



NZ State Services Commission, Institute for Governance and Policy Studies & the Australia and New Zealand  
School of Government present:



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# Designing for the greater good: Design thinking and innovation in government

Speaker

**Prof. Jeanne Liedtka**

Darden School University of Virginia

Speaker

**Lis Cowey**

Principal Advisor  
NZ Treasury

Moderator

**Dr Michael Macaulay**

Director  
IGPS

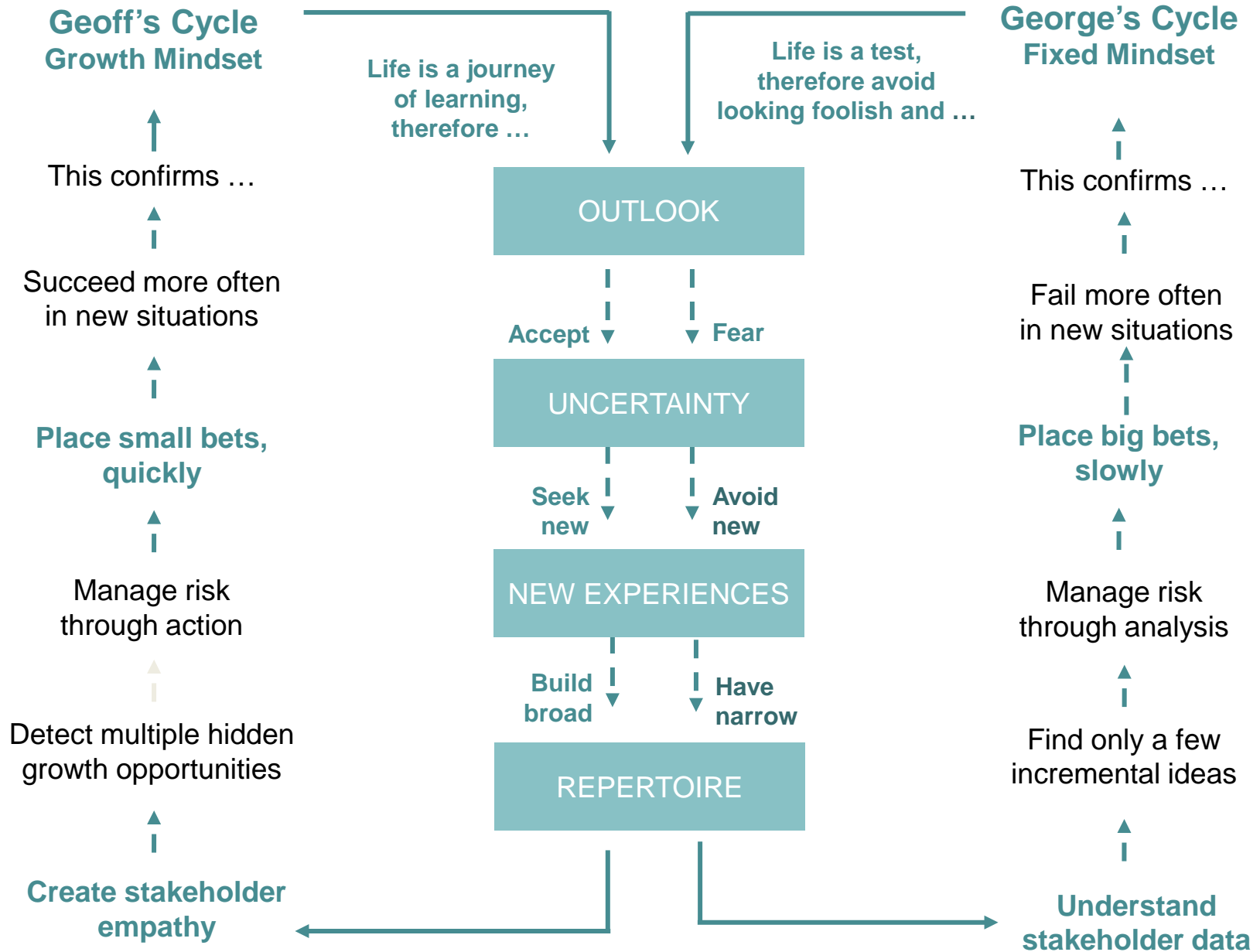
The background is a solid teal color with a pattern of overlapping circles in various shades of teal, creating a complex, organic design.

# Design Thinking





# Choosing a Mindset



# What is Design Thinking?

- Design thinking is a systematic approach to problem solving.

