DESIGN LEADERSHIP IN FINNISH GOVERNMENT

Understanding the Qualities Through Person, Position and Responsibilities

Laura Lerkkanen
2019
Master’s Thesis for Aalto University Master of Arts
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Design Leadership in Finnish Government

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Abstract

This master thesis investigates the qualities of design leadership, in relation to person, position and responsibilities, under conditions of Finnish government organisations. Design leadership has been previously studied in literature in the context of private organisations, and the understanding of it within the public sector context is still quite recent. Design scholars have noted design as a beneficial approach and a set of user-centred, collaborative and creative tools for the government in addressing the complex societal challenges of the 21st century. However, the introduction of design is rather novel at the context of Finnish governmental institutions, and several challenges has been identified in deploying design, in various design reports.

As a key finding of the research, the thesis identified that a lack of leadership is one of the central challenges for the design effectiveness, among professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants in the Finnish government organisations. Therefore it is important to configure the qualities of design leadership in order of improving the effectiveness of design in the organisations of government.

This design thesis approaches the topic through mixed method research in a set of three phases. First, the thesis applies quantitative research, through a survey (n=33) to identify the emergence of design leadership among the organisations of government in Finland. Second, qualitative research is conducted in a form of focus group discussions (n=11) to describe and understand the different qualities of design leadership. Third, the qualitative research is continued through semi-structured interviews (n=2) to bridge gaps in data and validate the collected
understanding. The sample of the empirical study represented professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants, identified mostly through “Julkis-muotoilijat” network.

This study identifies eight qualities of design leadership, significant for improving the effectiveness of design in the government. The qualities relational to person were identified as 1) courageousness to challenge the existing conventions, 2) maintaining high strategic mandate and credibility towards design, and 3) understanding both government and design substances. The quality relational to position was identified as 4) strategic positioning, that allows flexibility between organisational structures. The qualities relational to responsibilities were identified as 5) leading change from the perspectives of mindsets and practices, 6) supporting cross-sectoral collaboration, 7) aligning the design objectives with the government objectives, and 8) measuring and communicating design effectiveness.

The thesis aims to contribute to the understanding the qualities and requirements of design leadership in the public sector, and address some of the identified gaps in theory. Furthermore, the thesis aims provide valuable information for the public and government organisations for forming new models of leadership for improving the effectiveness of design.

**Keywords:** Design leadership, government organisations, mixed method

Aineistosta tunnistetaan kahdeksan muotoilujohtajuuden ominaispiirrettä valtionhallinnon kontekstissa. Henkilön ominaispiirteitä olivat 1) rohkeus haastaa olemassa olevia konventioita uusien toimintatapojen esittämiseksi ja 2) substanssiyymmärrys sekä muotoilusta että valtionhallinnosta. Muotoilujohtajuuden position ominaispiirteitä olivat 3) riittävän korkea mandaatti strategisen päätöksenteon tukemiseksi ja 4) positiointi, joka mahdollistaa joustavan toiminnan organisaatioiden rakenteiden välillä. Muotoilujohtajuuden velvollisuuksien ominaispiirteitä ovat 5) muotoilujohtajan kyky johtaa muutosta ajattelutavoissa ja käytännöissä sekä 6) tukea poikkihallinnollista yhteistyötä. Lisäksi muotoilujohtajan 7) on pystyttävä asemoimaan muotoilun tavoitteet valtionhallinnon strategisten tavoitteiden kanssa ja 8) aktiivisesti mitata muotoilun vaikuttavuutta ja kommunikoida sen tuloksista.

Tutkielman tavoitteena on yhdistää muotoilujohtajuuden teoreettista ymmärrystä valtionhallinnon kontekstiin. Tätä tutkimusperustaa tarvitaan, jotta muotoilu voi vakiintua työskentelytavaksi julkishallinnon vaativien ongelmien ratkaisemiseksi. Tutkielman tulosten avulla pyritään tukemaan valtionhallinnon organisaatioiden ymmärrystä muotoilujohtajuuden merkittävyydestä ja tunnistamaan lähtökohtia niiden rooli ja ominaispiirteiden määrittelylle.

Avainsanat: Muotoilujohtajuus, valtionhallinto, mixed method
Glossary of terms

Design
From many definitions, can be understood as a process of specified actions, as an outcome or object of designing (Buchanan, 2016).

Design for government
Design addressing or being applied to the government context (About Design for Government, 2015).

Design Leader
An individual in a position of design leadership.

Design Leadership
Organisational function that leads design actions of an organisation. Often confused to design management, but describes a more strategic leadership function of an organisation that is commonly related to, for example, vision building (Globben, 2009).

Designerly-minded civil servant
A civil servant with experiences of practising or applying design to the government context, or is a design enthusiast.

D9
A previous digital-team consisting design experts, under the State Treasury of Finland, with an aim of introducing design methods and approaches for the Finnish government (D9-digitilmi, 2017).

Focus group
A research method that resembles interviews, but is conducted in a groups of people to discuss over their thoughts (Muratovski, 2016).

Government organisations
Within this thesis, the government organisations refer to Finnish public sector organisations, both local, such as municipalities, and state, such as ministries and governmental agencies.

“Julkis-muotoilijat” network
A Finnish network of professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants from the Finnish government organisations. Coordinated mostly through a closed Facebook group (Julkis-muotoilijat, 2019).

Mixed method
A research methodology that conducts understanding from several research strategies in a single study, that can include qualitative and quantitative approaches (Morse, 2003).

Professional designer
A design practitioner that has a design education. Within the context of this thesis professional designers refer to design practitioners from the government sector, with professional design education.

Semi-structured interviews
Research method of interviews which contain both structured and unstructured sections (Walliman, 2017). They provide space for extended response, but are limited by the subject (Muratovski, 2016).

Survey
Research method that helps in collecting an understanding from a large number of participants and often combine closed and open-ended questions (Walliman, 2017).

Wicked Problems
Large systemic challenges often described through four characteristics; they include causal and ambiguous relationships, the problem can’t be categorized, efforts to solve the problem cause new expression of problems and there isn’t a single all-solving solution for the problem (Bason, 2017).
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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiivistelmä</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary of terms</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables, Figures and Images</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Context: Government in an era of complexity</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Research topic: Emergence of design leadership in improving the effectiveness of design</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Thesis structure</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Background: Design for government</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Evolution in the design landscape</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 The convergence of design and government evolutions</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 Openness</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 Changing focus</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3 Transforming the organisations</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.4 Implications</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Design for government in Finland</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Challenges for design application at the government organisations</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Emergence of design leadership</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Finnish impressions of design leadership</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Summary</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Theoretical perspectives to design leadership</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Design leadership as a concept</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1 Evolution of the design leadership</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.2 Differentiating design management and design leadership</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.3 Design leader in a position of design leadership</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Understandings of design leadership qualities</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1 Design leader as a person</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.2 Design leadership position</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3 Design leadership responsibilities</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3.1 Envisioning future</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3.2 Manifesting strategy</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3.3 Directing corporate investments</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3.4 Shaping customer experience and business reputation</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3.5 Sustaining an environment for innovation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3.6 Training for design leadership</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Summary</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Research objectives</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Research gap</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Research topic</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Methodology and methods</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Mixed method</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1 Quantitative research</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2 Qualitative research and design ethnography</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3 Critique towards mixed methods</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Data Collection Methods</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1 Survey to “Julkis-muotoilijat” network</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2 Focus group engaging to discussions over design leadership</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.3 Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Data Analysis</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.1 Analysis over quantitative data</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.2 Analysis over qualitative data</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Ethical Considerations</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Research process</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Survey of the members of the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.1 Survey content</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.2 Survey analysis</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.3 Survey findings, limitations and continuation</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Focus group at the Design &amp; Government event</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1 Focus group discussion content</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.2 Focus group discussion analysis</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.3 Focus group findings, limitations and continuation</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.3.3 Support a development of design mindsets across the organisations
7.3.4 Lead a change
7.3.4.1 Act as a change catalyst
7.3.4.2 Challenge the status-quo
7.3.4.3 Engage to the change process
7.3.5 Support cross-sectoral collaboration and lead networks
7.3.5.1 Bring people together
7.3.5.2 Build bridges between design and other disciplines
7.3.6 Measure and communicate design impact and value
7.3.6.1 Measure the value of design through creation of indicators
7.3.6.2 Communicate the value of design
7.3.6.3 Promote design outcomes, instead of design
7.3.6.4 Translate design to the “organisation’s language”

8 Discussion
8.1 Discussion over the findings
8.1.1 Discussion over the design leadership qualities as a person
8.1.2 Discussion over the design leadership qualities as a position
8.1.3 Discussion over the design leadership qualities through responsibilities
8.1.4 Final observations
8.2 Results
8.2.1 Results over design leadership through a person
8.2.1.1 Courageousness to challenge the existing conventions
8.2.1.2 Maintain high strategic mandate and credibility towards design
8.2.1.3 Understanding government and design substances
8.2.2 Results over design leadership through a position
8.2.2.1 Strategic positioning, that allows flexibility between organisational structures
8.2.3 Results over design leadership through responsibilities
8.2.3.1 Leading change from the perspectives of mindsets and practices
8.2.3.2 Supporting cross-sectoral collaboration
8.2.3.3 Align the design objectives with the government objectives
8.2.3.4 Measure and communicate the effectiveness of design
8.3 Contributions and suggestions for practise
8.4 Limitations
8.5 Suggestions for future research

9 Conclusions
References
Appendix
List of Tables

Table 1. Summary of participant details over the focus group discussions (Lerkkanen, 2019)  67
Table 2. Summary of participant details over the interviews (Lerkkanen, 2019)  69

List of Figures

Figure 1. The four orders of design (adapted from Buchanan, 2001)  25
Figure 2. The convergence between the evolution of government agencies and design (adapted from Bason, 2017)  27
Figure 3. Framework over the role of design and design leadership in relation to an organisation (adapted from Junginger, 2009)  46
Figure 4. Organisational levels (adapted from Best, 2006)  47
Figure 5. The design leaders’ responsibility to linkage strategic intent with design & service response (adapted from Turner, 2013)  49
Figure 6. Three theoretical perspectives, person, position and responsibilities applied in this thesis to understand the different qualities of design leadership (Lerkkanen, 2019)  52
Figure 7. Overview of the research process (Lerkkanen, 2019)  75
Figure 8. The research findings through three theoretical perspectives (Lerkkanen, 2019)  89
Figure 9. The research findings in relation to person (Lerkkanen, 2019)  90
Figure 10. The research findings in relation to position (Lerkkanen, 2019)  98
Figure 11. Extension of design leadership from organisation specific to cross-cutting (Lerkkanen, 2019)  99
Figure 12. Location of design leadership in relation to the organisational levels (adapted from Best, 2006)  101
Figure 13. The level of integration of design leadership within an organisation (adapted from Junginger, 2009)  104
Figure 14. The research findings in relation to responsibilities (Lerkkanen, 2019)  108
Figure 15. Design leadership’s complex relation to an organisation (Lerkkanen, 2019)  126

List of Images

Image 1. Open-ended questions of the survey were analysed by applying affinity diagram inspired method (Lerkkanen, 2019)  78
Image 2. Focus group discussion held as a part of Design & Government event 2018 (Mazé, 2019)  80
Image 3. The documented and transcribed data from the interviews was analysed by using affinity diagram inspired technique (Lerkkanen, 2019)  82
Introduction
This chapter introduces the context of this thesis. The first section provides a short overview why government organisations call for new approaches, such as design, to answer societal challenges. The second section introduces the research topic, emergence of design leadership for improving the effectiveness of design in Finnish government organisations. The third section provides an overview of the thesis structure and content of each chapter.
1.1 Context: Government in an era of complexity

Over time, government organisations (both local, such as municipalities, and state, such as ministries and governmental agencies, see glossary at page 10) have developed towards a common basis that the purpose of government is to minimize societal uncertainty and maintain stability (Lin, 2016). These higher objectives have developed these government organizations into institutions where hierarchy, bureaucracy and rigidness are observable or even self-evident. However, during the past years these governments have started to face challenges both in responding to the needs of users (‘users’ here refers to both citizens and other stakeholders), as well as addressing complex, systemic problems that traditional practices don’t seem to solve.

By nature, these government agencies operate in a complex political system, where they need to function in an environment of costs, benefits, laws, policies and multiple stakeholder interests (Junginger & Sangiorgi, 2011; Lin, 2016). They need to take into an account both the relationships with numerous external stakeholders (such as interest groups, private businesses, citizens and media), as well as between internal stakeholders (such as different units and departments with own agendas and functions) (Lin, 2016). Consequently, the operations and functions of the government organizations are more often designed around internal processes and legislation, instead of considering value creation for users or stakeholders (Junginger & Sangiorgi, 2011).

The inevitable challenge this has caused is the decline in the capacity of government organizations to answer user needs. Government agencies struggle to provide services for citizens that are usable, flexible, user-centric and open for all. Additionally, through the rise of social media and diversified sources of information, citizens have a variety of channels for active discussion, and the ability to challenge government actions in new ways (Bason, 2017; European Commission, 2013).

Furthermore, while government organizations operate in an environment of complexity by nature, they are facing an era of increasingly complex systemic challenges. The European Commission (2013) has described these systemic issues as societal challenges that can’t be solved by single entities. Moreover, the challenges require a collaboration of public, private and non-governmental
organizations in order to combine expertise and adapt to new ways of working for understanding the root causes, the variety of stakeholders, and the contributions of the challenges, and thereby driving together for innovation (European Commission, 2013).

It could be argued that the government has always faced complex societal problems. However, the ill-defined, complex problems that the government currently faces are often defined as wicked problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973). A distinguishing feature between the past systemic problems, with the problems that are currently referred to as wicked, is the rapidly changing nature of them. Wicked problems are evolving and changing their form more rapidly than the government is able to organise itself for addressing it (Bason, 2017). Bason (2017) defines wicked problems through five characteristics; they are ill-defined and can only be addressed by systematic experimentation, they contain causal relationships, the problem itself doesn't go into a division of a single category, the efforts to solve the problem cause new forms of the problem and there isn't an agreed clarity if the problem is solved or not. In addition, his research adds that in the context of wicked problems a large set of players function simultaneously causing unpredictable effects and dynamics.

Dominant paradigms within contemporary Western governments have been introduced previously for improving policy-making practises. Notably “New Public Management” has led the discourse over the past decades, where approaches from the private sector businesses are being introduced to the governments’ utilisation (see e.g. Kimbell & Bailey, 2017). Furthermore, concepts of a new paradigm “Networked Governance” are being introduced in the literature, where public value plays a central role and the governance is organised through networks to address to the emerging issues (Benington & Hartley, 2001 as cited in Bason, 2017).

The challenges the governments are currently facing are both wicked by nature, and relating to an incapability to answer to the emerging user needs. It seems quite inevitable that these challenges form driving forces for the government organisations to change, where an application of new, collaborative, experimental and creative approaches are required. Nevertheless, the emerging dynamics put an emphasis for a larger reorientation of the government organisations (Junginger & Sangiorgi, 2011). The larger reorientation process
gives space and calls for new approaches assist with this change, such as design (Junginger & Sangiorgi, 2011; Bason, 2017).

1.2 Research topic: Emergence of design leadership in improving the effectiveness of design

In the context of contemporary Western governance, design has been identified as one beneficial approach in addressing to the government needs. From many definitions of design, it can be understood as a process of specified actions, as an outcome or object of designing (Buchanan, 2016). Several characteristics of design, such as enhancing collaboration and experimentation, user-centeredness and creativity, have been identified as valuable approaches to provide new tools and approaches for the government. Simultaneously the design field is evolving to novel forms and is being applied to increasingly complex settings. As Bason (2017) suggests there is an observable convergence between the emerging forms of government and design. Several government organisations have started to apply design methods into their practices and established internal design units.

However, the application of design methods for the government hasn’t unfolded without restriction and observable barriers. For an example, the Design Commission (2012) in UK describes a cultural clash between design and government legacies as one of the most critical challenges for the design to implementation. A survey conducted as a part of this thesis process discovered that one of the most significant challenges for the effectiveness of design is the lack of leadership and authorising environment, according to professional designers (a design practitioner that has a design education, see glossary at page 10) and designerly-minded civil servants (a civil servant with experiences of practising or applying design to the government context, or is a design enthusiast, see glossary in page 10) from the Finnish government organisations. Within the same study it was discovered that greater autonomy and support from leadership structures was stated as the most significant opportunity for improving the effectiveness of design (see page 33-35).

Therefore, the fundamental question remains; “what kind of design leadership is required among the professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants in the Finnish government organisations”. This master’s thesis investigates the qualities of design leadership in the context of Finnish government organisations,
perceived by the design experts from the field. This study aims to have two types of implications to the theory and practise. First, it is expected that this study links some gaps of knowledge in theory for understanding the qualities of design leadership in the public sector context. Furthermore, it is expected that this thesis provides valuable information for the public and government organisations for forming new models of leadership for improving the effectiveness of design.

1.3 Thesis structure

This master’s thesis is split into nine chapters. In addition to this introduction, the thesis continues with a second chapter which presents the convergence of design evolution and emerging needs of government organizations. This is important to introduce for reader, for understanding some key aspects of the thesis, including its motivation, setting and the specific context of Finnish government organizations, before then focusing on the area of design leadership within this thesis.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of design applied to for the government organisations and the raised notion of lack of design leadership within the Finnish government organisation’s context. The findings of a survey are presented to define the starting point and motivation for this study. Chapter 3 introduces the theory and understandings of design leadership that form a theoretical lenses for the empirical research of this thesis.

After introducing the background and theory of this study, chapter 4 describes the objectives, research gap and research questions of this thesis. Chapter 5 provides an overview to the selected methodology and research methods of this study. Chapter 6 recaps the research process and introduces the different stages of it in more detail, as well as reasoning behind certain choices of the process.

Chapter 7 provides an overview to the findings of the design leadership qualities, collected through the qualitative research. In this thesis ‘findings’ refer to findings from the empirical research. In chapter 8 the research findings are being discussed in relation to the design leadership theory. Through this discussion the research results are encapsulated into 8 design leadership qualities. In addition, the chapter 8 includes limitations and contributions of this thesis as well as suggestions for further research. Finally, in chapter 9 the conclusions of the thesis are being presented.
2

Background: Design for government
This chapter introduces the conceptual background and motivation for the thesis to understand the emergence of design leadership. The first section introduces the evolution in design landscape over the years to answer to the government needs. The second section discusses about the convergence of design and government evolutions to meet, and where specifically design is being applied in government context.

The third section describes the recent evolution of design in Finnish government context, which is the focus area of this thesis. The fourth section describes the identified challenges design has faced in government organisations. The fifth section highlights the emergence of lack of leadership as the one of the core challenges for design effectiveness in the government context. Finally, the sixth section introduces notions from a survey results, conducted as part of this research that emphasise the importance of leadership.
2.1 Evolution in the design landscape

The definition of design is constantly evolving and therefore it is difficult to make all-encompassing definition of it. Design is represented through several disciplines, such as product design, graphic design, fashion design, industrial design and service design (Globben, 2009), and is often described through a design process, outcome of design activities, skills of professional designers or as a way of thinking (Buchanan, 2016). Since there is a myriad of variables in defining design, this thesis will employ very inclusive understanding of design as an openly formed problem-solving process, where various design principles such as user-centeredness, collaboration, innovativeness and exploration are being applied.

