



Stockholm
University

Mobile Life VINN Excellence Centre
at Stockholm University

From High-Risk Design Work to a Fruitful Research Centre

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Professor, KTH

Always explore!
Always create!
Always enjoy!



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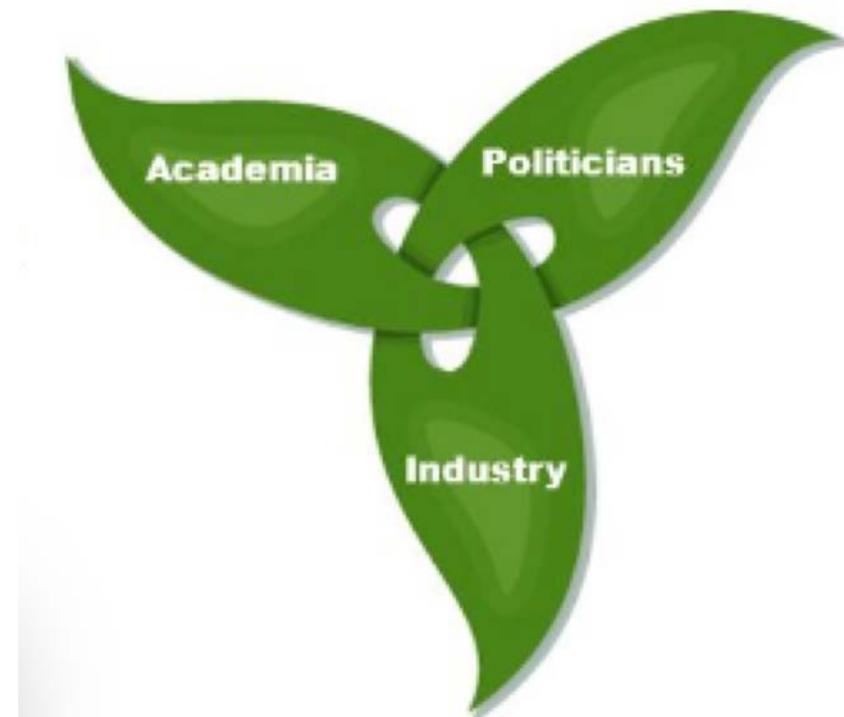


Stockholm
University

Mobile Life VINN Excellence Centre
at Stockholm University

Mobile Life
2007-2017

Triple helix



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Stockholms
stad



Sparbanken Rekarne



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ieHT.

Academic partners

- Worrying about relevance – not technology-driven but design-driven – would that work?
- Worrying about linking to partners' business models (workshop on “what do you make money from?”)
- Worrying about keeping the dialogue alive – experimenting with collaboration forms

Industry & Society partners

- Worrying about relevance
- Worrying about letting outsiders into their secret rooms (co-creation initiatives huge step for e.g. IKEA and Ericsson)
- Worrying about having to spend time (money no big deal)
- Worrying about internal re-organisations/power games/not-invented-here-problems
- Worrying about unique selling points? Why shop research here and not somewhere else?

Industry & Society partners

- Longing to be “challenged”, “encouraged” and “inspired”
- Longing for “seeing the future” before it exists
- Longing to bring in ideas to make their business/processes better – but annoyed if given what they already know
- Longing to know about the “digital disruption” will do to their business before it hits them
- Longing for a pre-competitive arena

Take risk?
YAY!

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Example: Soma project

Keys to success here:

- Daring to do design outside-the-box?
- Honest dialogue?
- Hiding early ideas?
- Designing slowly?
- Exploring together?
- Finding the right person (rather than right organisation)?

Actuation

Soma Mat & Breathing Light



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Somaesthetics?

Soma

“Soma as a living, purposive, sentient, perceptive body or bodily subjectivity”

Aesthetics

“an awakening from the mindless, joyless behaviours”

Analytical & Practical

“the highest art of all – that of living better lives”