What would be different if managers thought more like designers?

**Problem solving would be driven by three core beliefs:**

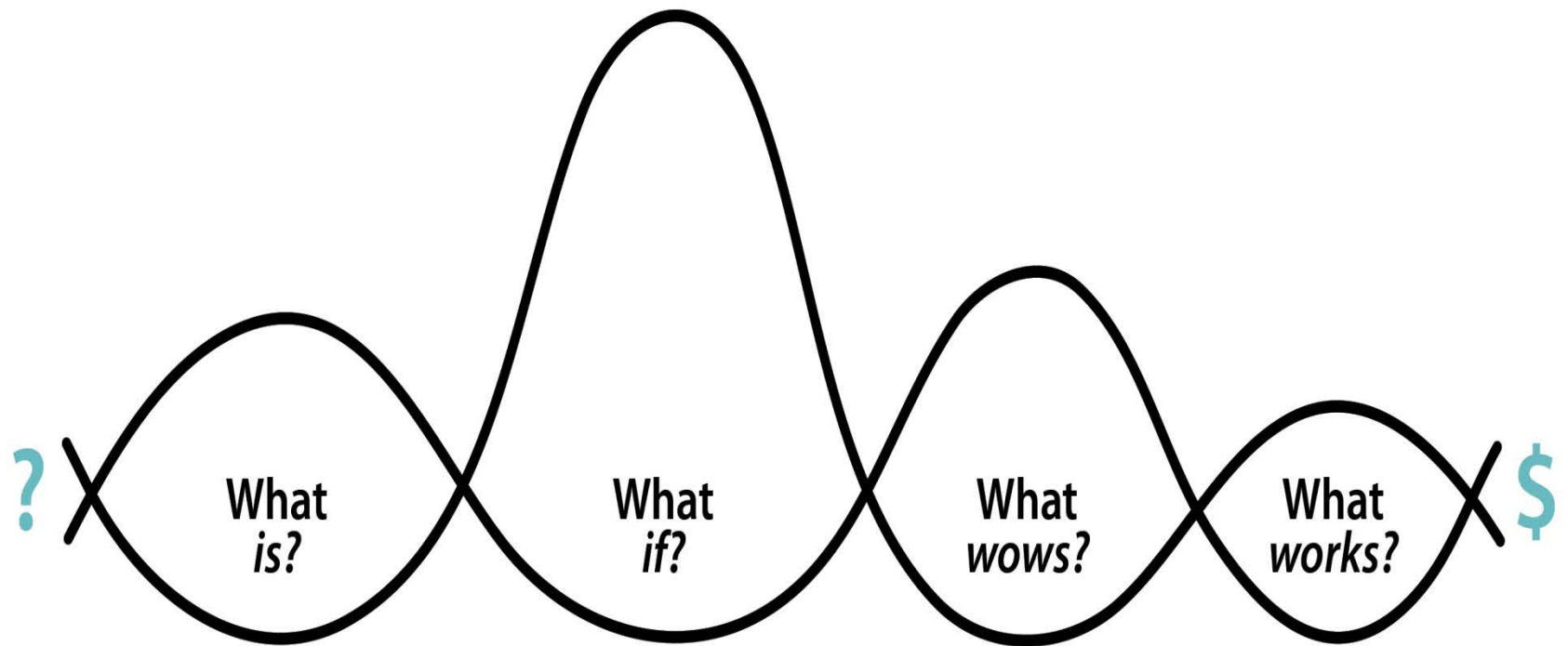
**Empathy** – Start by establishing a deep understanding of human needs

