Design Thinking Program

Volunteering TASMANIA

Program Overview

We know that the future of volunteering is changing. Without bold leadership and a chance to challenge and trial different ways of working, we won't see the adaptation needed to thrive in this changing environment. This program will support leaders in the volunteering sector to be bold in their actions, learn and grow from failure and build solutions through rapid prototyping and person-centred design.

The Design Thinking Program is part of Volunteering Tasmania's Innovation Program and will support Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIOs) to think and operate differently to build a more sustainable and flexible volunteering sector. Through this program we aim to:

- help volunteer organisations to adapt their operations after COVID-19, to effectively recruit, support and manage a more flexible workforce, and
- embed leadership and resilience in the volunteering sector by supporting people within VIOs to approach challenges and problems differently through an action learning process.

Volunteering Tasmania will use a design thinking framework to support and embed innovation and creative ways of approaching the future of volunteering across the sector. This process will encourage the sector to consider and test new solutions to old problems through practical trials of innovative projects / initiatives.

What is Design Thinking?

Design thinking is a creative problem-solving process, with humans at the centre of the design. This process is often applied to complex challenges within an organisation, community or society. Design thinking is a shift in mindset, it's about experimental learning, adapting a beginner's mindset.

> *"In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's mind there are few."*
> *Shunryu Suzuki*

The process of design thinking uses the following stages to build a solution that is desirable (for people who will be affected), viable and feasible:

- **Empathise:** conduct research to fully understand and empathise with your end-user.
- **Define:** bring all your research together to define what the real problem is for your end-user.
- **Ideate:** generate a number of bold, crazy and creative ideas.
- **Prototype:** build quick, real and tangible prototypes for a range of your ideas. These will help test potential solutions in a low-risk way with end-users.

- **Test:** trial the prototypes with end-users to map the results and learn what hasn't worked and why. Then the prototypes can be discarded or changed.

Program Details

There are limited places available on the Design Thinking Program, therefore people interested will need to submit a short application to be considered for selection in the program. This will be a 12-month program. Participants will gain knowledge through a workshop series on each of the stages of design thinking and be supported to implement each of the stages in their communities, organisations or groups between workshops. A community of practice will be established to allow participants to support each other during this program.

On completion of the program, participants will have tested and trialled different ways of working to tackle a challenge that they face in their sphere. They will have developed an understanding and gained skills in how to tackle challenges using a design thinking framework and mindset.

Conditions of participations

- Attendance at all workshops and Community of Practice
- Commitment to trial solutions and rework them as need be
- Commitment as an organisation and an individual to follow the design thinking principles
- Commitment to undertake activity outside of workshop commitments

Assessment process

Assessments will be undertaken through an application process. Applications will be considered and be assessed against selection criteria and by persons with proper administrative delegation to participate in the application consideration process. Those persons adjudicating will consider the merits of each application. At the conclusion of the process, applicants will be notified if their application has been successful or unsuccessful.

Proposed Timeline

The below table provides an indication of the activity, timelines and required commitment of participation. The community of practice sessions will run for around 2-3 hours and in person workshops will be whole day workshops. Community of Practice dates will be discussed with participants to ensure they are timely and relevant to those participating in the program.

There will be information, resources and relevant articles shared throughout the program to help participants fully immerse themselves in the design thinking approach. It will be up to individuals as to how much they engage with the materials.

Activity	Method	When
Workshop 1: Empathise and Define	In person	Wednesday 2nd February
2x Community of Practice	Online	February/March
Participant activity – undertake activity in your organisation/group/community related to both stages.	Individual	February/March
Workshop 2: Ideation	In person	Wednesday 6th April
2x Community of Practice	Online	April

Participant activity – brainstorm solutions with organisation/group/community and select ideas.	Individual	April
Workshop 3: Prototype & Testing	In person	Wednesday 25th May
4x Community of Practice	Online	June - September
Participant activity – undertake prototype and testing stages in organisation/group. Put together a presentation of experiences and learning.	Individual	June - September
Workshop 4: Review and Reflection	In person	Wednesday 26th October

For more information, please contact Strategic Manager Innovate and Lead

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