Bhumika. Kavita. Tanmayi | MSSDM'24 | Parsons School of Design

THE TEAM

Bhumika

Textile Designer
Design Strategist

Kavita

Lingerie Designer
Design Strategist

Tanmayi

Interior Designer
Design Strategist

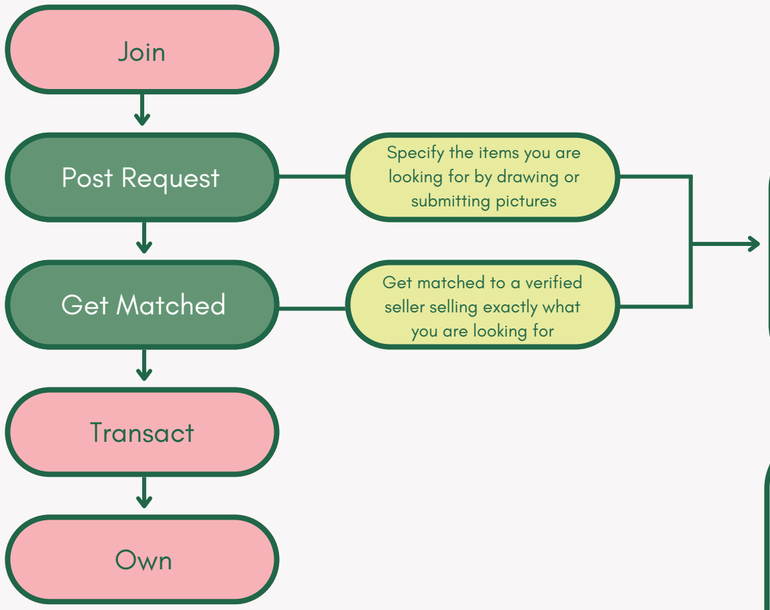
Wishful Thrift

A hyper-local peer-to-peer match-making app for pre-loved fashion.

Enabling buyers to post tailored requests and get matched with sellers offering precisely what they seek, fostering a direct connection between seekers and providers, making search for desired items effortless.

A step ahead of your regular search tool.

5 steps to your pre-loved finds



Key Features

Robust Search Tool

Search Tool that focuses on filtering for need-based shopping:

- Physical Needs
- Emotional Needs
- Functional Needs

Reverse Image Search

Instantly get matched with items based on your unique search criteria and see the match percentage.

Communal Benefits

B2C seeking options for specific requests by NGOs/Charity Organizations - fostering community building and giving non-profit orgs a platform to seek what they are looking for

FASHION FALLOUT: URGENCY FOR INDUSTRY INTERVENTIONS

The fashion industry is the second most polluting industry, contributing 8% of all carbon emissions and 20% of all global wastewater

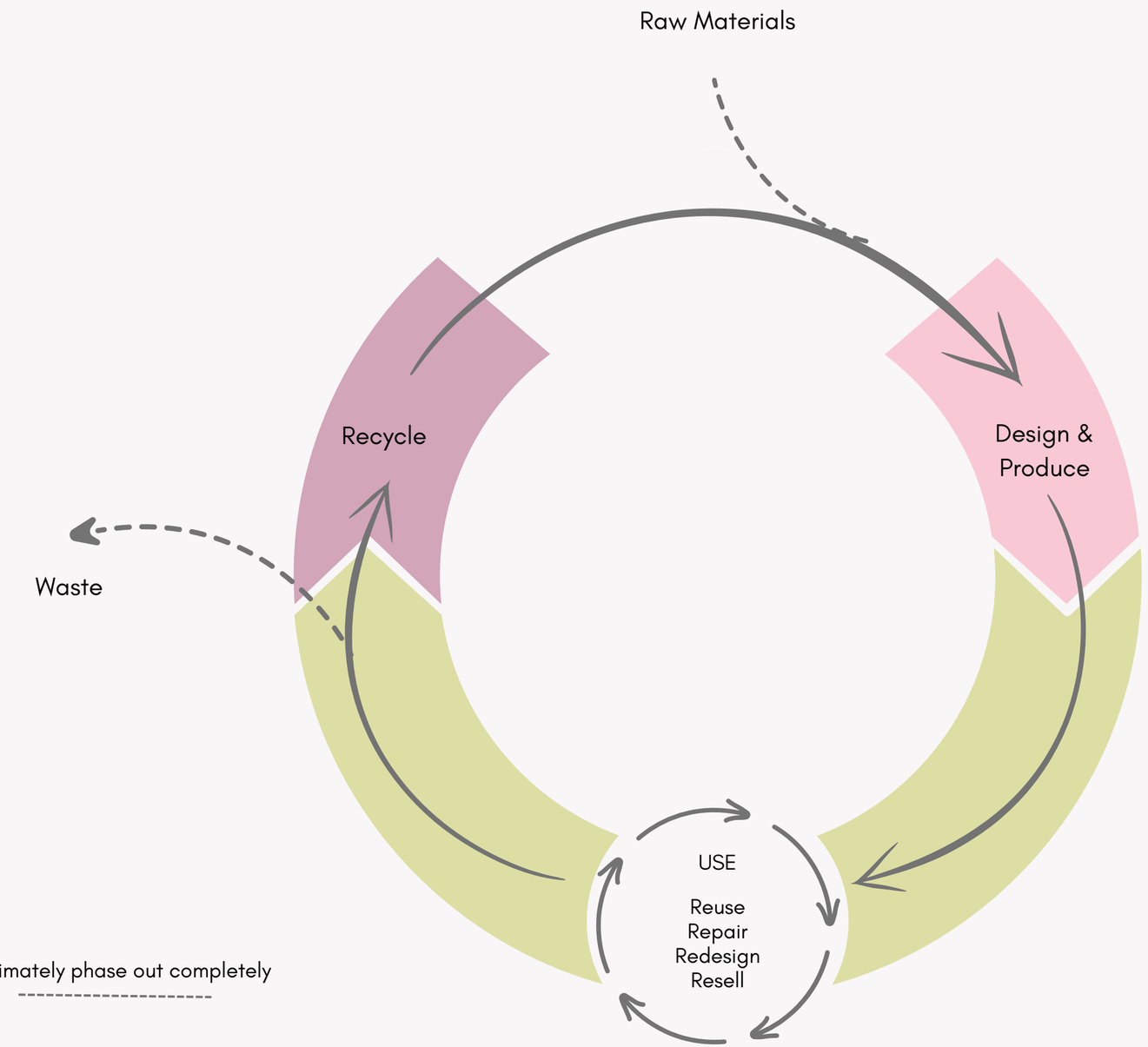
600 *Garment workers injured in 2022*

8% *American consumers affected by compulsive buying disorders*

36% *Decline in garment usage over the last 15 years*

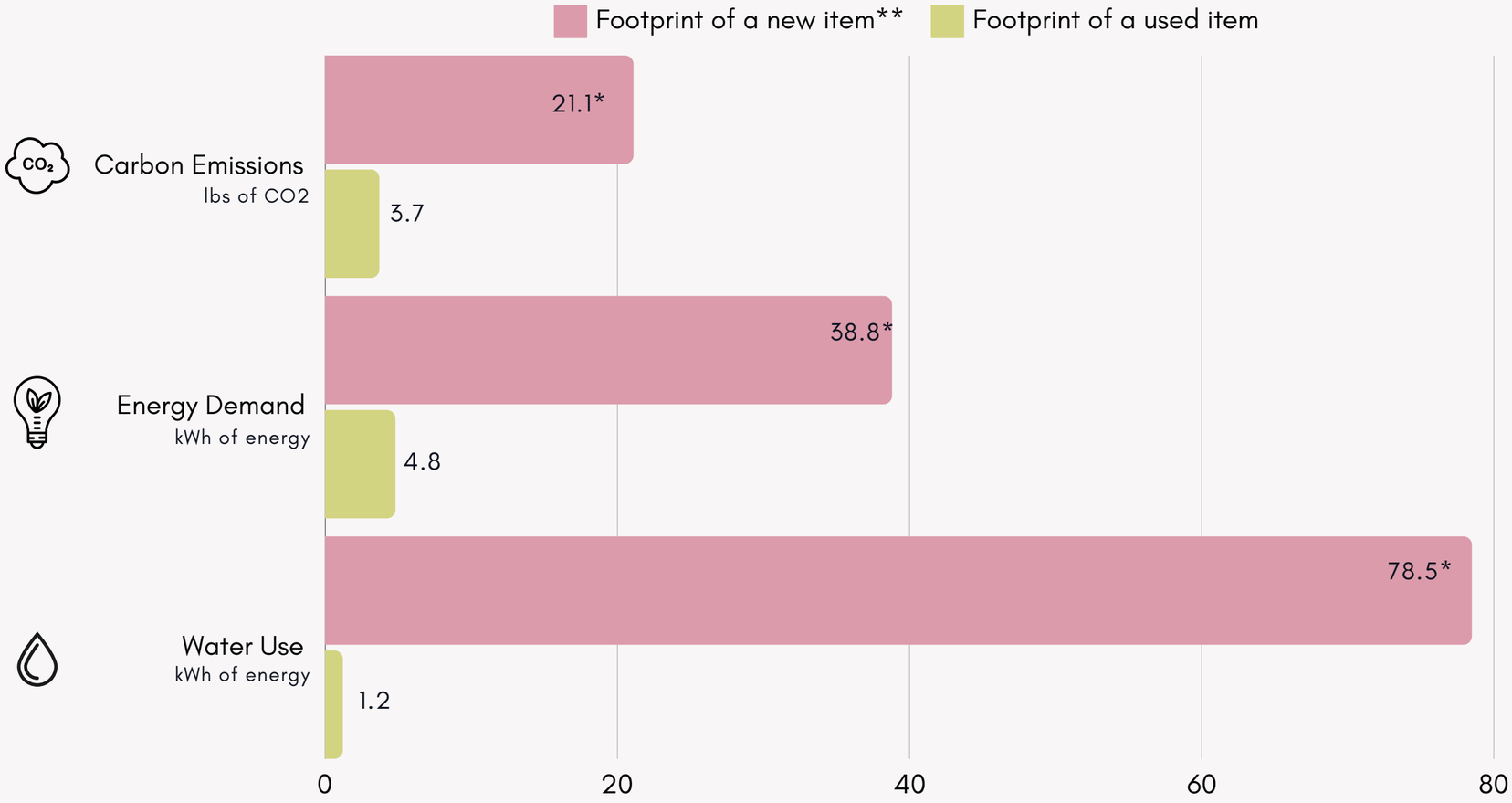
Source: UN Environment Programme, The Business of Fashion, American Journal of Psychiatry