**Invention** – Discover new possibilities

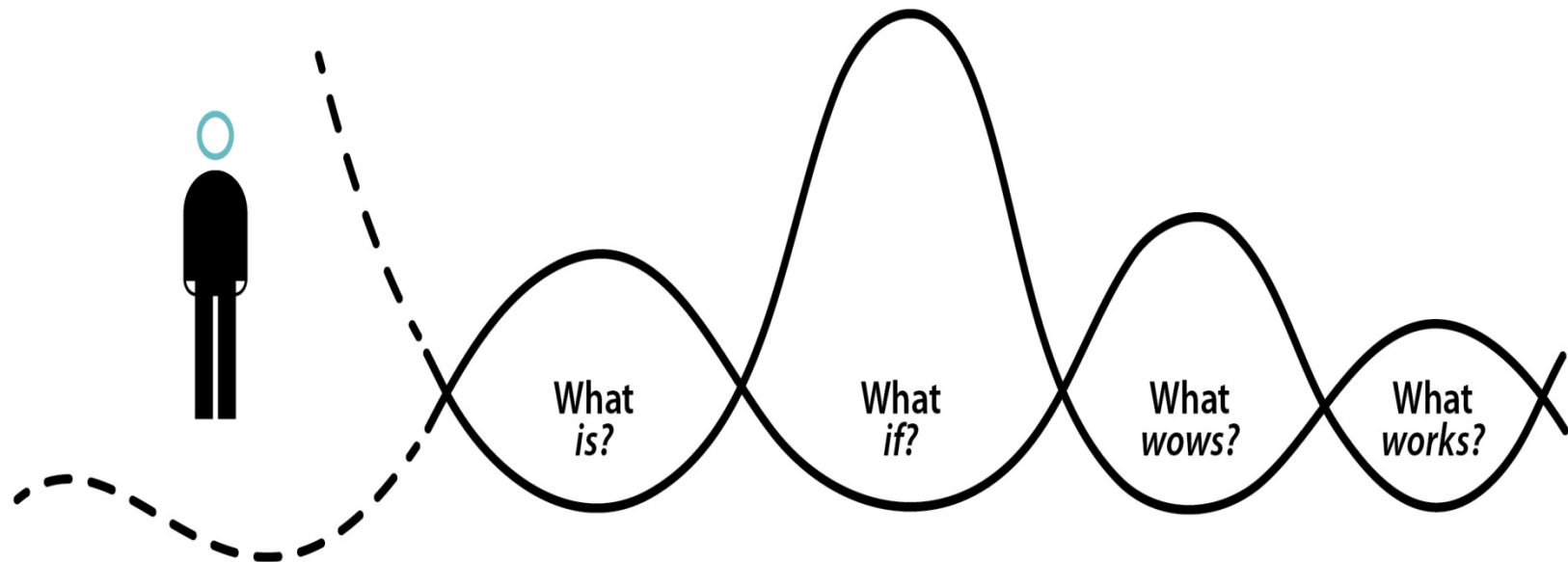
**Iteration** – Use the first solutions only as stepping stones to a better one



# Design as a Problem