

*I = interviewer; P15 = participant. Refer to DDM2020 dataset documentation for more information.*

1 I so erm i asked you to identify one erm project  
2 and product that you've worked on which is  
3 related to sustainability could you tell me just  
4 briefly what what you've chosen to talk about

5 P15 uhu yeah so i would like to talk about a project  
6 that is actually still running if that's okay

7 I mhm yeah

8 P15 and it is a collaboration with a product designer

9 I mhm

10 P15 i'm a material designer so the chosen material  
11 would be my aquafaba foam and it is a project  
12 where we create a lamp

13 I okay

14 P15 from the material and yeah it's not yet finished  
15 but it was the project that i felt most  
16 comfortable sort of releasing information about

17 I yeah sure and so how did it come about is there a  
18 project brief or design brief from someone

19 P15 so it came about erm well initially because erm  
20 this product designer who works like with big  
21 companies like ((company name)) and so on i don't  
22 know if you know them he found my material and  
23 was interested in creating something

24 I mhm

25 P15 that would be released in a limited edition erm  
26 so this is how it came about and we basically  
27 created our own brief which was really  
28 interesting because

29 I okay

30 P15 from the very beginning we clarified that  
31 sustainability will be the main factor

32 I right

33 P15 that means ((inaudible)) be leading in this erm  
34 so yeah throughout the development so far we're  
35 considering it at any point and we're also still  
36 learning about it erm but yeah i don't know  
37 ((inaudible))

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38 I yeah and and is there a client you said the  
39 designer works for for big companies

40 P15 so yeah he works for big companies erm now  
41 freelance

42 I mhm

43 P15 and we don't have a set client yet so i don't  
44 know if that affects

45 I no no no just out of interest but the aim is to  
46 find a client and sell the product

47 P15 indeed

48 I yeah okay

49 P15 so i find a client that is willing to release a  
50 limited edition

51 I yep

52 P15 or erm we're also looking into different  
53 directions which maybe sound a bit weird but i  
54 erm also have like a curated erm online er  
55 gallery platform

56 I uhu

57 P15 that want me to sell er my works or my  
58 collaborative works on their platform so we're  
59 also considering to go towards art which erm

60 I okay

61 P15 is more embracing in regards of new  
62 sustainability terms actually then the industry

63 I right

64 P15 sometimes mhm

65 I okay and so how many of you are involved is it  
66 just the two of you

67 P15 it's just two yeah

68 I okay and in in the i guess in the context of the  
69 design of the product including the materials erm  
70 could you tell me some of the things that you had  
71 to make design decisions about

72 P15 yeah sure so erm the base for our project is my  
73 material

74 I uhu

75 P15 and everything else has been created around it  
76 which actually causes a lot of erm new ways in in

77 thinking and designing because there are very  
78 specific properties that my material offers

79 I yeah

80 P15 which are might not be standard so this product  
81 designer is erm working around those specific  
82 properties and adapting his designs whenever we  
83 find that actually this might not work with a  
84 material we might need something else so the main  
85 thing that has been developed around the material  
86 to create the lamp is the structure

87 I mhm

88 P15 itself so there are two i would say main factors  
89 that influence the look of the lamp one is our  
90 story what do we want to communicate

91 I mhm

92 P15 that's the material is it sustainability is it's  
93 something else erm so in our case we decided that  
94 it will be a combination of material and yeah new  
95 sustainable options so the material that will be  
96 sort of erm the main element sorry i can't  
97 articulate myself today

98 I it's okay

99 P15 sorry erm and what he is developing with me is  
100 the frame so

101 I mhm

102 P15 with that we considered what size might be good  
103 you know also working with the material erm how  
104 should the like what should be the material for  
105 the frame so that should also be a material that  
106 is possibly recycled reused something like that  
107 erm

108 I mhm

109 P15 so at the moment we're considering aluminium

110 I yeah

111 P15 because it can be recycled yeah endlessly er that  
112 means that all elements of the frame to do that  
113 so every little screw or whatever we're not using  
114 screws but we're using new different elements  
115 that could sort of erm yeah ber erm how do you  
116 say that can you see my screen like they would  
117 work

