Institution: Lancaster University		
Unit of Assessment: 32, Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory		
Title of case study: Leapfrog: Using innovation to transform how organisations, professionals and individuals engage with their communities		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2011 to 2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Leon Cruickshank David Perez Roger Whitham	**Role(s) (e.g. job title):** Professor Lecturer Lecturer	**Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:** June 2007 to present October 2015 to present April 2008 to present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: January 2015 to April 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		

1. Summary of the impact

In health and social care, public engagement is a legal requirement when major decisions about service delivery in the public sector are made, and in other areas, it can be an important means of assisting public bodies to meet their legal equality obligations. There is therefore a pressing need for innovation in community engagement, helping the public sector to do more, and better, and for less. This was the aim of Leapfrog (LF), a GBP1.3 million AHRC funded project undertaken between 2015 and 2019. Working with community groups, the public sector, NGOs and others largely in the NW of England, the LF team co-designed innovative, highly practical ways to engage their communities. The team shared the research nationally and internationally, in the form of editable engagement tools that have shaped and transformed professional practice. LF has brought about strategic policy revisions in Lancashire Library Service, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and national food poverty programme 'Food Power'. It has resulted in over £1 million in cost savings for Lancaster City Council through activating friends groups (schemes whereby people can become a 'friend-of' their local park, for example), besides transforming the evaluation practice of international organisations such as World Design Weeks and the Victoria and Albert Museum (the V&A). At an individual level, the tools developed as part of LF have also enhanced wellbeing and played an important role in shaping life courses.

2. Underpinning Research

The research, which includes open design, co-design, creative engagement, participatory design and facilitation, is the culmination of an ongoing initiative to help people from all walks of life make the best possible contribution to society as citizens [R1]. For LF (and the subsequent 'Scaling up Leapfrog' project) Lancaster University, along with academic partners Glasgow School of Art, co-designed new forms of engagement – that is, new forms of dialogue between citizens and the public sector [G1,G2]. All research and impacts presented here were undertaken exclusively by Cruickshank (PI) and Whitham and Perez (Co-Is) between 2015 and 2020.

The research undertaken through LF involved collaborating with groups of people (e.g., consultation officers, people in food poverty, librarians) in developing new tools or approaches to support engagement or dialogue with others [R2]. Co-designed research is innovative in its inclusion of participants in every aspect of the research, and its findings are widely available in peer-reviewed publications. The outcomes of this research are often tools in the form of editable PDF documents, offering anyone the ability to edit the text with a free PDF reader [R6]. For example, a tool could be a 'dinner plate' illustration to prompt talking, thinking and drawing around food poverty, or a template to help young people to negotiate the agenda of a meeting with their social workers. The key research insights are:

[i1] Effective tool design requires designers to genuinely share authorial power, as revealed through LF's ground-breaking action research on how to improve engagement tools. This has led to the development of new roles for designers as facilitators [R1,R4, R5].
[i2] Co-designed tools can significantly amplify existing skills in professional engagement practitioners, as evidenced in LF's work with professionals, ranging from the Victoria & Albert's Learning & National Programmes Team to World Design Weeks, from librarians across Lancashire to safeguarding professionals [R2, R3].

[i3] Successful tools act as 'boundary objects' bridging between stakeholders, and often across hierarchical structures (e.g., case worker and young person) as seen through LFs's work with cared-for young people and people with lived experience of food poverty [R1, R6].

[i4] Co-designed tools can energise communities to become active contributors to society to the point where this affects public policy, as found though LF's work with Lancaster City Council and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council [R1, R6].

3. References to the research

[R1] Cruickshank, L., Open Design and Innovation: facilitating creativity in everyone, Cruickshank, 2014, Routledge. Held at HEI. *Peer-reviewed.*

[R2] Whitham, R., Cruickshank, L., Coupe, G., Wareing, L., & Pérez, D., Health and Wellbeing: Challenging Co-Design for Difficult Conversations, Successes and Failures of the Leapfrog Approach, The Design Journal, 22(sup1), 2019: 575-587. https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2019.1595439. *Peer-reviewed.*

[R3] Coupe, G. & Cruickshank L., Providing Fast Flowing Calm Waters. The role of the Design Manager in mid-large scale Public-Sector Co-Design Projects, The Design Journal 20(sup1), 2017: S3401-S3412. https://doi.org/10.1080/14606925.2017.1352844. *Peer-reviewed.*