SECOND-HAND EMERGES AS THE WAY FORWARD.



POWER OF SECOND-HAND

Footprint of a new vs used item



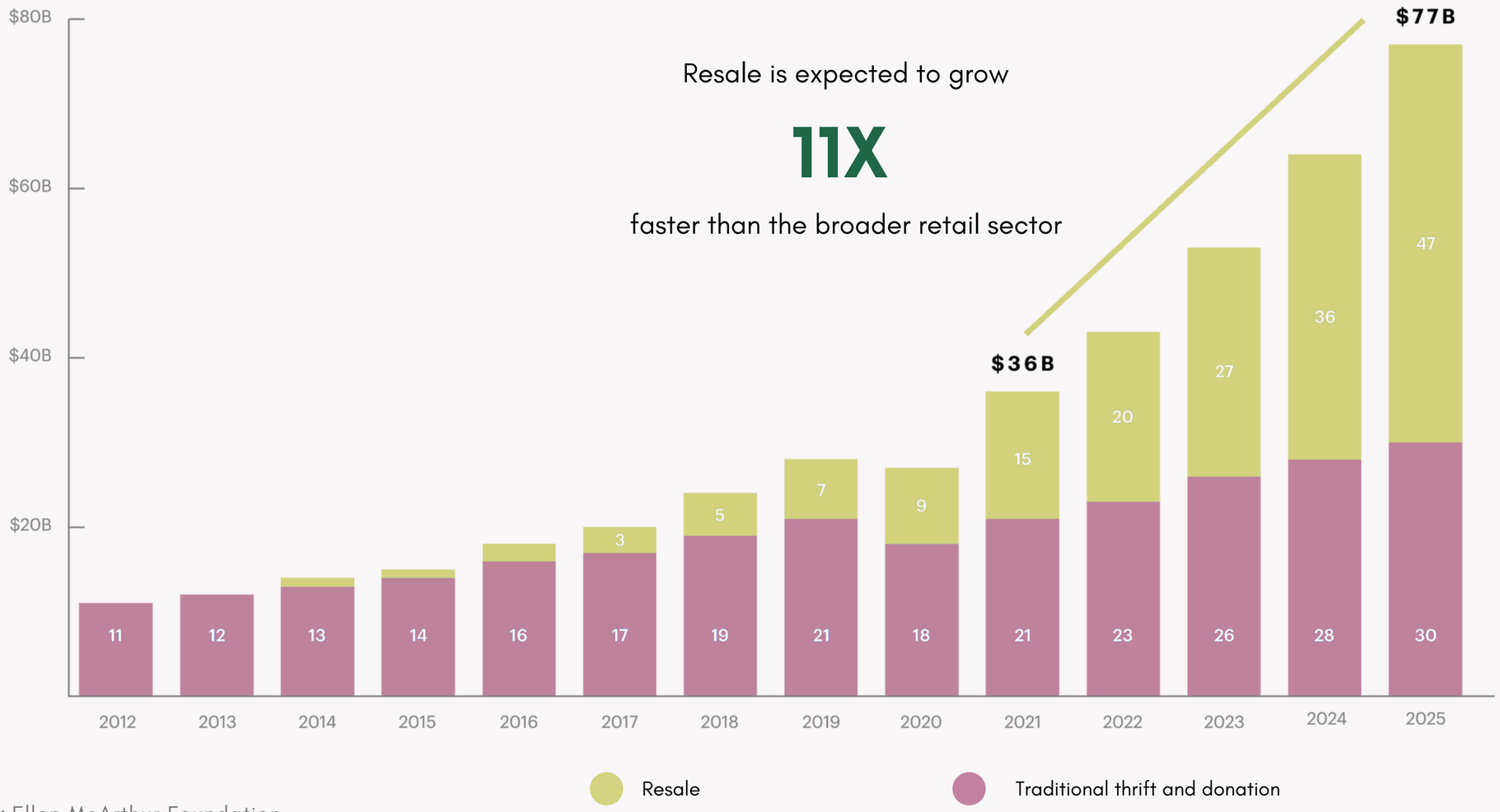
*Assumes 30% of the lifetime is complete when re-used to calculate relative savings

**Assumes the new item is a run of the mill fast fashion garment

Ellen MacArthur Foundation - Comparative lifestyle assessment (LCA) of a new vs secondhand clothing (2019)

SCOPE

Second hand fashion market is projected to grow by more than double the size of fast fashion



Source: Ellen McArthur Foundation

ACTION-INTENTION GAP

Pro Thrifter

- Sizing inconsistencies
- Returns, refunds, exchanges
- Unappealing visuals online
- Lack of credibility

Curious Thrifter

- Lack of convenience
- Time consuming
- Lack of categorization
- Pricing inconsistencies

Cautious Thrifter

- Hygiene and quality concerns
- Lack of awareness & resources
- Social stigmas
- Poor past experiences

HOW MIGHT WE...

reduce the action intention gap to make second-hand shopping a part of the mainstream fashion landscape?

Explored through:

30 Touchpoints

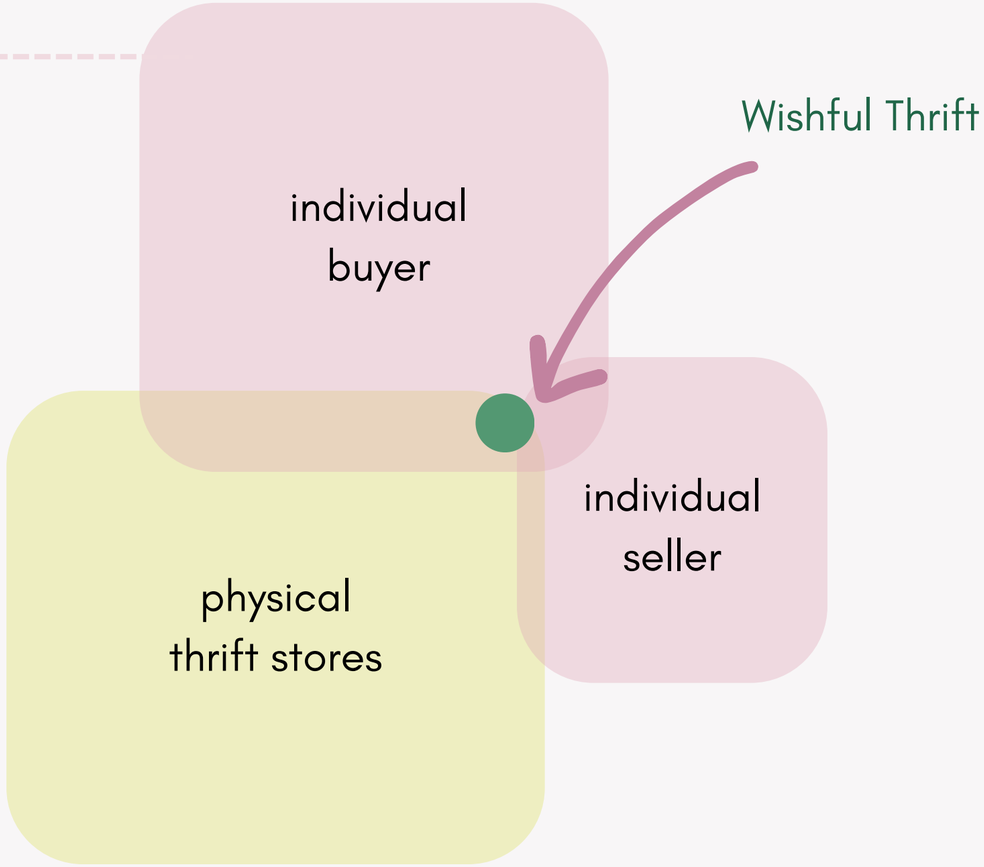
10 Interviews

ITERATION 1

A digital platform that lets buyers visually post what they seek and match with individual sellers and physical thrift stores selling second-hand fashion items.

