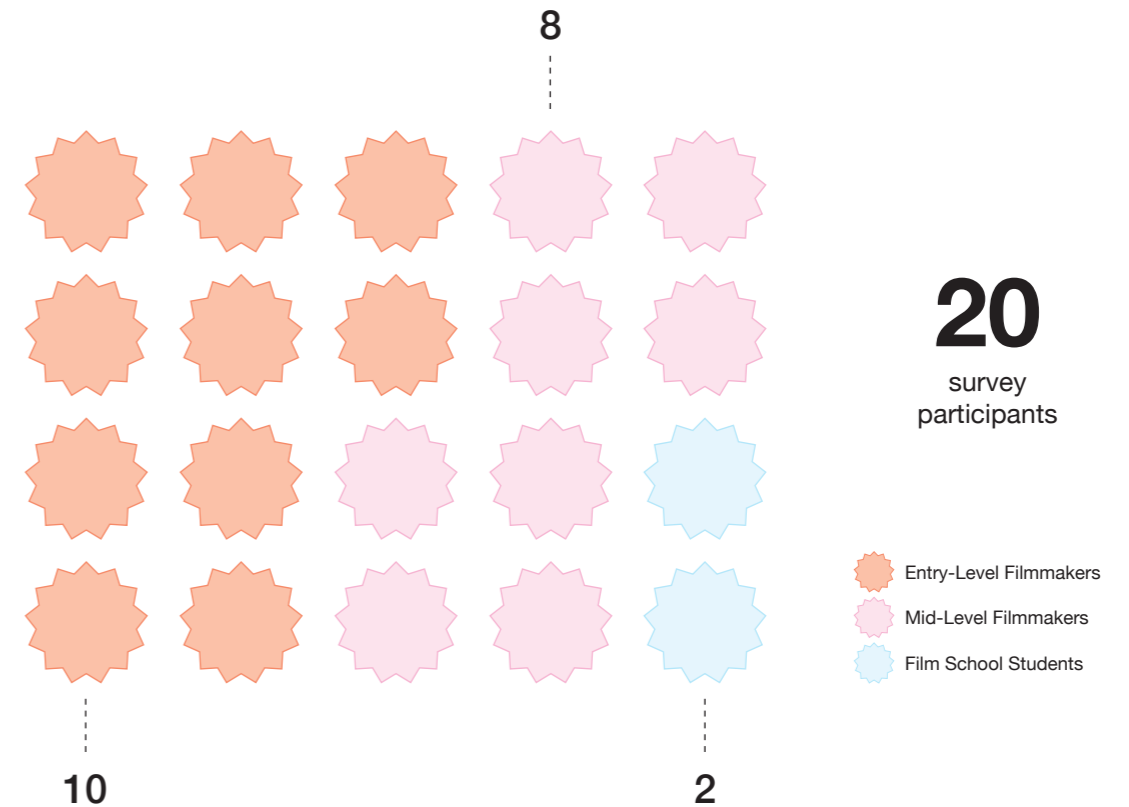
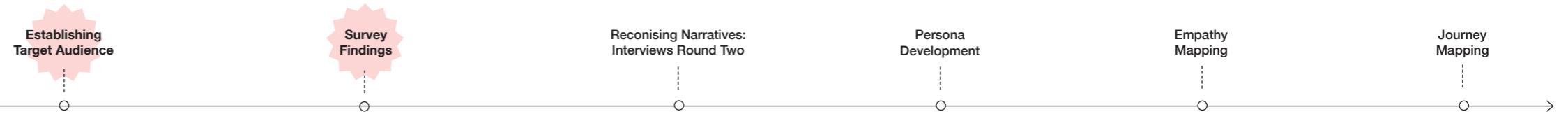


Fig. 25. Respondents were asked to identify their current career stage (2025).

## Survey Findings

To better understand how emerging filmmakers are responding to AI, I conducted a **16 question survey with 20 participants** (see Appendix 3) across various roles and locations to find out how the perceived problem of AI was affecting this group of people. The goal was to explore their experiences, current use of AI, perceived risks, and adaptive strategies.

### Who Are the Emerging Filmmakers?

This survey included **20 early-career creatives**: 10 entry-level professionals, 8 mid-career filmmakers, and 2 film students (Figure 25). Most respondents were already active in the industry, not just training for it, which for me, validated their relevance as a target audience.

Their creative focus was varied but production-heavy: Producing was the most common role (11), followed by Directing (5) and Cinematography (2), with a few also identifying with writing and editing. Geographically, participants came from a wide range of locations including Japan, the UK, the Netherlands, South Africa, Germany, the UAE, and the US which showed a diverse, international spread.



Fig. 26. Printed survey poster placed at LCC Screen School (2025).



**Are Emerging Filmmakers Already Using AI?**

Despite mixed feelings about AI's long-term impact which will be seen in a later question, **nearly all participants (95%)** (Figure 27) said they already use AI tools in some form whether it was for scripting, research, visuals, or admin tasks. This high adoption rate suggests that for many emerging filmmakers, AI isn't a distant future and that it's part of their present-day practice like we saw previously in Figure 17.

It also prompted me to ask:

**How confident do they feel using these tools, and how are they actually applying them?**



**How confident do they feel using these tools, and how are they actually applying them?**

Despite 95% of participants reporting that they use AI in some capacity, few described themselves as fully informed. No respondents strongly agreed, and most hovered near the **neutral midpoint** on the scale (Figure 28). This gap between usage and confidence suggests that while AI is being adopted, emerging filmmakers might still be feeling unequipped to critically understand or steer its creative impact.

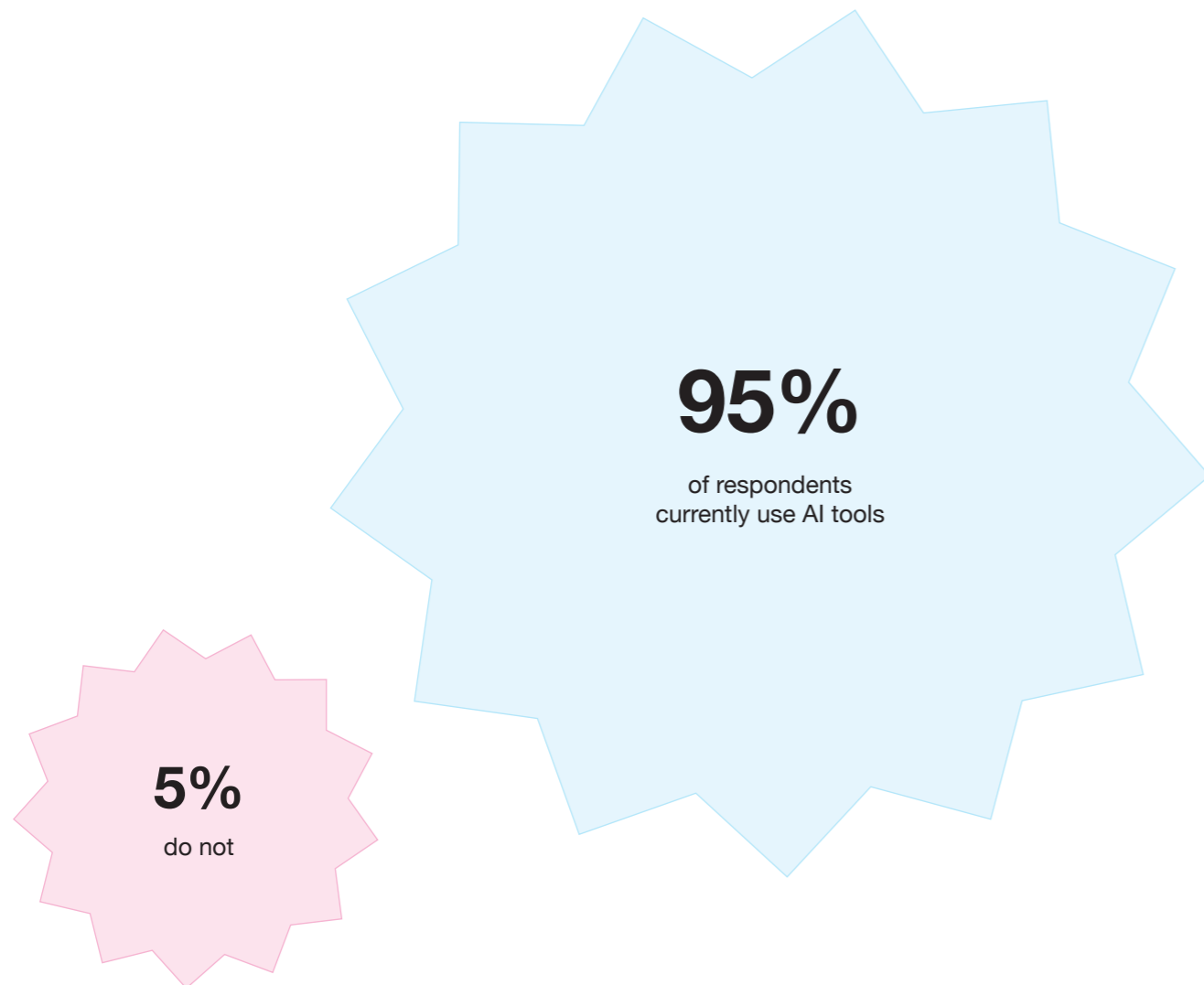


Fig. 27. Survey respondents were asked whether they currently use AI tools in their creative or professional work (2025).

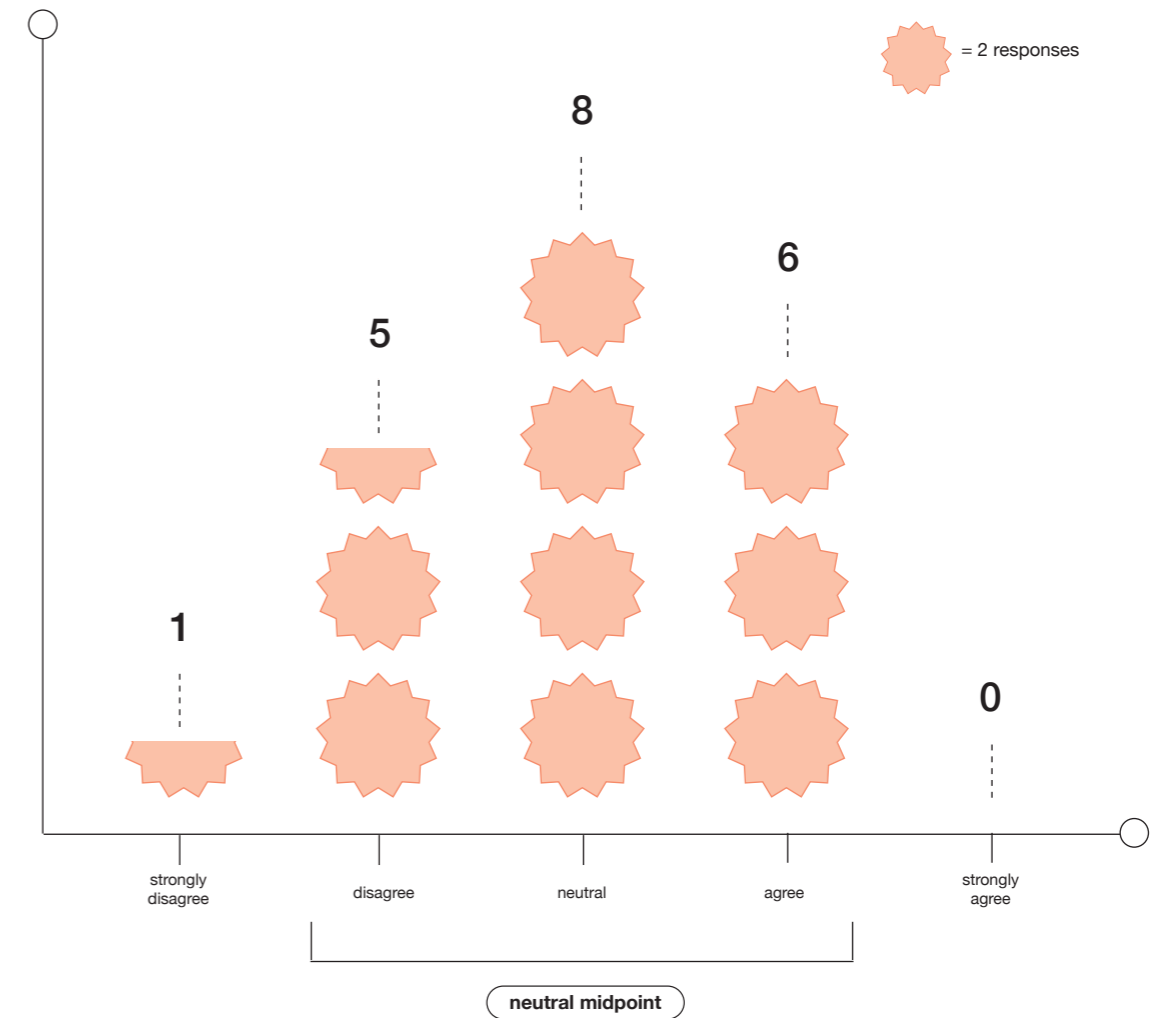


Fig. 28. Respondents were asked to rate how informed they feel about AI's impact on the film industry. Most responses clustered around the midpoint, with no participants strongly agreeing (2025).



### How Are Emerging Filmmakers Using AI?

The most common uses of AI among emerging filmmakers were for writing assistance (scripts, treatments, emails) and marketing or distribution content (trailers, social posts) (Figure 29). Visual concepting, admin, and light brainstorming also appeared, but far less frequently. Only one respondent indicated using AI for editing or post-production, suggesting that **AI's role remains largely supportive**, not yet integrated into deeper creative or technical stages.

While writing and marketing were the most common use cases, respondents also mentioned specific tools they rely on. The most frequently cited were **ChatGPT, Midjourney, Claude, and Perplexity**, with a few also using **Canva** and **Adobe Firefly**. Many described these tools as helpful for “non-creative” tasks, particularly for speeding up research, generating moodboards, or simplifying admin.

This supports an important distinction: **AI is primarily being used to accelerate workflows and support non-core creative tasks, rather than replace hands-on craft or artistic decision-making.**

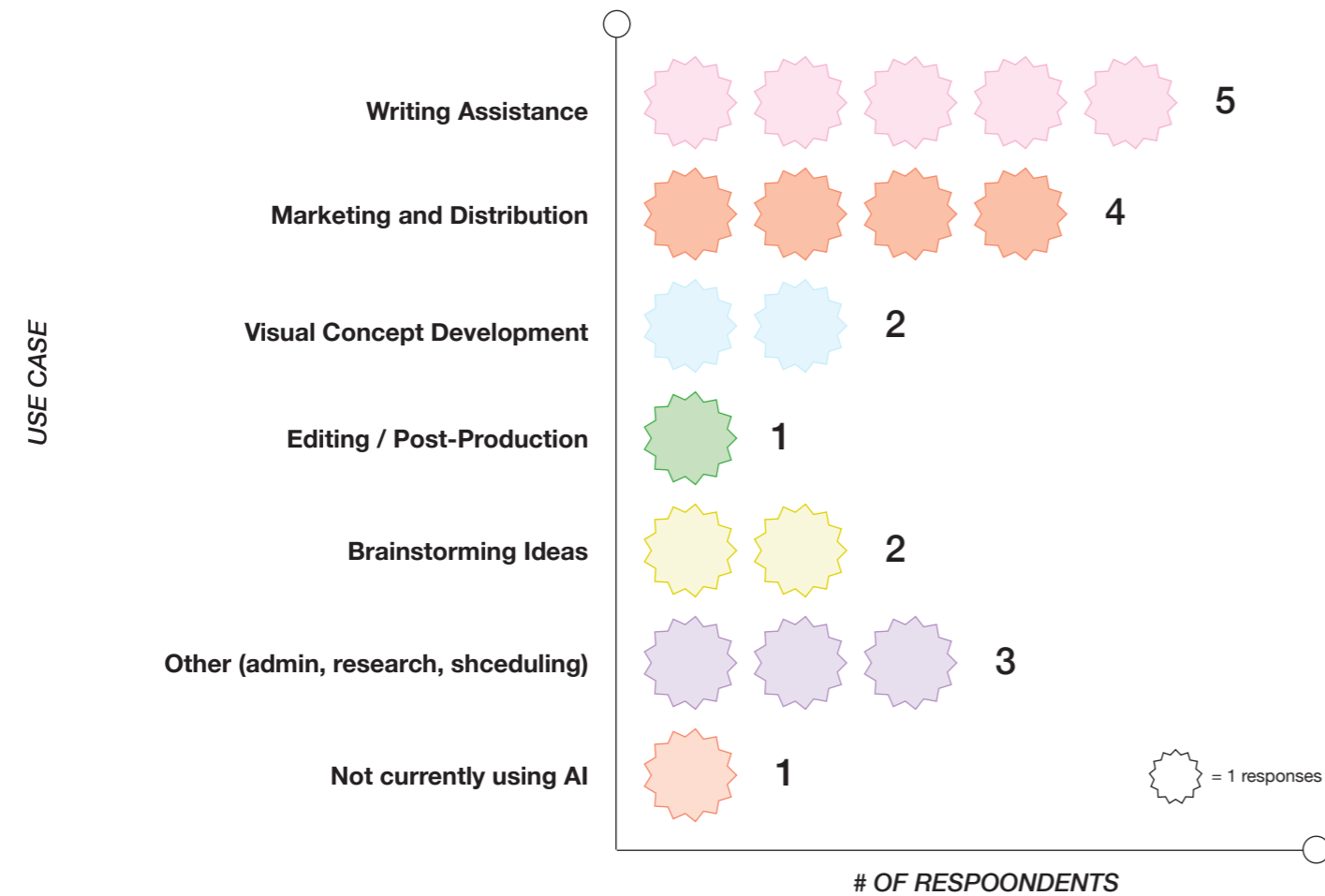


Fig. 29. Respondents were asked which aspects of their workflow they currently use AI tools for (2025).

### Are Emerging Filmmakers Ready for AI?

Most respondents landed in the neutral-to-unprepared range when asked about both their readiness for AI and the support they've received. The near-identical pattern across both questions (Figure 30) reflects a consistent barrier: **that emerging filmmakers are aware of AI's impact, but feel they're navigating it somewhat alone.**

This insight became a **turning point & slight pivot** in my research because it revealed that beyond access or excitement, many creatives are lacking the structural backing to confidently adapt. This disconnect between expectation and support was a key theme I carried into my interviews in the next phase.

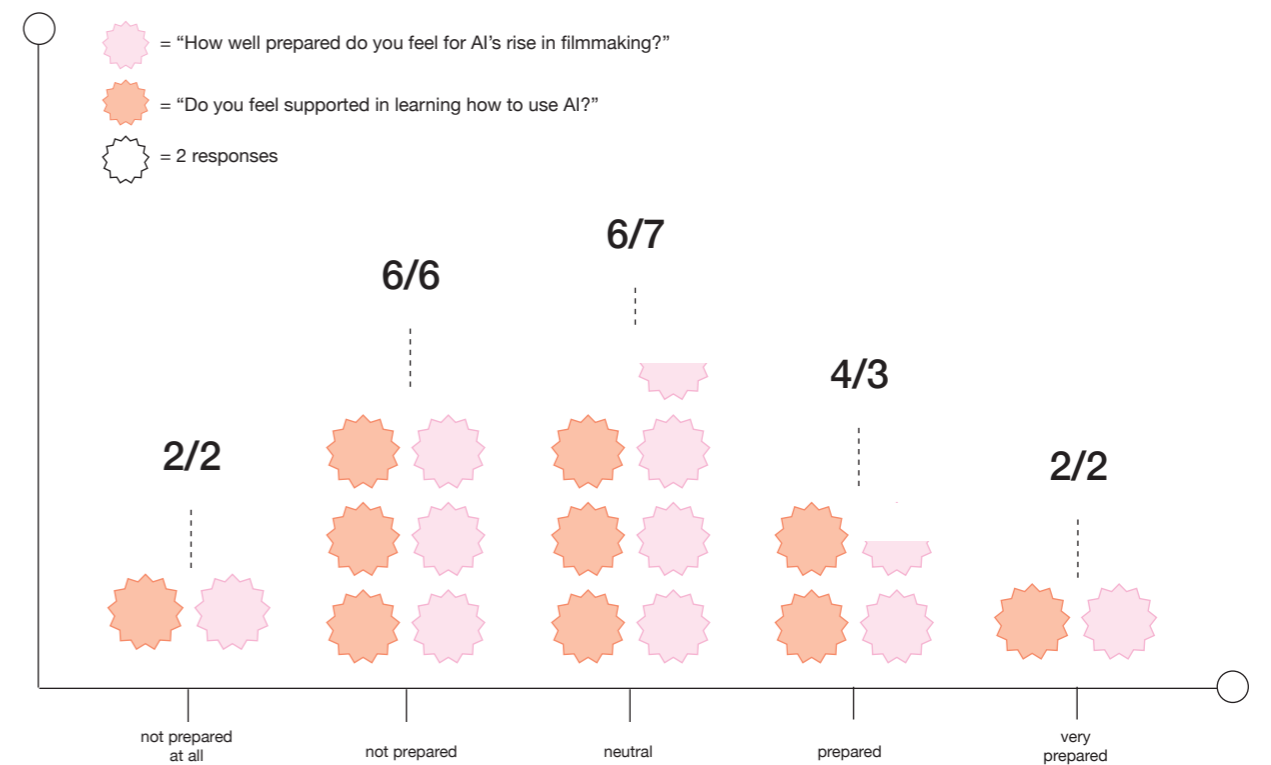


Fig. 30. Respondents rated how prepared they feel for AI's rise in filmmaking, and whether they feel supported in learning to use it (2025).

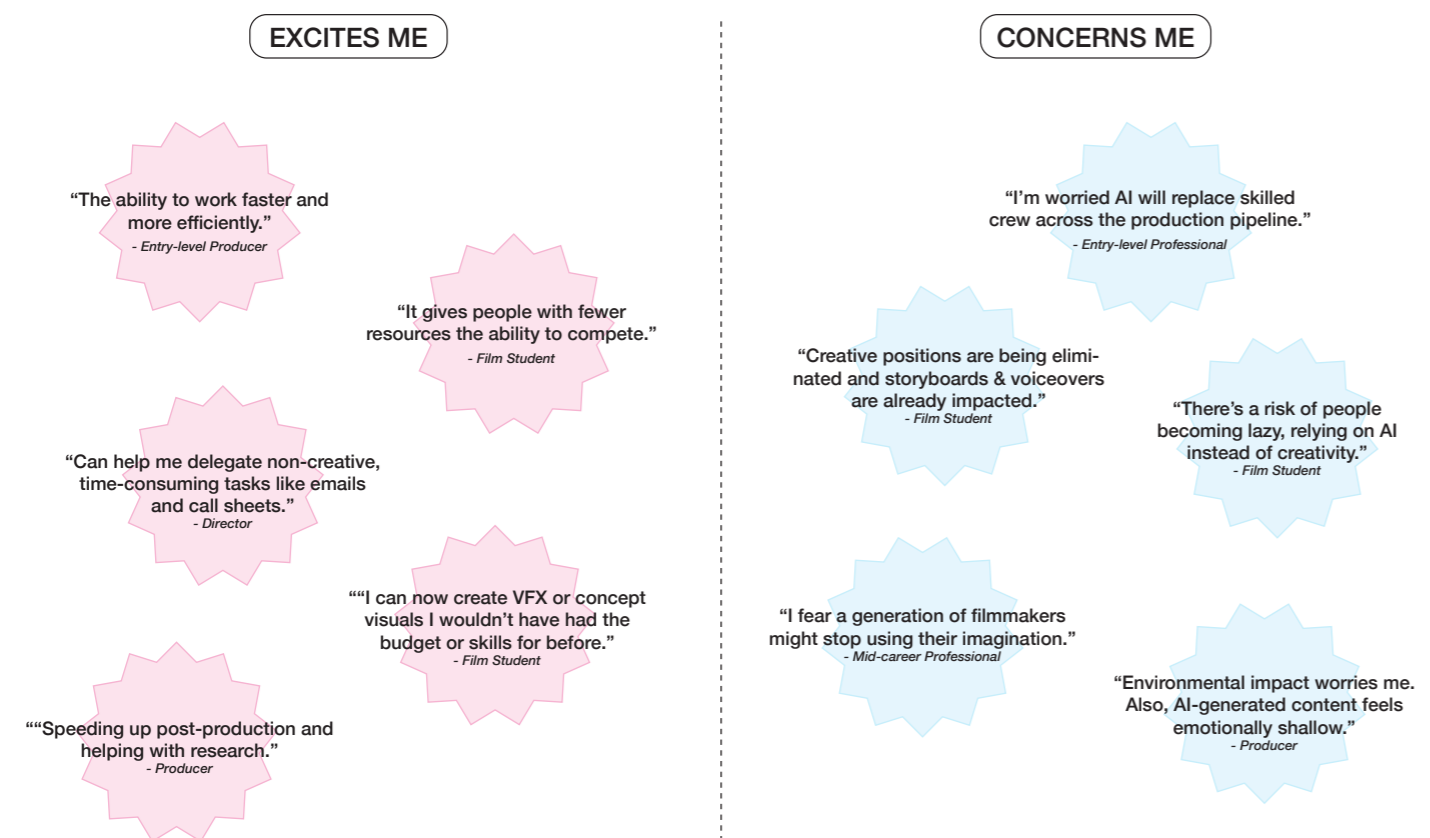


Fig. 31. Respondents were asked what excites them and what concerns them about AI in filmmaking (2025).

**What Excites Them, What Concerns Them?**

Emerging filmmakers held nuanced, emotionally layered views on AI. On the one hand, they're **excited by its potential to save time, support creativity, and level the playing field**, especially for those without access to high-end tools or big budgets (Figure 31). On the other, they fear it could displace jobs, stifle originality, and shift the industry toward bland, shallow, or unsustainable practices.

**Excitement Themes:**

Speed, democratisation, affordability, creative boost

**Concern Themes:**

Job loss, originality, ethical concerns, environmental cost

These quotes helped me identify emotional patterns that I later explored further in my round two of one-on-one interviews shown later on.

**How Optimistic Are Emerging Filmmakers?**

This final survey question asked respondents to reflect on their emotional outlook which was not just toward AI, but their future in film more broadly (Figure 32). Despite earlier concerns around job loss and creative dilution, the responses suggest an underlying theme of resilience. Many may have felt that the system is changing fast, but they still see themselves as part of its future.

All in all, this whole survey revealed an unexpected perspective on emerging filmmakers which was that they were **relatively high in AI adoption and curiosity, but low in confidence and institutional support**. While they're already experimenting with tools like *ChatGPT* and *Midjourney*, many feel they're navigating this shift while isolated. It made me curious in what I could find out more in the future of my process and what I might be missing in this stage of what I already completed.

For myself as a designer, this chart marked an **emotional pivot**. I began to see emerging filmmakers not only as responders to change but as potential shapers of it. This belief will guide the next phase of my process, where I move from pattern recognition into deeper listening through interviews, persona development, and empathy mapping.

Regardless, the process of attempting to empathise with my audience remained interesting and I felt as though I might never stop learning more about them as a community.

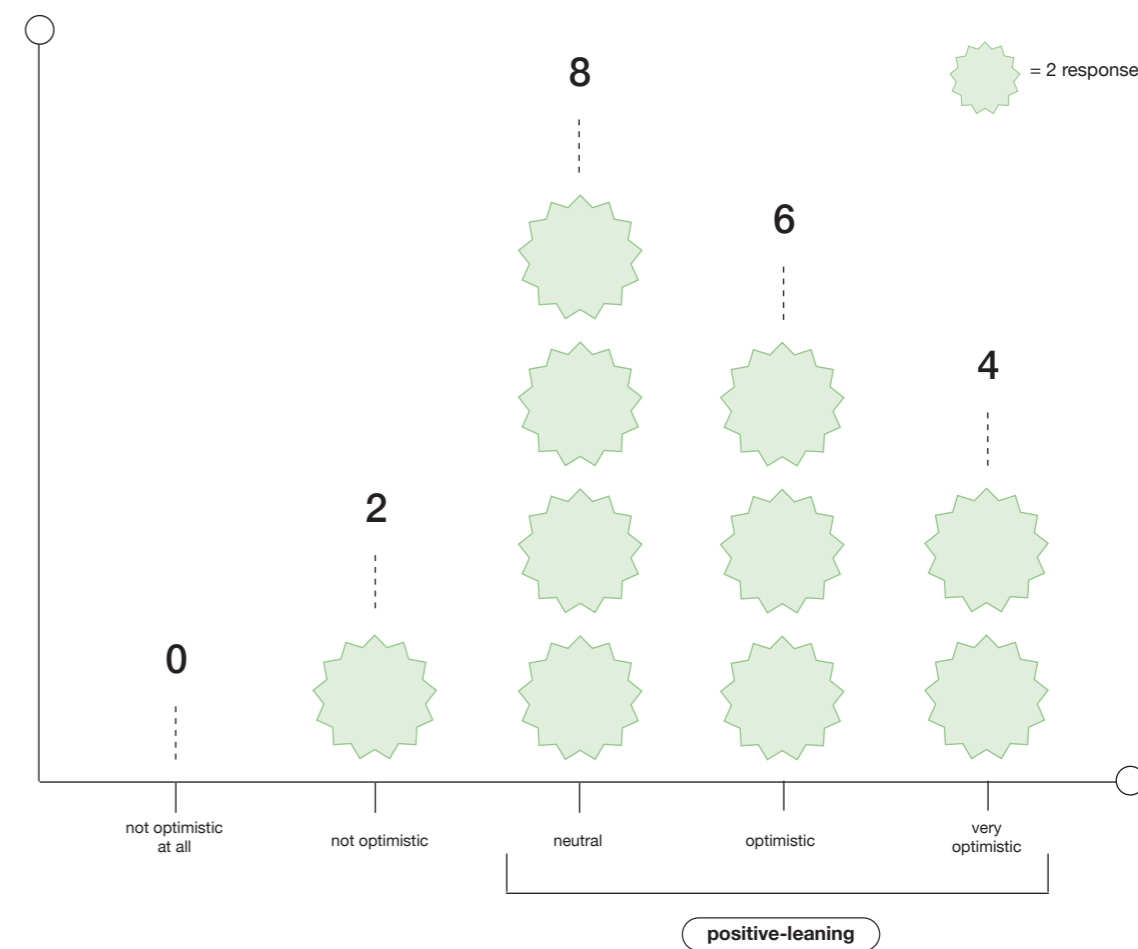


Fig. 32. When asked how optimistic they feel about their future in the film industry, most respondents leaned neutral to positive (2025).



### Recognising Narratives: Interviews #2

After analysing the survey data, I noticed a unique contradiction: while many emerging filmmakers were relatively high in AI adoption and curiosity, they were also low in confidence and institutional support. This contrast which was placed between action and uncertainty, signalled something I wanted to explore further. I also noticed myself pivoting in how I saw this group. I no longer viewed emerging filmmakers solely as responders to technological change, but increasingly as **potential shapers** of it. This realisation made me want to dig deeper, which wasn't just into certain attitudes, but into the actual lived experiences of people navigating this evolving industry.

