

Collaborative Design

A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO WORK

Charlie Ursell, 2019

coeuraj.com
hello@coeuraj.com

Definition and Origin

Explaining Co-Design isn't easy. It's one of those things, like going to a concert, conquering a mountain peak or taking part in an exhilarating sport, that has a quality which is lost when put into words. Yet the experience is often profound and can have long lasting and transformative impacts on the individuals and systems involved.

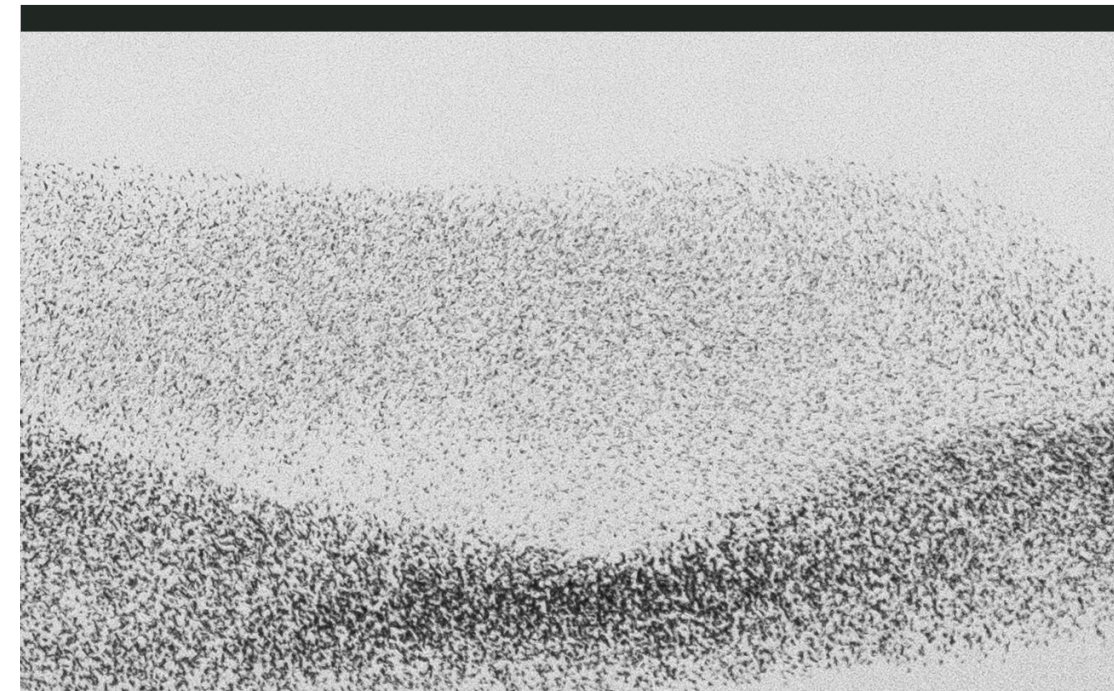
Put simply, Co-Design is a method and process of working together to achieve shared outcomes. It involves a journey of collective understanding, contextualization, discussion, and work in order to generate new insights and a more holistic understanding of the problem faced. Participants change the way they look at things and this changes what they see. These new collective insights are used to vision, explore, co-create and rapidly prototype solutions through working iteratively and collaboratively. Participants quickly go through multiple iterations of work, informed by open and honest feedback, scenario testing, and design challenges.

Purpose and Benefits

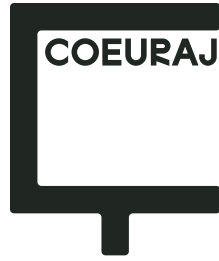
A key aim of co-design is to create a space for participants to have profound learning experiences, challenge stereotypes, form individual and collective identities, and develop new and innovative ideas through exploring the cultural, social, and political perspectives of their respective mental models and world views. The specific activities in a Co-Design process are usually custom and created for the purpose and context Co-Design is being applied to.

Most people discover Co-Design because their current approach to the problem they face is no longer working, and/or isn't optimal. They are stuck and need to do something fundamentally different. Co-Design offers a solution.

WHAT IS CO-DESIGN?



Key Benefits



Key Benefits

1

ALIGNMENT AND OWNERSHIP OF A ROUTE FORWARD

Going beyond buy-in because people have had a hand in creating the solution and have a vested interest in ensuring its success. People love what they design and own what they create.

2

OPTIMIZATION

Co-design enables participants to think and work differently because it can be hard, and some argue impossible, to solve problems with the thinking that was used to create them.

3

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Fresh thinking and new dimensions of human performance can be achieved through drawing on the collective intelligence and variety of perspectives in the room.

4

RISK MITIGATION

Through uncovering the risks, issues and differences in opinion early on so they can be designed around, instead of a project uncovering them once it's in delivery.

5

ACCELERATION

Achieving "months of work in a matter of days" through accelerating feedback cycles and compressing meetings that are spread over months and years into a matter of days.

Defining Attributes

'Co-Design' is different to 'negotiation,' which is typically a discussion aimed at reaching an agreement; and where the discussion is conducted by third parties, such as lawyers and advisors. Co-Design interventions are run by a neutral facilitator, who has no vested interest in achieving an outcome for a specific party. Their aim is to achieve an overall outcome for everyone involved.

Harnessing collective intelligence requires active participation from the groups involved in both the problem and the solution. This is a fundamentally different approach to an expert designing a solution for or with a client. During this process, it is the participants that make design decisions and trade-offs together, instead of 'conceding' on points in order to 'win' on others. The practitioners and participants work together in partnership to create new solutions.

Co-Design harnesses the collective intelligence of a group, recognizing that there are many things that can be created through collaboration that cannot be created by any one individual. The diversity of both the participant group involved and of the perspectives in the room is seen as key to ensuring rigor and resilience in the solutions that are created.

learn more

coeuraj.com

hello@coeuraj.com