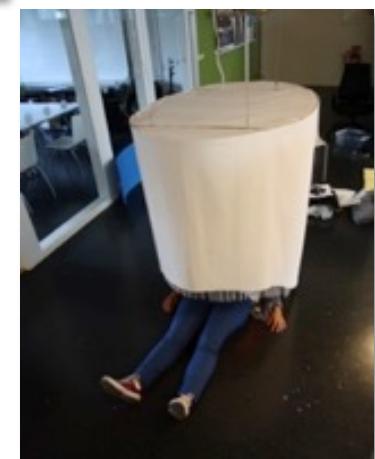
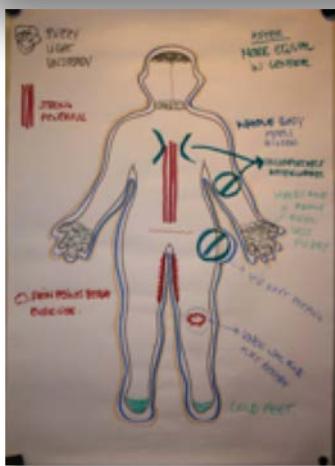
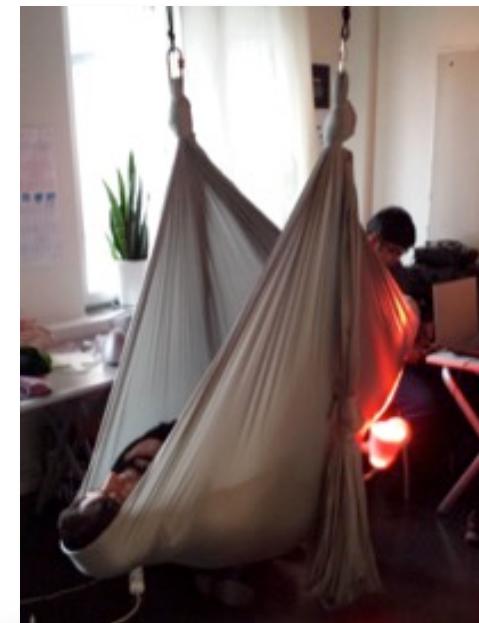
Long & winding
design journey



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Long & winding design journey



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Right person: Eva-
Carin Banka Johnson



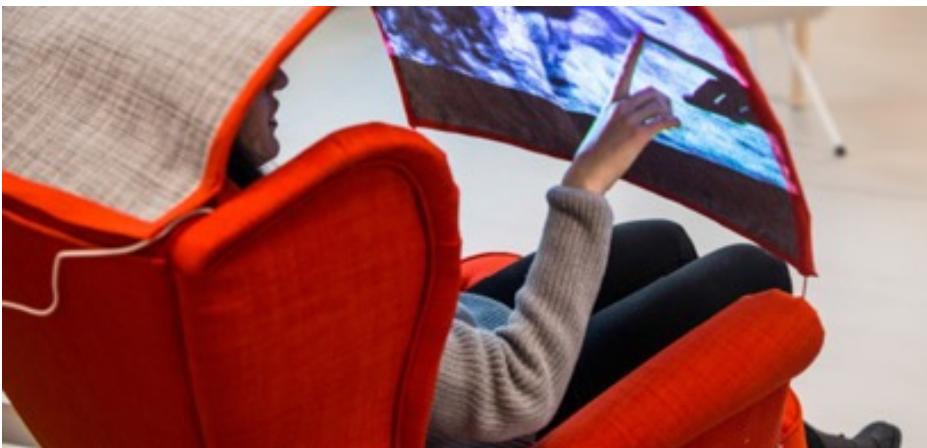
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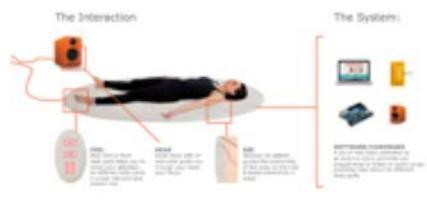
Industrial success

Hackaton democratic design centre Älmhult

Space10 exhibition



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The Soma project

By Johanna Skvarcova, Romy Stahl, Anna Karlsson, Martin Jonasson, Sanna Rydqvist & Kristina Höglund from Mobile Life Centre

In the Soma Project, we searched for an alternative design stance that would not distract us from our own experiences, but instead deepen our understanding of and engagement with ourselves.

By adopting a somatic design stance, we challenged participants to deepen the experience of their own felt bodily sensations and movements instead of relying on external sensory interactions.

With the Soma Mat, we wanted to support participants' ability to direct their attention to bodily sensations by providing haptic feedback to different parts of the body as they follow the instructions of a guided Feldenkreis lesson (a somatic educational system)

designed by Yitbarek Fedderickx. The guided session takes participants on a journey of body expression. For instance, when you hear a question like, "How is your body touching the floor right now—your heel, your right heel? Is there any difference in how they contact the floor?" the mat heats up underneath your right heel and then your left heel. The warmth comes on slowly and feels steady. We had to work hard to move the body little enough to not distract, but hard enough to feel the difference. We found the right tempo, heat intensity, and interaction with the vocal instructions, the experience became intensely pleasurable.

