# Bloomberg Philanthropies | MAYORS CHALLENGE

## Innovator's Toolkit

# Table of Contents

This toolkit is inspired by the best of innovation and design thinking practices which support creative problem-solving, ideation, and collaboration.

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# ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

# Welcome!

## We're glad you're here. Ready to innovate service delivery in your city?

## We're here to support you!

This toolkit will help you:

- Go through each step of a proven process for getting clear on a problem to solve and collaborating with residents to develop a bold new solution.

- Prepare an application for the 2025 Global Mayors Challenge.

- Get a glimpse at the in-depth learning and development you will experience if your city is selected for the Champions Phase.

- Serve as an ongoing resource to help you begin new projects or apply for other grants. Download and save this file for future reference!

## Modules

This toolkit is designed for cities at any stage of government innovation. It includes 7 modules to guide your application, each with:

- **Activity Worksheets** to help you think through your problem and potential solutions
- **Facilitation Guides** for group activities
- **Example Responses** from previous applicants

By the end, you'll have a bold idea for a service to support your city's residents.

## Estimated Time

Completing the toolkit is not required for submitting an application. The modules are self-paced and flexible based on your needs, with time estimates to help you plan. Completing all modules will take at least 15 hours.

Module 3, Gather Evidence, is especially variable in time required depending on your information needs and sources. You can expect to revisit and update earlier worksheets as you progress.

## Solo or Group

Some toolkit activities are better done in groups than individually. For these, it's helpful to set aside time for facilitation and discussion. Group sessions are especially useful for Module 2, Frame a Clear Problem, and Module 5, Brainstorm Bold New Ideas.

# Global Mayors Challenge Checklist

## How to Get Started

☐ Seek commitment from your Mayor or executive sponsor to submit an application. Once your team has identified an idea to pursue, the application will require this person to submit a video explaining why they want your city to participate.

☐ Review the Selection Criteria and Application Questions so that you understand what is expected for your 1st round application.

## Suggestions for Working Together

☐ Identify one person able to dedicate significant time to own the application process. The owner should know the city well, have access to the Mayor or executive sponsor, and be able to bring in collaborators and stakeholders.

☐ Set up a physical or digital workspace where others can easily help with the application. Make sure it includes a central place to store all application documents.

☐ Set up a workflow to gather data, develop responses, discuss content, proofread drafts, and obtain stakeholder approval.

# Global Mayors Challenge Selection Criteria

Your application will be reviewed against the following criteria. Each criteria corresponds to specific question(s) on the application.

## Mayoral Commitment

- Is the mayor or lead decision-maker in the city bought into and engaged in the team's idea? (question #1)
- Is solving the problem connected to a broader vision and set of leadership priorities for the city? (question #1)

## Problem Understanding & Impact

- How strong is the team's understanding of the problem? (questions #2, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- How big or impactful is the problem in the city? (questions #3, 4)
- Is the problem and progress on solving it measurable? (questions #3, 5, 9)
- How aware is the team of past failure points and learning objectives to test? (question #6)

## Idea Potential

- Is the idea new and bold? (questions #7, 8)
- Does the idea address the problem? (questions #7, 8, 9, 10)
- Does the idea radically transform a core city service (e.g. sanitation)? (question #7, 8)
- How deep and/or broad is the resident impact? (questions #9, 10)
- Does the team have a good understanding of who they need to bring in for buy-in? (questions #11, 12, 13)

# Toolkit Contents

| Module | Resource | For Application Question | Estimated Time | Solo or Group |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 01 Set the Vision | Explore Problem Areas | #1 | 20 mins | Solo |
| | Define Impact Goals | #1 | 30 mins | Solo, Group |
| 02 Frame a Clear Problem | 5 Whys and Problem Statement | #2, #5 | 30 mins - 1 hour | Solo, Group |
| | Impacted Residents | #3, #4 | 30 - 45 mins | Solo, Group |
| 03 Gather Evidence | Resident Interviews | #3, #4 | 1 - 2 hours (per interview) | Solo |
| | In-Person Observation | #3, #4 | 1 - 2 hours | Solo, Group |
| 04 Look for Inspiration | Inspiration Library | #7, #8 | 1 hour | Solo, Group |
| | Borrow and Adapt | #7, #8 | 1 hour | Solo |
| 05 Brainstorm Bold New Ideas | How Might We | #7, #8 | 30 mins | Solo |
| | Creative Warm Up Bank | #7, #8 | 5 - 15 mins | Group |
| | Rules of Brainstorming | #7, #8 | 10 mins | Group |
| | Push your Idea | #7, #8 | 30 mins | Solo, Group |
| | Radical Mashups | #7, #8 | 30 mins | Solo, Group |
| | Question the Status Quo | #7, #8 | 20 mins | Group |
| 06 Develop your Idea | Concept Storyboard | #7, #8, #9, #10, #11 | 30 - 45 mins | Solo, Group |
| | Headlines from the Future | #7, #8, #9 | 30 mins | Solo, Group |
| 07 Build your Team | Teambuilding | #12, #13 | 30 - 45 mins | Solo, Group |

# MODULES

# Set the Vision

Setting ambitious goals helps you move from incremental changes to big, transformative ideas. Establishing early targets keeps your team and stakeholders focused as you develop ideas and plans to achieve your goals.

# Set the Vision

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Define impact goal(s) for your city to achieve within a set timeframe

- Align your team and city stakeholders to a vision and shared understanding of success

**This Module will help you answer…**

Question #1

- Mayor Commitment: Why do you want your city to participate in the Mayors Challenge?

# Set the Vision

**TIPS**

- Use this module as an opportunity to obtain mayoral buy-in for your participation in Mayors Challenge.

- The vision for your city can evolve as you learn more in subsequent modules. At this stage, the vision should be aspirational and directional.

**Instructions:**

**1** ──────────── **2** ──────────── **3** ────────

### Identify a problem area

Select a problem area related to core services that you want to address through the Mayors Challenge. If you're not sure where to begin, use the Explore Problem Areas worksheet to find focus.

### Develop a vision

Envision a future state of your city where the chosen problem area has been addressed. The Define Impact Goals worksheet will help you articulate the outcomes and a vision for residents in your city.

### Align on the vision

Seek commitment from your mayor and/or executive sponsor to pursue the vision. Ensure that your team and stakeholders understand how the Mayors Challenge will help with achieving the impact goals.

# Explore Problem Areas

**1** What are the problem areas related to core services that directly affect residents and need to be addressed in your city?

Don't overthink. Trust your intuition, unique vantage point, and lived experience. Think about feedback or requests you get from residents and problems you observe or experience personally.

**2** Review your problem areas.

- Circle the problem areas related services that are **citywide**
- Add a checkmark next to problem areas that are **resident-facing**
- Underline the problem areas that are in an area that the **city has authority** over
- Add a star next to problem areas that your **Mayor has committed** to or would be willing to prioritize solving

**3** Prioritize your problem areas.

Out of the problem areas that meet all four criteria above, choose one to focus on for the Mayors Challenge.

If none of your problem areas meet all four criteria, brainstorm additional problem areas. Talking to residents can help surface the most high-impact problem areas. You can explore how to do that in *Module 3*.

# Define Impact Goals

ACTIVITY GOAL: *Articulate a vision statement that provides direction for your team in the Mayors Challenge.*

Suggested Time: 30 minutes

**1** Explore your impact goals

Imagine a future state where your chosen problem area no longer exists in your city. What is the impact on your city and its residents? Impact is usually long-term and something that your work will contribute to over time.

The lasting change you would like to contribute to your city is:

**2** Gather feedback from your Mayor

In the process, you'll uncover expectations for the longer-term change as well as more immediate outcomes that will contribute to that change.

To achieve this lasting change, your city will need to consider the following:

**3** Refine your impact goals

Set a time frame for achieving the impact goals along with a measurable outcome for your residents. Write your impact goals as a vision statement.

Example: By 2030, every young person has access to economic opportunity that enables them to be safe and secure.
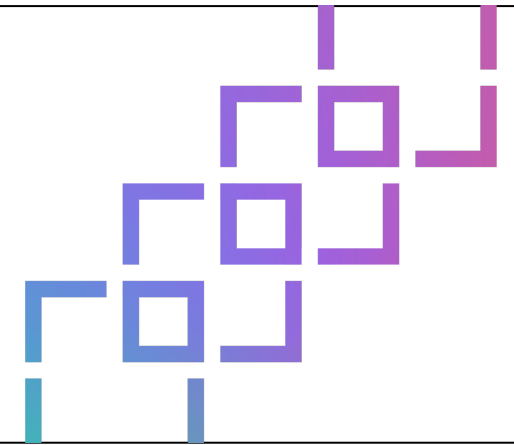
The vision for your city is:

# Frame a Clear Problem

A great idea starts with a clear problem statement. A well-articulated problem statement is like a compass in the wilderness of innovation — ensuring that every step taken moves towards a solution that is both effective and meaningful to your residents.
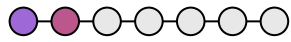
# Frame a Clear Problem

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Select the right problem to address through the Mayors Challenge

- Write a clear Problem Statement that conveys what the problem is, whom the problem affects, and why the problem exists in your city

## This Module will help you answer…

### Question #2

- Problem Framing: What is the problem in a core service area that your city wants to address through the Mayors Challenge?

### Question #5

- Problem Causes: What is/are the cause(s) driving this problem in a core service area?

# Frame a Clear Problem

- Avoid formulating a problem statement that is a solution in disguise. You must separate the problem from a potential solution, which at this stage may or may not be right.

- As you complete these worksheets, take note of gaps in your understanding and where you might be making assumptions.

- What you think is the problem may not be what residents experience. Validate assumptions by connecting with residents.

## Instructions:

**1** ———————————————————— **2** ————

### 1

Get to the root of your problem

Using the Five Whys & Problem Statement worksheet, identify the root causes of the problem you want to address through the Challenge. Select which root cause to focus on in order to create a clear Problem Statement.

*If you're not sure where to begin, use the Explore Problem Areas worksheet to find focus.*

*If you need additional data (existing or new) to complete this step, go to Module 3.*

### 2

Understand the resident impact of your problem

With the data available to you, use the Impacted Residents worksheet to capture who is affected by the problem and their key attributes (e.g. demographics, occupations, behaviors, needs).

*If you need additional data (existing or new) to complete this step, go to Module 3.*

## APPLICATION QUESTION #2

Problem Framing: What is the problem in a core service area that your city wants to address through the Mayors Challenge?

*A Mayors Challenge problem is one that:*
- *Is in a core service area (city-wide, resident-facing, and that your city has authority over)*
- *Your Mayor has committed to, or would be willing to prioritize, solving*
- *May require cross-department or cross-functional collaboration within and outside of city hall*

**STRONG RESPONSE**

*The problem statement is clear and concise. The symptom of the problem ('gender inequality') and the problem that the applicant wishes to solve is evident ('Women's "time poverty"').*

Women's "time poverty" is a structural cause of gender inequality. Full-time female caregivers lack financial autonomy. Ninety percent of them are low-income, and 33% are deprived of free time for self-care, which has incalculable impacts on public health. Moreover, this translates to considerable lost political participation by women, the entrenchment of inequality at home and beyond, and lost economic gains for society: if such work were paid, it would represent 13% of [City] GDP and 20% of [Country] GDP. [We consider the following to need care: children five years old or less, elderly and persons with disabilities who require care].

*The response explains what this problem means for a specific resident group ('Full-time female caregivers lack financial autonomy') and establishes a measurable baseline of the negative impact ("33% are deprived of free time for self-care, which has incalculable impacts on public health.")*

*The immediate and long-term consequences for this resident group are well considered: ("lost political participation by women, entrenchment of inequality at home and beyond, lost economic gains for society.")*

## APPLICATION QUESTION #2

Problem Framing: What is the problem in a core service area that your city wants to address through the Mayors Challenge?

*A Mayors Challenge problem is one that:*
- *Is in a core service area (city-wide, resident-facing, and that your city has authority over)*
- *Your Mayor has committed to, or would be willing to prioritize, solving*
- *May require cross-department or cross-functional collaboration within and outside of city hall*

### AVERAGE RESPONSE

*The 'declining and aging population' in this city is a demographic driver and 'weakening of the community' is more of a symptom of the problem rather than a description of the problem itself. The response could improve with supporting data that highlights how exactly the 'declining and aging population' weakens the community.*

The problem that we are trying to address is the weakening of the community as a result of a declining and aging population, which in turn affects residents' well-being. The population of [City] is [xxx] but is projected to decrease to [xxx] by 2060. The proportion of residents 65 and over is around xx% (national average is xx%) and nears xx% in some neighborhoods. The effect of this situation on social capital is clear from one city questionnaire, in which the top two issues raised regarding [City]'s civic activities were "aging of the staff" (43%) and "lack of successors" (35%).