To do this, I conducted 30-minute interviews (see Appendix 4, 5, and 6 for transcripts) with three participants who asked to remain anonymous, and I **obtained verbal consent from all of them**. One was a 24-year-old audiovisual design student based in Rotterdam, who has worked across

fiction films, teasers, trailers, commercials, documentaries, essay films, and immersive installations. The second was a **22-year-old student** based in the UK, also working across formats and currently completing her studies. The third was a **28-year-old** working professional who is **four years out of film school**, and now freelancing full-time as a director in the industry based dually in the US and Japan.

The aim of these conversations was to uncover specific pain points, hopes, hesitations, and coping strategies that go beyond survey-scale ratings or checkbox responses from my survey. I wanted to hear personal narratives and voices from within the community who are both feeling the pressure of technological change and experimenting with it firsthand. Below are the 4 common themes I identified and organised from the interviews in an organised table (Figure 33). Some quotes have been lightly edited for clarity and flow, while preserving the speaker's intent and tone.

Insights	Keywords Pulled	Theme Description	Quotes
<b>AI in the Creative Workflow</b>	AI in film, post-production, creative roles, production agency, visual effects, pre-production	Participants spoke about how AI tools are increasingly entering creative stages particularly in early development (e.g. moodboards, concepting, and script planning) and post-production (editing, effects), but their use was <b>intentional and tactical</b> , not a replacement.	"Post-production is where I see AI really coming in and it's where time pressure hits hardest." "It's more like a collaboration than a replacement. AI is already happening, but we're still figuring out how to work with it, not compete with it." "It's more like a collaboration than a replacement. AI is already happening, but we're still figuring out how to work with it—not compete with it."
<b>Curiosity vs. Concern</b>	ethical considerations, generational differences, future of AI,	Each participant showed a mix of <b>excitement and hesitation</b> . AI was seen as both a threat to creative identity and an opportunity to streamline or democratise production. Ethical concerns (authorship, labour, sustainability) were common, especially around where this tech is heading and who controls it.	"If I could pause AI development, I would, but I can't, so I'm trying to learn and adapt." "Even in companies where AI is growing, they don't want their campaigns to look AI-generated. There's still a preference for analog." "There's no real regulation, and it's all moving so fast. That's what makes it scary."
<b>Learning &amp; Community Knowledge</b>	learning tools, community, community knowledge, collaborative AI, knowledge sharing	Interviewees often referenced <b>peer learning, self-teaching, and online spaces</b> (like Pinterest, YouTube, Discord) as primary learning environments. There's a desire for more transparent, non-extractive educational support that respects the craft while introducing emerging tech.	"For junior positions like mine, it's not about learning the tools first...it's about understanding what's happening in the industry." "I'm learning more from people around me than from official platforms. Most of the time I hear about AI from a friend or a colleague."
<b>Human Connection &amp; Identity</b>	human effort, human connection, creative process, consumerism, cultural sector	There's a common <b>tension</b> between the <b>efficiency AI offers</b> and the <b>human connection participants value</b> in their work. They talked about how film is not just about production and that instead it's about <b>culture, emotion, preserving tradition and collective making</b> .	"Creativity is a way of connecting...not just producing content. AI doesn't yet bring meaning." "There's always this 'AI look' to it. It's not quite right, even when it's technically impressive."

Fig. 33. Interview insights matrix outlining the four key themes. Each theme synthesises keywords, participant reflections, and illustrative quotes drawn from semi-structured interviews with emerging filmmakers (2025).

Furthermore, to deepen my understanding of emerging filmmakers' needs, I also combined insights from both survey responses and my interviews into a **Clustered Insight Synthesis Diagram** (Figure 34).

The 4 themes (AI in the Creative Workflow, Curiosity vs. Concern, Learning & Community Knowledge, and Human Connection & Identity) emerged as recurring insight clusters across the interviews as well as the survey, and I believe this clustering process helped visualise not just what's being said, but how emotional tone, practical needs, and cultural values overlap within themes.

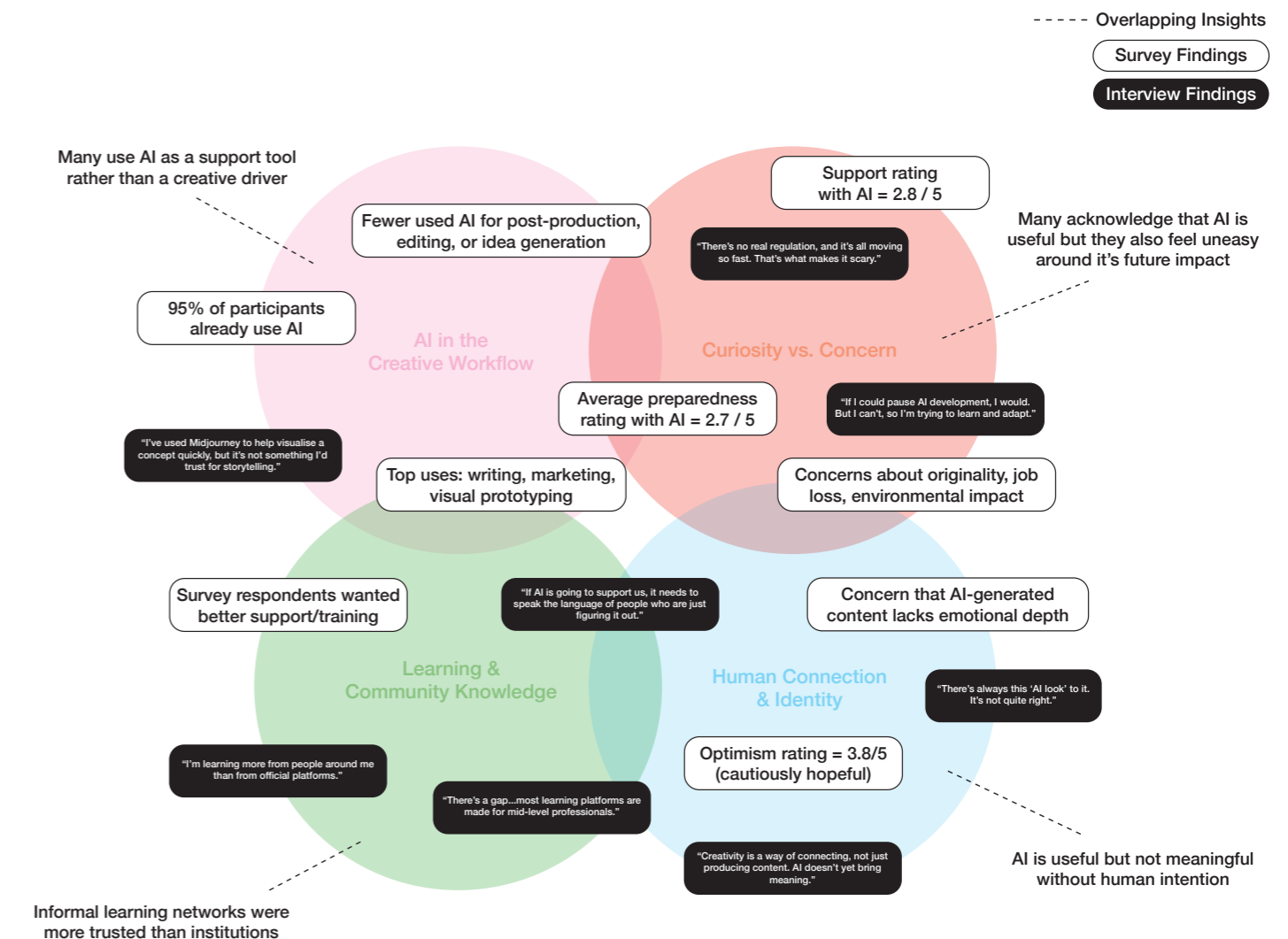


Fig. 34. A synthesis of emerging filmmakers' perspectives on AI, combining survey and interview findings across four key themes (2025).



### Persona Development

The users of this project are primarily emerging filmmakers who are film students currently in education, as well as recent graduates (within the last five years) who are beginning to establish themselves in the creative industries. This definition stems directly from the scope of my research, which revealed shared behaviours, challenges, and aspirations across both student and early-career contexts.

Despite their varied educational or professional stages, this group shares a **transitional identity**: they are navigating the shift from education to industry while contending with the uncertainties brought by AI's rapid integration into creative workflows. My interviews and survey responses revealed that while their excitement about new tools is genuine, their confidence and support systems vary widely.

These 4 personas (Curious Tinkerer, Cautious Optimist, Skeptical Collaborator, and Networked Learner) (Figure 35) are not meant to represent every emerging filmmaker but to reflect key mindsets that emerged from my research. They will actively help ground the project in real human contexts, and guide how I'll move forward with defining the problem and crafting a meaningful design response.

The Curious Tinkerer

The Cautious Optimist

The Skeptical Collaborator

The Networked Learner

**Anna, 22**  
London, UK  
Undergraduate film student

**Primary Goal:**  
To explore new visual styles and get ahead by experimenting with AI tools

**Frustrations:**  
Lacks access to structured learning resources; unsure how to develop a unique creative voice using AI

**Relationship to AI:**

- Uses tools like Midjourney and ChatGPT for visuals and research
- Feels confident using AI for "non-creative" tasks but unsure how far to take it creatively
- Curious and proactive, but overwhelmed by

**Quote:**  
"I love how fast I can get concepts down but I'm not sure if it's actually helping me grow as a filmmaker."

**Noah, 25**  
Rotterdam, NL  
Recent graduate working freelance in documentary production

**Primary Goal:**  
To build a sustainable creative career while staying relevant in a changing industry

**Frustrations:**  
Feels behind on tech knowledge; lacks time and mentorship to explore AI

**Relationship to AI:**

- Has dabbled with AI for marketing, captions, and admin tasks
- Sees the potential in AI, but lacks confidence
- Feels pressure to adapt quickly while juggling freelance demands

**Quotes:**  
"I want to embrace these tools, but I need someone to show me where to start without it feeling like I'm doing it wrong."

**Luca, 27**  
Berlin, DE  
Mid-career filmmaker working in experimental/essay film

**Primary Goal:**  
To protect the integrity of their storytelling while staying aware of industry trends

**Frustrations:**  
Concerned that AI may undermine creative depth or become a crutch

**Relationship to AI:**

- Keeps up with AI news but doesn't use it regularly
- Interested in AI's impact on others but personally resistant
- Advocates for slow adoption with strong ethical considerations

**Quotes:**  
"AI doesn't scare me but it bores me. It solves problems I don't have. But I know I need to pay attention."

**Sam, 23**  
Gothenburg, SE  
Postgraduate student in audiovisual design

**Primary Goal:**  
To grow as a creative through collaboration, feedback, and peer knowledge

**Frustrations:**  
Finds institutional resources outdated or too general; relies heavily on online communities

**Relationship to AI:**

- Uses AI collaboratively for moodboards, research, VFX mockups
- Prefers to learn through experimentation and peer discussion
- Values community-led learning and informal knowledge sharing

**Quotes:**  
"Most of what I've learned has come from group chats, YouTube, or just asking around. Platforms don't speak our language yet."

Fig. 35. A set of four user personas developed to represent distinct yet overlapping mindsets within the emerging filmmaker community. Each persona reflects patterns in attitudes, goals, frustrations, and relationships to AI, grounded in primary research with survey respondents and interview participants (2025).



### Empathy Mapping

I also went on to develop a collaborative Empathy Map (Figure 36) that combines insights across the 4 key personas, and while each persona brings a unique relationship to AI, this visualisation surfaces shared emotional tensions which were especially apparent in the gap between **excitement and uncertainty & experimentation and confusion.**

Themes such as **lack of structured support, trust in peer-led learning,** and a desire to preserve **creative traditions** emerged repeatedly as it did in some previous research methods as well.

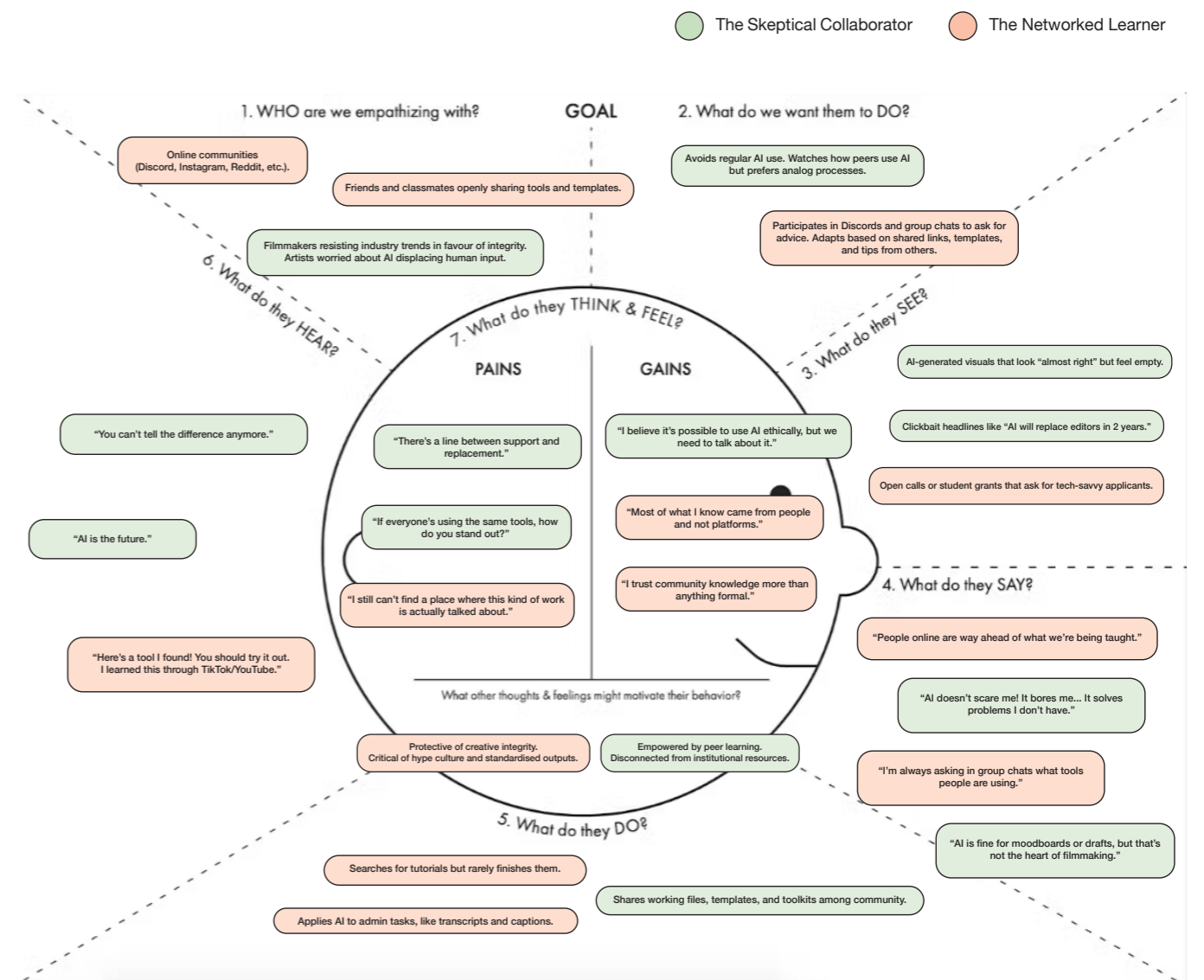
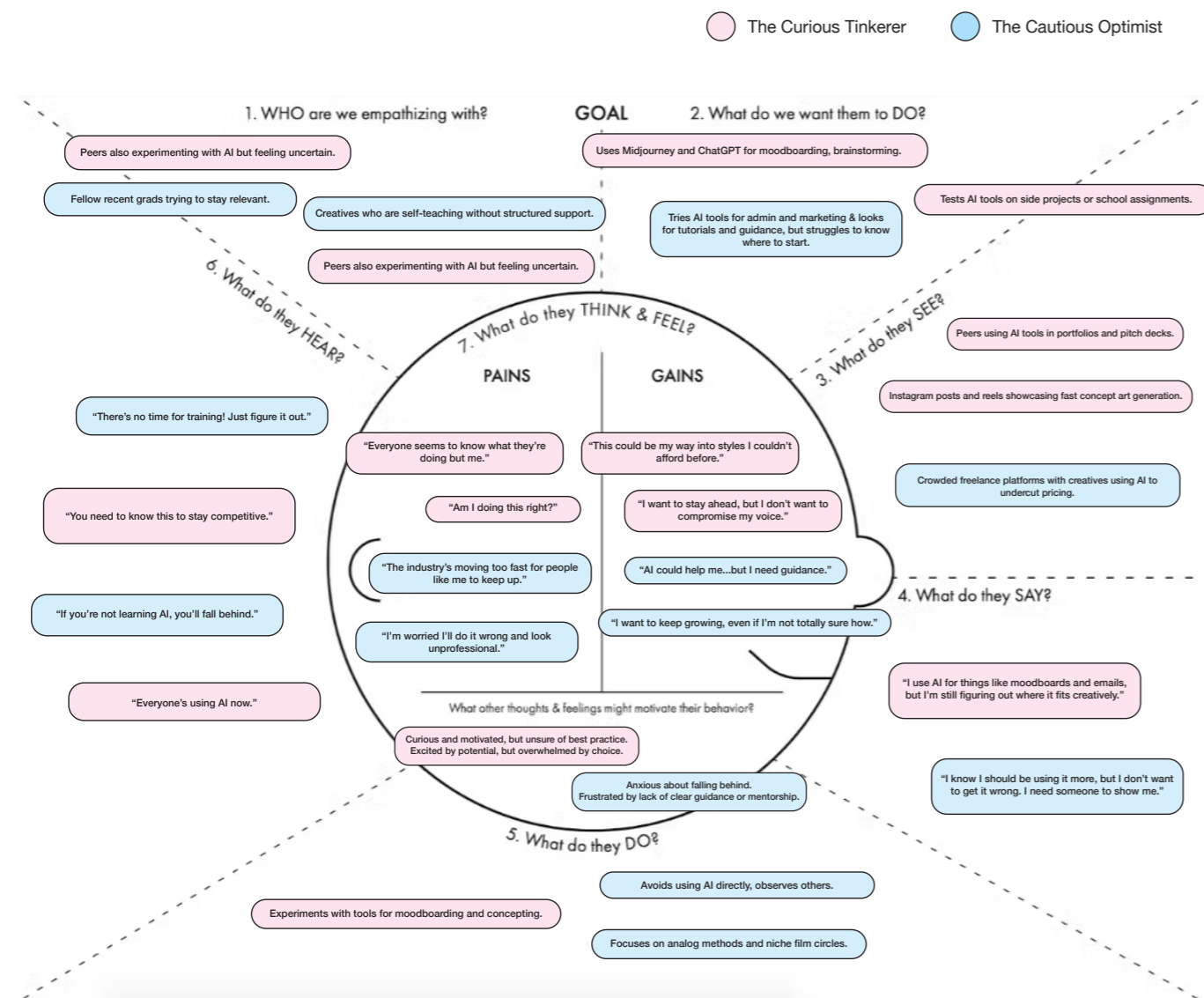


Fig. 36. Combined Empathy Map visualising overlapping experiences of four emerging filmmaker personas (2025).



### Journey Mapping

I created 4 Journey Maps (Figure 37) highlighting the stages that emerging filmmakers move through as they encounter, explore, and reflect on AI in their creative practice. These maps are based on a synthesis of survey findings, interview insights, and empathy mapping. They show not only what participants do, but how they feel, what they struggle with, and where meaningful interventions might occur.

I was able to identify repeated moments of confusion, experimentation, hesitation, and hope. All which are insights that would become crucial in defining my problem and narrowing in further in the *Outline* phase.

- The Curious Tinkerer
- The Skeptical Collaborator
- The Cautious Optimist
- The Networked Learner

Stage	Touchpoints	Actions	Pain Points	Emotions	Opportunities
Discover	Instagram, TikTok, YouTube	Browses creative content; notices AI-generated visuals	Overwhelmed by options; unsure where to start	Curious, eager	Curated beginner-friendly AI toolkits
	Film forums, Discord, YouTube tutorials	Finds inspiration, reads industry news	Feels behind on trends, unsure what tools are relevant	Anxious, curious	Clear intro to tools for different career paths
Learn	Midjourney, ChatGPT, Discord	Experiments with AI tools; seeks tutorials	Confused by technical jargon; lacks structured guidance	Frustrated, determined	Step-by-step guides with community support
	Canva, ChatGPT, Reddit threads	Watches tutorials, tests basic tools	Overwhelmed by conflicting info, no mentor support	Overwhelmed, hopeful	Mentorship-style guidance and starter packs
Apply	University projects, personal films	Integrates AI elements into work	Uncertain about originality; fears over-reliance on AI	Anxious, experimental	Workshops on ethical AI use in creativity
	Client briefs, freelance platforms	Implements AI for admin/marketing tasks	Time pressure, fear of doing something 'wrong'	Stressed, cautious	Templates for ethical, creative AI use
Share	Social media, peer reviews	Shares AI-enhanced projects; seeks feedback	Mixed responses; questions about authenticity	Vulnerable, hopeful	Platforms for constructive peer critique
	Personal journal, peer discussions	Reflects on what worked, what didn't	Unsure how to improve or level up skills	Motivated, still uncertain	Checklists or feedback loops for reflection

Stage	Touchpoints	Actions	Pain Points	Emotions	Opportunities
Discover	Industry news, experimental film circuits, peer discussions	Skims articles on AI in filmmaking; listens to discussions but doesn't engage deeply	Overwhelmed by hype; skeptical of tech solutions that seem creatively shallow	Mild distrust, analytical	Build awareness through values-aligned case studies (ethics, creative depth)
	Discord servers, WhatsApp group chats, Pinterest boards, shared Google Docs	Learns about tools through friends and online communities	Hard to tell which tools are legit; lacks a centralized place to track all resources	Energised, curious	Create a peer-powered, editable directory or community knowledge space
Learn	Film festivals, grant briefs, peer projects using AI	Observes how others are incorporating AI in visual work	Finds outputs formulaic or overly reliant on tools	Disappointed, unconvinced	Showcase alternative uses of AI in non-generic, artistically aligned ways
	Canva, Midjourney, TikTok tutorials, Instagram reels	Uses AI collaboratively on shared projects (moodboards, visuals, admin)	Doesn't always understand how tools work; info is scattered or not beginner-friendly	Playful, semi-confident	Co-designed learning experiences and creative walkthroughs
Apply	Talks with collaborators, open-source tools	Tries low-stakes AI applications (e.g., transcription, upscaling, moodboards)	Distrusts platform motives; unclear where to find non-corporate tools	Skeptical, cautious	Provide transparent tools that prioritize creative autonomy
	Student exhibitions, class group chats, online forums	Shares tips and links with friends; adapts others' workflows	Feels like the "real" knowledge is still hidden behind closed doors (grants, studios)	Empowered, slightly excluded	Formalise peer knowledge into accessible learning systems
Share	Ethical design blogs, peer networks, alternative film communities	Uses AI only when ethically aligned (e.g., accessibility features, archive cleanup)	Resists pressure to conform to trends; fears eroding storytelling quality	Cautious satisfaction	Position AI as a quiet collaborator, not a replacement
	Personal Notion boards, reflective journaling, class crits	Evaluates which AI tools helped vs. hindered creative intent	Still unsure how AI-generated content is perceived professionally	Growing, uncertain	Create reflective tools to help young creatives evaluate and evolve their AI practices

Fig. 37. Combined Journey Map visualising overlapping experiences of four emerging filmmaker personas (2025).

# Empathy, Reflection & Ethics Review

Bringing care, criticality, and responsibility into focus before diving into the *Outline* phase.

## Before Empathy: Where I Started

Throughout the *Empathise* phase, I set out to understand the needs, concerns, and lived experiences of emerging filmmakers navigating the evolving role of AI in the film industry. Using the broad toolkit used in this extensive chapter, I wanted to ensure that empathy sat at the heart of my process. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, it became about **much more than just collecting insights, and it became a way to ground my design direction in the realities of the people I was designing for.** I started with some assumptions, both about the industry and my audience and as someone who identifies with this particular group of emerging filmmakers, I expected most of this community to feel similarly cautious or even resistant to AI. But the more I investigated, the more I encountered some nuance. Participants of emerging filmmakers **were shaping how AI is being explored and applied.** Some were hesitant but many were curious, inventive, and actively experimenting with these tools which was something that I had not initially expected. That shift in perspective changed how I viewed my role as a designer in this space as it opened me up to stories and experiences I hadn't previously considered, and helped me suspend judgment in favor of listening.

Before conducting any formal primary research, I created a **visual ethnography** in December 2024 as part of the course's In-Progress Exhibition, where I intuitively explored the presence of AI in the creative space. I titled each piece **"WILL AI TELL YOUR STORIES"** (Figure 38) and marked them with the statement **"AI IS HERE."** Looking back, this now feels like the first moment I recognized that AI's presence in storytelling was no longer hypothetical, even before attending the FOCUS LONDON and Dr. Nelson-Tabor's Concentric Circular Diagram (Figure 17) was introduced to me. It was a visual reflection of my initial curiosity and unease, and it set the tone for the questions that would later guide my process.

## The Empathy Work: How I Understood the Audience

There were several subtle but significant **pivots** during this phase. Early on, I shifted from seeing emerging filmmakers as passive recipients of disruption to recognizing them as active participants in shaping how this technology is used. Later, I moved away from tech-based segmentation (by tool

or usage) and instead began focusing on mindset, behavior, and values. These changes didn't happen all at once and instead they emerged gradually through reflection, surprise, and listening closely to the voices I encountered. I mostly pivoted in the very early stages of initial exposure when securing my topic, during some of my early research when I realised the potential emerging filmmakers had in the later stages of the *Zooming In: People and Spaces* section, as well as a few unexpected insights from primary research when assessing actual narratives. The pivotal moments weren't as dramatic, although they were definitely rooted in a lot of realisation and reconsideration.

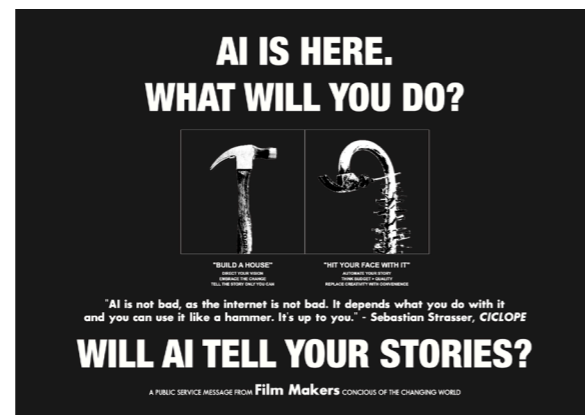


Fig. 38. Visual Ethnography titled "WILL AI TELL YOUR STORIES" (2024).

Of all the methods I used, the survey proved to be the most productive. While I was initially anxious about using it since I feared low participation or receiving superficial responses, I was surprised by the generosity and engagement of those who responded. For me, this was a turning point: I realized

many participants were eager to talk about AI, especially when they felt it related directly to their creative practices or future career paths. Rather than dismissing AI outright, most were navigating it with a mix of experimentation, caution, and excitement. I thought the interviews were equally rich, offering a more emotional, narrative-led layer to the patterns I had seen in the survey data. I believe together, these tools helped me move from generalized assumptions to textured, human-centered understanding.

## [Ethics Review]

Ethically, I was mindful of ensuring all participants felt informed and respected. Each interview began with a clear explanation of the project's purpose, a request for verbal consent, and permission to record. For my survey, I included an **ethics statement** (see Appendix 7) at the beginning so participants knew what they were agreeing to. Throughout this work, I tried to remain sensitive to the vulnerability that can come with talking about creative work in a time of change and also filled in my ethics review prior to conducting any primary research (see Appendix 9).

In building my personas, I was also cautious of representation. I deliberately created 4 distinct personas instead of 2 or 3, to reflect the range of mindsets and experiences I encountered. I wanted to avoid oversimplifying the issue or flattening people's stories into a single viewpoint. This ethical consideration also became particularly important when defining my target audience and I didn't want to narrow my focus so much that I excluded challenges that were just as valid. Furthermore, I don't believe I risked overgeneralising or stereotyping in my audience since I carefully avoided shallow research and over-simplification of the overarching issue particularly during interview segments and face-to-face research. However, I found that avoiding overgeneralisation was actually difficult to do when establishing my target audience since I didn't want to narrow in too close on a particular group, which could ignore other people's challenges that are just as significant. When it came to power dynamics, I tried to ensure that my presence and questioning style during interviews was open and neutral. However, in hindsight, I recognize moments where I may have unintentionally influenced responses or steered conversations especially in interviews. This is an area I could improve in future research. Even with this care, I recognize that my own lens as a researcher influenced

how I interpreted the data. As I described in my *Preface*, I approach design as both an **Empath** and a **Strategist**. This dual mindset allowed me to hold space for emotion and narrative, while also mapping systems and looking for patterns. It also reminded me to regularly check in with my own biases and assumptions throughout the process. I made a deliberate effort to never lose sight of what I wanted to contribute to the film industry and to keep my primary audience of entry-level filmmakers at the heart of my decision-making. I believe my strengths as a designer emerged most clearly through this sustained focus and adaptability. Even as my project pivoted and evolved, **I remained calm, intentional, and driven by a clear sense of purpose.**

## After Empathy: What I Learned & How I Grew

This phase of my research was by far the most overwhelming and scary chapter to take on as part of my process, largely because of the volume of insights and the speed at which the topic is evolving. But I personally thought it was also the most meaningful. It required me to be present, adaptable, and clear-eyed in how I approached a topic that's still unfolding. I walked away from this phase with a deeper understanding of my audience, a stronger sense of purpose, and a new level of confidence in navigating ambiguity and complexity.

This chapter designed to *Empathise*, now forms the backbone of the following *Outline* phase, where I begin to distill these insights into a core friction points then assessing their opportunities before developing them into potential problem statements.



