

HOUSING SUPPLY CHALLENGE

# Design Thinking Module **5**

## Refine and Pitch

### Choose a solution and refine it

At this point, your team and stakeholders brainstormed a lot of possible solutions to your problem statement and narrowed them down to your best ones. In Module 5: Refine and Pitch, you'll choose one solution and will work on articulating why you made that choice. You might start with this module and realise that the solution does not resonate with stakeholders who are critical to its successful implementation. This presents an opportunity to retrace your steps through previous modules.

## WHY THIS STEP?

You've spent a lot of time understanding the problem and ideating solutions, and this step will help you decide on the best possible solution going forward. You will test your assumptions and explore the benefits of your solutions with important input from stakeholders.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

You've been working as a team for some time now and have probably noticed that you have different strengths and perspectives, and you don't always come to unanimous agreement. It might not always seem like it, but this is a good thing. We need you to bring your different opinions and perspectives to the table. It strengthens the process and makes for a better result. We get it, having a genuine appreciation for differences of opinion is challenging when you're making a decision that will fundamentally shape the rest of this process. Just remember to trust your teammates and try to see where they're coming from.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Whatever solution you choose to move forward with needs to be something implementable. In **Module 3: Define**, you took the time to define the right-sized problem. Now, you need to make sure that you're moving forward with the right-sized solution.

## STEPS

This module describes a series of activities that could be integrated into a workshop or a series of web based working sessions with members of your team and key stakeholders. A few approaches that you could use are described below.

- 1 Select a solution using the Six Thinking Hats
- 2 Clarify your theory of change, vision and next steps
- 3 Prepare a Pitch Deck

# 1 Select a solution using the Six Thinking Hats

At the end of this activity, you'll have your chosen solution. This exercise should take about an hour and you should do it in real-time with your team and be sure that everyone is able to participate. Have your short list of solutions, determine through Module 4: Ideate, listed in a shared document, and have one or several dedicated notetakers.

You all have different thinking styles – some of you are risk-takers and others are super practical; some of you bring creativity to the table while others bring rigour and process. In this activity, each of those thinking styles will have their time to shine. You'll spend a dedicated amount of time considering your solutions with one of the Six Thinking Hats (Bono, 1958) on, exploring the options thoroughly from that perspective, before changing hats. People will consider the solutions from your perspective, and you'll consider the solutions from their perspectives.

So, what are the **Six Thinking Hats**\*? You'll probably recognize yourself in one or more of these:

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\* Descriptions adapted from <https://medium.com/book-bites/use-the-six-thinking-hats-to-solve-your-creative-challenges-a6c1def15941>

## 1 Red Hat

This thinking style centres feelings, intuition, and gut reactions. You're considering how you feel about the different solutions, and how others may feel about them.

- What are your gut reactions to the different solutions?
- Does one of them feel more "right" than the others? Don't worry about explaining why.

## 2 Black Hat

This thinking style is all about caution, risk-mitigation, and critical thinking. You're thinking about the potential weaknesses, challenges or risks of proposed solutions.

- Think critically about your proposed solutions – what are some of their weaknesses?
- Could any of your proposed solutions have unintended negative outcomes?

## 3 Yellow Hat

This thinking style is all about benefits. You're thinking about the positive elements of your proposed solutions.

- What are the potential positive outcomes of these solutions?
- What are the individual merits of each idea?

## 4 White Hat

This thinking style tries to remain as neutral and objective as possible. You're just looking at the facts.

- Is this solution possible? Is it implementable with the resources we have access to?
- Do we have the knowledge, skills, and information needed to deliver on this solution? If not, are we able to obtain them?

## 5 Blue Hat

This thinking style is where you turn your attention to process. You're focusing on planning and organization.

- a. Think about the process involved in your proposed solutions – are these solutions executable within the given timeframe?
- b. Think about potential timelines, budget, and resources – do some of these solutions fall out of scope?

## 6 Green Hat

This is the creative thinking style. You consider alternatives, explore wider possibilities, and generate new ideas. You already flexed this muscle in **Module 4: Ideate**, and you'll continue to use creativity in the other modules, but for now, we're putting this hat on pause.

### Here's how you'll go through the activity:

1. Spend 5-7 minutes with each hat on before switching to the next. Consider each of the ideas on your shortlist of solutions before moving on and switching thinking styles. Make sure someone is taking notes on the key points.
2. Spend 10 minutes debriefing the exercise. Once you've considered all perspectives, does one solution clearly stand out? You'll need to come to a decision on a solution to move forward with here. You may want to take a break before coming back together to make a final decision.