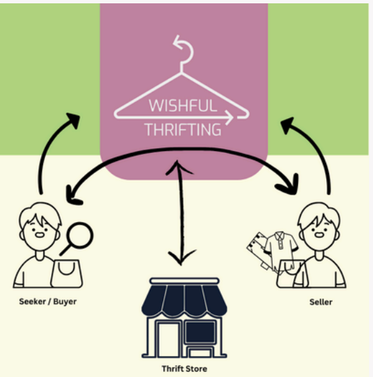
This design intervention aimed at reducing the physical barriers of time, digging through the items at a thrift store by providing a way for shoppers to know in advance what they can/ cannot find at thrift stores.

Our first provotype, designed to enhance convenience, introduced “a wanted board” in thrift stores to create an opportunity for shoppers to sketch their requests.



WISHFUL THRIFTING

Feeling adrift in the sea of thrift? Let us steer you towards your perfect catch!



A user-friendly digital platform that **enables buyers and sellers to post what they're wishing to buy/sell second-hand and get matched with right thrift stores (or even each other)** for a hassle-free transaction.

The platform connects directly with physical thrift stores through **a "wanted" board**. Here, buyers can **easily specify** the items they're looking for by drawing, visualising, or submitting pictures. This fosters a **direct connection between seekers and thrift stores**, making the search for desired items effortless.

PROBLEM

While thrifting gains momentum, challenges such as **sparse choices**, **brand doubts**, **cleanliness worries**, **pricing inconsistencies**, and **social perceptions** remain.

> I am unsure and concerned about the hygiene and quality of second hand garments.
>
> -Novice Thrifter, 28

> I want to be more responsible with my choices but I fail to shop second hand due to lack of accessible and convenient avenues.
>
> -Transitioning Thrifter, 25

> It takes me ages to find what I am looking for while thrifting.
>
> -Seasoned thrifter, 23

WHY NOW ?

"If every consumer this year bought just **one second-hand** garment annually instead of a new one, it would lower CO2 emissions by more than 2 billion pounds, equal to taking 76 million cars off the road for a day, and save some 23 billion gallons of water and 4 billion kilowatt-hours of energy."

(ThredUp April 2023)

FEATURES

- **Post pictures of what you are looking for. Get matched with someone who has it!**
- **Get detailed & certified info. about the thrifted item like usage, quality, size, hygiene.**
- **Resources and guides for thrifting**

WHERE AND FOR WHO ?

New York City - A Fashion Forward City that embraces second-hand shopping with open arms.

For Shoppers who wish to transition from hyper-consumerism to mindful consumerism through second-hand shopping.

WHY US ?

We...

Possess years of fashion industry experience and resources to make this dream a reality.

Stress over lost value of thrown-away clothes.

Obsess about making sustainable fashion mainstream & accessible.

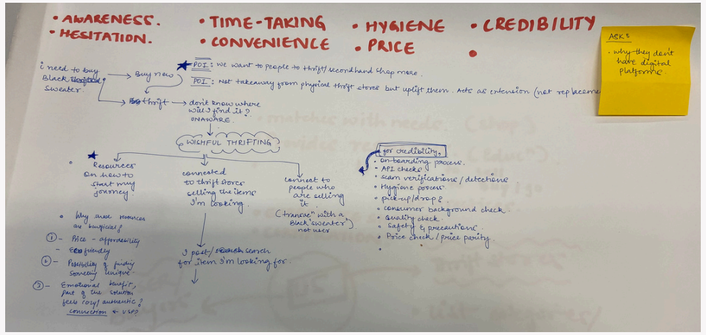
Embracing the beauty of second chances in the realm of fashion. If you're with us, sign-up to be part of sharing your ideas.

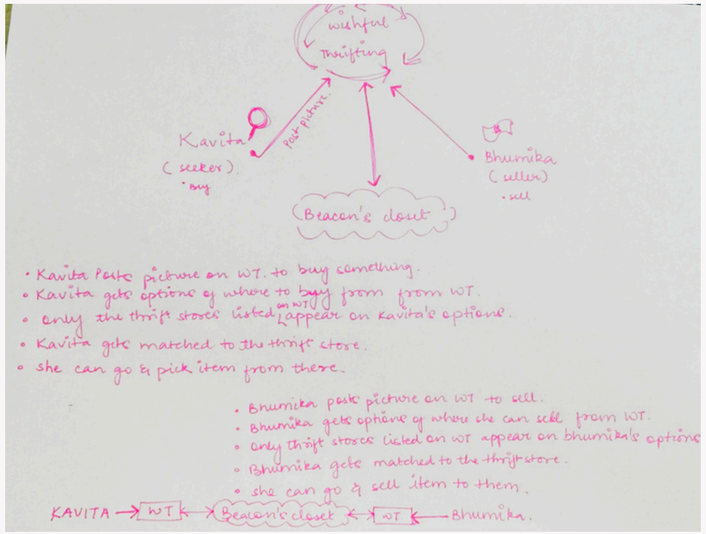
SIGN-UP HERE

PROCESS

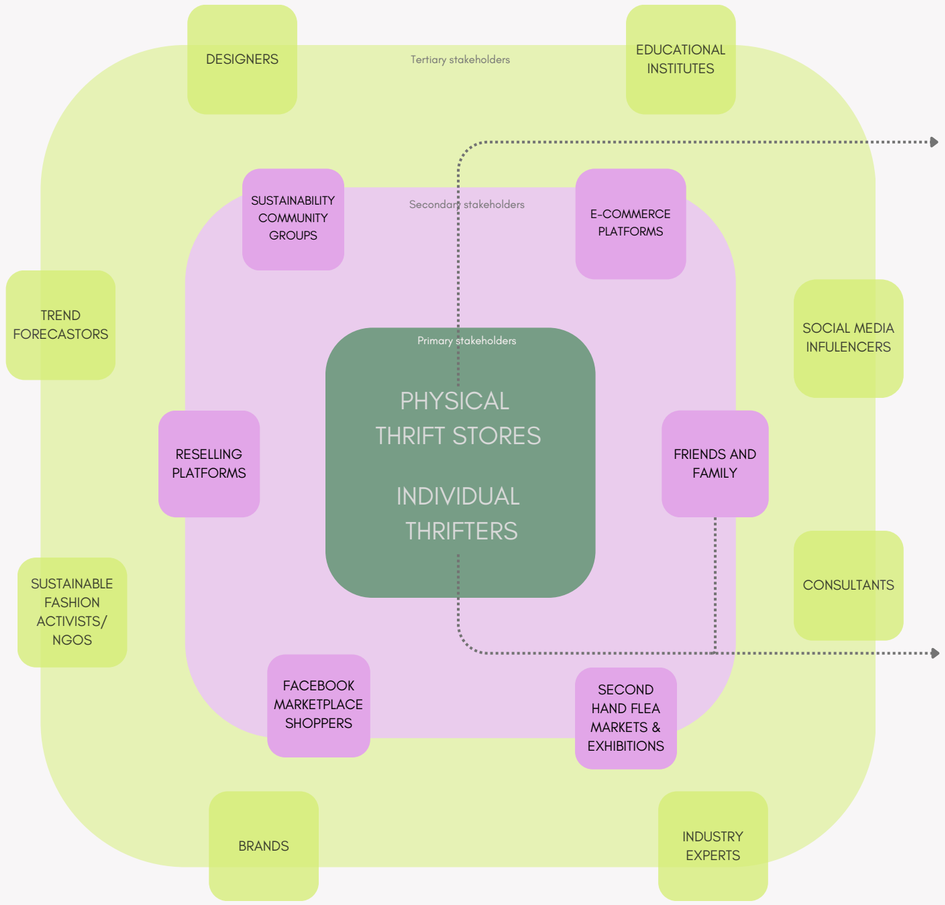
Our first step was to focus on building the type of transactions, pain points, and relationships between the key stakeholders. We mapped out the high-level flow of steps in the process, identifying the values we wanted to cater to the users.

To understand this more fundamentally, we reached out to multiple stakeholders - ranging from thrifters, non-thrifters, thrift store staff, software developers, fashion industry experts, etc.





STAKEHOLDERS



CONCEPT TESTING

One-on-one semi-structured interviews and conversations for feedback on one-pager and concept.

Powerpuff 1
Store Staff | Beacon's Closet, Manhattan NYC
Powerpuff 2
Store Staff | Crossroads, Manhattan NYC

Powerpuff 3
Pro Thrifter | Staff, The New School, NYC
Powerpuff 4
Pro Thrifter | Student, The New School, NYC
Powerpuff 5
Cautious Thrifter | Student, New York University, NYC

Powerpuff 6
Curious Thrifter | Student, The New School, NYC

Powerpuff 7
Curious Thrifter | Cybersecurity specialist, NYC

*All names changed for anonymity

FEEDBACK & INSIGHTS

concerns	Thrift stores do not have back-end inventory management system to support their presence on a digital platform.	Time & effort v/s sales for digitising dynamic store inventory is impractical.	Updating and keeping track of Wishful Thrift would require additional touchpoint and resource in the store.
delights	"A people-to-people connection would work as our community speaks with each other"	"Would be helpful for theft prevention in store"	"Would be helpful for upcyclers"

concerns	How will the back-end of stores work as they have a lot of stuff?	How is Wishful Thrift taking care of hygiene, transaction and logistics?	How will WT stop the platform from becoming profit based exchange platform, vulnerable to taken advantage of?
delights	"that's a great idea because sometimes key words can only really go so far. So I do like the idea of posting an image"	"this will definitely save time and effort of searching"	

PIVOTAL LEARNINGS

A digital platform is not the most viable solution to connect individuals and physical thrift stores.

