

CO-DESIGN PROCESS

How to use this tool

This Tool is to provide guidance to ensure the Co-Design process is inclusive, comprehensive, and effective in leading to better programs and services.

Introduction

There is no single model for Co-Design that can be applied in all cases. The model for design of a new approach to tackling entrenched problems in a particular community will be different from the re-design of existing services to better meet the needs of a well-defined group of service users.

Preparation

Ensure that all elements of the preparation covered in the Government Preparation Tool and the Community Sector Preparation Tool have been actioned. In particular, ensure the scope of the Co-Design is clearly articulated, the potential stakeholders identified and invited to participate, the model for engagement and participation that is fit for purpose has been developed, and a communication plan is in place.

Work with the independent consultant or facilitator to ensure the process:

- ▶ aligns with the Co-Design Principles
- ▶ identifies and engages the full range of stakeholders as outlined in the Engaging

Stakeholders Tool

- ▶ has engagement strategies that are appropriate to the scale of the Co-Design initiative
- ▶ includes the right combination of workshops, focus groups and targeted consultations to ensure all relevant voices are heard
- ▶ gets input on all relevant parts of the service model or program design, including:
 - ♦ high level outcomes,
 - ♦ service user profile
 - ♦ service needs analysis
 - ♦ service delivery model including skills required to deliver
 - ♦ mapping of relationships between service users, providers, funders and other stakeholders
 - ♦ decision-making processes or governance models
 - ♦ reporting and monitoring and accountability requirements
 - ♦ evaluation
 - ♦ built-in continuous improvement

**CO-DESIGN
TOOLKIT**



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Ways to make a difference

- ♦ processes
- ongoing processes to ensure Co-Design Principles are continued into the implementation phase post-design

Note: A one-dimensional process, e.g. a series of similarly structured stakeholder workshops, may not be suited to getting the best outcomes on all elements of the service model. Some subjects such as identifying Key Performance Indicators may be more effectively developed in smaller groups with a different mix of experts and service users.

Check the proposed Co-Design process with key stakeholders (such as service provider Peak Bodies and Consumer Advocacy Groups) before proceeding.

Initial Engagement

Use a mix of targeted invitations (to service providers, user representative bodies and relevant Peak Bodies) and public notices (for example in sector newsletters and eNews networks). Include encouragement to extend the invitation to service users (and families and carers if relevant) in each of the invitations and notices.

In some Co-Design initiatives it may also be appropriate to provide support to service providers to engage with or consult their existing service users to extend consumer input beyond the numbers who are actually able to attend Co-Design planning events.

Initial engagement should include information on the issue being addressed, the scope for Co-

Design to contribute to the service model and the timetable for developing the model. It should also be clear about the level of involvement/commitment required from participants.

Co-Design Process

Use the Co-Design Process in More Detail Tool to match the process to the scale, scope and purpose of the program or service design. This Tool outlines the elements of the process that are common to most if not all Co-Design.

Use the following to ensure that the process you develop for the particular Co-Design initiative is fit for its particular situation:

- ▶ Engagement in System, Strategy or Large Scale Whole of Community Co-Design
- ▶ Engagement in Place-Based Co-Design
- ▶ Engagement in Program or Service Level Co-Design
- ▶ Engagement in the Delivery of Services (Co-Production)

In applying these Tools it is critical to have confidence in the process and in the wisdom of the crowd, and to share that confidence with participants.

It is not unusual for there to be scepticism about how genuine the engagement is going to be. Many participants may have experience of previous consultation models where they feel they were not able to influence the outcome and will be wondering how this will be any different.

It is important to acknowledge that experience and to be as clear, open and transparent as possible about what is in scope and what is out of scope. Even so, it is not always possible

to know that all in advance and sometimes the most interesting and innovative ideas are at the boundaries of what is in or out of scope.

In the Co-Design process it is important that people feel free to express a wide range of opinions and put forward a wide range of options and ideas, particularly in workshop activities and more open-ended consultations. Even where these are out of scope for the particular Co-Design they should be respected and captured for consideration in other contexts.

Sometimes what emerges from the Co-Design cannot be ignored and it is the scope that has to change. While that will no doubt lead to challenges for the funding body and its relationships with key decision-makers (its Executive, Director General, Minister or even Cabinet), sometimes it will be necessary to go back with the message that the initial scope is not viable, optimal or appropriate.

Hopefully these circumstances will be rare. In recent WA experience this has mainly been in relation to proposed timelines for procurement and in other cases about the total level of funding allocated rather than matters related to the service models being designed.

Concluding the Co-Design Process

Each stage of the Co-Design process should involve feedback to participants so they know have been correctly heard and their input recognised as well as ongoing feedback about how the service model is taking shape.

At some stage the process will 'go behind

closed doors' while detailed specifications are drawn up. This generally needs to be done in this way to ensure the integrity of the subsequent procurement process which may be a competitive tender or grant process subject to State legislation and Government policy.

Procurement processes though can allow for the publication of draft specifications with opportunities for stakeholders to comment. This is an opportunity for stakeholders to check that the views expressed and decisions agreed in the Co-Design have been captured in the specifications. It is at this stage that the integrity of the Co-Design process is really put to the test.

It can be difficult for participating agencies to make direct submissions about problems with the specifications at this stage, because of concerns about affecting the way their subsequent bid will be viewed. At this stage there may be a role for Peak Bodies in representing views of their member agencies, particularly where concerns are shared across a sector.

Likewise, it can be difficult for individual consumers who have been part of the process to have input at this stage but their concerns may effectively be conveyed by their representative or advocacy bodies.

Sufficient time must be allowed for revision of the specifications following the closing date for feedback. Otherwise participants in the Co-Design will not have confidence in the legitimacy of the process.

Once the procurement process is under way and the closing date for submissions is passed, it is a good time to reflect on the Co-Design process and seek feedback from participants on their experience of the process.

It is useful to do this once proposals are in

but before decisions on successful bidders are announced. That way responses can be sought from those who did and did not submit proposals, and comment on the process will not be prejudiced by success or failure of the subsequent bid.

A template for evaluation is included as a Tool in the Co-Design Toolkit.

As a final action in the pre-implementation phase, feedback should be provided to all participants summarising the outcome, describing the model/s decided upon, notifying them of which agencies were successful in bidding to provide services, and providing a summary of participant feedback on the Co-Design process evaluation.

Of course, this communication should also thank them, recognising that for many it has been a significant commitment of their time and a sharing of their valuable expertise.

The agency responsible for Co-Design should also conduct its own evaluation of

the process taking into account the feedback from participants (including those internal to Government) and by undertaking an honest appraisal of the extent to which Co-Design added value in developing the service model and improved the quality of proposals put forward in the procurement process. It should also assess which elements of the specifications were directly informed by the Co-Design process.

This evaluation should be distributed to decision-makers in Government and the Department and used to inform the development of future Co-Design initiatives. It would be a matter for the Department to determine whether or not it would also be appropriate to share with other stakeholders in the Co-Design.

In the spirit of Co-Design, it too should be shared, but it is also recognised that there may be some self-censorship if it is to be distributed and this may make it less useful for informing future practice.

CELEBRATE SUCCESS

Find an opportunity to celebrate success. Perhaps using the launch of the new program or other significant milestone as an event at which participants in the Co-Design could be acknowledged for their role. This will build ongoing commitment from people who are already invested in the model and generate goodwill for future participation in Co-Design initiatives.

If the process has been particularly effective, look for opportunities to enter the Co-Design in public or community sector awards for collaboration or innovation. Nomination is in itself an acknowledgement to participants that you have valued their input. Being shortlisted or even winning is a bonus!