*Additionally, the response would be stronger if the applicant could articulate the long-term consequences for the residents of this city if the problem is left unaddressed.*

*While quantitative data has surfaced issues in the city — ('aging of staff (43%) and 'lack of successors' (35%)) — more qualitative data can be provided on the needs of the resident group affected by the demographic driver and the challenges they face.*

## APPLICATION QUESTION #2

Problem Framing: What is the problem in a core service area that your city wants to address through the Mayors Challenge?

*A Mayors Challenge problem is one that:*
- *Is in a core service area (city-wide, resident-facing, and that your city has authority over)*
- *Your Mayor has committed to, or would be willing to prioritize, solving*
- *May require cross-department or cross-functional collaboration within and outside of city hall*

**WEAK RESPONSE**

*The response does not directly answer the question that is being posed. The problem to be solved is too broad ('prevent diseases') and the first statistic refers to the impact on the world population rather than specifying impact on an identified resident group in the city.*

It is estimated that disruptions in life and the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic will have significant short and long-term impacts on the physical and mental well- being of 10-15% of the world population. Despite significant advancements in technology, we do not yet have non-medical tools that enable us to prevent diseases, particularly collaborative tools to educate and keep people informed about the control measures for both infectious and non-infectious diseases. We also lack tools for early detection and prevention of infectious diseases and systems for rapid and decisive intervention during emergencies.

*Instead of articulating a clear problem with supporting data, the response proposes three solutions ('non-medical tools', 'tools for early detection and prevention', 'systems for rapid and decisive intervention') with vague outcomes.*

# 5 Whys + Problem Statement

1. Write your initial problem statement.

# 5 Whys + Problem Statement

**2** Dig deeper into your problem by asking why it is happening and what evidence you have.

| Why is this happening? | | How do you know? | |
|---|---|---|---|

| Why is this happening? | | How do you know? | |
|---|---|---|---|

| Why is this happening? | | How do you know? | |
|---|---|---|---|

| Why is this happening? | | How do you know? | |
|---|---|---|---|

| Why is this happening? | | How do you know? | |
|---|---|---|---|

# 5 Whys + Problem Statement

**3** Star the problem cause in step 2 that makes the most sense to focus on for this project and articulate a new problem statement.

You can try creating multiple problem statements to determine which is most compelling.

The problem is

This is a problem for

This is a problem because

# 5 Whys + Problem Statement

**4** Assess your problem statement to see where it falls on each of these spectrums.

*If it leans more toward the right of the spectrum, the problem is likely a good fit to focus on for the Mayors Challenge. If it leans more toward the left, revisit your 5 whys and try another problem statement.*

### What is the nature of the problem?

The problem is well understood. We know what causes it, and there is solid evidence for a solution that will have the intended effects. ← → We are not really sure we understand the problem fully, let alone the solution.

### How are people engaging with the problem?

There is a high level of consensus among stakeholders and experts about what to do. ← → There is a significant diversity of opinion and even conflict among stakeholders and experts about what to do.

### What is the nature of the environment?

The problem is relatively self-contained and not intertwined with its broader environment, which is stable and predictable (political, social, and economic). ← → There are many diverse and dynamic interconnections between the problem and the broader environment, which itself is unstable and dynamic (political, social, and economic).

### What does a solution to the problem look like?

Achieving a short-term goal. ← → Making sustained change at a broad scale.

# Impacted Residents

ACTIVITY GOAL: *The Impacted Residents activity will help you articulate whom the problem impacts in your city and how, surfacing additional areas to research.*

Suggested Time: 30 - 45 mins

**1** Fill out the template for three different profiles of residents who are impacted by your problem.

It can be helpful to think about real people that you've met or heard from as you complete this.

**2** Reflect on your profiles

- What parts of the resident experience are clear to you?
- Where do you have gaps or questions?
- What assumptions are you uncertain about?

In the next module, you will have a chance to explore your open questions.

### Resident 1

What are the key attributes of this resident? You may include things like age, race, gender, occupation, education, family makeup, and background.

What are the core needs of this resident? What do they care about?

When does this resident experience the problem? How does it impact them?

### Resident 2

What are the key attributes of this resident? You may include things like age, race, gender, occupation, education, family makeup, and background.

What are the core needs of this resident? What do they care about?

When does this resident experience the problem? How does it impact them?

### Resident 3

What are the key attributes of this resident? You may include things like age, race, gender, occupation, education, family makeup, and background.

What are the core needs of this resident? What do they care about?

When does this resident experience the problem? How does it impact them?
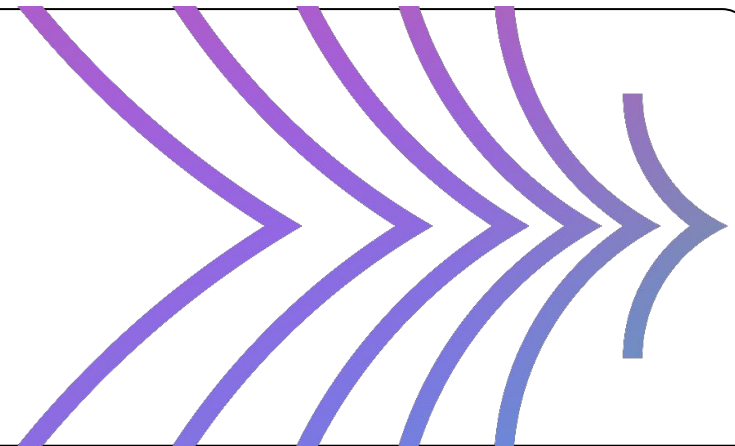
# Gather Evidence

While quantitative data provides a sense of scale for the problem, talking with residents is the most valuable way to gain a clearer picture of the problem. Quantitative data tells you what is happening in your city in a numerical format. Qualitative data tells you how and why in a narrative format.
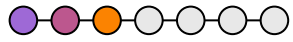
# Gather Evidence

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Gather the evidence to connect your problem statement with resident impact
- Conduct a resident interview
- Conduct a field immersion

## This Module will help you answer…

### Question #3

- Capture the Problem: Who is most affected by this problem in your city and why? What evidence can you provide to illustrate the core service problem and its impact on your residents?

### Question #4

- Resident Impact: Please include 3 brief quotes from different residents that show how the problem affects their lives.

# Gather Evidence

## Instructions:

**1**

**2**

**3**

### 1

Review existing data about your problem

Gather existing data that highlights both the scale and impact of the problem in your city. Identify gaps or open questions that you have about how the problem impacts residents.

### 2

Gather additional data to fill gaps

Select the research method(s) best suited for exploring your questions:

- Resident Interviews to understand how the problem affects their daily lives. Use the Resident Interview worksheet to prepare for and document your interview.

- In-Person Observation to see the problem firsthand in context. Use the In-Person Observation worksheet to prepare for and document your immersion.

- Expert Interviews to understand leading research and perspectives on your problem.

- Quantitative Studies to measure the scale of the problem for your city and residents.

- Secondary Research to understand existing research around your problem.

### 3

Refine your problem statement

Based on the new information you've collected, review and update the Five Whys + Problem Statement and/or your Impacted Residents worksheet from *Module 2*.

Repeat steps 1 and 2 as needed. When you have sufficient and compelling evidence, and a deeper understanding of the problem within your city, go to *Module 4*.

## APPLICATION QUESTION #3

Capture the Problem: Who is most affected by this problem in your city and why? What evidence can you provide to illustrate the core service problem and its impact on your residents?

*Please provide a description of the affected residents and an estimate of their population size(s) in your city; if the problem is city-wide, you can provide estimates of relevant incidents. We are looking for you to quantify the impact of the problem which helps us understand the scale of impact in your city.*

*Evidence should include quantitative data to indicate the scale and impact of the problem in your city. If quantitative data is not available, please explain how you could get the data and provide at least one piece of qualitative evidence.*

*Qualitative evidence may include:*
- *Local expert input*
- *Articles or research reports*

### EXAMPLE A

The pandemic increased the number of women devoted to unpaid care work from 800,000 to 1.2 million. The closure of care services transferred care to homes, where their redistribution was unequitable. For 85% of the children, it was their mother who cared for them. In 50% of cases, care for the elderly and persons with disabilities increased by more than three hours/day. 60% stated that it was hard to distribute care. Thus, women's employment rate fell from 55% to 45%. For every man that lost his job, 3 women lost theirs. Advances made before the pandemic are in jeopardy.

Estimate of Population Size
[City] has a female population of 4 million, of whom 3.6 million carry out unpaid care work and 1.2 million do so full-time. That is 30% of the female population of the city whose potential socioeconomic and political contributions and well-being are left neglected. Within full-time caregivers, 14% suffer more dire situations. They oversee persons with extreme disabilities and cannot leave their home. The situation worsens for:

1. Caregivers in rural areas, who devote more time to care and often lack basic utilities
2. Migrants, who lack social networks to redistribute care or access to stable government services

### EXAMPLE B

[City] witnesses 1,681 overdoses annually; related deaths impact users directly and damage ripples outward, harming families, decreasing street safety and community vitality, increasing money-desperate crime such as robbery (five-times the state average). Resulting perceptions of [city] harm investment, health, educational outcomes, and resident pride. [City]'s clinics attract those seeking treatment by an inequitable system promoting inappropriate treatment. Failed patients take refuge on our streets fueling our 428% growth in street homelessness over four years, 48% with SUD with more than 18% of the homeless coming from other municipalities. Inaction perpetuates this epidemic. The system must be disrupted to yield change.

Estimate of Population Size
The poor and uninsured Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) sufferers are most impacted by unsuccessful abstinence programs or inappropriate Methadone programs. 48% of the street homeless locally have a Substance Use Disorder. Most shelters require sobriety and, from lack of understanding, reject those on Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). Single dose 30-day extended-release buprenorphine, appropriate for the unsheltered, is not covered in [City]'s poverty rate, which is 27% (13% nationally) and its uninsured rate, which is 21% (10% nationally). OUD sufferers contribute significantly to prevalent crime. This adversely impacts all members of [City] by harming perceptions (population of [#]); drug crime discourages economic investment, thwarts upward mobility, and harms health outcomes.

## APPLICATION QUESTION #4

Resident Impact: Please include 3 brief quotes from different residents that show how the problem affects their lives.

**EXAMPLE A**

Example Resident Quote

"I have a one-month-old baby. I live with my mother, and my husband, who are unemployed, and my brother. I dislike not being able to go out because of the virus. In the morning, I make breakfast for my family, then I spend between four to five hours doing all the housework. I spend 24 hours a day with my daughter. I feel frustrated at having to depend on others financially. It makes me sad. I almost always have to wait for my mother to arrive before I can bathe. I feel tired most of the time but don't have time to sleep well."

**EXAMPLE B**

Example Resident Quote

"The window when you will accept help is fleeting. Aid cannot be delayed when they are ready to accept it... our hospital has an Opioid Overdose Recovery Program but there is no transportation to get there... except through the hospital, MAT is not available when people need it, nights and weekends... if you are chronically homeless, it is because of drug addiction or mental health... the fear of withdrawal is stronger than anything else, even a fear of death."

# Resident Interviews

**1** **Determine who you will learn from**

Identify three people that can offer a perspective on your problem that you and your team do not have. Consider individuals with different demographic characteristics, behavioral characteristics, and lived experiences.

**2** **Brainstorm your questions**

What do you want to learn from your residents? Start with getting to know them as people, then think about gaps in your knowledge, conflicting data, assumptions you're holding, or questions about how your problem is experienced. Frame 5-7 open-ended questions (e.g., questions that start with "what," "how," or "why") with follow ups.

**Profile 1**
What are the key attributes of this resident? You may include things like age, race, gender, occupation, education, family makeup, and background.

**Profile 2**
What are the key attributes of this resident? You may include things like age, race, gender, occupation, education, family makeup, and background.

**Profile 3**
What are the key attributes of this resident? You may include things like age, race, gender, occupation, education, family makeup, and background.

Questions

Questions

Questions

# Resident Interviews

**3** Review Best Practices for Interviewing

### BE TRANSPARENT

Start by informing the resident of how their likeness, quotes, and input will be used and where they will be shared. Receive their consent before starting or conducting any recordings of the interview.

### MAKE SPACE

Switch from talking mode to listening mode. Sit with silence. Give the resident time to think and respond.

### DEFER JUDGMENT

Never correct, refute, challenge, or tell the resident that they misinterpreted your question. Their perception is a reality for you to learn from. The resident is an expert in their own lived experience and an agent of change.

### VALUE THEIR COMFORT

Treat them as collaborators and partners, not subjects. Approaching research like a normal conversation will help the resident be comfortable. Err on the side of a pleasant interaction versus extracting all possible information.

### ASK OPEN QUESTIONS

How does that make you feel? Can you say more about that? Why do you think that? Open questions give the resident space to further explain their thinking. To help people get more specific, ask them to tell you about a time something happened.