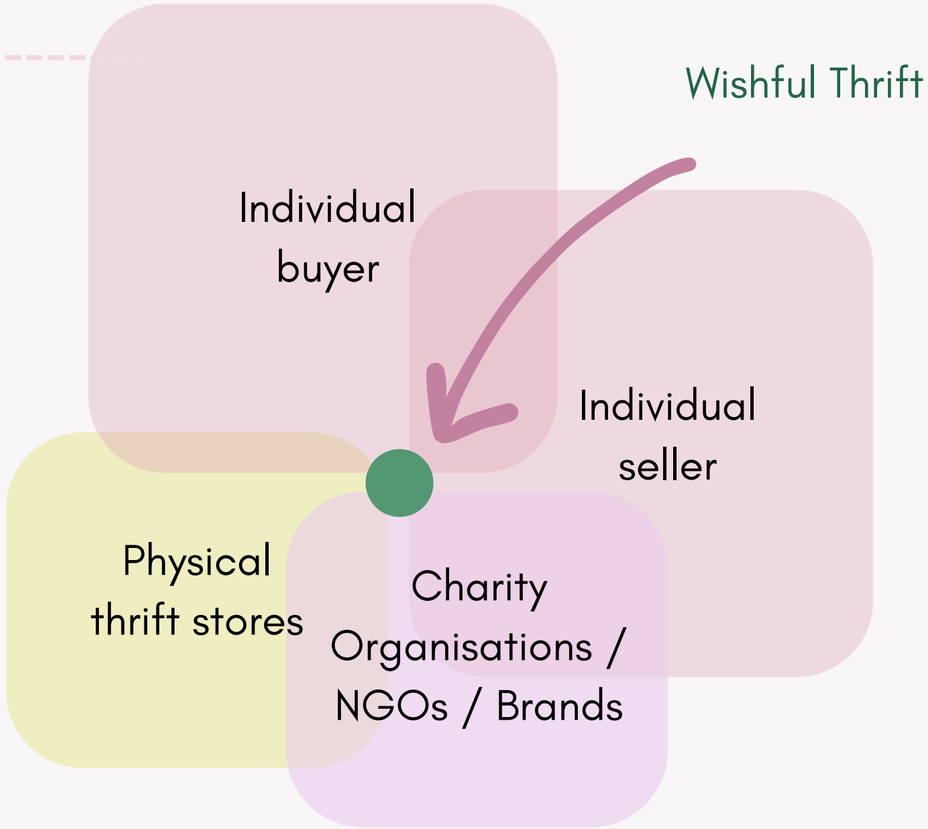
People opt for quick solutions and may not choose thrift shopping for urgent needs.

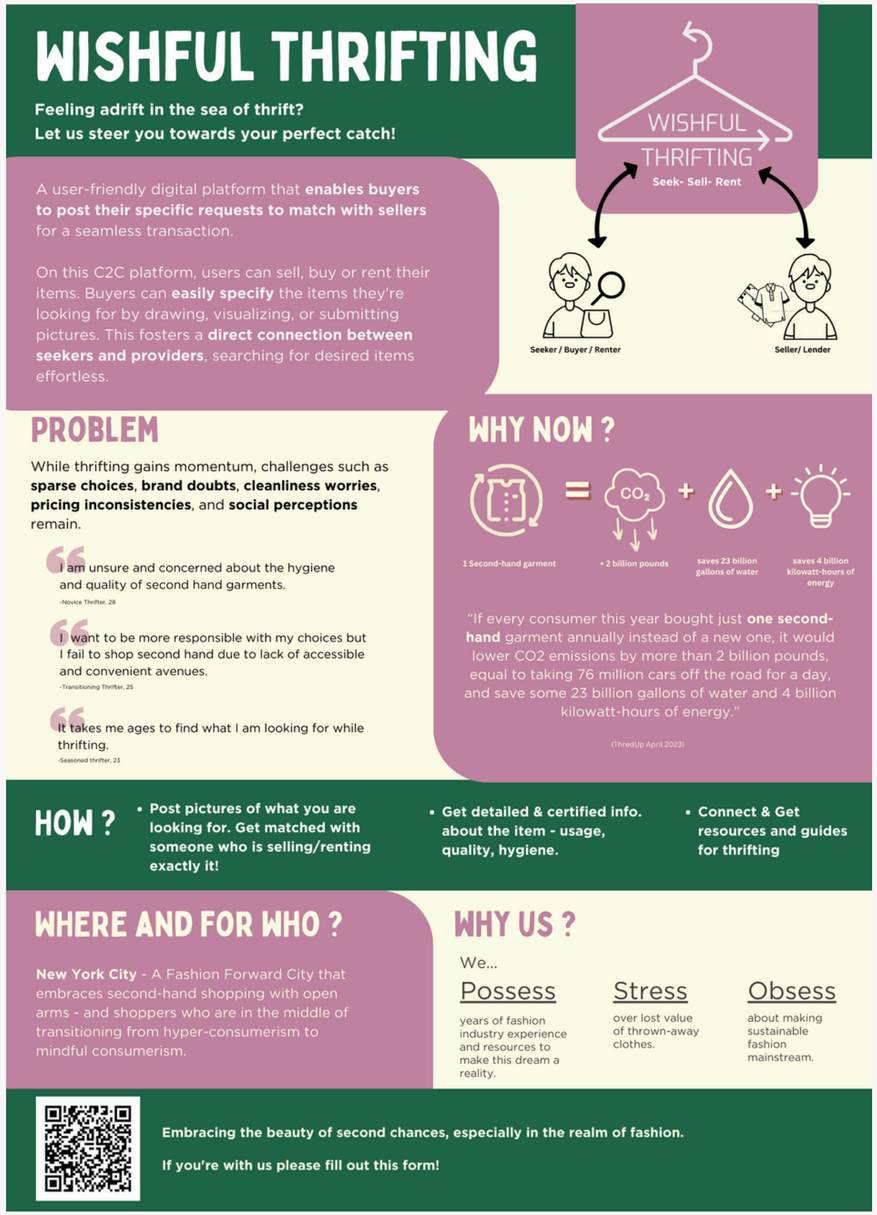
Visual search has significant potential to revolutionize need-based thrifting.

ITERATION 2

A digital platform that lets buyers (individuals + organisations) visually post what they seek and matches to across individuals & organisations selling/renting second-hand fashion items.

This iteration aimed to bring in the stakeholders in the second-hand eco-system, like small brands and thrift stores along with introducing another feature of renting for the individual. The primary feature was to help thrift stores and small and medium fashion brands with liquidating their dead stock/slow-moving inventory through our platform.