We are now in the third prototype phase and have started to implement changes based on the feedback we received from our first iterations. We are really excited to exhibit it at Space10 and to receive more feedback from people.

THE MOBILE LIFE CENTRE

The Mobile Life Centre's research is based on developing a deeper understanding of human behaviour. We envision an enjoyment society, where happiness, pleasure and playfulness are key motivators. This is a cross-disciplinary, involving researchers from computer science, interaction design, design, and psychology, but also from game design, art, dance, and fashion.

Q&A



Innovation Leader of Future Horizons R&D
Eva-Carin Berns, R&D

How did you start working with Mobile Life around the soma project?

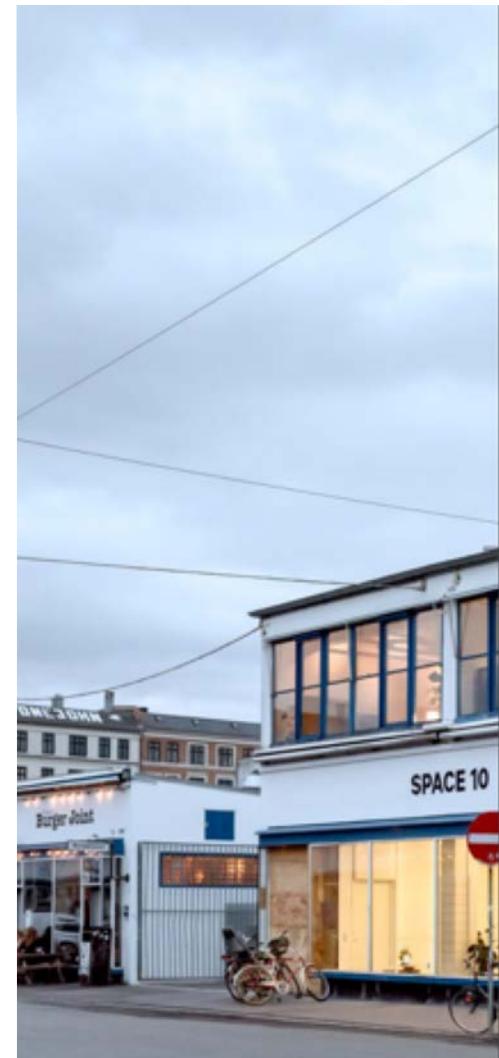
They used to bring me to their meetings, and we were working on an idea from the inside—spying a home from the inside—thinking about our own needs and then creating a home around it. Then we saw that we could work with the body and then fit the home with cooling and heating. We were curious to see if this research could help us understand our needs.

How did you come up with the design idea that could support people?

There is something many people need and that is

What was the approach?

We wanted to explore how we could design with a somatic, more holistic approach for supporting meditation body interaction. We use light and touch to create a space that gives incentives to move our bodies. People who try out prototypes report feelings of relaxation, better movement, and an increased awareness of their own breathing.