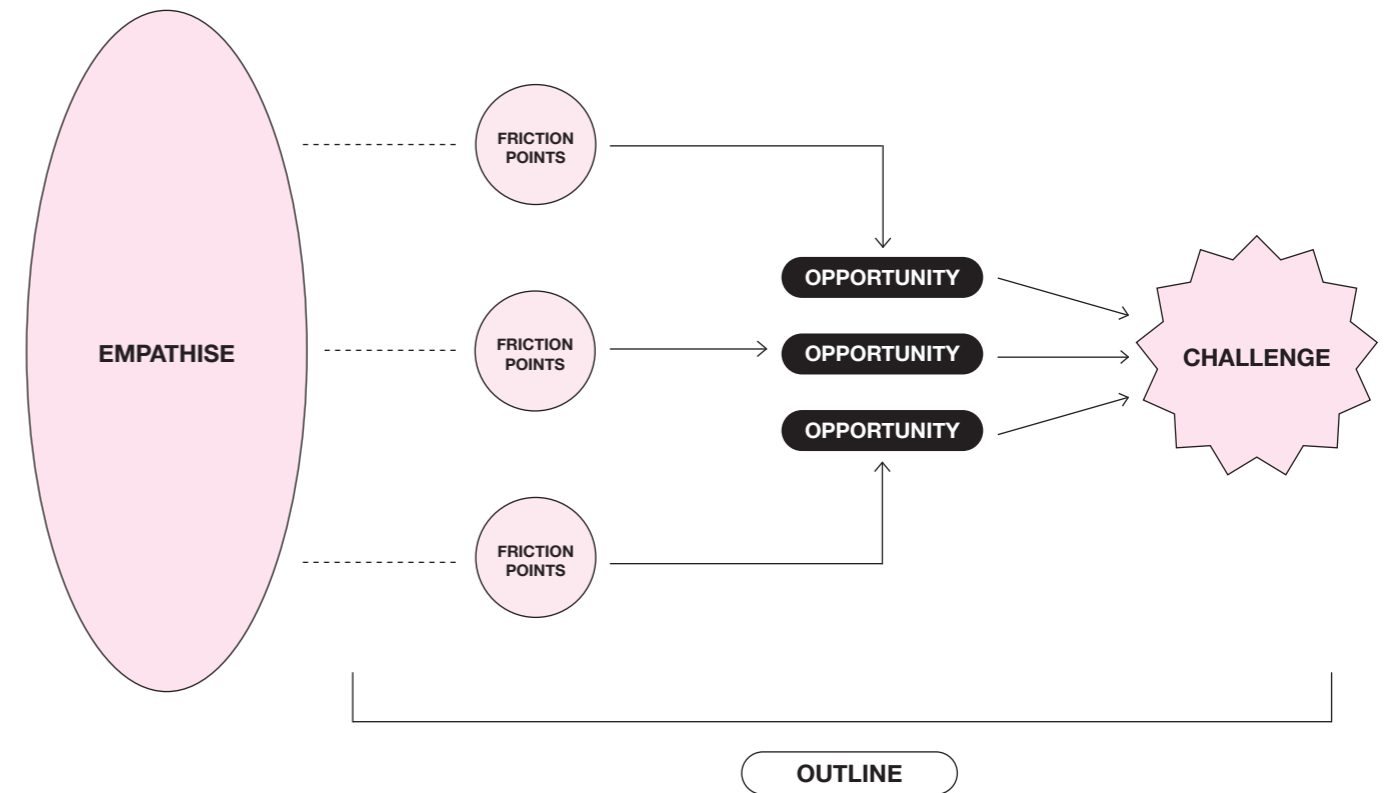


Fig. 40. Process visualization adapted from a framework featured in *Circular Design for Fashion*, reinterpreted to fit the “Outline” phase of my project (2025).

## Outline: Making Sense of the Noise

Surfacing tensions, framing opportunities, and defining the problem space.

### “Outline”

**This chapter (phase) is about turning insight into focus by narrowing the scope of my project and reframing complexity into a clear design direction.**

Having spent the *Empathise* phase gathering layered insight through primary and secondary research, I now shift from **discovery into definition**. This chapter serves as somewhat of the obvious pivot point, since it will serve as the moment where I synthesise what I’ve learned from the complex phase of discovery and finally begin to determine what problem, system, and people I’m truly designing for and why. If the last phase was about listening, observing, and mapping the system, this one is about making sense of that complexity and outlining a path forward.

This chapter will be broken into two main sections reflecting the process shown in the diagram above (Figure 40), before transitioning into the *Ideate* phase of my research:

#### From Friction Points to Opportunity

In this section, I will surface the recurring pain points and tensions that emerged through interviews, surveys, empathy mapping, and journey mapping. Using synthesis tools like insight clustering and opportunity framing, I will work to identify potential areas for meaningful design intervention. These friction points are signals of where current systems fail to support emerging creatives, and where new possibilities might be existing.

#### Defining the Core Challenge

Building on these insights, I will then distill them into a refined challenge statement that will guide the rest of my process. This section is where my research becomes truly directional: a point of clarity that turns reflection into action. I will use tools such as the 5 Whys method and SWOT analysis to support this process, and critically evaluate the space I’m stepping into as a designer.

This phase is particularly important because it connects empathy to strategy which reflect my 2 main mindsets. I think where the complex system I’ve been exploring becomes something more focused and digestible, not by simplifying it, but by shaping it into a problem I’m uniquely positioned to address. The decisions I make here will define how I move into ideation, and ultimately, how I propose to contribute meaningfully to the evolving relationship between emerging filmmakers and AI.

# From Friction Points to Opportunity

What's blocking emerging filmmakers? Where are the tensions, gaps, or moments of confusion they face with AI? And how do they lead to their needs?

## What We Learned From Discovery

The *Empathise* phase revealed much more than just individual opinions as it surfaced a complex web of tensions, contradictions, and evolving behaviors that emerging filmmakers are negotiating as they navigate AI in creative work.

From system-wide structural shifts in the industry showcased in all six elements in my PESTLE Analysis (Figure 15) to intimate emotional responses all across my primary research conducted in the *Narrowing Focus: Individual Narratives* subchapter, my research was able to uncover **4 key thematic tensions** (Figure 41) that consistently reappeared across interviews, surveys, and some of my field observations. The four key themes are presented below in brief:

### 1) AI in the Creative Workflow

While 95% of participants reported using AI, most did so in a limited, support-based capacity (e.g. admin, scripting, prototyping), rather than as a creative driver. Their usage reflected experimentation, not full integration, signaling hesitation and uncertainty around creative control, ethical boundaries, and emotional depth.

### 2) Curiosity vs. Concern

Filmmakers expressed a contradictory relationship with AI: excitement for its potential, yet discomfort with its pace and implications. Concerns about job displacement, regulation, and AI's capacity to mimic but not feel, echoed throughout the process. One interviewee put it simply: "If I could pause AI development, I would, but I can't, so I'm trying to learn and adapt" (Figure 33).

### 3) Learning & Community Knowledge

A gap exists between the growing pressure to adapt and the institutional resources available. Emerging creatives trust peers and informal networks over official platforms, often teaching themselves through YouTube, Discord, and group chats. This kind of insight contributes to highlighting a system not built for beginners.

### 4) Human Connection & Identity

At its core, filmmaking is still perceived as an act of emotional communication. Many respondents described AI-generated content as feeling "flat" or "not quite right." These reflections surfaced a shared desire to preserve storytelling as a deeply human, cultural, and connective act.

These tensions appeared across the journey maps I created for each persona: *Curious Tinkerer*, *Cautious Optimist*, *Skeptical Collaborator*, and *Networked Learner*.

Emotional friction emerged at key moments, for example, the *Cautious Optimist* often stalled during application stages due to a lack of confidence in using AI creatively, while the *Networked Learner* navigated a fragmented, community-led approach to learning that was empowering but inconsistent. I strongly believe that these helped map behaviours provided a narrative dimension to the themes on the left, helping show when, where, and how friction points surfaced across different user types.

Together with findings gathered from my primary research and synthesizing those findings into personas and journey maps, it is evident that these tensions reflect deep structural friction points that affect how this new generation of creatives learns, collaborates, and builds identity within an evolving industry. Emerging Filmmakers are navigating a shifting system without a clear map.

## Key Friction Insight Clustering

To move from insight to direction, I began developing specific friction points grounded in the themes I uncovered during the *Empathise* phase. This will be why the arrows extending from **theme** → **friction insights** can be seen in the friction cards to the right (Figure 41).

These developed friction points represent the real-world tensions, contradictions, and unmet needs that emerged across the previous primary research I conducted, paired with consideration derived from my secondary research. While the earlier discovery work helped identify broad emotional and behavioural patterns, this next step allows me to break those themes down further into more distinct and specific moments of friction that can be directly mapped to potential design opportunities. By naming and articulating these points clearly, my aim is to create a bridge between what I've learned and what I might begin to solve in the next process to come.

What We Learned from Discovery

Key Friction Insight Clustering

Friction to Opportunity Road Map

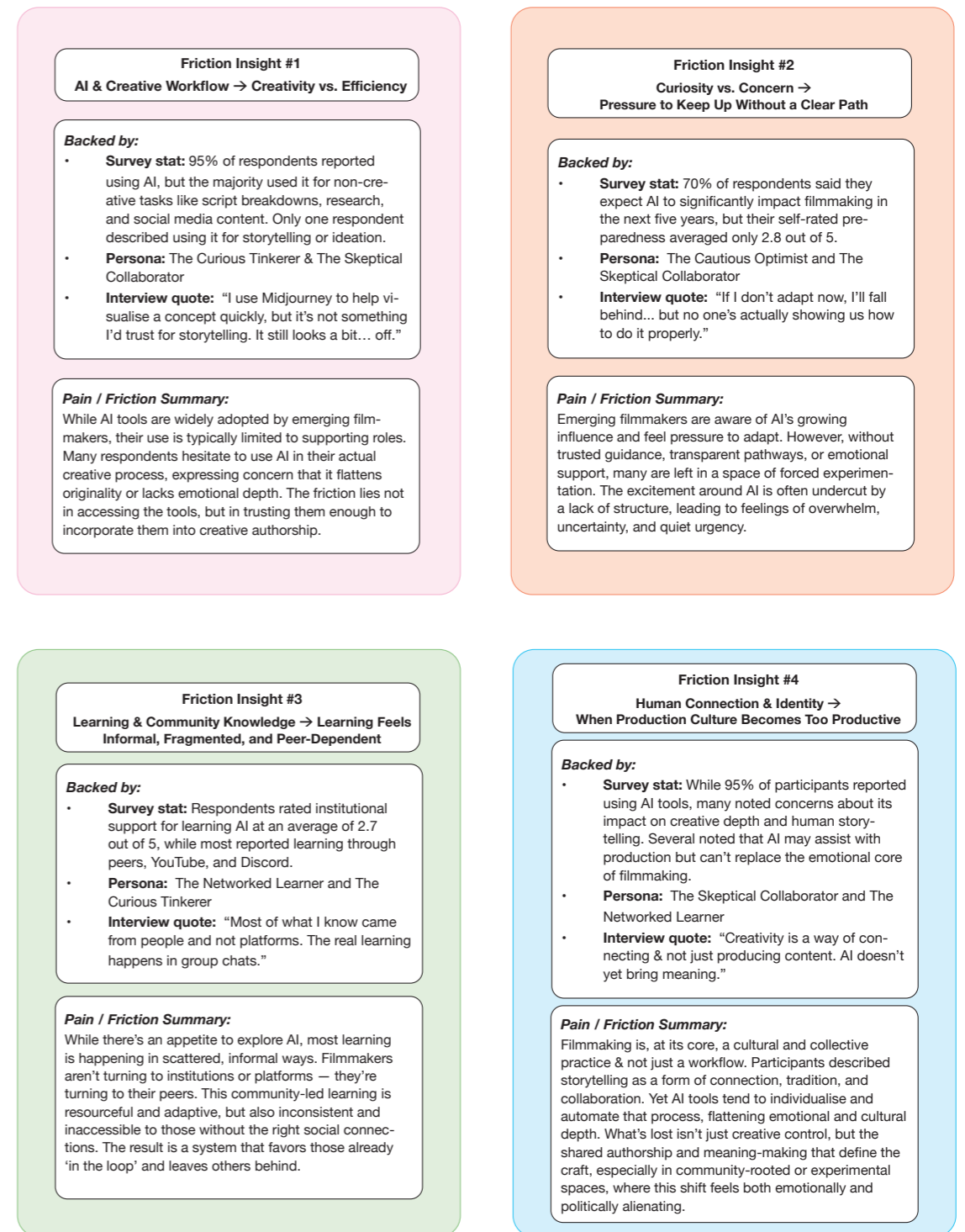


Fig. 41. Four friction insights clustered from my *Empathise* to *Outline* phase (2025).

What We Learned from Discovery

Key Friction Insight Clustering

Friction to Opportunity Road Map

### Friction to Opportunity Roadmap

To understand where the strongest design opportunities lie, I created this Friction to Opportunity Roadmap (Figure 42), mapping out where insights from each theme intersect. While each friction insight reveals specific tensions emerging filmmakers face, it's at their points of overlap that deeper systemic needs begin to surface. These overlaps expose recurring issues that are emotional, structural, and cultural, ranging from performance anxiety and creative dilution to institutional gaps and misaligned definitions of success.

At the centre/left of this map lies a particularly significant **3 way overlap** (marked with a white star) between the tension insights 1) Creativity vs. Efficiency, 2) When Production Culture Becomes Too Productive, and 3) Learning Feels Informal, Fragmented, and Peer-Dependent, where emerging filmmakers face simultaneous pressure to keep up, lack formal learning support, and feel their creative practice is being shaped by productivity rather than expression. This convergence represents the most

critical systemic tension in my research, and one that I feel especially responsible to address. It brings together insights from all four of the core themes I explored during my *Empathise* phase, and reflects the broader values, concerns, and contradictions expressed by my audience. Tackling this intersection means designing not just for one pain point, but for the complex reality many emerging filmmakers are living through, a system where identity, creativity, and belonging are deeply intertwined.

*Note: The arrow seen at the very bottom right signifies that I will be exploring some of the design opportunities further when I go onto defining the core challenge.*

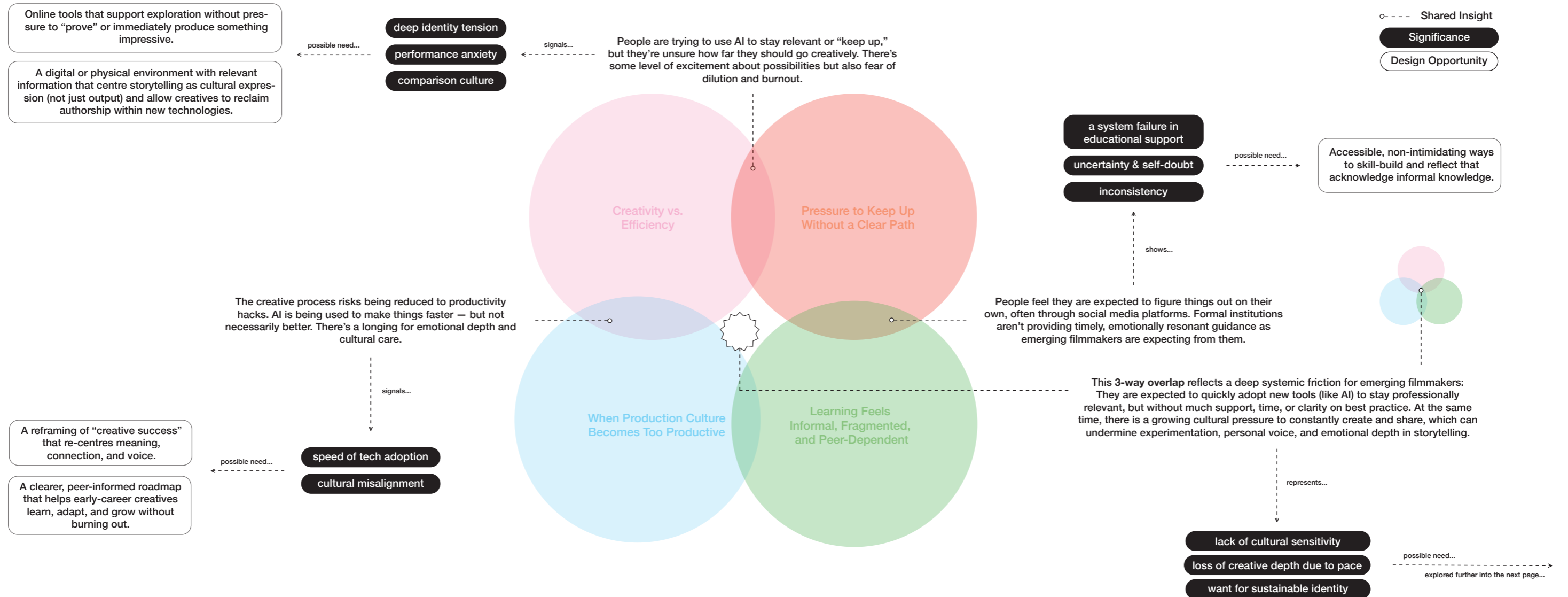


Fig. 42. A synthesis diagram mapping key friction insights from the Empathise phase. The overlaps between themes reveal shared emotional and structural challenges. At the centre, a three-way intersection highlights a critical systemic tension which will be one that will guide the development of the core challenge explored in the next page (2025).

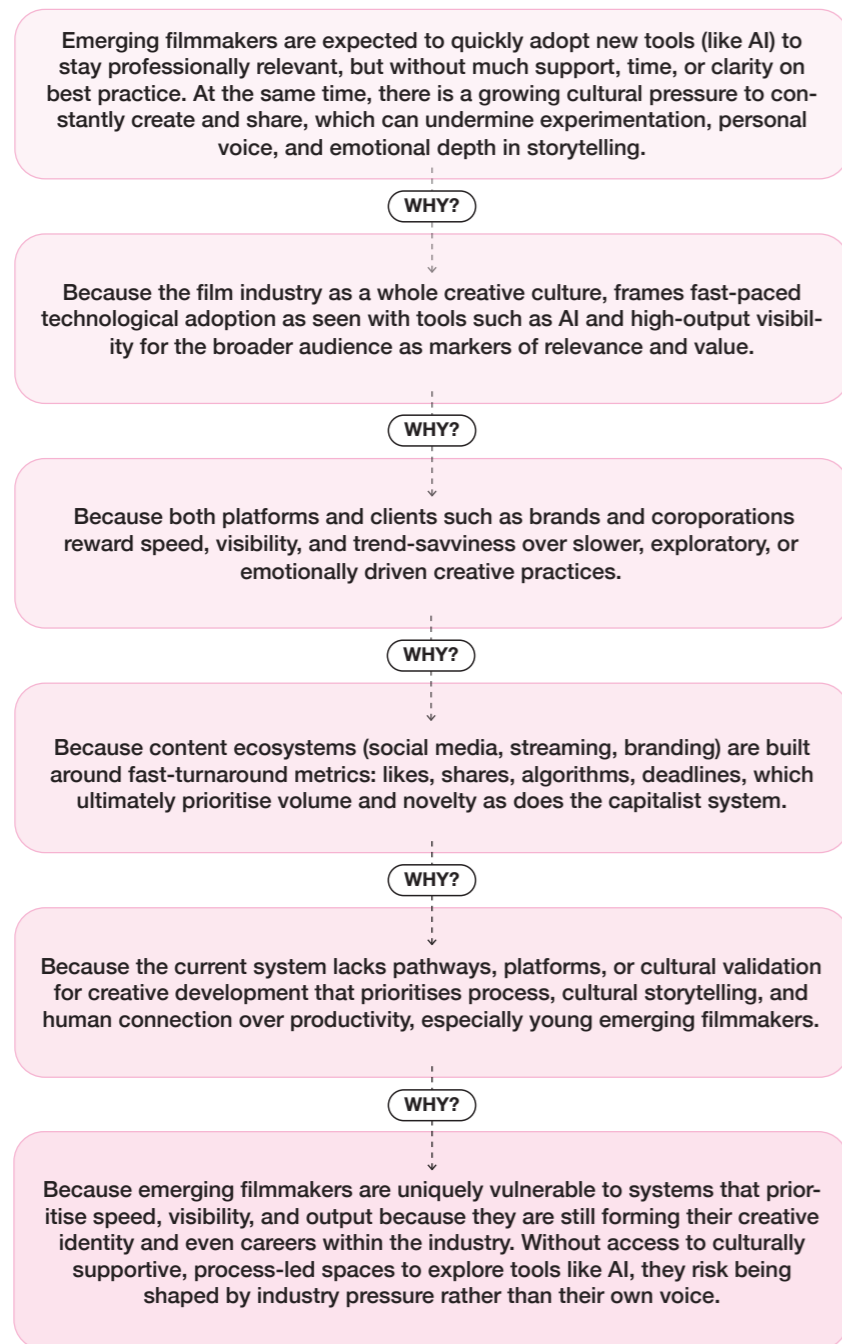
# Defining the Core Challenge

What's really at the heart of this challenge?  
How do layered insights, systemic thinking, and audience needs come together to define a direction worth pursuing?

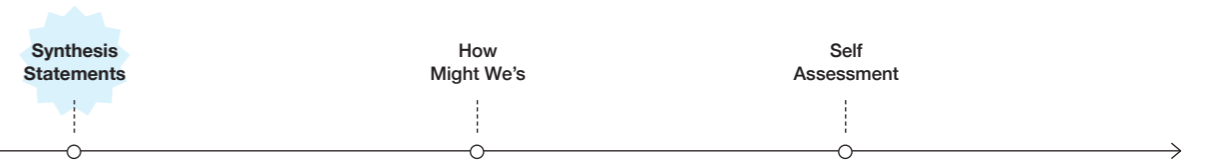
## The 5 Why's

Before coming to a conclusion on my core challenge, I dug a little bit deeper into my highest priority friction insight to uncover the underlying and broader context of what's happening by using the 5 Why's method.

I then went onto develop my four key synthesis statements (to the right) which would help me to build and deliver my **How Might We** questions to finally guide me into my *Ideate* phase.



## Synthesis Statements



**User Need Statement**

Emerging filmmakers need **community-driven guidance and physical or digital tools** because **they're expected to keep up with evolving technologies like AI without the time, support, or clarity to experiment** **meaningfully.**

*USER*      *USER'S NEED / OPPORTUNITY*  
*FRICTION INSIGHT*

**Jobs-To-Be-Done**

"When I'm navigating a fast-paced creative industry that values speed and constant output, I want to explore how to use AI tools without compromising my creative process or personal voice, so I can stay professionally relevant while still telling meaningful stories that reflect who I am and not just what performs well."

*SITUATION*  
*MOTIVATION*  
*OUTCOME*

**Problem Statement**

Noah, a recent film graduate working as a PA but has hopes in directing his own films, is a resourceful but time-poor creator who needs a more intuitive and supportive way to explore AI in filmmaking because current tools feel disconnected from how emerging creatives actually work, collaborate, and learn.

*USER*  
*USER CHARACTERISTICS*  
*USER NEED / OPPORTUNITY*  
*FRICTION INSIGHT*

**Goal Statement**

Our solution will let users discover and explore AI use in filmmaking through peer-informed, value-aligned learning, which will affect emerging filmmakers struggling to stay relevant without losing creative identity, by supporting experimentation, cultural preservation, and community sharing, which we'll measure by increased confidence, engagement with AI tools, and peer network participation.

*ACTION*  
*USER*  
*HOW ?*  
*USER CHARACTERISTICS*

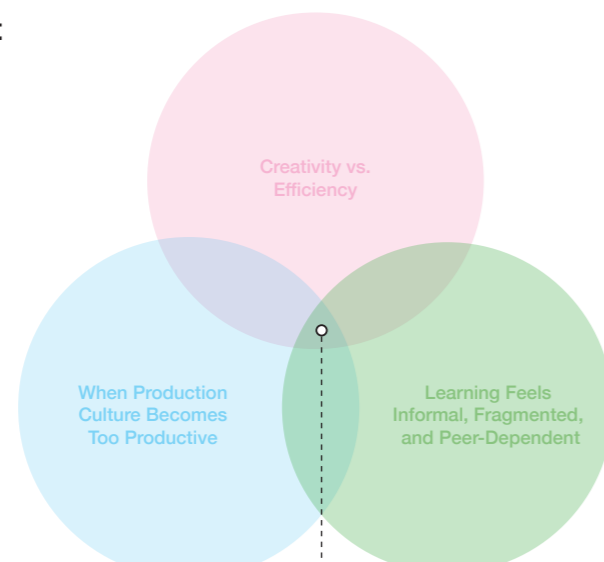
5 Why's

Synthesis Statements

How Might We's

Self Assessment

### How Might We Statement



FROM FRICTION CLUSTERS TO...

#### Overlapping Friction & Main Issue

Emerging filmmakers are expected to quickly adopt new tools (like AI) to stay professionally relevant, but without much support, time, or clarity on best practice. At the same time, there is a growing cultural pressure to constantly create and share, which can undermine experimentation, personal voice, and emotional depth in storytelling.

WHY?

#### Leading Problem

Because they are uniquely vulnerable to systems that prioritise speed, visibility, and output because they are still forming their creative identity and even careers within the industry. Without access to culturally supportive, process-led spaces to explore tools like AI, they risk being shaped by industry pressure rather than their own voice.

SO...

#### How Might We...

- enable slower, more intentional creative practices in an industry obsessed with speed?
- turn fragmented peer-learning spaces into stronger ecosystems of support?
- make digital creative mentorship more accessible and culturally relevant for emerging filmmakers?
- design industry standards that ensure AI adoption supports rather than erodes human collaboration in film?

FOR

#### Emerging Entry- and Junior-level Filmmakers

to defensively accelerate their careers by intentionally leveraging AI tools while preserving the cultural and people-centered foundations of the film industry?

### Self Assessment & Mini Reflection

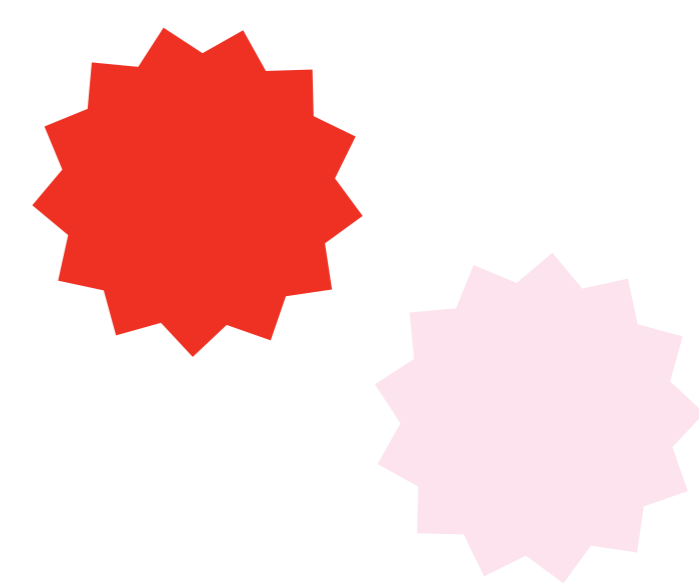
The *Outline* phase helped me shift gears: **from exploring the system to actively working within it.** I began this stage by re-examining the core themes I developed during the *Empathise* phase, and translating them into focused friction insights. That same process visualised in Figure 42, challenged me to stop standing outside the system and start stepping into it to really ask myself: **What's not working? What problems does that create? And what opportunities are born from what the audience actually needs?** It was a perspective shift that grounded me as a problem-solver, not just an observer looking into the industry.

One of the most satisfying moments was working through the 5 Whys and realising the problem wasn't linear but instead that it circled back on itself. The insight I began with ended up being reinforced by the insight I arrived at in the end. That full-circle moment made the complexity feel alive because it felt more human, and no longer a dead end in my project, but part of a living, evolving issue emerging filmmakers are actively situated inside. The clarity that came out of writing my 4 Synthesis Statements (the User Need, JTBD, Problem Statement, and Goal) was also unexpectedly rewarding since they helped me see the full picture, and finally pushed me to articulate the problem in a way that actually moves something forward.

Letting go of certain directions was a bit tough, especially some friction insights and overlaps that I was excited about pursuing. When I discovered the 3-way friction overlap (Figure 42), it felt significant, but a part of me wished I could have included the particular insight, *Learning Feels Informal, Fragmented, and Peer-Dependent* more directly. That friction felt incredibly relevant, and it would've added another rich layer. Still, I'm proud I found an intersection that brought more than two themes together, and I think I made the right call by staying focused and not attempting to do too much by reaching my arms out too far.

It was affirming when I started mapping out how the friction insights led to my *How Might We* questions. Seeing that flow come together was important because it helped me solidify my core direction and feel prepared for the Ideate phase. It's also helped me see where I still need to go: I plan to go back and refine my HMWs to be even more specific, more audience-oriented, and more strategically sound. Now that I've scoped the challenge, I want to make sure the entry point for ideas feels equally well-grounded.

At the start of this phase, the complexity was intimidating, but now that I've gone through summarising and translating insights into something structured and intentional, **I feel proud of what I've accomplished.** I think I can pat myself on the back a bit for pushing through that uncertainty. I was able to define a meaningful challenge and prepare myself to ideate not just something cool, but something my audience might actually want, use, or feel seen by.



# Ideate: From Challenge to Concept

Generating, shaping, and sharpening ideas that respond with care.

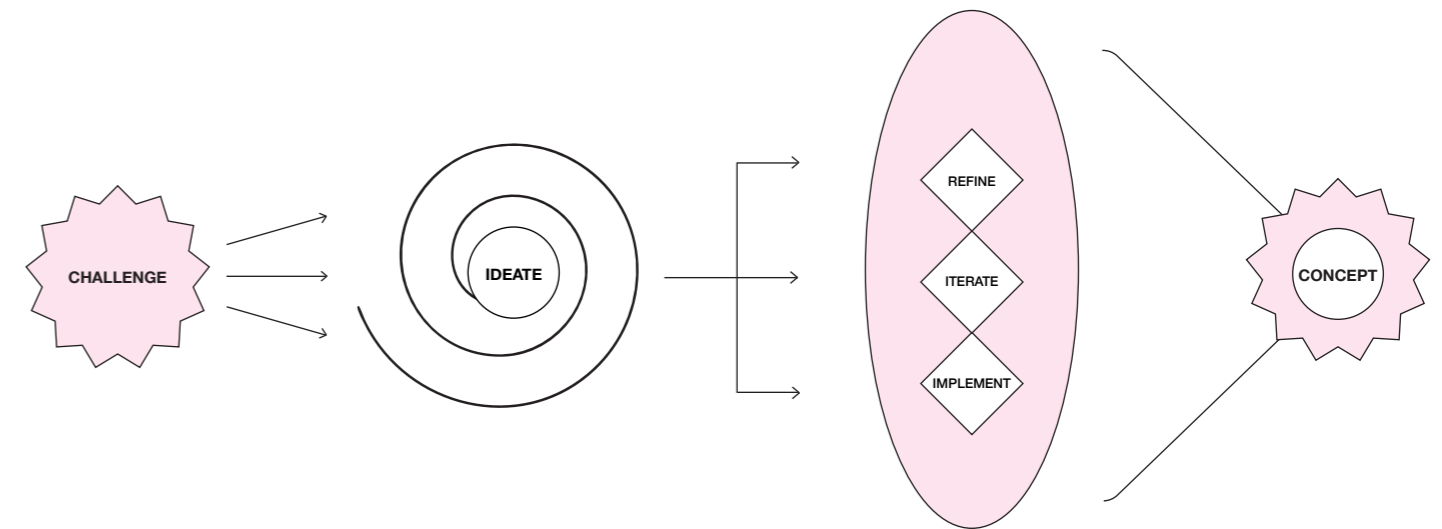


Fig. 44. Process visualization adapted from a framework featured in *Circular Design for Fashion*, reinterpreted to fit the “Ideate” phase of my project (2025).