This quite wide definition of design is applied in this study due to three reasons. First, rather than starting the exploration from a perspective of a very specific design discipline, the focus of this study is to explore qualities of design leadership which can be in a position of leading any type of design activities. Second, government organisations are not a single entity but are a combination of several units and departments. By the wide definition of design, design can be more relevant for multiple organisations and industries that they represent and take into account the existing design legacies (Junginger, 2014). Third, the government organisations’ representatives are interested in approaches that may help them in practise, instead of following academic definitions of design disciplines. Practically, design approaches can be applied in myriad ways, and there isn’t a “one-fits all” recipe in doing so.

What is in the key interest of this study is the recent evolution of design from focusing solely to the creation of tangible artefacts, to addressing large-scale social issues, visions and systemic challenges (Lin, 2016). In relation to the recent evolution of design Buchanan (2001) has introduced a framework of “the four orders of design” (adapted in Figure 1). Buchanan’s study notes that these four orders enable rethinking the nature of design, rather than having a set of fixed categories of design disciplines. Buchanan describes that the first and the second orders of design are representing merely graphic and industrial design, where symbols and artefacts are at the focus of designing. The study indicates that the evolution has then shifted to focus on designing holistic human experiences, that is implied as third order of design. Design disciplines where human relationships and experiences are being explored, such as service design, UX and UI fall into the category of third order of design (Buchanan, 2001.)
Buchanan (2001) describes the fourth order of design, as an environmental or systems design, where abstract structures and systems and their relation to humans are in the focus of designing. What has gradually changed from the third order of design, is the context and nature of interactions becoming increasingly diversified, connected and open-ended (Junginger & Sangiorgi, 2011). Buchanan (2011) continues that the systems that fourth order of design aims to address can’t be directly seen, yet human lives are being influenced by them. The application of fourth order of design concerns in organisations strategic decision-making, visions and values (Buchanan, 2001). As an example, in public systems policies have an influence to people, and are the object of fourth order of design (Junginger & Sangiorgi, 2011).

For this thesis, the framings of third and fourth order of design are particularly interesting in addressing to the needs of government organisations’. The third order of design may provide tools and approaches for the government in redesigning their services and in answering to the needs of users’ with improved public service. In the era of wicked problems and rapidly changing society, the fourth order of design can provide significant value in addressing to the emerging global challenges (Junginger & Sangiorgi, 2011). Additionally, Buchanan (1998) argues that the third and fourth orders of design are particularly important in influencing to the strategic decision-making and vision building of organisations’.
2.2 The convergence of design and government evolutions

As stated in the previous chapter, government organisations are facing inevitable changes due to the increasingly rapidly changing demands of the society. In addition, design has evolved during the past years from focusing to the creation of tangible artefacts to an entity that considers large systemic issues, and enables organisational transformation towards strategic competitiveness (Buchanan, 2001; Baglieri, Zamboni, Secchi and Rampino, 2008; Lee & Joo, 2015). The remaining question is, what is the convergence of the government needs and design application, and what does design help the government organisations to achieve.

Bason (2017) has introduced a summary over the convergence of public administration and design (adapted in Figure 2). The four presented headlines of the study; openness, changing focus, transforming the organisations and implications, refer to directions that design assists the government to take. Next, a short description is conducted under the four headlines.

2.2.1 Openness
According to Bason (2017), the openness refers to a need for government to react proactively to the emerging issues. For addressing to the wicked problems, the government practises must evolve from reactive decision-making to proactive future-making (Bason, 2017). Design, on the other hand can provide tools for creative problem solving and understanding possible future scenarios (Design Commission, 2012). When there are several variables, so called “unknown unknowns”, prototyping can help in learning more about the problem itself by testing out various small scale experimentation (Design Commission, 2012).

2.2.2 Changing focus
Changing focus refers to a larger transformation of government organisations to shift the focus from political processes and legal demands to user-centricity (Bason, 2017). Design has several tools, methods and approaches for supporting user-centricity and change the traditional ways of thinking. These design tools can enable better service experiences for the users and a deeper understanding of the underlying problems (Design Commission, 2012; Lin, 2016; Bason, 2017).
2.2.3 Transforming the organisations
Transforming the organisations refers to a recognition that new tools and approaches are needed at the government to enhance innovation and support capacity building (Bason, 2017). For example, design can provide variety of tools for experimentation, learning, stakeholder engagement and bring outsider perspectives to organisational challenges (Design Commission; Bason, 2017).

2.2.4 Implications
By implications it is referred to more organised innovation processes in governance and to a wider citizen and stakeholder engagement (Bason, 2017). According to Bason (2010) innovation in the context of public sector isn’t novel. However, the author argues that public sector needs more systematic innovation processes to address the complex challenges of the current society (Bason, 2010). The design approaches enable tools for better user or public engagement, increased employee commitment, and tools for a creative problem solving, as well as experimentation (Design Commission, 2012; Bason, 2017).

![Figure 2. The convergence between the evolution of government agencies and design (adapted from Bason, 2017)](image-url)
If Basons’ summary illustrated the areas where government organisations emerging needs and design approaches meet, to what functions can design be applied.

The Design Commission (2012) has listed three areas for design application in government and public sector organisations; designing or redesigning (1) public services, (2) policies and (3) complex systems, such as organisations. Firstly, the study indicates that majority of citizens interact with the government organisations through public services, and the application of design methods in designing or improving them seems the most evident. Even in the context of central government design can assist in reminding civil servants from the implications of their efforts to citizens, or by engaging multiple stakeholders into a design activity (Design Commission, 2012). Secondly, the created policies take a form and expression through public services (Junginger & Sangiorgi, 2011). Furthermore, Junginger and Sangiorgi state that the policies made in the government have at least indirect implications to a reasonable number of stakeholders. Therefore, it is crucial to apply design in the policy making consider the implications it has to public services. Design Council (2013) refers the introduction of design methods into policymaking as strategic design in government.

2.3 Design for government in Finland

In response to the wider expansion of design to the public sector globally, the potential of design has been also recognised in the Finnish public and government organisations. As an important cornerstone of developing the understanding over the design benefits for the public organisations in Finland, can be seen the year 2012, when Helsinki was designated as the World Design Capital (Design Finland, 2013). The year provided space for several promotional design initiatives, such as for a formation of national design programme, Design Finland, by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, naming the implementation of design to the public sector as one of their strategic objectives (Design Finland, 2013).

During the recent years, design has been increasingly observable across several strategy documents of the Finnish government organisations. To mention a few, design has been promoted as a part of the City of Helsinki’s strategy (The Most Functional City in the World – Helsinki City Strategy 2017–2021, 2018), and as
mentions of supporting experimentative culture in the Finnish Government Programme in 2015 (Finnish Government, 2015). Additionally, some design units have been formed inside the Finnish government organisations, such as Inland Design within the Finnish Immigration Service (Inland, 2019), and initiatives to support government organisations through the design application, such as Helsinki Design Lab (Helsinki Design Lab, 2019).

For the relevance of this thesis, three design initiatives from the Finnish public sector context are introduced in more detail. First, in the context of design leadership, the City of Helsinki established a role of Chief Design Officer (CDO) where Anne Stenros was hired between 2016 and 2018 (Bennes, 2017; City of Helsinki a, 2018; City of Helsinki b, 2018). The high-level position of CDO at the city organisation was pioneering even in global comparison, and the objectives given to the position were to support experimentative culture, development of the city’s services, and introducing the application of design into the city’s ways of working (Bennes, 2017). For this thesis, the role of the City of Helsinki’s CDO illustrates the motivation and raised interest to understand design leadership more encompassingly in the public and government organisation’s settings.

Second, in 2016 the Finnish Ministry of Finance instructed the State Treasury to support the digitalisation and change towards customer-centricity of Finnish public services (“Suomi digi”, 2019). For this purpose, the State Treasury established D9 Digital Team of professional designers to support in digitalisation and public service development (State Treasury, 2017). For the relevance of this thesis, several members of the past D9 team participated this study to discuss about their experiences from working with the government organisations.

Third, an active community of professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants from the Finnish government organisations, referred as “Julkis-muotoilijat” network, played an active role in this research process. The “Julkis-muotoilijat” is organised through an active Facebook group, that consists of over 270 members (Julkis-muotoilijat, 2019). Within this study the term “designerly-minded civil servants” refers to civil servants, who don’t have a professional training of design, but who have experiences of design application or are design enthusiasts.
As a conclusion for this chapter, there seems to be a raised interest towards the design application at the Finnish public sector organisations, and several design initiatives have formed inside the government. However, the application of design hasn't still integrated to the government without some recognised challenges.

2.4 Challenges for design application at the government organisations

Even though the potential of design for the public sector usage has been identified, there are several notions that design hasn't implemented to the organisations without some reluctance. The European Commission (2013) has stated that there is an evidence of four distinct barriers for the more enhanced public sector innovation. According to the study these four barriers are: unfavourable conditions, lack of leadership, limited knowledge of innovation methods and incapability to measure the value of design.

The first notion of the listed barriers, unfavourable conditions, concerns structural reluctance, limitations in resources and challenges with collaboration (European Commission, 2013). The Design Commission (2012) emphasises that even though there is a myriad of structural challenges, more importantly there is a cultural clash between design and government legacy. For an example, the new design oriented ways of doing force an opening of the hierarchic positions of government by posing the user to the center of policy making (Design Commission, 2012).

The second notion of barriers, lack of creative leadership, is related to a notion that public sector innovation occurs more often under uncoordinated projects, than as a result of strategic efforts (European Commission, 2013). Mumford, Scott, Gaddis, & Strange (2002) describe creative leadership connected to innovation leadership, since their main focus is to support the organisations’ creativity and provide space for innovations. Within this thesis design leadership is seen somewhat parallel to creative leadership, but not solely focusing over supporting creativity and innovations of government organisations. All in all, the barrier of lacking design leadership is in the core focus of this study to understand in-depth, how design leadership could help the government agencies and what are the requirements for it according to government representatives.
Thirdly, limited knowledge of innovation methods have been stated as a barrier for design to meet the government agencies expectations. This notion is connected to a lack of understanding design processes and methods, and challenge of communicating their value (Design Commission, 2012). Lin (2016) argues that professional designers seem to work more often with government organisations as external consultants in short-term design projects, which limits the designers’ ability to follow the final implementation. Additionally, the government organisations are relatively new area for professional designers to work within, and it sets novel demands for them to understand the context (Design Commission, 2012).

Finally, design has a built-in challenge to be measured and evaluated. Furthermore, there is vague terminology and lack of data that create a challenges of communicating the design value to the policy-makers (Design Commission, 2012; Whicher, Swiatek, & Thurston, 2016). However, inviting the government employees to hands-on workshops to use design methods in practise can help enormously in communicating the design effectiveness (Whicher et al., 2016).

In sum, this section has provided a short overview to the barriers that design faces in the government organisations. This overview is hardly an all-encompassing and some of the challenges are more organisation specific, but some of the barriers are more deep rooted than others. One of the very deep rooted issues for design to flourish is the acknowledgment over lack of leadership in government organisation (Lin, 2016) and understanding this phenomena is in the core focus of this study. Despite expectations, design leadership hasn’t been extensively discussed in the context of government or public administration and has been more exclusively connected to private businesses.
2.5 Emergence of design leadership

Several promotional initiatives and studies have established the importance of leadership as condition for design and innovation to thrive in the government organisations (Yee & White, 2016; Design Commission, 2012; European Design Leadership Board, 2011; Yoffee, 2016; European Commission, 2013; Design Council, 2013; Bason, 2010). The recognitions of needed leadership support, emphasise the commitment of the executive members, seen as essential condition for design to implement throughout the government agencies. The Design Commission (2012), the European Design Leadership Board (2011) and the European Commission (2013) have emphasised the importance of design being applied to the strategic functions of public organisations. Even though the leadership support is seen as essential for the effectiveness of design to implement and help government organisations to succeed, the importance of design leadership is much less articulated in these studies. The European Commission (2013) has addressed a challenge of lacking an understanding over the characteristics of public sector design leaders and managers, and define an emergence of novel leadership role.

As seen from the presented statement there isn’t a comprehensive understanding what are the qualities and role of design leadership for improving the effectiveness of design. This thesis begins the exploration process of the emergence of design leadership from this setting, where the emergence of design leadership for the government has been recognised, but more specific understanding of its qualities seems ambiguous and unclear.
2.6 Finnish impressions of design leadership

To illustrate the emergence of design leadership in the Finnish government organisations’ context, this thesis presents findings of a survey conducted to “Julkis-muotoilijat” network. Unlike the previous sections of this chapter which are based in literature, this section extends and localizes the needs and challenges in relation to leadership in the Finnish government context. Within this context, there is much less literature, and this thesis and the collaborative survey conducted as part of this research process, develop the first background for these issues and motivation for this thesis.

The survey to the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network has been originally conducted as a part of larger research process, led by PhD candidate Minuette Le from the University of Potsdam. The aim of the survey is to understand current perceptions, applications and status of design-led approaches in Finnish government organisations. More about the research process is introduced at the chapter 6.

The survey findings relevant for this thesis occurred under two questions (17 and 18). These two questions asked the participants’ level of agreement with several provided statements. The participants’ had a scale of four answers (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) to implicate their takes to the provided statements. From the provided set of statements, “lack of leadership and authorizing environment” and “greater autonomy and support from leadership structures” are in the special focus of this thesis. The whole survey is added as an appendix.

**Question 17: Please indicate your level of agreement on the challenges with design-led approaches in your organization.**

- General resistance and confusion around “design” meanings and values
- Communicating its costs, benefits, and how to evaluate outcomes
- Lack of leadership and authorizing environment
- There is a constant need to justify design-led approaches

First, the findings for the question 17 indicated that over 80% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement of having a lack of leadership and
authorizing environment in their organisation. In comparison to all provided statements, the lack of leadership and authorizing environment raised as the most significant by ~45% of the respondents strongly agreeing, and 40% agreeing with the statement.

**Question 18: Please indicate the level of agreement on the following statements on what is needed to improve the effectiveness of design-led approaches**

- Greater autonomy and support from leadership structures
- The ability and authority to initiate new collaborations and projects
- Risk-free spaces to experiment, learn, and test new ideas, tools, methods
- Dedicated working hours for sharing and knowledge exchange
- Creation of an oversight body
- Better evaluation tools and methods

Second, the findings for the question 18 indicated that great majority 95% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement of greater autonomy and support from leadership structures is needed to improve the effectiveness of design-led approaches. This notion also raised as the most significant from the all provided statements by ~43% of the respondents strongly agreeing, and 52% agreeing with the statement.

The findings of the two survey questions provide a strong indication that currently in Finnish government organisations design is facing challenges caused by a lack of leadership and authorizing environment. Simultaneously, the greater autonomy and support from leadership structures is highlighted as the most effective way to increase the effectiveness of design-led approaches in Finnish government organisations. These two findings provided a motivation for this thesis to seek a further understanding of leadership, and more specifically about design leadership.
2.7 Summary

This chapter has provided a background, reasoning and motivation for this study, by introducing the emergence of design leadership for government. Government is currently facing an era of complexity and systemic problems and is challenged by the citizen needs and desires. Therefore, there is an increased demand for new approaches that may help the government organisations to reorient their ways of working, and provide tools for improving public services and addressing complex challenges. Simultaneously, design has evolved from focusing only in designing tangible artefacts to addressing holistic human experiences, complex systemic challenges and abstract structures, such as organisations. The potential of design providing approaches to the government needs has been increasingly recognised globally and in Finland, in the areas of public services, policy making, and in addressing complex challenges.

However, design has faced several barriers when entering the government organisations. To mention a few, design has faced structural challenges in organisations and cultural clash with the government legacy, lack of leadership, shortcomings in capabilities and ambiguity in measuring and communicating design value. In addition, a survey conducted in Finland engaging design experts form the government organisations, indicates that lack of leadership is stated as one of the most significant challenges for design. Therefore, the emerging problem isn’t “if design can bring value for government organisations”, but moreover, “how to understand better the barriers design faces in the government organisations and overcome them”. It seems, that there isn’t a holistic understanding of design leadership qualities and importance, and somehow it’s linkage to the practise is still missing.

This thesis will focus to the landscape of design leadership as an entity that is increasingly important in providing support for design to meet the needs of Finnish government organisations. As introduced previously, leadership support for design and innovation in public sector has been established and highlighted in various studies and papers. However, these papers lack of understanding what design leadership is in government context and what qualities does it consists of in more detail. It is important to note that most probably design leadership, won’t be an all-saving solution, but hypothetically it has potential to contribute several barriers, introduced previously. In what scale and how, will be addressed in this thesis in more detail.
Theoretical perspectives to design leadership
This chapter discusses about theoretical perspectives of design leadership, that form a theoretical basis for this thesis. The first section aims for defining the concept of design leadership, which seems ambiguous and without a unified definition, for clarifying the topic and key concept of this study. The second section introduces a theoretical framework for understanding the qualities of design leadership. It also draws from previous research to introduce understandings of the different design leadership qualities.
3.1 Design leadership as a concept

This section introduces the discourse around defining the concept of design leadership. First, the evolution of design leadership from the field of design management is being introduced. Second, differentiating design management and design leadership is being discussed. Third, the concepts of design leadership and design leader are introduced for clarifying the topic of this study.

3.1.1 Evolution of the design leadership

Design leadership is a relatively novel concept without a long history (Joziasse, 2011). Originally it emerges from the research field of design management and the first notions of design leadership can be drawn from the early 1920's (Turner & Topalian, 2002). However, even until today, there isn’t a consensus on what is the distinguish between these two concepts, and what is the exact point of separation between these two terms (Globben, 2009). Since design management is more extensively studied concept, this introduction to focuses to the evolution of design management for understanding design leadership.

Even though design management has been identified already during the industrial revolution, the term raised into the public discourse 1960s in the UK when several studies were published about it (Cooper & Junginger, 2011). At that time, design management was understood merely as management of relations between design companies and design buyer-clients (Globben, 2009). Cooper & Junginger (2011) point out that design leadership has been also briefly mentioned in an interview between Dennis Cheetham, a journalist of Design magazine and Jasper Gringling in 1965. In this interview Gringling states that every company board needs a position for design leader with a trust of the board, for influencing to the design policies (Cooper & Junginger, 2011).

In 1970s, design research focused over understanding the relationship between design management and value creation to industries (Borja de Mozota & Valade-Amland, 2019). Their study indicates that through this understanding, governments started to present promotional design initiatives, that provided space for several design management movements such as Design Management Institute (DMI) to emerge. According to Borja de Mozota and Valade-Amland
design management started to focus over large corporations in the 1980s, for understanding brand management as the company’s competitive advantage. In a decade the design management discourse had shifted from relation management to creating competence and business success (Borja de Mozota & Valade-Amland, 2019). From the 1990s on design management reached a larger acknowledgement, that established academic research and education programmes about the topic (Borja de Mozota & Valade-Amland, 2019). According to their study, this acknowledgement changed not only the perceiving of design in organisations as a differentiator, but also at where in the organisation design was understood as valuable. Among private businesses, governments started to identify the potential of design management in the early 2000 nd in creating competitiveness and resilience in globalized markets (Borja de Mozota & Valade-Amland, 2019).

The current discourse of design management focuses over the role of design management in organisational transformation processes (Borja de Mozota & Valade-Amland, 2019). Cooper & Junginger (2011) have posed a concept of “third paradigm of design management” which focuses on understanding design as a general capability. According to them, this general capability has a special focus to human problems, has an advanced understanding of how things are designed, has a systematic approach and tendency of utilizing participatory design approaches (Cooper & Junginger, 2011). From the perspectives of this thesis the third paradigm of design management seems interesting from the context of leading design in the government organisations. Additionally, several authors claim that focus of design management discourse has started to shift towards design leadership as a transformative and future-building capacity (Joziasse, 2011; Tan & Chapman, 2017).

