

Rupture/Repair



Reflections on repair

We acknowledge Australia's First Peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands where this zine was created. Repair of relationships. Repair of Country. Recovery toward justice.

Creating
something
great

Project background

The past two years have been spent exploring rupture and repair in co-design with those who have experienced the messiness of relational work. Our first zine is designed as a resource for reflective practice. It focused on what rupture looked like and felt like at the starting point and messy middle of co-design, and ended with some collective wisdom – a gift, shaped like proud moments, questions to self, and hopes for the future of collective creativity and change making.

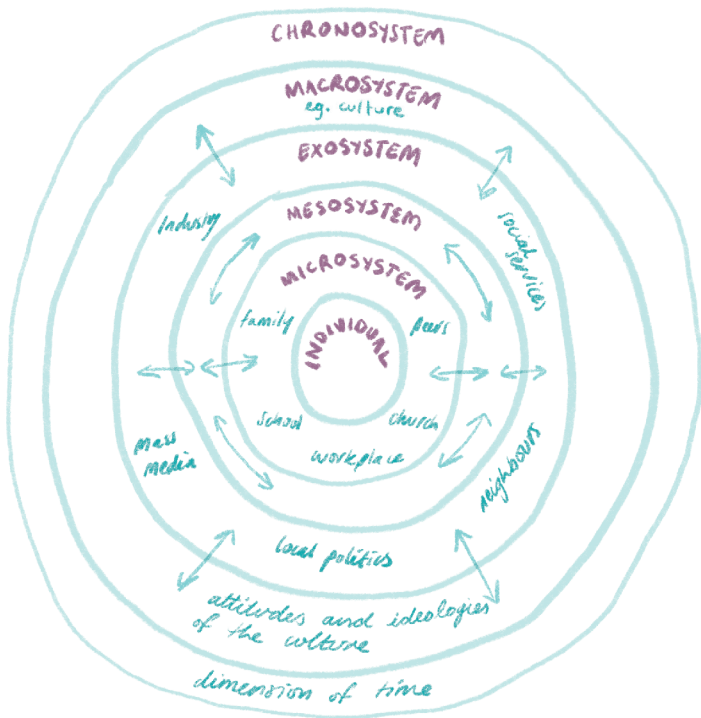
This zine offers a gift for your current and future work: a selection of quotes, actions, mindsets, strategies, and practices to prompt repair and recovery from rupture. We worked with four co-design facilitators to reflect on the findings from the 2024 research study by delving deeper into repair, individually and across systems. The visual reflections showcase their personal responses to the quotes, including what they would do to navigate co-design in their own spaces. We hope that what you find in these pages provokes and prompts you to move beyond the rupture point to think about what repair means to you and your collaborators.

The zine shares research previously conducted by RMIT University Social Work and Human Services students and researchers and was made possible through the RMIT University Strategic Impact Fund.

Themes

In the following pages, we offer strategies to respond to rupture, and to support repair. We jokingly called this our ‘Spice kit of repair’ because a different combination or flavour is needed in each setting, system, or context. Whether this is reflecting before acting, talking things through and out loud, or building capacity, we hope these resonate with you too.

Adaption of Urie Bronfenbrenner's
Social-Ecological Map



Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.

Project team reflections

Jo

*Designer,
researcher and
co-design advocate*

In the first we fumbled through the words to express what a co-design rupture can be and how it feels. In this edition, we patch together what repairing deeply could be. What I love emerging is that care during rupture and repair is not just for one individual to hold. Time for us all to start dreaming and asking for care to be collective and systemic for all our co-designers.

Patrick

*The boring
academic one*

This zine can be something that sits on your desk, or on a bookcase, or in a cupboard with other miscellaneous items, or in the bottom of your bag. Or, it can be one of those things that gets lost under the couch, only to be found years later with you having no recollection of what it is. Wherever it is, it will always be there, ready to turn to in times of need.

Hope

*Designer, occasional
design lecturer*

A zine is a casual, imperfect format. It doesn't mind if you flick through it, pick a page at random, or cut a page out to stick on your monitor. You can take it or leave it. My hope is that these two zines can offer a space of reflection and inspiration to those working in contexts of rupture, in need of repair.



Project team reflections

Georgi

*Design advocate,
leading with kindness*

Rupture is the thing or things we need to reactively respond to. Repair is our chance to respond in the way that serves others, the process or a better outcome for those we are working with.