## “Ideate”

**This chapter (phase) is about expanding creative possibility and exploring multiple pathways toward intervention, grounded in everything I’ve learned.**

After defining a clear problem and refining the space I want to work within in the *Outline* phase, I now begin to stretch outward again by opening myself up to different ways of responding to the challenge. This chapter marks a shift from clarifying *what’s wrong* to imagining *what could be*. It’s also where I intentionally bring creativity back into the process: not just for the sake of innovation, but in pursuit of something meaningful, specific, and rooted in the needs and realities of emerging filmmakers.

The *Ideate* phase will allow me to explore, iterate, and test design directions that respond to the tensions and frictions I’ve uncovered, particularly around identity, speed, authorship, and support in a rapidly evolving creative industry. As always, my goal is to **generate possibilities that align with the values of emerging filmmakers, not just the pressures of the systems they’re navigating.**

This chapter is broken into two main sections, following the process visualised in the diagram above (Figure 44):

### 1. Ideate: Mapping the Opportunity

Coming out of defining the *Challenge*, in this first section, I focus on creative exploration. I revisit my *How Might We* questions, map opportunities, conduct market research, and generate early concepts through methods such as affinity mapping, idea clustering, and concept sketching,

followed by conducting a poll aimed at my audience to gain their approval on which concept they would deem most successful based on their own experiences in the industry. **The goal here is to stretch outward and explore a variety of directions** that reflect different aspects of the challenge space.

### 2. Refine, Iterate, Implement

Next, I begin to converge. Through **strategic evaluation and reflection**, I begin identifying which idea is the most meaningful, feasible, and aligned with the needs of my audience. I conduct a one-on-one collaborative workshop to assess the potential concept, review precedents through market analysis, and reflect on overall insight. This section moves me closer to a potential concept, something I can prototype, evolve, and ultimately position as a response to the challenge (although I didn’t completely succeed).

Unlike the *Empathise* and *Outline* phases, I chose not to include a separate individual reflection section at the end of this chapter. This is because **much of the work in Ideate was inherently reflective**: throughout mapping possibilities, refining ideas, and gathering feedback, I continuously reassessed and recalibrated my direction. Reflection was embedded throughout the creative exploration and decision-making process itself.

# Ideate: Mapping the Opportunity

Where could design intervene? How do reinstating the challenge, mapping insights, and audience testing uncover the clearest opportunities for change?

## Reinstating the Problem

Before moving into idea generation, I wanted to revisit and consolidate the most critical framing from the *Outline* phase: my *How Might We* question. While a range of design directions emerged from overlapping frictions, this refined HMW (Figure 45) represents the challenge I'm choosing to carry forward. It weaves together the core tensions around speed, authorship, learning, and cultural integrity which helps me in grounding my ideation in the real lived experience of emerging filmmakers, and helping ensure that the concepts I develop remain values-aligned.

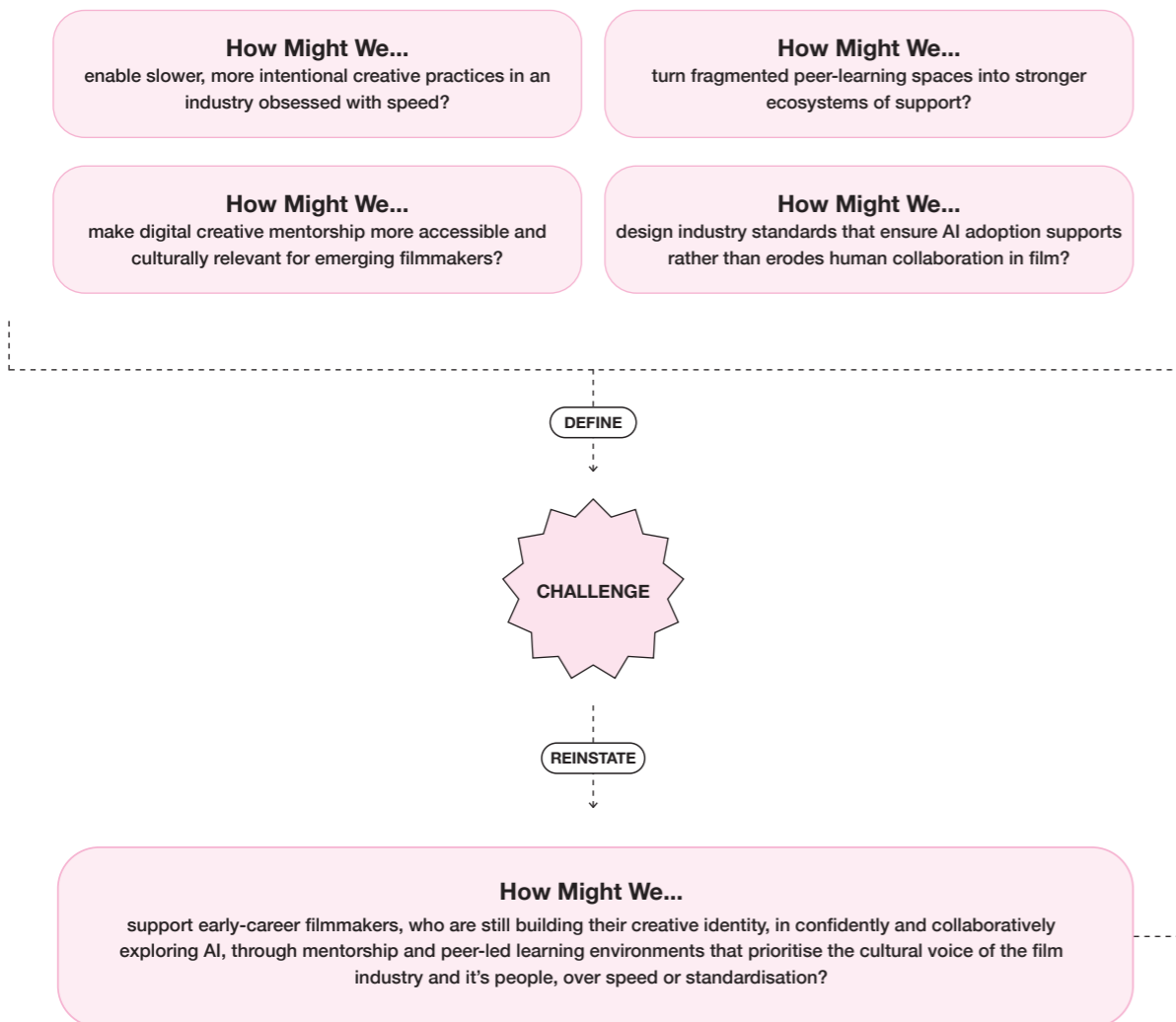


Fig. 45. Reinstating my central How Might We question (2025).

Reinstating the Problem

Affinity Mapping

Idea & Concept Generation

Audience Approval

## Affinity Mapping

This map (Figure 46) organises raw observations into shared patterns, which ultimately helped in surfacing the emotional and cultural frictions shaping how emerging filmmakers are encountering AI. The insights build upward into three core tensions: around identity, confidence, and learning. They will inform the design direction behind my HMW.

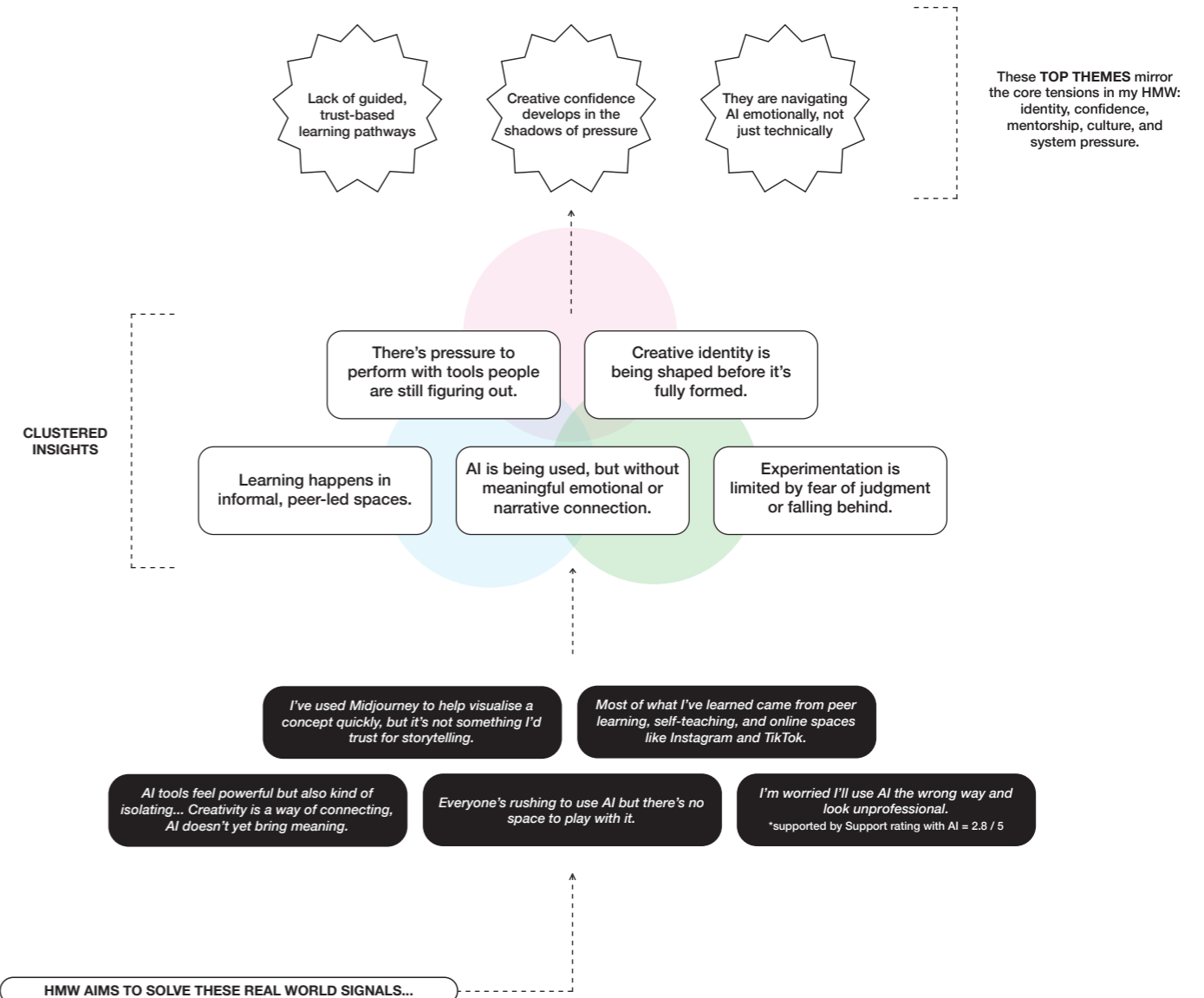


Fig. 46. An affinity map tracing insights from real-world quotes to systemic tensions, revealing the cultural and emotional frictions my HMW statement aims to address. (2025).

Reinstating the Problem

Affinity Mapping

Idea & Concept Generation

Audience Approval

### Idea & Concept Generation

This spread captures a transitional moment in my *Ideation* phase. The first three images to the right (Figure 47) of this text document an in-class exercise led by **Ava Watson**, a tutor in *Design Management* at LCC and multidisciplinary researcher and designer, where we were asked to **visually represent the nuance of our project** without using words. The aim was to illustrate the emotional and systemic tensions at play, drawing from what we had learned so far, and then annotate the connections we noticed within our sketches of digestible symbols and drawings.

Although not expected, this activity actually served as a **pivotal creative prompt** for me, as it helped me begin translating abstract tensions like creative pressure, peer-dependency, and identity-in-flux, into early concept language. Through this activity, I began circling around ideas rooted in education, emotional support, and peer-designed knowledge systems as a potential concept idea.

In the images placed on the next page (Figure 48), I carried that energy found in Watson's in-class activity into a more analytical breakdown of rough concept directions, loosely categorised around the top three friction themes I had previously surfaced in my Affinity Map (Figure 46). Though messy and raw, this process helped me visualise how my HMW question could take shape through potential interventions that are culturally resonant, emotionally grounded, and contextually informed. It was also a chance to imagine a world where creative mentorship, emotional safety, and experimentation are valued as much as technical skill or output.



Fig. 47. In-class ideation activity led by Ava Watson (2025).

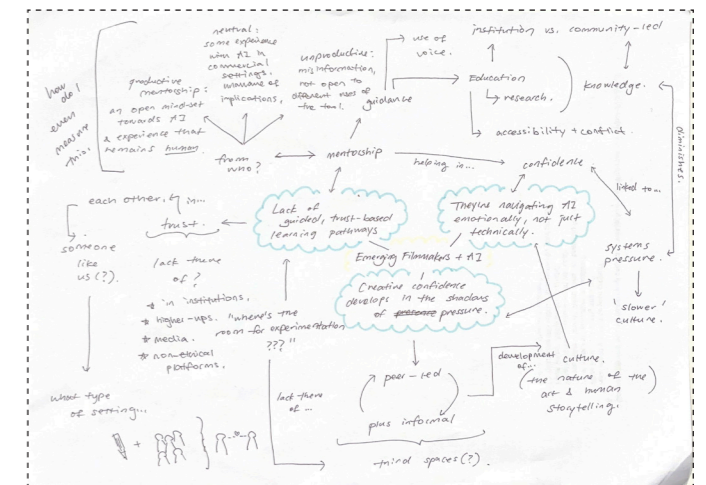
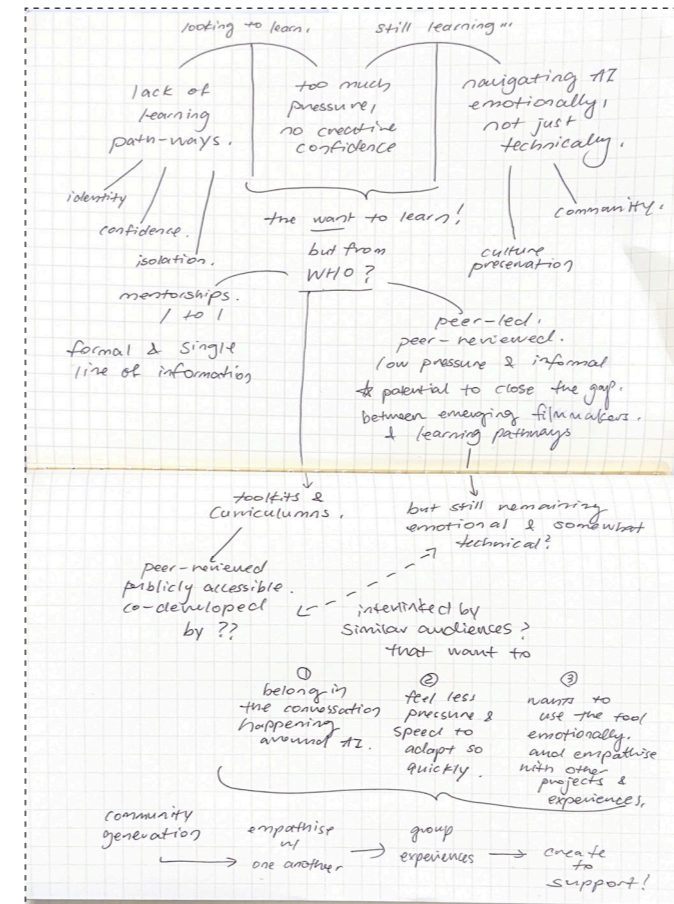


Fig. 48. Translating sketched intuitions into concept directions (2025).

Reinstating the Problem

Affinity Mapping

Idea & Concept Generation

Audience Approval

### Audience Approval

To make sure my concept directions were not just imagined for my audience, but with them, I created a **short digital poll** (see Appendix 8) and shared it with 8 emerging filmmakers: 5 current students and 3 recent graduates (within five years). Each participant was asked to review five early concept directions (Figure 43), developed from ideating around my core themes by mind mapping, and select the one that felt the most relevant, exciting, or useful.

Rather than gathering data to extract, this was an intentional step in working as a **collaborative designer**. I included an open-ended section (Figure 49) where participants could reflect on why they chose the concept they did, and what felt most aligned with their own creative challenges and hopes for the future. This process helped surface real preferences and priorities from the people I'm designing with, not just for. It allowed me to narrow in on ideas with early buy-in and cultural resonance, while reinforcing that co-creation and listening are embedded values in my project approach mentioned earlier in my *Preface*.

Of the 5 early concept directions I shared, 2 stood out clearly as the most resonant for my audience: **The Sandbox Supper Club** and **The Process Journal (Group Edition)** (Figure 50). These concepts were chosen by a majority of participants for their focus on process over polish, emotional comfort, and collaborative learning which were all recurring needs in my research.

This audience feedback gave me a clearer sense of what types of interventions felt both emotionally aligned and practically desirable and useful. It ultimately helped me move forward with confidence in refining a concept that is not only strategically relevant, but deeply grounded in the shared lived experiences of emerging filmmakers.

The Sandbox Supper Club was picked for its informality, creativity, and potential to reframe AI exploration as a collective, embodied, and culturally grounded act. Meanwhile, the Process Journal appealed to those craving a slower, more reflective structure to engage with tools on their own terms, supported by others doing the same.

2 → Here are 5 early concept directions developed from real frictions and needs shared by emerging filmmakers. Please select up to two options that feels most exciting or relevant to you.\*

- Peer-Curated AI Toolkit**  
A shared digital platform where emerging filmmakers collect and annotate AI tools they've used, rating their usefulness, creative flexibility, and learning curve.
- Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform**  
A one-to-one mentorship system that matches early-career filmmakers with short-term, low-pressure mentors based on values in the context of emerging technology, not just skill gaps.
- The Sandbox Supper Club**  
A monthly or pop-up gathering where emerging filmmakers come together to share food, ideas, and experiments with AI in a safe, casual, and non-performative environment. The goal isn't to "show off," but to co-explore, question, and play with the creative possibilities and cultural tensions around AI in filmmaking.
- The Process Journal (Group Edition)**  
A small-group journal that rotates weekly, where each filmmaker documents their AI experiments, creative reflections, and in-progress ideas. Instead of focusing on final outcomes, it celebrates process, voice, and the shared culture of filmmaking. After a full rotation, the group gathers to review and learn from each other's journeys.
- Cultural Learning Loop**  
A physical peer-led workshop format where creatives reflect on cultural storytelling practices, experiment with AI tools together, and co-develop learning materials.

Choose as many as you like

A 1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit

B 2. Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform

C 3. The Sandbox Supper Club

D 4. The Process Journal (Group Edition)

E 5. Cultural Learning Loop

press Enter ↵

3 → Which concept did you choose, and why did it stand out to you? Is there anything you would change, add, or want to see more of in this idea to make it feel more useful or supportive?\*

Type your answer here...

press Enter ↵

4 → Any final thoughts about what would make you feel more confident or supported while learning and experimenting with AI?

Type your answer here...

press Cmd ⌘ + Enter ↵

Never submit passwords! · Report abuse

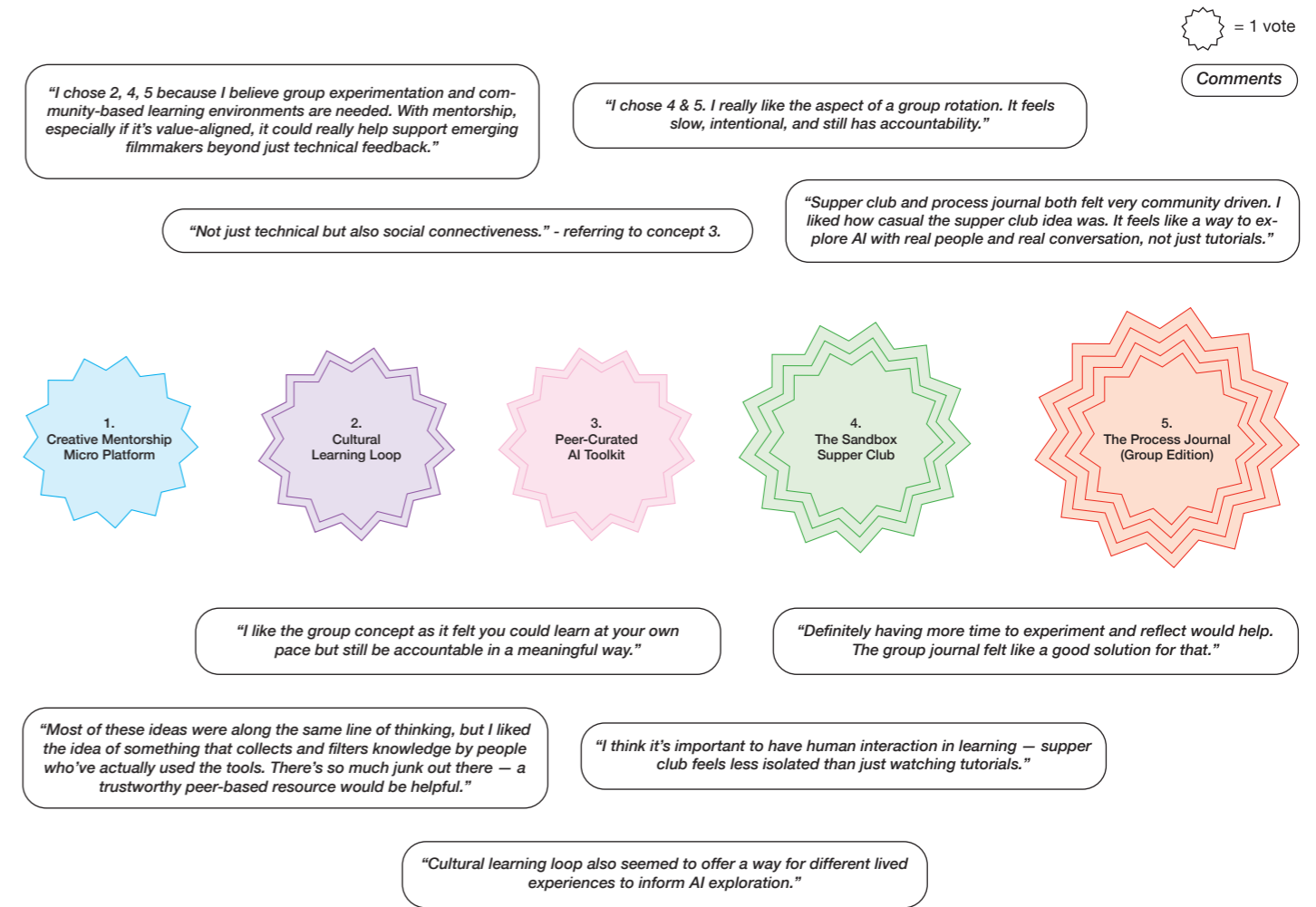


Fig. 49. Digital concept poll distributed to 10 emerging filmmakers (2025).

Fig. 50. Audience feedback mapped across five early concept directions. Participant comments reflect a strong desire for collaborative, culturally grounded, and emotionally supportive learning environments that prioritize experimentation and real dialogue over standardised outputs. (2025).

# Refine, Iterate, & Implement

Which ideas resonate beyond theory? How do real-world feedback and strategic analysis sharpen the direction forward?

## 1:1 Co-Creation Workshop

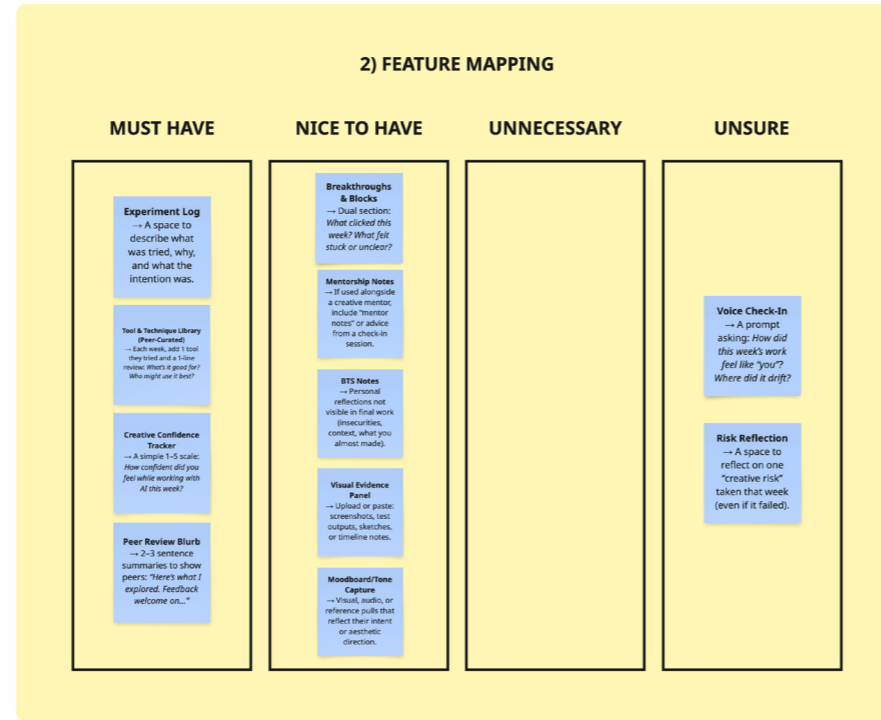
To further ground my concepts in real user experience, I scheduled a one-to-one virtual co-creation workshop with emerging filmmaker Silas, who is currently studying film, branding and advertising. The session lasted approximately one hour and was conducted across 2 platforms: FaceTime (to record audio insights) (see Appendix 9) and Miro (to collaboratively capture written ideas).

I prepared a guided flowchart for the workshop (Figure 51), including a mix of discussion prompts and a tool sorting activity. The goal of the session was to gain deep, qualitative insight into how someone within my target audience might interact with, critique, and shape the Group Process Journal concept based on their own journeys and emotions as emerging filmmakers.

1:1 Co-Creation Workshop

Market Research: Competitor Analysis

Radical Change Making



**Silas, 20**

Silas is a second-year student at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), currently studying Advertising and Branding with a strong interdisciplinary interest in filmmaking. Alongside his coursework, he has developed skills across screenplay writing, videography, editing, sound design, and film theory. His passion for filmmaking has led him to complete numerous film projects and win awards for his work while attending St. Andrews. Silas' unique perspective combining creative storytelling with strategic thinking, made him an ideal collaborator for this 1:1 co-creation workshop.

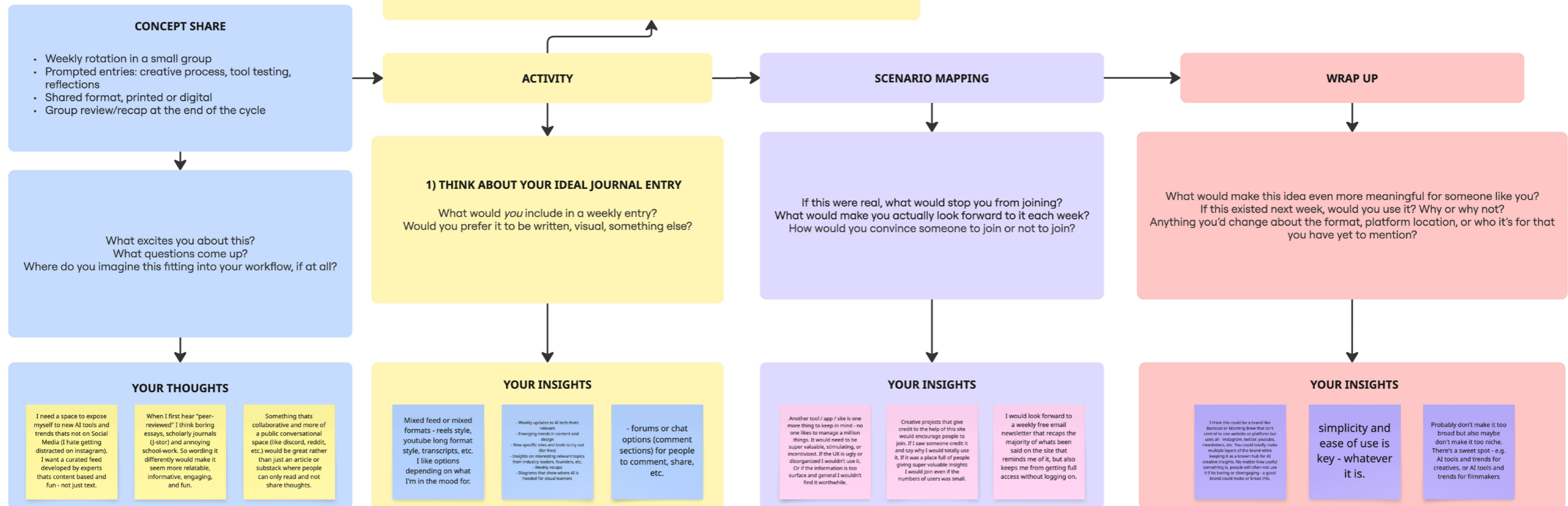


Fig. 51. Flowchart mapping insights from a one-to-one co-creation workshop with Silas the emerging filmmaker (2025).



Following the workshop, it was time to reflect. I was first introduced to the *Man in the Hole* (Figure 52) narrative framework by **Juhee Hahm**, a strategic designer, foresight researcher, and system designer who served as my associate lecturer in the Design Management course.

