

Xskool Workshops

<http://thackara.com/xskool/>



Innovation happens when a diverse group of motivated people engage with a meaningful question in a rich context.

Xskools are inspired by one over-riding question:

In what ways can design help people interact with the living systems of a unique place that help both of them thrive?

The outcomes of an Xskool workshop are a shared perception of new opportunities - and the first step – such as a prototype, or pilot – towards making a new enterprise happen. Here below are some highlights:

City Eco Lab, St Etienne, France

As centrepiece for the main French design biennial, we organised *City Eco Lab*. 80,000 visitors came to interact with more than 50 projects from the region; they met urban farmers, watershed restorers, and bicycle couriers – and ate at *Cantine 50km*.

Food and food systems, New Delhi, India

For Doors of Perception, we took specialists from 20 global cities to experience the markets, communal kitchens, street food and farms of Delhi. Every evening, with Indian experts, we discussed the lessons learned on these expeditions.

Social Innovation, North East England

In *Designs Of The Time*, the UK's social innovation biennial, we ran live projects that explored what life in a sustainable region could be like. More than 20,000 citizens came to the Dott Festival on the banks of the River Tyne.

Bioregions by design, South Devon, England

A bioregion re-connects us with living systems, and each other, through the unique places where we live. It acknowledges that we live among watersheds, foodsheds, fibersheds, and food systems – not just in cities, towns, or 'the countryside'. Together with *Isabel Carlisle* and *Regenesis* we helped to a *two week course at Schumacher College*.

Back To the land, Denmark

Together with *Chora Connection*, we ran a two day workshop for 12 pioneering project leaders – real-world examples of how local living economies work. We started a new conversation about the fact that city and rural are dis-connected – and what to do about it.

School of the Moon, Scotland

Together with *Cateran's Common Wealth* we explored new ways for residents and visitors to connect with the ecological and cultural assets of 'Big Tree Country.' Our group included a blacksmith, a digital arts producer, a land owner, a raspberry farmer, a soldier turned master mead maker, an expert on the ecosystems to be found in dry stone walls, a service designer, *an artist who makes outfits that disguise you as a rock*, the tutor at a forest school, and a designer of water cleaning systems.

Cycle Commerce As An Ecosystem, Delhi

At the *UnBox Festival in Delhi* we brought together service designers, cargo bike designers, and city planners to explore practical steps needed to accelerate the growth of cycle commerce as an ecosystem.

From Gated Lagoon to Bioregion, Venice

Together with a team of urbanists and ecologists (below) from TU Graz, we ran a workshop in Venice around the proposition: *From Gated Lagoon to Bioregion*. Our report on the workshop is [here](#).

Rural Innovation, Bangor, North Wales

For an Xskool entitled *Innovation In A Small Nation*, we explored how a resilient economy can emerge in a region with one foot in a rural economy, its other in a world of universities and nuclear power.