Tan and Chapman (2017) have introduced seven definitions of design leadership, which are described to reflect the evolution of design leadership during the past years. These seven definitions are 1) effective use of resources, 2) market leadership, 3) design expertise, 4) design together with people, 5) as strategic thinking 6) as team or bottom-up leadership, and 7) as visionary leadership (Tan & Chapman, 2017). First, the authors claim that effective use of resources describes the early stages of design management in 1960s. Second, market leadership, refers to an organisation’s leading position in the market competition (Topalian, 1990). Third, according to Tan and Chapman (2017) design expertise
refers to design leader’s role in design competence building. Fourth, the authors
describe design leadership supporting to co-design activities for gaining
innovation opportunities. Fifth, the study indicates design leadership as
strategic thinking as a way that design leaders think and act. Sixth, the authors
describe design leadership as team or bottom-up leadership refers to managing
design and people bottom-up. Finally seventh, design leadership as visionary
leadership refers to design leaders role in leading change and providing a vision
(Tan & Chapman, 2017.) From Tan’s and Chapman’s seven definitions of design
leadership, this study focuses mostly to understanding design leadership as the
visionary leadership.

This section has introduced a brief introduction to the evolution of design
management, and simultaneously evolution of design leadership. Since there isn’t
a single separation point for these two concepts, the history of design leadership
can be observed from the perspective of design management. The next section
will introduce the discourse around separating the two terms from each other, for
defining the concept of design leadership.
3.1.2 Differentiating design management and design leadership

The two terms “design leadership” and “design management” are often confused to each other. According to Best (2006) there isn’t a one universally agreed definition of design management or design leadership, and the terms are somewhat complementary to each other. However, as Globben (2009) emphasizes, a comprehensive understanding of both is needed in organisations to maximise the efficiency of design investments.

The most common distinguish between the terms is argued by design leadership representing a more strategic and vision oriented function of an organisation (e.g. Globben, 2009; Turner, 2013; Kotter, 1996). In comparison, design management represents a function that ensures the operational effectiveness of design processes (Globben, 2009; Turner, 2006). According to this separation, design leadership represents a function that generates organisation’s future vision and a strategy for achieving the vision (e.g. Globben, 2009). In contrast, design management is used to describe activities that optimize resources for executing the strategy (Globben, 2009). Turner (2013) concludes that design leadership is about looking beyond the immediate issues of design management.

Another distinguish between design leadership and design management is conducted by Turner and Topalian (2002). Their research suggests that the difference between the concepts is that leadership is proactive, whereas design management is reactive (Turner & Topalian, 2002). In other words, design leadership proactively looks for future directions, whereas design management reacts to the directions design leadership provides. This relation also indicates the correlation of these two functions. As Turner (2013) states, without design leadership the organisation doesn’t know “where to go”, and without design management the organisation doesn’t know “how to get there”.

To conclude the difference between the concepts of design leadership and design management, there isn’t a clear separation between the concepts. However, this thesis builds on understanding that design leadership is the more strategic function of an organisation that proactively leads the organisation through a created vision. In contrast, design management is more reactive function that manages operational design processes to achieve the strategic objectives.
of an organisation. What is important to note, is that both of the concepts are complementary and dependent on each other to ensure the organization’s success.

This thesis focuses over understanding design leadership in more detail due to several reasons. First, according to the previous definition, design management has more limited scope of function than design leadership. Second, initiatives around design management are more observable in the Finnish government organisations context, and stronger understanding of the role and potential of design leadership is still missing. Since the two functions are dependent on each other, a more emphasis on design leadership should be put in the future. Third, design leadership is an emerging area of design management practice that helps the organisations to address complex challenges in future oriented ways. This approach is essential for the government organisations to succeed in the future.
3.1.3 Design leader in a position of design leadership

There are several definitions of design leaders in the academic discussion. Most commonly, design leaders are being defined in two ways; as an organisation’s leading market position, and as an individual in a position of design leadership (Topalian (1990); Lee & Joo, 2015; Joziass, 2011; Tan & Chapman, 2017). Even though there are some definitions of design leaders and design leadership, there isn't an exclusive separation between these two concepts. To draw an understanding between the two concepts an understanding from the general leadership studies is required. This study basis on Ulrich's and Dulebohn's (2015) general definition between leaders and leadership.

“A leader refers to an individual who has unique abilities to guide the behavior of others. Leadership refers to an organization’s capacity to build future leaders. While an individual leader matters, an organization’s leadership matters more over time (Ulrich & Dulebohn, 2015, p.195).”

This thesis assumes that the concepts of design leadership and design leaders can be understood based on Ulrich’s and Dulebohn’s (2015) definition. In this thesis design leadership is considered as a wider organisational function, which often takes form through a design leader. Although design leadership is in the key focus of this study, it is important to acknowledge the existence of design leaders for providing valuable understanding about design leadership (Turner and Topalian, 2002). Finally, it is important to state that design leadership can take more forms in organisations, than an individual person in a position of leading. However, this thesis aims to understand the qualities of design leadership in relation to Finnish government organisations. Based on this thesis findings, further suggestions or studies could be conducted for understanding the role formation of design leadership.
3.2 Understandings of design leadership qualities

Several design leadership theories focus on describing the work design leaders are in charge of within their representative organisations. However, to understand the qualities of design leadership more encompassingly, an understanding from the general leadership studies is applied in this thesis. Authors Hartley and Hinksman (2003) argue that it is important to separate three different aspects of leadership for understanding it holistically; qualities that connect to a (1) person, (2) position and (3) processes.

By a person the authors refer to a personality or skill set (e.g. charisma) of an individual. Within this thesis, person answers to question what type of human agency is related to design leadership in government organisations. By position, Hartley and Hinks (2003) refer to a role and amount of authority that the leadership holds in an organisation. For this thesis, position answers to question what is the role and positioning of design leadership in relation to the government organisations. Third, by processes Hartley and Hinksman (2003) refer to a set of leadership activities, such as responsibilities or tasks (e.g. motivating people) for achieving desired outcomes. For this thesis, activities is named as responsibilities to describe the third category more descriptively. This category answers for this thesis to a question what are the activities of design leadership for improving the effectiveness of design in government organisations.

These three aspects of design leadership provide theoretical lenses to understand the design leadership qualities. In the following sub-sections, theories in relation to these three aspects of design leadership are being introduced to form a theoretical background for the empirical research.

3.2.1 Design leader as a person

The first notion relating to the design leader as a person is that there isn’t a single formula of design leader characteristics. However, some identifications over the person related characteristics can be recognised that are representative for design leaders in comparison to other styles of leadership. McCullagh (2008) argues over three characteristics of design leaders, that draws them separate from general leaders. These three characteristics are (1) ability to envision future, (2) ability to strategic thinking, and (3) ability to lead and motivate others (McCullagh, 2008).
The ability to envision future refers to a leader’s ability of “seeing beyond horizon” for future direction and understanding organisational matters holistically (McCullagh, 2008). His study argues that the best design leaders are distinctively good at articulating this vision to others. Second, McCullagh (2008) states that the ability to strategic thinking is referring to design leaders ability to create plans how to reach created visions and make strategic choices concerning the organisation. Third, the ability to lead and motivate others, refers to design leader’s abilities to inspire design teams to work towards the vision and external stakeholders’ to believe in the vision (McCullagh, 2008).

Additionally, McCullagh (2008) states for myths of design leader qualities. These two myths he describes as design leaders with big personalities and design leaders born to the position. McCullagh (2008) emphasises that there are several personalities in design leaders and a large ego doesn't qualify for the positions of design leadership. Similarly, he states that being a design leader is a continuous learning process. A person can’t therefore be born to this position or not (McCullagh, 2008).

3.2.2 Design leadership position

Similarly to the characteristics of design leader as a person, there isn't a single and universal characterization of design leadership position. Moreover, the question of design leadership position is relational to an organisation and can take many forms and roles. However, the position of design leadership in connection to an organisation can be analysed through several theoretical perspectives. The two theoretical perspectives that are selected to be a part of this research to observe the position of design leadership are Junginger's framework of design integration (2009) and Best’s framework of organisational levels (2006).

Junginger (2009) introduces a theory of design integration in organisations through four different framings describing the relationship between design and organisation (adapted in Figure 3). These four framings of the design integration describe the position of design actions in relation to the organisation. Junginger (2009) describes the four models as separate, peripheral, central and integrated. First, the separate framing is introduced to describe design as an external resource, which is applied coincidentally to the organisation’s needs. Second, the peripheral model is introduced as design being present at some parts of the
organisation, but these areas of application are limited. Third, the central model is described as design having a central role at the organisation that contributes, for an example, to the organisation’s competitiveness at the market. Fourth, the integrated model refers to design being present at all actions of an organisation, including strategic actions (Junginger, 2009).

The second theory for understanding the position of design leadership is related to Best’s (2006) description of organisational levels. Her study defines that the organisational functions can be categorized in three different layers (adapted in Figure 4). First, the study indicates that at the strategic level of an organisation, policies, missions and agendas are created. Second, the study describes that at the tactical level of an organisation, processes and systems of each function are defined and managed. Third, at the operational level of an organisation, design is realized through, as an example, tangible artefacts or service delivery (Best, 2006). Best (2006) also indicates that design leadership belongs more often to the strategic level of an organisation for contributing to the organisation’s vision and strategy. In similar manner Globben (2009) states that the design management belongs moreover to the tactical and operational levels of an organisation.

### 3.2.3 Design leadership responsibilities

To understand the design leadership qualities, this thesis applies Turner’s and Topalian’s (2002) theory over design leaders’ responsibilities. According to
Turner and Topalian (2002) the important design leadership responsibilities are: (1) envisioning future, (2) manifesting strategy, (3) directing corporate investments, (4) shaping customer experience and business reputation, (5) sustaining an environment for innovation, and (6) training for design leadership.

### 3.2.3.1 Envisioning future

Probably the most common and fundamental definition of the design leadership responsibilities is to encapsulate organisation's future vision, creating shared meaning and purpose for the organisation's stakeholders (see e.g. Verganti, 2009; Yee & White, 2016; Nam & Jung, 2008; Turner & Topalian, 2002; Turner, 2013; Topalian, 2011). Importantly, creating a vision for the organisation's future isn't something design leaders can bring “by default”. Moreover, design leader can enable the vision creation process through applying design-oriented tools and approaches (Turner, 2013). These tools and approaches include open stakeholder participation, set of sensemaking and scenario building capabilities, abilities to clarify future implications and bringing stakeholders together for the process (Turner, 2013; Lin, 2016). In addition, design leadership may support the organisation's abilities in identifying the users (Yee & White, 2016). This is an important aspect in the context of government organisations, for clarifying the purpose an organisation serves in the society, despite being commanded by laws and regulations.
According to Yee & White (2016) the process of envisioning has been traditionally concerned as something that private sector organisations do for keeping pace with the market competition. In contrast, their study indicate that public sector organizations are often led by the need to ensure good governance and accountability (Yee & White, 2016). However, as discussed in the earlier chapter, public sector agencies are in a position, where considerations of organisations purpose and vision are increasingly important. Furthermore, since the environment where the public sector organisations operate is ever-changing, the process of envisioning should be constant. To establish a process of envisioning, design leaders are in a position of encouraging the whole organisation to start acting differently and challenge the top executives of the organisation (Topalian, 2011).

3.2.3.2 Manifesting strategy

According to Turner (2013) manifesting strategy refers to design leader’s responsibility of linking the decisions made in among top executives with the organisation’s processes (adapted in Figure 5). In other words, manifesting strategic intent describes the design leadership capability of forming strategic objectives and then translating them throughout the organisation, for making sure that all organisational operations work towards the same direction (Turner, 2013).

This responsibility is highly connected to the vision building, since it relates to the design leader’s capabilities of communicating the vision and strategic objectives in understandable and relatable ways. Especially in the context of public sector organisations, the set of sensemaking capabilities are essential tools for design leaders to build a mutual understanding in the contextual complexity (Lin, 2016).

3.2.3.3 Directing corporate investments

The third design leader responsibility is to direct investments across the organisation in relation to design for ensuring the effectiveness of design (Turner, 2013). Turner (2013) argues that directing the design investments requires a design expertise for understanding how to turn the investments in the most profitable or effective ways, without forgetting the organisation as a whole. In
addition, Turner (2013) argues that design leaders need to direct resources, such as space, human capacity, tools or time for design.

In the context of public sector organisations, the process of directing investments is most probably trickier than in context of private sector businesses. At least this sets a requirement for the design leadership to have the top executives support (Yee & White, 2016), as well as high-enough position and mandate in the organisation to access resources and to direct them in the most effective ways.

3.2.3.4 Shaping customer experience and business reputation

According to Turner (2013) design helps in managing all relationships of an organisation and between its internal and external stakeholders. In more detail, this refers to managing the customer experience as a whole, as well as the satisfaction of employees working within an organisation (Turner, 2013).
As discussed in chapter 2, design can provide especially valuable tools and approaches for improving the customer experience. In the government organisations’ context the mention of managing business reputation doesn’t really fit for describing the design leadership responsibility. However, managing the reputation and relationships with all organisation’s internal and external stakeholders is equally as important to public than for private organisations.

3.2.3.5 Sustaining an environment for innovation

Innovations are often considered crucial for private businesses to succeed in the market competition, and design leaders have a key responsibility in sustaining innovation by providing a supportive environment for them (Turner, 2013). Innovations are equally important for the government organisations, since they are in a position of discovering ways to turn complex systems into usable services, processes and policy implementation (Bason, 2010). Furthermore, Bason (2010) states that innovation can enable governments in optimal allocation of resources, in creating competitive advantage through smart regulation, creating credibility, attract talent and support private sector success.

Innovation is not an area of expertise for professional designers only. Moreover, nowadays open networks can contribute to the organisation’s innovation processes. Turner (2013) states that opening networks for innovation doesn’t come without risks and requires management and leadership skills. He also adds that design leaders need to constantly challenge the “status quo” of organisations for enhancing innovation culture in organisations (Turner, 2013). Studies have shown that leadership that is more collaborative, instead of authoritarian encourages innovation (Askenas, Ulrich, Jick, & Kerr, 2002; cited in Yee & White, 2016). Joziasse (2011) states that design leaders are especially skilled in balancing in between exploration of new possibilities with maintaining a good management of the existing design functions at the same time.

3.2.3.6 Training for design leadership

Turner (2013) states that there is very limited understanding of training for design leadership. Furthermore, his study emphasises that distributing the design expertise and skills of design leadership is one of the core responsibilities
of design leaders, for building an internal design competency and changing the organisation towards more design centric. In the context of government organisation, this aspect of distributing design expertise seems particularly interesting. However, quite little is known about this matter in the government organisations.
3.3 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview to the theoretical perspectives and previous studies of design leadership. The evolution of design leadership as a concept has evolved from the field of design management and there isn’t a clear separation point for the terms design management and design leadership. In this thesis design leadership is understood as more strategic and proactive function of an organisation in comparison to design management. In addition, design leadership is understood in this thesis as a more wide function of an organisation, which is often taking form through a design leader. Three theoretical perspectives are being applied in this thesis to understand the different qualities of design leadership. These three perspectives are person, position and responsibilities (see Figure 6).

![Figure 6. Three theoretical perspectives, person, position and responsibilities applied in this thesis to understand the different qualities of design leadership (Lerkkanen, 2019)]
4

Research objectives
The aim of this thesis is to conduct a novel understanding of the design leadership qualities in context of Finnish government organisations, by comparing the findings of this study to the introduced design leadership theories.
4.1 Research gap

There is a large amount of literature about design entering to public sector and government organisations especially from the recent years (e.g. Junginger & Sangiorgi, 2011; Bason, 2014; Kimbell, 2015; Buchanan, Junginger & Terrey, 2017). However, several studies focus over considering a particular aspect of design, such as method (e.g. Manzini, 2014; Siodmok, 2014; Halse, 2014), or driving for new practises such as innovation (e.g. Bason, 2010; Steinberg, 2014; Meruno, Corubolo & Bartolomeo, 2017) for public sector context.

Bason (2010; 2017) has studied the convergence of design and government and the role of design transforming the public governance. In Leading Public Design Bason (2017) investigates what happens when public managers engage with design and how does the application of design transform the public governance. In Leading Public Sector Innovation Bason (2010) introduces four areas; consciousness, courage, co-creation and capacity that public leaders need to address for enhancing innovation. He also introduces four leadership models; visionary, enabler, 360 degree innovator and knowledge engineer, required to support the innovation. In these studies Bason examines the public sector innovation and the convergence of design and government more extensively than from the perspective of leadership. As an example, the four leadership models indicate roles in both strategic positions and in operative management positions. In comparison, this thesis focuses over investigating the qualities of strategic design leadership more comprehensively, and as a function of supporting the effectiveness of design in Finnish government context.

In addition, as introduced in the previous chapter, there is a myriad of literature considering design leadership as a concept, position or organisational function (e.g. Turner & Topalian, 2002; Joziassse, 2011a; Giudice & Ireland, 2017; Tan & Chapman, 2017). However, the theories over design leadership lack an overlook over the different qualities and characteristics that constitute design leadership. Moreover, the existing literature of design leadership focuses over describing the practical skills or capabilities of design leaders that make them distinct from general business leaders (e.g. Joziassse, 2011b; Turner, 2013). Furthermore, most of the existing literature focuses over understanding design leadership in private business context to drive for winning over the market competition.
In several governmental design association reports the notion over the importance of leadership has been emphasised (e.g. Design Commission, 2012; European Design Leadership Board, 2011; European Commission, 2013; Design Council, 2013). However, these reports don't dive deeper for suggesting an understanding of what constitutes a suited design leadership or what kind of leadership is demanded for supporting the effectiveness of design in the government organisations. However, research on the topic what constitutes a suited design leadership for the government organisations is still nascent and there is a notable gap of understanding of it in the Finnish context, which is the scope of this research. Finland can be seen as one of the forerunner countries in the application of design in the public sector settings. Therefore this thesis provides an unique opportunity to conduct an understanding how the application of design could be more efficient in government context. Additionally, this thesis provides a voice for the practitioners in the field to articulate what kind of leadership is required at the current government organisations settings.

This thesis brings together theories of design, design leadership and public governance to provide an understanding for all of these research areas. The wish is that this thesis would provide guidelines for the government organisations to consider their leadership functions from a novel perspectives and start an active discussion over the design support.
4.2 Research topic

This thesis aims for understanding the qualities of design leadership in the context of the Finnish government organisations. The primary research question of this study is:

*What are the perceived qualities of the design leadership in the Finnish government settings?*

This will be studied according to the professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants from the Finnish government organisations. In order to understand the perceived qualities within this primary research question, it is attended specifically to the following sub-questions:

- *What are the perceived qualities of design leadership as a person?*
- *What are the perceived qualities of design leadership as a position?*
- *What are the perceived qualities of the design leadership responsibilities?*

Each of the posed sub-questions will answer from a different perspective for what are the design leadership qualities through the research. It is expected that several notions in relation to design leadership will be collected under each sub-question. What is particularly interesting from the perspective of this thesis, is to discover the qualities of design leadership that are unique for the Finnish government organisations and distinct from the existing theory.