Rachel

*Social worker
and design
thinker, educator
and researcher*

Just like rupture, repair is needed across different and interrelated systems. Individuals should not carry the burden of resolving issues that they themselves might have inherited from systems that can be hostile to relational work. Recovery is more likely when we can use our gifts, practice humility, clarify our role, and work with others to co-create the conditions for repair.

Activity: 4

What would see happen

TO ARTICULATE THE REALITY - it's messy!

feeling of with things not working

to [unclear]?

pm

PEOPLE WILL BUILD BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT DENIES THE WORK IS

HOPE S

I CAN SHARE STORIES TO SUPPORT NEW COMERS

Sharing prompts learning

We develop a shared purpose

creating something great

hope: to feel less alone in this!

hear more about co-design experiences

10 years of our future different conversations about different

EARN OTHER

WE GET A FLY WHEEL FOR CHANGE MOMENT

more - someone positive will happen - requires resources

WE CAN KEEP ADDING AS WE GO

purposeful sharing

I FEEL UNDERSTOOD?

fun

LAUGH MORE

SPICE RACK

OF REPAIR





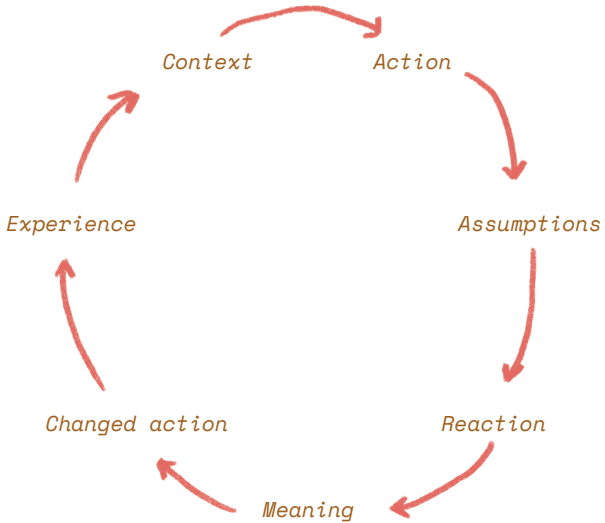
Reflecting before acting

“What did we hear? What did we feel in that room? What was, like, the vibe?’ And then just like using that to kind of like plan out, ‘OK, maybe this was a really important thing that someone brought up. So maybe like the next kind of activity is like we really drill down on that a little bit deeper?’”



Prompt: What does responding vs reacting look and feel like to you? How much discomfort is safe for you to hold as you plan for repair?

*Adaption of Fook & Gardner's
Critical Reflection Framework*



*Fook, J., & Gardner, F. (2007). Practising
critical reflection: A resource handbook.
McGraw-Hill Education (UK)*

Initiating communication

“I definitely was really interested in being like, ‘Wow... let’s talk about this thing that just happened... let’s just look at what happened here.’”

Prompt: What have you learned from a recent rupture? Share this learning with a trusted person.





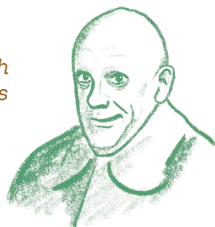
Sitting down for a cup of tea with someone is a legitimate rupture, repair and prevention strategy



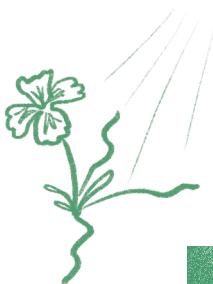
Get out of your head and into your body. Process the rupture so you can go into repair fresh, healthy and clear headed



Don't go it alone - get support with the repair process



Don't let ruptures fester - it only makes things worse



Remind yourself that rupture can be a positive learning experiences



Demonstrating leadership

“Every moment or every time we met with students, it was sort of looking like, ‘OK, what needs to be mended?’ ‘What needs to be connected a little bit better?’ or ‘What doesn’t feel connected that needs to be connected?’” So, in a way, it was kind of like the project management aspect felt like always surveying this quilt and seeing like what was being added to the quilt, sewn together, or otherwise kind of present. And being, ‘OK, do we need this for this thing that we’re making together?’”



*Demonstrating
leadership*

*Prompt: Take a
minute to plan and
build your container
for your current or
future project*

Continuously build your skills / add to your tool kit - so you can roll out the right spice for the right gathering.

