CENTER FOR URBAN PEDAGOGY

MISSION/ AMBITIONS
TACTICS
NETWORKS
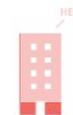
Carla Landa | Peter Lee

Empowerment_guide to knowledge as power to individual or group lacking. First used and defined in the paramenters of self actualization, now has obtained a relationship towards economic growth. Empowerment can be optained by means of agency.

"CUP hopes that the information will empower constituents to advocate for themselves."

CUP is a non-profit organization operating out of New York City, using design to become a **dialogical interface** between communities and organizations.

"The first step to increasing participation is making the knowledge more accessible ~~through design~~"

Working within a framework of mediation between organizations or educators and artist or activist, designing processes for creating knowledge about urban issues and distributing it to various organizations
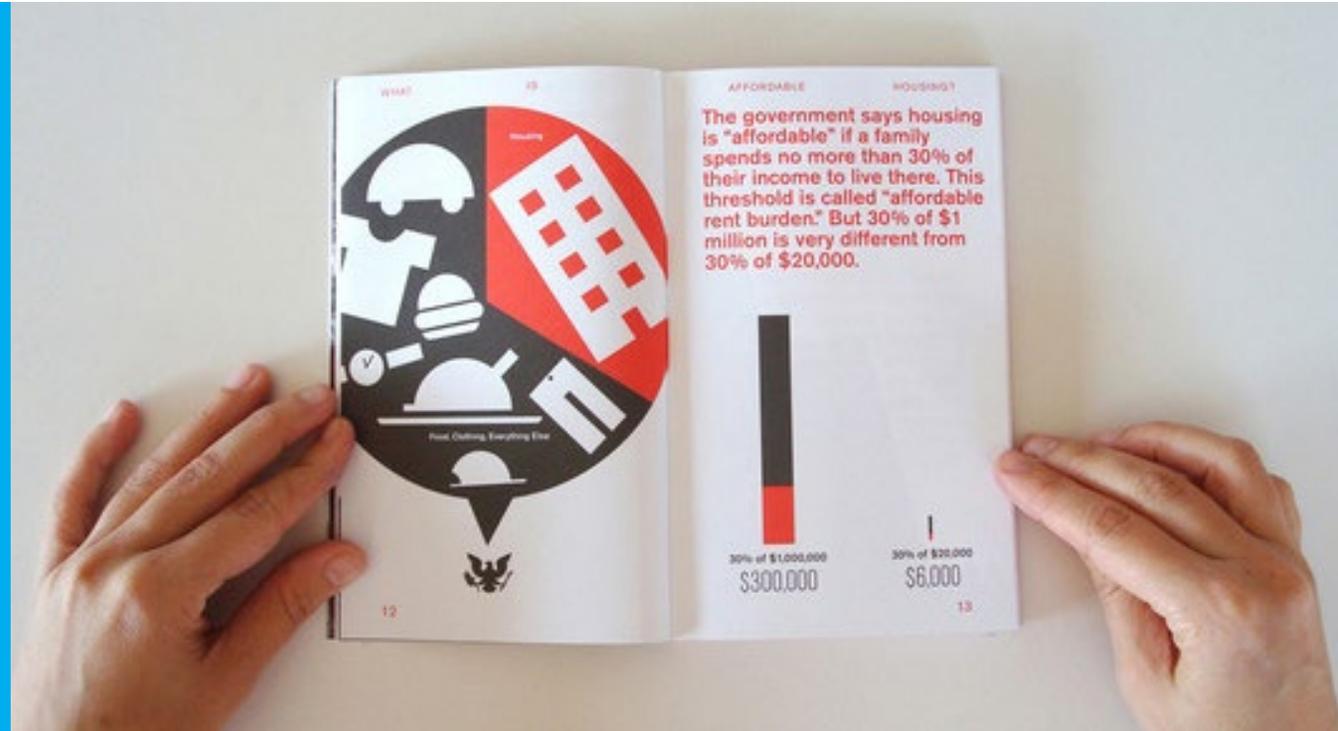
Goals to improve community-based civic engagement with urban policy and planning issues that impact communities. By including more diverse individuals in a community process to shape urban policy and planning issues.