The research questions will be approached by an application of mixed method research. First, a quantitative research is applied for identifying a phenomena, design leadership, from the field, and second, a qualitative understanding is applied as a main research approach for understanding the different aspects and qualities of it.
Methodology & Methods
Muratovski (2016) defines research methods as tools of collecting the relevant understanding and simultaneously, methodology as a reasoning for why certain tools were selected to collect the understanding in a research setting. Therefore, methodology functions as guide for the research to select the methods that are preferable and beneficial for constructing novel understanding. This study is a combination of generative study and exploratory study. The first section of the thesis is generative (Hall, 2013).

This section focuses over identifying a phenomena to focus on, emergence of design leadership at the Finnish government organisations’ settings. Furthermore, the following sections are moreover exploratory (Hall, 2013) with an aim of understanding the characteristics of design leadership in the context of Finnish government organisations setting.

For conducting an understanding to the posed research questions, this thesis combines both qualitative and quantitative researches. First, it identifies a phenomena through a mix of qualitative and quantitative researches, and then explores the different aspects of the phenomena further through qualitative research. Therefore, the methodological approach of this study is a mixed method research (DeCuir–Gunby, 2008).

This chapter has a focus on introducing the selected methods of the study. The first section introduces the mixed methods as the methodological approach, qualitative and quantitative research approaches and critique posed towards the mixed methods research. The second section introduces the specific methods, a survey, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, selected to collect the understanding of the research. The third section introduces the method for analysing the collected data during the research process. Finally, the fourth section discuss over the ethical considerations and validity of research methods in the context of this study, yet the research process and the taken actions are introduced at the chapter 6.
5.1 Mixed method

The mixed method as a research methodology is common within the field of social sciences (DeCuir–Gunby, 2008). Mixed method as a research methodology is a combination of several research strategies in a single study, including qualitative or quantitative approaches (Morse, 2003). The main argument behind mixed method is that both qualitative or quantitative research approaches can be seen as complementary for each other, where the two approaches can provide different kind of understanding about the same research topic, and then discuss within each other (DeCuir–Gunby, 2008).

There are many ways for how the qualitative and quantitative parts of the research are combined in mixed method research. In the context of this study, the balance between the quantitative and qualitative research methods is heavily at the qualitative side, with most of the selected methods aiming for describing the qualities and understandings of design leadership. Walliman (2017) describes this type of mixed-method research as “concurred nested”, where the main focus is at either qualitative or quantitative methods and the supporting methods only add additional viewpoints to the main one.

Morse (2003) raises an important notion relating to the mixed method research, that each selected method should have a full and important role as a part of the study. Furthermore, the selected methods should complement each other and be strategically selected (Morse, 2003). This research includes three research methods: a survey, focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews. First, the survey, including both quantitative and qualitative questions, provided clues about the emergence of design leadership at the beginning of this study. This notion formed a basis for the other research methods. Second, the focus group discussions provided an overview about the qualities of design leadership. Third, the semi-structured interviews play a central role of the research as a core method to collect rich and in-depth understanding of the design leadership qualities.

The mixed method methodology was selected to this thesis, because of two reasons. Mixed methods enable both, creating a theory and exploring the theory in one study (Muratovski, 2016). Additionally, most of this research initiated as a part of a larger research group's interest. Therefore, the access to some of the data
and research methods were predetermined, yet provided valuable information for the posed research questions. To see more about the research process, see chapter 6.

5.1.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research can be described as a research that basis understanding on top of quantifiable data such as statistics (Muratovski, 2016). The author states, that it is often argued to be objective form of research which is independent from the interpretations of a researcher. In the context of design research, quantitative research is often applied for two purposes. Validating a theory or for collecting statistics (Creswell, 2003 in Muratovski, 2016).

In this study, the quantitative research has been applied through a survey addressed to the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network. The survey itself is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research, by posing both open-ended and closed questions. However, by posing 11 closed questions from total 18, the emphasis of the survey is in the closed questions.

The benefit of the quantitative research in the context of this research is to collect an overview of the emergence of leadership in Finnish government organisation’s context. This aspect has been emphasised especially in the context of the survey question number 17 and 18, which ask for the participant’s level of agreement with the provided statements. Both of these questions are quantitative questions.

5.1.2 Qualitative research and design ethnography

According to Muratovski (2016) qualitative research is often by nature in-depth and exploratory about the research object. In addition, the author states that qualitative research is usually applied for understanding abstract matters, which might have various variables. Qualitative research is usually applied when considering hypothesis and testing them out with the context of practise and real life (Muratovski, 2016).

Muratovski (2016) states that in the context of design, qualitative research has several frameworks, ethnographic research as one of them. His study describes ethnographic research focusing in collecting an in-depth understanding of
social interactions, behaviours and beliefs of people. The design ethnography is beneficial, when considering people in-depth in their natural environment and constructing insights about them (Ireland, 2003).

For the purposes of this thesis, the qualitative research is in the main focus to collect understanding for the posed research questions and it is applied in two sections of this research. First, the focus group discussions apply qualitative research to explore design leadership qualities through the perspectives of the research participants. Second, the semi-structured interviews continued this exploration.

5.1.3 Critique towards mixed methods

Morse (2003) describes the main critique towards mixed methods research concerning the validity of mixed method study. Compared to a single method research, the mixed method research might have a narrower data concerning a single method (Morse, 2003). In addition, mixed method research can be more difficult to manage purposefully, to construct a solid research.

However, each part of the mixed method research doesn't need to be a complete study by itself (Morse, 2003). Furthermore, Morse states (2003) that even the findings don't need to be fully verified, yet they can leave space for later validation. Moreover, the selected methods need to construct a meaningful entity together, that complement the study from different angles.

For the purposes of this thesis mixed methods research has been applied for its applicability to address complex research questions. The core benefit of mixed methods is that it provides quite comprehensive understanding of the research object by collecting an understanding from multiple sources (Morse, 2003). Additionally, mixed methods research enables testing out the hypotheses during a single research process (DeCuir–Gunby, 2008). For this thesis, the theoretical frame comes both from literature and the survey results, conducted to “Julkismuotoilijat” network. The mixed method research has supported a creation of theory and testing the theory in a research setting. This approach has provided an iterative process and a beneficial discussion between the theory and research data.
5.2 Data Collection Methods

As stated before, mixed method is not a method itself, but a methodology that combines several research methods in a single study. This thesis includes three selected methods; a survey, focus group and semi-structured interviews, that were applied during the research process. The purpose of the survey was to reveal the emergence of design leadership, that was further explored with the focus group. Finally, these two studies provided data for identifying important topics to cover and validate in the semi-structured interviews.

5.2.1 Survey to “Julkis-muotoilijat” network

Surveys are a suitable data collection method, when seeking information about people’s thinking from a large number or particular group of representatives (Walliman, 2017). Where questionnaires usually focus on collecting quantitative data, surveys are a suited method for collecting both qualitative and quantitative data through open-ended and closed questions (Walliman, 2017). However, surveys require expertise in conducting them correctly and the sample size of a survey should be selected carefully (Muratovski, 2016).

The sampling of the survey conducted as part of this thesis research process, can be described as non-probability sampling (Walliman, 2017) and more specifically purposive sampling (Palys, 2008), since the sample, design practitioners and designerly-minded civil servants from the government organisations, was intentionally selected. This sample was selected, because the intentional focus of the survey was to understand how design characteristics and the application of design are perceived in Finnish government organisations among people who were at least somewhat familiar with design. Within this study the designerly-minded civil servants refers to people, who don’t have a professional training of design, but who have experiences of design application or are design enthusiasts. These representatives were included to the sample, because most likely they are familiar with design and they have first-hand knowledge of design application in the government context. More about the access to this sample and roles in the survey creation process are introduced in chapter 6.

The identification of the sample occurred through the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network, consisting total 295 members. The “Julkis-muotoilijat” network
itself describes the participants of the network as professional designers and
designerly-minded civil servants from the Finnish government organisations
(Julkis-muotoilijat, 2019). An online link to the survey was created in
SurveyMonkey service, and the survey was posted to “Julkis-muotoilijat”
networks closed Facebook group’s page (Julkis-muotoilijat, 2019). The
respondents of the survey self-selected to answer to the posted survey link. The
final sample of participants is N=33.

The survey includes 18 questions, with a combination of 7 open-ended and 11
closed questions, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. The survey
also included two background questions about participant’s representative
organisation and level of expertise in professional design skillset and knowledge.
The whole survey is attached to the appendix at page 150. The focus of the survey
was to collect a wide understanding of the current application and perceived
characteristics of design-led approaches from the sample. Initially, the survey
origin as a part of Minuette Le’s dissertation research (the origins and research
process are introduced in more detail at chapter 6).

The purpose of the survey as a part of this thesis was to identify a phenomena,
emergence of design leadership, among the Finnish government organisations
perceived by the government employees experienced with design. The survey
was selected as a suited research method for this purpose, because it enabled an
access to a large number of sample. However, as a research method the survey did
not address in exploring the different aspects of design leadership in more detail.
Therefore, focus-groups and semi-structured interviews were applied to provide
the gaps of understanding.

5.2.2 Focus group engaging to discussions over design leaderships

As part of the Design & Government event in Helsinki Design Week 2018,
participants mainly from the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network joined in open dialogue
about public sector design in Finland. These discussions were organised as
thematic table discussions and led by a facilitator and documented for research
purposes. Therefore, within this thesis the research method is understood as
focus group discussions.
Focus group resembles an in-depth interview, but is done in discussion teams (Muratovski, 2016). The focus group usually engages people in an open dialogue, where the core aim is to understand how people perceive certain matters (Muratovski, 2016). Ireland (2003) argues that focus groups are a beneficial research method when engaging multiple people for qualitative research without aiming for a consensus among the participants.

The participants were invited to the event through the “Julkis-muotoilijat” Facebook group and through the event moderators’ existing networks to discuss about emerging topics in the design and government context. In total over 45 participants joined the event. At the event several discussion topics were introduced to the participants (more detailed description of the event at chapter 6) and the participants self-selected the topics they wished to discuss within groups. This thesis has a focus over two 20 minutes focus group discussions over design leadership. The Table 1 below provides a summary of the discussion participants, introducing their role and organisation. In total the two focus group discussions included N=11. Because of documentation limitations some participants were left

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant nro coding</th>
<th>Position in organisation</th>
<th>Representative Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Affairs and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
<td>Prime Minister’s office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Professional designer, consultant</td>
<td>Aalto University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Professional designer, researcher</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
<td>City of Helsinki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Professional designer</td>
<td>HAUS, Finnish Institute of public management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Professional designer</td>
<td>City of Vantaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Design teacher</td>
<td>Laurea University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
<td>Academy of Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Professional designer</td>
<td>City of Helsinki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Professional designer</td>
<td>Member of the State Treasury’s D9 team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the purposes of this study, focus group was selected as the second research method to conduct a wide understanding over the design leadership qualities perceived by the professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants working at the Finnish government organisations. At this stage of the research, the emergence of design leadership was recognised but the understanding of its qualities remained ambiguous. Focus group became the selected method at this stage of the study because it enabled an access to a quite large number of participants to reflect in-depth over the provided topics, and the benefit of the method was to provide an overview to the thoughts among the same sample than the survey.

However, the weakness of the selected method at this stage of the research was related to the timing and depth of the discussion that was reached during the focus group. Since there was a large number of participants in the focus groups with a variety of backgrounds, the anticipated time for the discussion was too limited for an in-depth dialogue. In addition, the design leadership as a concept seemed to be quite ambiguous concept for several participants. Due to these reasons, the semi-structured interviews were chosen to continue as the next stage of the study.

5.2.3 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews are a suited research method for collecting qualitative understanding about people's thoughts and opinions (Muratovski, 2016). The advantage of the interviews is that the researcher is present at the interview setting and in a position of observing the research situation and evaluate the quality of responses (Walliman, 2017). For the purpose of this study semi-structured interviews were applied to collect further understanding about the design leadership qualities and validate the already existing data. Semi-structured interviews are formed so that they contain both structured and unstructured parts (Walliman, 2017). They provide space for extended response, but are limited by the subject (Muratovski, 2016).
For the purposes of this study, semi-structured interviews were selected as the third research method because they provide qualitative in-depth understanding, that allows the research participants to describe and explain even complex matters in-depth. The semi-structured interviews enabled the participants to explain and describe the qualities of design leadership in detailed and analytical manner. However, suited for this research purposes, the semi-structured interviews had a structure around the design leadership qualities, for collecting understanding in response to the posed research questions.

The sampling of the semi-structured interviews addressed to the same sample, professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants experienced with the Finnish government organisations, than the previous research methods. Due to access and voluntary participation, two representatives were interviewed within this study. The Table 2 below introduces their role and organisation. The interviewees were invited to the study by arranging an hour long meeting with them.

Table 2. Summary of participant details over the interviews (Lerkkanen, 2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant nro coding</th>
<th>Position in organisation</th>
<th>Representative Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Professional designer</td>
<td>“Kela”, The Finnish social insurance institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Professional designer</td>
<td>“Kela”, The Finnish social insurance institution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3 Data Analysis

The analysis of this research process aimed to seek an understanding from the collected data to the posed research questions. This section of the methods introduces the data analysis over the quantitative and qualitative research methods. Since the research of this thesis utilizes mixed method research and has been conducted in three sections, the analysis processes took place at three stages of the process with two different analysis methods. For seeing how the analysis was conducted in practise, see chapter 6 over the research process.

5.3.1 Analysis over quantitative data

The analysis over quantitative data occurred in this thesis in the context of analysing the survey results considering the quantitative questions of it. As Muratovski (2016) states, analysis quantitative data is highly related to the question formation of the study. The quantitative questions of the survey included multiple choices, ranking and scale question types. In multiple choices the respondent selects one preferred option out of many, and in ranking they select one in relation to preference (Muratovski, 2016). The questions that were in the focus of this survey (questions 17 and 18, see page 33-35) represented both scale type of questions.

Once the data is collected in quantitative survey, the results are analysed by organising the data statistically and in relation to the survey’s background questions (Muratovski, 2016). This thesis followed Muratovski’s definition of quantitative data analysis. First, the highest percentage and the lowest percentage of the survey results for each question was identified. Second, the answers were grouped in relation to the background questions to examine relationships, identify patterns, similarities or controversies among the different answers.

5.3.2 Analysis over qualitative data

The first notion of analysing qualitative data is that usually the process of analysing happens somewhat simultaneously than the data collection itself (Muratovski, 2016). The researcher of a design process starts already during the research phase to form an understanding in response to the research questions. In the context of this thesis the analysis over qualitative data occurred in the two
parts; analysing the data from the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews.

Muratovski (2016) describes the qualitative data analysis process through three stages; describing the data, categorising the data and interpreting the data. Within this thesis process the first step of analysing the qualitative data was transcribing it from audio records and memos to a format that was clearly understandable text format. Next, an affinity diagram inspired technique was applied to organise and interpret the data.

Affinity diagram is a visual qualitative analysis method that groups the data in logical order for identifying patterns from the data (Hall, 2013). According to the affinity diagram technique and logics of analysing qualitative data, the collected data was separated into individual responses and quotations and organised in logical sub-groups. In identifying the sub-groups a theoretical framework about understanding the design leadership qualities through person, position and responsibilities was applied as a specific lense for the analysis. Next, the sub-groups where reconsidered and organised under logical thematic clusters, that provided insights for the study. Finally, the larger meanings were identified based on the thematic clusters for responding to the research questions.

There are several opinion over affinity diagram as research method. Weprin (2016) describes the benefits of it through affinity diagram being convenient, analytical and useful in building a consensus or understanding in big picture. Simultaneously, Weprin (2016) states that with large sets of data, affinity diagram might require facilitation and the rationales can get easier lost. In addition, affinity diagram is not the most thorough analysis method to understand qualitative data in fundamental stages. Affinity diagram was selected as a qualitative data analysis method to this thesis, because it is convenient yet rationale method for organising the data that wasn't enormous. In addition, a thorough time consuming analysis method is not reasonable to apply in relation to this thesis purposes and objectives.
5.4 Ethical Considerations

An academic research needs to be conducted with a respect to the ethical considerations of the research. Walliman (2017) encapsulates the ethical concerns in two aspects; honesty and credibility of the researcher and treatment of research participants.

Concerning this research, the ethical considerateness relates to three main aspects. 1) The research participants’ willingness to join the research and that they are properly treated and informed about the research and data usage, 2) anonymousness of the data and 3) role of the researcher. First, all research participants have joined this study voluntarily and have been informed about the research. Second, where some of the research participants hold novel positions in government organisations, the anonymity of the participants needs to be ensured, so that the research doesn't cause harm to the research participants.

Third, inevitably, design research holds by nature a paradox of the role of the researcher. As Johnson (2003) argues, design research isn’t solely empirical, since usually the design researcher needs to understand situations where users are rarely able to express their needs. In the context of this thesis, the ambiguousness of the design leadership concept increased the participants’ challenges to communicate the characteristics of the design leadership. The author of this thesis is a design practitioner, experienced in collaborating with government organisations. These facts needs to be acknowledged as part of the study, but simultaneously the role and interpretations of the researcher needs to be diminished as much as possible.
Research process
This chapter introduces the overall research process of this study and the origin and context of the selected research settings. This chapter includes three sections, which each introduce a research process of the three empirical research stages. A Figure 7 provides an overview of the research process as a part of this thesis.

The first section introduces a creation process of an online survey, engaging the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network to reflect over the current status of design in the Finnish public sector context. The survey findings provided a basic setting for the research and functioned as a motivation for this study.

The second section of this chapter introduces a focus group discussion conducted at the Design & Government event held as part of Helsinki Design Week 2018. The event collected together “Julkis-muotoilijat” network for reflecting over selected topics. Two focus groups at the event focused over discussing the role and emergence of design leadership at the context of government organisations. Finally, the third section of this chapter introduces semi-structured interviews engaging two professional designers working at the Finnish government organisations, to validate the findings over the collected data and add viewpoints to gaps of understanding.
6.1 Survey of the members of the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network

First, it is essential to regard that the survey has been conducted as a joint effort between multiple stakeholders. The survey initiated from a research that doctoral candidate Minuette Le from the Potsdam University and was conducted during the fall 2018. The survey is a part of Minuette Le’s wider research relating to her dissertation to study design lead-approaches in the Finnish public sector. Helén Marton and the author of this thesis, both Aalto University’s masters students, were employed to a position of research assistants by professor Ramia Mazé to conduct an analysis over the survey findings as their main responsibility. In addition, two leading members of the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network were invited to the survey creation process, who provided a context understanding and access to the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network.

The survey creation was led by Le, and the above mentioned parties were involved to the survey creation process by providing feedback from the survey content and structure. The survey itself focused over understanding the attitudes and current application of design-led approaches at the Finnish public sector organisations. As introduced previously, the sampling of the study focused over the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network which constitutes professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants working at the Finnish public administration. Access to this sample was gained through the “Julkis-muotoilijat” closed Facebook group where the leading member of the network and stakeholder of this research process posted a link.

6.1.1 Survey content

Altogether the survey included 18 questions, including both open-ended and closed questions. The first two survey questions collected background information from the participants organisation and experience within design-led approaches, by providing a set of closed alternatives for the respondents to select from. The rest of the survey questions focused over asking general perceptions of design-led approaches or perceptions of use of design-led approaches in the respondent’s organisations. At the core interest of this thesis were the questions number 17 and 18 (presented below), which provided the most interesting findings in terms of the emergence of design leadership.
Question 17: Please indicate your level of agreement on the challenges with design-led approaches in your organization.

Question 18: Please indicate the level of agreement on the following statements on what is needed to improve the effectiveness of design-led approaches

Based on this thesis objectives, the other 16 questions are not in the focus of this study. To see a full survey, see appendix at the page 150.

