

# From research to design

## How can I creatively showcase the materials and energy transition for the Dutch Design Week?

### Motivation

MNEXT wants to raise awareness about their research on material and energy transition. Last year, they joined the Dutch Design Week for the first time, to reach a larger audience and share their message. But is the Dutch Design Week the right place for MNEXT? And does their current presentation match their goals? And if MNEXT decides to join again in 2025, what should their concept be like? This research looks at whether the Dutch Design Week is a good fit for MNEXT and how they can better share their message in the future.

### Research

In the first few weeks, I was fully immersed in MNEXT. I got to know the company and the projects well. Additionally, I was informed about everything related to the Dutch Design Week 2024: the concept for that year and the projects that would be presented. To further immerse myself in the Dutch Design Week and MNEXT’s concept, I was given the opportunity to create three designs that would be presented during the Dutch Design Week 2024:

#### Energy hubs

For the concept of Energy Hubs, I designed an infographic that explains the idea. I created this entirely within MNEXT’s brand style. It was very challenging to capture this complex concept in a single image. I had to be especially mindful of the fact that I already knew too much about the concept myself, making it difficult for me to judge whether it would still be understandable to a layperson.



#### Curcumine colors

For the Curcumine Colors project, I designed a presentation wall to showcase the dye’s applications. I opted for a clean and clear layout that instantly highlights where the dye comes from and how it’s used. To tie it all together, I created a custom background based on the brand style.



#### Life Cycle Analysis

The concept of Life Cycle Analysis also needed to be summarized in a single image. To explain this concept, I had to combine a lot of separate information. I used multiple layers and added a text panel at the bottom for additional clarification.



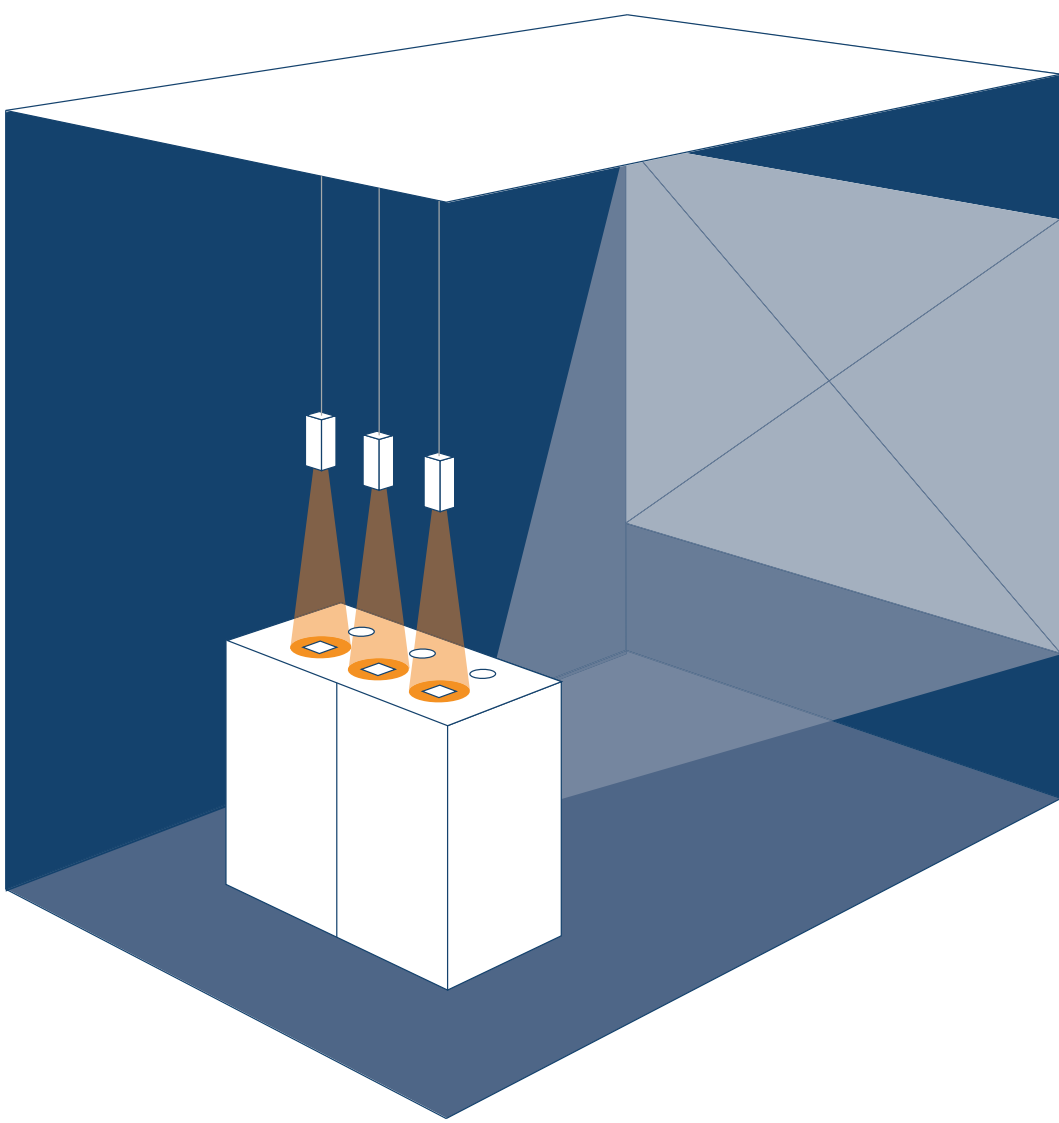
As the second part of my research, I analyzed the concept presented at the Dutch Design Week. To do this, I observed and interviewed visitors. But I also looked at metrics such as how often the QR codes on the information boards were scanned and how many contacts were made during the event. After the event, I also asked MNEXT employees for their feedback and experiences at the Dutch Design Week.