**4** Conduct the Interview

Interviews are best done in teams of two — one person to lead facilitation and ask questions, and one person to capture verbatim quotes (not interpretations).

Open the interview by explaining your role and the purpose of the interview. Make sure the participant agrees to how their information and responses will be used, and to being recorded or photographed if applicable. Let them know they can skip questions or stop the interview at any time.

# Resident Interviews

**5**  Reflect on the Interview

Review your notes from the interview and capture what you learned.

What did you learn? Top five takeaways or quotes.

How has your understanding of the problem evolved?
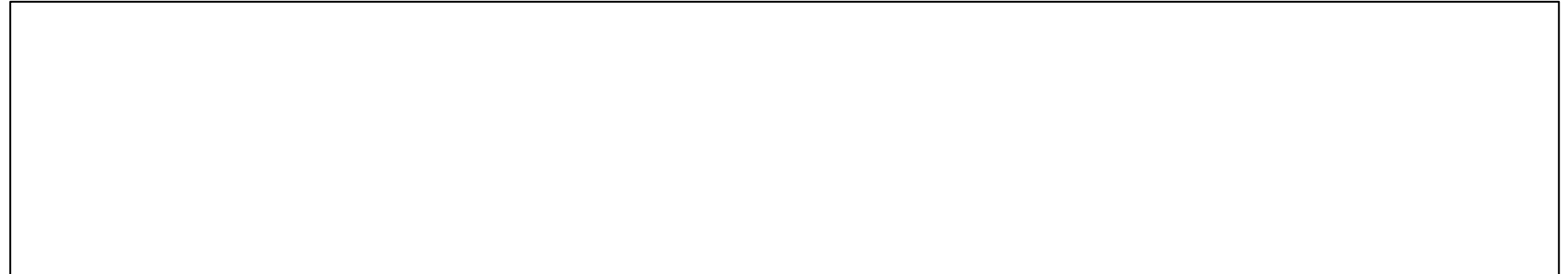
What's next? What new questions do you have?

# In-Person Observation

ACTIVITY GOAL: *An in-person observation helps you to see firsthand what your problem looks and feels like for residents - deepening your understanding.*

Suggested Time: 1 - 2 hours

**1** Determine where you will go

Identify a location to visit where you can observe your problem in action and its impact on residents.

**2** Prepare for your visit

Brainstorm key questions you hope to learn from your observation. Think about gaps in your knowledge, conflicting data, assumptions you're holding, or questions about how your problem is experienced.

# In-Person Observation

**3** **Conduct your Observation**

Make sure to ask for permission if taking photos, videos, or interviewing people and transparently share the intent of your observation. Fill out your observation framework.

**Activities**
What actions and behaviors do you observe?

**Environments**
What is the setting in which activities are taking place?

**Interactions**
Who and what are residents interacting with?

**Objects**
What tools are residents using? How are they using them?

**Users**
Who are the residents present? What emotions are on display?

**Additional Observations**

# In-Person Observation

(4) **Reflect on the Observation**

Review your notes from the in-person observation and capture what you learned.

What did you learn? Top five takeaways or quotes.

How has your understanding of the problem evolved?

What's next? What new questions do you have?

# Look for Inspiration

Bold, new ideas require inspiration from unexpected sources. When you've spent countless hours, months, or years deep inside a particular field or system, a radically fresh perspective can help unlock sticky problems or inspire new directions of exploration.
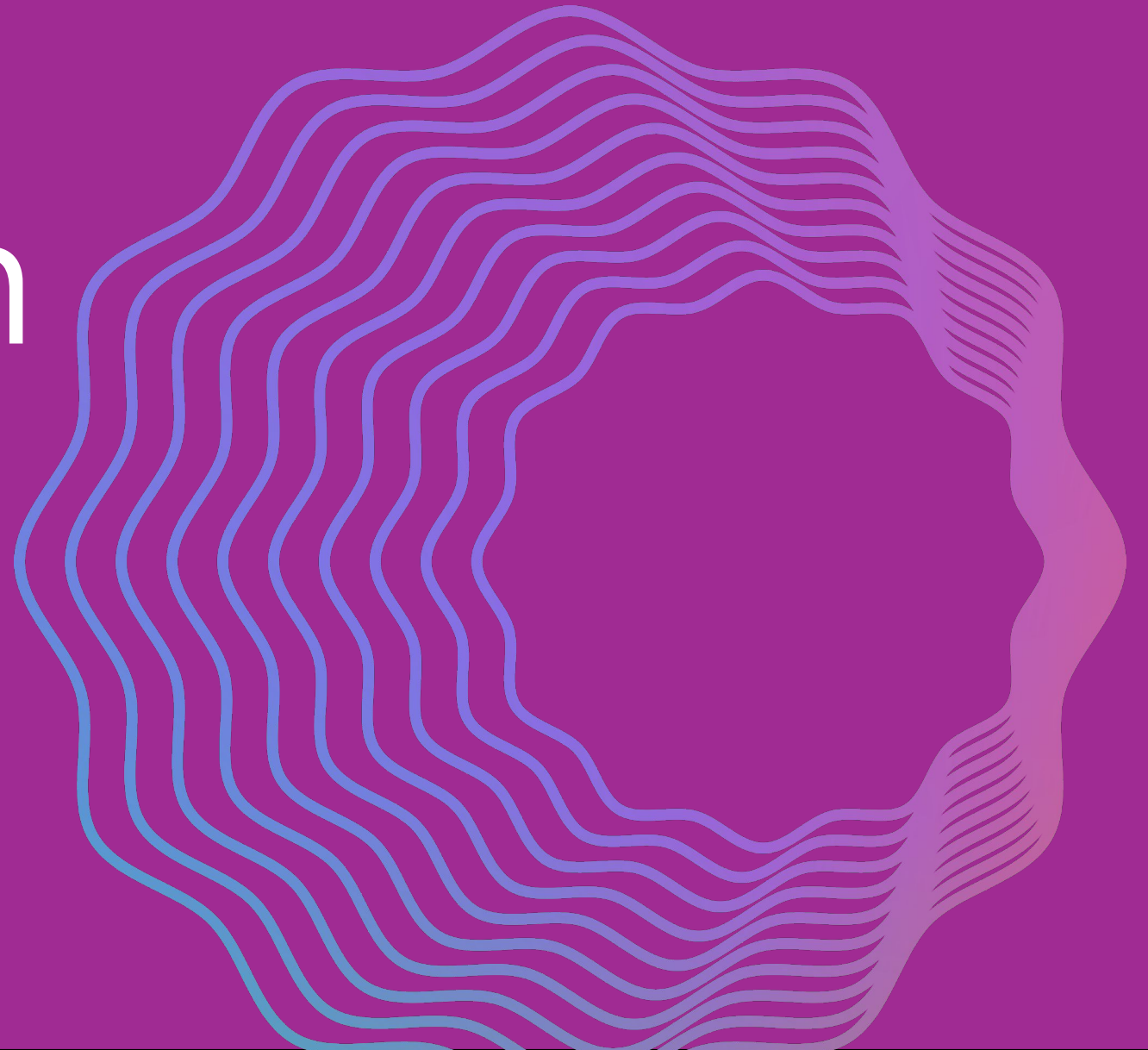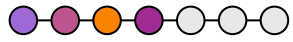
# Look for Inspiration
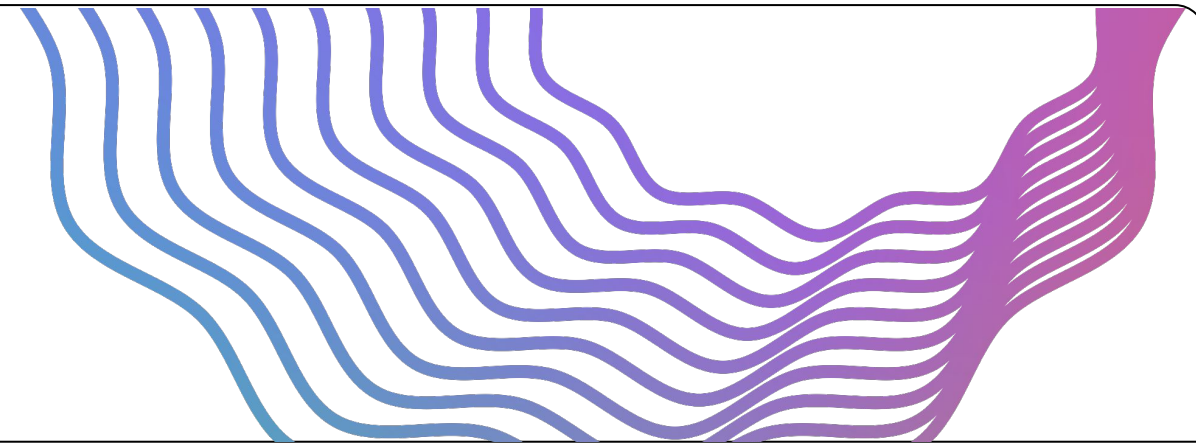
**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Draw inspiration from cities around the world transforming core services

- Spark different, new ideas

- Think about your idea in new ways based on forces shaping cities today and tomorrow

**This Module will help you answer…**

**Question #7**

- Pitch: Briefly describe your idea to address the problem in your city.

**Question #8**

- Add some detail: How does the core service currently work or get delivered and how will it work after the transformation?

# Look for Inspiration

**Instructions:**

**1**

Get inspired by other city innovators

Using the Inspiration Library worksheet, review a curated set of city-based innovations on core services from around the world and reflect on how it could inspire your ideas. Capture any additional content that inspires you.

**2**

Look for inspiration outside of city government

Get inspired outside of the context of your city office. Use the Borrow and Adapt worksheet to jot down ideas from unexpected sources.

# Inspiration Library

**1** **Review the Inspiration Library.** Below is a curated set of radical improvements to core, resident-facing services in cities around the world. These were amazing ideas of the past; use them to inspire your thinking about what might be possible in the future.
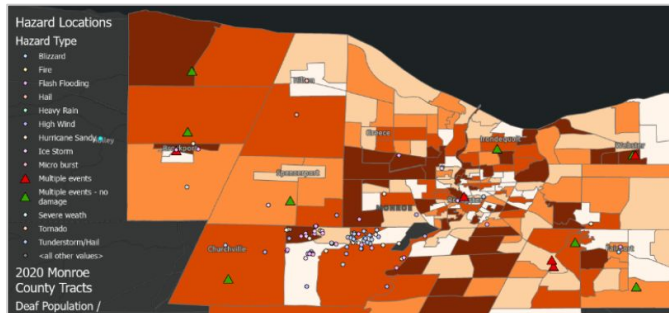


**Bridging Core Services with Deaf & Hard of Hearing Community | Rochester, NY, USA**

The nation's first Deaf community hazard-mapping geospatial toolkit called 'Deaf Map' to empower Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing communities to identify, characterize, map and communicate community hazards with public service agencies. ([Source](#))

*How might you tap into the knowledge and skills of local communities to co-create inclusive city services?*



**Tackling Water Scarcity Using Ancient Systems | Lima, Peru**

In the world's third most populous desert city, the city has implemented a program to restore ancient pre-Inca water management systems, known as "amunas," to capture and store water during the rainy season, as well as improve water purity and prevent erosion and landslides. ([Source](#))

*How might you leverage indigenous wisdom and science to address modern problems?*



**Fostering Public Safety through Unarmed Response Teams | Los Angeles, CA**

As part of a new unarmed response pilot program, LA deploys teams of mental health professionals and workers from three non-profit community-based organizations, supervised by licensed clinicians, in response to mental health crises, instead of armed police officers. ([Source](#))

*How might you bring resources across sectors together in unexpected ways?*

# Inspiration Library

**1** **Review the Inspiration Library.** Below is a curated set of radical improvements to core, resident-facing services in cities around the world. These were amazing ideas of the past; use them to inspire your thinking about what might be possible in the future.



**Expanding Education to Rural Areas |** Mombasa, Kenya

Close the Gap is strengthening connectivity and computer skills in vulnerable communities in rural regions through mobile labs. Equipped with 20 laptops, 20 VR headsets, and built in Wi-Fi, powered 100% by solar energy, each DigiTruck serves as a temporary digital school. (Source)

*How might you leverage geographic constraints to meet residents where they are?*
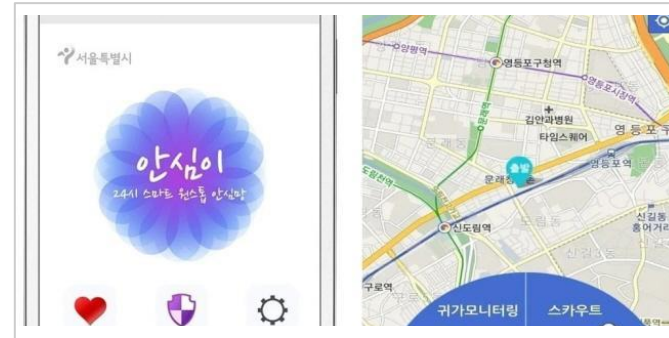


**Fostering Women's Safety in Public Spaces |** Seoul, Korea

A Women's Safety App, called 'Ansimi,' activated by shaking a smartphone or pressing a shortcut button, sends signals to nearby CCTV cameras to quickly monitor the situation and report back to the police. (Source)

*How might you raise public safety for all by raising it for the most vulnerable?*

# Inspiration Library

**2** Reflect on the inspiration

Capture which stories are resonating with you and how they are influencing your approach to addressing the problem in your city.