6.1.2 Survey analysis

Eventually, after collecting the survey responses, the survey data was analysed in collaboration with Aalto University’s Master’s student Helén Marton. The workload of the data analysis was shared evenly within the analysis process between the two members. A closer introduction to the analysis methods is at page 70.

Since the survey questions separated in open-ended and closed questions, the analysis was conducted differently depending on the type of each question. The open-ended questions were analysed by applying affinity diagram inspired method (Image 1), to form thematic clusters for responses of each question. The responses were first examined individually and organised into thematic groups. Second, larger connection were identified among the groups and thematic headlines were given to the larger groups. Finally, the grouping was documented to excel sheets and re-visited several times. In addition, the responses were cross-evaluated with the examined background information to explore larger similarities or controversies between the respondents.

The closed questions on the other hand, were evaluated based on the percental numbers of selected responses, especially identifying the largest and smallest number of selected responses. This was done for identifying similarities and controversies between the different responses and comparing the responses to the respondents background variables. Finally, these collected insights were documented to a summary of findings.
6.1.3 Survey findings, limitations and continuation

The key finding of the survey is that design leadership is required in the Finnish government organisations. This finding formed a motivation for this thesis to understand the qualities of design leadership more in-depth. Despite the raised notion for the emergence of design leadership, the survey included limitations in order of answering to the posed research questions. Most of all, since the survey was conducted as a joint effort, it examined multiple matters other than only focusing over the leadership aspect. Therefore, only few of the survey questions were able to indicate the emergence of leadership, but not connect it in-depth with the reasonings for it or respondents’ understandings of it.

Furthermore, the survey results didn’t provide an in-depth understanding over the design leadership qualities, required among the participants for supporting the effectiveness of design application. This setting provided a motivation to continue the research with exploring the understanding design leadership qualities for answering to the posed research questions. The following stage of the research process was to look into the design leadership theory about how design leadership had been previously defined. Also a further understanding over the design leadership qualities were collected to form a basis for the further research.
6.2 Focus group at the Design & Government event

Similarly than the survey, the table discussions, referred in this thesis as focus group, was organised as a joint effort between the same parties that were involved to the survey creation process. The focus group discussion was held as a part of Design & Government event, moderated by the same representatives than introduced at the survey creation context, as a part of Helsinki Design Week in 2018 (Image 2). At the event over 45 participants from the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network were invited to the Helsinki City Hall, to discuss over the role of design at the public sector in Finland. More about the event can be read at the designforum.fi (2018).

The Design & Government event constituted five discussion tables with specific topics, moderated by the event organisers. The discussion moderators had prepared a certain frameworks and questions for each table, where the participants shared openly their experiences, thoughts and ideas relating to the provided framings. The table topics in total were named as mindsets, skills, collaboration and leadership, and the fifth table was left intentionally as an open topic, ending up focusing over digitalization.

This thesis focuses over the leadership table discussion, moderated by a professional designer with an expertise from the government organisations and Aalto Master’s student Anni Leppänen. The discussion was documented by Aalto university Graduate Emma Berg. The questions discussed within the participants were also designed by the two representatives. The leadership table discussion focused over reflecting what is needed from design leadership currently at the Finnish public sector organisations and through what kind of steps can it be further developed. In total, the leadership table discussion was run twice in 20 minutes periods, with 11 participants. In addition, some of the coffee brake discussions among the participants and moderators that continued from the same topic, were documented as a part of this research data.

6.2.1 Focus group discussion content

The focus group over the leadership was separated into two rounds with different set of participants. Firstly, at the both rounds the participants introduce
themselves and the representative organisations. The first 20 minutes round of discussion focused over set of four topics where the participants could freely reflect their thoughts and ideas within an open dialog. The relevant questions for this study were:

• Do we need support systems for the design integration? What is the role of a leader integrating design into organizations.

• Who should the design leadership lead or provide support for?

The full list of focus group discussion question are attached in appendix (page 150).

The second round of the table discussion was organised by introducing different sub-topics in relation to design leadership to the participants and the participants voted for the topics they wished to focus on more in detail. Eventually, two topics were further discussed. These topics were designer roles in organisations and separation between the design leader and design manager.
The role of designer in organisation was discussed in relation to the Junginger's framework (2009). The table discussion participants were asked to reflect over the framework how design is currently organised at the organisations and how it ideally should be, and how design leadership should be organised in order of supporting design, and functioning at the organisation's context in the most effective ways.

The second topic that was discussed among the participants at the second round was the separation between design leader and design manager. This discussion focused over defining the position and responsibilities of design leadership. However, this topic wasn't fully explored at the discussion due to time limitations.

6.2.2 Focus group discussion analysis

The analysis over the table discussion data was conducted with utilising an affinity diagram inspired technique. The collected data from the table discussions was in a form of directly transcribed text over the discussion documented by the table moderators. The analysis process was done individually, yet since the author of this thesis wasn't present at the actual table discussions, some clarifications to the collected data was discussed with the table moderators.

The collected design leadership theory provided theoretical lenses of understanding the design leadership qualities through person, position and responsibilities. At first, the collected data was examined carefully and individual quotations were considered separately and organised under preliminary topics. Second, the topics were reconsidered, headlined to illustrate the topic of finding and organised into larger thematic clusters, that illustrated different findings of the research. Third, the analysis process and the findings were documented into an excel sheet for further consideration. Finally, the findings of the analysis were compared to the collection of design leadership theory in order of identifying similarities, controversies and the missing gaps of understanding to construct the research findings.

6.2.3 Focus group findings, limitations and continuation

The findings that were discovered from the table discussions mostly considered the role of design leadership in relation to the participants existing organisations
and understanding what design leadership meant for the research participants. A lot of the discussion focus was in the challenges that the individuals face in there, and focused over how design leadership might help in overcoming these challenges. This understanding provided valuable insight for forming an understanding over the design leadership responsibilities.

Image 3. The documented and transcribed data from the interviews was analysed by using affinity diagram inspired technique (Lerkkanen, 2019)
Some of the discussion focused over the position of design leadership in relation to an organisation, yet the findings varied from each other widely. Since the aim of focus group discussion isn’t to find a consensus among the research participants (Ireland, 2003), the findings over the design leadership position ended-up being even opposite to one another. This supported an insight that some of the design leadership qualities are more organisation specific than universal, especially when relating to the position of a design leader. The findings of the focus group discussion is documented at the next chapter 7 in the context of findings, and the quotations from the table discussions are marked in orange.

However, the findings of the focus group discussion held some limitations. First, due to short time for a large number of participants, the table discussions didn’t provide space for an in-depth discussions about the posed questions. Therefore, most of the collected data ended up being quite general notions in response to the research questions of this thesis. For example, design leader as a person, was limitedly covered.

Additionally, the concept of design leadership seemed to be quite loose and ambiguous for the research participants. Lot of the table discussion time was therefore used in explaining organisation specific circumstances, rather than directly discussing about design leadership itself. Finally, since the table discussion topics were decided by the table moderators and the author of this thesis wasn’t present at the discussion, the findings were heavily dependent over the discussion documentation. Due to these reasons, the study was decided to continue with semi-structured interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to cover the gaps of missing information from the existing data and validate the existing findings further.

### 6.3 Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interviews were the third research method applied during this thesis’ research process, with an aim to deepen and validating the understanding of design leadership qualities. The semi-structured interviews were organised at March 2019 with an hour long-interview with two participants, who were both professional designers with an extended history of working in-house within the Finnish government organisations. The participants were selected to represent the same group of participants than the survey and
table discussion participants, in order of answering to the research questions coherently.

6.3.1 Semi-structured interview content

The interview structure was created as an individual effort, for being a continuation to the table discussion topics. The interview was organised in a format of a dialogue, which was structured around a pattern of questions, but provided space for the interviewees to reflect over the topic through their own perspective. Altogether the interview structure included four thematic areas of discussion; introduction, reflection over previous experiences, reflection over current experiences and understandings of design leadership qualities. The semi-structured interviews were documented by recording the interview and later transcribing the content word to word into a text format.

The aim of the first section of the interview was to introduce the interview topic for the participants. The participants in turn introduced themselves and their role and position in their current representative organisation to provide a background information for the research. Second, the experiences in relation to design application and design leadership in the participants’ previous organisation was discussed. The aim of this section of the research was to understand previous experiences the participants’ had in relation to design leadership and warm-up the discussion. Third, the experiences of design application and design leadership in the participants’ current organisations was discussed. This aspect provided a reflective space for the participants to compare their experiences and provided understanding of the design leadership in multiple organisations. Finally, the three aspects of design leadership qualities; person, position and responsibilities, were discussed with the participants. First a space was provided for the participants themselves to reflect over the three aspects, and then findings from the table discussions were introduced. The participants were asked to analyse the findings from their own perspective with the aspect that they agreed and disagreed to validate further the already discovered findings. To see the interview structure in more detail, it is attached to the appendix at page 150.

6.3.2 Semi-structured interviews analysis

The analysis over the semi-structured interviews was conducted similarly than
the analysis for the table discussions. The documented and transcribed data from the interviews was analysed by using affinity diagram inspired technique (image 3), to categorise the findings under topics from the theoretic lense of design leadership qualities. Next these topics were re-evaluated and sorted under thematic clusters that provided bigger headings for the groups of findings. At this point, the thematic clusters started to take form under the framing of design leadership qualities, where three main headings formed into person, position and responsibilities.

Finally, the findings over the interviews were compared to the findings from the table discussions. By then, the categories of findings were re-evaluated, complemented or narrowed-down, depending over the findings. These findings were then documented and described (introduced at the following chapter 7). Finally, the findings were again compared to the collection of design leadership theory in order of identifying similarities, controversies and the missing gaps of understanding to construct new understanding and for answering to the research questions.

6.3.3 Semi-structured interviews findings, limitations and continuation

The findings over the semi-structured interviews provided a more detailed understanding and reasoning over the design leadership qualities, as well as validation over the existing findings. What turned out as quite surprising, the interviewees mostly agreed with the already existing findings, discovered from the table discussions. However, they gave more emphasis to, for an example certain leadership responsibilities, than to others in new ways that validated the existing findings further.

The interviews provided also valuable information about the design leadership position and design leader as a person, the two areas that weren't fully covered at the table discussions. Additionally, two aspects were especially emphasised during the interviews; first, the design leadership's emphasis shouldn't be at the promotion of design only, but moreover leading a change, and provide leadership support both to designers and civil servants, and second, the organisation specific requirements are in such a variety that it is difficult to form a universal model of design leadership that would be suited to all organisations’ purposes.
The findings of the interviews are represented in more detail at the following chapter 7 where the quotations from the interviews are marked in blue.

It is important to note that the access to the research participants during the interviews was somewhat limited. Since the number of professional designers or designerly-minded civil servants working in the government context is quite small number of representatives in Finland, the access to the interview participants was limited in scale in the context of this study. Continuing research with a larger number of representatives should be applied for a further validating the findings of this thesis in the future.
This chapter represents the findings of analysed data from the focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews, in order of examining the perceived qualities of the design leadership in the Finnish government context. To see the research question of this study in more detail, see chapter 4.

The collected qualitative data from these two research methods was analysed in two parts by using affinity diagram analysis method (Hall, 2013). First, the data collected from the focus group discussion was sorted into individual responses and organised in topic groups. Next, the topic groups were organised into bigger thematic groups that provided insights in response to the research questions. Second, the data collected from the semi-
structured interviews were analysed in similar steps, and then compared to the findings of focus group discussion to identify patterns or novel insights.

The three perspectives of understanding the design leadership qualities, person, position and responsibilities, functioned as lenses directing the analysis. In this chapter the findings are organised under these three headlines, introduced in Figure 8. Some quotations are selected from the research data to illustrate the findings. The quotations from the focus group discussion are marked in orange and the quotations from the semi-structured interviews are marked in blue.
Figure 9. The research findings in relation to person (Lerkkanen, 2019)
7.1 Qualities of design leadership as a person

In total, the findings indicate four categories of qualities that are related to design leadership as a person. These categories are design leader as a charismatic design spokesperson, courageous and visionary, credible among the organisation and expertise background see Figure 9.

7.1.1 A charismatic design spokesperson

The first aspect of the design leadership qualities through a person focuses over considering design leader as a charismatic design spokesperson. The research participants described that even though there might be different personalities among the design leaders, a characteristic of being a charismatic design spokesperson is needed for two reasons. First, the value of design needs to be actively and effectively communicated throughout the government. Second, motivating people, both professional designers and non-designers, about the introduction of new ways of working and shared objectives. Below the two aspects of design leader as a charismatic design spokesperson are introduced in more detail.

7.1.1.1 Ability to communicate design values for the organisation

As the first component of the design leader as a charismatic design spokesperson, the design leaders ability to communicate the value of design to the organisation in the most effective ways evolved. The research participants emphasised that in order of communicating the design value inside the organisation, the design leader needs to have two capabilities. First, a contextual understanding of the of the organisation, its objectives and functions to identify the best suited opportunities for design. Second, the design leader needs social and communication skills to identify the best suited strategies to ensure different stakeholders about the design effectiveness. One of the interviewees described a previous experience:

“There were doubts towards design, so it was good to have a leader who could talk through in any situations, and eventually we ended up with millions of requests.” – professional designer
Since the application of design is relatively new in the context of Finnish government organisations (especially if considering the more recent disciplines of design, such as service or strategic design), the current introduction and implementation of design requires efforts to reason its purpose for the organisations.

7.1.1.2 Ability to motivate people

As the second component of the design leader as a charismatic design spokesperson, the person’s ability to motivate people in the process of change and adaptation of new tools, processes and ways of working raised from the research findings. As one of the interviewees defined:

“[Design leader] needs to be a salesperson, who can motivate and get people excited” – professional designer

The ability to motivate people was described to concern both, professional designers, and non-designers to get them excited about the opportunities design application may provide for them.

7.1.2 Courageous and visionary

The second aspect of the design leadership qualities through a person involves courageous and visionary qualities of a design leader. Foremost, it raised from the research findings that certain courage is an essential quality of a design leader, for being able to challenge the existing conventions of the government, to trigger change from the status-quo to new ways of working and to look for alternate solutions besides the existing ones. One interviewee reflected her experiences over a collaboration with a previous leader:

“The certain audacity was a good thing, which is not typical in the government.” – professional designer

“She had nerves and courage to create completely new...question the existing ideas and suggest alternate solutions” – professional designer

In addition, the research participants described that the role of design leader is to stand as the front-face of design. Their responsibility is to encounter doubts and questioning towards design in the government organisations and continuously argue for the design’s value as a part of the organisational functions.
“There was doubts towards the design, so it was good to have a leader who could talk through what situation ever.” - professional designer

“[Design leader] needs to be brave, not to be afraid of opposite opinions and needs to be ready to go through same things again and again, and repeat the message in front of different crowds” - professional designer

The courage was emphasised in the research findings also in a context of a person taking the leadership position and introducing design at the high-level strategic discussions. The research participants also emphasised that qualities of being experimentative and not afraid of mistakes were essential for a design leader, in order of changing the existing practises. However, a notion raised from the findings, that the risk taking role and support for experimentative culture became more challenging in high-level leadership positions, since the position naturally included higher responsibility.

“Good leadership also requires that you have the nerves to face the challenges, go to the forums where decisions are made... it happens where the difficult decisions are made concerning the personnel and finances....they are also the discussions where the risks are the biggest and there is a huge potential of failure” - professional designer

“[Design leader] is not afraid of mistakes, goes forward, especially in the context of public governance, which is built on top of certain carefulness for not making mistakes” - professional designer

7.1.3 Credible among the organisation

The third aspect of the design leadership qualities through a person concerns the credibility of a design leader among the organisation. The participants depicted that the design leader needs to maintain credibility within the government organisations, to have an impact and influence to the strategic decision-making and to support the integration of design to the organisational functions. In addition, maintaining the credibility was emphasised in order of convincing internal stakeholders, for the most part non-designers.

According to the participants, if the persona or the appearance of a design leader is too contradictory with the government norms, it may disrupt larger purposes of supporting design:
“Design leader can’t be too designerly — needs to have civil servant credibility, e.g. how to dress non designerly.” - civil servant

Additionally, it was emphasised that the design leader needs to somewhat follow the conditions of an organisation. For example, it was emphasised that the design leader needs to understand the current processes, functions, budgets and understand the organisation’s context for maintaining it’s credibility:

“It breaks down the credibility of design if you’re not following the terms of the organisation” - civil servant

### 7.1.4 Expertise background

The fourth aspect of the design leadership qualities through a person concerns the expertise background of a design leader that is suited for the position. This category of findings separates into two aspects; first design leader’s expertise in the design field, and second, design leader’s expertise in the government substance area.

#### 7.1.4.1 Expertise in design

The first aspect of the design leader’s expertise background concerns the design leader’s expertise background from the design field. The research findings indicate that in order of leading design, the design leader needs to have quite in-depth understanding of design process and methods, in order of being able to lead the design. As an example, several research participants described that the lack of understanding design had caused challenges in the current leadership functions:

“The leadership doesn’t currently understand that it takes time to do things properly. Time is needed for creativity.” – participant

“The managers with different professional backgrounds don’t understand a lot about design process and how to lead design” – participant

Also, the challenge of identifying the right opportunities for design, without an expertise background from the design field raised from the research findings.
"The person at the strategic position doesn’t need to be a professional designer, but needs to have an understanding for what design can be applied and ability to identify the moments where design could be applied" – participant

The design leadership capability of looking the organisation from a distance was stated as one beneficial aspects of design leadership. As one research participant questioned the stability of current governmental structures:

"The industries may change – does a designer need to know all about the substances?" – participant

Therefore, some of the research participants questioned if the design leader needs to have an in-depth substance expertise in the government, but moreover the expertise from the design field is the valuable add to the discussions.

7.1.4.2 Expertise in the government substance

The second aspect of the design leader’s expertise background concerns the design leader’s expertise background from the substance areas of the public governance. First of all, the research findings indicate that in order of maintaining credibility and enhancing trust towards design leadership, the design leader needs to have a position and substance expertise that is valued inside the organisation.

"To some extent it might be good that [design leadership] is external, but you would also need those who are trusted and belong to the inner circle. They don’t need to be those who actually work hands-on, but moreover take care of the strategic matters.” – participant

The research participants also reported that design as such doesn’t still have the credibility among the government organisations that would be valued among the top-executives:

"If I’m thinking of board of executives and the discussions that they have there, the design terminology has quite little credibility in there” – professional designer

Some of the research participants emphasised that the design leader needs
“just a right amount” of substance expertise in order of working purposefully and maintaining credibility among the organisation. Additionally, it was noted that the right amount of context understanding included understanding the organisational practises, such as processes, budgets and schedules.

“Needs to understand the substance enough.” - participant

“Must know the practise, e.g. silos, budgets and schedules” - participant

Finally, the research findings indicate that both of the expert backgrounds, from the design field and from the government substance are important for the design leader. The right combination of these two leaves for further considerations.
Figure 10. The research findings in relation to position (Lerkkanen, 2019)
7.2 Qualities of design leadership as a position

The findings indicate three categories of qualities that are related to design leadership position within an organisation. These categories are extension of design leadership from organisation specific to cross-cutting, location of design leadership in relation to an organisation and the level of integration of design leadership within an organisation (see Figure 10). To illustrate the findings in relation to design leadership position, graphics are added to each category.