[R4] Cruickshank, L., Coupe, G., & Hennessey, D., Co-Design: Fundamental Issues & Guidelines for Designers: Beyond the Castle Case Study, Swedish Design Research Journal, 10:2, 2013: 48-57. https://doi.org/10.3384/svid.2000-964X.13248. *Peer-reviewed.*

[R5] Cruickshank, L. & Evans, M., Designing Creative Frameworks: Design Thinking as an Engine for New Facilitation Approaches, International Journal of Arts and Technology, 5:1, 2012: 73-85. DOI: 10.1504/IJART.2012.044337. *Peer-reviewed.*

[R6] Cruickshank, L., et al, Designing, Adapting and Selecting Tools for Creative Engagement : A Generative Framework, Swedish Design Research Journal, 15:1, 2017:42-51. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3384/svid.2000-964X.17142. *Peer-reviewed.*

Peer-reviewed research grants:

[G1] Cruickshank (PI), Whitham (Co-I), Smith, M., (Glasgow School of Art), Smith, P., (Glasgow School of Art), Cooper (Co-I), Williams (Co-I), McWilliam (Glasgow School of Art), Inns (Glasgow School of Art), *Leapfrog: Transforming Public Service Consultation by Design*, AHRC: (2015 to 2018) GBP999,923

[G2] Cruickshank (PI), Whitham (Co-I), *Scaling Up Leapfrog: improving a million creative conversations*, AHRC: (2018 to 2019) GBP80,624

4. Details of the impact

LF's tools are created and used daily by its co-design collaborators, in some cases thousands of times, as in the 'Target Control' tool with NHS evaluation organisation Health Watch, and national food poverty programme Food Power [S1]. LF tools are also published and can be freely downloaded and modified from its website (www.Leapfrog.tools). LF has improved the ways in which individuals and organisations interact with communities, leading to deeper, more mutually productive, and more economically beneficial, relationships. These improvements are exemplified in the impacts described below.

Between 2014 and 2020, the research team held 103 co-design events, reaching 720 participants from 83 partner organisations, and resulting in the co-creation of 83 unique engagement tools. Participants ranged from the V&A Museum to small community organisations supporting people living in food poverty, to leaders of international design festivals. The tools have been widely distributed to 292 community organisations, reaching 3,802 beneficiaries via 95 tool-sharing events. The LF website which shares tools has been viewed over 100,000 times in 146 countries (from Andorra to Zimbabwe) with over 5,000 downloads of the tools, tracked through the LF website. Examples of users include the NHS evaluation organisation Healthwatch (Blackburn), which has engaged with over 2,000 children and young people in order to shape local health care provision [S1], and the Food Justice Network which has partners on 4 continents [S1].

1. Enhancing professionals' engagement practice and the delivery of professional services: LF has been responsible for improving the quality and effectiveness of engagement amongst professionals who carry out public and user engagement on a daily basis. The Head of Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registrars for Lancashire County

Council describes how LF has changed professional practices, examples including practices amongst those working with cared for young people [S2] and through national professional bodies such as CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals). At two LF workshops she ran, she "*witnessed how people started to rethink the tools*" as they were adopted into their practice (i2, S2). Below are further examples of impact on the practices of professionals.

At local level, a Youth Action researcher working for CancerCare (Lancaster) has completed arts projects with young people using a wide range of visual arts materials for 20 years, but states that "*Leapfrog has transformed my practice as a youth arts worker and as a community worker*" [i2, S8]. This transformation was initiated by a 'Tool-fest' - a tool sharing event in July 2016 where the research team presented the 'Sound Advice' tool, developed by cared for young people and using a mobile phone to record advice to their younger selves. One of the biggest impacts was a change in her practice: "*it's taken me into using digital…. It's broadened my horizons enormously… I've entered into a whole new body of work that really captures the essence of what young people think*" [i2, S8]. Between October 2019 and March 2020, she employed LF tools with over 500 children and has since reflected that LF fundamentally changed her approach to engagement: "*I've gone beyond changing my own practice technologically and having a whole new range of skills now, into using those tools to help me not just facilitate issue-based work but to plan it as well*" [i2, S8].

