Co-design is a framework/model that engages people who are either impacted by or have direct experience with an issue alongside professionals/technical experts to design a solution.

Co-design centres on the people involved in the process, drawing on their experiences to develop a deep understanding of the issues and solve problems. By doing this, the co-design process accesses fresh ideas and thinking from a diverse range of people whose relevant experiences lead to the development of relevant solutions.

The method of co-design provides a framework to work within as well as an open and creative way of thinking. Co-design is used in communities all over the world to tackle wicked problems and create impactful, systemic change.

By creating shared ownership and a sense of responsibility within the people who take part, co-design leads to alternative, sustainable models and resources that are more likely to have long-term effects.
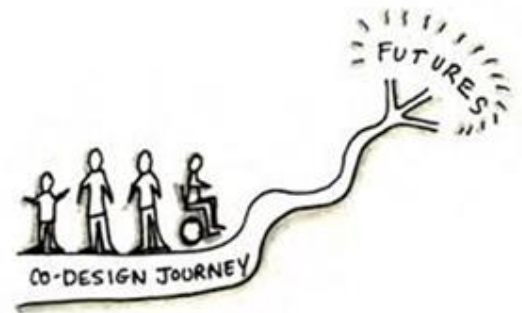
Image. https://www.yacwa.org.au

"When people work together with organisations to find solutions, they become valued collaborators in achieving great outcomes for the community. This is good community governance in action. The impact of using co-design is an investment in helping to build stronger, trustworthy, and more resilient communities."

Julie Andersson, Clarence City Council

Why Co-Design?

- ☐ Builds people's capability.
- ☐ Strengthens community connections, leading to ongoing partnerships.
- ☐ Creates an environment of shared power and ownership.
- ☐ Increases community awareness and participation.
- ☐ Builds momentum and community change.
- ☐ Creates space for community members to step up and share.
- ☐ Provides opportunities for new ideas and solutions to challenges.
- ☐ Offers sustainable, long-term solutions to systemic issues.
- ☐ Provides opportunities for community members to work together and build networks.

The 5 Phases of Co-Design
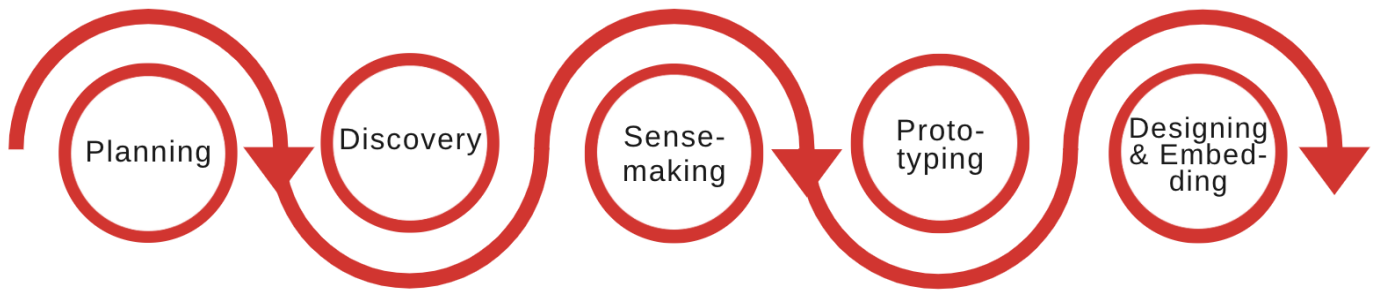
1. **Planning** We define the problem, surface/identify assumptions, identify stakeholders, shape the team and plan the work.

2. **Discovering** We test the assumptions surfaced in phase 1 (Planning), involve others in the process, listen to what people have to say, observe and find out more.

3. **Sensemaking** We review the data that we have collected and accessed, find patterns and meaning, develop insights and shape ideas.

4. **Prototyping** We design and run experiments, test our own assumptions and learn as we practice our work.

5. **Designing & Embedding** We learn and adapt, design our work, processes and resources, work with people to create lasting change, evaluate what we have done and continue to learn and iterate.

Key Principles of Co-Design

- ☐ **Shared Power** All voices have the same level of influence when we balance power dynamics and shift hierarchical structures.

- ☐ **Prioritising Relationships** We build and maintain strong relationships across the community.

- ☐ **Use Participatory Means** We make sure members of the community have the chance to participate in whatever way works for them.

- ☐ **Builds Capability** We support people to increase knowledge and capability.

For more information on the principles of co-design visit beyondstickynotes[1]

Next Steps

Check if co-design is suitable for your circumstances by consulting the *Co-Design Checklist*

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Tasmanian Government

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[1] https://www.beyondstickynotes.com/what-is-codesign