Mobile Life

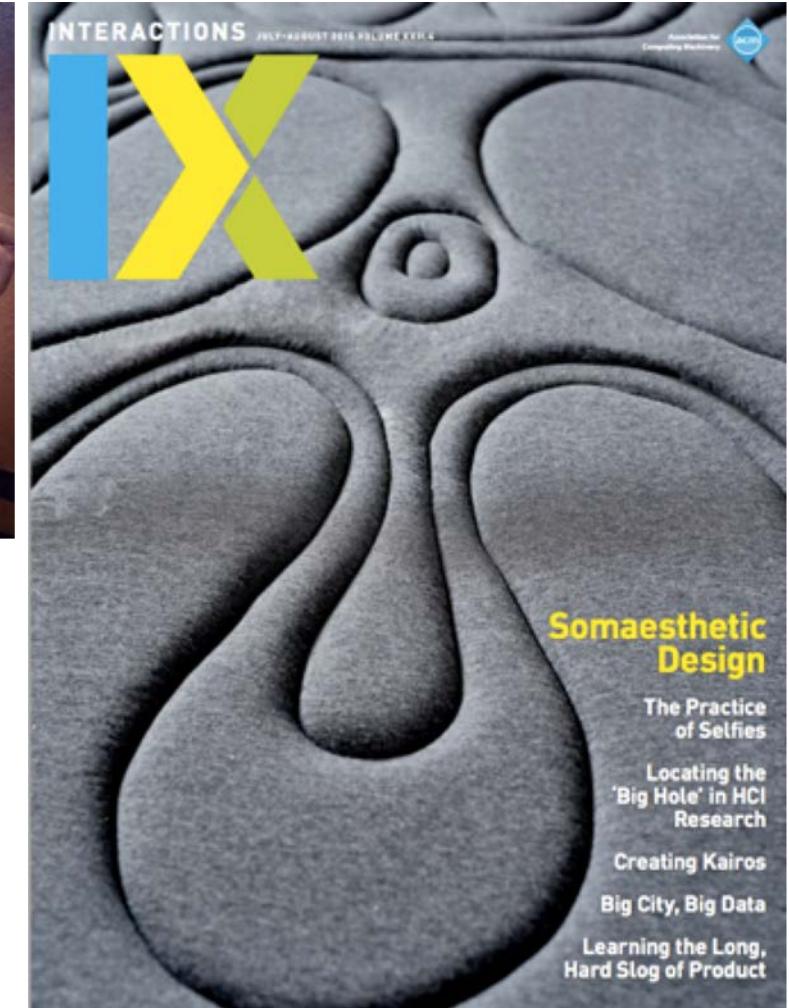
Academic success

Honourable mention
at CHI-conference



Front cover
interactions

Book on Soma Design
with MIT Press in
2018



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Soma project: success

- We took risk
- We designed slowly
- We designed together with our partners
- Tangible design outcomes – of relevance to IKEA
- Beyond exemplars – an alternative design philosophy - scaling

Soma project success: touching disruption & scaling

- Consumer-product companies (IKEA, Husqvarna, ...) met Internet of Things
- Products become services rather than things
- Who makes money in that new eco-system?
- What do you do with the data?
- How do you make IoT affordable to “the many people”?
- What is “ownership” in the age of sharing economy?

Implications

Smart Implicit Interaction: homes



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Implications

Smart Implicit Interaction: cities



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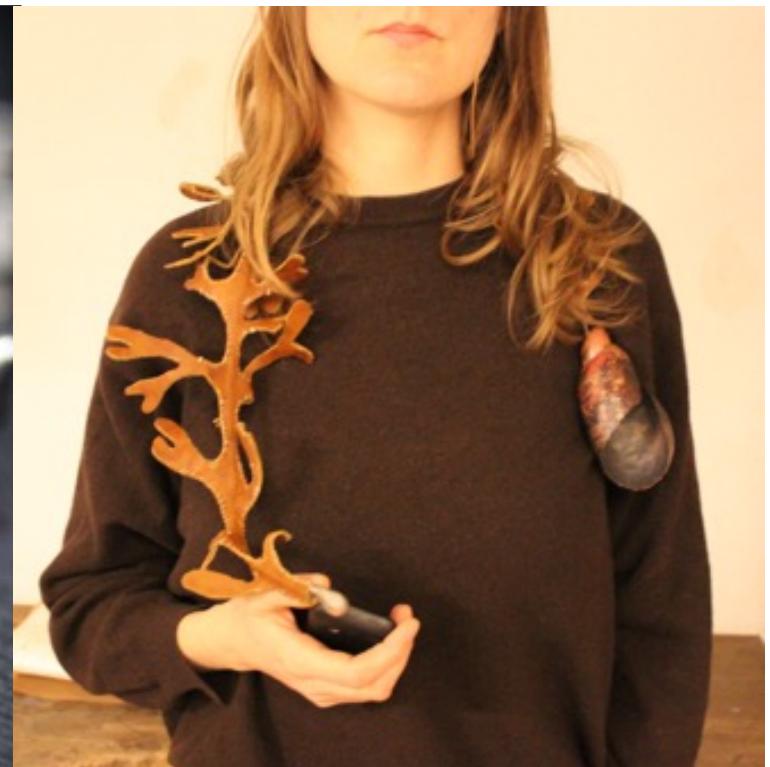
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Touching Disruptions?