What examples are most inspiring to you? Why?

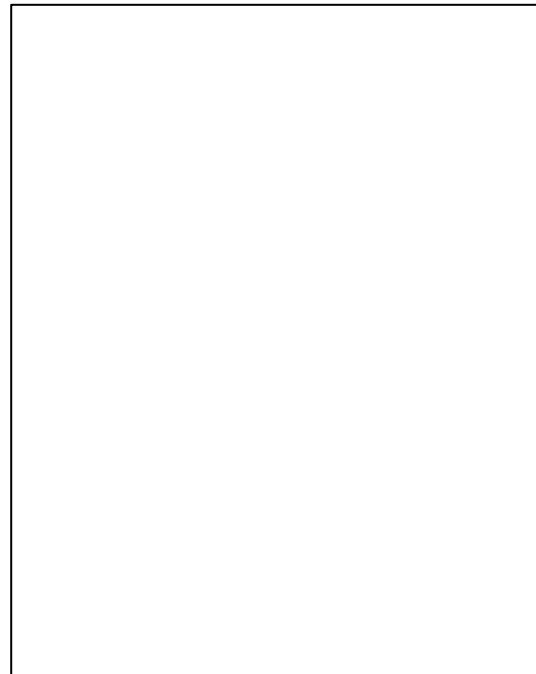How do these examples change the way you think about addressing your problem?
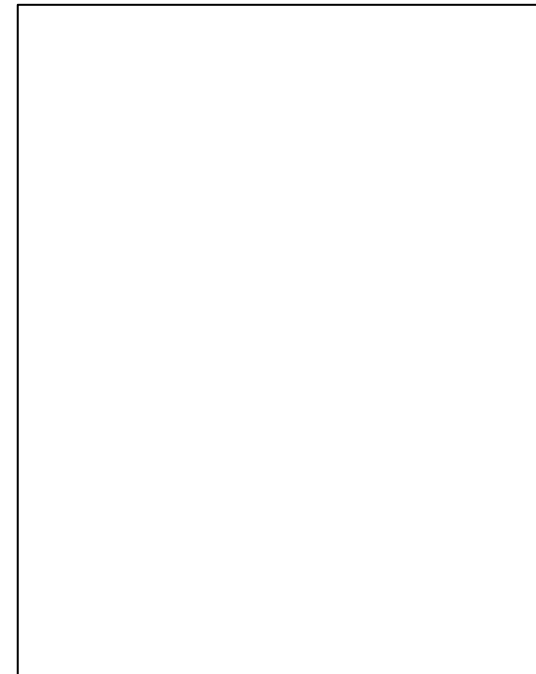
# Inspiration Library

**3** What else is inspiring you?

Capture all additional content that inspires you. Follow your curiosity. Here are a few questions to get you started.
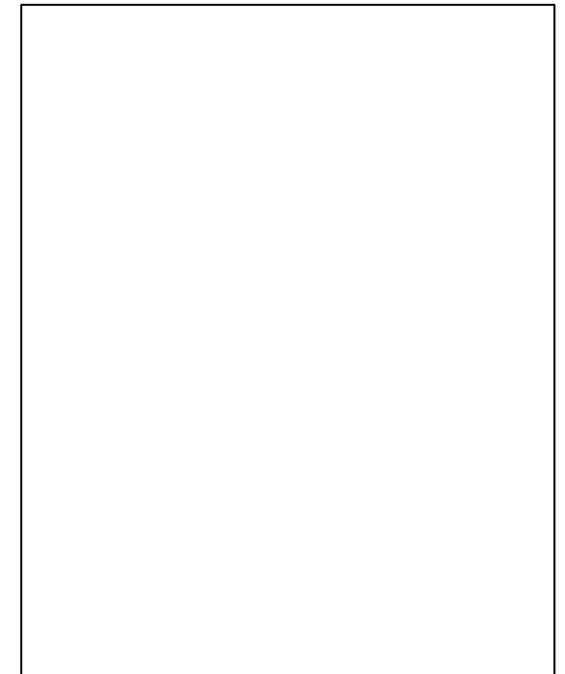
What are city residents already doing to address the problem? What does the community already have and do well? If you don't know, ask.

What projects/initiatives in other cities from your region have caught your eye?

What else is inspiring you?

# Borrow and Adapt

ACTIVITY GOAL: *Think through how those outside of your field of work are approaching your problem in a different context.*

Suggested Time: 1 hour

**1** Review this case study to better understand the purpose of Borrow and Adapt.

A hospital team wanted to create a better experience for surgical patients, one focused not just on clinical outcomes. They wanted to get inspiration from outside the healthcare space to see what an exceptional patient experience could look like. What was another setting that would be similarly highly regulated, with lots of moving parts and coordination required, also trying to deliver an exceptional experience? They decided to get inspired by an airline known for its customer experience.

As the team of surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, and hospital executives walked through the passenger experience, they saw immediate parallels to the patient experience:

- The airline offers multiple pathways for travelers with different needs, such as families, travelers with disabilities, and frequent fliers. At check-in, passengers can use a kiosk, their phone, or speak to a real, live person, depending on their level of comfort with technology. The hospital team realized they only offer one experience, even though their patients, like air travelers, come with a variety of needs.
- The airline had a customer service desk with friendly employees ready to answer any and all questions that travelers might have. The hospital team saw an opportunity to offer something similar to get a better sense of what patients really want and need.

Rather than copy exactly what the airline did, the hospital team took the principles of what they observed — tailored pathways and easy answers to questions — and designed a series of prototypes to test at the hospital, including a redesigned lobby experience, and a way to engage with patients with different levels of confidence and familiarity with the hospital system.

# Borrow and Adapt

**2** Brainstorm places you could learn from

List the distinct activities, behaviors, and emotions that are associated with your problem that you would like to change. Next to each one, write down a setting or situation where you might observe this activity, behavior, or emotion.

Think about settings, experiences, or groups of people that you might easily encounter everyday, like the supermarket around the corner, public square outside your building, or maintenance crew in your building.

For example:

- *If your problem is related to getting people to do something differently, you may brainstorm places known for effective habit building, like gyms or nutrition programs*

- *If your problem is related to fostering more pride in using a service, you may brainstorm what inspires people to feel a sense of pride, like being on a strong sports team or giving back to the community*

- *If your problem is related to delivering a better resident experience, you may brainstorm places known for exceptional customer service, like a local market or a hotel*

# Borrow and Adapt

**3** **Conduct your Observation**

Make sure to ask for permission if taking photos, videos or interviewing people, and transparently share the intent of your field immersion. Fill out your observation framework.

**Activities**
What actions and behaviors do you observe?

**Environments**
What is the setting in which activities are taking place?

**Interactions**
Who and what are residents interacting with?

**Objects**
What tools are residents using? How are they accessing and using them?

**Users**
Who are the residents present? What emotions are on display?
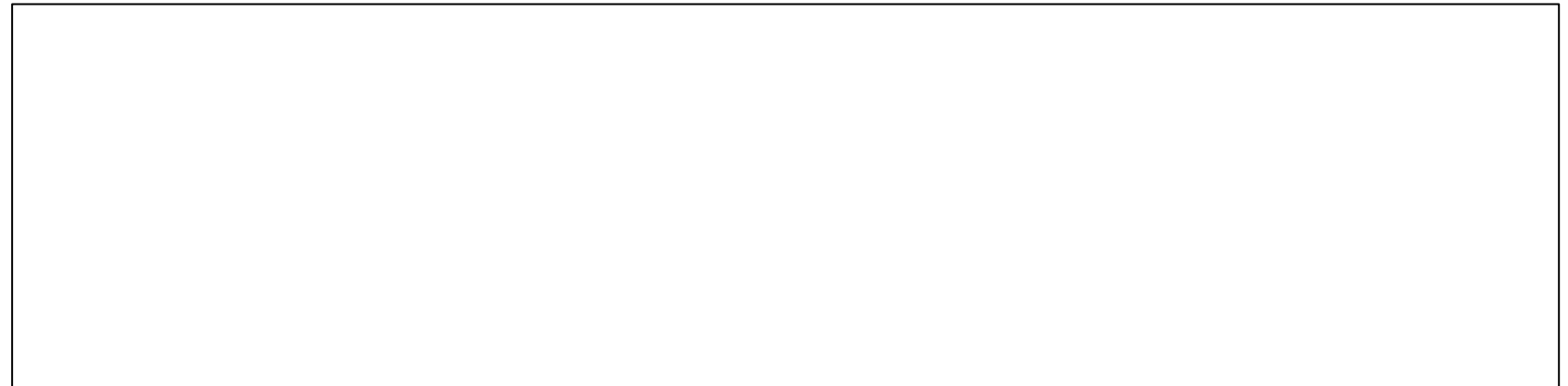
**Additional Observations**

# Borrow and Adapt

**4** Reflect on the Observation

Reflect on the observation. Review your notes and fill in what you learned.

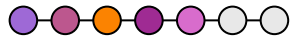What did you learn? Top five takeaways or quotes.

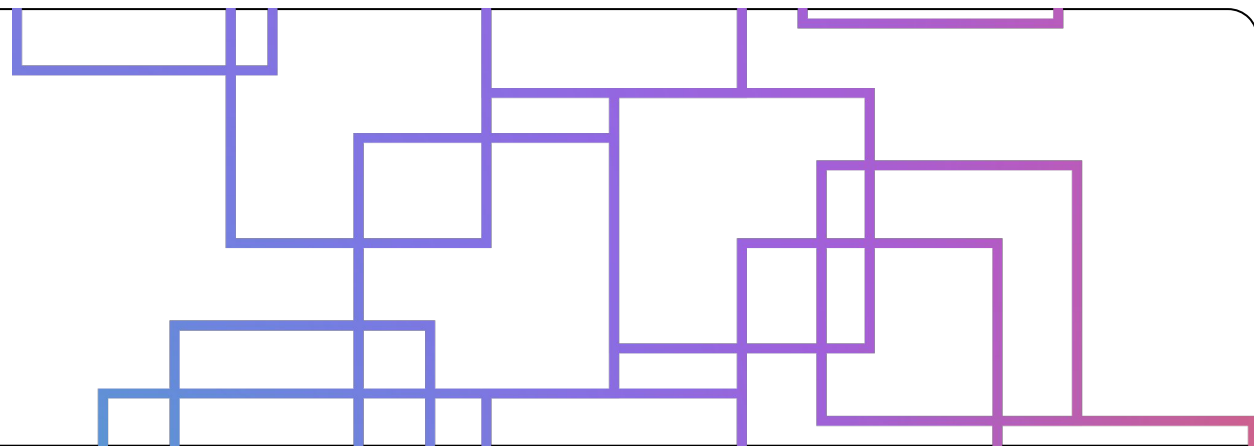How might you apply these learnings in the context of your problem?

# Brainstorm Bold New Ideas

The only way to get to good ideas is to have lots to choose from.

Brainstorms work best when a group is focused on generating as many ideas as possible and not thinking about constraints or feasibility.