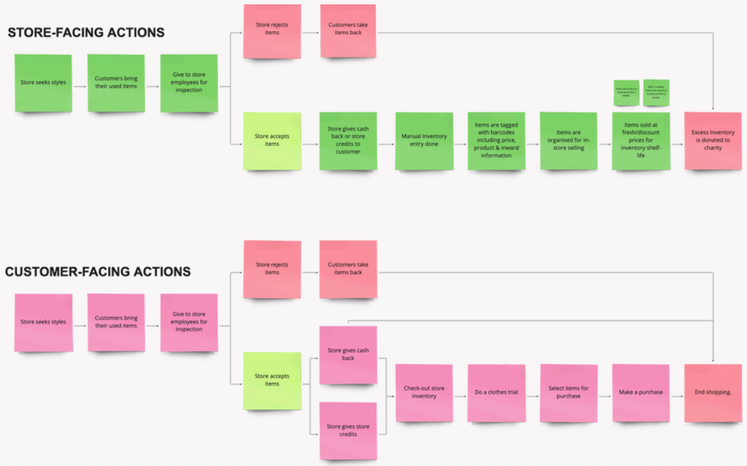




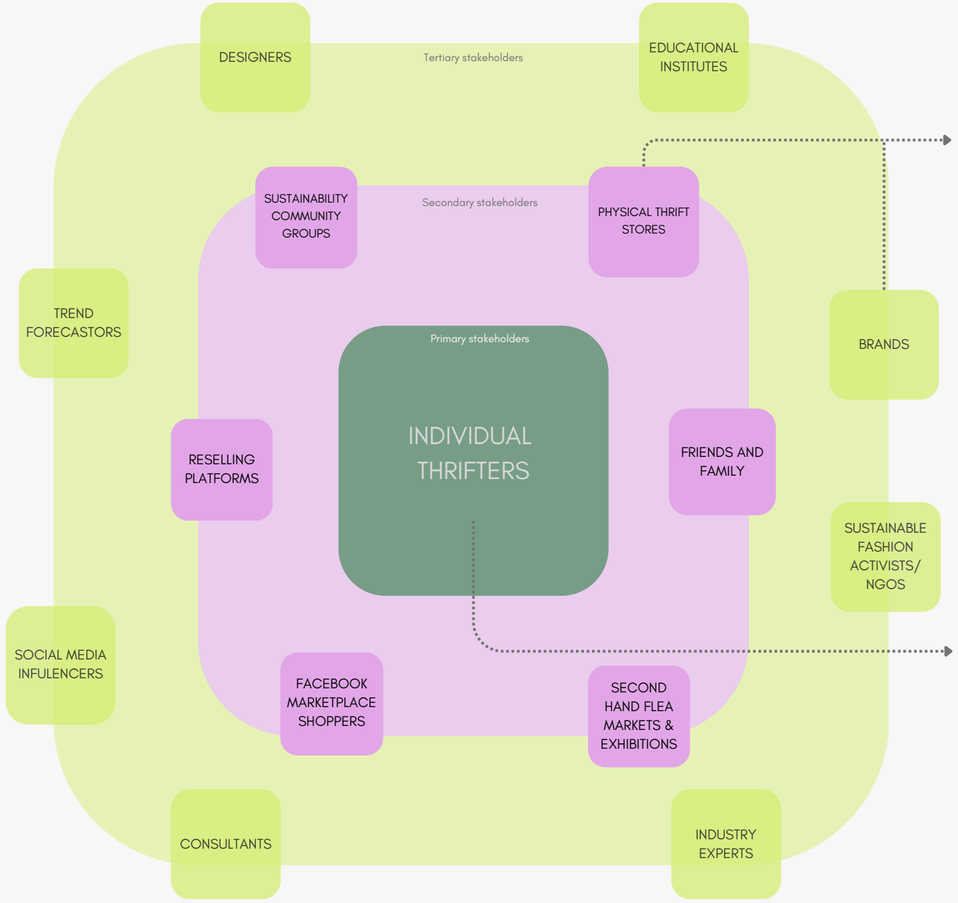
PROCESS

We found that the **desire for seeking specific needs** is strong. Thrift stores seek via manual posts outside their store. Individuals seek via browsing or asking from peers. Charities seek via partnerships with organisations.

We mapped out the journey of individuals and the thrift stores to understand what could be the entry point for wishful thrifting, since we still wanted to hold physical thrift stores in our ecosystem. We also explored the option of renting as a service.



STAKEHOLDERS



CONCEPT TESTING

One-on-one semi-structured interviews and conversations for feedback on one-pager and concept.

Powerpuff 8
Store Owner | Beacon's Closet, Manhattan NYC

Powerpuff 9
Brand Owner | Sustainable small brand, India

Powerpuff 10
Cautious Thrifter | Clinical Psychologist, NYC

FEEDBACK & INSIGHTS

concerns	Time & effort v/s sales for 1 garment will also be too much to do.	Shoppers & Sellers are same people mostly, so they want money instantly
delights	"It'll be cool to see that, there's a nice sweater 2 blocks away from me & get it."	"I can list unsold inventory of samples/minor-defect items for sale"

concerns	Concerned about refunds, exchanges and would prefer try and buy aspect	How will be the endless scrolling be taken care of?
delights	the specificity tool really helps to filter it out like pet hair. I am allergic to pet hair!	

PIVOTAL LEARNINGS

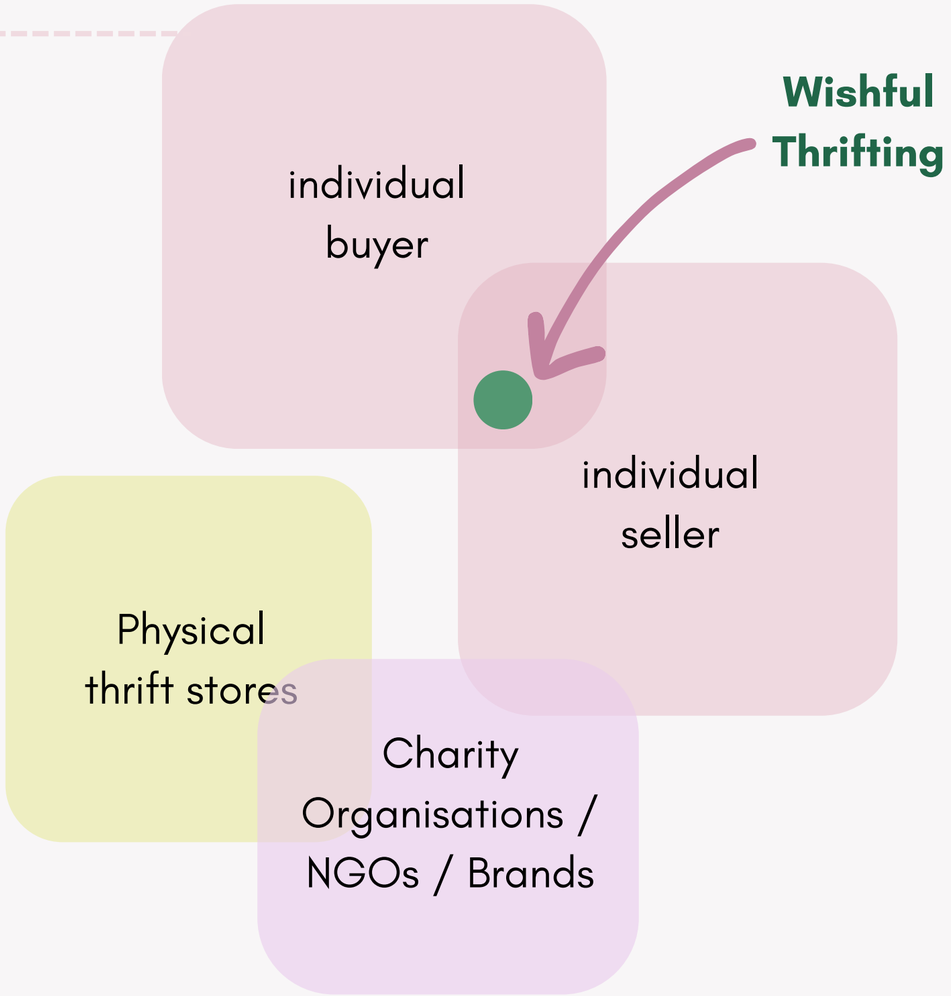
Thrift stores may find digitizing inventory challenging as their existing supply chain includes responsible disposal mechanisms.

Creating a hyper-local platform with a user-friendly interface like Tinder can enhance user experience and increase engagement.

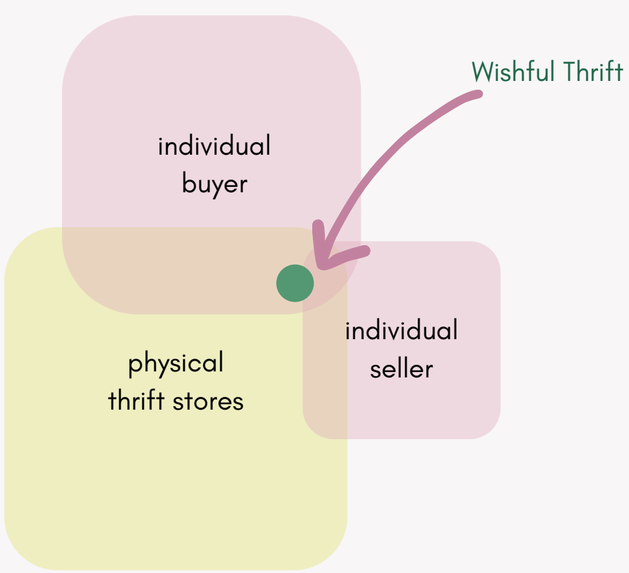
ITERATION 3

A hyper-local peer-to-peer match-making app for pre-loved fashion.

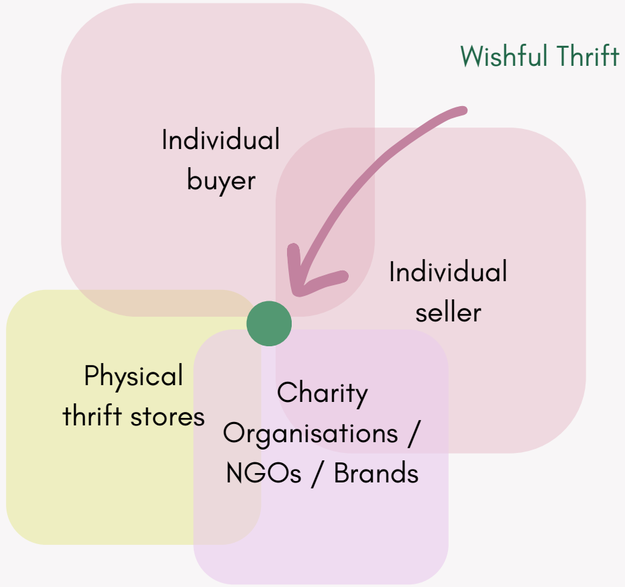
Enabling buyers to post tailored requests and get matched with sellers offering precisely what they seek, fostering a direct connection between seekers and providers, making search for desired items effortless.