118 I i can't you're frozen i don't know why but

119 P15 ((inaudible))

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120 I i can just see an image of you

121 P15 ((inaudible)) like clamps or something so they  
122 they get you know they're not screwed in so we're  
123 considering other ways of actually fixing a  
124 material to frame

125 I yeah

126 P15 we're not allowed we'll use a mono material on  
127 the frame just one and that should be recycled  
128 one already and should be then erm able to be  
129 recycled again and again and again

130 I yeah

131 P15 another thing that we're considering is the the  
132 material so maybe the frame will last longer than  
133 the material because

134 I mhm

135 P15 this material new material it's still sort of in  
136 development which means it's basically not yet  
137 erm industrially producible

138 I mhm

139 P15 but is ready itself sort of to to be made erm so  
140 could this material be replaced at some point

141 I yeah

142 P15 could the user erm the owner of this piece may be  
143 just order a new sort of sheet of material that  
144 we will you know create for them erm and then er  
145 replace it sort of it's a bit like ikea you know  
146 the ikea system where you have replaceable parts

147 I yeah

148 P15 and that so it should be easily like it should be  
149 easy to take it apart

150 I mhm

151 P15 to adjust it erm you know to get new parts  
152 whether it will be a limited edition sold by you  
153 know a company or as an art piece

154 I yep

155 P15 erm the main aim is to yeah keep it lasting for  
156 very long

157 I mhm

158 P15 so yeah that's what we're considering

159 I and can you tell me what the material is a little  
160 bit

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161 P15 uh huh so the material is the so called aquafaba  
162 foam which is a bio material that i developed and  
163 it's based on erm aquafaba which is like a  
164 surplus a household surplus

165 I mhm

166 P15 from yeah cooking so it's a liquid that is also  
167 used in the vegan kitchen

168 I yeah i'm familiar yeah

169 P15 yeah and when you cook chickpeas or other erm  
170 legumes you get this very starchy water

171 I yep

172 P15 which goes to waste and erm yeah in in households  
173 you have if you consume chickpeas erm then you  
174 have a lot left over and they can actually be  
175 turned either of course into some sort of other  
176 food

177 I mhm

178 P15 element or into this material so that is also why  
179 we have it as a limited edition because

180 I mmm

181 P15 it's from household leftovers whereas my other  
182 materials like i have a material that is called  
183 ((product name)) that contains it's also a bio  
184 material and that contains leftovers from  
185 chocolate production chocolate manufacturing and  
186 they have a massive stream of this resource  
187 endless basically as

188 I mhm

189 P15 long as we consume chocolate there will be this  
190 leftover so there's another scale available with  
191 the aquafaba not er not at the moment at least so  
192 yeah and i erm create from this aquafaba i create  
193 my own biomaterial which sort of feels like a  
194 plastic

195 I right

196 P15 but i call it a foam because it actually is a  
197 foam so yeah but i don't release too many more  
198 information about my material because it's like  
199 the recipe is

200 I yeah sure sure i can imagine enough from that  
201 thank you so you talked about a few of the  
202 decisions that you're making related to this  
203 project and how they relate to sustainability  
204 what decision do you think would be the most

205                   important erm in this product design for  
206                   sustainability

207       P15           mhm erm i think it's the decision of the frame  
208                   although rethinking well maybe even more  
209                   important would be to ensure that the system  
210                   around it works

211       I             mhm

212       P15           so if we design it for erm it to be recycled we  
213                   need to make sure that it is possible for the  
214                   users to actually erm access recycling

215       I             yep

216       P15           you know so it is it is a bit complicated  
217                   especially if you're not a massive company that  
218                   sort of has impact or it's like the company lush  
219                   that is in the uk they have their own recycling  
220                   erm that's great so yeah erm it's sort of our  
221                   next step we need to develop this system that  
222                   could work that where we could say maybe this  
223                   product is only released in certain countries  
224                   where we can ensure that there is recycling for  
225                   aluminium

226       I             mhm

227       P15           or if that is not possible the person purchasing  
228                   it erm should ideally be be up for sending it  
229                   back to you know maybe there is some sort of  
230                   arrangement erm yeah between the the user and us  
231                   so that they can be sent to a recycling centre  
232                   something like that but that is very complex  
233                   because erm that is an element that is i feel  
234                   only now being sort of thought about you know  
235                   also by bigger