# Brainstorm Bold New Ideas

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Turn your problem into a "How might we…" question that sets you up to generate ideas

- Come up with a strong, bold, new idea

## This Module will help you answer…

### Question #7

- Pitch: Briefly describe your idea to address the problem in your city.
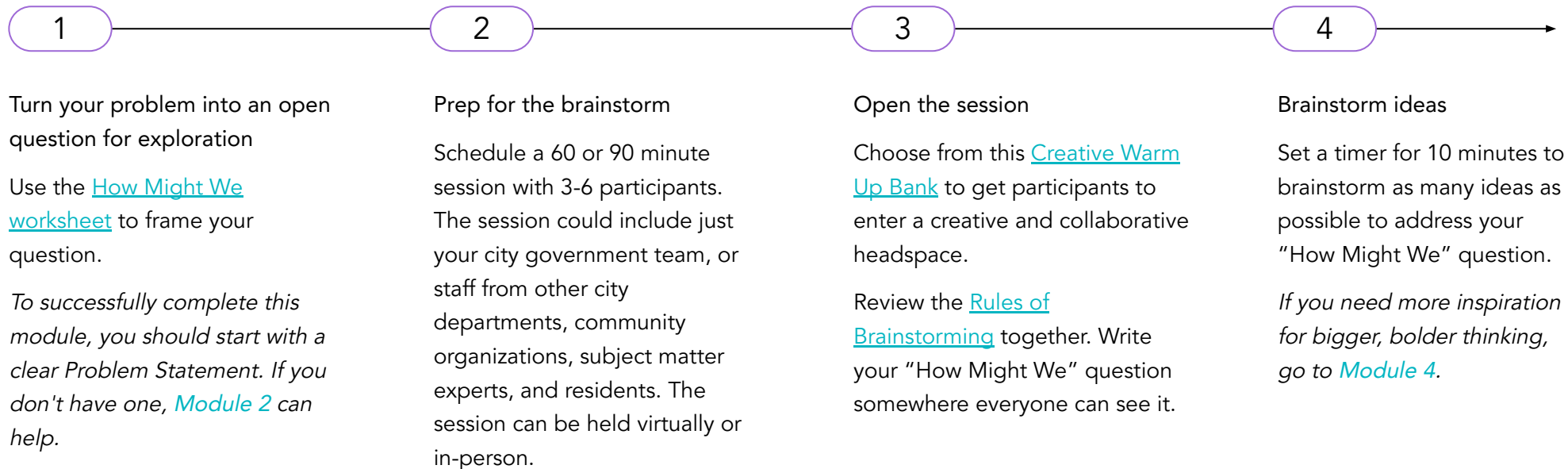
### Question #8

- Add some detail: How does the core service currently work or get delivered and how will it work after the transformation?

# Brainstorm Bold New Ideas

**TIPS**

- Bring in materials into your brainstorm for participants to write and capture ideas.

- Novel ideas come from having a mix of perspectives in the room. Select a diverse group of participants to join your brainstorm. Encourage them to share whatever ideas they have, no matter how wild or improbable they may seem.

- You may want to run multiple brainstorming sessions with different participants to generate more ideas.

## Instructions:

**1**

Turn your problem into an open question for exploration

Use the How Might We worksheet to frame your question.

*To successfully complete this module, you should start with a clear Problem Statement. If you don't have one, Module 2 can help.*

**2**

Prep for the brainstorm

Schedule a 60 or 90 minute session with 3-6 participants. The session could include just your city government team, or staff from other city departments, community organizations, subject matter experts, and residents. The session can be held virtually or in-person.

**3**

Open the session

Choose from this Creative Warm Up Bank to get participants to enter a creative and collaborative headspace.

Review the Rules of Brainstorming together. Write your "How Might We" question somewhere everyone can see it.

**4**

Brainstorm ideas

Set a timer for 10 minutes to brainstorm as many ideas as possible to address your "How Might We" question.

*If you need more inspiration for bigger, bolder thinking, go to Module 4.*

# Brainstorm Bold New Ideas

- Bring in materials into your brainstorm for participants to write and capture ideas.

- Novel ideas come from having a mix of perspectives in the room. Select a diverse group of participants to join your brainstorm. Encourage them to share whatever ideas they have, no matter how wild or improbable they may seem.

- You may want to run multiple brainstorming sessions with different participants to generate more ideas.

## Instructions:

### 5

**Share and prioritize ideas**

Take turns sharing your ideas with the group, adding new ideas as they come to you.
Group ideas with similar qualities or intents.

As a group, vote on 3 ideas to further explore:

- 1 that feels achievable
- 1 that feels aspirational
- 1 that feels risky yet bold

### 6

**Advance your ideas**

To encourage bolder, more novel thinking, you may try any of the following:

- Bring in someone with a new perspective to build on the ideas from your brainstorm
- Run a new brainstorming session with different participants.
- Try Push Your Idea to think about bolder angles on your problem based on present and future forces.
- Try Radical Mashups to create novel ideas from unexpected combinations of ideas.
- Try Question the Status Quo to explore what unlearning assumptions can unlock for you.

*It can be helpful to take time in between brainstorming sessions and seek additional inspiration, which you can do in Module 4.*

# How Might We

ACTIVITY GOAL: *Framing your challenge will help you transition from problem to potential solutions and invite others to generate ideas with you.*

Suggested Time: 30 minutes

**1** Write your problem statement.

What is the problem you are trying to solve? Need help? Go to *Module 2*.

**2** State the key outcome that you're trying to achieve by addressing this problem.

The lasting change in our city we would like to contribute to is _____.

*You may want to refer back to your vision statement in Module 1.*

**3** Draft a "How might We" question

With your problem statement as a guide, write a "How Might We" question using the Mad Lib below. "How" assumes that solutions exist, "might" invites exploration and multiple possibilities, and "we" indicates that it will be a collaborative effort.

How might we support _____ [group of residents]

to _____ [problem to be solved]

while they're _____ [context: place, time, activity]

# How Might We

**4** **Assess and adjust your "How Might We" question**

An effective "How Might We" question is broad enough to invite multiple solutions, yet focused enough to feel actionable. Review the sample "How Might We" questions and then assess your draft and modify as needed. This will probably take several rounds of edits!

Sample 1:
### Too Broad

*"How might we improve educational outcomes for our city?"*

This question does not specify a target population, or a specific outcome. It would be challenging to have a focused brainstorm around this question.

Sample 2:
### Too Narrow

*"How might we support 8-year-olds at Jones Elementary to read one more book a year?"*

This question is so narrow that it would be difficult to come up with lots of ideas and the scale and impact would be very limited in scope.

Sample 3:
### Too Solution-Focused

*"How might we launch an after-school program for students struggling in math?"*

This question leads with the solution, narrowing the possibilities for ideas that could be generated.

Sample 4:
### Just Right

*"How might we support young children in low-income households to improve their reading skills while they're outside of school?"*

This question is specific enough to be actionable and broad enough to invite many possible solutions.

# Creative Warm Up Bank

ACTIVITY GOAL: *Creative warm ups are quick, playful activities to transition your team from their day-to-day into a creative and generative headspace.*

Suggested Time: 5 - 15 minutes

**(1)** Choose an activity from the list below or make up your own!

- Draw a teammate's portrait without looking at the paper

- Make a paper airplane with one hand

- "30 Circles": on a page with 30 blank circles, draw as many sketches as possible in one minute

- "1000 uses": pick a random object (i.e. a paperclip), and try to come up with as many uses for it as possible in 2 minutes

- Caption a stock photo

- Share one word that represents how you're feeling right now

- Pick a word, any word, then have everyone tell a true story or memory based on that word

- Describe the book of your life in 4 key chapters

- Take a piece of paper behind your back and try to tear it into a giraffe

- Sketch the superpower you wish you had

- Storyboard your dream vacation

# Rules of Brainstorming

ACTIVITY GOAL: *The rules of brainstorming will help your team have a productive, inclusive session to surface potential ideas for your problem.*

Suggested Time: 10 minutes

## Defer Judgment

There are no bad ideas, you can filter later.

## Encourage Wild Ideas

Out-of-the-box thinking often leads to breakthroughs.

## Build on the Ideas of Others

Try to use 'yes and' instead of 'but' to encourage lots of ideas.

*Example: "I like this aspect of your idea, AND it makes me think of _____."*

## Stay Focused on the Topic

You'll get better output if everyone stays on track.

## One Conversation at a Time

Listen to ensure all ideas are heard and can be built upon.

## Go for Quantity

For a 60-minute session, you should try to generate 100 ideas.

## Be Visual

Sketches convey more than words can.

# Push your Idea

**1** Write out one of your most promising ideas.

**2** Review the following forces affecting cities around the world. Add new ones that are relevant and specific to your city.

Forces could be social, technological, economic, environmental, cultural, or geopolitical, or variables that impact the trajectory of your city.

### Climate Change

Rising global temperatures, extreme weather events, and natural disasters are leading to increasing risk of displacement and destruction in cities around the world. Reducing carbon footprints and consumption while increasing circularity of resources is imperative. Building resilient cities in the face of climate change will become the norm.

*Photo Credit: Karsten Würth*

### Emerging Tech

Technology does not necessarily create a better solution. When used unwisely, it often exacerbates inequities. However, if used thoughtfully and ethically, the rising use of emerging technologies, such as generative AI and augmented reality, has the potential to improve the access, reach, and effectiveness of solutions.

*Photo Credit: Maxim Hopamn*

### Indigenous Knowledge

More individuals and governments are looking towards Indigenous knowledge to build a healthier, more reciprocal relationship between people and planet. A more sustainable future requires grounding in local, place-based contexts, harnessing the power of nature, and communal, people-centered ways of working.

*Photo Credit: Connected by Josué Rivas*

### Political Turnover

Transitions in government and administrations are inevitable. The most sustainable solutions are ones that can withstand changes in political vision and will.

_____

How it will affect your city:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

# Push your Idea

**3**  Consider how your idea might evolve in response to each force.



**Climate Change**
I might evolve my idea to…

Consider: What might be the sustainable, climate-conscious, circular version of the idea?



**Emerging Tech**
I might evolve my idea to…

Consider: How can emerging tech improve the access, reach, or effectiveness of the idea?



**Indigenous Knowledge**
I might evolve my idea to…

Consider: What might be a version of the idea that taps into ancient, local, and communal ways of working?



**Political Turnover**
I might evolve my idea to…

Consider: What might be a version of the idea that can withstand political transitions?

Force: _____
I might evolve my idea to…

_____

_____

_____

# Radical Mashups

ACTIVITY GOAL: *This method is about bringing odd or unexpected things together to spark fresh ideas.*

Suggested Time: 30 minutes

**1** Write your "How Might We" question.

Need help with setting up your brainstorm? Go to the [How Might We worksheet](#).

**2** Brainstorm places you could learn from.

List the distinct activities, behaviors, and emotions that are associated with your problem that you would like to change. Next to each one, write down a setting or situation where you might observe this activity, behavior, or emotion. If you completed the [Borrow and Adapt worksheet](#), you can copy or add to the answers that you previously brainstormed.

For example:

- *If your problem is related to getting people to do something differently, you may brainstorm places known for effective habit building, like gyms or nutrition programs.*

- *If your problem is related to fostering more pride in using a service, you may brainstorm what inspires people to feel a sense of pride, like being on a strong sports team or giving back to the community.*

- *If your problem is related to delivering a better resident experience, you may brainstorm places known for exceptional customer service, like a local market or a hotel.*

# Radical Mashups

**3** Generate a list of items to mash up.

Pick one of the places you listed and turn it into a category. For example, if the place you select is "a hotel," a category you might brainstorm within could be "things you find in a hotel." Write this category down next to Category 1. Spend 5 minutes brainstorming as many items under this category as you can.

Write the resident-facing core city service that you are addressing next to Category 2. Spend 5 minutes listing as many items related to your core city service as you can.

---

EXAMPLE

Category 1: Things you find in a hotel

Items: Concierge, Beds, Restaurants

---

EXAMPLE

Category 2: Public Transit

Items: Trip Planning Experience, Security

---

Category 1: _____

_____
_____
_____
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_____

Category 2: _____

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# Radical Mashups

④ "Mashup" one item from each category to brainstorm new ideas.

Try putting together items that seem the most different to see what thinking it unlocks for you. Describe the ideas that emerge and how they address the needs of your residents.