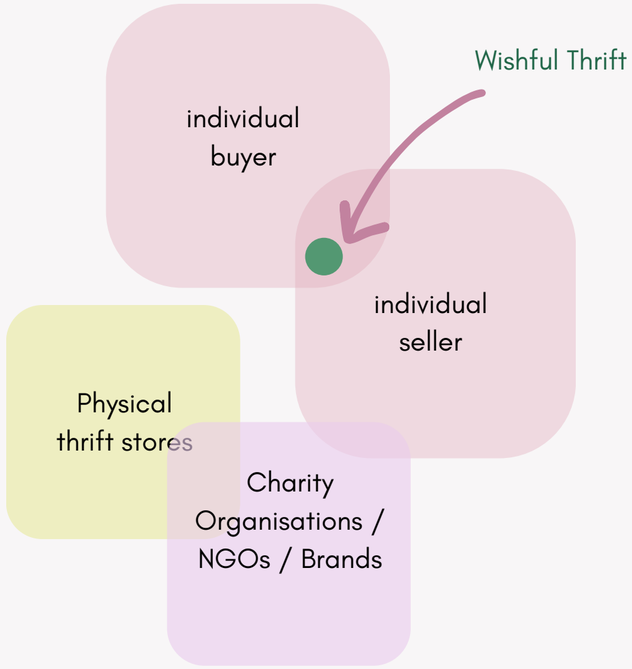
CONCEPT EVOLUTION



iteration 1



iteration 2



iteration 3

Wishful Thrift

WISHFUL THRIFT
Seek - Match - Sell

A step further than your regular search tool.

A hyper-local peer-to-peer match-making app for pre-loved fashion.
Enabling buyers to post tailored requests and get matched with sellers offering precisely what they seek, fostering a direct connection between seekers and providers, making search for desired items effortless.

5 steps to your pre-loved finds

Join → Post Request → Get Matched → Transact → Own

Post Request: Specify the items you are looking for by drawing or submitting pictures
Get Matched: Get matched to a verified seller selling exactly what you are looking for

Robust Search Tool | Reverse Image Search | Communal Benefits

Do you relate?

"I want to be more responsible with my choices but I fail to shop second hand due to lack of accessible and convenient avenues."
- Hesitant Thrifter, 25

"It's so tough to find second hand pants for my size - being tall comes with its challenges. Wish I could tell them my height!"
- Exhausted Thrifter, 19

"It takes me ages to find what I am looking for while thrifting."
- Seasoned thrifter, 23

Why care?

1 Second-hand garment = CO_2 reduces 2 billion pounds CO2 + saves 23 billion gallons of water + saves 4 billion kilowatt-hours of energy

"If every consumer this year bought just **one second-hand** garment annually instead of a new one, it would lower CO2 emissions by more than 2 billion pounds, equal to taking 76 million cars off the road for a day, and save some 23 billion gallons of water and 4 billion kilowatt-hours of energy."

(ThredUp April 2023)

Meet the team

Bhumika
Design Strategist

Kavita
Design Strategist

Tanmayi
Interior Designer

We believe in embracing the beauty of second chances, especially in the realm of fashion.

If you're with us please fill out this form!

RE-SELLING LANDSCAPE

Potential Partners

Rescue, Sourcing, Recycling | Fashion/Textile Rescue | Charities for donation | SME Fashion Brands

Fashion Re-selling

Physical Thrift Stores

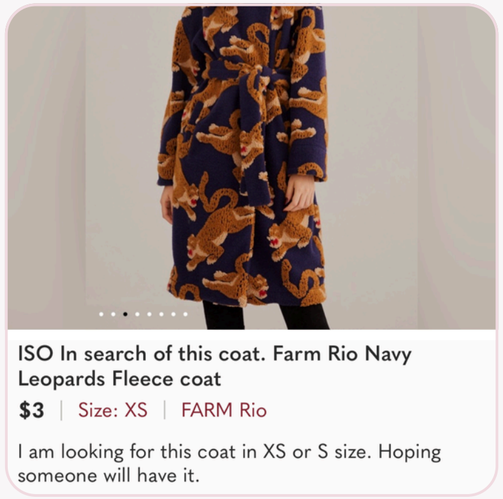
Analogous

Furniture Reselling (Online)

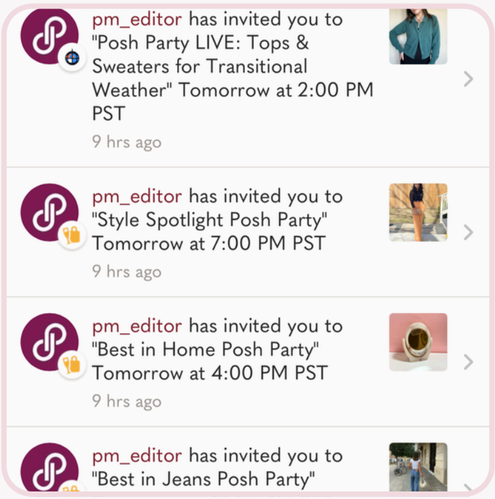
Dating Apps (Online Matching)

Community Building/ Support

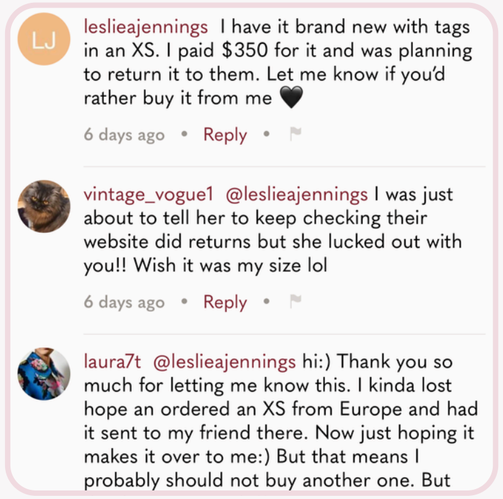
PAIN POINTS IDENTIFIED IN COMPETITORS



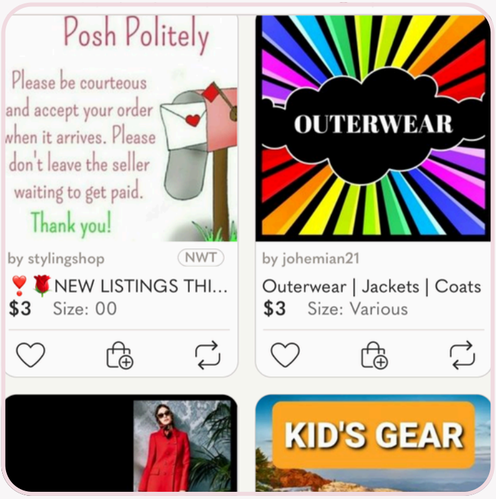
Dire need for a seeking feature, people using the listing features to create requests.



Unfriendly and cluttered platform with irrelevant notification spam.



Inconvenient, unassured matching through conversation on the listings.



Lack of credibility and assurance, flooded with spam and fake listings.

WHO SEEKS AND FOR WHAT?

Individual Shoppers

To make specific requests:

- for functional garments (maternity, camping gear, swim wear etc)
- based on physical needs (body type).
- based on garment owner's lifestyle (pet owner, smoker etc.)
- based on sensory preferences. (colours, textures, fabric types, feel).