7.2.1 Extension of design leadership from organisation specific to cross-cutting

The first aspect over the position of design leadership focuses on considering if design leadership should be specific for each government organisation, or cross-sectoral touching several government offices (Figure 11).
Firstly, an important notion emerged among the research participants, that the Finnish government includes several types of organisations in variety of scale and focus to different areas of expertise. Therefore, each organisation has its own organisation specific requirements and qualities concerning the design leadership position. One of the interviewees compared design leadership being relational to the “design maturity” of an organisation:

“It really depends what is meant by the government, is it a ministry or some other organisation...the maturity of an organisation influences heavily to the model of the design leadership.” – professional designer

Despite the notion of Finnish government agencies including a diversity in organisations, the research participants argued besides both, design leadership being organisation specific and cross-sectoral. Some of the research participants emphasised that by their experiences design leadership has a bigger opportunity to have an influence, when leading only one organisation. This was reasoned by claiming that design leaders can create more continuous and systematic processes and identify better opportunities for design when understanding the organisation specific context.

“In [our previous organisation] the work that we did was quite topical with various ministries and offices, whereas in our current position, there is a larger opportunity for design leadership, since it only concerns one organisation” – professional designer

“There is more opportunities in one organisation to recognise the places where design is needed to be promoted” – professional designer

In contrast, some of the research participants claimed that design leadership has a greater opportunity to focus on design specific matters and identify cross-sectoral problems, when it is leading multiple organisations. As an example, a space to move between the organisational or cross-organisational units was stated to support design leadership abilities to identify deep rooted issues.

“How should they be able to make decisions based in design and not silos?” – participant
7.2.2 Location of design leadership in relation to an organisation

The second aspect of the design leadership position focuses over considering the location of design leadership in relation to an organisation. This category of findings focuses over two aspects. First, a location of design leadership in relation to organisational levels, considering a framework by Best (2006) (see page 47), and second, the relation of design leadership to design management and design teams.

7.2.2.1 Location of design leadership in relation to the organisational levels

The first aspect considers the location of design leadership in relation to the organisational levels. This category of findings bases to a framework by Best (2006) about strategic, tactical and operational organisational levels (adapted in Figure 12).

According to the research findings, the design leadership was most often positioned to the strategic level of an organisation. The research participants

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**Figure 12. Location of design leadership in relation to the organisational levels (adapted from Best, 2006)**
described that design leadership was in charge of providing strategic vision. As one interviewee described the positioning followingly:

“You have to be in the table of discussions where design has the biggest possible potential to have an impact” – professional designer

Additionally, the visionary design leadership was reported to be lacking from the government agencies even though the space for it was recognised:

“Currently the visionary design leadership is missing completely from the government.” – professional designer

In relation to the strategic positioning, the research participants emphasised that the design leadership needs to be positioned in the existing government legacy of hierarchy. In order to have a mandate to provide strategic vision and space for design inside a government, the research participants emphasised that design leadership needs to have an authority and high positioning.

“As long as the public governance is hierarchic, it is important to maintain the leadership at the high level of the organisation, they won’t listen someone from the seventh floor. In this world the leadership just can’t be located in there, even though the expertise would be located in there.” – professional designer

Furthermore, some research participants defined that the design leadership needs to have supportive roles or support instruments, such as strategy documents, to sustain the positioning of design.

“A design leader is not enough, but it helps if there is a person next to the Prime minister [who sustains design].” – participant

On the other hand the research participants noted that design leadership shouldn’t remain too rigidly at the high, authoritarian positions. Moreover, it was emphasised that the positioning of design leadership should enable flexibility between the organisational levels and units to understand holistically what actually happens inside an organisation, and for leading networks. However, it was noted that the network leadership still included challenges and areas of uncertainty in large government organisations.
“The design leader’s role should be moreover flexible, but I’m not sure if it should operate at the project level... in our current organisation there are so many units that it starts to be impossible to understand all the things that are currently happening there” – professional designer

Additionally, the research participants emphasised that in order of design leadership providing the space for design and communicating the design value, it needed to have a connection to the concrete design work.

“It is easy to talk about the design in front of a powerpoint, but it is important to make the work visible... and the best way to illustrate the value of the work is to ask people to join in” – professional designer

“Easily design leadership only remains as a speculative discussion of the design potential” – professional designer

7.2.2.2 Relation to design management and design teams

The second component of the design leadership position in relation to an organisation considers the connection of design leadership to the design management and design teams. Most observably the research participants agreed that design leadership is highly dependent on both, design management and design teams.

However, the participants stated that currently design was present only at one level of an organisation, usually disconnected from the other functions. For an example, one research participant claimed that previous initiatives of introducing design to the organisational leaders had failed due to misalignment and lack of connection to the management and employees:

“Design needs to be present of all levels of the organisation, at the leadership, middle management and among employees.” – participant

“It is typical that, for example, experimentations are introduced for the high executives, but the middle management can be from totally different world and might even punish employees from experimenting.” – participant
In addition, some of the research participants stated that establishing a design team is the first step in the introduction of design to the government organisations. Simultaneously, it was noted that the design teams faced several challenges without leadership as their support.

“In many places just the resources are needed to even have a design team, because there is so much to do in the organisations... yet rarely the design team can survive there alone without the leadership” - professional designer

![Figure 13. The level of integration of design leadership within an organisation (adapted from Junginger, 2009)](image)

### 7.2.3 The level of integration of design leadership within an organisation

The third aspect of the design leadership position focuses over the model of integration between the design leadership and an organisation. This category considers the findings over Junginger's (2009) framework, where design is considered either separated, peripheral, central or integrated to an organisation (adapted in Figure 13).

The first notion raised from the research findings was that there wasn’t a shared agreement over the most suited model of design leadership integration for the government purposes. As stated before, because of the variety of organisations inside the Finnish government, there wasn’t a cohesive agreeing over the best suited model for all organisations.
“There isn’t a one answer to this question, because the government holds inside such a variety of organisations, so it is heavily dependent on the organisation.” — professional designer

However, all of the Junginger’s models of design integration were discussed and analysed over advantages and disadvantages among the participants. Interestingly, none of the research participants reported of having experienced a design leadership model that would fit to the Junginger’s definition of design being integral of all parts of the organisation. Moreover, the participants brought up a wish to change design into a mind-set or movement, where design leadership could play a supportive role.

The central role of design leadership was stated among the participants most often to be well fitted for the current structure of the government organisations. The participants emphasised that design leadership having a central role inside the organisation enables a holistic perspective to the organisation specific needs and enables to identify independently the best situations for the design application.

“Our position has changed that currently we are in the middle of everyone, able to recognise ourselves the places and situations where our work and collaboration is needed, instead of being a design unit where our expertise is sold all around” — professional designer

Some research participants described the advantages of working as a design unit, accessible for several organisations. An external perspective to the organisational matters was stated as the core benefit of separated design leadership.

“To some extent it might be good that [design leadership] is external, but you would also need those who are trusted and belong to the inner circle.” — participant

Also being separated from a single organisation was claimed to provide freedom to move between the different organisations. In addition, this was stated to provide neutrality to the design work, which was seen as beneficial quality for design leadership also to maintain.

“It had some advantages that we had a certain neutrality, we didn’t try to sell anything or didn’t hold a political agenda. It made us easier to be received in different organisations.” — professional designer
In comparison, the pitfall of separated design leadership model was the disability to identify the best situations for the design application. The design application was stated to become dependent over the “design buyers”, who were described not to be often design experts.

“The one who “buys” design in government, needs to have an understanding of what are you actually purchasing, and then a collaboration with an external consultant can work” – professional designer

Additionally, one professional designer at a central position inside her organisation saw challenges in separated design leadership:

“[In my own organisation] it feels pretty hard that one could provide solutions outside of the organisation, since we have so many people and own culture and processes that need to be understood.” – professional designer
Figure 14. The research findings in relation to responsibilities (Lerkkanen, 2019)
7.3 Qualities of the design leadership responsibilities

The findings in relation to qualities of design leadership responsibilities were discovered under six categories. These categories were defined as lead through shared vision, bringing coordinated support to design integration, support a development of design mindsets across the organisation, lead a change, support cross-sectoral collaboration and network leadership, and measure and communicate design impact and value (see Figure 14).

7.3.1 Lead through shared vision

The first design leadership responsibility, leading through shared vision, separates into two aspects. First, it was emphasised that the design leadership’s responsibility is to help the organisation in generating a vision to follow. Second, it raised from the research that the professional designers are longing for strengthening the internal design culture and identity.

7.3.1.1 Generate a vision for the organisation to follow

The research findings indicate that currently there is a lack of visionary design leadership in the government organisations. As the responsibility of design leader was seen to generate or help the organisation to generate a vision, and bring that vision to the strategic discussions of an organisation. The participants also emphasised that the vision should include considerations of the organisation’s relation to its customers, such as customer experience development.

"Currently the visionary design leadership is missing completely from the government." – professional designer

"One of our current roles is to bring discussion and vision to the top executives of the organisation, how customer experience should be developed and why is it important to be addressed… and bring the understanding how it should be developed and measured, and how does the organisation prioritize and lead its actions” – professional designer
7.3.1.2 Strengthen internal design culture and identity

The research participants emphasised that in addition to providing an organisational vision, design leadership needs to strengthen the internal design identity among professional designers. The participants described that there isn’t a consensus even among the design professionals over the role of design in government organisations.

“If you have a large organisation, there is a variety of design professionals who might have different understandings of the design work, so in a sense it is also a huge task to keep the lines aligned for design work” – professional designer

“It helps our efforts if it doesn’t take time to communicate and encapsulate who we are and who we should be, so the person in design leadership position is as best a person who can strengthen the internal design culture and identity.” – professional designer

The research findings indicate that the government organisations include currently a variety of professional designers with different backgrounds and therefore there isn’t a single design identity.

“For example, in service design there are many people who come with a UX background, who might have the job title as service designers... there is a huge variety of design backgrounds that someone working closer to service production might not understand that what is meant by the more strategic design, even though you would speak the same design language.” – professional designer

7.3.2 Bring coordinated support to design integration

As the second design leadership responsibility, bringing strategic, systematic and coordinated efforts for advancing the integration of design, raised from the research findings. Despite the potential of design has been started to recognize in the Finnish government organisations, the research findings indicate that the majority of the conducted design projects have still been somewhat coincidental, non-strategic and periodic. As one of the table discussion participants described:

“There are still very few designers and no coordinated efforts to train and spread design mindsets and methods to government.” – participant
Therefore, coordinated efforts that support the design integration to the organisation were seen as the essential design leadership responsibilities. In this study the coordinated support actions are organised in three sub-categories; ensuring resources to design, changing short termism to continuity and identifying opportunities for design.

7.3.2.1 Ensure resources to design

The first aspect of bringing coordinated support to the integration of design involves design leadership’s responsibility to ensure and advocate for needed resources such as time, budget, space and capabilities, required for design. During the study, a research participant described the challenges in answering to the organisation’s needs when lacking time or professional design capacity:

"Core challenge [internal design team] had in the position of leading design, were the lack of resources and allocated time to it, since it was so busy with the hands-on project work." – participant

7.3.2.2 Change short termism to continuity

The second aspect of bringing coordinated support to the integration of design is to change of short termism to continuous actions, where the design application isn’t only periodical but moreover permanent. The research participants stated that currently a lot of design efforts goes into reasoning for the design capacity that still ends up being short in terms. As an example, a research participant described her experiences followingly:

"Design and professional designers need to be an integrated part of the organisation. Now it is constructed so that their employments end.” – participant

Another interviewee described an ongoing buy-in process of the design projects:

"There should be repetition in projects. What we did was really a drop in the ocean and many times the first project that we did was a roll-in, where you would prove your skills and value, before it opened the doors in the organisation that there is a lot of stuff to do, and then the projects started to become more strategic and with larger responsibilities” – professional designer
7.3.2.3 Identify opportunities for design

The third aspect of bringing coordinated support to the integration of design involves the identification of opportunities for design in the governmental discourse. The research participants emphasised that an important aspect for supporting the design integration was to identify the best opportunities for design to create and demonstrate the value for the organisation. As some of the participants described, the identification of opportunities for design was defined as an active sales work, to assure the organisational units of the design utility:

“She was like a sales machine — which was needed in our small unit, so that we wouldn’t just stand still.” – professional designer

However, this approach was noted as novel for the government agencies.
“...That was a new way of working in the public sector, to go and open the doors, challenge people and offer services.” – professional designer

Simultaneously, the active sales work to identify the best opportunities for design was seen necessary for the design integration among the participants:

“When the way of working was such a new thing, it could have also ended to a situation where nobody wanted to work with us, because the collaboration would have been scary or felt as too distant” – professional designer

7.3.3 Support a development of design mindsets across the organisations

As the third design leadership responsibility, the research findings indicate a need for supporting a development of design mindsets across the organisations. Throughout the research, the participants described experiences of design being applied as an “ad-on activity” in the government organisations. According to the participants the core responsibility of a design leadership is to turn design into a movement or to a mindset across the government organisations. The research participants described a current challenge of pushing design into its own unit, instead of introducing it throughout the organisation as an approach.

“Design can’t remain as its own bubble inside an organisation.” – participant
However, several research participants described the process of developing design mindsets as challenging, and they claimed a lack of tools or strategies to support it.

“How to develop design mind-sets in people and make it into a movement?” - participant

7.3.4 Lead a change

As the fourth design leadership responsibility, a support for a larger change in the organisational working culture evolved from the research findings. As one professional designer described the emergence of change and design’s role in it:

“The organisation needs strategic designers, active dialogue and change in the working culture, and I see that service design has a lot to offer for it” - professional designer

This area of responsibility is separated into three sub-sections; act as a change catalyst, challenge status-quo and engage to the change process.

7.3.4.1 Act as a change catalyst

As the first element of changing the working culture, design leadership acting as a change catalyst raised from the findings. This responsibility includes two parallel perspectives. First, design leadership should support a larger change in the organisations by enabling professional designers’ to act as change-makers. Second, design leadership should act itself as a change catalysts by leading the change through an example.

“Designers should act as change agents and facilitators.” - participant

7.3.4.2 Challenge the status-quo

As the second element of changing the working culture, design leadership challenging the status-quo emerged from the research findings. According to the research participants, an essential quality in a design leader is have a courage to question the existing ways of working.
"It is a good quality in a high-level leader that they can question the existing conventions of what problems are we solving here and what are the things that direct our work" – professional designer

Challenging the status quo was stated essentially important in the context of the government organisations, where the decisions are more used to make from the organisations internal perspective, rather than opening it up to new solutions. According to the participants by actively challenging the status-quo a larger change process can be triggered in the organisations: providing a concrete example of introducing new ways of working in practise, as well as providing space for experimentation.

"She [design leader] had nerves and courage to create completely new...question the existing ideas and suggest alternate solutions" – professional designer

However, the research findings also indicated that it is equally important for the design leadership to recognise the right places for questioning.

"Designers tend to have too naive perspective, that they will come to the organisations as outsiders to solve your problems, and our tools and approaches are better per se, but what you actually need is humbleness and ability to listen, because there is already an expertise inside the organisation." – professional designer

7.3.4.3 Engage to the change process

As the third component of changing the working culture, the engagement of various stakeholders to the change process emerged. The research participants emphasised the importance of engaging different stakeholders across the organisations, and not just lead the change from top-down. As an example, providing a space for the different units or teams to create a working model or assigning them with tasks were seen as essential when managing the change, to increase the ownership and commitment of employees to the change.

"Let us to build the model how we work and how does the team look like, what are the ways of working, what kinds of service offering we have... things that are in the core of our expertise, what service design is all about of” – professional designer
7.3.5 Support cross-sectoral collaboration and lead networks

Design leadership was identified to have an important responsibility to support and enhance the cross-sectoral collaboration and systemic thinking, rather than a siloed ways of working. The participants described that the current leadership models, such as result based steering, didn't require cross-sectoral collaboration, even though it has been identified as one of the core approaches for solving the current governmental challenges.

“Cross-sectoral collaborations are the issue, [instead of design].” - civil servant

In addition, the leadership of networks and supporting bottom-up functions were discussed as an important responsibility of design leadership. The participants described that they were currently rather novel for the government, required new leadership capabilities and were associated to a more engaging and open government organisations.

“Perhaps design leadership is about building networks and structures and leading them.” – participant

“In networked leadership openness is a standard. How do you encourage to this?” – civil servant

This responsibility separates into two aspects; bringing people together and building bridges between design and other disciplines.

7.3.5.1 Bring people together

The research findings indicate that design leader's responsibility is to enable a collaboration and active discussion between the people inside the organisation and towards engaging external stakeholders, such as different organisations or citizens. The responsibility of bringing people together includes enabling an introduction of new design methodologies that enable novel and participatory ways of working and identifying the right moments and people for collaboration to achieve effective outcomes. As one of the research participants described:

“A skilled designer working in the public sector can recognise the informants and build bridges between them, and when the time and
resources are limited, it is especially important to consider who are the right parties to engage.” – professional designer

7.3.5.2 Build bridges between design and other disciplines

The second aspect of supporting cross-sectoral collaboration and leading networks is design leadership’s responsibility in building bridges between design and other disciplines. The research participants described experiencing a clash when design entering to the government organisations. As one interviewee describes the resistance towards design:

“The challenges that we faced were first more personal, like if we were at a wrong place at a wrong time and if there was any space for design at all, and it took a lot of our energy to face how design was received.” – professional designer

On the other hand, the interviewees emphasised that to enhance the collaboration between design and other disciplines, designers tended to have an overlook to the challenges and existing ways of working in the government organisations. Moreover, the research participants emphasised that both professional designers and experts from other disciplines needed empathy towards each other for creating a basis for a collaboration.

“Needs humbleness to understand the perspective of the opposite parties and respect their capabilities” – professional designer

“It is about respecting the expertise, that is the most important.” – professional designer

For the design leadership, finding a common ground between the disciplines and leading the work by an example come important responsibilities. Several strategies can be applied to this purpose to increase the understanding and discussion between professional designers and experts from other backgrounds.

7.3.6 Measure and communicate design impact and value

As the sixth design leadership responsibility, measuring and communicating the design impact and value effectively for the different stakeholders emerged. These two aspects were seen as somewhat interconnected, since the efforts of measuring
the impact will support the successful communication of the design value. The effective communication of design value also requires a development in design terminology to be appealing for the government representatives. Therefore, this responsibility separates into four aspects; measuring the value of design through creation of indicators, communicating the value of design, promoting the design outcomes instead of design, and translating design into organisation's language.

7.3.6.1 Measure the value of design through creation of indicators

The first element of measuring and communicating design impact and value includes measuring the value of design through creation of indicators. This responsibility includes two important tasks for a design leadership. Identifying and creating the right metrics to measure the effectiveness of design, and actively measuring and collecting the data from the existing design initiatives.

The emergence of measuring the design value is emphasised in a context of communicating and illustrating the effectiveness of design, in order of gaining credibility towards it. One of the interviewees describes the measuring of design value as one of the core responsibilities of the design leadership as followingly:

"Also measuring the impact is very important, so that it doesn’t only remain as a talk, but you have the concrete evidence of how design can be done and you are able to illustrate situations before and after for people to understand the value of the work" - professional designer

In addition, identification of the right metrics that can actually communicate the effectiveness and value of design in a terms that resonates in the organisation raised as an important aspect from the data. As one of the interviewees describes the situation with measuring, where the efforts for measuring design didn't lead into a continuation and credibility towards a design unit:

"It was somewhat seen that the number of projects that we did proved the value and place of design in the government, and it was wished that the number of projects would have proved the value of our unit" - professional designer

7.3.6.2 Communicate the value of design

The second aspect of measuring and communicating design impact and value concerns communicating the value of design to internally and externally of an
organisation. In addition, to the previous notion in communication skills in relation to design leadership qualities as a person, it was emphasised among the participants that design leadership needs actively and continuously bring up conducted design work.