Build in space for the rupture/timeframe slippage, things going wrong

Say yes to the projects you are passionate about and bring your gifts to and be clear on the parameters

How to build your container:

- *with intention for each project based on the people and opportunity (based on dignity, respect and upholding their voice)*
- *based on your practice wisdom even if you don't say it out-loud*
- *think about and plan the safety of everyone (neurodiversity, physical space, time, cultural)*
- *communicate the parameters and agree expectations in every session*

Content credit: Ange Elson, who gratefully learned the concept of 'containers' from Jade Lillie

Being candid about the parameters for design

“Just saying something like, ‘What I think happened is we had these principles we were trying to enforce, and that was difficult to enforce in this certain situation because of X, Y, Z reasons’... “These are the constraints that we are working within, and I wish they were different but what I can do is this and what I can’t do is this.” Just having that approach I think is a great strategy when, again, starting a project AND trying to repair following a rupture.”



Prompt: When you need to repair, what is your big 'Cher' energy?

Once reassembled



Leaders handle the heat

Funder already aware

We come together to replay the rupture



We don't hide it, we work collectively through discomfort to repair

Not one person,

All of us

WE CAN BRING CHER ENERGY TO REPAIR

- aka confidently write and perform a smash hit about a breakup/rupture

Content credit: Jo Szczepanska



Being human

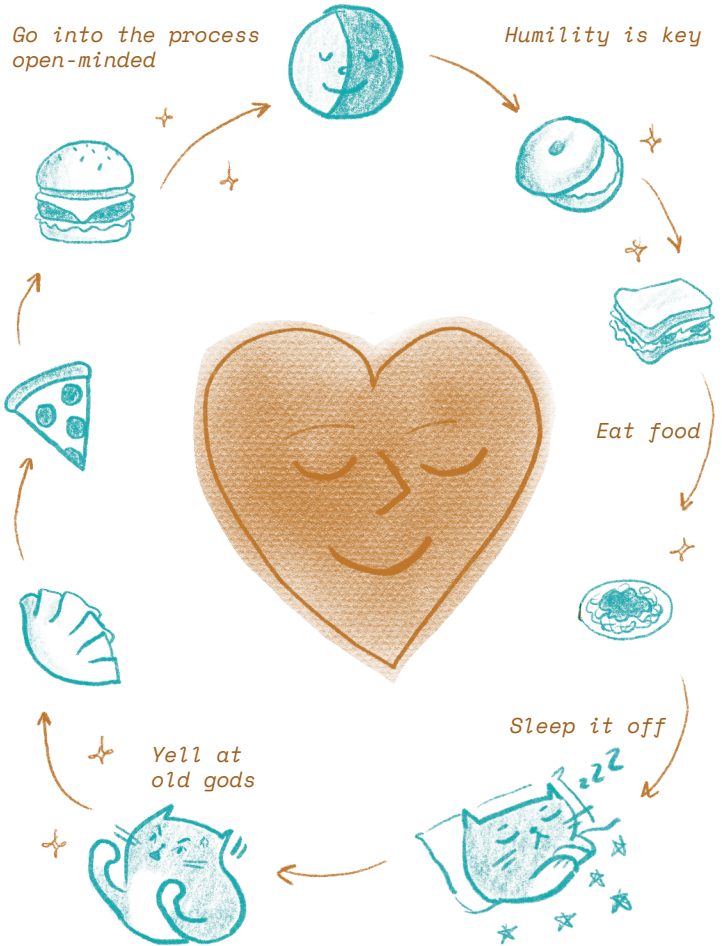
“Relationships matter and I’m this random white person you know, offering this or asking kind of them to participate. I handled it human to human. I think it’s really important to bring some of yourself to the work and be authentic. So rather than being formal or whatever, I just said: ‘Look, you’re totally right. And thank you so much for bringing this to my attention. I have made this mistake. I made this mistake. Do you still want to attend? What can I do to make it easier for you to attend?’”



Prompt: How do you take care of you and your crew?

Go into the process
open-minded

Humility is key



Flexibility and choice

“...Let’s not focus so much on these worksheets that we created on the boards, and the sticky notes and all of this. Let’s ditch all that and then focus our next activities on just listening. Let’s ditch the thing that we planned and make sure that they have this time and space while they’re in the room with us.”