Brands

To redirect their dead stock/ slow inventory toward reuse

NGOs/ Charity Organization

Seek out the specific needs of community

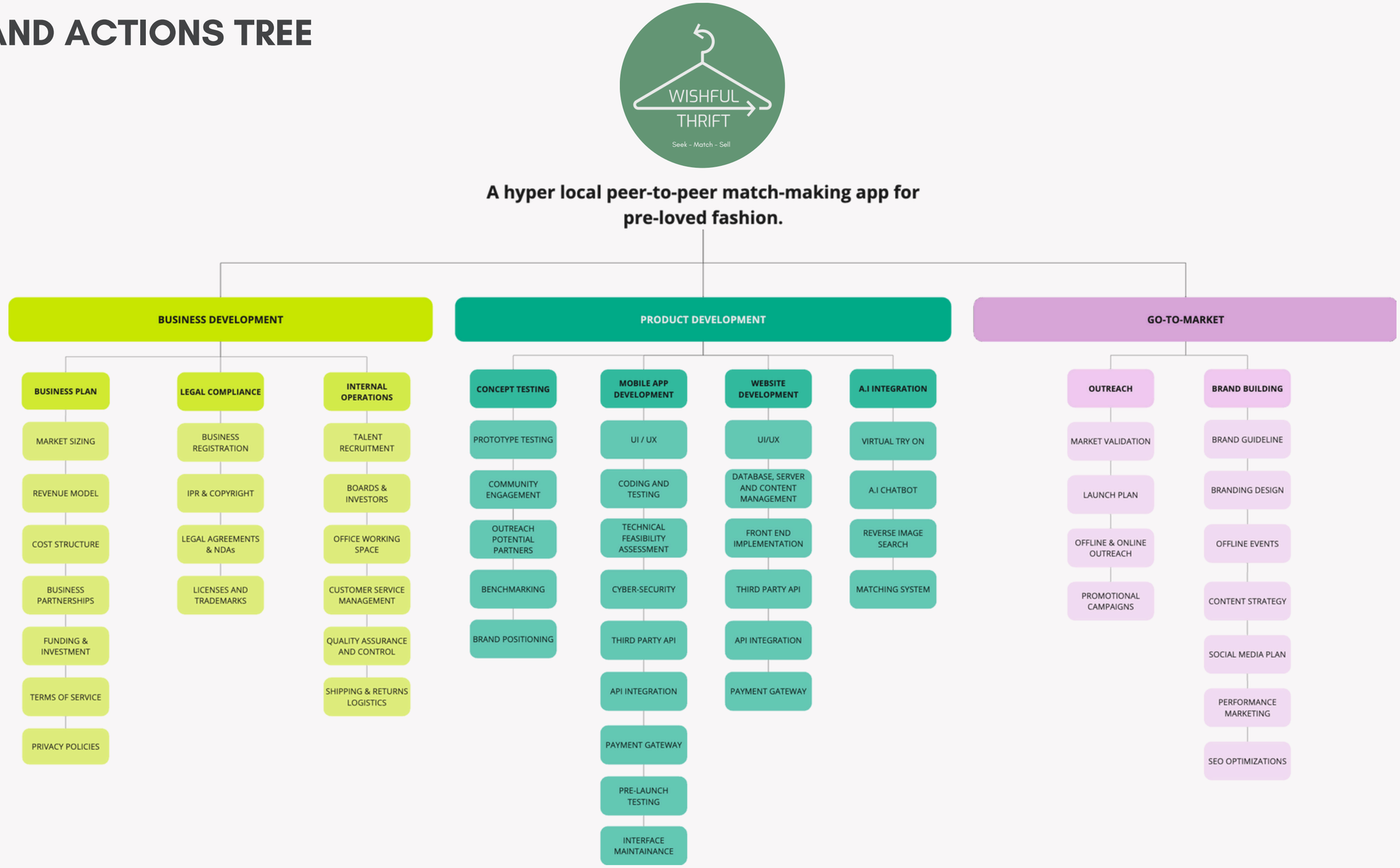
Upcyclers

Small scale designers/upcyclers who are looking for garments to design, upcycle and resell

Students

Looking for specific garments for their projects.

FUNCTIONS AND ACTIONS TREE



NEXT STEPS

1

Test the possibility of making WT a plug in that adds value to the already existing solutions

Interview non-profit organizations, upcyclers, designers and brands

Conduct Workshop with primary stakeholders about matchmaking concept validations

2

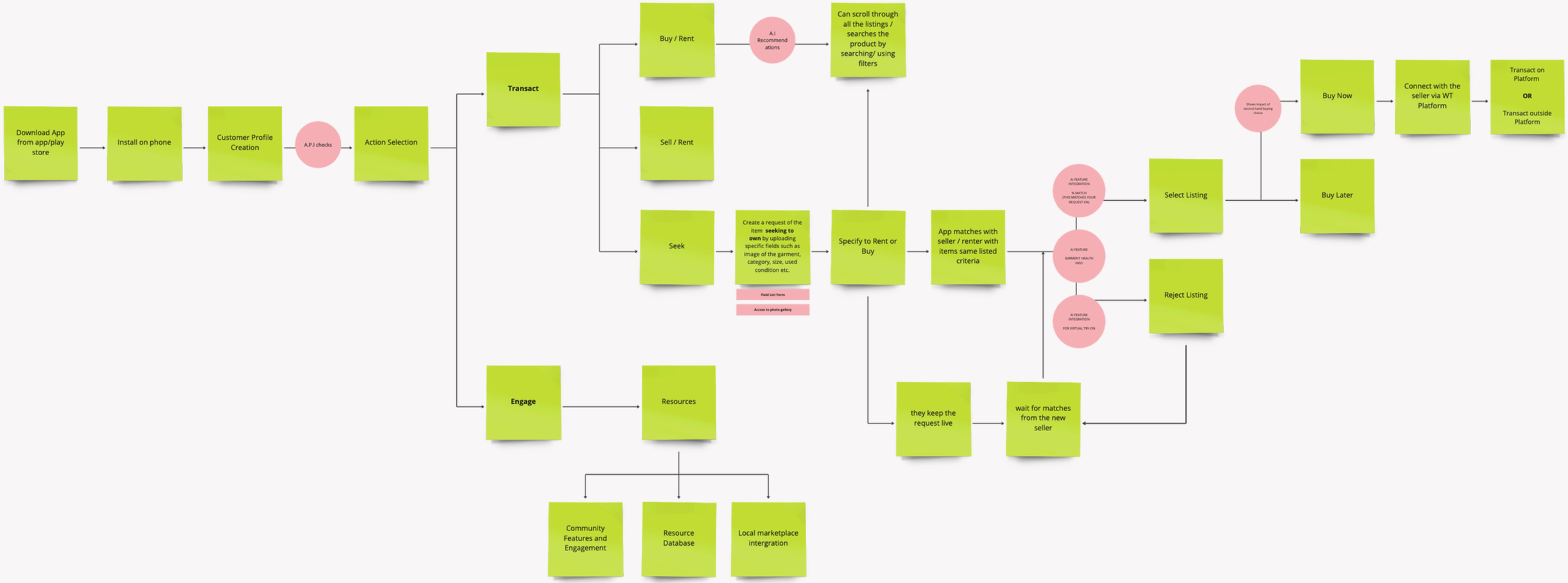
Interview software and app developers for a feature and feasibility test

Further narrowing the target audience and defining our niche

Testing and finalising the features and USPs

Business Model Development

JOURNEY MAPPING OF THE CUSTOMER



COVER LETTERS

Draft 1
Cover Letter | Formal Tone

Subject: Seeking Support and Collaboration in Testing Capstone Concept for Sustainable Fashion

Dear _____,
Hope this message finds you in good health and high spirits.

I am reaching out to express my enthusiasm and seek your interest and support for the testing of our capstone concept.

My team and I are currently engaged in developing a design intervention aimed at bridging the Action-Intention Gap among users in embracing sustainable fashion practices. Our focus revolves around the promotion of circularity, thrifting and second-hand shopping, recognizing them as an impactful way to combat the overwhelming issue of fashion waste.

Through our research, we have identified that many users encounter barriers in adopting thrifting practices. These hurdles range from inconveniences such as time-limitations to a lack of awareness, access to resources, or hygiene concerns associated with thrifting.

Having personally faced these barriers and eventually found ways to navigate through it, we believe that all these challenges are surmountable.

New York City, at the forefront of the sustainable fashion movement, has embraced second-hand initiatives with open arms. Recognizing its pioneering role, we see NYC as an ideal ecosystem to test our concept and further the industry's collective sustainability endeavors.

Consequently, we are actively seeking to connect with users, sustainability practitioners, industry changemakers, thrift store owners, and anyone involved or wishing to be part of circularity in NYC. We want to co-design with those who play a pivotal role in bringing our innovative concept to life.

I am confident that your expertise and insights would greatly help shape this concept and we look forward to the opportunity of potential collaboration.

Please let me know if you would be interested in a meeting to learn more about the concept and share your insights on it.

Thank you for your time to read through our request, and I eagerly anticipate the possibility of working together on this exciting venture, very close to our hearts - just as yours!

Best Regards,

Name
Position
Contact Information

Draft 2
Cover Letter | Formal Tone

Subject: Seeking Participation in Testing Project Concept for Fashion Thrifting

Dear _____
Hope this message finds you well.

I am reaching out to seek your participation in testing our new concept in development.

My team and I are developing a design intervention aimed at bridging the Action-Intention Gap among users in embracing sustainable fashion practices. Our focus revolves around circular fashion by promoting thrifting and second-hand shopping, recognizing them as an impactful way to combat the overwhelming issue of fashion waste.

Through our research, we found that many users face barriers in thrifting, ranging from inconveniences such as **time-limitations** to a **lack of awareness, access to resources, or hygiene concerns**.

To address these barriers, we are developing **Wishful Thrifting** - a digital platform that enables people to request what they're wishing to buy or sell second-hand and get matched with right thrift stores &/or individual sellers for a safe, credible & hassle-free transaction. Please see attached our concept note to get more details.

Consequently, we are seeking to connect and co-design with those involved or wishing to be part of circular fashion in NYC.

