



*This is an electronic reprint of the original article. This reprint may differ from the original in pagination and typographic detail.*

**Please cite the original version:** Chydenius, T. (2019) Pioneering a Chapter Co-ordinator Model. Touchpoint, The Journal of Service Design 11:2, 91. Service Design Network.

Available at: <https://www.service-design-network.org/touchpoint/vol-11-no2-experience-prototyping/vol-11-2-pioneering-a-chapter-co-ordinator-model>

## Pioneering a Chapter Co-ordinator Model

SDN chapters are the essence of our global network. While chapters are growing in number and maturity, the Global Chapter Team is continuously looking for new opportunities to support our various chapters' needs. As we are currently approaching the amazing number of 50 local chapters, the recent and more established chapters have very different opportunities and challenges. Therefore, new models and initiatives are being developed to support our chapters to prosper as local and self-sustaining volunteer-based communities.

SDN Finland is among the most active SDN chapters. Since its founding in 2012, it has grown continuously both in the number of members and community followers. The chapter is now proportionally one of the largest and most active, hosts several monthly events and develops new kinds of activities to promote service design on various local forums for different audiences. This has kept the Core Team members busy along with their already engaging full-time jobs. It had become evident that the chapter activities could not be run adequately due to a lack resources, and that the chapter needed more support to keep its activities professional and in-line with the chapter's mission.

One of the most pressing issues was to better co-ordinate the chapter activities. While the chapter is fortunate to have engaged many volunteers, coordinating their input, sharing enough information and scheduling events demands a more efficient approach. These issues were raised in a member survey conducted during Spring 2019. SDN Finland Chapter Representative Teija Hakaoja said, "We especially were constantly behind in communication – the members got event information at the last minute, and the communication channels were unclear. Our Core Team was painfully aware of this."

To improve the chapter activities, the team wanted to recruit someone to take on an active role in managing events and communication. They

were lucky enough to find an excellent co-ordinator from among their members. This freelancer co-ordinator role includes responsibilities for communication, event organisation, administration support and additional development tasks when necessary.

"In the Co-ordinator role, I get to work with many different professionals and create better experiences for our members. With the active help from the Core Team, I was able to pick up the work very quickly. The freelance model makes the job very flexible and possible to do alongside work and studies," said Lotta Salminen, the new SDN Finland Chapter Co-ordinator. Teija Hakaoja – one of the Core Team – is happy to have Lotta onboard: "Getting a Co-ordinator to work with the Core Team has been more than helpful. We have a demanding, professional community and that is only a good thing. It shows that service design has a nice footing in Finland. We are eager to improve and serve our audience better. Earlier, we were constantly lacking in resources. With the freelance co-ordinator we can now professionalise our activities and keep our members happier," said Teija.



Teija Hakaoja, SDN Chapter Representative (left) and Chapter Co-ordinator Lotta Salminen (right)