At national level, the Empowerment Programme Officer of Church Action on Poverty, coordinating the national food poverty programme 'Food Power', collaborated with LF in the co-design of new engagement tools with food poverty experts by experience. This included working with schoolchildren in Blackburn and adults in Byker, Newcastle. LF changed the way the Officer worked with participants, allowing for "*conversations to be more holistic and inclusive*" and enabling "*people of different abilities to contribute... nobody feels excluded*" [S1]. There were also more profound impacts on practice for him: LF "*made me think about the whole design of projects in a different way. It really embedded that kind of co-production ethos into my work and into the organisation…Even when we weren't using the Leapfrog tools, the way in which we went about them was quite different, that we embedded people with lived experience right at the very start*" [i2, S1]. LF has also improved how the Officer interacts with the 69 Food Power alliances which make up the programme, each with 3-7 local groups working together to address food poverty. The Officer confirmed that as a consequence of LF, these alliances have become more independent from him, needing less intensive support [i4, S1]. LF tools have increased Food Power's capacity to increase their engagement, which informs decision making: "*volunteers have been able to take it and use it and increase the capacity and the amount of information we gather taking those findings to somebody who's making decisions at a strategic level, it's quite easy*" [i3, S1].

In demonstrations of changes to engagement practices include Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, where the Paediatric Patient Experience Officer confirmed the use of LF tools has led to improved professional practice: "*I've become more creative in the way I engage with young people and families*" and "*the tools have given young patients more ownership with their experiences… to have their voices heard and to be listened to by the right people*" [i2, S3]. The quality and originality of the tools that LF co-designed with young people was recognised through the Youth on Board Innovation Award (British Youth Council) in 2017. The award, voted for by young people, acknowledged the innovative co-design of tools by the research team and 12 cared for young people, created to help young people interact with the social services in a more positive, egalitarian manner [i3, S6]. Then in 2017, after Ofsted had visited Blackburn's safeguarding provision, their subsequent inspection report singled out the efficacy of LF communication tools in engaging children [S9, para.75].

2. Transforming public policy: public sector bodies' engagement with citizens and their operation of services: LF has impacted upon the infrastructure, organisation and operation of public sector bodies, so much so that it has become embedded in 3 local authorities. In Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (BC), LF enabled their Public Health arm to "*transform the ways in which we engage with and involve citizens in planning service… the tools have been adopted and adapted in a wide range of settings: from Children's Services where they have helped to transform the creative methods for ensuring*

that the voice of the child is embedded in service development planning" [S7, i2]. LF helped Blackburn with Darwen BC in "*filling a significant gap in the ability of policy makers and strategists to develop policies*" [S7].

In Lancashire County Council, LF collaborated with the Library Service at a time when half of the libraries in the County were scheduled to close. Through developing public engagement tools, the Head of Libraries comments that LF *"has both challenged and empowered my teams which has assisted them to be far more resilient"* [S2]. These tools, co-designed by librarians, are now embedded in the training and resources available across the County Council. The tools can be ordered and made by the County's printers, new staff are trained to use LF tools, and they are part of everyday engagement practice across Lancashire County Council [i4].4

For Lancaster City Council, LF's impact has been profound, resulting in a major reorganisation of its structure and approach to delivering services. As the Director for Communities and Environment at Lancaster City Council says, LF *"changed the way we think about working with the community … [and] made me step back a bit and think we're about a million miles away from the world that Leon's talking about"* [S4]. Challenging the traditional consultative approach of thinking that *"a survey was good engagement"*, LF *"provided the council a wider knowledge and expertise for effective consultation and engagement"* [i2, S5]. Faced with a 60% reduction of the operating budget, rather than thinking *"cut cut cut"* the Council looked to LF and co-design to fill the gap, placing community engagement at the heart of a new strategy: *"we've invested as a council, we've reprioritised, we've put money into staff who do engagement. We've looked at delivering services on a more area basis… to invest more in helping give the community capacity or pulling the community..."* [i4, S4]. This investment has resulted in an improvement in green spaces, despite the drastic reduction in funding (an economic impact described below). The Director for Communities and Environment attests to this policy and structural change in the Council being directly associated with LF: *"'Could you attribute the concept of this new team and that strategic change in direction to the involvement and learning from Leapfrog? Absolutely... Would you call that a strategic change? Yes. And a step-change as well"* [i4, S4].

3. Enhancing participants' learning, understanding, and engagement: As stated earlier, LF co-designed 83 new tools with 720 people to promote innovative forms of engagement. These colourful, accessible and adaptable tools have been used many thousands of times in the UK and internationally**.** A LF toolbox for the V&A Museum is used by their Learning & National Programmes team to evaluate the 1,600 events they run annually with 420,000 participants; and evaluation tools co-designed with the World Design Weeks organisation are used in design weeks (festivals) from Tokyo to Milan to Melbourne. There is also a significant benefit for the people doing the co-design, where small groups come together to co-design engagement tools specifically to meet their own needs, but which are shared more widely in a more generalised form.