236       I             yeah

237       P15           bigger companies to consider what happens once  
238                   the product is being passed on to the user or new  
239                   owner erm do we lose responsibility or not and we  
240                   would like to somehow make it happen but it's  
241                   yeah well we'll see how it goes you know

242       I             yeah so do you you mentioned responsibility do  
243                   you feel a responsibility as a designer for these  
244                   wider impacts of what you're producing

245       P15           yeah absolutely um a lot of guilt haha

246       I             okay

247       P15           sort of like oh god do we need to produce another  
248                   product

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249 I yeah

250 P15 erm but yeah sort of yes i feel responsible mmm  
251 and i think yeah we we will always need certain  
252 products so when

253 I mhm

254 P15 beginning to consider designing a new product or  
255 even also a material at first it is all about  
256 sort of finding the right place for it is it  
257 necessary can we redesign it in a way that maybe  
258 it will make other products obsolete you know or  
259 not to sort of ruin anyone haha that is producing  
260 another product but we're like can we rethink it  
261 you know but it's it's so complex

262 I yeah

263 P15 er for me i would say and erm we decided to go  
264 for a lamp because we always need lamps i think  
265 light is a good thing but with you know the  
266 recyclable frame and the replaceable front we're  
267 hoping to erm yeah make it make it as sustainable  
268 as possible

269 I yeah

270 P15 but of course what would be best is a full  
271 lifecycle analysis

272 I mhm

273 P15 for the products but that is hard yeah it's it's  
274 not really affordable for small designers

275 I yeah

276 P15 so we ourselves consider all stakeholders erm we  
277 you know producers manufacturers erm users and so  
278 on erm as good as we can

279 I yeah

280 and do you make decisions together then or how  
281 does it work working together

282 P15 so yeah we go every step together i mean at first  
283 it was me and my material and now we're doing  
284 everything together

285 I mhm

286 P15 so that means a lot of communication erm and it's  
287 easier in a small team

288 I yeah

289 P15 but yeah working with erm brands you know where  
290 they have like big teams and all sorts of

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291 departments erm in my experience can get really  
292 complex

293 I yeah

294 P15 with very lengthy processes of just discussing  
295 the budget or you know the thought of doing  
296 something differently

297 I yeah

298 P15 so yeah i feel it's much faster it feels like a  
299 startup environment you know you just have an  
300 idea you just go for it you know you just do it  
301 yeah with other sort of yeah kinda i mean this  
302 case it's more like a collaboration but with  
303 clients it's yeah it's more difficult also fun  
304 but different

305 I yeah so have you previously worked on projects  
306 with clients where it is a bit more difficult

307 P15 yeah so only a few projects because i'm still  
308 fairly new in the market like i've only started  
309 like a year ago

310 I mhm

311 P15 um so yeah and these like oo they take long but  
312 it's okay okay you know you just need to go step  
313 by step but as a small designer i feel like  
314 sometimes you just really need to release  
315 something to go to the next stage and and during  
316 this crisis the current crisis

317 I yeah

318 P15 also some of the like two of my main client  
319 projects were actually stopped

320 I okay

321 P15 put on hold erm and yeah one is actually now  
322 cancelled with bigger brands

323 I mhm

324 P15 one is actually also uk based er but  
325 international erm and yeah so i will not name any  
326 name

327 I no no of course

328 P15 but for your information like their main reason  
329 was that they will their companies both of them  
330 will hold back on spending

331 I yeah



332 P15 budgets for sustainable projects that are a bit  
333 erm different you know

334 I mhm

335 P15 so they're trying to be safe now and not yeah  
336 working with these new projects erm which they  
337 were quite excited about before but of course you  
338 have to save money now but the question is erm  
339 whether it makes sense to now stop your  
340 sustainability projects

341 I yeah

342 P15 so it's it's tricky erm but yeah maybe that also  
343 reflects why i'm more happy to talk about my own  
344 stuff now