- No banks in five years? (Rekarnes Sparbank)
- Nobody wants to work in control rooms? (ABB)
- Infrastructure no longer sold to operators? (Ericsson)
- Digital tools altering the conservative fashion industry? (H&M)

Actuation

Interactive Jewelry



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Actuation

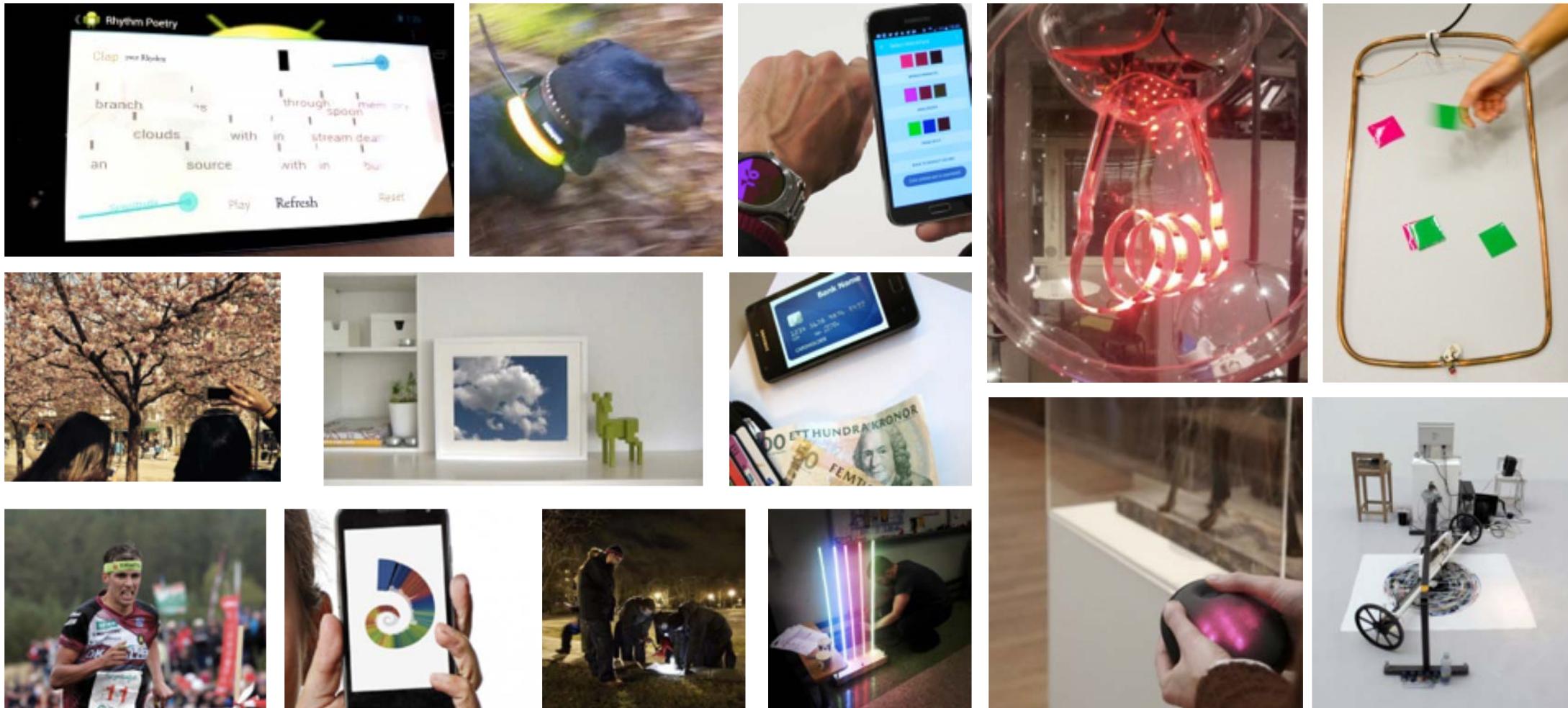
Fashion: interactive video



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...and much more



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Collaborations forms

There is no given formula for how to collaborate between partners!

- Pre-competitive arena
- Joint projects
- Internships – also for seniors
- Going on trips together – Japan, Silicon Valley, India and Europe
- Lectures
- Creating specific applications, tools or toolkits
- Creating popular descriptions or design fictions
- Joint workshops or brainstorming activities
- Sharing a research/design method
- Open house demos
- Joint exhibitions
- Partner days where all projects are presented
- Industrial PhD-students

A strength of the Mobile Life centre was probably our willingness to try out different collaboration forms in an equally creative manner as we engaged with our research topics.

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www.mobilelifecentre.org



In numbers:

~250 people engaged in the centre (~150 people working in the centre)

210 MSEK + other grants ~145 MSEK = 355 MSEK

52 journal papers

184 full peer-reviewed conference

113 short papers, posters, workshop papers

6 books

4 spinoff companies

10 companies & Stockholm City Municipality