The empowering effects of the co-design are evident in the pride and ownership participants take in the tools. This is especially significant for the Food Power participants, who often face other life challenges compounded by hunger and restricted access to food: "*Now people are using the tools, because it's not something that they've been given to use, it's something that they've been involved in producing, they have ownership. I think that is as a result of them feeling empowered during the process of co-designing the tools for food stories, that it changed their perspective on things"* [i1, S1]. This commitment has led to co-design participants presenting evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Food, Poverty, Health and Environment, also travel to an international conference in the USA to present their work. In an interview on Channel 4 News, the Empowerment Programme Officer, Church Action on Poverty credited the LF 'Food Safari' tool with helping affected school children to articulate: "*it helped the young people join the dots and give them a bit more of a journey, a structure, of how the local food scene linked to individuals, linked to the community, linked to access, affordability, choice"* [S1]. In a further example from Blackpool Teaching Hospital, the Paediatric Patient Experience Officer how LF had enabled "*Young people have been empowered to engage directly with managers, rather than having to go through engagement professionals"* [i1, S3].

4. Securing funding and saving resources in the public sector: The economic impact of LF on the public sector has been considerable. The adoption of a community-led approach supported by LF tools that help facilitate a dialogue between council officers, communities and friends groups has been instrumental in identifying and providing evidence for genuine needs in Lancaster City Council: "*This [approach] has been used to successfully secure external funding grants. Through 'friends of' groups we've obtained over £1m of additional investment in parks, plus immeasurable amounts of volunteer hours*" [i4, S4]. These additional resources have enabled the City Council to improve the parks and green spaces of Lancaster. The City Council used LF tools to engage with friends groups productively, maximising the mutual benefit of these (human and monetary) resources with dramatic effect: "*Engaging our communities in the design of public space in this way has led to a number of positive outcomes for the council. Even though we've had a 60% decrease in resources through austerity across the board, our parks, open spaces and things like that are now in better condition than they were pre-austerity. What we're kind of saying is that by looking at things completely differently we're getting more now than we were before. We've seen increased participation, a greater appreciation of the outcome and a significant reduction in long term vandalism*" [i4, S4].

5. Enhancing individuals' wellbeing and helping shape life courses: LF was ultimately about design research helping people prosper through making the best contribution possible and improving lives together. Two examples follow, where an individual's wellbeing and likely life course has been shaped by LF. In the first, cared-for young people (children between 13 and 17 years old), were involved in the co-design of tools to help facilitate their interaction with the social care system. Follow-on contact as part of Blackburn's 'champions network' showed that 4 of these young people are now pursuing qualifications to go to university having never considered this before, with each being the first members in their family to go onto higher education [i3, S10].

In the second, a 6-year-old girl was orphaned and there was dispute between her immediate and more distant family members as to who should have contact and responsibility for her welfare. A LF tool called Target Control (a visualisation activity) enabled a social worker to keep the girl away from what would have been a more intrusive intervention involving a difficult family conference. Target Control helped the girl to identify who in her family was closest to her and who was more distant, and why. Throughout this process, her voice was pivotal; she was able to directly influence the choice of guardian. The LF tool gave her perspective centre stage, enhancing her agency and avoiding the need to attend a potentially distressing large meeting with family and Social Services [i3, S10].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact
[S1] Testimonial from the Empowerment Programme Officer, Church Action on Poverty, working on the national food poverty programme 'Food Power' (2019).
[S2] Testimonial from the Head of Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registrars Lancashire County Council (2018).
[S3] Interview with Paediatric Patient Experience Officer, Blackpool Teaching Hospital (2018).
[S4] Testimonial from the Director for Communities and Environment at Lancaster City Council (2019).
[S5] Interview with Public Realm Development Manager, Lancaster City Council (2018).
[S6] Innovation engagement award from the British Youth Council
www.byc.org.uk/awards/youth-on-board/award-winners
[S7] Testimonial from Head of Engagement Research Intelligence, Public Health, Blackburn with Darwen Council (2018).
[S8] Testimonial from Youth Worker, Cancer Care (2019).
[S9] Ofsted report, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council *Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers*, (2017). https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50004407
[S10] Children & Young People's Participation Officer Safeguarding Unit, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (participant testimonial, 2018).