# 2 Clarify your theory of change, vision and next steps

## Theory of Change Activity

Exploring your theory of change helps you to map out the necessary steps you need to take to achieve a goal. It can help you to identify the potential impact and risks of your plan and connect your work to a bigger goal.

A [detailed theory of change guide and toolkit](#) is available from IDEO. The activity guide and worksheet can be filled out by a few team members in advance of a working session to move the conversation along or you can complete it during a working session. The steps below were modified from IDEO's theory of change guide. (IDEO, n.d.)

### 1 Review key outcomes

Start by reviewing the key outcome you're aiming to achieve. You defined this in Module 1 and 2 when framing your design challenge. Is it still the right one or has it evolved through the design journey?

### 2 Complete Theory of Change worksheet

Next, using the IDEO Theory of Change worksheet, write out each of the shifts that you are trying to solve for, and then each of the concepts that you are excited about taking forward. Use Post-it notes if you have them and organize them in a grid structure on a wall or other workspace.

### 3 Critique your assumptions

During this step you're going to get critical about your shifts and your concepts. You'll explore which shifts are a priority to address, and then how well each of your concepts addresses those. The IDEO Theory of Change worksheet will steer you through this.

### 4 Articulate a theory of change

This process will push you to articulate a theory, or rationale, for how your solution will create change and achieve your key outcome (from

Step 1 above). Stand back and interrogate this emerging theory of change. Does the logic for how one thing will lead to another hold up? What assumptions or risks are there at each step? Try having someone outside of your design team join this discussion for a more objective push.

### 5 Summarise your theory of change

Using the activity guide and worksheets capture and summarize your theory of change. Then use the Logic Model activity to get to a more detailed and clearly structured visualization of your solution model.

## Business Model Canvas

The Business Model Canvas helps you focus on your vision and break down how to achieve it, on a single clear page. (IDEO U, 2018)

The layout, originated by Osterwalder and Pigneur, gives you a bird's eye view of your activity to spark new ideas from a different perspective. It also enables collaborative discussions on management and strategy by helping to set out the key elements and hurdles of your activity and showing how everything interrelates.

1. Begin by filling in the 'What do you do?' (or 'What do you plan to do?') box in the centre.
2. Then build from this by adding keywords and detail to each of the other boxes. This can be done with sticky-notes so that you can move ideas around the canvas. You can also colour-code your keyword notes according to sections of your activity, such as different client groups.

Visit [NESTA – Business Model Canvas Toolkit](#) for a detailed description of this helpful exercise and a downloadable template.

# 3 Prepare a Pitch Deck

Once you've chosen your solution, creating a pitch deck will help you articulate everything you've work on to date. So what is a pitch? It's a summary of the challenge, how you defined the problem, and your chosen solution. A pitch usually ends with a call to action of some sort – you're telling someone about your solution because you want their buy-in, their advice, their partnership, or their investment. Since you haven't prototyped and developed your concept yet, the goal of creating a pitch deck at this stage is to build a shared understanding of how and why you got to this particular solution. You'll add more and change certain things as you develop your solution.

## Slide 1: Cover page

Your cover page should include the name of your solution and a very short description of what it is or a tagline (ex. Decision making tools to support affordable housing supply for local government). Remember, this can change and evolve as you move through the following modules – the point of doing it at this stage is to try to encapsulate your concept in a few words.

## Slide 2: The team

List the members of your team and partner organizations. You can include details such as photos, team member skillsets, team roles (if those are defined), and/or contact information.

## Slide 3: The challenge

What was the broad challenge you have been focusing on as part of the Housing Supply Challenge (e.g., Create data solutions that improve decision-making for housing supply across Canada)?

## Slide 4: Insights that led to your problem definition

What key insights did you uncover about the challenge that led you to your more detailed problem definition? What gaps did you see?

## Slide 5: The problem definition

What "how might we" question, from **Module 3: Define**, did you end up with?

## Slide 6: The solution

Define your solution as best as you can at this stage. What's the main concept?

## Slide 7: What is unique about it?

At the end of the Six Thinking Hats activity, you decided on this one solution. Why? What was unique and special about it?

## Slide 8: How does it work?

Describe how the solution works. How is it better, faster, more reliable, efficient, or cost effective. How will it be managed? What is your business model? Who will pay for it?

## Resources

- IDEO offers a useful [\*Theory of Change\*](#) activity guide.
- Visit [\*NESTA – Theory of Change Toolkit\*](#) for a detailed description of this helpful exercise and a downloadable template.
- Visit [\*NESTA – Business Model Canvas Toolkit\*](#) for a detailed description of this helpful exercise and a downloadable template.

## REFERENCES

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