

There are several benefits to this way of working: for the university, this is a good way to integrate research, education, and external engagement, while the frame creation process is helped enormously by the unbiased observations of the students. Working with young people who look at the world with fresh eyes is a crucial feature of both the Designing Out Crime center and the Young Designers foundation.

Apart from sparking changes in the ways that participating organizations work, frame creation can also spawn new networks of actors, and create new roles for organizations within these networks. In the marathon case study, for example, city officials take on a new role as network actor in the city. And indeed, in the aftermath of this small project, actor networks have come together and collaborations have led to first experiments to implement the proposed frames and solution directions. That this can be taken much further is proved in the Kings Cross case study (see case 17). The result is a confident new strategy called “OPEN Sydney—Future Directions for Sydney at Night,” which sets out how the city seeks to become more “global, connected, diverse, inviting, and responsive.” By entering into the process in this way, the City of Sydney as an organization has become an active agent in a completely new way. It has become a curator or perhaps even conductor of life in the city. It has not just reframed a problem, but has reinvented itself as a new actor within the city.

EMBRACING FRAME CREATION

Introducing the ability to create frames to an organization widens its repertoire of problem-solving strategies enormously, and deepens its knowledge of the outside world. When this is done successfully, something deeper and more lasting can happen. We have not yet focused our attention on the very last step of the frame creation process, “integration,” but a small revolution can occur in this step from which a completely new type of organization is born. To understand this transformation, we have to look at organizations in a different way, beyond the problem-solving perspective we have maintained throughout this book, to consider frame creation as a structuring principle for organizations in and of itself.

In today’s culture, networks of individuals form the basis for societal organization, in contrast to “mass societies” in which the collective organizes the individual. The historical uniqueness of this form can be contested—there have always been networks—but the scale and size of cooperation have grown enormously. (Van Dijk 1999, as quoted in Boutellier 2013)