Solving Approach



# Steps to Designing For Growth



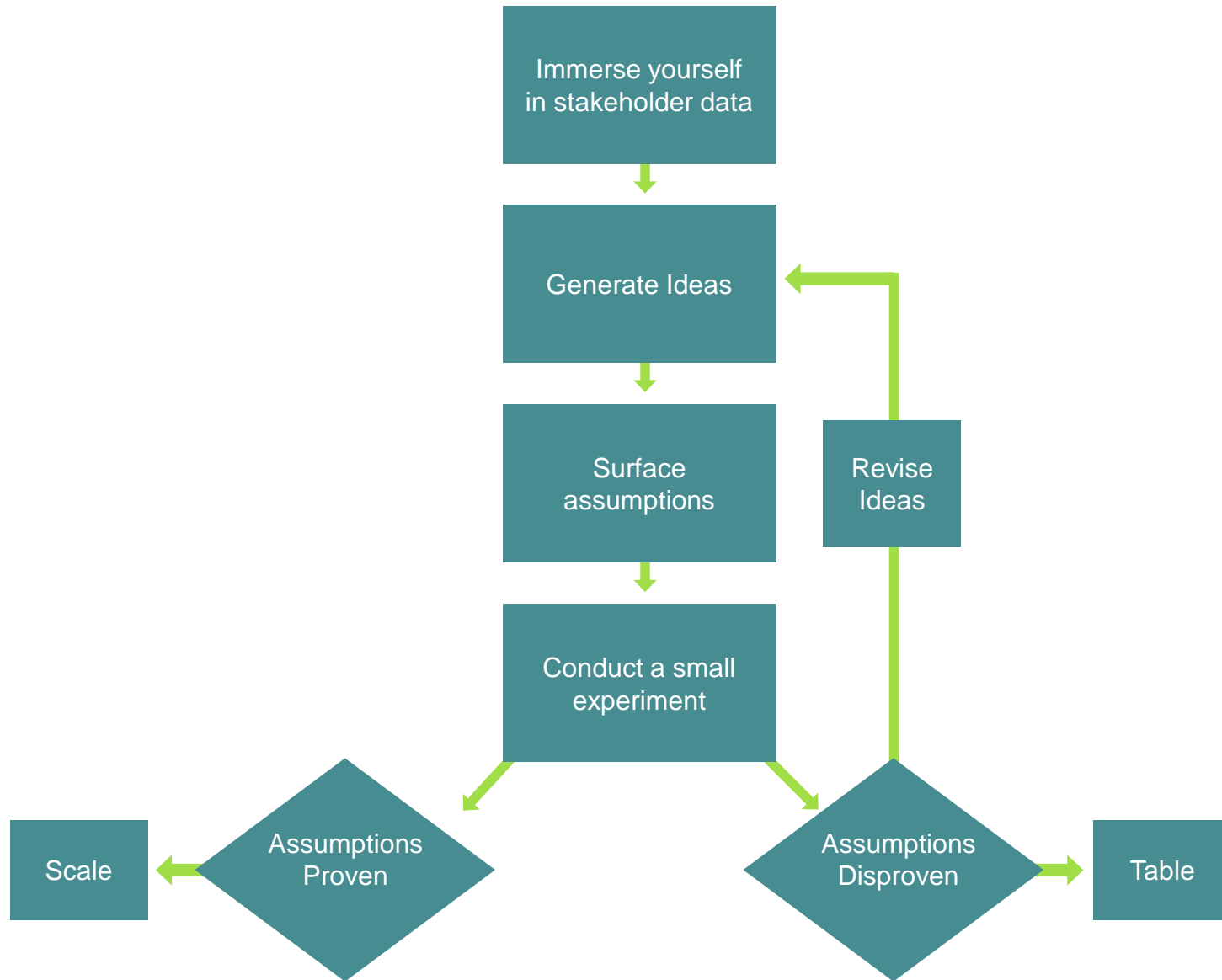
- 1 Identify an Opportunity
- 2 Scope Your Project
- 3 Draft Your Design Brief
- 4 Make Your Plans