Founded in 1997 drew on diverse backgrounds to collaborate on projects investigating how the city works. They made publications, videos, and exhibits on topics like urban renewal, housing subsidies, and the history of public housing. NOW_an anticollective, many collaborators, not a group as a single entity but together and utilizing the orgaziation as a social instrument.

DAMON RICH	**ROSTEN WOO**	**JASON ANDERSON**	**AJ BLANDFORD**	**JOSH BREIBART**	**STELLA BUGBEE**	**ALTHEA WASOW**	
artist/ architect	policy analyst	artist	contractor	media artist	graphic designer	filmmaker	**+**

Pedagogy_ engages art, as a kind of empowerment without an end. Encouraging to produce works that illuminate politics and have a sympathetic relationship to organizing but that don't produce clear answers or directives.

"Artwork is particularly structured to be effective in that way." Damon Rich

1. COLLABORATION
2. VISUAL COMMUNICATION
3. URBAN EDUCATION
4. SOCIAL JUSTICE
5. ACCESSIBILITY

Promises
of fair wages
and treatment

1. Collaborative process. CUP is committed to bringing individuals from different fields together in creative dialogue. All CUP projects include CUP staff, artists or designers, community-based or advocacy organizations, and the people directly affected by the issues we address.

2. Visual communication. Every CUP project results in a piece of visual communication. CUP works with artists and designers to create everything from documentaries to posters to comic books to contraptions, all with a strong visual presence and a focus on making information accessible, enjoyable, and meaningful.

3. Education about urban issues. CUP projects produce visual tools designed to be used by constituencies that can most benefit from the information. These audiences include community organizations, who use the products in their own organizing efforts; educators, who use the products in their classrooms; and other constituencies addressed in particular projects, such as New York City street vendors or residents of public housing.

4. A focus on social justice. While CUP aims to foster greater and better civic participation across the board, our projects emphasize engagement of historically underrepresented communities. Our youth education programs are all based within the New York City public school system, and our community education programs emphasize collaborations with low-income communities and other underrepresented groups.

5. Accessibility. CUP is serious about civic engagement, but we think it works better when it's fun. We find these topics inherently interesting but we know they can often be intimidating. We think it's easier for people to engage with projects that capture their imaginations, make them laugh, or give them a chance to play.

ACTIVISM

Activism_ act to seek social change

Participatory design_ charitable savior of political struggle, through design arrive a conformation and dellution of real issue. Bringing everyone to the "same page"

What is Affordable Housing?

As advocacy_
What is Affordable Housing?
Distribution of knowdlege
(not direct engagement with
constituents) Passive Resistance

As protest_
Occuply Wall Street
Distribution of Knowdlege to
everyone directly engaged
with the space of the street

Not mistaking non violence
for passivity "nonviolent
resistance becomes a "carefully
crafted f*** you"
_Judith Butler

As advocacy_
Bridge Project (CUDC)
Just the act of opening up the
bridge, not asking for partic-
ipation but letting constitu-
ents, occupy and inhabit for
inprocess planning based on
reaction. Could start to view
as active resistance and still a
project of advocacy.

CUP created a workshop toolkit to explain affordable housing policy language to constitutents. The toolkit was designed in collaboration with Glen Cummings, community organizations, advocacy groups, and policy experts. The toolkit is then distributed to organizations and educators to be used to workshop the issue to their constituents.

Important points:

1. This is purely an informational product.
2. It's distributed to organizations, not the constituents themselves.

Stakeholders

CUP

Community Advocates

Community Organizations

Schools

Art/Design Organizations

Foundations/ Non-Profits

Non-Profit Organizations

Policy Organizations

Legal Organizations

Governmental Organizations

Grassroots Organizations
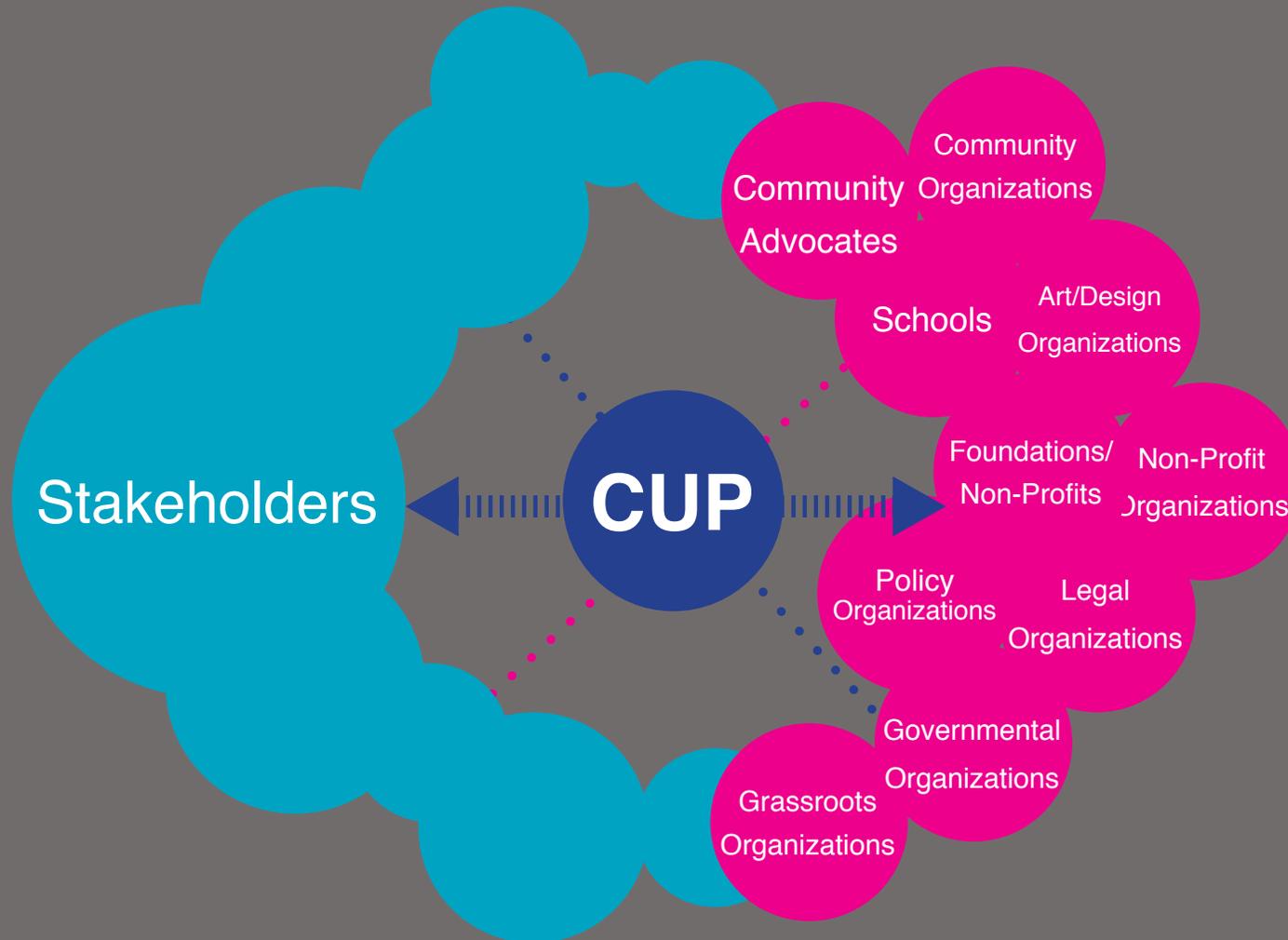
CUP acts as an **interface** that reciprocally exchanges knowledge with both institutions/ organizations and stakeholders. As a result, the web of relationships are very interconnected. Sometimes CUP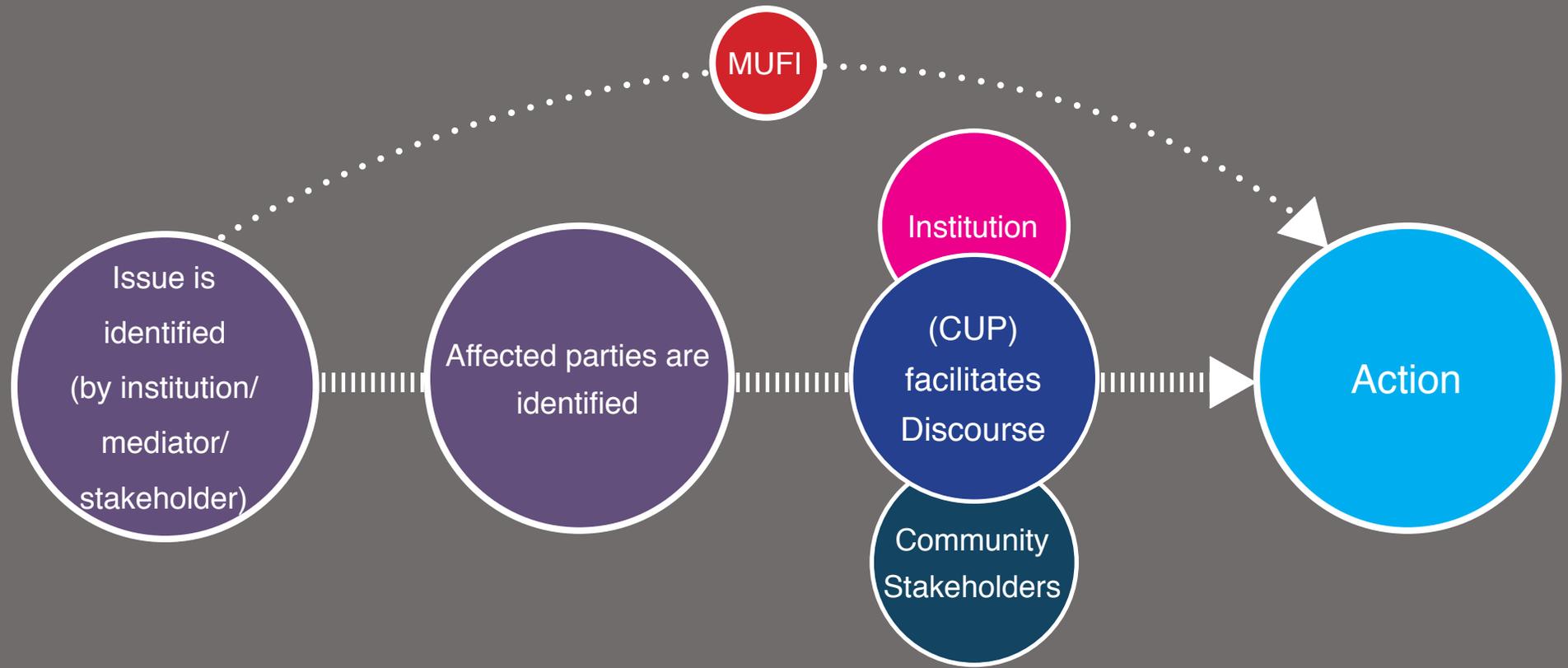 initiates the process, other times an an organization approaches them, and yet others, stakeholders themselves initiate.