---

EXAMPLE

Item A:          Item B:

<u>Concierge</u>    x  <u>Trip Planning</u>

Name of Idea:

<u>Train Concierge</u>

Description:

<u>A staff member available to support passengers with decisions related to transit itineraries.</u>

---

Item A:         Item B:

_____ x _____

Name of Idea:

_____

Description:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Item A:         Item B:

_____ x _____

Name of Idea:

_____

Description:

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Item A:         Item B:

_____ x _____

Name of Idea:

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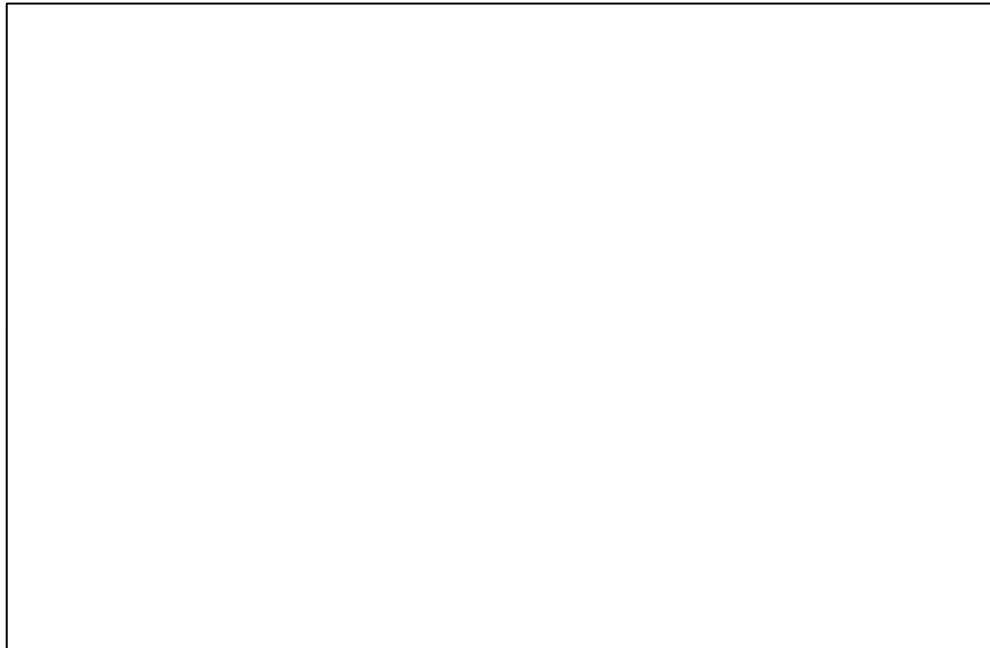
# Question the Status Quo

ACTIVITY GOAL: *Question the Status Quo helps you to challenge the "norms" of your city government in order to uncover unexpected opportunities.*
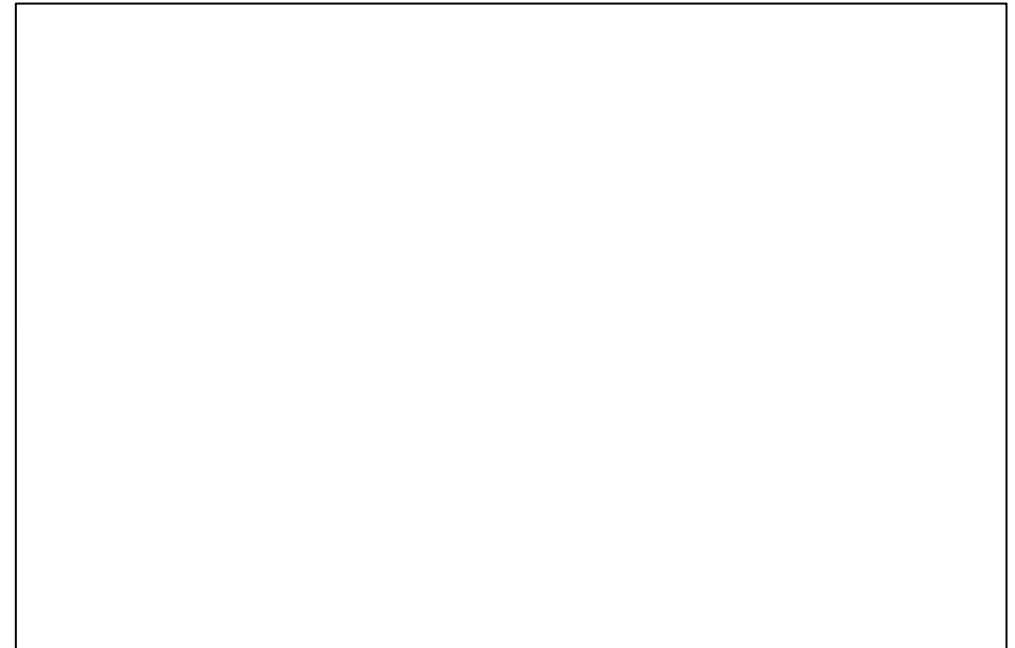
Suggested Time: 20 minutes

**1** Thinking about your problem, brainstorm as many unspoken but assumed to be true "rules" that contribute to the status quo.

For example, the "rules" for hotel experience might be that a room is for 24 hours, a hotel has a lobby you check in at, you pay a nightly rate for your room, you check in to get a key for your room, etc.
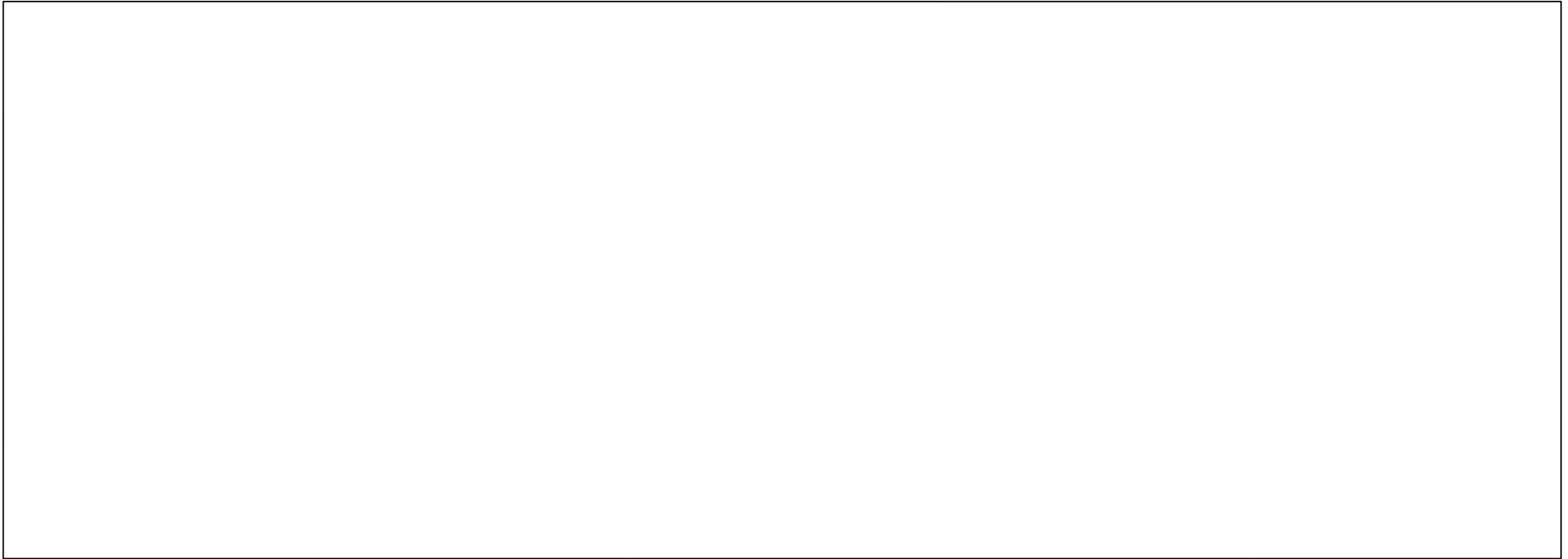
**2** Break the rules! Go through each "rule" and ask "what if this wasn't true? What would it unlock?"

For example, breaking the hotel experience "rules" could lead to hourly rooms with digital check-in for travelers to briefly rest, or entirely new businesses like Airbnb for staying in other people's homes when you travel.

# Question the Status Quo

3  Reflect. What new ideas did this exercise open up for you that could address the problem in your city?

# Develop Your Idea

Getting to the level of specificity required to articulate your idea to others often means sketching or writing out how the idea could work in practice, even if you're not sure. Identifying what you know and don't know yet about your idea can show areas for further research and testing.

You are not looking to get your concept right at this point. Instead, focus on making your concept as real as possible.
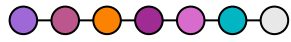
# Develop Your Idea
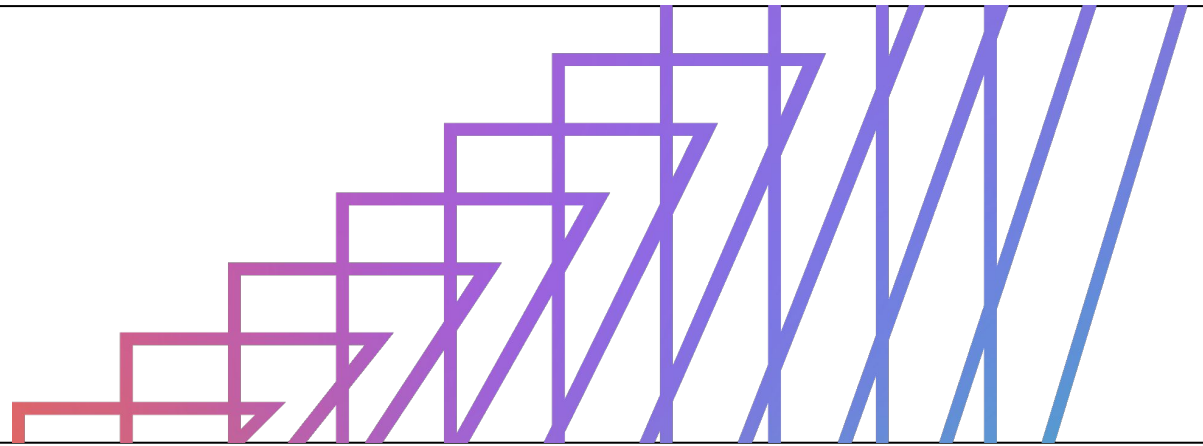
## Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Articulate your idea clearly — including how it could work to serve residents

- Convert an abstract idea into a tangible one that can be prototyped and tested

- Identify assumptions and challenges associated with bringing your idea to reality

## This Module will help you answer...

### Question #7

- Pitch: Briefly describe your idea to address the problem in your city.

### Question #8

- Add some detail: How does the core service currently work or get delivered and how will it work after the transformation?

### Question #9

- Impact: What is the desired outcome for your residents if your core service transformation is successful?

### Question #10

- Prioritization: Why do you believe that this is the most promising solution to your core service problem?
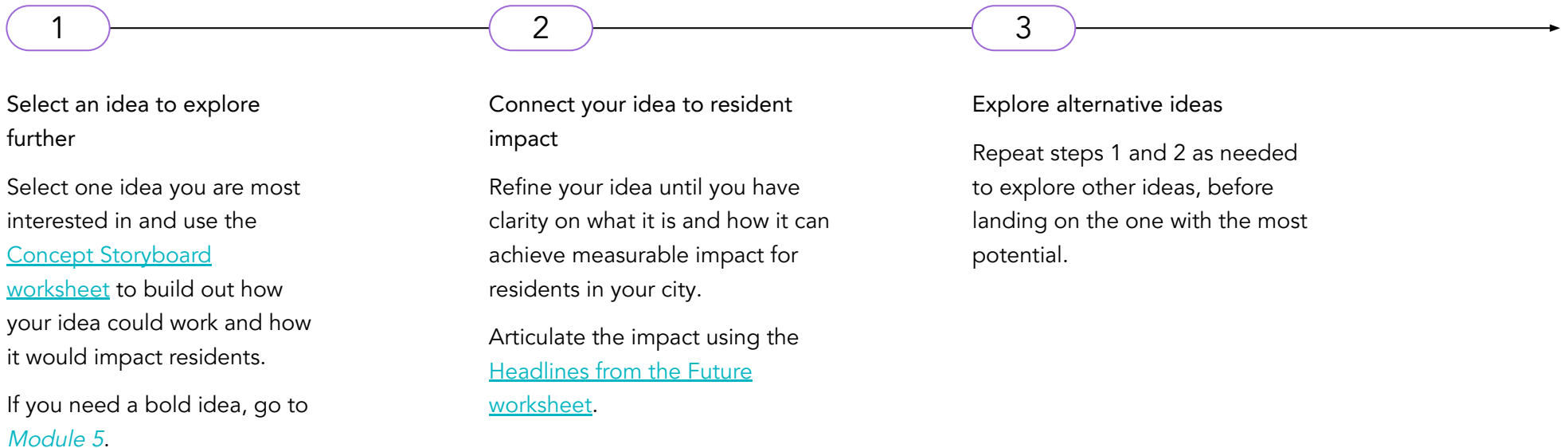
### Question #11

- Know Your Challenges: What are the top three challenges you foresee navigating if you pursue your idea?

# Develop Your Idea

**Instructions:**

**1**

Select an idea to explore further

Select one idea you are most interested in and use the Concept Storyboard worksheet to build out how your idea could work and how it would impact residents.

If you need a bold idea, go to *Module 5*.

**2**

Connect your idea to resident impact

Refine your idea until you have clarity on what it is and how it can achieve measurable impact for residents in your city.

Articulate the impact using the Headlines from the Future worksheet.

**3**

Explore alternative ideas

Repeat steps 1 and 2 as needed to explore other ideas, before landing on the one with the most potential.

## APPLICATION QUESTION #7

Pitch: Briefly describe your idea to address the problem in your city.

*Your response should cover:*

- *What is your idea?*
- *What makes your idea novel and innovative?*
- *Why is your idea a transformative approach to a core city service?*

**STRONG RESPONSE**

### Applicant Response

An in-home assistance program brought to their homes, for persons requiring care and their unpaid female caregivers, which: (1) Frees up time for women to pursue self-development (including higher education) and well-being, (2) Trains male family members in care work, and (3) Addresses gender norms that perpetuate the inequality.