345 I yeah i'm finding that's often in the case with  
346 people can't really talk about their work in big  
347 companies that they may have a side project that  
348 they can say more about so and if you are working  
349 in cases where you are working with a a big  
350 company as a client who do you think's  
351 responsible for how sustainable the product is in  
352 that case

353 P15 mmm you mean whether it would be me or the

354 I yeah just think although they're different lines  
355 of responsibility do you think in that different  
356 context

357 P15 yeah i i think it's it's a combination so um of  
358 course it depends on the project and the  
359 structure of the other company but for example  
360 i'm now thinking of a certain project

361 I mhm

362 P15 so the it would start with me being responsible  
363 erm for the transparency erm where the  
364 ingredients come from erm how the material is  
365 made er and that's very important because in the  
366 sort of bio material well there have been some  
367 incidences where erm yeah big material producers  
368 claimed to create a buying material but then  
369 actually erm the term was being tweaked a bit and  
370 it actually contained fossil fuel

371 I okay

372 P15 ingredients which is also the problem with the  
373 language it's sort of like we need a new  
374 dictionary for this stuff but yeah so that's  
375 where i see my responsibility though erm it  
376 actually comes from me from my desire to make  
377 sure that that is the case

378 I yeah

379 P15 you know you just have to tell the clients er  
380 yeah sure it's sustainable and they're like oh  
381 cool love it you know let's do it you're like  
382 you're not even asking the right questions i  
383 could tell you anything so yeah so and then so  
384 that would be the ingredients and the material  
385 and then like for me it's also very important to  
386 make sure that you know if it's manufactured on a  
387 larger scale i mean my large scale is not really  
388 that large it's still small but erm if it's  
389 manufactured make sure that the manufacturer is  
390 also you know erm sort of that they have certain  
391 standards that work for me as well you know where  
392 are they based are they based in europe just like  
393 me can i access them you know freely do they seem  
394 to have good labour conditions all that i think  
395 that all is very important for a sustainable  
396 product erm what machinery do they use how do  
397 they use it er what are they their aims as a  
398 manufacturer erm and i found one that is just  
399 amazing i love them though so great these guys  
400 and yeah it's sort of like all the values match  
401 but it makes the process of course more  
402 complicated because they have to find the right  
403 people

404 I mhm

405 P15 yeah so that's sort of where i see my research is  
406 important to make sure that fits and then with a  
407 client erm i feel like then sort of the  
408 responsibility like once my product reaches them  
409 erm it's their responsibility and i lose control  
410 of making sure that it actually ends up it's sort  
411 of lifecycle erm

412 I yeah

413 P15 yeah it's you know and then they have to make  
414 sure that when their clients erm so i'm thinking  
415 of a certain project where i would have sort of  
416 you know they have their own client again like  
417 erm one studio

418 I mhm

419 P15 and i can only suggest what their client does  
420 once they don't want the product anymore or  
421 something like that but you know it's it's  
422 optional for them

423 I yeah yeah

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424 P15 yeah and so i guess yeah then that's it and they  
425 have to make sure that it all works but if they  
426 don't want to communicate that to their client or  
427 the client in the end feels like oh no it's gonna  
428 be too expensive to actually ((inaudible)) send  
429 in things to get rid of the product in the  
430 correct way erm then i can't do anything about it

431 I mm hmm

432 P15 yep

433 I but it sounds like from what you're saying that  
434 you see your role as er as a designer going much  
435 beyond what what was traditionally understood as  
436 the role of a designer you see your roles and  
437 responsibilities to go further from what you're  
438 saying

439 P15 erm i guess yeah yeah and i yeah it's i guess  
440 because i feel like gosh if i put it out there  
441 you know i need to make sure it doesn't end up in  
442 the ocean and killing a whale or i don't know  
443 what you know so

444 I yeah

445 P15 yeah so yeah i guess but i can also see that you  
446 know erm the generations of designers leaving art  
447 schools

448 I mhm

449 P15 they seem to have this mindset as well like i  
450 graduated four years ago we didn't really talk  
451 about this sort of stuff a lot or at all really

452 I okay yeah so um you mentioned your values and  
453 finding erm collaborators that match your values  
454 could you tell me a bit about how your values  
455 inform your design and and maybe where this came  
456 from