During her lecture on how design researchers can map and organize a collective journey, she presented the *Man in the Hole* method as a way to capture emotional and intellectual turning points within a process. I found this tool especially fitting for reflecting on the journey of my 1:1 workshop because it offered a clear structure to identify moments of tension, discovery, and resolution, and allowed me to narrate the workshop as a shared human experience and

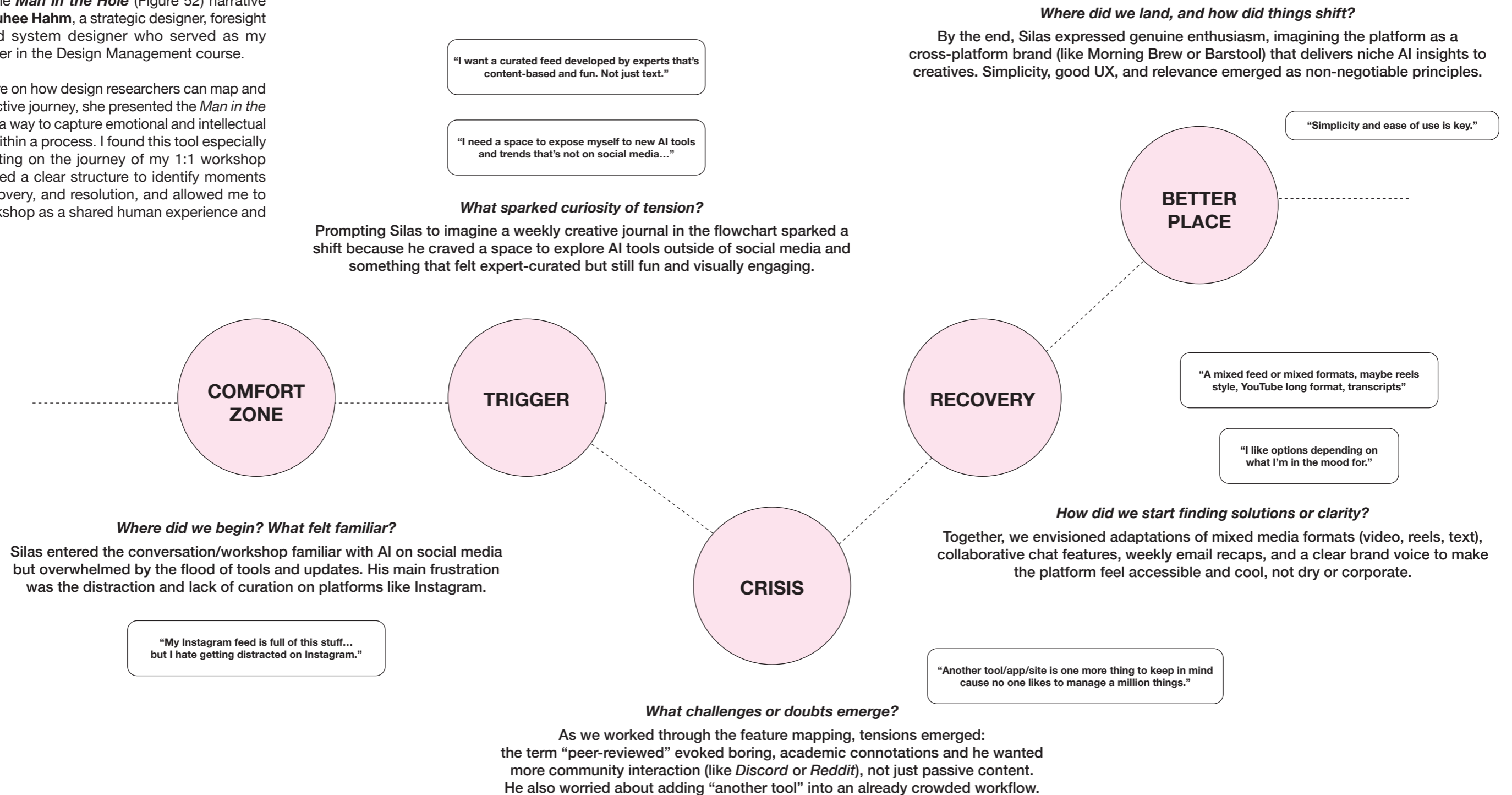


Fig. 52. Reflection on the 1:1 co-creation workshop using the Man in the Hole narrative framework, incorporating direct quotes and findings from the session. (2025).

1:1 Co-Creation Workshop

### Market Research: Competitor Analysis

After speaking with Silas during my 1:1 workshop, it was clear that market positioning would be crucial to the success of my concept. One key insight he shared was: *“There’s already so much noise. It’s hard to know what’s actually helpful versus what’s just trend-chasing.”*

This concern made me think of the importance of understanding where my potential concept as a solution would sit within the broader AI learning ecosystem. To address this, I revisited the Concentric Circular Map of relevant platforms, categorizing them by their proximity to AI learning layered with industry specificity. Rather than simply mapping general learning tools, each outer layer represents

platforms combining AI with a specific domain: **Film + AI, Short-Form + AI, or Technology + AI** (Figure 53). Only the innermost circle focuses purely on AI without clear industry application. This visualisation helped clarify that while many platforms teach AI tools, only a few directly address the cultural, creative, and process-based realities of the film industry.

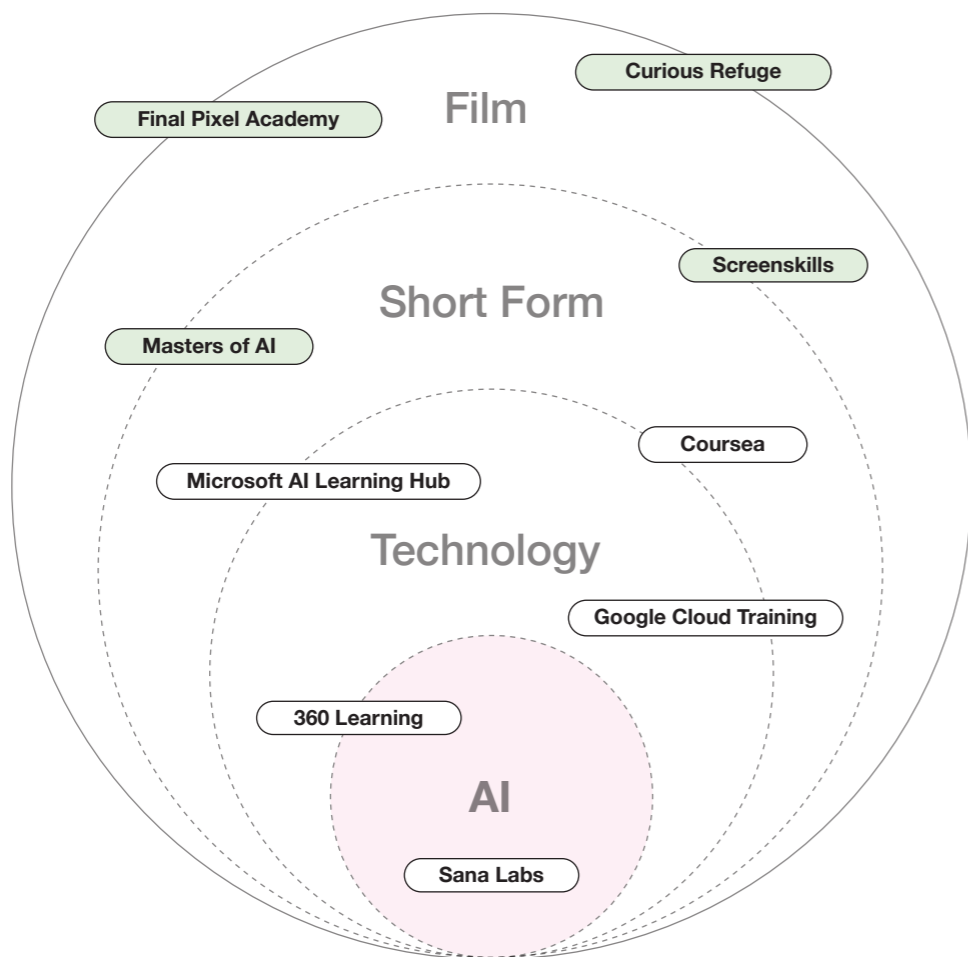


Fig. 53. Layered Map of AI-focused learning platforms, categorized by proximity to filmmaking, short-form storytelling, or general technology education (2025).

Market Research: Competitor Analysis

Radical Change Making

In order to better position my concept in a real-world landscape, I conducted a competitor analysis of 4 existing learning platforms: *Curious Refuge, Masters of AI, ScreenSkills, and Final Pixel Academy* (Figure 54). While these platforms differ in specificity and focus, they all intersect with creative skill development, emerging technologies, and storytelling practices.

I decided to focus on structured learning platforms rather than informal community spaces like *Reddit* or *Discord* as mentioned in the 1:1 workshop. While peer-to-peer communities do play an important role in emerging filmmakers’ learning (as highlighted in my earlier primary research), they are harder to systematically evaluate. In contrast, analysing formal platforms with established offerings allowed for a clearer, more strategic and academically grounded market comparison.

Although none of these platforms were tied to a singular geographic location, this was deliberate. **In today’s film ecosystem, distribution is increasingly global:** projects tend to circulate across borders via streaming, social media, and independent circuits, and creative communities often form internationally as well as virtually rather than being locked to a single city or country (although it does happen). It was important that I treated my audience as mobile, connected, and culturally fluid, rather than tied to a singular regional pipeline.

Ultimately, while none of the platforms fully aligned with the peer-led, culturally reflective model I aim to design through the concept of the Group Process Journal, analysing the four brands still helped me validate gaps and opportunities in my upcoming concept development.

Brand	Insights	Primary Focus	Taregt Audience	Learning Format	Community Element	Cost
		Teaches how to use AI tools across the filmmaking production process, covering prompt engineering, animation, and creative workflow streamlining. Aims to serve both professional and amateur filmmakers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creative professionals, freelancers, and students integrating AI into creative workflows.</li> <li>Motivated to invest time and effort to master AI for real-world projects (self-paced).</li> <li>Learners who value community learning and collaboration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-paced online courses with structured curriculum.</li> <li>Totally independent.</li> <li>By the end of the course, students are expected to produce a full AI film.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Light:</b></p> <p>Private online community for students (discussion &amp; sharing).</p>	<p><b>\$749 USD</b> <b>£562.61 GBP</b></p> <p>per student for access to 4 weeks of video modules, 12 Months of content updates, private group chat access (doesn't specify for how long), and feedback from "pro artists".</p>
		Benjamin Benichou (course teacher and founder) offers structured online courses focused on teaching AI filmmaking techniques, emphasizing storytelling, visual generation, and integrating AI into traditional film production pipelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Filmmakers (professionals, hobbyists, or students.)</li> <li>Interested in practical training on AI-driven filmmaking techniques (prompt engineering, animation, etc.)</li> <li>Early adopters or experimental creatives willing to blend AI with storytelling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-paced online courses with structured curriculum.</li> <li>Traditional lecture-based lessons (pre-recorded).</li> <li>Some community engagement involved with peer collaboration and project-based learning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Somewhat Strong:</b></p> <p>Peer collaboration and group learning is a feature when it comes to project building.</p>	<p><b>\$199 USD</b> <b>£149.48 GBP</b></p> <p>per student for access to 3 months of 50+ in-depth video lessons, MJ Prompt design sheet, 20+ assessments &amp; case studies, access to "The AI Dojo community", AI post-production &amp;</p>
		Broad learning platform focused on workforce development across the screen industries, with emerging initiatives to train creatives in using AI to support, not replace, human-driven storytelling and expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current screen industry professionals looking to future-proof their careers.</li> <li>Early-career creatives interested in upskilling for emerging technologies like AI.</li> <li>Creatives who believe in human-first, ethically informed AI use.</li> <li>Learners seeking practical checklists, guides, and courses endorsed by UK industry standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mix of short online courses, checklists, and resources aimed at upskilling clients.</li> <li>Learning is primarily self-directed but they also offer live sessions &amp; workshops depending on the course.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Generally None:</b></p> <p>Focus on individual skill development but clients have opportunities to network during live sessions and workshops when held in-person.</p>	<p>Most of their online training and resources are free to access but Some specialised programmes (like ScreenSkills bootcamps, or industry placements) are funded by industry bodies or sometimes have subsidised costs, meaning they are either free or very low-cost for participants. ScreenSkills is a UK publicly supported non-profit.</p>
		Training in virtual production technologies (real-time environments, Unreal Engine), not directly AI-focused.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early-career and mid-career film and media professionals interested in virtual production technologies.</li> <li>Creatives aiming to upskill in real-time production, LED wall workflows, and virtual cinematography.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structured instructor-led courses focused on hands-on training.</li> <li>Learning is primarily project-based (independent) designed to replicate professional production</li> </ul>	<p><b>Generally None:</b></p> <p>Instructor-led professional training, no formal peer network but clients may have opportunities to network during hands-on training if not 1:1.</p>	<p>Training programmes (covering virtual production skills) typically cost a few hundred to a few thousand pounds depending on the course length and content. Occasionally, funded partnerships or scholarships might exist through collaborations but the core academy itself is structured around paid</p>

Fig. 54. Competitor analysis table assessing existing AI and creative education platforms, with attention to numerous elements (2025).



### Radical Change Making

Following the *Refine, Iterate, Implement* section that was just covered, I turned to *Radical Design Thinking* in the concept of the Group Process Journal (title of the journal soon to be revealed) concept, to frame how I would approach the next phase of my project. *Radical Design Thinking* at its foundation are 5 core mindsets often associated with Bill Burnett and Dave Evans' *Designing Your Life*: curiosity, bias to action, reframing, mindfulness of the process, and radical collaboration.

While all 5 mindsets influenced my thinking, **radical collaboration** stands out as the mindset that most reflects my identity as a designer and as a changemaker. My work so far hasn't been about following existing blueprints; **it is about creating new frameworks where none currently exist**. The process journal concept emerged from recognizing a gap in the market since only few (if any) platforms provide an emotionally grounded, peer-led, co-created, culturally reflective space where emerging filmmakers can collaboratively experiment with AI while protecting their creative voice.

In this sense, I view myself as a **radical change agent** because I'm not adapting to an existing models, but designing an alternative one. Radical collaboration shaped this approach by emphasizing that **transformative learning** does not happen in isolation. It **happens when diverse individuals co-create, challenge each other, and build collective knowledge that evolves over time**. The process journal is structured to foster these kinds of interactions in prioritizing shared exploration, peer accountability, and cultural authorship over standardized instruction.

Through this radical design thinking approach, I positioned the process journal concept as an intentional tool in an industry that often demands speed and conformity. At this stage I started to see my work as a step toward reshaping not just how emerging filmmakers learn, but also how they imagine their own future.

Drawing from Burnett and Evans' mindsets, I also embedded some of the other values into the Process Journal:

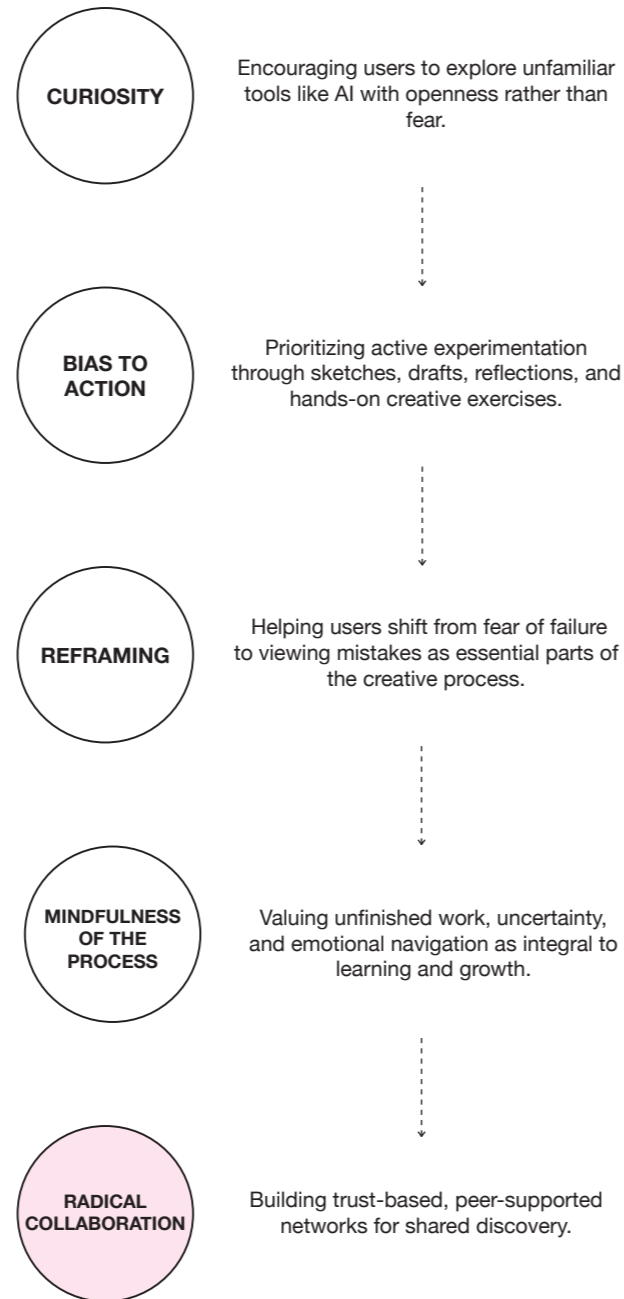


Fig. 55 . A still captured from "Going Out Is Going In" directed by Gasser Brothers (2023).

# Deliver: From Concept to a Tangible Outcome

Building, testing, and refining a solution that honors process, people, and purpose.

Fig. 56 . A still captured from "New Cavaliers" directed by Otman Qrita (2024).

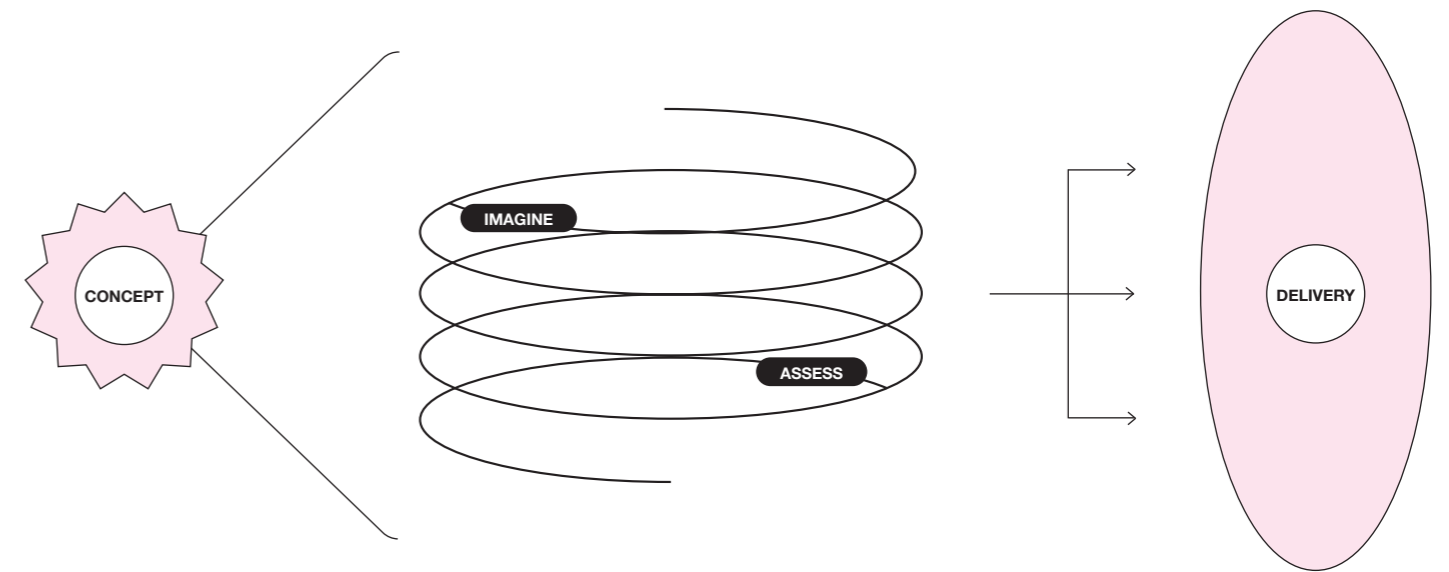


Fig. 57. Process visualization adapted from a framework featured in *Circular Design for Fashion*, reinterpreted to fit the "Deliver" phase of my project (2025).

## "Deliver"

**This chapter (phase) is about giving form and structure to the concept and imagining how it could live, evolve, and make an impact beyond the research.**

Having spent the *Ideate* phase expanding possibilities and sharpening the direction of my concept, I now move into the *Deliver* phase. Unlike a full production phase, *Deliver* here represents a grounded thought experiment: assessing how my concept could realistically live, grow, and evolve if it were to move beyond the boundaries of this academic project.

Given the natural limitations of time, resources, and my own development as a designer still early in my career, **the goal was never to deliver a fully finished product.** Instead, the *Deliver* phase focuses on mapping a pathway forward and asking not only what could this become, but *how could it meaningfully fit into the real world if given the opportunity?*

This chapter is divided into two key subphases, reflecting the process shown in the diagram above (Figure 57), and preparing to transition into my final *Postface* reflection:

### 1. Giving Shape to the Concept

In this first subphase, I work to consolidate the exploration and insights gathered during *Ideate* into a digestible, coherent creative proposal. I break down the journal's structure, its core purpose, and explore existing creative journaling methods to critically position where my idea fits, and where it can offer something new.

### 2. Finding Fit, Future Pathways

In the final stage of this project, I move from shaping the concept to assessing its potential reality. I explore potential partnerships that could support real-world development, draft a Business Model Canvas to investigate structural feasibility, and conduct a SWOT analysis to surface early risks and opportunities. I also conduct future thinking through the Three Horizons model and map both short-term opportunities and longer-term possibilities for the project's growth.

This phase is crucial because although it doesn't mark the final delivery of a polished solution, it was still an exercise in understanding how my design, strategy, and creative intention might align to bring **something into being**. I believe it reflects on both the constraints and the ambition I experienced when working within the complex system of the film industry, and sets the stage for my final reflection on the journey of this project as a whole.

# Giving Shape to the Concept

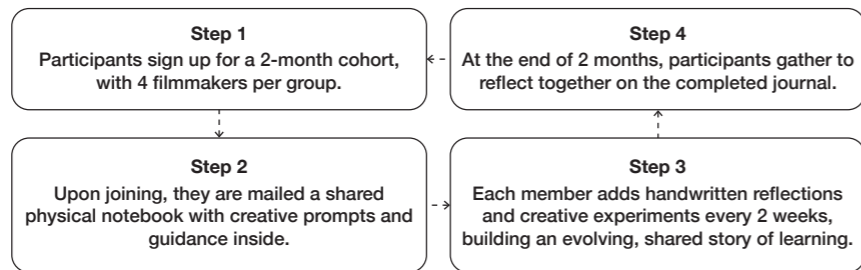
What defines this concept, how does it reflect my broader project, and why is it the right response to my How Might We question?

## Concept Breakdown

**The Concept: Do You Know What You're Doing?**

The Group Process Journal named *Do You Know What You're Doing?* is a small-group, rotating physical notebook experience designed for 4 emerging filmmakers exploring AI in their creative practice. Every 2 weeks, each participant handwrites their AI experiments, reflections, and in-progress ideas. Rather than focusing on polished outputs, the journal celebrates process, voice, and filmmaking culture, with an emphasis on empathy and shared learning. After a full 2-month rotation, the group gathers to review each other's journeys through a tangible, collective artifact.

### How It Works



**Digital Extensions**

While the heart of the experience is the physical Group Process Journal, additional digital features could offer light-touch support for the broader emerging filmmaker community.



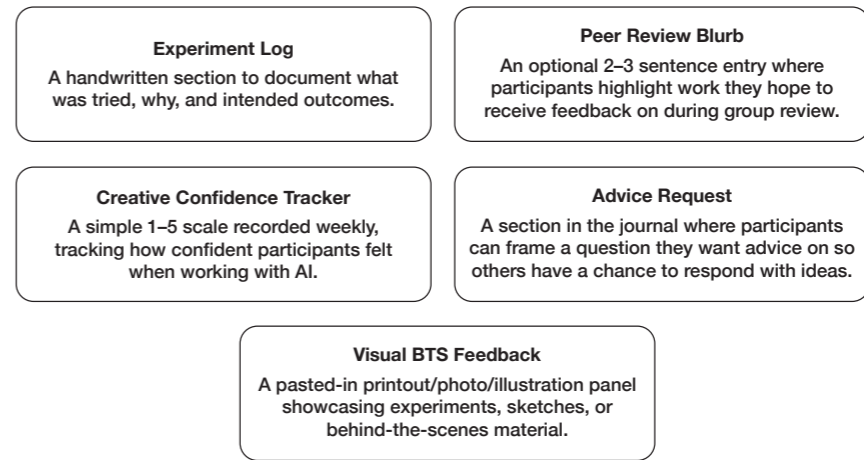
These features make the platform more open, giving emerging filmmakers a shared, peer-reviewed space for knowledge and not just scattered updates from algorithms used by social-media platforms.

Concept Breakdown

Mapping Creative Journal Models

Locating the Progress Within My Approach

### Featured Journal Tools



**Purpose**

The Group Process Journal aims to empower emerging filmmakers by offering trust-based learning pathways through tangible, shared reflection practices, building creative confidence amidst pressure, and supporting emotional navigation of new tools like AI.



These TOP THEMES mirror the core tensions in my HMW:

**How Might We...**

support early-career filmmakers, who are still building their creative identity, in confidently and collaboratively exploring AI, through mentorship and peer-led learning environments that prioritise the cultural voice of the film industry and it's people, over speed or standardisation?

Purpose of the concept should directly respond to and embody the intentions set out in my How Might We question...

Concept Breakdown

Mapping Creative Journal Models

Locating the Progress Within My Approach

### Mapping Creative Journal Models: Locating My Concept With Existing Practices

Individual Reflection

What I Like

What I Want to Avoid

--- In the context of my FMP

LOOSE + SOLO

#### The Sketchbook Project

A global crowd-sourced art project run by The Brooklyn Art Library where individuals fill out physical sketchbooks and submit them to be archived in a permanent collection. The focus is on personal creative exploration, with little to no formal structure, and minimal real-time community interaction beyond archival sharing.



Fig. 58 & 59.

Celebration of imperfection & the freedom to explore personal storytelling in whatever format that allows you.

Lack of dialogue or a feedback loop... although participants are able to reflect on overall archive independently.

I want to carry forward the celebration of imperfection but balance it with more peer feedback and real-time connection.



Fig. 60 & 61.

#### Wreck This Journal by Keri Smith

An individual creative journal filled with highly structured, playful prompts encouraging users to destroy, alter, or creatively disrupt the book itself. Designed to loosen perfectionism and invite experimentation, but fully solo with no community component.

Dismantles the expectation of perfection by encouraging participants to interact with the object itself in wild, non-traditional ways.

While "wrecking" invites playful chaos, it sometimes prioritizes destruction over meaningful, thoughtful reflection.

I want to bring risk-taking spirit, but guide it with a healthy level of professionalism so creative growth feels supported and not random.

HIGHLY STRUCTURED + SOLO

Loose & Open Ended

Highly Prompted & Structured

LIGHTLY STRUCTURED + SHARED

#### Waffle: App for Couples and Family

A digital group journaling app where small groups of users share entries in a rotating manner. Each participant contributes reflections, thoughts, or memories, fostering a casual, peer-to-peer conversation inside a private space. Lightly structured but very community-driven.



Fig. 62.

Peer collaboration and casual reflection is an element that I want to include in my concept to sustain the community element.

Due to the open-ended nature of its structure can sometimes lead to fragmented participation and lack of accountability.

I want to keep the casual, peer-to-peer tone that makes reflection feel natural, while designing more structure to avoid fragmented participation.

Do You Know What You're Doing?

Shared Peer Review Experience

To inform the development of *Do You Know What You're Doing?*, I explored several existing models of creative journaling (both digital and physical) that engage with process, reflection, and community. Although none were directly related to filmmaking or AI, they offered valuable lessons about how people interact with creative documentation in small, shared spaces.

I mapped *Waffle*, *The Sketchbook Project*, and *Wreck This Journal* on a matrix based on two critical dimensions. The horizontal X-axis represented the Level of Structure, ranging from open-ended approaches to highly guided prompts. The vertical Y-axis represented the Level of Community Interaction, spanning from solo, independent work to deep peer-led exchange. Positioning these models helped me understand where *Do You Know What You're Doing?* could sit which would be a balance between intentional creative guidance and authentic peer-driven collaboration thus why it's positioned in the *Moderately Structured + Shared* area of the Matrix.

Concept Breakdown

Mapping Creative Journal Models

Locating the Progress Within My Approach

### Locating the Progress Within My Approach

As I move deeper into the *Deliver* phase of my FMP, it is important to re-situate myself within the overall design journey that has guided my work: *Empathise* → *Outline* → *Ideate* → *Deliver*. At this stage, my focus is not on launching a fully finished product. Instead, as outlined at the beginning of this *Deliver* phase, the aim is to build a clear, feasible plan: one that imagines how the group process journal could exist if further developed beyond this academic project.

This approach reflects the practical boundaries of time, resources, and my own growth as an emerging designer while ensuring that my work remains grounded, strategic, and aligned with the critical, human-centered values that have shaped my process since the beginning. The pages that follow will continue to explore how the concept could find fit, evolve responsibly, and create meaningful impact, without overreaching the scope of this FMP.

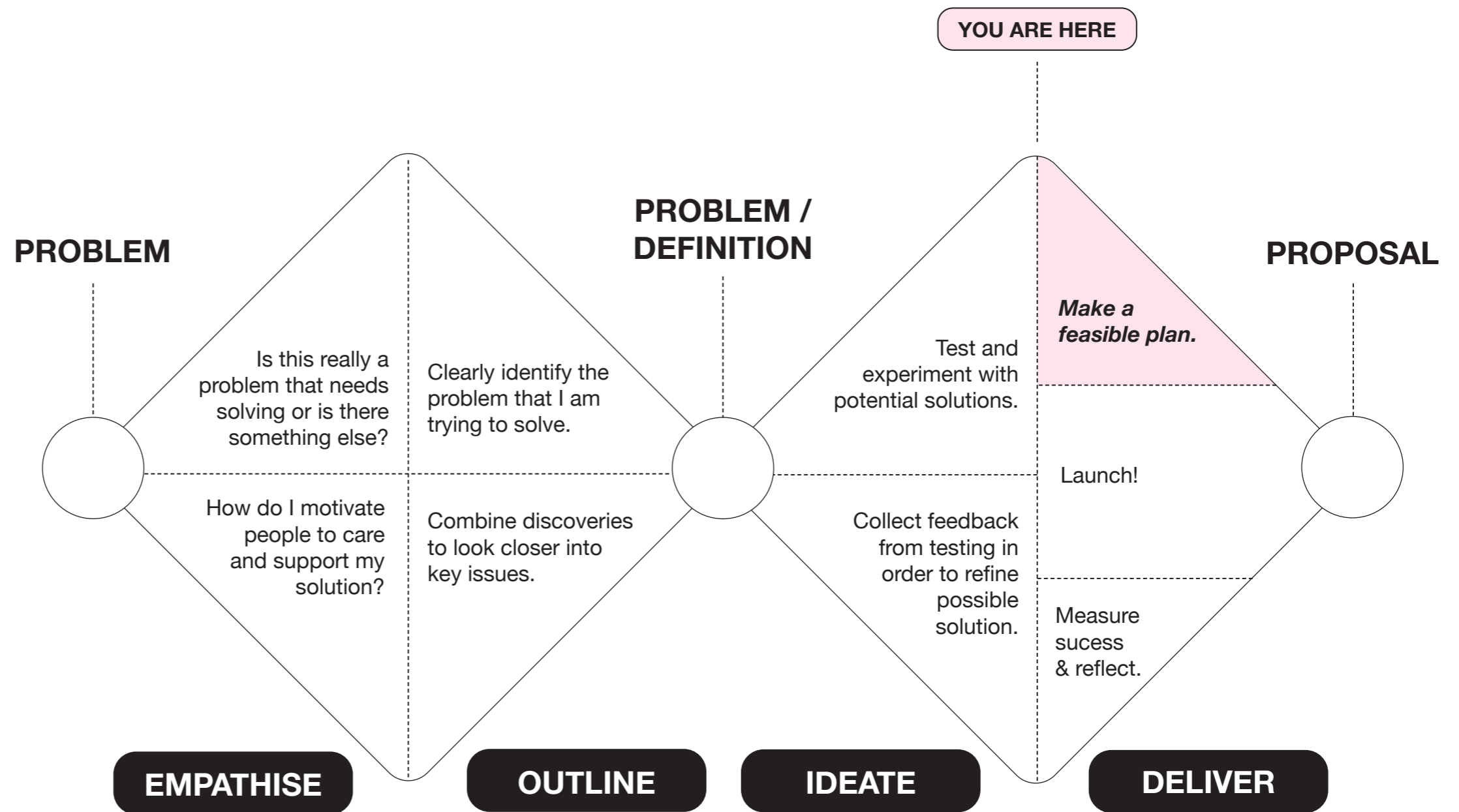


Fig. 63. Adaptation of the Double Diamond model used to map my project's journey from problem identification to proposal. This version highlights my current position in the Deliver phase, where the focus is on making a feasible plan rather than launching a final product (2025).