#### Conclusion of the analysis

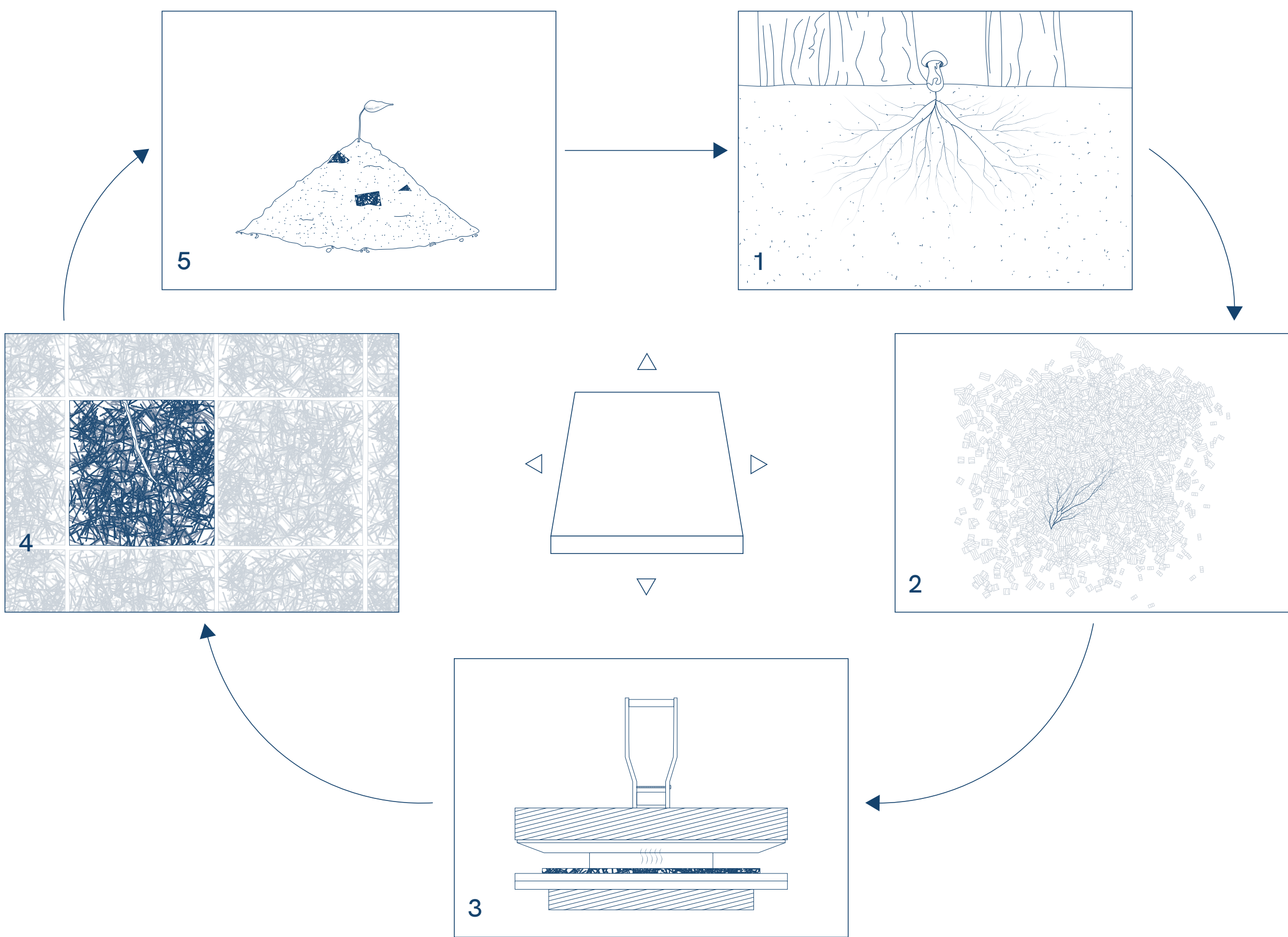
Visitors were positive about the fact that MNEXT presented their research at Dutch Design Week. It gave them hope for the future. For most visitors, the information was largely new, and they found it inspiring to discover all the possibilities in the field of sustainability. What stood out to me was that clear presentations and visuals with minimal text were highly effective. Visitors also appreciated the opportunity to see the materials up close, touch them, and interact with them.

### Result: Concept for Dutch Design Week 2025

For the 2025 concept, I connected the material and digital worlds. This idea stemmed from my desire to let visitors learn more about the material simply by interacting with it. For this concept, I focused on a specific topic within MNEXT: mycelium biocomposites. To develop this concept, I drew on various studies, such as Mycelium Board and MycEoLA.



Above is a visual representation of how I envision the presentation. The presentation will be kept as minimalistic as possible. I will display various types of mycelium biocomposites with their substrates on the presentation table. Additionally, there will be a projection of a rotating sample to suggest that there is more to discover by interacting with one of the samples.



By picking up one of the samples, the user discovers the story behind the material. I chose to tell the life cycle of mycelium biocomposites, as I’ve noticed that people often only see what can be done with the material, but not why it is so special and why it is a better alternative to conventional materials. By moving the material around, the user uncovers the different stages of the life cycle, which are illustrated through animations on the projection. The different stages I showcase are: the growth of the underground network, growth on various substrates, drying or pressing the material, the regenerative ability of mycelium, and the end-of-life options.

#### Conclusion

With this concept for MNEXT at Dutch Design Week 2025, I hope to inspire visitors and highlight the potential of mycelium biocomposites. This is the starting point for a new way to communicate the material transition, and I’m confident it can be further developed, becoming even more impactful with additional stories and materials.

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