PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: Akshay Roongta
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EDUCATION

2013 – 2016
MA in New Media from Aalto University, Helsinki

2005 – 2009
Graduate Diploma in Product Design from Symbiosis Institute of Design, Pune

2003 - 2005
International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, Dhirubhai Ambani International School, BKC, Mumbai

1991 - 2003
ICSE, Bombay Scottish School, Mahim, Mumbai

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

2017 - Present
Full-time Independent Strategy and Design Consulting
1. Designing an Agent Empowerment Platform for BTPN, an Indonesian Bank - *Quicksand, India*
2. Designing and executing Evaluation for Informal Science education at 'The Story of Space, 2017' – *The Story of Foundation, India*
3. Developing a system of documentation for learning and scale of fluorosis mitigation strategy - *INREM Foundation, India*
4. Advising on internal communications using digital communication platforms and rethinking e-facilitation - *Quest Alliance, India*
5. Developing a system for replication and communication of Lab.Our Ward, a maternal health service design for low resource settings - *M4iD, Finland*
6. Structuring the pilot and documenting for scale for Engagement of Alumni from the Skills to Succeed programme - *Quest Alliance, India*
7. Ethnographic Research around rituals in maternal health in Bihar - *M4iD, Finland*
8. Technology Roadmap and Strategy for Anandshala Program - *Quest Alliance, India*
9. Leading the Monitoring and Evaluation Team for 4 year EU funded national project around Fluorosis and Arsenic - *INREM Foundation & Partners, India (ongoing)*

2013 - 2016
Part-time Independent Strategy and Design consulting in various capacities
1. Strategy and Product Roadmap for the Sustained Mastery Programme - *321 Education Foundation*
2. Researcher and Designer - *Talkoot Taxi (A 2014 world design capital project in Cape Town), a project as part of a student team at Aalto University*
3. Programmatic design for encouraging students to become entrepreneurs - *AltCity (a startup incubator in Lebanon), a project as part of a student team at Aalto University*
4. Part of panel of experts working on programme strategy - *Climate + Change (ICIMOD + Thinc Design)*
5. Research, Naming and Brand Positioning - *3CCollective (Low cost hand hygiene)*
6. Assisting in facilitation of global workshop on Behavior change at scale - *Unilever (Lifebuoy Social mission)*
7. Conceiving of and deploying experimental participatory learning networks in a WASH Behavior Change project in rural India - *Centre of Gravity and TATA Trust*
8. Workshop on 'Lean experiments towards programme improvement' for senior staff - *Technoserve India*
9. Editing and writing on 'Reflecting on Toolkits' a broad, long-term research exercise - *Quicksand*
10. Mentor for the Open Leaders Training Series for Round 3 and Round 4 - *Mozilla Foundation*

2013 – 2015
Co-founder and COO at Amrutdhara Water Services
Amrutdhara is a social enterprise designing and deploying systems that use technology to ensure access to quality-assured drinking water in urban India.

2010 - 2013
Design Research, Product Design and Project Management at Quicksand Design Studio
Projects:
1. The Potty Project — The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
2. Healthy Futures — A global consumer electronics company
3. UnBox 2011 — Design Festival initiated and executed by Quicksand
4. Hand Hygiene research, ideation and prototyping — Clean Hands Inc.
5. Smartphone Usage in India — A global Mobile Phone company
6. User-centred research around Dishwashing in India and Nigeria — A global FMCG company
7. UnBox 2012 — Design Festival initiated and executed by Quicksand
8. Project Sammaan — The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
9. Digital Camera usage — Idea Couture, Toronto
10. UnBox 2013 — Design Festival initiated and executed by Quicksand

SHOWCASE PROJECTS - 2016 to Present

Participatory Learning Networks: Empowering Grassroots workers to Innovate in Context, MA Thesis at Aalto University ‹Link›
The thesis investigates the use of participatory media in large scale development projects to empower grassroots workers and middle managers to localise solutions by innovating in and for the context. It further supports the conceptualisation of 'Participatory Learning Networks', which act as a system to enable 'middle managers' to accomplish the same. The thesis proposes, a set of principles for organisational and project design that would help restructure processes to be more 'bottom centred' as opposed to the narrative of top-down/bottom-up. Additionally, it defines principles for the design and execution of the setting up of networks for realtime communication using a suite of existing and new digital tools. The ideas of the thesis were tested and iterated through a pilot project across about twelve villages in rural Gujarat, as part of a larger behavior change in WASH programme being conducted by the TATA Trust, and supported by Centre of Gravity.

Developing a system for replication and communication of Lab.Our Ward, M4iD
The Lab.our Ward Innovation Project, created by M4iD, a BMGF grantee, brings together expertise from the fields of product, service and architectural design, in collaboration with maternal and newborn health experts, to improve the birth experience in low-resource settings. The project has over the past year or so, been working actively to pilot the solutions in various contexts in Africa and India. I am working with them in the capacity of a strategic advisor and service designer, to help document a pilot in Balasore, sponsored in part by a local Member of Parliament. The ultimate outcome of my work, is to use the learnings from the pilot, while applying frameworks from the learning networks to create a concept note to restructure the Lab.Our Ward project as a learning resource to be used by a variety of stakeholders to scale the impact of the initial service design concepts as well as add learnings and contextual information, creating a dynamic system to aid replication.

Developing a system of documentation for learning and scale of fluorosis mitigation strategy, INREM Foundation
Over the past seven years, the INREM foundation with their field team, the Fluorosis Mitigation Centre (FMC) in Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh has been working on the components of a holistic approach to addressing the issue of skeletal, non-skeletal and dental fluorosis faced by tribal, rural communities in the district. Through a process of iterative design and contextualisation of research by experts, they have worked out a process and a set of tools that can be used to mitigate the effects of fluoride contamination in water and malnutrition, in far flung villages in the district. My work with them has been to study their processes, help them tease out and synthesize the process, approaches, stories and learnings so that they can go about creating a dynamic and live 'toolkit', that can be used in their work with partners such as UNICEF and the larger Fluoride Knowledge

and Action Network (FKAN), to affect change in fluoride affected areas across India, besides helping them scale up across various locations in adjoining areas of Madhya Pradesh.

Designing an Agent Empowerment Platform for BTPN, an Indonesian Bank, Quicksand
BTPN WOW is a financial inclusion product that is administered through microentrepreneur agents across rural and peri-urban Indonesia. At the start of the project the number of agents stood at about 200,000 and the number of customers at around 3 million. The project with Quicksand, was to design the principles of a platform on smartphone and the existing USSD, that would empower the agents to better service the customers and offer more complex and much needed financial products, while continuing to scale across the country. The key was to apply principles of gamification and behavior change, while building the network in such a way that agents could learn from each other, and have more transparency into their own performance and growth. For the bank, the goal was to be able to scale up not just the network, but to get deeper into the market with more products, while maintaining the size of the ranks of their onground staff.