

# When should co-design be implemented?

Co-design can take place across all phases of work. Co-design should start early, at the priority setting and planning phase, and continue through to evaluation and review. Government, industry and organisations should consider when to engage people with disability in planning cycles, including what the engagement might look like.

Engagement across a whole body of work ensures that government, industry and organisations are doing 'with' people with disability, not 'to' them. Results are more appropriate and user-friendly.

This fact sheet outlines some examples of actions for engagement across stages of a piece of work. Many of these actions can be taken in multiple stages.

## Engaging people with disability across the planning cycle



### Planning

#### Considerations

Take time to define the core issue at the centre of your co-design process:

- What is the challenge that needs to be addressed?
- What outcome do you need to achieve?
- What do you know about the problem and its impact?
- What else do we need to know?

Ensure that everyone has a clear, agreed understanding of the scope and intent:

- What is the level of influence / decision making people with disability can have around the outcome (refer to the engagement spectrum on Fact Sheet 1)?
- Is a co-design process the most appropriate process, or does the issue require a different level of engagement?
- What is in scope?
- What is out of scope?
- Where is there room for flexibility if the co-design group asks for it?

Set aside sufficient resources to run a co-design process. Consider the costs associated with accessibility and inclusion for people with disability:

- How will we recognise people's contributions?
- How will the process be facilitated (for example, independent facilitators, consultants, in-house)?
- What allocations do we need to make for people's access, support and dietary needs, transport costs (for example, interpreters, hearing loops, accessible venues, easy English resources)?

### What could it look like?

- Needs analysis: Involve people with disability to gather expertise and resources to identify gaps, issues, and needs that should be addressed.
- Planning Stage: Inclusion of people with disability on committees/advisory groups/ to guide the planning, development, implementation, and review of initiatives.



## Designing

### Considerations

Identify participants:

- Which other aspects of diversity should be represented in the group (for example, age, gender and sexual identity, cultural background, language, and geographical location)?

- Who will be responsible for implementing the initiative?
- Who will benefit from or use the final product?
- Who else will be affected by the project?
- Who has been involved in similar initiatives in the past?
- How can we ensure appropriate diversity of representatives in the process?
- What data and other information will they need?
- What are their timeframes for involvement?
- How should we structure the process (for example, a series of workshops, establish an advisory group, or focus groups)?
- How can we connect with invitees and invite them?
- Recognise that there is a power imbalance, acknowledge this openly and find solutions together for representatives to make a valuable contribution.
- Close the feedback loop. "You said, we heard, we did". Too often people with disability spend time giving feedback and never hear about the outcomes of their work.

Define the scope of the work and expectations of group members:

- How long is the activity/initiative, what are our key milestones and deliverables?
- How much time between meetings/workshops is needed for reporting and responding to what has been done?

### **What could it look like?**

- A forum with a diversity of people with disability, their supporters, family, and carers to identify priorities.
- Involve people with disability in the development of a matrix to help prioritise decisions and funding.
- Create positions for people with disability on governance committees that determine the criteria for research grants and funding, to better focus research around people with disability and their needs and preferences.



## Implementation

### Considerations

Mutual agreements/understandings:

- Establish agreements about how participants can contribute to the discussion.
- Each activity should have a process for capturing outcomes. This includes any notes or other feedback by participants and summary notes covering whole activity feedback and decision making. Each should include a 'next steps' section towards the end, so that people are clear on what will happen next.
- Participants should be provided with a record of the activity's outcomes as soon as possible after the event. This lets people know their voice has been heard and gives them an opportunity to add or correct.

### What could it look like?

- People with disability are involved in reviewing draft plans to ensure they meet the needs of people with disability.
- Focus groups comprising people with diverse disabilities workshop priorities to inform a needs analysis regarding new government programs and services.
- A steering committee including people with disability representatives implements key recommendations/actions.



## Evaluation

### Considerations

Some questions to consider in evaluating the whole co-design process:

- What was the greatest achievement of this work?
- What worked well? What did not?
- What did we find most challenging?
- What did we find most energising?
- What was one moment where everything shifted? Why?
- What could be done differently to get better outcomes

## What could it look like?

- People with disability are part of developing the tools for evaluation and the criteria of success and are on the evaluation working group.
- People with disability are involved in the design of monitoring mechanisms and help decide ongoing benchmarks needed to achieve the desired outcome or goals within timeframes.
- People with disability actively seek input from their peers about a plan or project experience and effectiveness and share this feedback with the monitoring committee.



Image caption: A photograph of two people seated, facing each other and talking.

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