“From the beginning it felt crazy that the work that we did at [old design unit] wasn’t brought up more — this is the way how you should approach projects in the future” – professional designer

“It is a lot about the communication, what can be achieved through design, and in that case the value can be presented through experimentations” – participant

7.3.6.3 Promote design outcomes, instead of design

As an important aspect of supporting the development of design mindsets, promoting the design outcomes, instead of design as such was brought up in the research. It raised from the research that one of the core challenges design faces in the government organisations is an over-promotion of design as a discipline, which is perceived as too far and distinct from the government context. One professional designer described the challenges of promoting design as a discipline as such:

“It feels like the problem is that the design leaders who have too strong design identity can harm the credibility of design by promoting design as such. Moreover, they should be promoting what was achieved through design” – professional designer

Furthermore, design was described as an strategic asset that should be applied throughout the organisation in order of achieving better outcomes:

“I don’t think it is very purposeful and strategic to promote design as such, moreover you should go to the tables where important discussions are made and use design to achieve better outcomes.” – professional designer

In addition, the promotion of design had led to several misperceptions of design in government organisations. One professional designer described that by her experience, the design activities were sometimes implemented for the sake
of doing things differently and as an ad-on activity. She emphasised that the implementation of design without a clear objective led a loss of design credibility in the organisations and to mixed expectations towards design capabilities:

"Design shouldn’t be done so that there is a workshop that is open for all, and there are Legos and playdough to have fun with.” – professional designer

Therefore, it was seen as important that design leader can manage the expectations and perceptions towards design by promoting the value and the process of achieving certain outcomes through design.

7.3.6.4 Translate design to the “organisation’s language”

As the fourth aspect for measuring and communicating design value, translating design to the “organisation’s language” raised from the study findings. According to the participants, to effectively communicate design value to the government agencies, the design terminology, language and ways of communicating need to be translated to a language that is legitimate for the organisation. Since there is rarely even a one unified terminology or language inside a single organisation, the translation of design is also required to be conducted at the different levels of the organisation. As one of the research participants described:

“The value should be communicated separately for everyone, to customers, employees and leadership: what is the advantage of design for you.” – participant
Discussion
This chapter represents the final results of this study. First, the findings from the empirical research are being compared and discussed in relation to design leadership theories. This is conducted to identify design leadership qualities that are specific for the Finnish government context. Second, the results of this thesis are represented in relation to the posed research questions. Third, contributions and suggestions for practise are represented. Fourth, limitations of this thesis are being analysed and stated. Finally fifth, the suggestions for further research are posed.
8.1 Discussion over the findings

This section discusses over the research findings of this thesis in comparison to the design leadership theory for answering to the posed research questions. The discussion is separated in three sections: qualities of design leader as person, position and responsibilities are being discussed. Finally, the key observations over the data in comparison to theory are highlighted.

8.1.1 Discussion over the design leadership qualities as a person

In comparing the existing theory of design leadership qualities as a person in the literature, the findings from this study partly confirm but also deviate the qualities relational to design leaders as a person. Specifically, the findings of this study highlight aspects of design leaders’ ability to motivate others (especially in change situations), being courageous and challenging existing conventions as well as maintaining credibility among the organisation.

In comparison to the McCullagh’s (2008) summary of the three person related qualities of design leaders’, the research findings of this thesis also indicate somewhat similar notions. First, McCullagh argues that design leaders have abilities to envision the future. In similar manner, the research findings indicate that design leaders need to be courageous and visionary, who can see “beyond the horizon” and challenge the existing conventions.

Second, McCullagh states that design leaders need capabilities to think strategically. The research findings don’t directly indicate the second aspect of design leaders, but moreover this quality is argued indirectly in relation to several categories of findings. For an example, the design leader's abilities to think strategically are introduced in the context of “identifying opportunities for design”, by thinking strategically what are the suited situations to introduce design.

“*A skilled designer working in the public sector can recognise the informants and build bridges between them, and when the time and resources are limited, it is especially important to consider who are the right parties to engage.*” – professional designer
Third, McCullagh emphasises the design leaders’ abilities to motivate and lead others. This aspect was strongly emphasised in the research findings in relation to a need for charismatic design spokesperson. Furthermore, with a larger observation over the research findings, ability to motivate and lead others highlight in variety of findings, such as responsibilities of leading change or leading through a shared vision.

“[Design leader] needs to be a salesperson, who can motivate and get people excited” – professional designer

To form further interpretations, it could be stated that ability to motivate people becomes increasingly important when the organisation is facing changes. Kotter (1996) argues that leadership is one of the driving forces of change, but not only in a sense of authoritarian leadership. Moreover, the important role of leadership is enhance trust and provide a common goal for the employees, that can make the change happen. However, the employees of traditional, bureaucratic organisations, such as government organisations, face often difficulties to start the change processes without leadership support (Kotter, 1996). Furthermore, both of the aspects under the need for charismatic design spokesperson; effective communication and people’s motivation raise an importance in situations of change.

In addition to these three notions, some research findings were distinct from McCullagh’s theory. Firstly, being courageous and challenging the existing conventions were discovered during the research. These aspects have an emphasis of describing the specific setting of government organisations, where rigidity and stability have a great importance. For example, Bason (2010) has emphasised that leading innovation or co-creation ecosystems in public sector demands courage from the leaders, from the perspectives of questioning existing norms and for taking risks.

“[Design leader] is not afraid of mistakes, goes forward, especially in the context of public governance, which is built on top of certain carefulness for not making mistakes” – professional designer

Secondly, the credibility of a design leader among the organisation raised as an interesting notion from the research findings. Credibility seems to be a quite specific quality of a design leader, that hasn’t been emphasised in previous
research. However, in a position of being a front face for design, the emphasis over the credibility seems to be natural in connection to the government organisations where, for example, the culture of hierarchy is still present. Even though the credibility doesn’t make a design leadership higher in quality, it can be a way to provide space and credibility towards design in government. It could be stated that, the mandate and space for design is achieved by adapting to the organisational terms and requirements, yet what design can enable is a change towards a very different type of organisation.

“It breaks down the credibility of design if you’re not following the terms of the organisation” - civil servant

Thirdly, the research findings indicate that design leader needs at least some level of substance understanding for being credible at the government context. The notion of design leader being an expert of a specific substance area, has been quite little discussed in the theory. However, one could think that design leadership must be connected to the substance of any organisation for being able to lead it. The further question of exploring this issue is to consider “how much of substance understanding is enough, and does its’ importance grow in the context of government organisations”. For the confusion over the expertise background of design leaders’, it could be stated that both, expertise in design and substance expertise in the government landscape are both important. However, to find both expertise in one person, seems to be challenging. Therefore, alternative models that support the meeting of the both expertise backgrounds should be extended and explored.

“The leadership doesn’t currently understand that it takes time to do things properly. Time is needed for creativity.” – participant

“If I’m thinking of board of executives and the discussions that they have there, the design terminology has quite little credibility in there” – professional designer

Additionally, the notions of design leader holding both courageous and credible qualities includes some controversies. Simultaneously, the research findings indicate that design leader needs courage to challenge the existing settings of the government, and remain credibility among the organisation. The incoherence lies in how much can a design leader challenge the organisation’s existing practises without losing the credibility. To continue from here, in the environment of
governance the responsibility of individuals, especially in leadership positions, seems to be rather high. The underlying challenge for the design leadership is to manage between risk-taking, support experimentation and maintain the credibility towards oneself and design in a rigid organisation. In many ways, the design leader needs to be strategic and smart to identify just right occasions for challenging the existing and introducing design into a play.

To conclude over the qualities of design leadership in relation to a person distinct for the context of government organisations in comparison to theory, three qualities emerged. These qualities are courageousness to challenge the existing conventions, maintaining high strategic mandate and credibility towards design and understanding government and design substances.

8.1.2 Discussion over the design leadership qualities as a position

As the most evident notion in the relation to the design leadership position, it came across that the position is extensively connected to the organisation specific conditions. Therefore, universally suited models of the design leadership position can’t be made without understanding the organisation specific context. However, based on the research findings some observations could be made as a basis for the design leadership position.

Based on the research findings, it emerged that the design leadership position was mostly positioned to the strategic level of an organisation. Therefore, this aspect supported the understanding of the design leadership theories (see e.g. Globben, 2009; Best, 2006). However, differentiating from the previous studies the research findings indicate that design leadership requires flexibility and mandate to touch and lead functions inside and outside its own organisation. For example, the research findings indicate that design leadership needs to understand a single government organisation holistically, by understanding what happens at the different levels and units of an organisation.

“There is more opportunities in one organisation to recognise the places where design is needed to be promoted” – professional designer

“How should they be able to make decisions based in design and not silos?” – participant
In addition, design leadership needs connection to other government organisations for enabling cross-sectoral initiatives. Finally, the research findings indicate that for leading networks, design leadership needs to support and provide space for networks to enhance innovation and response to emerging issues proactively. The Figure 15 illustrates the design leadership’s complex relation to an organisation based on the research findings.

Additionally, the position of design leadership returns to the notion of mandate. For being able to lead the networks and enable collaboration cross-sectorally, design leaders should have the mandate and credibility of doing so. Therefore, this requires a considerations of including the mandate for flexibility into the role description of a design leaders by default.

“As long as the public governance is hierarchic, it is important to maintain the leadership at the high level of the organisation, they won’t listen someone from the seventh floor. In this world the leadership just can’t be located in there, even though the expertise would be located in there.” – professional designer

![Figure 15: Design leadership's complex relation to an organisation (Lerkkanen, 2019)](image-url)
Similarly than the theory suggests (see e.g. Turner, 2013) the research findings indicate that the design leadership has a thigh connection to design management and design teams. This finding suggest a clear implication to the practise; for improving the effectiveness of design, design is needs to be present simultaneously at different levels of an organisation. However, in a position where many government organisations don’t have resources for even internal design unit, the underlying question lays in where to start.

“In many places just the resources are needed to even have a design team, because there is so much to do in the organisations... yet rarely the design team can survive there alone without the leadership” – professional designer

It seems quite evident that design teams are required first to introduce the design methods in practise. As Kotter (1996) suggests, design teams and design management have quite little power to transform an organisation, whereas leadership has in comparison 70-90% changes to contribute in it. Since the introduction of design teams and design management is already done in several government organisations, the natural next step would be to introduce design leadership.

The integration of design raised an active discussion among the research participants. In connection to Junginger’s framework over the integration of design (2014), the presented models weren’t clearly ranked in an order, but moreover it was identified that the different government organisations represent different models of design integration. However, in connection to the other findings of the research, the indication of the findings suggests that since design leadership is seen foremost at the strategic level of an organisation, integrating design to all organisational actions, the direction is towards the integrated model.

“Our position has changed that currently we are in the middle of everyone, able to recognise ourselves the places and situations where our work and collaboration is needed, instead of being a design unit where our expertise is sold all around” – professional designer

The positioning of design leadership could be evaluated in the presence of previous initiatives. As an example, as a part of Design Finland programme in 2012, a network referred as Finnish Design Centre (FDC) was established with an executive committee assigned to lead it (Finnish Government, 2017). However,
the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment evaluated the network and the function of the executive committee as a failure, since it was evaluated as too distant from the actual instances in the field, and didn’t provide concrete enough solutions to the field (Finnish Government, 2017).

In comparison, the research findings suggest that some structures that provide a distance for the design leadership from an individual organisation were stated as essential. Based on the failure of the FDC and research findings, it could be stated that staying high-level and cross-sectoral as well as being organisation specific can be both beneficial positionings for the design leadership. Moreover, the position needs to be a combination of these two that enables an organisation specific integration as well as structures of cross-sectoral forums.

As a concrete suggestion to practise, the design leadership position should be positioned as strategic function of an organisation, which has mandate to lead the organisational functions and cross-sectorally collaborate with other organisations. For this purpose, each organisation could have own design leader as well as a committee of design leaders to address cross-sectoral issues.

To conclude over the qualities of design leadership in relation to a position distinct for the context of government organisations in comparison to theory, one quality emerged. This quality is strategic positioning of design leadership that allows flexibility between organisational structures.

8.1.3 Discussion over the design leadership qualities through responsibilities

In comparing the existing theory of design leadership qualities through responsibilities in the literature, the findings from this study partly confirm but also deviate from the responsibilities presented by the theory. Specifically, the findings of this study highlight design leaders’ responsibilities of leading change, supporting cross-sectoral collaboration and measuring and communicating the effectiveness of design.

Similarly than Turner and Topalian (2002) define, the research findings also indicate that envisioning the future and directing investments and resources to design are essential responsibilities of design leaders. Foremost, envisioning
the future evolved as an essential responsibility of design leadership from the research, both in terms of providing organisational vision and vision for the internal design teams to follow. This was emphasised as essential among the research since the visionary leadership was stated to be currently completely missing.

“Currently the visionary design leadership is missing completely from the government.” – professional designer

In addition, the mention of directing investments and resources raised from the research findings in relation to bringing coordinated efforts to design. However, bringing coordinated efforts to design included also other design leadership responsibilities, such as changing short-termism to continuity and continuously identifying opportunities for design.

“There should be repetition in projects. What we did was really a drop in the ocean and many times the first project that we did was a roll-in, where you would prove your skills and value, before it opened the doors in the organisation that there is a lot of stuff to do, and then the projects started to become more strategic and with larger responsibilities” – professional designer

In comparison to the theory over introduced design leadership responsibilities, the research findings indicate some distinctions over the design leadership responsibilities. First, leading change raised as an important responsibility from the research findings, yet wasn't mentioned in Turner’s and Topalian’s (2002) summary of design leadership responsibilities. This notion is a context specific for the government setting and seems quite evident, considering the background of this study. Bason (2017) describes that leading a change in public sector occurs partially from the interplay of public managers and design. As Bason describes (2017) leading change happens by changing the mindset of public managers from decision-making to future-making. In a sense, Bason’s definition of changing the mindsets of public managers to future-making stance, reminds of Turner’s and Topalian’s (2002) separation between design management and design leadership. Whereas the design management is defined as reactive, design leadership that is currently missing from the government organisations is more proactive with a future-making mindset.
However, it is important to point out that supporting the organisations in change process isn't targeting only towards promoting the role and importance of design in the government context. Moreover, a higher aim of the design leadership is to assists the government agencies to reach their full potential and change their existing practises, culture and mindsets by introducing design tools and approaches in fitted situations. Therefore, the development of design mindsets raises as an important finding from the research, where design is perceived as a set of tools that can be applied in any situation among the organisation. Furthermore, design leaders’ responsibility isn’t therefore to raise design as a strategic objective itself, but moreover to align design within the organisations' higher objectives for supporting the effectiveness of design. In this way design isn’t promoted value as such, but can be more effectively utilized as way, as a method or as a mindset of reaching the strategic objectives of an organisation.

“I don’t think it is very purposeful and strategic to promote design as such, moreover you should go to the tables where important discussions are made and use design to achieve better outcomes.” – professional designer

Supporting the cross-sectoral collaboration was also mentioned as an essential design leadership responsibility among this research findings, connected to a reformation of the existing practises and logics of government organisations. The work of government organisations has been identified to change from the current systems into networks and cross-administrative entities (Pirkkala & Lappeteläinen, 2018). However, the underlying challenge stays in how to create shared objectives and motivate people to work towards the same objectives for solving societal problems (Pirkkala & Lappeteläinen, 2018). The findings of this research suggest that design leadership has a crucial role in introducing shared objectives and vision, and enabling and motivating people to work collaboratively across the disciplines.

“Cross-sectoral collaborations are the issue, [instead of design].” – civil servant

Interestingly, the design leadership responsibilities of creating an environment or innovation, training for design leadership, shaping customer experience and the business reputations, and manifesting strategic intent according to Turner and Topalian (2002) were not mentioned directly in the research findings. Some
indirect notions can be found in relation to creating an environment of innovation and manifesting the strategic intent from the research findings. For an example, the findings in relation of challenging the status-quo suggest that space for experimentation and freedom from authorizing environment is required. On the other hand, several interpretations over why the responsibility of shaping the customer experience and business reputation wasn't discovered in relation to the research findings. As an example, it could be assumed that the implications of government organisations to customer experience are often indirect and therefore difficult to observe.

“One of our current roles is to bring discussion and vision to the top executives of the organisation, how customer experience should be developed and why it is important to be addressed... and bring the understanding how it should be developed and measured, and how does the organisation prioritize and lead its actions” – professional designer

Finally, it could be expected that measuring the impact of design and articulating the impact inside and externally of an organisation would be at the core of design leadership responsibilities. Interestingly, the responsibility of measuring and communicating the design values throughout the organisation wasn't mentioned at the Turner’s and Topalian’s (2002) theory. In the context of government organisations, measuring and communicating design values becomes as one cornerstones of design leadership responsibilities, to enable an application of design and improve the effective application of it.

“Also measuring the impact is very important, so that it doesn’t only remain as a talk, but you have the concrete evidence of how design can be done and you are able to illustrate situations before and after for people to understand the value of the work” – professional designer

To conclude over the qualities of design leadership in relation to a responsibilities distinct for the context of government organisations in comparison to theory, four qualities emerged. These qualities are leading change from the perspectives of mindsets and practices, supporting cross-sectoral collaboration, align the design objectives with the government objectives, measure and communicate the effectiveness of design.
8.1.4 Final observations

Before introducing the results of this thesis, some overall observations can be pointed from this study. First, the categorization over design leadership qualities in person, position and responsibilities could be questioned based on the research findings. Several findings raise and come across among multiple categories, such as design leadership having a high strategic mandate. However, even though these three aspects don’t provide a perfect categories for separating the findings from each other, they provide a structure of understanding design leadership from different valuable aspects. Furthermore, the three categories seem highly interconnected, which indicates that they are all important to understand in connection to one another. The structuring into categories of person, position and responsibilities can be especially beneficial for further considerations over the design leadership role descriptions in government organisations, especially since the three aspects can’t be considered separately.

Second important observation that raised from the study findings is that design in the Finnish government context should be introduced as an approach or as a way of working, instead of promoting it as an own function. However, the application of design methods and approaches requires cultural change from legacies of hierarchy and rigorousness to openness, collaboration and creativity. As the findings of this study initiate design leadership has an important role in this larger cultural change, yet the other aspects relational to organisational transformation need further consideration.

Thord, some of the findings of the study, such as mandate for design leadership seem to be contrary to the proposed responsibilities and values that the design leadership should advance in the organisations. For example, this study states supporting an open collaboration as one of the design leadership responsibilities, and simultaneously suggests that design leadership should be positioned in a high strategic position. However, the findings of this study reflect the current status of design within Finnish government organisations. For supporting the effectiveness of design within the government organisations currently, the design leadership needs an influential position. Nevertheless, the positioning of design leadership could change in the future, if the organisations evolve to different direction in the future.
Additionally, it could be questioned what are the parallelisms and disparities of design leadership to creative leadership or innovation leadership. As an example, the European Commission (2013) has raised a lack of creative leadership as one of the main barriers for design effectiveness in the government organisations (see page 17). Most evidently design leadership, creative leadership and innovation leadership include overlapping similarities. As Mumford describes (2002), creative leadership and innovation leadership are more connected to each other since their main focus is at supporting the organisations creativity and provide space for innovations. In comparison design leadership can also support creativity and innovation, yet it can assist the government organisations in a process of re-orientation and maintaining their relevance towards citizens and the society. In addition as the findings of this study indicate, an important role of design leadership is to place users to the centre of an organisation and through that provide vision and direction for the organisation in the process of larger change.