# Finding Fit, Future Pathways

How might this concept find its footing and build resilience? What partnerships, strategies, and future pathways could strengthen its growth?

## Business Model Canvas

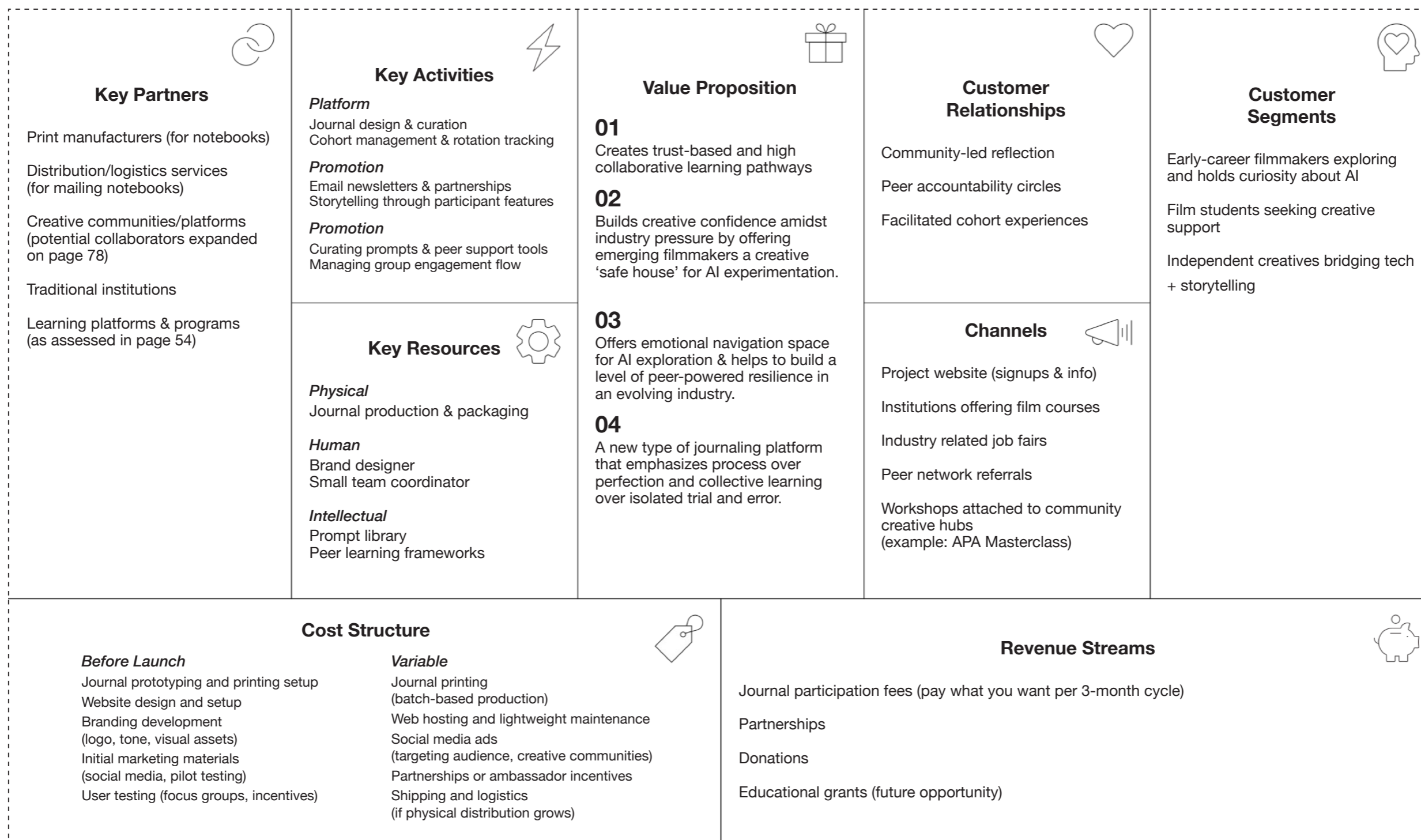


Fig. 64. Business Model Canvas for the Group Process Journal concept. Icons created by Sanni Huovinen (2025).

Business Model Canvas

Potential Partnerships

SWOT Analysis

Future Thinking

### Potential Partnerships

Although earlier phases of my research like in *Ideate*, I emphasized the importance of a global mobile film community since it is common to see creative projects cross geographic borders and emerging filmmakers are rarely and completely tied to a single to a single city (especially with the access of digital platforms), my proposed partnerships in this phase are deliberately UK-based. This decision is strategic because I realise that the UK film industry offers a dense network of support platforms, career development hubs, and education-facing institutions that are highly accessible to my identified audience of early-career filmmakers curious about AI.

Rather than contradicting the global fluidity of the audience, these partnerships aim to offer anchor points that could act as scalable models: places where the *Do You Know What You're Doing?* could be piloted, tested, and amplified through networks already engaged in nurturing emerging voices.

#### FILMD: The independent film and TV production platform

FILMD is a UK-based career resource platform specifically built to support young emerging filmmakers through networking, project funding, and showcasing opportunities. I was first introduced to their company during my field research at *Cine Circle Job Fair* mentioned earlier in my *Discovery* phase. Their mission to make industry access more visible and democratized strongly aligns with the group journal's goal of reducing career isolation and promoting collective growth among early-career creatives.

In particular, *FILMD's* forums and resource library features stand out as strong points of alignment. Their dedicated forums allow members to share knowledge, ask questions, and engage in peer-led discussions, which resonates with the Journal's aim of fostering trust-based, non-hierarchical learning spaces. Likewise, their resource library, offering curated grants, templates, and production tools, reflects a broader commitment to demystifying industry pathways for early-career creatives.

A potential partnership could position the group journal as a creative extension of *FILMD's* offerings, integrating it into their ecosystem as a reflective, experimental space that complements their career-facing resources.

### Sight and Sound (British Film Institute Bulletin)

The British Film Institute (BFI) is one of the UK's leading authorities in film culture, education, and industry development. Their *Sight and Sound* platform, housed within the BFI's "Learn and Discover" initiatives, offers a blend of critical writing, emerging trends, industry interviews, and curated bulletins aimed at connecting audiences with new voices and movements in British cinema (British Film Institute, 2025).

Positioning the *Do You Know What You're Doing?* alongside or within the *Sight and Sound* bulletin would align the project with an institution that already emphasises diverse storytelling and evolving creative practices. This would offer an opportunity not only for visibility, but to situate the Journal within a broader cultural conversation around innovation, authorship, and the future of creative work in film. By connecting with BFI's existing network, the Journal could tap into an audience that is already curious, critically engaged, and open to rethinking what creative careers look like in an AI-impacted industry.

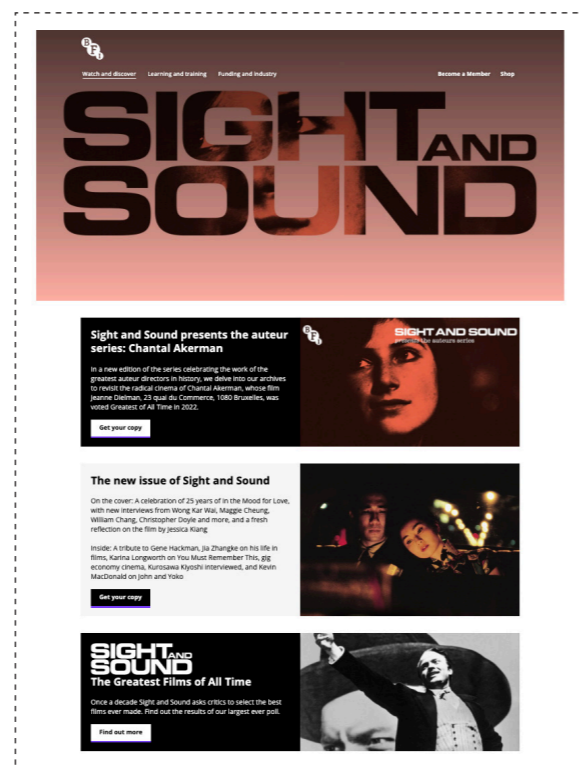


Fig. 65. BFI "Sight and Sound" featured on the BFI official website (2025).

### SWOT Analysis

#### Weaknesses

- Scalability challenges because journal rotation requires cohort management and regular engagement.
- Physical distribution (shipping notebooks) could increase logistical complexity and costs.
- Requires initial buy-in and trust from users unfamiliar with peer-led journaling systems.
- Brand and marketing might need strong positioning to distinguish from generic self-help or hobbyist journaling.

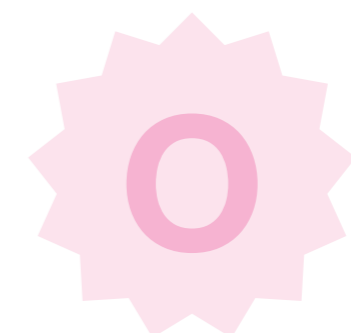
#### Threats

- Competition from free, more immediate online communities (like Discord, Reddit) offering fast peer advice.
- AI tools themselves are evolving rapidly so the platform must stay relevant to shifting creative practices.
- Limited initial funding or staff could constrain ability to scale or iterate quickly based on feedback.



#### Strengths

- Deeply grounded in real audience research (emerging filmmakers' real needs and frictions as backed by my *Outline* phase).
- Unique focus on process over perfection to help build emotional resilience, not just technical skills.
- Peer-led structure encourages collaborative learning and stronger creative communities.
- Physical journal format offers a tactile, slower-paced alternative to screen-saturated learning.
- For Future Planning: Light additional features (news digest, peer-reviewed tools) keep the wider platform connected without being overwhelming.



#### Opportunities

- Collaborations with creative hubs (like FILMD, BFI, ScreenSkills) to expand visibility and legitimacy.
- Potential for expansion into workshops, toolkits, or online companion resources.
- Taps into growing interest in alternative, human-centered learning models amidst AI disruption.
- A chance to create a trusted platform that emerging creatives want to stay loyal to as their careers grow.



Fig. 66. SWOT Analysis for *Do You Know What You're Doing* concept (2025).

Potential Partnerships

Business Model Canvas

SWOT Analysis

Future Thinking

### Future Thinking: Three Horizon Model

In considering the future growth of *Do You Know What You're Doing?* concept, it was important to approach the Three Horizons model through a realistic, phased lens. As the model outlines, the concept could grow from an initial physical journal into an expanded, hybrid peer-learning platform. However, a crucial step before imagining further horizons would be to ensure the success of the first.

In Horizon 1, launching the physical journal and building a trusted, small cohort would serve as the essential foundation. Without establishing real proof of user engagement, value creation, and trust-building in this earliest stage, the vision for Horizons 2 and 3 would lack integrity. As a design manager, it is critical to recognise that successful scaling demands an evidence-based approach and that each horizon must be informed by the lessons, reflections, and user insights captured from the phase before.

This approach aligns with Design Management principles around strategic and anticipatory thinking mentioned in my *Preface*, which is to ensure that ambitions for impact are matched with the responsibility of user-centred growth. Horizon planning is not just about imagining possibilities; it's about consciously mapping a pathway where care, trust, and real-world feedback drive how (and when) each future step is taken.

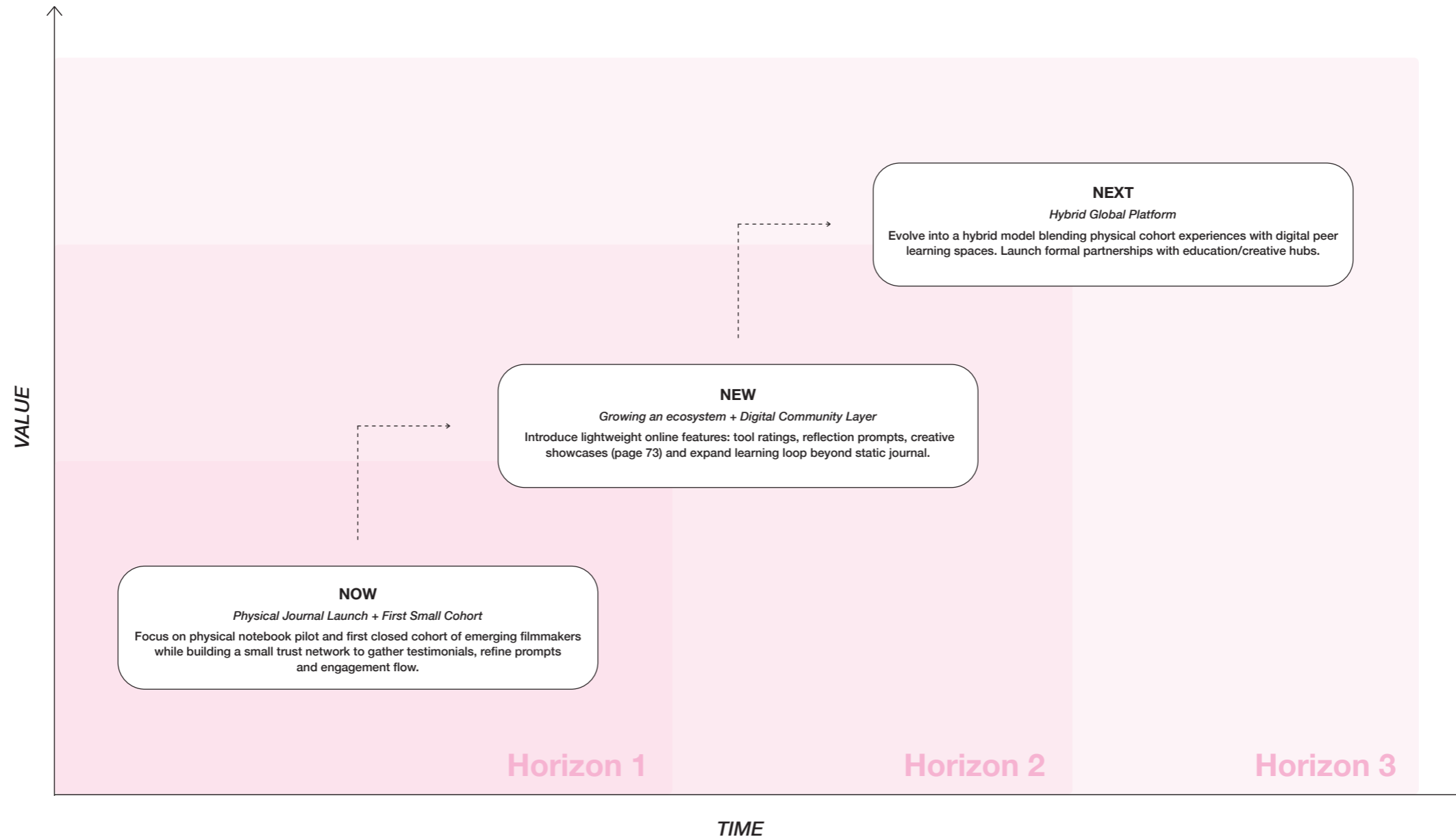


Fig. 67. Three Horizons Model mapping a potential growth trajectory for the Group Process Journal, from initial physical launch to a digitally expanded peer-learning ecosystem. (2025).

## Postface: Tracing the Journey, Facing What's Next

Revisiting my design practice, my voice, and the evolving creative industry.

### Revisiting Mindsets & Intentions

**How have my original mindsets as an empath and strategist, evolved through the challenges, tensions, and discoveries of this project?**

At the beginning of this project, I positioned myself through two foundational designer archetypes: the **Empath** and the **Strategist**. As I described in my *Preface*, the Empath leads with emotional intelligence and a deep understanding of human needs, while the Strategist thrives on clarity, systems thinking, and long-term vision. These mindsets helped me navigate a challenge of the integration of AI filmmaking that was never just technical, but deeply human and cultural. They became not just guiding tools for my workflow, but anchors that kept me connected to my intention: **to center emerging filmmakers and support their navigation of a changing creative landscape.**

In the early phases of this project, my Empath mindset was most present. I made a conscious effort to zoom out, first mapping the broader film industry system, then zooming into the spaces, communities, and individuals most impacted by AI's rise. I resisted the urge to define a problem too quickly, choosing instead to spend time observing, listening, and mapping the nuances of the issue. This deliberate pacing felt essential because it was a way to stay grounded in the lived realities of emerging creatives rather than surface-level trends. My primary research methods, which included interviews, surveys, and direct fieldwork, allowed me to stay close to my audience, and tools like empathy maps, journey maps, and personas helped me organize this understanding into something actionable. I went into this research expecting more resistance toward AI, but I was met with something more complex which was a mixture of curiosity, caution, and quiet experimentation. This unexpected insight reminded me not to project my assumptions, but to keep returning to the people I was designing with.

As the project moved into the *Outline* and *Ideate* phases, my Strategist mindset became more critical. The complexity of my research and the urgency to begin shaping it, required me to step into a more evaluative role. I grouped data thematically, transformed tensions into friction points, and then mapped them to potential design opportunities. I made a concerted effort to justify each decision with findings from my research, using diagrams, mapping tools, and even **AI (like ChatGPT)** to help consolidate patterns and make them digestible. These methods weren't just about organizing information but they were strategies to ensure the project could hold both empathy and structure. Still, I sometimes found myself wishing I had stayed closer to empathy in certain moments. Especially in hindsight, I recognize how important it was to root every stage of the process (even the most strategic) in human-centered intention.

As I reflect, I realize that the tension between these two mindsets wasn't always easy to navigate. There were moments when structure threatened to flatten nuance, and moments when emotional resonance risked overwhelming clarity. I often asked myself: **Am I being a collaborative designer or just an extractive one? Could I have done more to validate my insights alongside my participants, not just after?** These questions didn't lead to easy answers, but they kept me accountable and it led me to learn that integrating emotional intelligence into a design project, especially one that operates across systems, tools, and identities, requires ongoing calibration. Empathy isn't a phase: it's a responsibility that must be carried forward even when strategy takes center stage.

Through this entire process, I've come to realize that empathy and strategy are not opposites to be balanced but they are interdependent. In fact, I would argue that a new mindset emerged from their overlap: one that acknowledges the impossibility of doing both perfectly at all times, but values the ongoing attempt to hold space for both. This mindset, perhaps best described as a **Process Driven Integrator**, reflects my growing belief that impact happens not through polished execution alone, but through iterative, intentional navigation of complexity that celebrates awareness, reflection, and choice.

This evolution mirrors the intentions I first outlined in my *Preface*, where I described my desire to stay grounded in empathy, adaptability, and a clear sense of purpose. From the start, I acknowledged that my strengths as a designer emerged through sustained focus and responsiveness to change. As this project unfolded, those values deepened. In a process that promotes imperfection, I've had to accept that I too am a work in progress. This mindset shift from seeing empathy and strategy as distinct, to understanding them as interwoven has shown me that responsible design is not about achieving balance, but about remaining committed to process. I now carry forward a mindset shaped by both: one that listens with intention and acts with care.

# Being a Changemaker: Redefining Impact

What kind of change was I aiming to make, and how do I now define impact after navigating this project's realities?

Mapping this process through *Kotter's 8-Step Change Model* (Figure 69), originally developed by Dr. John Kotter, allowed me to frame these actions not just as design milestones, but as meaningful steps in enabling cultural change. In particular, **Step 5: Enable Action by Removing Barriers** reflects my decision to design a journal that removes emotional and logistical friction and opting for a non-performative, reflective tool over platform-based systems. Similarly, **Step 6: Generate Easy Wins** was embodied through small moments of validation (feedback from peers, resonance in workshops, and the enthusiasm of early testers) that helped ground the concept's potential impact. Although the problem space is still evolving, the final steps in the model (*Increase the Pace* and *Institutional Change*) represent future possibilities I've begun to map, particularly through my Three Horizons framework. These shifts may take time, but this project aims to initiate them through emotionally grounded, community-led responsible design.

Rather than solving a fixed problem, my FMP responds to a **problem space that is still evolving**. The challenges surrounding AI in creative practice are shifting rapidly, and so is the creative identity of those navigating it. Because of this, I didn't attempt to define a single institutional change. Instead, I focused on making an early cultural intervention which invites emerging filmmakers into a new way of thinking about authorship, learning, and peer support. These softer, less visible forms of change are no less valuable. In fact, they often lay the foundation for more sustainable transformation later on.

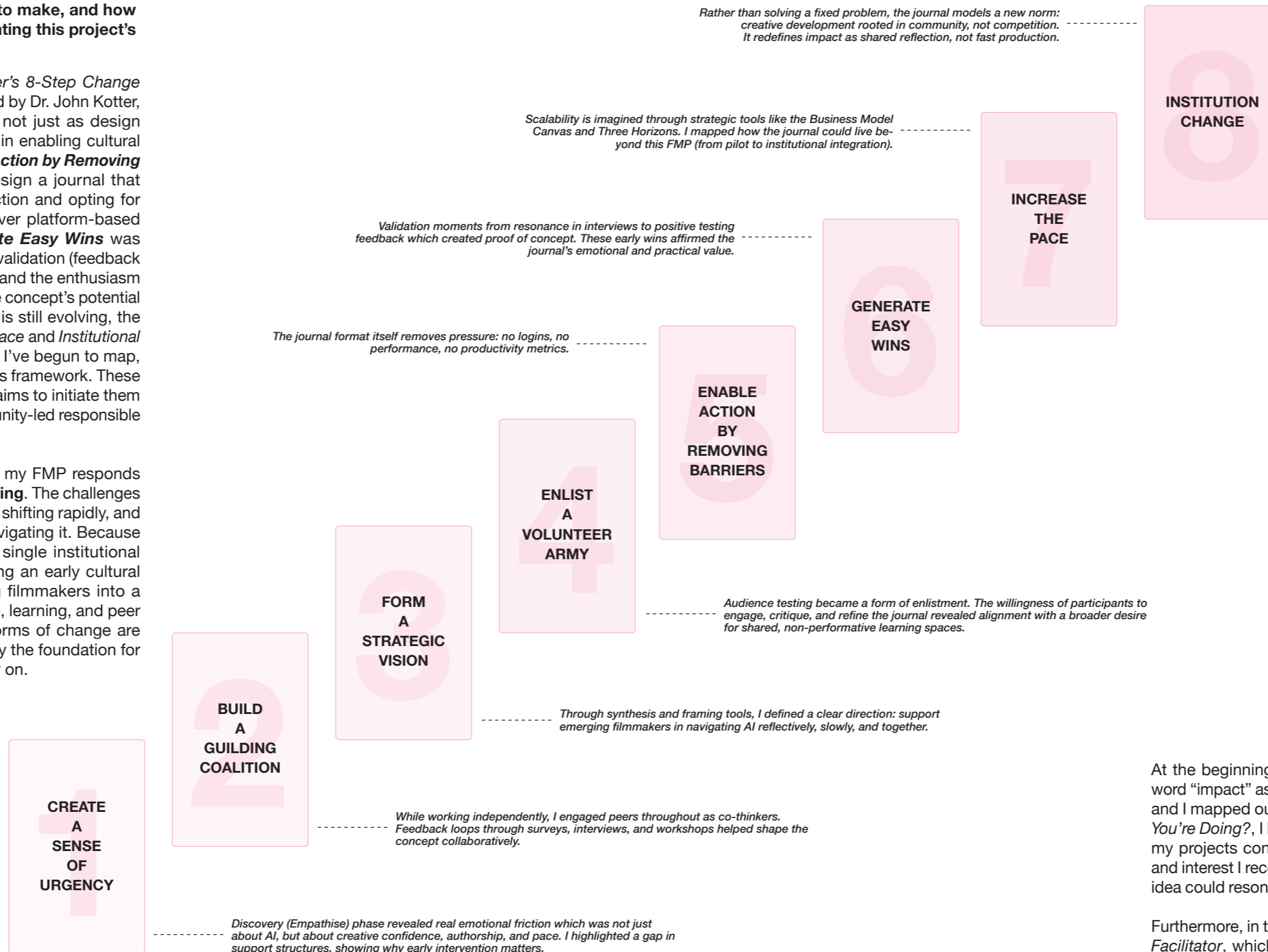


Fig. 69. Application of Kotter's 8-Step Change Model to the *Group Process Journal*, illustrating how each phase of the project contributed to a structured and intentional changemaking trajectory (2025).

At the beginning of this whole process, I thought of the word "impact" as small-scale but as the project progressed and I mapped out future pathways for *Do You Know What You're Doing?*, I began to understand its potential reach in my projects context. The emotional validation, curiosity, and interest I received from participants suggested that the idea could resonate more widely than I initially anticipated.

Furthermore, in this process, I acted as both *Instigator* and *Facilitator*, which I believe is someone who introduces a shift and then builds the structure for others to continue it. My intention was never to create a one-off intervention, but to seed a model of change that is communal, reflective, and emotionally sustainable.

# Tracing the Journey Visually

What tools, methods, and mindsets now shape my creative practice. How did this journey unfold across time during this Final Major Project?

This visual map captures the layered evolution of my FMP, showing how each phase unfolded through distinct methods, tools, and mindsets. The addition of Sprint 1 and Sprint 2 highlights the adaptive rhythm of my process: moving from contextual, system-level inquiry toward more focused, human-centered insight.

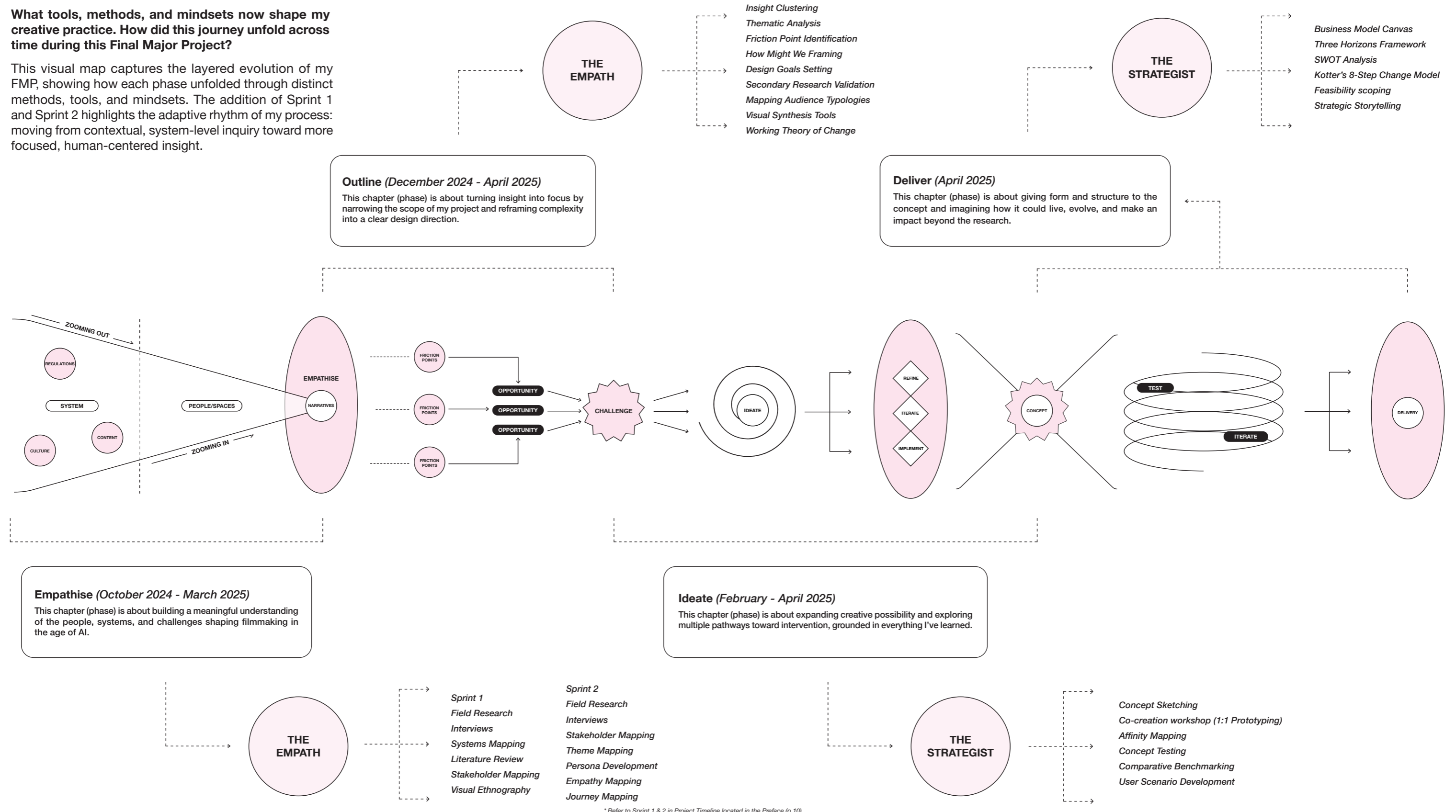


Fig. 71. This visual timeline maps the progression of my project across four phases: Empathise, Outline, Ideate, and Deliver, layered with key methods, mindsets, and decision-making tools (2025).

# Reflective Retrospective: The 4 L's

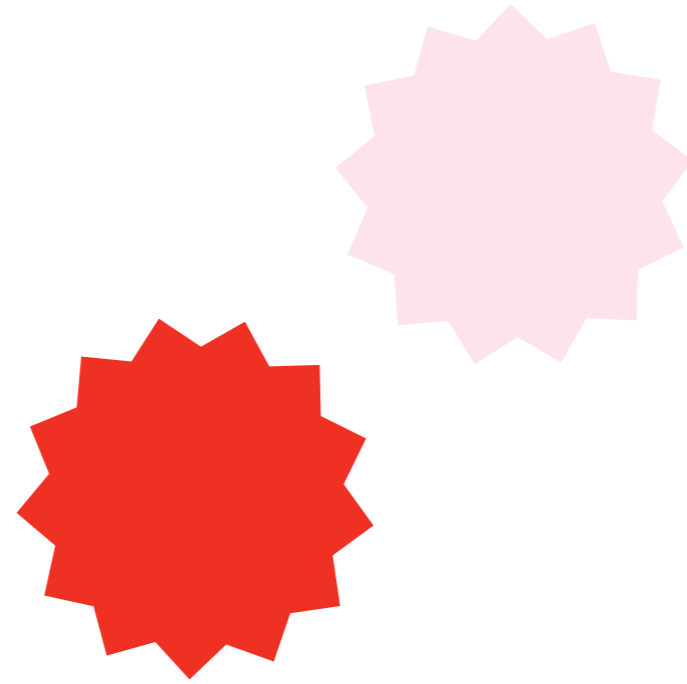
## What moments defined my learning journey and where do I see room for deeper growth moving forward?