457 P15 mhm hmmm so i'm just thinking where did it come  
458 from

459 I yeah haha

460 P15 haha i'm like ooh dear i guess it's been there  
461 for like oh twenty years or so

462 I mhm

463 P15 because when i was a child i decided to become a  
464 vegetarian and erm since then i've just been  
465 thinking about you know nature animal people erm  
466 how we live and so on and i guess it has grown  
467 with me over the now decades in a way

468 I yeah

469 P15 and that is affecting how i design and how i  
470 approach my projects how i erm i might design my  
471 own briefs or collaborative briefs or with whom i  
472 would want to work with i get a lot requests from  
473 big brands but erm i don't necessarily follow up  
474 on them which sounds silly

475 I right

476 P15 but i just feel i don't want to sell my soul and  
477 i don't want to erm be responsible for some  
478 horrible thing that will go to landfill or a good  
479 product but still through a brand that er i don't  
480 know just does horrible things

481 I yeah

482 P15 erm yeah and so i guess that's how it started and  
483 i guess my values evolved around er yeah healthy  
484 healthy materials healthy for people for the  
485 planet for nature

486 I mhm

487 P15 and that's it and yeah sort of healthy circular  
488 materials i guess and that continues you know  
489 into the product and so on but it all starts with  
490 a material

491 I mhm

492 P15 for me with the ingredients yeah

493 I yeah it's interesting you say that wasn't really  
494 part of your studies which which wasn't that long  
495 ago i i am surprised

496 P15 erm well was sort of i guess you know i studied  
497 textiles and you know my tutors were and are  
498 fabulous and then talked about natural dyes and  
499 so on

500 I yeah okay

501 P15 but we never really in depth sort of tried  
502 natural dyes or

503 I yeah

504 P15 considered any organic fabric to print on because  
505 er the course included you know a lot of printing

506 I mhm

507 P15 so that involves you know a lot of dyes and  
508 binders and so on

509 I yeah

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510 P15 there was digital printing and so on and using a  
511 lot of paper to draw on and just endless use of  
512 resources which you just need to you know for the  
513 development anyway but i would have wished for  
514 more communication about it and i'm sure they are  
515 doing it now erm back then not so intensely

516 I yeah

517 P15 erm i guess but yeah and sort of defend of them i  
518 guess it also depends how much time the  
519 university allows them

520 I mhm

521 P15 to to spend on these things because they have a  
522 curriculum and yeah

523 I yeah yeah well these are the questions i i had  
524 was there anything else that you want to add  
525 about the project or the topic or anything you've  
526 thought i might have asked but i didn't

527 P15 i think no these questions were good i'm thinking  
528 anything else just that i'm hopeful that the next  
529 generations of designers approach their projects  
530 in a very different way as well

531 I yeah

532 P15 i can see already you know because i also i write  
533 for ((organisation name)) so i go to erm a lot of  
534 i don't know you know them they're like this  
535 platform they're based in london ((organisation  
536 name)) and they report about graduate shows and  
537 so on so

538 I okay

539 P15 so i get to talk to a lot of graduates and it's  
540 really fantastic and there it's a lot about  
541 materials

542 I mhm

543 P15 and i think it's really great even textile  
544 students that like yeah we're not only about  
545 printing and embroidery now we're thinking about  
546 the core material we're creating new materials  
547 also like bio materials and product designers are  
548 thinking differently but these are very new you  
549 know sort of erm yeah generations

550 I mhm

551 P15 i think at the world that is out there and  
552 looking at the brands companies studies

553 I yeah

554 P15 er there the more impactful ones they don't  
555 really consider it that much they're beginning  
556 you know you can see certain projects like the  
557 nike show the what was it space hippie really  
558 super you know developed from the own waste and  
559 so on erm but still you know massive massive  
560 brands with big impact on the environment and  
561 society so yeah

562 I yeah

563 P15 i guess my to close it up it's like i'm hopeful

564 I haha

565 P15 yeah so that's it yeah i don't actually have  
566 anything more to add i think yeah i hope it was  
567 helpful

568 I definitely yes it was really interesting

569 /end/