This is the first city-level care system in Latin America. It is innovative because it: (1) Puts caregivers at the center, (2) Organizes the city to meet people's needs, instead of the other way around, and (3) Addresses the inequality of care burden, from a cultural perspective that ensures long-term, sustainable change.

In a big city like [name of city], the [program's] main innovation is in its manner of operation: it simultaneously provides services for those who provide care and those who require care, and will bring the services to their homes if they are unable to leave.

### Reviewer Feedback

Harnesses existing city services to create targeted support for two of its most vulnerable populations (caregivers and those dependent on specialized care) by encouraging interdepartmental collaboration.

The proposed support aims to support its target populations in dually impactful ways by:

1. Providing caregivers with the freedom to pursue personal and professional development opportunities as well as receive access to pro-bono legal and social services.
2. Providing persons requiring specialized care with individualized therapy to build and regain autonomy in their day-to-day routines.

This approach centers residents in its program design and drastically reduces the political/bureaucratic barriers a city might face in implementation.

## APPLICATION QUESTION #7

Pitch: Briefly describe your idea to address the problem in your city.

*Your response should cover:*

- *What is your idea?*
- *What makes your idea novel and innovative?*
- *Why is your idea a transformative approach to a core city service?*

**STRONG RESPONSE**

### Applicant Response

The [City] Small Business Technical Assistance Network (TA Network) brings together 19 organizations across [city] to: 1) Reach BIPOC-owned small businesses that lack access to assistance, 2) assess the needs facing these businesses, and 3) provide culturally competent assistance to help these businesses recover, rebuild, and thrive.

Several features make this project innovative. First is operational collaboration and data sharing across government and nonprofit organizations. Rarely have organizations in [city] been so intentional around working together, sharing data on businesses served and outcomes, and coming together to share best practices and lessons learned. Second is the all-out effort to reach businesses that have historically been left behind by including in the TA Network organizations trusted in their communities that don't typically partner with and make referrals to city government. Third is the creative use of the network to leverage partnerships with community lenders and other partners.

### Reviewer Feedback

By encouraging collaboration amongst multiple organizations, this idea leverages existing networks and community knowledge to provide curated assistance to its target population.

This coupled with data transparency and sharing can help shape and continuously transform how the city approaches, invests in, and engages with the target population and organizations aiding this work.

## APPLICATION QUESTION #7

Pitch: Briefly describe your idea to address the problem in your city.

*Your response should cover:*

- *What is your idea?*
- *What makes your idea novel and innovative?*
- *Why is your idea a transformative approach to a core city service?*

**WEAK RESPONSE**

Applicant Response

To improve residents' physical, mental, and social well-being, we propose a system to assess well-being; build a digital platform to connect those involved in civic engagement and foster interactions between residents across generations; and design a public-private- academia co-creation space for people of all backgrounds to intermingle and resolve community issues.

The idea is innovative because: it considers a multitude of "social determinants of health" that affect one's body, mind, and community, not just the physical factors. To truly improve the well-being of [city residents], we are designing a new, holistic data-driven framework that explores the subjective and objective elements of improving well-being and employs digital solutions to effectively address issues.

Reviewer Feedback

Unclear proposal. "A system to assess well-being" seems to be about setting KPIs for city policies. This is interesting but no examples are given to illustrate what that might look like. "A digital platform to connect those involved with civic engagement" is too vague to merit investment. The co-creation space seems to already exist.

## APPLICATION QUESTION #9

Impact: What is the desired outcome for your residents if your core service transformation is successful?

*Your response should begin with the desired newspaper headline that you hope to read about your city at the end of 2027. Make sure it solves the problem in Question 2!*

[City] Breaks Down College Access Barriers with New Program

Immediate outcomes are measured by [city program's] impact on the informational and financial barriers to college access. Short term outcomes for success include participation by families and the amount of funds earned towards ongoing education. Participants earn varying quantities of "Scholar Dollars" to be put towards their child's [program] award for completed activities that improve their understanding in areas that are often informational gaps: e.g., strategies for effective child advocacy, college access, budgeting, credit, and financial aid.

According to surveys by the Hispanic Foundation of [region's] Family Engagement Institute, 95% of parent participants have learned why setting personal goals for their own development or learning influences their adolescent's school success. We would hope to see similar metrics within the program to gauge success. The long-term outcomes would measure for the number of families completing the program cycle and increased rates of students of color graduating high school, enrolling in college, and ultimately graduating from that program. The goal is also to build a sustainable pipeline for families to promote ongoing education and economic mobility. This vision includes formalized partnerships with community organizations to scale [the program] and build an upskilled and more informed future workforce.

## APPLICATION QUESTION #9

Impact: What is the desired outcome for your residents if your core service transformation is successful?

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EXAMPLE B

Technical Assistance (TA) Network Reaches 1,500 BIPOC-owned Small Businesses to Drive Inclusive Economic Recovery

We would know success when we have reached more businesses, brought more community lenders to [city], and have closed the racial disparities in small business growth. In the short-term, we would like to significantly scale up the number of businesses the TA Network can serve. While we have served 1,500 businesses, we currently reach only about 3.5 percent of BIPOC-owned businesses in the city. We would like to see that number increase to 20 percent over the next three years. We would also like to increase the number of CDFIs and other lenders that prioritize BIPOC-owned businesses. We currently have four such lenders in [city], but would like to see at least 10 such lenders over the next three years. In the long-term, we'd like to see more small business capital going to our communities of color, where currently businesses in these communities access 20 percent of the citywide average of dollar amount invested in small businesses. We'd like to see business revenues among BIPOC-owned businesses increase from 12 percent to 15 percent over the next three years. Finally, we'd like to see BIPOC-owned small businesses reverse job losses, growing jobs by 1 percent per year for three years.

Note: 'BIPOC' stands for Black, Indigenous, People of Color.

# Concept Storyboard

ACTIVITY GOAL: *A concept storyboard helps you think through how your idea could work in practice and lead to impact for your residents — surfacing any assumptions or gaps along the way.*

Suggested Time: 30 - 45 minutes

**1** Fill out the storyboard of how your idea would work in practice

For members of the resident community experiencing the problem, imagine their lived experience as a story: How does the problem impact their daily lives? How do they find out about your idea? How do they experience it? What does their life look like after your idea is adopted? Draw a rough sketch to represent each moment in the story.
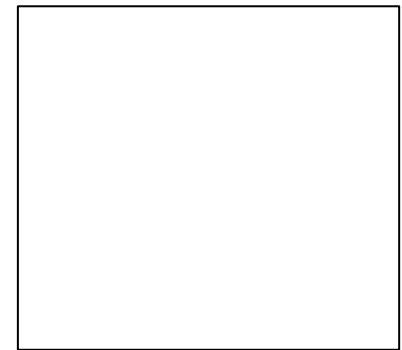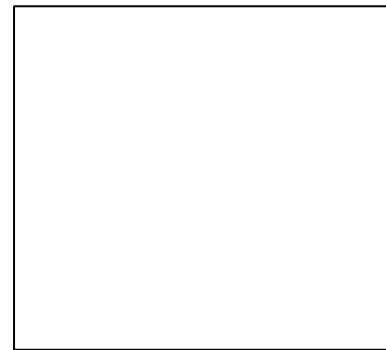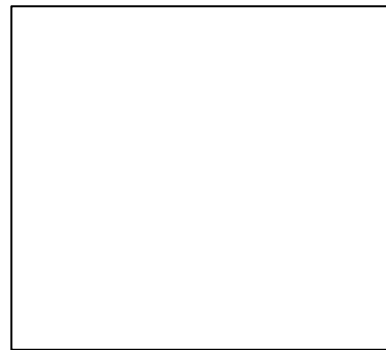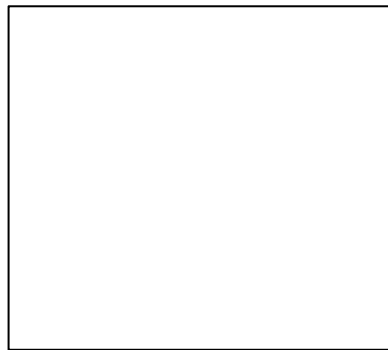
| Moment 1 | Moment 2 | Moment 3 | Moment 4 | Moment 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|

# Concept Storyboard

**2** Reflect on how <u>novel</u> your idea is

Has your idea been done before? Explore sources such as CityLab, Idea Exchange, WEF Cities of Tomorrow, Smart Cities Dive, Bloomberg Cities, or MIT Senseable City Lab to validate novelty.

**3** Reflect on how <u>impactful</u> your idea is

Is there a clear path from idea to resident impact? How does the resident's life change? What are the positive benefits? This is a great asset to share with a resident to get feedback regarding how the idea might work for them!

**4** Reflect on how <u>doable</u> your idea is

Are there parts of the story that are outside of your city's authority? What assumptions have been made in this story? How can you validate your assumptions? How can you fill gaps in your understanding of how this idea works?

# Headlines from the Future

ACTIVITY GOAL: *Headlines from the Future helps you get clear about the outcome you're driving toward and the resident impact that you hope to create.*

Suggested Time: 30 minutes

1   Select the publication that you aspire to be featured in at the end of the Challenge in 2027

2   Write a big, bold headline that includes the problem you solved and the impact on residents

3   Include a blurb with details about your project and how you achieved impact

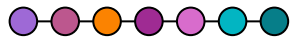4   Add an imaginary pull quote from a resident talking about the impact

1
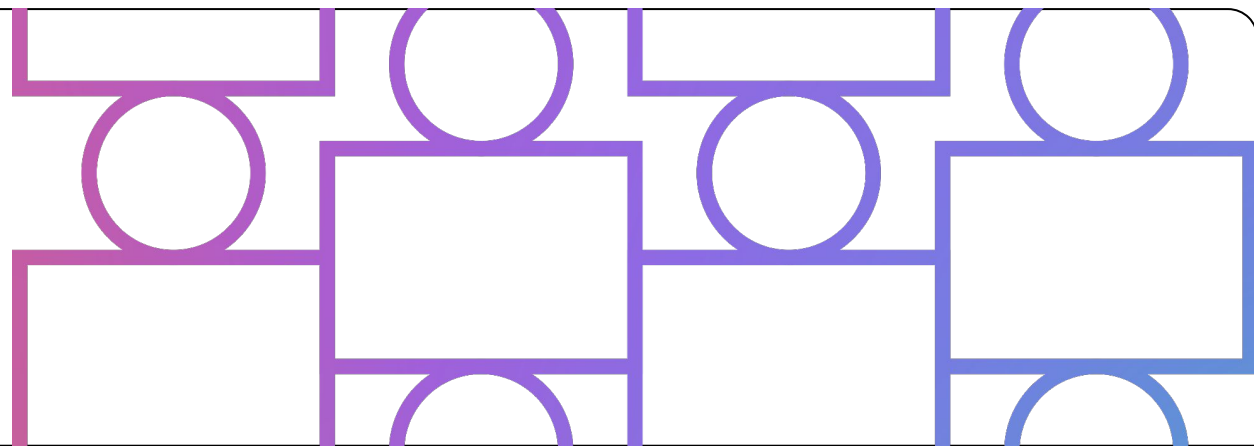
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4