Continuing from here on, it could be questioned how specific are the qualities of design leadership for design leaders in comparison to general leaders. For instance, abilities to envision a future, think strategically and lead other people could be as well understood as important qualities of any leader. However, these aspects can be seen as important for any successful leaders, being specified in design or not. More importantly, it could be articulated that these aspects could encapsulate in other type of leaders, but they are essential for design leaders specifically in enabling a more effective use of design in the government context. Moreover, this study provides an understanding of the aspects that are essential for leading design in the context of Finnish government organisations. The considerations over further role formation of design leadership and how to name the position for further research.
8.2 Results

The results of this thesis are conducted by comparing the findings of the empirical research to the selected design leadership theories. Since the findings indicate a several design leadership qualities in relation to person, position and responsibilities, the results highlight qualities that are specific for the government organisations context. Therefore, the previous chapter introduces the identified design leadership qualities in total, yet this section summarises the ones that are identified as unique for the government context.

This thesis has discovered eight qualities of design leadership, that are specific for the Finnish government organisations context. These eight qualities of design leadership are being explored in the respect of the research question of this thesis:

**What are the perceived qualities of the design leadership in the Finnish government settings?**

This primary research question will be studied according to the professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants from the Finnish government organisations. In order to understanding the perceived qualities within this primary research question, it is attended specifically to these sub-questions followingly:

- **What are the perceived qualities of design leadership as a person?**
- **What are the perceived qualities of design leadership as a position?**
- **What are the perceived qualities of the design leadership responsibilities?**
8.2.1 Results over design leadership through a person

8.2.1.1 Courageousness to challenge the existing conventions
In the government organisations’ context the personal capabilities of design leader to question the status-quo and existing conventions is emphasised to initiate a larger change. Design leader needs courageousness to introduce design in the high-level strategic discussions as well as introduce new ways of working and thinking, such as through empathy, creativity and user-centricity to the organisation.

8.2.1.2 Maintain high strategic mandate and credibility towards design
Currently design lacks credibility among the government organisations and is seen as very operative function of an organisation. Design leaders need to maintain their own credibility among the organisation for supporting credibility towards design and a more strategic application of design. In addition, design leaders’ need a mandate within an organisation for being able to lead the organisational functions as well as initiate cross-sectoral collaborations.

8.2.1.3 Understanding government and design substances
Within the government context an emphasis of design leadership expertise background is given to both design expertise and government substance expertise. The emphasis to design expertise is given for being able to lead design activities, and government substance expertise is given for maintaining credibility among the organisation and for being able to introduce design within that context. Since these two aspects can be rarely discovered from an individual person, alternate models for enabling both expertise should be considered.

8.2.2 Results over design leadership through a position

8.2.2.1 Strategic positioning, that allows flexibility between organisational structures
The design leadership is positioned among this study to a strategic position within an organisation. However, it is also emphasised within this study that the design leadership required flexibility within the position to lead cross-sectoral
initiatives and networks, instead of staying rigidly at the strategic position of a single organisation. Nevertheless, this positioning requires a mandate for flexibility and initiate collaborations between the different stakeholders.

8.2.3 Results over design leadership through responsibilities

8.2.3.1 Leading change from the perspectives of mindsets and practices
The Finnish government organisations are facing changes in their existing practises, structures and ways of working. As an important responsibility of design leadership is to lead the change from their part by positioning users to the central stage, introducing design methods into the practise, motivating people of the change and providing vision of the future directions. In addition, the role of design was seen among the research as an approach and mindset that any government employee could apply, instead of value as such.

8.2.3.2 Supporting cross-sectoral collaboration
Cross-sectoral collaboration is identified as a one core approaches of addressing complex societal problems that the government faces. Design leaderships' role is to support and change the working culture to more open and collaborative for addressing to these challenges together.

8.2.3.3 Align the design objectives with the government objectives
The role of design was seen among the research as an approach and mindset for the public sector, and not a discipline of governance itself. Moreover, the objectives of design needs to be aligned with the objectives of the public governance, in order of providing space, effectiveness and credibility for the design application.

8.2.3.4 Measure and communicate the effectiveness of design
For supporting the introduction and implementation of design within the government organisations the most efficient ways, design leadership should measure and communicate the design impact and value continuously. Therefore, design leadership needs to identify and create indicators to measure the design impact and communicate the value in the government language.
8.3 Contributions and suggestions for practise

This research has both theoretical and practical contributions. First, this thesis has contributions to existing literature of design leadership, since it combines leadership with a specific area of expertise, design, with a context of public governance. Existing literature from this area is rather limited, foremost Bason (2017) has studied the contributions of public managers engagement with design. However, Bason’s thesis (2017) focuses over understanding what are the implications of design to public managers’ leadership capabilities, but not in more detail, what kind of leadership qualities are required for improving the effectiveness of design in the public sector.

From the perspective of theory, it should be noted that the theories of design leadership seem quite loose and there isn’t a universal theory of it. One reason to this is the context specificness of design leadership, where it is highly depended to the organisation specific settings. This thesis provides an access of observing design leadership in a specific context of public governance, and furthermore, from the perspective of Finnish government, which have been a global forerunner in introducing design to the public sector and government settings. The implications of this study are valuable both in Finnish context as well as globally, for introducing design in the government context.

The contributions to practise are understanding the qualities of design leadership and providing guidelines for the formation of the design leadership positions or models in the government organisation. However, the suggestions of this thesis are starting points for understanding design leadership and for the role formation a more detailed and organisation specific research is required. In addition, it should be noted that by nature organisations are continuously changing and evolving. In the future, the qualities of design leadership might be different from the understanding of this thesis.

This research also underlines the inevitable change in culture, practises, structures and processes that the government organisations are facing. The practical contribution of this thesis is to present the design leadership as one supportive function for improving the effectiveness of design in the government organisations and enabling partially a larger change process. For a further research, the role of design leadership in comparison to other functions that might enable the change process, should be studied.
8.4 Limitations

In the context of this thesis, there are limitations in relation to the theory, empiric research and level of detail that should be noted, for further research and within application to practise. The limitations related to theory were connected to the gaps of understanding of the design leadership holistically. Furthermore, there is a lack of theory of what aspects constitute design leadership as a whole and therefore, the understanding of this thesis was collected from general leadership studies to construct an overview of the different design leadership qualities. A further analysis between general leadership literature and design leadership should be conducted a more thorough understanding.

The limitations in connection to empirical research related especially to selection of research methods, access to people and scalability of the findings. First, several parts of this thesis empirical research was conducted as a part of larger research initiative. Naturally, the selection of some research methods was predetermined and directed this study to utilize mixed methods as a methodological guidance. However, the larger research group provided a valuable access to practitioners in the field in Finland, where the number of representatives of the selected target group is per se limited. Even though the sample of this research doesn't provide statistically significant information, the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network represents the design professionals in the Finnish government organisations the most suited ways. In addition, the reliability of the selected research methods for data collection could be questioned, especially when applying the semi-structured interviews to only two representatives. However, since this study applies mixed method research, the validity of the research findings comes from the application of several research methods into same research area.

Some limitations of the research relate to language and transcription of the sample. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in Finnish, because both of the interviewees and the researcher were Finnish speaking. However, the translation over the interviews was conducted as precisely as possible to avoid distortions. Additionally, the data over the focus group discussion was collected by a transcription of a third party, without the author of this thesis being present. Therefore, the study findings rely over the documentation of the table discussion and additional conversations between the moderators of the focus group and researcher of this thesis. Even though the data collection was conducted as carefully as possible, for ensuring the reliability, it highlights the importance of
the researcher being present at the research setting, especially when conducting qualitative design research.

Within the context of this thesis, the context of the research has an influence to the research findings. This study is conducted with a specific group of representatives, where their beliefs and values influence to the findings of the study. Therefore, the findings of this research focus over areas that the participants raised as essential and important for design leadership. In addition, Finland represents a specific type of governance model. The structure, culture and model of government organisation has naturally an impact what kind of qualities are linked to design leadership. As note previously, an organisation specific and nation specific analysis should be first conducted before implementing or scaling the findings into practise.

Finally, the aim of this study is to provide an early understanding and an overview to the landscape of design leadership qualities, and not to focus over an individual quality. To deepen the understanding, the landscape of design leadership could be explored from different angles and each leadership quality could be studied throughout.
8.5 Suggestions for future research

The opportunities for further research are either continuing to explore the qualities of design leadership in the public sector context or build on top of this thesis findings. An important area of research is to continue the exploration over the role of design leadership as a part of larger change in the government sector. Furthermore, what kind of skills or requirements can be recognised for design leadership in order of enabling a larger organisational transformation. Additionally, the role and importance of design leadership in comparison to other change enablers could be studied further.

For the realisation of design leadership, the organisation specific requirements and settings should be explored further. The government organisations include a variety of different types of organisations in Finland, and especially in global context. Organisation specific requirements related to design leadership qualities should be studied further to understand the landscape of public sector organisations and before the formation of role or model of design leadership. Furthermore, several questions underlie in the process of design leadership realisation. For an example, does the realisation of design leadership require reformation of existing structures, training or adaptation of new practises and ways of working by the existing roles or an introduction of a completely novel function or position.

Finally, after realisation, the effectiveness and benefits of design leadership for the organisation should be continuously evaluated and measured. This should be conducted together with role formation in order of, not only proving the value of design leadership, but to improve the leadership capabilities further in the government organisations.
9 Conclusions

Inevitably, the current society is facing tremendous changes in an accelerating pace. The large societal wicked problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973) are complied with differentiation of citizen values, changes in technology and service delivery, that set expectations for both private and public organisations. Especially the public governance and government organisations are facing challenges to renew their existing practises and logics of functioning for answering proactively to the citizen expectations and arising systemic challenges in a middle of political turbulence.

During the past years novel ways of working have been experimented in the government organisations. Design has been identified as one beneficial approach in introducing novel tools, approaches and ways of working to transform the existing practises and providing aid in solving the societal wicked problems. For an example, the human-centered and collaborative nature of design and endorsement of exploration and creativity have been identified as key benefits of design for the public governance.

However, the introduction of design to the government organisations haven’t unfolded fluently without cultural clashes or barriers. Foremost, lack of leadership support and authorizing environment has been identified as one of the most significant challenges for the effectiveness of design in Finnish government organisations, by professional designers and designerly-minded civil servants from the Finnish government organisations.

This thesis has focused over understanding the qualities of design leadership that are being described by the design practitioners, experienced from the Finnish government organisations. The study has explored a variety of design leadership qualities, in relation to person, position and responsibilities, that are required from the new set of leaders in the public sector for improving the effectiveness of design and enabling a larger change process inside the organisations.

This study identifies eight qualities of design leadership, significant for improving the effectiveness of design in the government. The qualities relational to person were identified as 1) courageousness to challenge the existing conventions, 2) maintaining high strategic mandate and credibility towards design, and 3)
understanding both government and design substances. The quality relational to position was identified as 4) strategic positioning, that allows flexibility between organisational structures. The qualities relational to responsibilities were identified as 5) leading change from the perspectives of mindsets and practices, 6) supporting cross-sectoral collaboration, 7) aligning the design objectives with the government objectives, and 8) measuring and communicating design effectiveness.

The thesis aims to contribute to the understanding the qualities and requirements of design leadership in the public sector, and address some of the identified gaps in theory. Furthermore, the thesis aims provide valuable information for the public and government organisations for forming new models of leadership for improving the effectiveness of design.
References


References of tables, figures and images


Lerkkanen, L. (2019). Table 1. Summary of participant details over the focus group discussions. Self-drawn.


Lerkkanen, L. (2019). Figure 6. Three theoretical perspectives applied in this thesis to understand the different qualities of design leadership. Self-drawn.

Lerkkanen, L. (2019). Figure 7. Overview of the research process. Self-drawn.

Lerkkanen, L. (2019). Figure 8. The research findings through three theoretical perspectives. Self-drawn.

Lerkkanen, L. (2019). Figure 9. The research findings in relation to person. Self-drawn.

Lerkkanen, L. (2019). Figure 10. The research findings in relation to position. Self-drawn.

Lerkkanen, L. (2019). Figure 11. Extension of design leadership from organisation specific to cross-cutting. Self-drawn.

Lerkkanen, L. (2019). Figure 14. The research findings in relation to responsibilities. Self-drawn.

Lerkkanen, L. (2019). Figure 15. Design leadership’s complex relation to an organisation. Self-drawn.


Appendix

Attachment 1. Survey for the “Julkis-muotoilijat” network.

Q1 Which of the following statements best describes you?
- I am a public sector employee with informal training in design thinking and design-led approaches (I have taken career development courses and attended workshops/trainings)
- I am a public sector employee with formal training in design (from a degree granting institution)
- I am a public sector employee with some knowledge of design-led approaches gained through testing methods and applying it in my own work.
- I am a public sector employee who has learned of the value of design thinking and design-led approaches, but have not been successful in applying it.
- I am not a Finnish public sector employee

Q2 I work for
- the prime minister’s office
- state ministry
- government organization
- public sector agency, state-owned agency, or quasi-public sector organization
- sub-national level/municipal level organization
- I do not work for any of the above

Q3 Design-led approaches are more observable across governance settings today because...

Q4 Which of the following best represents the core benefit of using design-led approaches
- bring creativity and imagination to solve grand societal challenges
- build bridges across the bureaucratic and disciplinary silos
- to advocate for more inclusive/end-user views inside government
- to rethink and transform the way government works
- Other (please specify)

Q5 Where are the core competencies of design-led approaches found in your organization?
- mostly within select individuals across different departmental units
- within a specialized unit
- mostly purchased/outsourced to consultants
- a combination of individual skills/competencies and external consultants

Q6 Which of the following is most accurate?
- Design-led approaches are an external resource; design-led expertise is not a function in my organization
Design-led approaches are a part of the organization; they are applied to specified and limited areas and functions.

Design-led approaches are central to my organization's efforts; and this expertise serves as a resource to various organizations.

Design-led approaches are integrated at the highest levels of my organization; it is integrated and applied actively into a wide range of service areas, administrative functions, and policy areas.

Other (please specify)

Q7 In your own words, what is the core function of design-led approaches in your organization? In other words what core objectives does it help to fulfill?

Q8 Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on the core values of design-led approaches (DLA) in a public sector setting. (COMPLETELY DISAGREE, DISAGREE, AGREE, COMPLETELY AGREE)

- At its core, DLA is about building bridges across the bureaucratic and disciplinary silos
- At its core, DLA is about taking the perspective of end-users/citizens/stakeholders
- At its core, DLA is about rethinking government processes, systems and structures
- At its core, DLA is about transforming the way government works
- At its core, DLA is about bringing imagination and creativity inside the bureaucracy to address society's biggest challenges.

Q9 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on the capacity of your organization to support design-led approaches. (COMPLETELY DISAGREE, DISAGREE, AGREE, COMPLETELY AGREE)

- My organization has the ability to procure support staff with specialized design-related expertise
- My organization has the ability to attend relevant workshops and conferences relating to design-led approaches in government
- My organization has the ability to create (or customize) our own designerly models, tools, & techniques
- My organization intentionally discusses and reflects upon our design-led work in order to improve future efforts
- My organization has accumulated experiences with design-led approaches
- My organization has sufficient access to space (including rooms & equipment) required for design-led activities
- My organization has integrated design-led approaches into our strategic plan

Q10 Please indicate your level of agreement on the following statements on knowledge exchange / knowledge sharing of design-led approaches in the public sector. (COMPLETELY DISAGREE, DISAGREE, AGREE, COMPLETELY AGREE)

- We share and present our work regularly to other public sector organizations
• We participate in related knowledge sharing networks
• We share and present our work regularly in international events and networks
• We have developed (or customized) toolkits and processes which can be easily replicated
• We actively share and exchange knowledge through our network of peers and experts
• We actively conduct research and publish on this topic
• We actively create opportunities for knowledge sharing and exchange

Q11 Imagine that you are speaking to a decision maker about getting the appropriate resources and funds to build stronger design capacity in your organization. What would your core argument be to justify this cost?

Q12 Choose 3 words/phrases which characterize design-led approaches, activities, or practices

Q13 In your own words, describe something you designed in your organization using a design-led approach.

Q14 In your experiences with design-led approaches, what has surprised you most about its use or effectiveness in public sector settings?

Q15 In your own words, what do you see as the major risk or pitfalls of introducing a design-led approach?

Q16 What kinds of resistance or reluctance to design-led approaches have you experienced?
• not seeing the benefit of taking a user-centered perspective
• ineffective communication; lack of understanding around design approaches more generally
• difficult to prove its value or cost-effectiveness
• Other (please specify)

Q17 Please indicate your level of agreement on the challenges with design-led approaches in your organization. (COMPLETELY DISAGREE, DISAGREE, AGREE, COMPLETELY AGREE)
• general resistance and confusion around “design” meanings and values
• communicating its costs, benefits, and how to evaluate outcomes
• lack of leadership and authorizing environment
• there is a constant need to justify design-led approaches

Q18 Please indicate the level of agreement on the following statements on what is needed to improve the effectiveness of design-led approaches (COMPLETELY DISAGREE, DISAGREE, AGREE, COMPLETELY AGREE)
• greater autonomy and support from leadership structures
• the ability and authority to initiate new collaborations and projects
• risk-free spaces to experiment, learn, and test new ideas, tools, methods
• dedicated working hours for sharing and knowledge exchange
• creation of an oversight body
• better evaluation tools and methods

Attachment 2. Questions for focus group discussion.

• How are the roles of the civil servants changing? Should every civil servant have design capabilities?
• Do we need support systems for the design integration? What is the role of a leader integrating design into organizations.
• Is design everything?
• Who should the design leadership lead or provide support for?
Attachment 3. Supportive material for the focus group discussion created by Anni Leppänen.
Attachment 4. Interview questions for professional designers experienced from the Finnish public sector organisations.

Introduction

Tell me about yourself:
• Describe your current role and position in your representative organisation
• What kind of tasks and responsibilities do you have in your current role and position?
• What was your previous role and position before the current role? How did you end-up in the current position?

Experiences of design leadership in the past organisation

• What design leadership means to you?
• How was design leadership organised in your previous organisation? What kind of role did it have?
• What were the challenges of design leadership / lack of design leadership by your experiences in your previous organisation? Why?

Experiences of design leadership in current organisation

• How is design leadership organised in your current organisation? What kind of role does it have?
• What are the challenges of design leadership / lack of design leadership by your experiences in your current organisation? Why?
• How would you compare the design leadership in your previous organisation and current organisation? What were the benefits or weaknesses of each model?
• By your experiences what kind of leadership design requires in the Finnish public sector organisations in your opinion?
• What kind of actions needs to be done in your opinion in the Finnish public sector organisations to improve the effectiveness of design?

Person, position, responsibilities

• What kind of qualities in relation to person you see essential for a government organisation design leader?

After introducing findings from the focus group discussions:
• Do you agree with these findings? What presented qualities in relation to person you see essential for a government organisation design leader? What do you see less essential? Why?

• What kind of qualities in relation to position you see essential for a government organisation
design leader?

After introducing findings from the focus group discussions:

• Do you agree with these findings? What presented qualities in relation to position you see essential for a government organisation design leader? What do you see less essential? Why?

• What kind of qualities in relation to responsibilities you see essential for a government organisation design leader?

After introducing findings from the focus group discussions:

• Do you agree with these findings? What presented qualities in relation to responsibilities you see essential for a government organisation design leader? What do you see less essential? Why?
Attachment 6. Figure representing previous findings for the interviewees to evaluate during the interviews.
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