Prompt: What is the smallest change you could make to be more responsive to your team?

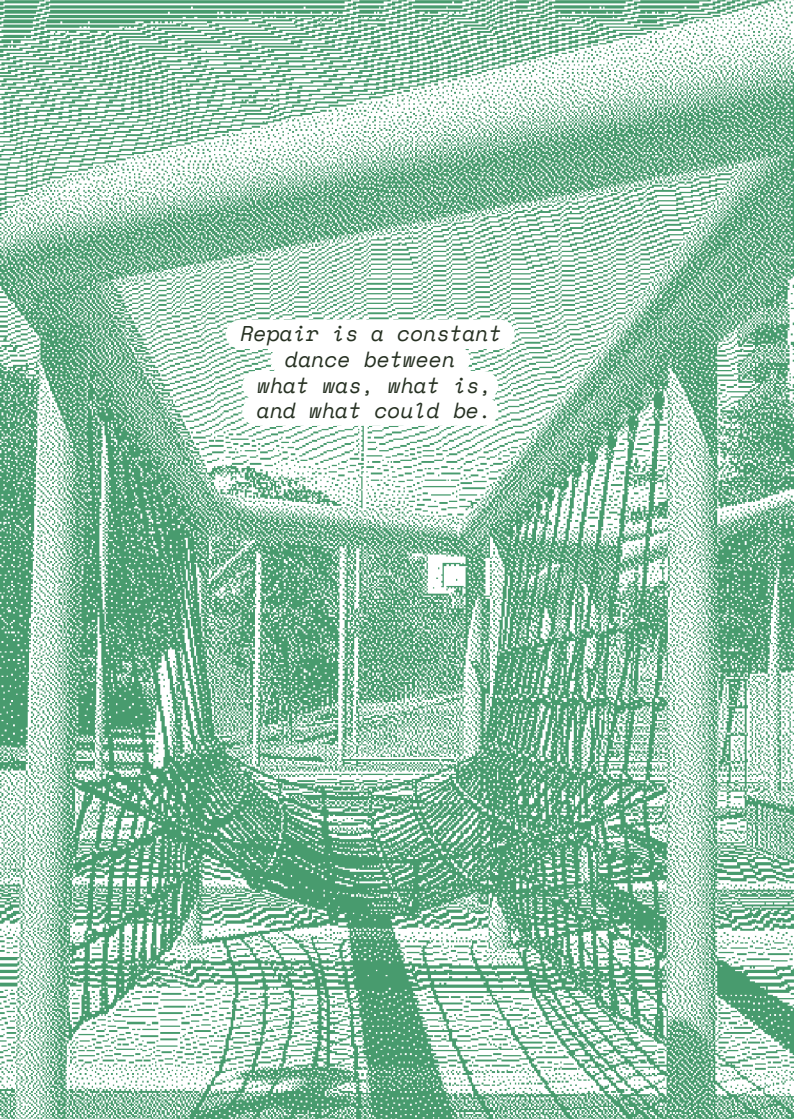
Flexible

*helps people
stay connected*

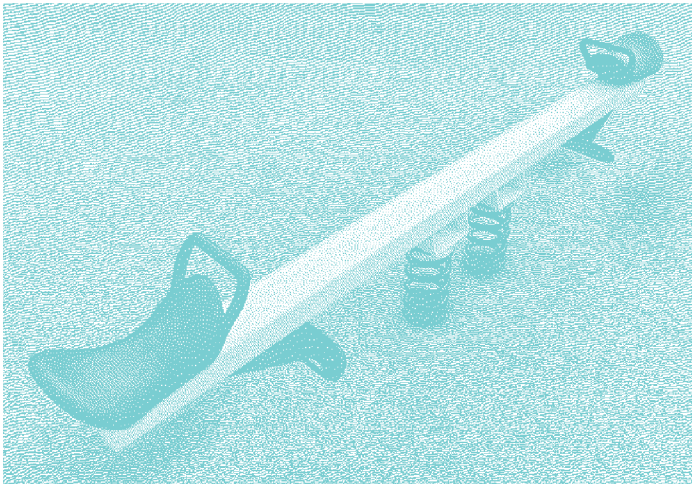
reduces injury



Content credit: Kelly Clark



*Repair is a constant
dance between
what was, what is,
and what could be.*




*Some spicy moments, sometimes where
our feet fall through the cracks.
And sometimes, a push against the
gravity of systems and conditions
that isolate us from our humanness.*



Clarify the degree of co-design

“It’s more so, ‘What do people need and want and what is reality, and how do we work within those constraints to build something together and translate that information?’”