Funding comes from a combination of grants, private donors and partnerships.

MUFI

Institution

(CUP) facilitates Discourse

Community Stakeholders

Issue is identified (by institution/ mediator/ stakeholder)

Affected parties are identified

Action

CUP does not actually produce direct interventions or actions. It merely acts as an interpreter of discourse, creating a common language for stakeholders and academics/officials to speak from. It's important to note that both the issue and the response to the issue are determined by either stakeholders or institutions. From CUP's compartmentalized position as mediator, we extrapolated a rough production chain for change in the social/built environment. Mediation plays a crucial role; the village teacher in the informal settlement in India also fits into this model. MUFI mentioned that they went straight from issue to action in their initial take-over and faced many obstacles.

Antagonism_ Instead of reading participation as the charitable savior of political struggle, what are the limits and traps of its real motivations.

Rather than breading the next generation of consensual facilitators and mediators, arguing for conflict as an enabling, instead of disabling, force. Conflictual participation or Antagonism—no longer a process by which others are invited "in," but a means of acting without mandate, as uninvited irritant: a forced entry into fields of knowledge that arguably benefit from exterior thinking.

Organization

Issue is identified (by institution/mediator/stakeholder)

Affected parties are identified

Issue is re-framed to relate to systemic paradigms

Community Stakeholders

Antagonism

CUP engages in design processes that aim to allow stakeholders to a greater degree of input and control to the resulting form. For the sake of argument in this chart, we will refer to it as a participatory design process. Often-times, these participatory design practices merely involve a facilitation of consensus with the aim to address an immediate problem. We propose that this design can be utilized to re-frame issues in such a way that their socio-economic, historical, political and cultural roots are revealed as normal operating conditions, rather than exceptions to the rule. This can lead to direct action and antagonism. An example of a

References

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