# Build Your Team

To make an idea a reality, you need the right set of skills, expertise, and perspectives on your team. You'll also need to bring key stakeholders across the city along the journey of your idea to build momentum and buy-in. An idea is only as good as the people who can champion it.
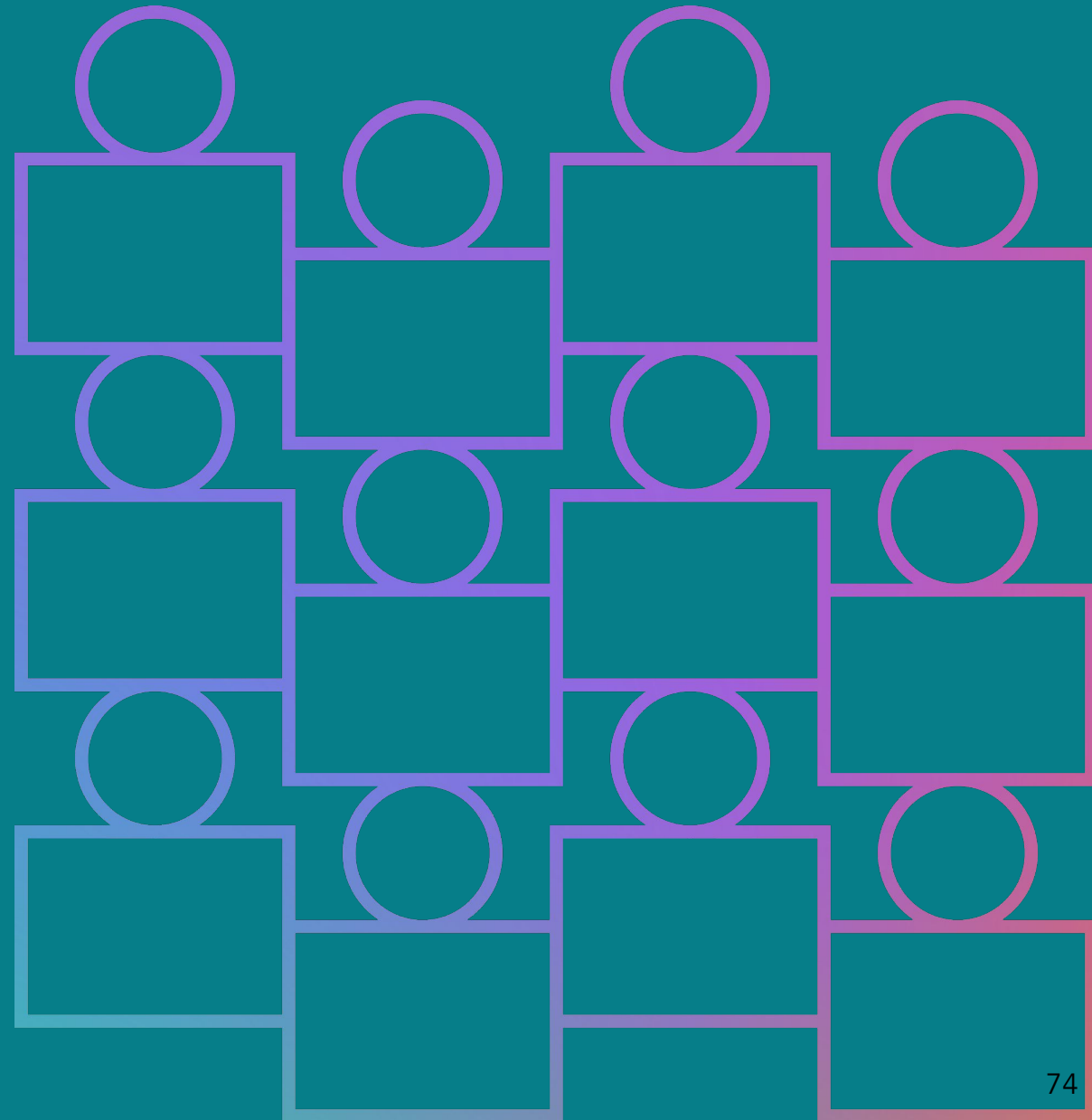
# Build Your Team

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Identify skills and perspectives needed on your core team to pursue the idea successfully

- Identify relevant stakeholders to engage beyond your core team to build buy-in

## This Module will help you answer…

### Question #12

- Project Team: What skillsets and departments need to be represented on the project team?

### Question #13

- Stakeholders: What individuals, organizations, and agencies need to be involved to overcome the challenges listed in Question 11 and achieve the impact explained in Question 8?

# Build Your Team

- You may not have all of these pieces right now, and that's ok! Many teams recruit for new positions or leverage colleagues from other departments or partners as they advance in the Challenge.

- This activity will help you begin to plan your team for the Champions phase and build your bench of stakeholders. Your team will likely evolve when you shift from early idea exploration to implementation.

- Lead with the skills, capabilities, and behaviors you need for the idea to be successful, not the names of specific people.

**Instructions:**

1 ———————————————————— 2 ————————————————•

**1**

Draft a potential team for the Challenge

Use the Teambuilding worksheet to understand the qualities of past successful teams for the Mayors Challenge. Identify potential team members to fill any skills and perspective gaps on your team and critical stakeholders to engage.

**2**

Socialize and evolve your team

Review this list with your Mayor and/or executive sponsor and potential team members to get buy-in. Ensure the leaders of identified team members will allow them to dedicate time to this effort to avoid conflicts or commitment challenges.

# Teambuilding

ACTIVITY GOAL: *Build an innovation team with the right skills and perspectives required to bring your idea to life.*

Suggested Time: 30 - 45 minutes

Guidance:

Successful teams in the past have included:

- A fully-dedicated project leader
- A core team of 3-7 individuals
- Expertise in the subject matter, data, and communications
- Diverse, interdisciplinary skill sets

In addition to specific skills, people will the following attributes and mindsets are often great team members on innovation projects:

- Highly collaborative
- Effective problem-solvers
- Biased toward action
- Skilled at convening and managing stakeholders
- Comfortable working through ambiguity and adapting
- Curious and open-minded
- Empathetic
- Resilient in the face of setbacks

① **Known team members**

Write the name of individuals that are well-suited for this project in the appropriate category.
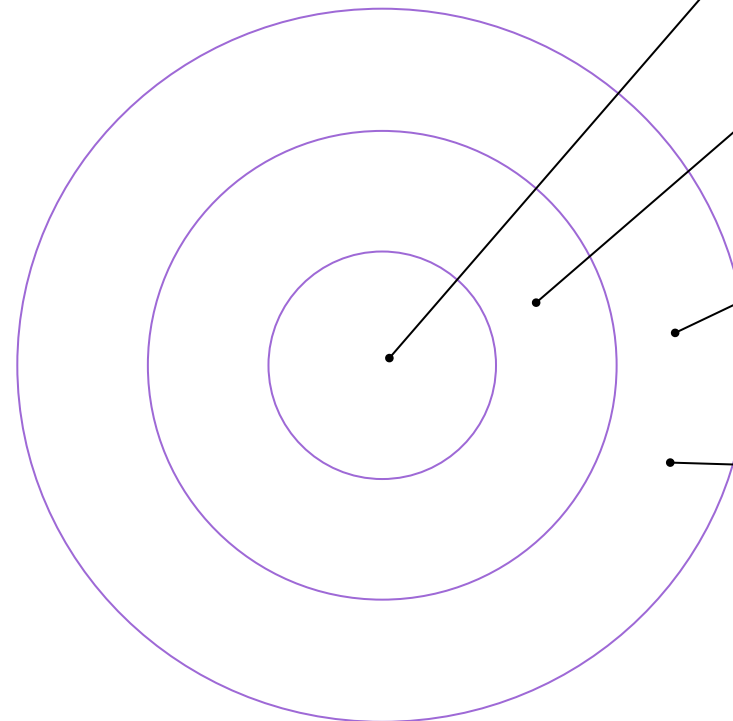
**Core Members:**
The day-to-day people who will work on this project from start to finish

**Close Collaborators:**
People who have a specific skill or area of expertise to lend

**Mobilizers:**
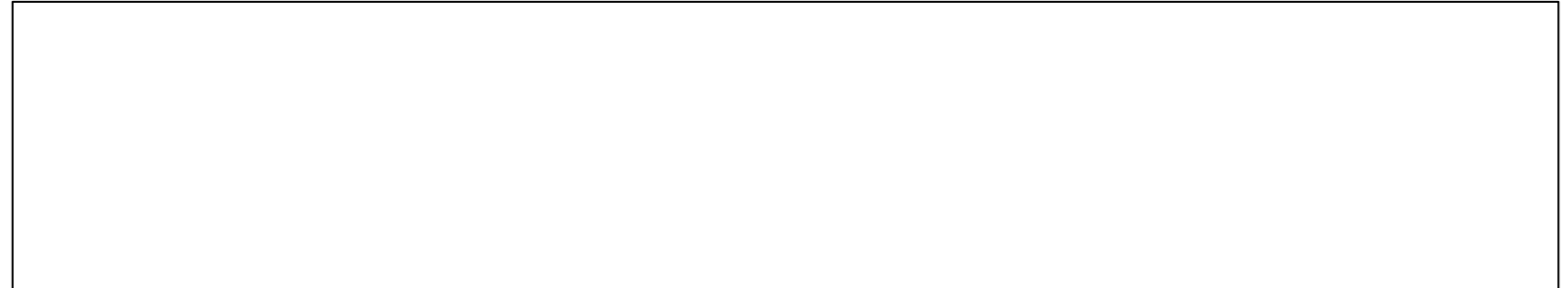Influential people who can get the word out and help build traction.

**Advisors:**
Key decision-makers who will provide guidance at critical moments.

# Teambuilding

### 2  Assess your gaps

Review your team and ask:

- What skill gaps might this team have?
- What expertise gaps might this team have?
- Are we missing any key perspectives?

### 3  Make a plan

Review the team gaps and brainstorm:

- How might we recruit additional people?
- How could we incentivize them?
- How would this project fit into their day-to-day responsibilities?

# Teambuilding

**4** Setting the table

Think beyond your team to identify other critical stakeholders you will need to engage and secure buy-in from to make your idea successful. Consider:

- Who will be directly impacted by your idea, either positively or negatively?
- Who has the power to authorize or block your idea that you will need buy-in from?
- Who will need to adapt or change behavior to adopt your idea?
- Who might be a champion or key advocate of your idea?
- Who might support or enable the implementation of your idea?
- What organizations could you partner with?
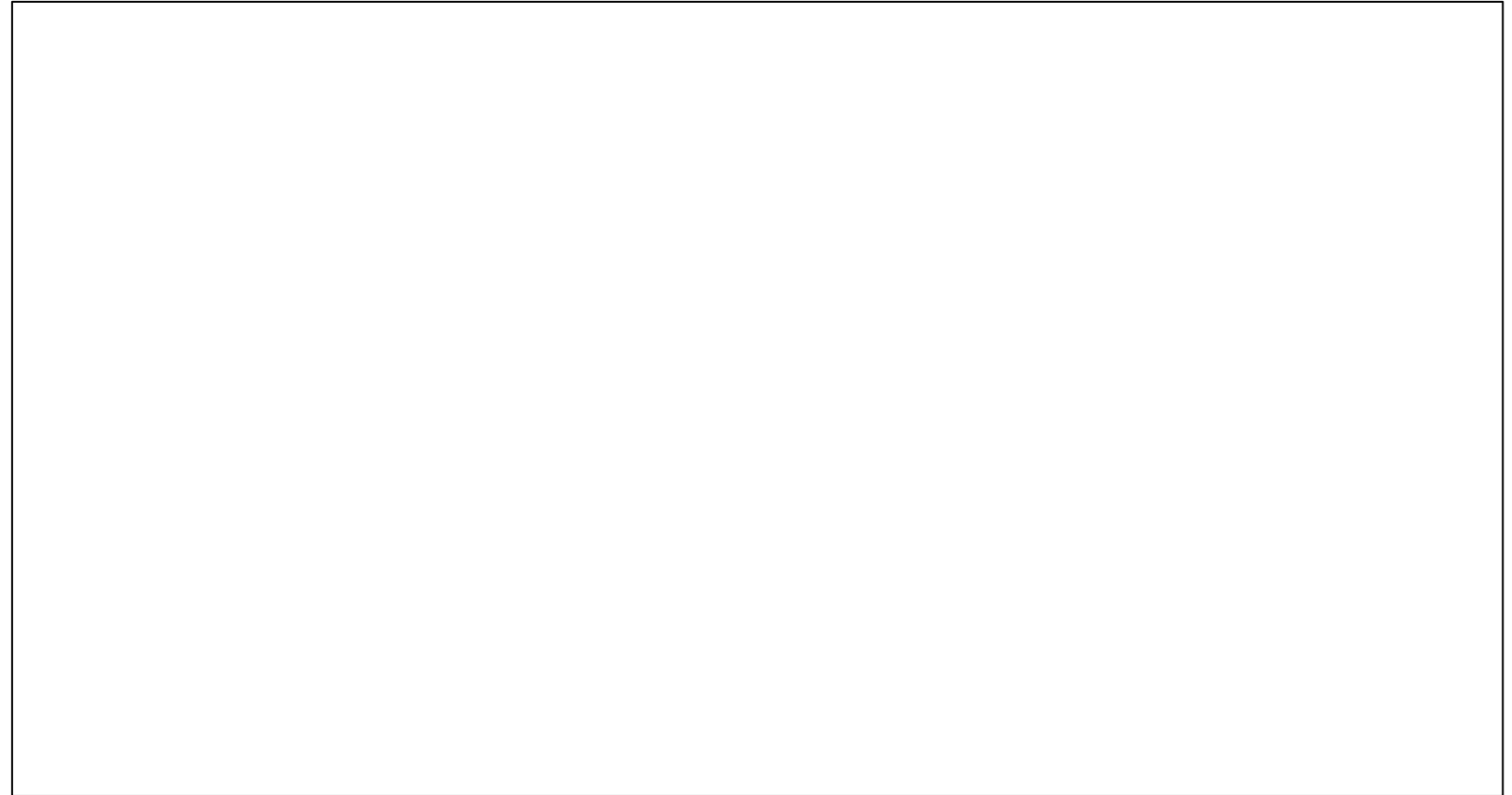
# Thank you!

We hope this resource was helpful in completing your application. Best of luck in the Mayors Challenge!

For more information, please review the FAQ. If you have questions, please send us an email at

[mayorschallenge@bloomberg.com](mailto:mayorschallenge@bloomberg.com)