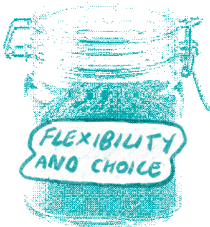
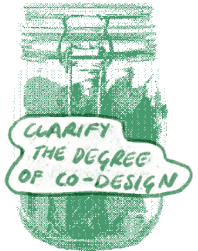
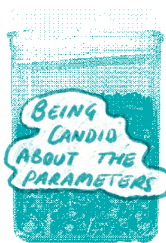
Prompt: Ask questions, stay humble, hold the line. A communications plan to prompt conversations could be really useful to understanding the scope of your work



Clarify the degree of co-design

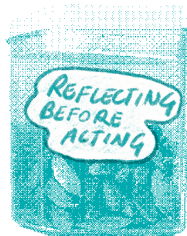
MY SPICE MIX FOR SUCCESSFUL CO-DESIGN

For funders /
commissioning orgs



Enablers for people

Skills for designers



Co-create psychological safety

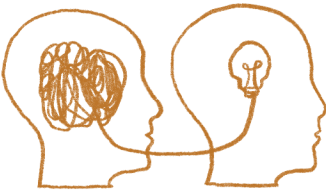
“Learn ‘who is in the room’ and ‘pick up the signals and proactively address’ concerns as they arise.”



Prompt: Safety is relational. What step would you take to (re) establish trust?



"We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails" - Dolly Parton

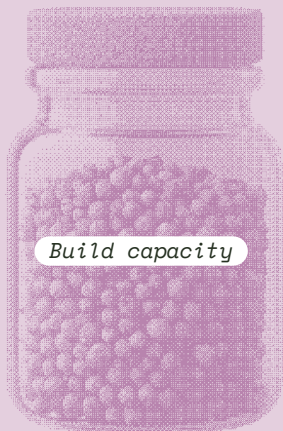


What might change if we spent as much time nurturing kindness, in ourselves and others, as we do trying to fit into boxes or guess what others are thinking?

Build capacity

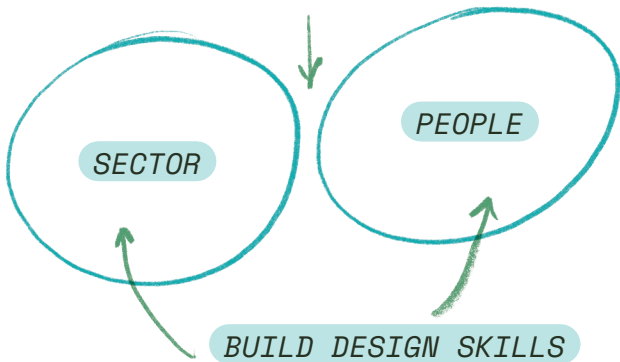
“Good co-design is too dependent on the individual”

“We had people helping us with co-design and community engagement. There was a real frustration that they couldn’t hold the community. They were the people who are helping us, but it really needed the people in the organization and in that team to pick up those relationships and work with them and attend events and things like that. And we couldn’t really resolve that, because people a) saw it as outside their role, and b) didn’t feel confident and resourced within their daily allocation to do some of that work. The real lesson for that was: How do you make community engagement everybody’s responsibility in co-design and how do you keep that going once the initial project was up and running?”



Prompt: How might you participate in collective care?

DESIGN STARTS HERE




What if there was a SWAT Team that came with care tools for you and your team?

Content credits: Ange Elson (top half)
Jo Szczepanska (bottom half)

Responsible use of power

“It’s not always just going to be this black and white, you know, equal partnership. It’s going to be quite fluid... If I was to do this again, I would have advocated a lot more strongly to do a lot more community”



*Responsible use
of power*

*Prompt: Who has power,
and how is it shaped
by context?*



Resources

“You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation,” is often attributed to Plato but I heard it from a woman delivering project management training. During the process of coming together in conversation on ruptures and the way to repair, we asked each other to share resources for self-reflection, rupture management or repair inspiration. Here are some, in no particular order.