As I neared the end of my FMP, I turned to a reflection model called the 4 L's: Loved, Learned, Loathed, and Longed For. This was here to help me process the experience in a way that felt personal, open, and honest.

Originally created by Mary Gorman and Ellen Gottesdiener, the 4 L's were developed as a retrospective tool for *Scrum* teams to evaluate both the positive and negative aspects of a project (Team Retro, n.d.). I first came across it in the context of the Design Management course and in a project like this, where emotions, strategy, and reflection all intersect, I needed a framework that could hold both clarity and care.

Using the 4 L's gave me space to pause and look back with not just at what I accomplished, but at how I experienced the process as a whole. In the **"Loved"** section, I was able to reflect on the moments that brought me genuine joy: conversations with emerging filmmakers, the sense of support among my peers, and the unexpected warmth I received from people who wanted to help move the project forward. These moments for me, were reminders of why I started this project in the first place.

In the **"Learned"** reflections, I uncovered how much I'd grown in confidence, research skill, communication, and strategic thinking. Despite my own assumptions that I already "knew" the industry I was designing for, I learned again and again how much I still had to explore and how much stronger my process became when I remained open to that same thought.



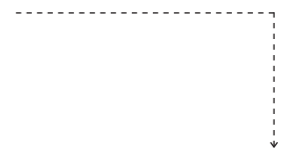
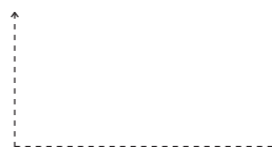
The **"Loathed"** and **"Longed For"** sections were harder to write, but equally necessary. I had to acknowledge where I fell short: moments of disorganization, the weight of over-scoping, and the frustration of not having the time or resources to test more ambitious ideas. These reflections in particular helped me better understand the systems I need to put in place for myself, and the environments in which I do my best work.

Ultimately, the 4 L's helped me reflect with both accountability and compassion. They made room for contradictions for things to feel joyful and difficult, fulfilling and incomplete. That balance feels true to how this project unfolded and moving forward, I'll continue to use this model as a check-in tool not just for looking back, but for deciding how to move forward better.

- I learned that even in an industry I thought I knew very well, there was still so much to discover. Every interview or survey revealed something new and sharpened my awareness of blind spots I hadn't noticed as a design researcher.
- I learned how to apply a range of design management tools that I hadn't used in previous years of this course, and became more confident with research synthesis and strategic framing for future projects.
- I learned to become a more comfortable and open communicator, especially in face-to-face contexts, where my confidence grew significantly.
- I learned to use Adobe Creative Suite more efficiently than I ever had before, especially under time pressure.
- Most of all, I learned to recognize the industry not as a fixed space, but as a dynamic system full of diverse voices and perspectives that will forever keep evolving, which is something I find exciting!



- I longed for more time and a small team. There were parts of the project that felt too ambitious and overwhelming for one person, and I think constant collaboration could've opened new possibilities for the project.
- I longed for access to certain tools particularly premium AI learning platforms I couldn't afford to test firsthand during my competitor analysis.
- I longed for clearer guidance from the course at times. Some rubrics and tasks felt slightly ambiguous, which made decision-making and strategising for the project more difficult during key stages like working to deliver my final outcome.



- I loved the challenge of facing the unknown. Despite my initial fear and uncertainty going into the FMP, I genuinely enjoyed confronting complexity and evolving through difficulty.
- I loved every opportunity to speak with industry professionals. One standout moment was when friends referred me to other emerging filmmakers which truly showed me a strong sign of community and shared care. Seeing people engage with my project with genuine interest was really heartwarming.
- I loved the culture of support within the Design Management class at LCC. Sitting in a circle, sharing feedback, and offering each other guidance created a strong sense of collective growth and solidarity during difficult times for me.
- I loved creating the process book. Consolidating months of research into a narrative format, and shaping it into something others could learn from, felt like one of the most meaningful parts of the entire project. I'm excited to be able to see people reading it!



- I loathed the disorganization I experienced in the early stages of the project. That lack of structure when I was unsure of what I was doing, cost me time and created unnecessary stress but it also taught me what kind of systems I need to design for *myself* in future work.
- I loathed the feeling of having over-scoped my project. I set high expectations for myself hoping to create a fully finished prototype, and even though I worked consistently and pushed hard, I couldn't achieve that vision within the timeframe. Letting go of that concept was difficult and honestly took a hit to my confidence. It felt like I had to mourn a version of the project I thought I'd be able to deliver.

Fig. 70. A reflective mapping of the project's emotional and practical journey through four key lenses: Loved, Learned, Longed For, and Loathed (2025).

# Revisiting My Ethics Statement

**How did my ethical approach shift through the overall project? How did it shape my decisions as a designer and researcher?**

Looking back at the ethics statement I wrote at the start of this project, I feel a strong sense of alignment. The core values I committed to which were responsibility, empathy, accessibility, and cultural care, remained steady anchors throughout the FMP. But as I engaged more deeply with the work, I also came to understand how difficult it is to uphold those ethics in practice, especially when resources, timelines, and internal expectations create pressure to move faster than critical reflection sometimes allows.

One of the things I wrote early on was that my role as a designer wasn't just to produce an outcome, but to do so responsibly. That intention stayed true. At every stage, I tried to centre emerging filmmakers and listening closely to their needs, fears, and perspectives as AI continues to reshape creative industries. I kept returning to their voices as a compass. But doing this consistently wasn't always simple. There were moments I worried I was designing for rather than with, or that I was over-representing voices that were easier to access, while others remained harder to reach.

This is where my ethical thinking started to shift. In my original statement, I framed ethics as a commitment: something I could consciously carry through my process. But now, I see ethics as less of a fixed commitment and more of an evolving attunement: something I have to check in with regularly, especially when tension arises between design ambition and real-world limitations.

My belief in defensive acceleration, meeting technological change with intentional, human-centred strategies has only deepened. But I now carry a more sober understanding of how easy it is for well-intentioned work to still replicate bias or exclusion if critique isn't baked into the process. I tried to remain open to that critique, but I also see where I could have pushed further: validating with more diverse filmmakers, spending more time testing the emotional usability of the journal, and acknowledging that one format can't serve everyone equally.

Still, I don't feel I've broken from my ethics and I feel I've grown within them. The process has reaffirmed that my values are not just theoretical, but deeply embedded in the way I listen, research, and design. And perhaps most importantly, this reflection reminds me that ethical design isn't something to state once, it's something to practice, question, and adapt to constantly.

As I move forward, I'll carry this ethic of responsive responsibility with me: a reminder that values are not boxes to tick, but guides for ongoing, human-centred work.

## Positioning Myself as a Researcher

Throughout this project, I've been aware of the privilege I hold as a researcher. I entered this process with an existing connection to the film industry. I already knew people. I had context. I had language. I had access to conversations and communities that aren't easily reachable to everyone. And while that gave me a strong starting point for research, it also made me reflect on what it means to examine a system from the inside with a level of proximity, comfort, and pre-existing trust.

Not everything came easily, of course and I still had to work for connection and challenge my own assumptions, but I know that being able to speak directly to emerging filmmakers, to access emotional insights quickly, and to receive referrals from friends and peers was a form of advantage. It shaped the pace and depth of my research in ways I couldn't have replicated if I were approaching this industry from the outside.

I also want to acknowledge the privilege of access to tools, spaces, and platforms that many creatives do not have. Studying at an institution like UAL (University of the Arts London) where I could attend workshops, receive feedback, and design with freedom which opened doors that may not have existed otherwise. Even things like having time to focus, or being able to afford certain tools (design software, printing, etc.) are privileges that shaped my ability to execute this project at a certain level.

I don't say this to diminish my work, but to honour the context in which it happened. Not everyone researching or entering the film industry has the same level of reach or support. Recognising that helps me remain grounded in empathy not just toward the people I'm designing for, but toward those who might never get the same access to these rooms or tools.

Moving forward, I want to keep reflecting on how I use my access. The responsibility is not just to design for others, but to open pathways for those who come next.

## Applying an Ethics Framework to My FMP

To further reflect on the ethical dimensions of my FMP, I applied the *Applied Ethics Framework* (Figure 72), a model originally developed at **Loyola Marymount University** (LMU) to support ethical business practice through integrated operational thinking. This framework was introduced to me during the *Design Management* course at UAL by my lead lecturer, **Montana Williamson**, and it became an incredibly useful tool for zooming out and looking at my project through a more systemic, multi-dimensional ethical lens.

The framework outlines six interrelated domains: Leadership, Culture, Goals, Product, Compliance, and Industry & Governance. Rather than treating ethics as a single statement or checkpoint, it asks to *consider how values are enacted through the structures, decisions, and outputs of a project* (Loyola Marymount University, n.d.). For me, this was a way to move from intention to accountability and it helped me evaluate not just what I set out to do, but how I actually showed up across different layers of the work.

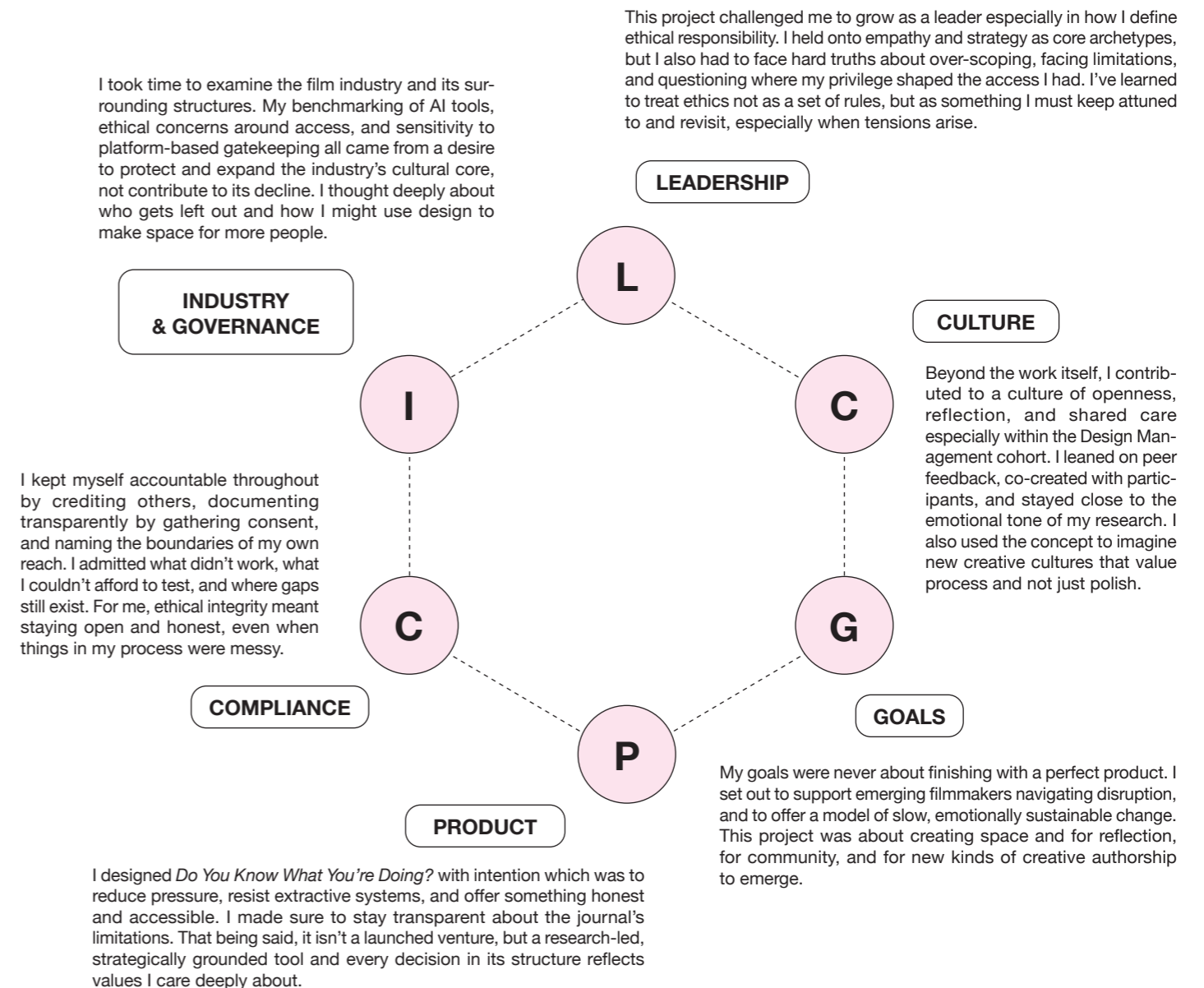


Fig. 72. Adaptation of the Applied Ethics Framework used here to critically reflect on the ethical dimensions of my entire FMP (2025).

# Final Thoughts

As I write this final section of my Final Major Project, I can only say how incredibly grateful I feel to have had the opportunity to bring this work to life. While the journey came with its ups and downs, I truly think it allowed me to learn more than I ever imagined, not only about the film industry, but also about myself as a design researcher, change-maker, creative strategist, and, above all, an empath.

With this process book completed and as I look toward the possibilities that lie ahead after my graduation, I feel excited to carry forward the lessons I've gained from not just from this project, but from the entire Design Management course both at UAL: London College of Communication and Parsons School of Design. My goal is to apply these insights as I transition into the world of work (hopefully in the film industry!) as an entry-level professional, and to continue building toward something meaningful and impactful.

I would like to thank all my tutors for helping me bridge dreams into realities through their rigorous teaching and invaluable support. And, of course, I am deeply grateful to my family and friends for sustaining my mental health and grounding me through the tough moments. I couldn't have done any of this without the community I'm so lucky to have :)



Fig. 73 . A still captured from "New Cavaliers" directed by Otman Qrita (2024).

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: In-Progress Deck



**Key (initial) Interests**

- Sustainable Design Focus - moving away from human-centered approaches toward designs that support both people and the planet.
- Potential Areas of Interest:
  - Sustainable Carments
  - Service Design & Biomimicry - applying principles from nature.
  - Natural Systems for Societal Impact
- Broad Exploration of Sustainable Systems

**& Why?** Driven by challenges in sustainable design and eager to create something meaningful for the community, but also feeling disheartened by the slow progress.

**Key Questions & Pivots**

"As systems of urban infrastructure in developed areas continue to adapt anthropocentric designs, how...?"

How are we making space for the planet in a human-centered world?  
Who are the humans who are already doing this and what challenges and obstacles do they face?

"How might we reshape human-centered design to advocate the indigenous ecological preservations in the face of the climate crisis?"

What do these challenges physically look like? Is it something I can access and research on?  
What small-scale industry (relevant to me) can I focus on to address sustainable design?

"How might human-centered design practices in the global film production industry be reimaged to promote sustainable futures?"

Is this really a wicked problem that needs solving?  
What realistic, potentially solvable wicked problem does the global film industry face?

**Navigating the Problem**

What realistic, potentially solvable wicked problem does the global film production industry face?

→ AI!!! (Countless concerns and hot topic within the industry as seen at ADA show, CLOPE festival, and summer internship. Constant conversation & the tensions felt.)

& based off first round of primary research producer concerns included ...

- Clients, often brands, are increasingly opting for AI due to its cost-effective and pre-automated solutions & this shift often overlooks the complexities of production, cutting out producers and creative professionals (e.g., digital artists, directors, writers).
- Many clients misunderstand AI's capabilities, believing they can generate high-quality content with simple prompts - this misconception undermines the expertise of experienced producers and threatens human creativity.
- Production companies should engage clients in discussions about the nuances of high-quality production, highlighting that it involves more than just inputting commands into AI.

**Reframing My Research**

How can producers in the global film industry...

- retain their relevance during the rise of AI, by leveraging human skill & expertise to balance technological advancements with human creativity and decision-making?
- reinvest their role and remain relevant during the rise of AI, by transforming traditional production frameworks to balance technological innovation with human creative leadership?

Keywords & Areas of Focus: AI-Human Collaboration, Automation in Film (& other industries and how it's evolved industries), Adaptation to Transformation, Systems Designs (workflows & practices), Creative Leadership, Design Frameworks, and more to consider...

**Planning Ahead (Research for Fall)**

**Next 2 Weeks**  
Conduct interviews - reach out to producers, creatives, and clients to gather insights about their experiences and needs with AI.

**URGENT!**  
Identify key sources to research context & explore case studies related to identified keywords/themes + cases of automation.

- Until Week 8  
Compile and synthesize findings into visual ethnography due Dec 4 (plan to print starting Nov 20)



## Appendix 2: Notes from panel held by Emma Turner and Dr Jodi Nelson-Tabor

Skills in motion  
↳ Building a multi-industry career.

↳ challenges + opportunities.

Scaling up.  
- converging tech + transmedia.  
↳ skills overlapping (recombine/rethink)

Shipping into jobs/roles  
- more agile.  
- more opportunities.

↳ things could go awol  
- training programs.  
- commission training.  
- paying people  
↳ by paying (de-risked).

① education  
② experience through partnership.  
③ exposure

↳ virtual production stages.

↳ accessibility  
↳ changing an industry + education in diverse networks.  
↳ innovation & jobs.

network exposure.

↳ research → staying ahead  
↳ educational courses for jobs  
↳ multi-level problems  
↳ on-top of what's changing.

AZ → demographical shifts.  
↳ embrace tech in the job role  
↳ specific to you is a human learning  
↳ finding commonality.  
(not) building a self set.  
↳ digitally smart and clear  
↳ making sure there's a model

↳ soft skills are most important.  
(communications, network)  
↳ human-centered techniques.

launch of platform  
- for vfx, post, virtual.  
- diversity inclusion  
- mid-level talent.

initiative to include on on-set opportunities.

- gatekeeping / opening doors into smaller + projects, (lack of collaboration?)

- gen 2. / packaging skills + backgrounds.  
↳ initiatives + programs + workshops.  
↳ E-learning, meta-skills.  
↳ border film officers.

human intervention  
↳ choices & responsibilities.  
↳ telling authentic stories w/ universal appeals.

- stage 3  
↳ networking resource, marketplace for mentorship, while certification programs.

local series / universal themes  
↳ incentive for opening up to a broader audience

an era of unity & globalization?  
local = global!  
↳ consistent infrastructure.  
↳ storytelling on a global human level!

Diagram: Film, then for, then AI, then Audience

target  
AUDIENCE

- research film  
↳ by my thoughts identify the target.  
↳ interview w/ target.  
(forums) individual strengths

"The Floating Bird" of Systems Thinking  
↳ inputs - growing problems  
↳ outputs - solving problems.

holistic overall picture of what's going on!

↳ an understanding of the entire world we live in & understanding patterns + natural systems.

↳ influence across many different fields.

Cultural Theory Domains  
Hierarchical  
Solidaristic → emphasizes belonging, values and the idea of justice & fairness as important maintaining the system.  
Individualist  
Fatalistic

Appendix 3: Survey Questions & Responses

Table with 10 columns: #, Current film student, Graduate (within the last 5 years), Other, 1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit, 2. Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform, 3. The Sandbox Supper Club, 4. The Process Journal (Group Edition), 5. Cultural Learning Loop.

Table with 10 columns: #, Current film student, Graduate (within the last 5 years), Other, 1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit, 2. Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform, 3. The Sandbox Supper Club, 4. The Process Journal (Group Edition), 5. Cultural Learning Loop.

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responses

Table with 10 columns: #, Current film student, Graduate (within the last 5 years), Other, 1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit, 2. Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform, 3. The Sandbox Supper Club, 4. The Process Journal (Group Edition), 5. Cultural Learning Loop.

Which concept did you choose, and why did it stand out to you? Is there anything you would change, add, or want to see more of in this idea to make it feel more useful or supportive?

Table with 10 columns: #, Current film student, Graduate (within the last 5 years), Other, 1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit, 2. Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform, 3. The Sandbox Supper Club, 4. The Process Journal (Group Edition), 5. Cultural Learning Loop.

Table with 10 columns: #, Current film student, Graduate (within the last 5 years), Other, 1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit, 2. Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform, 3. The Sandbox Supper Club, 4. The Process Journal (Group Edition), 5. Cultural Learning Loop.

responses

Table with 10 columns: #, Current film student, Graduate (within the last 5 years), Other, 1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit, 2. Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform, 3. The Sandbox Supper Club, 4. The Process Journal (Group Edition), 5. Cultural Learning Loop.

**Appendix 4: Interview with participant 1**

*The following interview transcripts were polished using ChatGPT to remove filler words and correct minor grammatical errors, while preserving the original meaning and tone of each conversation.*

Participant 1: (0:00)

If you want, I can also try to record and send a few.

Hana Grasse: (0:06)

No, it's okay — no hassle. I sent you the stuff to fill out, but you can do that later. It's not important. It's just something I want to have when I visualize my interviews.

Okay, so these aren't just introductory questions. How long have you been working in film? I know you study audiovisual design — could you tell me a bit about what that specifically involves?

Participant 1: (0:42)

Does “working” include studying?

Hana Grasse: 0:45

Yeah — I mean, being involved in any way.

Participant 1: (0:50)

I'm an audiovisual design student, which can mean a lot. What we do is quite diverse. Over the last four years of studying, I've worked on fiction films, teasers, trailers, commercials, documentaries, essay films, and immersive experiences and installations. That all falls under audiovisual design. I've done all of that, but I'm especially drawn to documentaries and rule-based formats. That's what I'm into. So yes — I've been doing this for the past four years.

Hana Grasse: (1:30)

So you've mostly studied — have you worked in the industry as well?

Participant 1: (1:51)

Yes, I've worked in the industry, but I've never produced anything myself. I worked at a production agency where my role focused on social media and client communications. I didn't get to be present on production days or on set. However, I've helped out on sets with friends and classmates.

I also did other internships, mostly in social media — though in one, before the production agency, I worked for a brand and helped film a commercial teaser. That was a big step up for me.

Hana Grasse: (3:01)

Lovely. My focus is on emerging tech, particularly AI. I attended some film-related events in London — award shows, workshops — and a lot of the dialogue was around AI. Some people were panicking, others were embracing it. I found it an interesting space to research because industries are always evolving.

My question is: what role has emerging tech like AI, VR, or other digital tools played in your work or learning? Whether in school, internships, or personal projects — has it impacted your creative process?

Participant 1: (4:15)

For personal and school-related work, I use ChatGPT to help with script formatting. It doesn't write scripts for me, but it helps with layout, which I find useful.

I haven't experimented with AI-generated visuals myself, but during my internship, I worked with producers and directors who were creating AI-generated films — which was wild to witness.

Personally, I've also used text-based editing tools, which I think are AI-driven. Those have been really helpful.

Hana Grasse: (5:29)

Interesting. I should have asked earlier — do you have a stance on AI? I mean both generative AI, like image creation, and non-generative tools that support your workflow.

Participant 1: (5:54)

I actually did research on AI in creative industries — advertising, film, design — for a project. My opinion is still forming because AI itself is still evolving.

At the moment, I think AI-generated visuals are useful for mood boards, but I would never pass AI-created work off as my own.

I hope that answers your question.

Hana Grasse: (6:47)

It does. So — how do you feel about the impact of AI and emerging tech on creativity in filmmaking, whether personally or industry-wide? Does it enhance or hinder creativity? And why?

Participant 1: (7:21)

That's an interesting question — I asked the same one in two interviews I conducted myself.

Personally, I think AI enhances creativity in certain ways. I'll give two examples.

For brainstorming, I use ChatGPT to bounce ideas back and forth. It helps me begin my research and develop concepts.

Visually, I haven't had much luck using AI-generated images. I usually prefer Pinterest or Cosmos. I find AI hard to direct for specific visual outcomes.

But in terms of text and ideas, it enhances my process. Sometimes I'll write a prompt and ask it to give me five variations — and one of them sparks something useful. It's a collaborative spark, not a replacement for original thinking.

Hana Grasse: (10:20)

So it's assisting, not replacing.

Participant 1: (10:24)

Exactly.

Hana Grasse: (10:27)

Is this process common in your school? Do others use AI like you do?

Participant 1: (10:40)

Yes. In fact, I can share my interviews — both audiovisual design students also use AI in their process. They said it helps start the creative process, like a snowball.

I've also seen people use AI in pitch decks and graduation projects — visuals clearly made by AI.

I didn't expect people to brainstorm with AI the way they do.

Hana Grasse: (12:17)

That's so interesting. But I guess there are still concerns about AI replacing certain roles in film? What's your take?

Participant 1: (13:01)

That's something I've explored in my research. I'll send you my paper — it aligns really closely with your project.

I started it during an exchange in advertising and carried it into my film studies.

My stance is: I'm not afraid of AI. I see it as a collaborator, not a competitor. It doesn't create anything on its own — it still needs human input. Even the prompt is a creative act.

Participant 1: (14:19)

But in commercials, I've seen companies try to cut costs by hiring one person to make an entire ad using AI. Coca-Cola did this. If more brands follow, it could affect commercial production jobs.

Hopefully, that opens new doors, but it's something entry-level creatives might need to think about.

Hana Grasse: (15:16)

Do younger creatives actually think about that?

Participant 1: (15:17)

Not really. One interviewee said AI is like language — it's not something we chose, but something we adapt to.

Have you seen the Mango commercial? It didn't land well.

People are realizing AI-generated work often lacks emotional depth. So while AI is here, it's seen more as a tool than a threat.

Hana Grasse: (16:45)

Yeah, I started this thinking people would be scared of AI, but now it feels more like, “It's already here, and it's kind of underwhelming.” So I guess we collaborate with it rather than compete.

I'm thinking of designing a solution for entry-level filmmakers — but I'm curious: how do you currently stay updated on tech in the industry? Is there a community or platform you use?

Participant 1: (17:12)

I mostly stay updated through LinkedIn and scattered articles. Creative industry websites, advertising magazines, and YouTube channels like The Future are also helpful.

Hana Grasse: (17:56)

Totally. I can think of others too.

Participant 1: (18:02)

Also, from my internship — whenever something happens in the industry, it usually hits the marketing department first.

Even in fashion brands, we avoid the AI look. For our latest campaign, we hired a film photographer to avoid any AI associations.

Podcasts are helpful too — but only if they're industry-specific.

Hana Grasse: (19:47)

So, if there were a learning platform or app designed for emerging filmmakers, what features would you want?

Participant 1: (21:01)

I'd want a Reddit-style forum — something with categories for each industry where you can get AI news and updates. Also, maybe a learning course. But honestly, for people starting out, it's not about tools — it's about understanding the role AI plays in the industry first.

Hana Grasse: (22:53)

Right, it's about understanding what AI even is.

So — how important is peer knowledge-sharing to you?

Participant 1: (23:22)

Very. Most of the time, I hear about trends from other people. That's why I value my internship — everyone talks about what's going on. It keeps you up to date.

I also have a friend who refuses to use AI — she's a graphic designer. I think AI is more advanced in that field than in film, which might explain why graphic designers are more wary.

Hana Grasse: (25:42)

That's a great perspective. Do you have other spaces — in class or elsewhere — where you regularly hear about AI?

Participant 1: (26:03)

Social media, especially Instagram. I see reels and posts from marketing accounts that explain what's happening in the industry. I can share some with you if you'd like.

Hana Grasse: (26:25)

Thank you! Yeah, I find the conversation around AI varies so much depending on the industry.

Some people treat it like a taboo; others are eager to explore its potential. I fall into the latter — I think it can really enhance creativity if used ethically.

Participant 1: (27:03)

I agree with that.

Hana Grasse: (27:06)

You're so good at this interview — thank you!

Final question: What tech or trends are you most excited about?

Participant 1: (27:30)

Today, I found out Pinterest uses AI to predict trends — they have a whole predictions page, mostly for businesses. Also, I use ChatGPT a lot — it's a go-to tool for students.

And I downloaded a running app that creates personalized training plans based on your stats — that's definitely AI-driven.

There's also a tool I use that turns audio into text. I use it for transcribing interviews — very handy.

Hana Grasse: (29:57)

Awesome. Is there anything else you'd like to add about how young people can better share knowledge or resources? If you had one advice for someone who was going into the industry, and they were feeling a bit uneasy and intimidated by emerging technology, what is one piece of advice you would give them?

Participant 1: (30:32)

I would just say talk to people around you because that really helps knowing that there are also people who are you like yourself who are also going in who may know a bit more than you do and you can talk to them about it.

It's just something that helps easily access people.

One of the most accessible information is once you have the network to start speaking to people and sharing your knowledge.

The first time I ever learned about AI was from a friend actually. And also for Midjourney.

## Appendix 5: Interview with participant 2

*The following interview transcripts were polished using ChatGPT to remove filler words and correct minor grammatical errors, while preserving the original meaning and tone of each conversation.*

Hana Grasse (0:00)

Thanks for filling out the little mini form about who you are and everything. Could you briefly explain how you ended up in the film industry? What really brought you here?

Participant 2 (0:16)

That's quite an interesting question. I studied Fine Art in Vienna, specifically post-conceptual art. We're now in a phase some call post-contemporary art, because contemporary art has already been done, and now we're asking, what's next?

While studying Fine Art, I became skeptical of how elitist it was. For example, my friends and I might have shows, but only other artists or art students would come. It felt very insular.

Also, if my friends wanted to become artists, they needed three or four jobs on the side just to afford materials. I knew I wanted to stay in the arts, but do something different. That's when I became interested in audiovisual design.

I didn't apply to film school because I don't see myself as a film or series director. I'm more drawn to short-form work like music videos or audiovisual pieces. So I applied to a program in the Netherlands — and I'm still very happy I did.

Hana Grasse (1:33)

When was that — about four years ago?

Participant 2

About three and a half years ago. It'll be four once I graduate.

Hana Grasse

Great. So I mentioned in my message that I'm researching the disruption of emerging technologies in film — specifically AI.

Initially, I thought AI was going to radically change the film industry. But the more I looked into it, I realized it might not replace filmmakers — at least not generative AI. From what I've seen at events like Future Frank and others, AI may assist or compete in commercial sectors, where brands are more focused on cutting costs. But that's my take.

What role has emerging tech like AI, VR, or other digital tools played in your own work or learning — either at school or personally, as a director?

Participant 2 (3:14)

When you mentioned Coca-Cola, I thought of their AI commercial. It was heavily criticized. Sure, the goal was to generate buzz and boost sales, but if consumers find the commercial tacky or off-putting, it backfires. So unless AI itself becomes the consumer, it may not be worth it.

Everything in this capitalist system is ultimately about money — so if audiences reject AI content, there's little incentive to continue.

At school, I'm working on my graduation film. Our program has vague rules around AI. All ideas must come from us, but we're allowed to use tools like Midjourney or ChatGPT to develop our ideas.

We even had two classes on how to prompt AI effectively. If you use generic prompts, you get generic — and often inaccurate — results. In one exercise, we wrote film loglines and used ChatGPT to polish them. The idea still had to come from us, but AI helped refine it.

