



CAPACITYCANADA

Capacity Canada's Design Collective **Resilient and Diverse Communities by Design**

With the generous support of Suncor Energy Foundation, Capacity Canada invites nonprofit and charitable organizations and collaboratives from across Canada to apply for their education and skill-development program. This program is intended for organizations and collectives that want to make progress on an important challenge while learning a process that can be replicated across other areas of their work. Capacity Canada aims to grow the number of social good design leaders who drive innovative change in a way that is grounded in the needs of their stakeholders. Design thinking can help organizations mitigate risk and develop better solutions more quickly. Members of the design collective have the opportunity to build their capacity to innovate and approach problem solving differently in the company of other social good changemakers.

Design Collective



The Design Collective is inviting organizations from different communities across Canada to participate in this year's program. Two individuals from each of the selected organizations will be enrolled in the collective to learn the foundational elements of human centered design in order to bring this professional skill back to their organizations and communities. We encourage people from under-represented groups to apply as we feel the spirit of human centred design is well suited to addressing many of the challenges faced by these communities.

When is a Design Thinking Approach Useful?

Using a human-centred design thinking approach can be useful when the challenge and its solution will impact stakeholders important to the organization such as service recipients, donors, neighbourhood residents etc. The challenge will also be sufficiently complex where one or more of the following factors may be true:

- The response or solution is not immediately obvious
- Other attempts to address it have not been successful
- There is some urgency in addressing it
- The challenge and its solution will impact important stakeholders to the organization, such as service recipients, donors, residents in the neighbourhood etc.

Example outcomes the design process with social good organizations and Capacity by Design include:

- Engaging clients of a counseling services organization in defining the notion of 'family friendly' to inform the development of a new service delivery approach
- Development of a partnership agreement for a rescued food initiative that enhances program impact and creates a transparent decision-making framework
- Creation of an online interactive guide prototype that supports Muslim youth in foster care from a variety of stakeholder perspectives
- Building the components of an outreach and education program that helps community members support loved ones during death, dying and grief.
- Designing interactive tools that are intended to improve the experience of urban LGBTQI2S youth seeking mental health services

How will the Design Collective work?

Members of the design collective will work with Capacity Canada designers as they learn about design thinking and apply it to real-world problems.

Members will bring a passion for interactive design and be strategic and creative thinkers who want to make a meaningful difference on issues of importance to them and their community. They will also be comfortable working with an organizational colleague, within whom they will partner during the program.

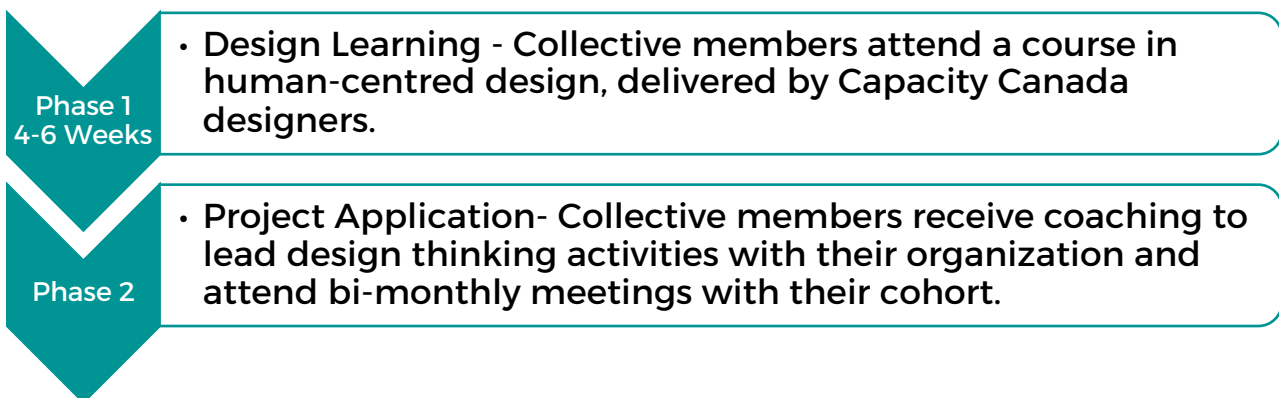
During the first phase of the program, members of the design collective will take a design thinking course on the principles and practice of human centred design. Participants will also try on the facilitation of short design thinking activities through their application to case studies and vignettes. The course will involve 2 days of in person instruction or the equivalent delivered in shorter sessions online.

Program applicants can choose a virtual course or launch their participation with a two day in-person course depending on their proximity to the course location. See the application for upcoming dates and locations.

During the second phase, collective members will receive one to one coaching as they develop plans for their applied project. Coaching and mentoring support for project execution will be available for approximately six months following course completion.

They will also have the opportunity to attend online sessions with their cohort. This is also an opportunity for the collective to continue to build their connection with each other, reflect on their progress as design thinkers and exchange thoughts and ideas about their projects.

Design Collective Cohort Schedule



* In order to ensure members are fully supported throughout their experience, we ask that social good organizations apply for the collective and nominate two members of their team who will commit to the program's entirety. The executive director must agree either to be a participant in the collective or to be a part of the team assembled to participate in the culminating design project. *

Organizational benefits of Joining the Design Collective

- Engage with key stakeholders and learn about their needs in a way that is accessible and ethical.
- De-risk change initiatives through a method of developing new solutions that enables them to be tested and refined prior to implementation.
- Help grow organizational bench strength through a skill development opportunity.

Individual benefits of Joining the Design Collective

- Learn the discrete phases of design thinking along with the tools and approaches unique to each phase.
- Grow their expertise with an expanded set of facilitation tools that can be used during any phase in the lifespan of a program, project or initiative.
- Work collaboratively with other design-thinkers in the field.
- Be part of an immersive professional development program.

Who should apply for the Design Collective?

- Organizations with a track-record of innovation who need to make progress on an issue of importance to their organization
- Organizational leaders who are willing to commit to learning about human centred design and involve their staff team in a design project.
- Organizational staff seeking professional development opportunities who have the commitment of senior leadership to apply design thinking to a project or issue of importance.
- Collectives or collaborations who would like to learn about human centred design in order to take an innovative approach to a challenge or opportunity.

Background

Human Centred Design is an approach to problem solving that begins with a deep understanding of and empathy with the people you're trying to reach—and then designing and testing solutions from their perspective. By including key stakeholders throughout the process, the solutions generated are more likely to be accepted and embraced.

Capacity by Design is a program of Capacity Canada that helps social good organizations rethink how they approach problem solving in order to develop innovative solutions to important challenges. The Design Collective furthers the work of Capacity Canada to build and support resilient individuals, organizations and communities across Canada.

Visit the Capacity Canada website to [learn more](#).
Apply today by filling out our [online application](#).