Podcasts Archives – Amanda Tattersall | <https://amandatattersall.com/category/podcasts/>

View of Absencing as Attentional Violence and Its Impact on Well-Being | <https://jabsc.org/index.php/jabsc/article/view/7698/7417>

Life-Hacks of the Poor and Aimless – Laurie Penny | <https://thebaffler.com/latest/laurie-penny-self-care>

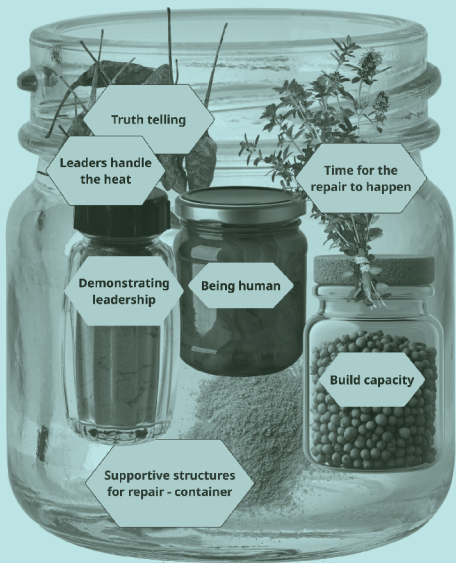
Why Am I Always Being Researched? – Chicago Beyond | <https://chicagobeyond.org/insights/philanthropy/why-am-i-always-being-researched/>

Trauma and Design – Rachael Dietkus | <https://medium.com/surviving-ideo/trauma-and-design-62838cc14e94>

Collaborative Indigenous Research Digital Garden | <https://www.collaborativeindigenousresearch.com/>

The Relationship is the Project | <https://therelationshipistheproject.com/>

Blackspace | <https://blackspace.org/>



I love this jar so much. <3

Aww shucks,

Danjoo Koorliny – Walking Together Project | <https://danjookoorliny.com.au/pages/walking-together>

Systems Scribing – Kelvy Bird | <https://kelvybird.com/systems-scribing/>

Jade Lillie | <https://www.jadelillie.com/>

Rupture and repair playlist

You and Me (But Mostly Me) – Andrew Rannells | <https://open.spotify.com/track/6PboV3CIAoIYKNozNjb83r?si=sFuJ42VeQ6yEdZpKXHud3g>

In the Hall of the Goblin King – Freshman Biology | <https://open.spotify.com/track/3ik1PMBWSRPwE6JcynUYWU?si=4BEUBVUPT6ClsEuShxvAA>

Scorpions – Wind of Change | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4RjJKxsamQ>

Short Ride in a Fast Machine – John Adams | <https://open.spotify.com/track/7nOHjpeOH4G2DjWBJqmIDm?si=zm4DaO-DSnS4r9XPStXsDA>

PEOPLE
FEEL
LESS
ISOLATED

WE CAN
LEARN BY
SHARING

Bios of co-contributors and co-authors

Jo Szczepanska

Maker and organiser who wants to live in a fair and healthy world.
Able to take “a lot of heat”. Sits in fires.

Hope Lumsden-Barry

Designer and lecturer whose practice is concerned with collaborative making and publishing.

Georgina Lewis

All about designing ways for people and systems to work better together.

Dr Patrick O’Keeffe

Tries hard to make a difference. Often late to meetings.

Dr Rachel Goff (she/they)

I research with, teach, and co-create communities – by design.

Kelly Clark

Helping decision-makers treat people like people.

Cordelia Attenborough

Social work student and early career researcher passionate about equity and systems change.

Jo Hatcher

Lifelong learner - researching, collaborating and advocating for health, social justice and equity.

Ange Elson (she/her)

Proud public servant. Passionate about people and place.

A note on design

This zine was designed by Hope Lumsden-Barry in Adobe InDesign and makes use of SIL Open Fonts Licensed fonts Space Mono and Newsreader, via Google Fonts. The dithered bitmap images have been created using the tool Dither Me This by doodad.dev and Photoshop. Most images are illustrated adaptations of the Miro boards we created during collaborative workshops.

Project team

The zine is a creative translation of research conducted by RMIT University Social Work Field Education Placement students (2024). The zine's development and production were generously funded by the RMIT University Enabling Impact Platform Strategic Impact Fund.





2025

First Edition