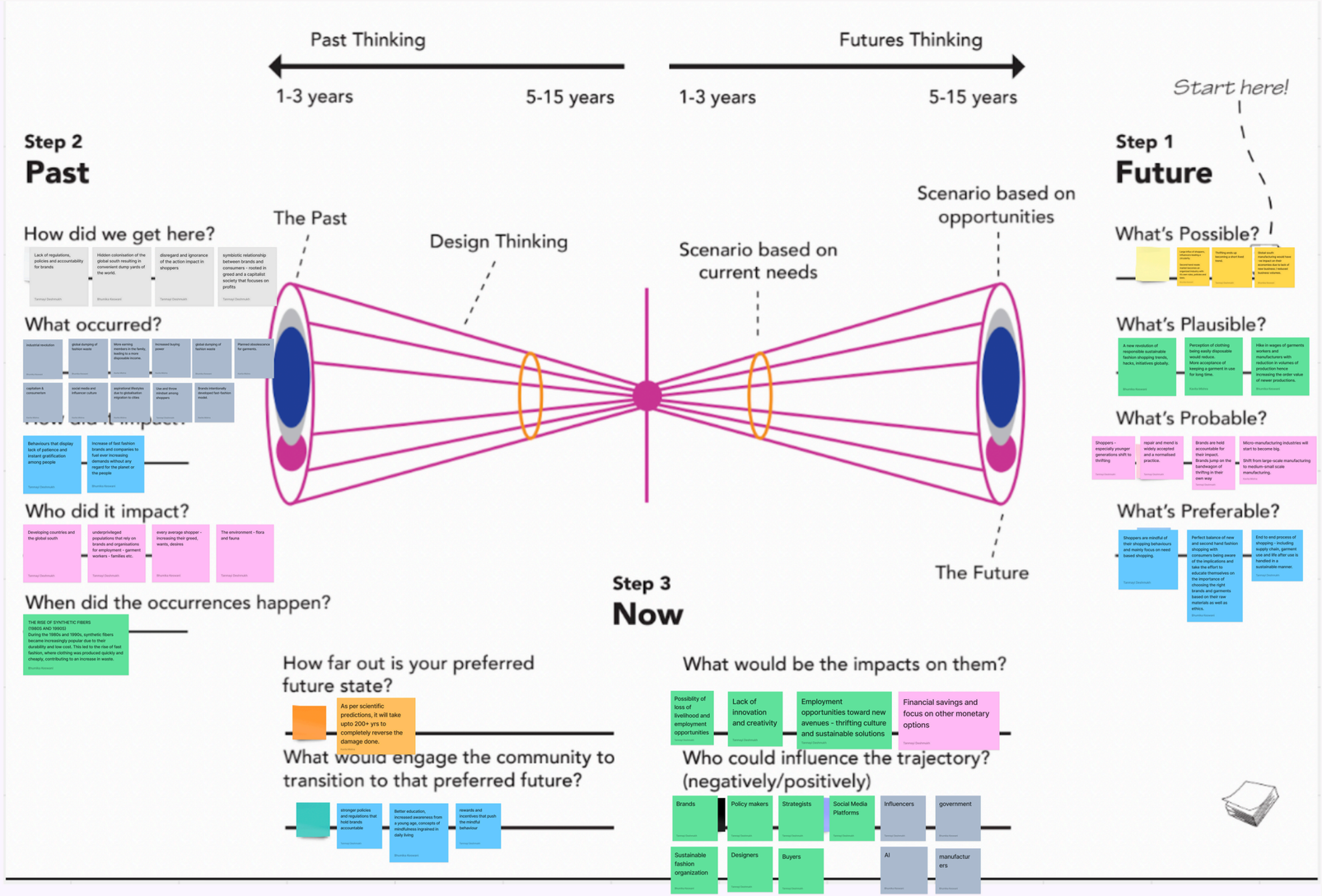
Being a ____ (enter their expertise), would you be willing to engage in a 30mins conversation about this concept between **15th Feb - 22nd Feb** to learn more and share your insights? We can set-up an in-person, zoom or audio call meeting whatever works the best for you.

Thank you for your time to read through our request, and I eagerly anticipate the possibility of working together on this exciting venture, very close to our hearts - just as yours!

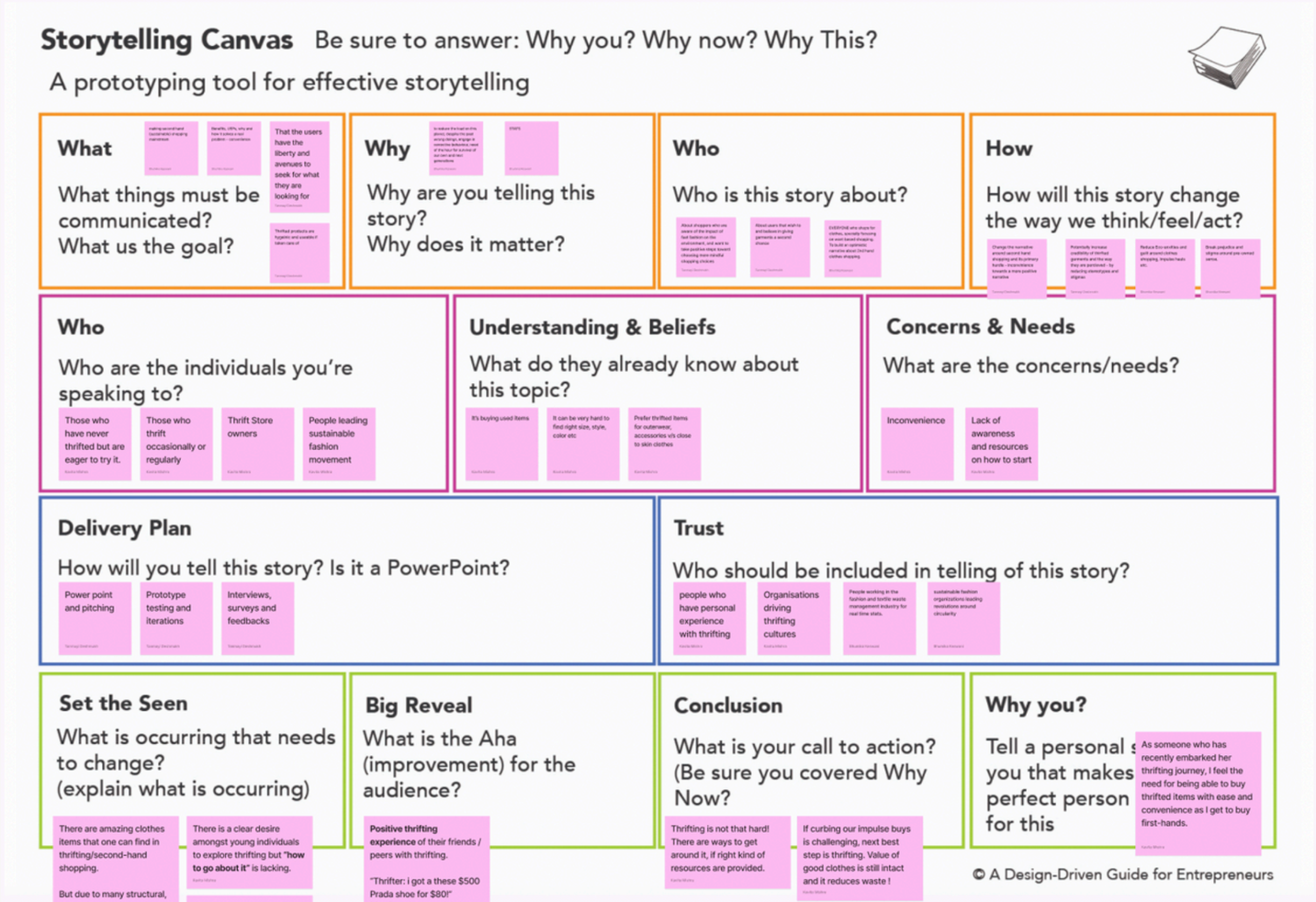
Best Regards,

Name
Position
Contact Information

FUTURE-BACK CONE



STORYTELLING CANVAS



STAKEHOLDER LIST

#	Name	Role	Company	Stakeholder Group
1	Chloe Roush	Student	Tan	Consumer (buyer/seller)
2	Soumil Panwar	Designer		Consumer (buyer/seller)
3	Praneet Thapliyal	Cybersecurity Specialist		Consumer (buyer/seller)
4	Ning			Consumer (buyer/seller)
5	Poonam Solanki	Student		Consumer (buyer/seller)
6	Samaksh Jain	Student : MS Strategic Design & Management	Parsons School of Design	Consumer (buyer/seller)
7	Parth Naik	Student		Consumer (buyer/seller)
8	Shivani Bapna	Graduate Student : MFAID	Parsons School of Design	Consumer (buyer/seller)
9	Jill Condon	Staff, Learning Space Operations	Parsons School of Design	Consumer (buyer/seller)
10	Doris Monsac	Operations Head	Custom Collaborative	Consumer (buyer/seller)
11	Christina Ivory	Alumni Co-ordinator	Custom Collaborative	Consumer (buyer/seller)
	Pooja			Consumer (buyer/seller)
12	Rachel	President : Sustainable Fashion Outreach	Parsons	Audience, Facilitator
13	TBC	Store owner / Staff	Beacon's Closet	Thrift Store
14	TBC	Store owner / Staff	CrossRoads	Thrift Store
15	TBC	Store owner / Staff	reminiscence	Thrift Store
16	Preethi Gopinath	Dean MFA Textiles	Parsons	Industry Expert
17	Ngozi Onkaro	Founder: Sustainable Fashion Start-up	Custom Collaborative	Industry Expert
18	Anette Millington	Parsons Fashion Faculty	Parsons	Industry Expert
19	Kirti	Founder: Sustainable Fashion Start-up	Relove	E-com platform owners
20	Om Singhan	Student	NYU	Industry Expert
21	Shawn	Founder - MetroLineas	Metrolineas	E-com platform owners