Hana Grasse (5:18)

So in your experience, it's mostly been an assisting tool. From what I've seen, AI helps most in pre-production — script formatting, call sheets, production plans. Would you say it enhances or hinders your creative process?

Participant 2 (6:02)

I'd say I'm neutral. I see both positives and negatives.

For instance, AI can theoretically create scenes so you don't have to shoot everything yourself — but that requires access to tools beyond Midjourney. It's a more exclusive capability.

I've also read that producing AI-generated content consumes significant resources, which raises environmental concerns. So that makes me question its sustainability.

Hana Grasse (7:03)

Right, it's not very sustainable.

Participant 2 (7:04)

Exactly. If I could pause AI development, I would — but I can't. It's coming whether I like it or not, so I'm trying to learn how to use it.

I watched a documentary that addressed the ethical and copyright issues. Regulation is difficult because major developers are in places like the US, EU, Korea, and Israel — and these regions don't always align.

Who gets to make the rules? How do we make sure that process is fair and not dominated by those in power?

But from an individual perspective, ChatGPT is incredibly convenient.

Hana Grasse (8:37)

Definitely.

Participant 2 (8:38)

When I was working at Future Frank, we had a project for a plant pot brand. The director made a moving storyboard using Midjourney. It was almost perfect.

Everyone was saying, "Why are we flying to Portugal to shoot this under the sun?" because the AI mockups looked so good — simple and clean.

Of course, we still filmed it. But AI visuals always have that slightly off color. There's a tackiness to it.

So again, I have both positive and negative feelings.

Hana Grasse (9:29)

It's mixed. I like what you said about how AI is here whether we like it or not. I felt pretty negatively at first, especially toward Midjourney. But when you factor in budgets and production costs, it's clear why it's gaining traction.

So my question now is: as entry-level creatives, do we even have access to knowledge about AI? Do you feel like there's a community or platform where you can stay up to date on emerging tech?

Participant 2 (10:37)

Not really. A friend of mine — he's an editor — told me about a filmmaker who used half live-action footage and half AI-generated footage in a film that screened at a festival.

He said it felt really weird watching AI content on the big screen.

So, no, I don't feel like I have enough knowledge. I know companies are experimenting with AI, but we don't really see the results.

Hana Grasse (11:15)

Fair. But in terms of tools like ChatGPT for pre-production, do you feel like you have what you need to work efficiently?

Participant 2 (11:37)

Yes — tools like ChatGPT and Adobe programs definitely help.

Adobe's AI tools aren't conversational, but they assist with tracking or generating backgrounds, things that used to require multiple masks and manual work.

I've seen AI demos that look amazing, but they're usually built for professionals, not for us at entry level.

Hana Grasse (12:30)

Why do you think that is?

Participant 2 (12:35)

Because access requires resources. I saw a video of someone using motion tracking with prompts to generate Hollywood-level content. But he was clearly using a proper studio setup.

That's just not available to us.

Hana Grasse (13:20)

Right — it's more advanced. This interview has been really different from my others, which is great for my research.

Annabelle, for example, also talked about using ChatGPT for scriptwriting and organizing ideas. But none of us seem to be using generative AI tools heavily.

Many say they wish there was a community or platform — like a forum — to share how people are using emerging tech in film.

You sound like you're comfortable with where you are, but—

Participant 2 (14:41)

Actually, I don't think it's good to have just one centralized resource. Knowledge always carries a power dynamic, and in a capitalist system, that can become problematic.

I prefer knowledge to be distributed.

Hana Grasse (15:07)

Fair. But if it were more like Reddit — an open forum where people share freely?

Participant 2

That could work. But even Reddit has its biases. For example, politically it leans left, so you don't always get a wide range of perspectives.

If I were to design something like that, it would still probably be skewed.

But maybe a forum where companies like Adobe could provide clear tutorials or insights into how their AI tools work — that could be helpful.

Still, it's important that we have multiple AI providers. ChatGPT already has some sketchy scandals, and I'd prefer to have options.

Right now, I'm stuck using it because there aren't many alternatives that are accessible.

Hana Grasse (17:34)

There's ScreenSkills — they offer some courses. But they tend to be for mid-level filmmakers, people already working in the industry.

I find that intimidating. A lot of people at events are already established.

There's so much learning that could happen around emerging tech — but it's not always accessible to people just entering the field.

Participant 2 (18:57)

When you say community, do you mean globally, or regionally?

Hana Grasse (19:07)

Right now, I'm focusing on the EU. I'm mainly interviewing students or recent grads.

At the beginning of my research, I interviewed people in their 50s and 60s — producers, network coordinators — and their views were very different.

Still, no one I've talked to is completely against AI. Most people recognize that it's here to stay.

Participant 2 (20:50)

I watched a documentary that said something similar. There are no regulations yet, but we need global policies.

The question is: who will write the rules? Every region — the US, EU, Korea — has different interests.

But AI is a global technology. If rules are made only by dominant players, it raises ethical concerns and echoes colonial dynamics.

Hana Grasse (22:12)

Such a huge topic. Okay — last question.

What are you excited about in film over the next five years?

Participant 2 (22:41)

Good question.

I love film, but I'm more into audiovisual and music videos lately. I've been following two Korean production companies that blend live footage with motion design.

I'm excited to see how AI and motion graphics evolve together.

There are already small AI tools in programs like After Effects. I'm curious what kind of ethical questions will arise.

Right now, AI-generated content has no copyright. I hope someone — an organization, maybe — starts leading that conversation.

As for advice to young filmmakers:

We're in a strange generation. Kids in Korea are already learning to code in school. AI is like a new language.

But I don't think you need to force yourself to stay constantly updated. What matters most is doing work that reflects you.

If you connect with AI, use it. If you don't, lean into analog and human connection. That authenticity will resonate most with audiences.

Hana Grasse (25:59)

That's what I think too. Thank you.

Participant 2 (26:08)

This reminds me of a conversation with my art teacher — now a content creator.

She said she's confident as a human because we resonate with human things — flaws, imperfections, emotions.

But AI can eventually mimic that, too. It's getting better at reproducing human textures and behaviors.

So that argument — that humans prefer humanity — may become weaker over time.

Hana Grasse (27:03)

That's really interesting. People say humans are empathy-driven, but maybe that's just how we're programmed — and AI could learn to mimic it. We'll see.

### Appendix 6: Interview with participant 3

*The following interview transcripts were polished using ChatGPT to remove filler words and correct minor grammatical errors, while preserving the original meaning and tone of each conversation.*

Hana Grasse (0:00)

To start, I'd love to hear your introduction to film — how you first got into it and why you're here now.

Participant 3 (0:20)

During my academic studies, I went through all the artistic routes. I actually really like stories and the general idea of moving images. I'm interested in trying to create experiences.

Hana Grasse (1:38)

Since we're talking about new and emerging tech, what's been your experience with using tools like AI — or even other technologies? For example, some people I've spoken to, mostly in directing roles, use AI to refine or write scripts or to generate inspiration. What's your experience been?

Participant 3 (2:22)

I've tried to stay away from AI as much as I can. For me, when AI is used intentionally and subtly, that's okay — but when it's obvious, it feels like it's taking over your role. If AI refines my script instead of me asking someone for help, it feels like a replacement, and that's strange.

There's been interesting work at festivals — films that use AI intentionally, where there's a clear reason behind it. But I personally haven't used AI yet in a way that's helped my own work feel easier. On the technical side, I can see the benefit of AI making manual tasks simpler, like editing — it's so much easier now compared to five years ago. But when it comes to creativity, especially as a director, I'm hesitant. AI draws from existing sources; it doesn't generate new ideas.

Hana Grasse (4:46)

That's a great point. Earlier, you mentioned an event you attended — were they saying it's only good if it's used intentionally, or was that your takeaway?

Participant 3 (5:20)

Yeah, that was my takeaway. For example, there was a film where the characters' faces and surroundings changed every couple of seconds. It was fascinating and experimental.

Hana Grasse (6:40)

I can relate. During an internship over the summer, I helped produce a part-AI, part-live action piece. Certain facial features kept shifting frame to frame — it was so bizarre. Personally, I hated how it looked; it wasn't cohesive. But I've also seen post-production examples where AI was used, and I didn't even notice. That's where it feels more successful.

Participant 3 (8:14)

Exactly. There are so many potential roles. I think in some cases, AI could improve sequences, change details, or trick the audience in subtle ways. But once you notice, it can pull you out of the experience.

Hana Grasse (9:39)

Would you ever consider using AI to assist you as a director, especially since you have input into post-production and delivery?

Participant 3 (10:22)

I think I'd use specific software that's standard in the industry. Film is about experimentation — so yes, there's room for testing things out. But I wouldn't go overboard.

Hana Grasse (12:02)

That's a really thoughtful answer. My research started with a pretty negative or neutral stance toward AI, but the more I explored the field, the more I realized adaptability is key.

Participant 3 (13:01)

Exactly. It's like social media — we have to be adaptable.

Hana Grasse (13:32)

How do you stay informed about industry trends or new tools? Some people have told me they rely on LinkedIn or their workplace. What about you?

Participant 3 (14:20)

I use social media and LinkedIn. I also like looking into how tools integrate into interfaces, like Notion. Efficiency matters to me — and that's why commercial partnerships become so big. Many people go into commercial work because the money's better, even if they don't always love the projects. AI could help refine those jobs.

Hana Grasse (15:45)

How do you feel about getting information through social media? Do you trust it?

Participant 3 (16:22)

It depends. Some people post just to go viral, and that can be dangerous — they might create shocking imagery just for attention. It's important to distance yourself from that.

Hana Grasse (17:42)

If you wanted trustworthy updates on AI tools, who would you trust? Institutions, mentors, peers?

Participant 3 (18:22)

I think trust is subjective. A well-designed website could help, but it's still subjective in the end.

Hana Grasse (19:05)

It sounds like you have some ethical concerns around AI.

Participant 3 (19:23)

Yes. We already have so much information online — so many images every day — and AI will accelerate that. It's overwhelming. I'm personally trying to step away from the digital world. Commercial work doesn't always interest me, except in specific cases. AI amplifies consumerism, and I'm uncomfortable with that.

Hana Grasse (21:12)

That's completely valid.

Participant 3 (21:17)

Yeah.

Hana Grasse (21:54)

What are your hopes for the future, given how you feel about all this?

Participant 3 (21:54)

The world is in a fragile state, and the industry has fewer and fewer budgets, especially in the cultural sector. With countries moving politically to the right, there's less funding for the arts.

I have a critical eye, but I'm also hopeful. People are starting to realize how social media affects mental health. I think our generation understands that more than older ones — sometimes even better than our grandparents, who might now be more addicted to their phones.

I'm hopeful that people will value human-made work more as AI grows. Every art movement has its counter-movement. Right now, tech and generative media are the big wave — but I think we'll see a pushback toward valuing real, human effort.

Hana Grasse (24:39)

That resonates. I've noticed older professionals want to adapt quickly to remain competitive, but younger generations like Gen Z seem more reflective, maybe even more community-focused.

Participant 3 (25:20)

I agree. Gen Z feels very community-based. I'm politically active, and I think it's necessary now.

Older generations have worked for years to reach top positions, but now the landscape feels uncertain. For our generation, it's a weird feeling — we're entering industries that may completely change in 10 or 20 years because of AI. And it's not just the creative industries — it's everywhere.

Hana Grasse (27:08)

You've offered such great insights. Do you feel a sense of community within the industry?

Participant 3 (27:24)

I'm still stepping into the industry, so I can't say fully. But among the people I've studied with, especially in our major, there's a shared mindset. We focus on creative concepts, not just technical skills.

We've developed a way of thinking that's about pushing ideas forward. Some of us are integrating AI, but none of us think it will replace us. We're confident that AI can't replace deeply cultural or personal stories. You can't replicate an original human experience with AI.

Hana Grasse (29:42)

That's a really beautiful perspective. Looking ahead, do you feel interested in expanding that community or network?

Participant 3

I feel kind of in the middle when it comes to AI. I'm not completely against it, but I'm also not fully on board. I sit somewhere between. I think I'd be interested in working with different kinds of approaches — but definitely not approaches that are fully AI-driven. At that point, I don't think you're really working with film anymore; you're working with an entirely different medium.

Hana Grasse

Right, I should have reframed that — I mean more about like-minded people, those interested in keeping things human-centered and being mindful of the roots of film while staying adaptable or at least informed. Personally, I think knowledge is power, and even if you don't fully agree with something, it's important to be knowledgeable.

Participant 3

Yes, exactly. I think what's interesting is the idea of “defensive accelerationism” — so we can be defensive or cautious, but we can also look for ways to progress, just so we're mindful and not careless. We still need to move forward in some way. I think it's impossible to avoid AI completely; it's going to become part of everyday life. So we need to accept it, be mindful about how we use it, and still preserve the essence of what we know film to be. Otherwise, we risk getting stuck in the past.

Hana Grasse

Beautiful. Thank you so much.

## Appendix 7: Ethics Statement for Survey

### ⚠ Intro & Ethics Statement

Hi, my name is Hana, and I'm a Design Management student at UAL. This survey is part of my Final Major Project, where I'm researching how AI is impacting early-career filmmakers and the future of creative work in the film industry.

This form will take **about 3 minutes** to complete. My aim is to gather real experiences from emerging filmmakers and understand how you're navigating this time of change. I'm committed to making sure this research is respectful, inclusive, and centered on the people who are shaping the industry today.

Your participation is completely anonymous, and your insights will contribute to my academic work exploring how filmmakers can adapt to new technologies like AI while staying connected to the human side of storytelling.

If you have any questions or would like to know more, please feel free to contact me at [grassehana4@gmail.com](mailto:grassehana4@gmail.com).

Thank you so much for being part of this :)

**Continue** press Enter ↵

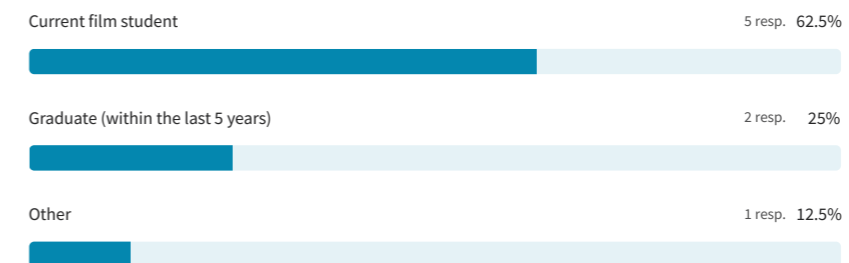
## Appendix 8: Audience approval poll findings

### My new form

8 responses

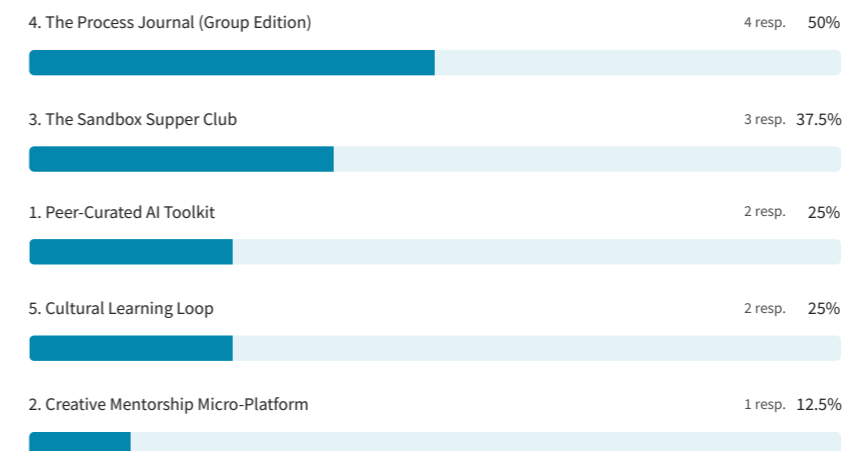
Are you a...

8 out of 8 answered



Here are 5 early concept directions developed from real frictions and needs shared by emerging filmmakers. Please select up to two options that feels most exciting or relevant to you.

8 out of 8 answered



Powered by Typeform

responses

#	Current film student	Graduate (within the last 5 years)	Other	1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit	2. Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform	3. The Sandbox Supper Club	4. The Process Journal (Group Edition)	5. Cultural Learning Loop
2zl64nv9fach0kkafup92zl64nvnqkk	Current film student					3. The Sandbox Supper Club	4. The Process Journal (Group Edition)	
kg7t1cq7ki88wihg7pkg7tit86m9yjkz		Graduate (within the last 5 years)						5. Cultural Learning Loop
11zwhkq1w4xksv511zwhkg2xs5mq0k0j		Graduate (within the last 5 years)		1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit				
tugl0tbmxfiu4u27fzxtuglhwf9jae1	Current film student				2. Creative Mentorship Micro-Platform		4. The Process Journal (Group Edition)	5. Cultural Learning Loop
rxj0bqv3lxw8virxj09ik5cr5oalj			Working in the industry			3. The Sandbox Supper Club	4. The Process Journal (Group Edition)	
fq8nw8o3on8c9ax3e9fq8nw8o4ylls5t	Current film student					3. The Sandbox Supper Club		
1tg6l1ieuipfazfnu1tg6l1iowfevj	Current film student						4. The Process Journal (Group Edition)	
8eoqemwwllxhph3hg3ioqcr8eoqemwgcg	Current film student			1. Peer-Curated AI Toolkit				

**Which concept did you choose, and why did it stand out to you? Is there anything you would change, add, or want to see more of in this idea to make it feel more useful or supportive?**

i chose 4&5. i rly like the aspect of a group setting because it steers away from being too isolated and intimidating. i like the supper club idea because i think people who enjoy company will be able to look forward to it and b

i think it's important to have human interactions building a community

since it can be used at any time and it seems very convenient to have an understanding of what the different tools can be used for.

I chose 2,4,5 because I believe group experiments are the most influential and other people are the best tool to learn from.

Supper club and process journal both felt very community oriented which I feel is the way to go with AI

not just technical but also social connectiveness

I like the group concept as it felt you could learn more by sharing it with your group peers in irl

Peer Toolkit: Most of these ideas were along the same idea - sharing AI usefulness. I'm totally looking for that too and currently relying on instagram. All of the ideas sound great but digital makes the most sense - hence why

Any final thoughts about what would make you feel more confident or supported while learning and experimenting with AI?	Response Type	Start Date (UTC)	Stage Date (UTC)	Submit Date (UTC)	Network ID	Tags
i want to be more knowledgeable and smart about all the new technology that's coming out. especially with current times and competitiveness	completed	2025-04-24 14:45:50		2025-04-24 14:49:17	55369edbe4	
knowing what tools my peers are using and how it helps them	completed	2025-04-24 14:41:41		2025-04-24 14:42:40	99a6a4195e	
just understanding tools before having to pay for them.	completed	2025-04-24 14:39:07		2025-04-24 14:41:11	99a6a4195e	
I think your ideas were great and I think the use of ai is underestimated within the film industry. I think people are intimidated by the fact that film enthusiasts are gonna critique those who want to us ai.	completed	2025-04-23 19:43:07		2025-04-23 19:48:28	288abc76b4	
I think a basic education in using AI as a technology to help better their workflow rather than replacing parts of a workflow altogether	completed	2025-04-23 14:17:41		2025-04-23 14:25:26	d2a01af2c0	
	completed	2025-04-23 07:48:08		2025-04-23 07:49:41	270c2a6850	
Definitely having more time to experiment and be around people who are doing the same	completed	2025-04-23 07:38:15		2025-04-23 07:39:40	d5cd4063e9	
I wish schools (like my own - SCAD) was a bit more up-to-date or ahead of the curve. Since its evolving in real-time it can be difficult but I'd argue necessary.	completed	2025-04-22 23:11:56		2025-04-22 23:16:18	1cd51130c1	

## Appendix 9: Workshop Recording with Silas

*The following interview transcripts were polished using ChatGPT to remove filler words and correct minor grammatical errors, while preserving the original meaning and tone of each conversation.*

Silas:  
I'm pretty up to date on AI — I'm kind of obsessed with it.

Hana:  
That's so cool.

Silas:  
Yeah, I think it's great. My Instagram feed is full of AI-related reels. I always see the ones you like too — it's the only time I see your name pop up!  
But honestly, it's overwhelming. There are a million new tools and platforms every day. I've heard of a bunch but haven't had the time to use most of them.

Hana:  
Right, because they're all subscription-based.

Silas:  
Exactly. The only one I'm subscribed to is MidJourney, and, of course, the Adobe Creative Suite.  
I want to test out more tools — I just haven't gotten there yet. I've mostly just watched others use them.  
There's stuff like Pika AI — all these new AI video generators. Some of them are insane.  
There are also these Instagram brands that are built around turning images into super vibey, realistic content. I think it's awesome.

Hana:  
That's really cool.  
When I started my research, during the discovery phase, I developed four key user personas. You actually fall into a rare category — someone who's genuinely excited about AI.  
A lot of the people I interviewed or surveyed had mixed feelings. Some were interested, but many were hesitant or said it didn't feel true to the nature of filmmaking. A lot of them were more traditional.  
I used to be kind of anti-AI when it first came out. I didn't see much value in the content being produced.  
But now I'm working for a film journalism magazine, running social media, and I've seen some great submissions that use AI tools in really thoughtful ways.  
If someone already has a strong foundation in storytelling and filmmaking, I think AI can be used productively. People just aren't fully aware of its potential — and things are moving so fast.  
It's about choosing whether or not to stay informed.

Silas:  
Totally. I think AI has a lot of great use cases — but some aspects are genuinely detrimental. Especially in writing and education. I think we're going to see a big realization in the coming years that younger generations — Gen Z and Gen Alpha — are sort of “brain-rotting” because we're not pushing ourselves anymore. There's a lack of integrity now, especially with schoolwork.  
I think that'll lead to a swing back toward older systems.  
So yeah — I'm scared in some ways and against AI in others. But creatively, I'm open to it.  
Also, I took a year off recently, so I've had more time to explore AI than a lot of my peers who are deeper in the industry and too busy.  
It's the people who are already working or in early-career roles who feel the most anxiety — they don't have the time to learn new tools.

Hana:  
Exactly. In my survey, the most open or curious people were students or recent grads.  
People who are working told me they don't talk to anyone about AI. They just learn about it online — and that lack of community is a big problem.  
That's why I've been thinking about a toolkit — like a Reddit-style forum where creatives can see and review AI tools, maybe 20 or so, to solve specific problems.

Silas:

I saw that! I liked both of your ideas — the toolkit and the supper club.  
The toolkit feels practical — a co-created, peer-reviewed space that could really help people get oriented.  
But the supper club idea is interesting too — more face-to-face, more human.  
Still, I think the journal concept you mentioned got the most votes, right?

Hana:  
Yeah, the journal did. But I'm imagining a version that could evolve into a toolkit.  
Like a shared, digital journal where people jot down insights or experiments each week — kind of a casual zine or magazine that documents primary experiences.  
It wouldn't be polished, just low-fi and iterative — and eventually could turn into something more structured.  
Most importantly, I want it to be co-created and publicly accessible.  
Not something developed top-down by a single expert, but something decentralized.

Silas:  
That makes total sense.  
Also, you're right to consider partnerships. As someone who's learned a lot about startups, I can tell you that launching a standalone site or platform is really tough.  
Only a few consumer startups actually succeed.  
You're better off integrating with existing platforms — Instagram, Reddit, Twitter — or working with a media brand like Morning Brew.  
They've built trust and engagement already.

Hana:  
Totally agree. That's what I'm planning to write about in the final section of my process book.  
Rather than launching a new platform, I want to explore partnerships — maybe start with small-scale media outlets or even job fairs that target emerging filmmakers.  
I need to meet my audience where they already are.

Silas:  
I genuinely think this idea could work. I would use it.  
Instagram is currently the only place I stay up to date on AI, but it's such a distraction.  
The algorithm isn't helpful, and AI content on there has a bad rep — it's a mix of clickbait, serious tools, and junk.  
A curated space — something that filters and organizes all this info — would be so helpful.

Hana:  
Exactly. I've thought about modeling it off Morning Brew — a short, funny, and digestible newsletter-style format.  
You don't need people to download another app. You just meet them where they already are.

Silas:  
Yes! People hate testing new things unless they trust the brand.  
If you can partner with something already known, their audience is already engaged and trusting.  
You don't want to feel like a test user — that's exhausting.

Hana:  
Totally. My degree is in design management, which focuses on solving problems creatively with business sensibility.  
This is my final major project — six months of research and development.  
I'm focused on emerging tech in the film industry, especially AI.  
There's just not much out there yet — it's still a taboo topic.  
I don't know if you've experienced that in the U.S., but here in the UK and in the Netherlands, AI isn't being taught in film programs at all.

Silas:  
Same in the U.S. My school is trying — they're doing okay — but it's hard to keep up because AI is moving in real time.  
Universities just can't move fast enough.  
It's also generational.  
People like Noah — you know him — are being taught by professors who are anti-AI, traditional filmmakers who tell students to ignore it.  
That's super discouraging for Gen Z.  
Especially now, with hiring freezes and job uncertainty, we need to be informed — even if it's uncomfortable.

Hana:  
People say AI will create new jobs, but I'm still not sure how that works.

Silas:  
If you're ahead of the curve, maybe.  
In my creative thinking class, the professor is about 65 and super relaxed. I was using MidJourney for an assignment, and he was a bit skeptical.  
I didn't even try to explain it — I just thought, "I know way more about this than you, and you're the one teaching me."  
We're in a weird moment where we have to teach our teachers.  
It's frustrating because we're the ones paying for education.

Hana:  
Exactly. I'm trying to reframe it as paying for the network, resources, and facilities — not the instruction itself.

Silas:  
That's a good way to look at it.  
Also — I think this whole project of yours is such a great idea. It's aligned with what I want to do, too.  
I want to work with small brands and help them scale. I'm not interested in corporate life.  
I think startups are way more exciting.  
If you need any help or want to brainstorm ideas, I'd love to be involved.  
You've been researching the culture of the film industry, and I've been more on the AI side — we complement each other well.

Hana:  
Totally agree.  
I'm so glad I spoke with you at this point in the project.  
Do people around you share your perspective on AI?

Silas:  
Not really. I'm in a weird place — coming back to school after time off.  
But I'm excited again.  
Traveling was great, but I saw all my peers working toward their goals and realized I wasn't.  
I needed to reset.

Hana:  
So you're back in school now. What are you studying?

Silas:  
Technically, advertising and branding. It's the closest major to what I actually want to do here.  
I'm still figuring out if I want to transfer. You transferred between creative schools, right? What was that like?

Hana:  
Yeah — I transferred from Parsons to my current school. The degree was technically the same — design management — but at Parsons, most people wanted to go into the business side of fashion or editorial. That's not what I was into.  
Here, I've had more freedom to explore the intersection of creativity and business.  
Do you have something specific you're looking to transfer into?

Silas:  
Yeah, I'm really clear on what I want — I want to help small-to-mid-sized brands scale. I'm not interested in corporate branding.  
But most schools don't offer a program that balances creative and business equally.  
SCAD has great facilities — honestly some of the best — but socially it's a bit strange. I've thought about transferring because of that, but I'm trying to remind myself that there's value beyond the social scene.  
The ad/branding program here is very corporate-track. Everyone's aiming for jobs at AKQA or similar.

Hana:  
Yeah, my degree is supposed to be that middle ground — creative + business. Our final project is all about choosing an industry, identifying a real problem, doing deep research, and proposing a creative solution that considers business viability.  
I liked it better than Parsons because the student work here felt more competitive, more driven.  
If you ever get a chance to do a study abroad, take it. It helped me figure out what I actually wanted in a school.

Silas:  
SCAD has a campus in Lacoste, France — which is bizarre but cool.  
The school is amazing in terms of facilities. Like, they have a 10-acre film lot with fake sets — it's like a mini Hollywood.

But that's for film students, and I realized last year I actually hate being on set. I'd never want to work in that environment.

Hana:  
Totally fair. Are you thinking of transferring soon?

Silas:  
I've already gotten into a couple of schools, but I didn't apply widely. Still waiting to hear back from a few.  
I'm in a weird spot — nothing is perfect, so I just need to commit at some point.  
SCAD might end up being the best option in the long run.

Hana:  
You're only 20, right?

Silas:  
Yeah — 20.

Hana:  
I'm 22. It feels weird graduating, but I'm excited. I'm planning to stay in London — I can apply for a graduate visa that gives me two more years here.  
I don't think London is my forever city, but it's way more livable than New York, where I used to be.  
I'm looking to work at a production company — something short-form like commercials or music videos. I'm not really into feature films. I want something client-facing, maybe as a production assistant or manager.

Silas:  
Would you work for Mr. Positive again?

Hanas:  
I already have — I've worked on set with them a few times.  
It looks good on my portfolio because they've worked with clients like Ogilvy and AKQA, so it's a good name to have.  
But I'm not planning to go back to Tokyo soon unless I need to financially. If I can support myself here, I'll stay.  
I really don't want to work for my dad.  
Is Kreider still working for him?

Silas:  
Yeah — she is. She likes it, but she's also in a phase of questioning everything. She's not unhappy — just figuring stuff out.  
She's super into niche things — like evolutionary theory and Darwinism — which aren't exactly lucrative.  
But she's also interested in branding and creating things, so she's kind of in between. I'm trying to help her figure it out.

Hana:  
That's sweet. Sometimes younger siblings have more clarity on direction.

Silas:  
I actually talked to Noah recently — he's heading to New Hampshire, right?

Hana:  
Yeah — my dad's going too. I wish I was joining them.  
I'll be graduating in mid-June, so my mom and boyfriend are coming to London for that. My dad and brother will be here earlier to celebrate, then they'll go to Cannes.  
Maybe I'll try to join them in New Hampshire after. It's been a while, and I want to see you guys and Grammy.

Silas:  
You should! Let's plan something. Are you doing anything this summer?

Hana:  
I'm not sure yet. I'll be around here for a while. What about you?

Silas:  
Same — no real plans. I might be in New Hampshire, depending on how things shake out.  
You should definitely visit while everyone's up there.

Hana:

Totally.

Okay – to wrap up, how did you feel about this session? Was the format helpful – using the Miro board and FaceTime?

Silas:

Yes, definitely. The board was great – maybe a bit redundant in some places, but it really helped me get clear feedback. I appreciated it more than a survey – it helped get real thoughts out.

It was great!

Do you want me to stay anonymous?

Hana:

Up to you! If you're okay with it, I'd love to include you by name in the printed version.

Silas:

That's fine. I'll send you a LinkedIn photo – or maybe a better one if I can find one.

Hana:

Perfect. And just to confirm – you're a student studying branding and advertising, you're 20, and you're especially interested in AI and short-form creative content?

Silas:

Exactly. Not into features – more into YouTube-style, docu-style work that blends branding and storytelling. Let me know if you need anything else.

Hana:

Will do. Thanks again, Sila – this was so helpful!

Email

[grassehana4@gmail.com](mailto:grassehana4@gmail.com)



LinkedIn



Website



WhatsApp