- 5 Do Your Research
- 6 Identify Insights
- 7 Establish Design Criteria

- 8 Brainstorm Ideas
- 9 Develop Concepts
- 10 Create Some Napkin Pitches

- 11 Surface Key Assumptions
- 12 Make Prototypes

- 13 Get Feedback from Stakeholders
- 14 Run Your Learning Launches
- 15 Design the On-Ramp





# Perspectives on design thinking

- **tool kit for producing more creative ideas**
- **risk reduction strategy**
- **change management approach**
- **increasing the speed of innovation**
- **vehicle for empowering local capability building**
- **way to convene conversations for change across diverse stakeholders**

# Convening a conversation for change

Defining the  
Opportunity

# Convening a conversation for change

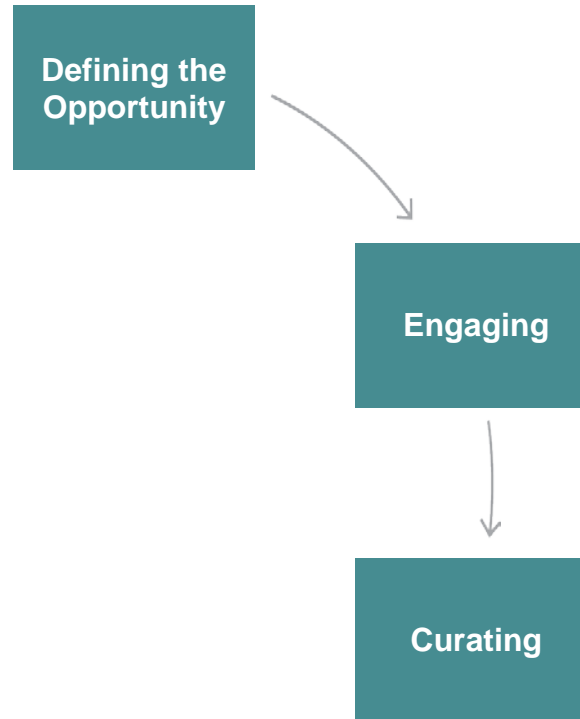
Defining the  
Opportunity



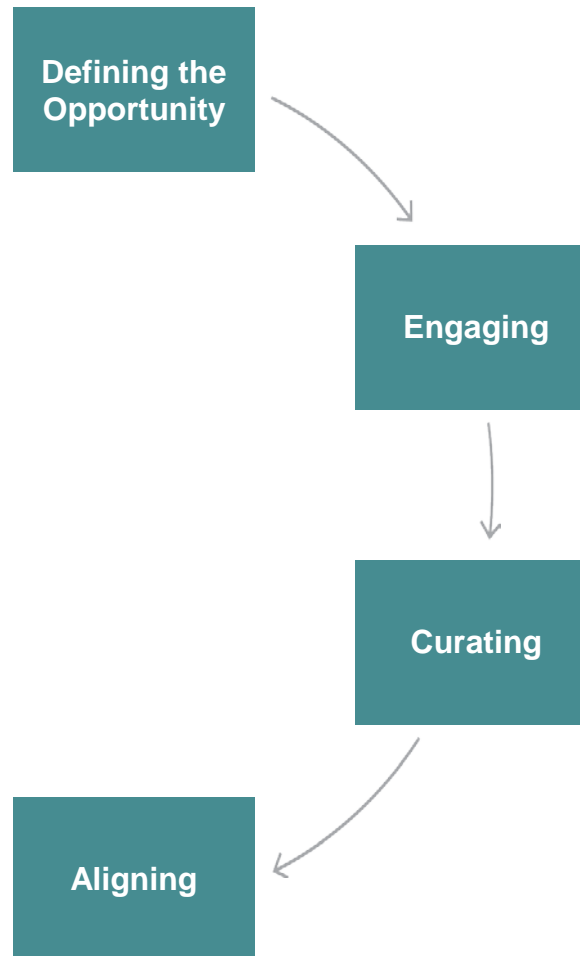
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graph TD; A[Defining the Opportunity] --> B[Engaging]
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Engaging

# Convening a conversation for change



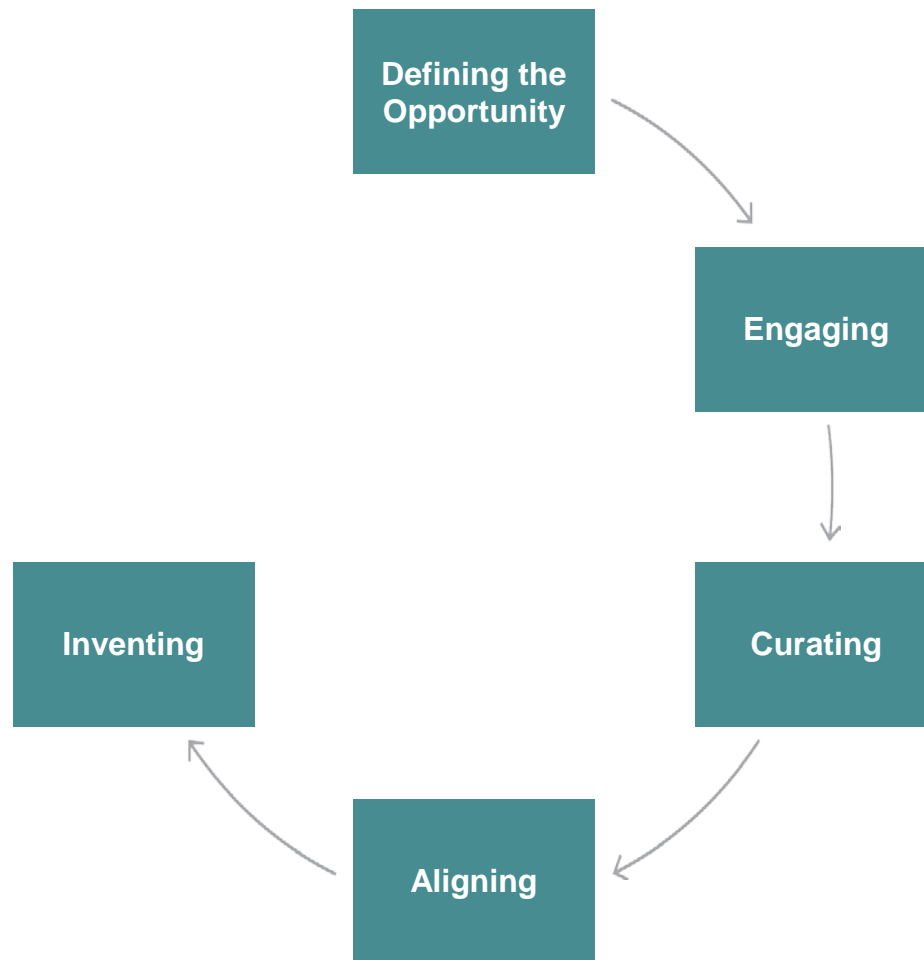
# Convening a conversation for change



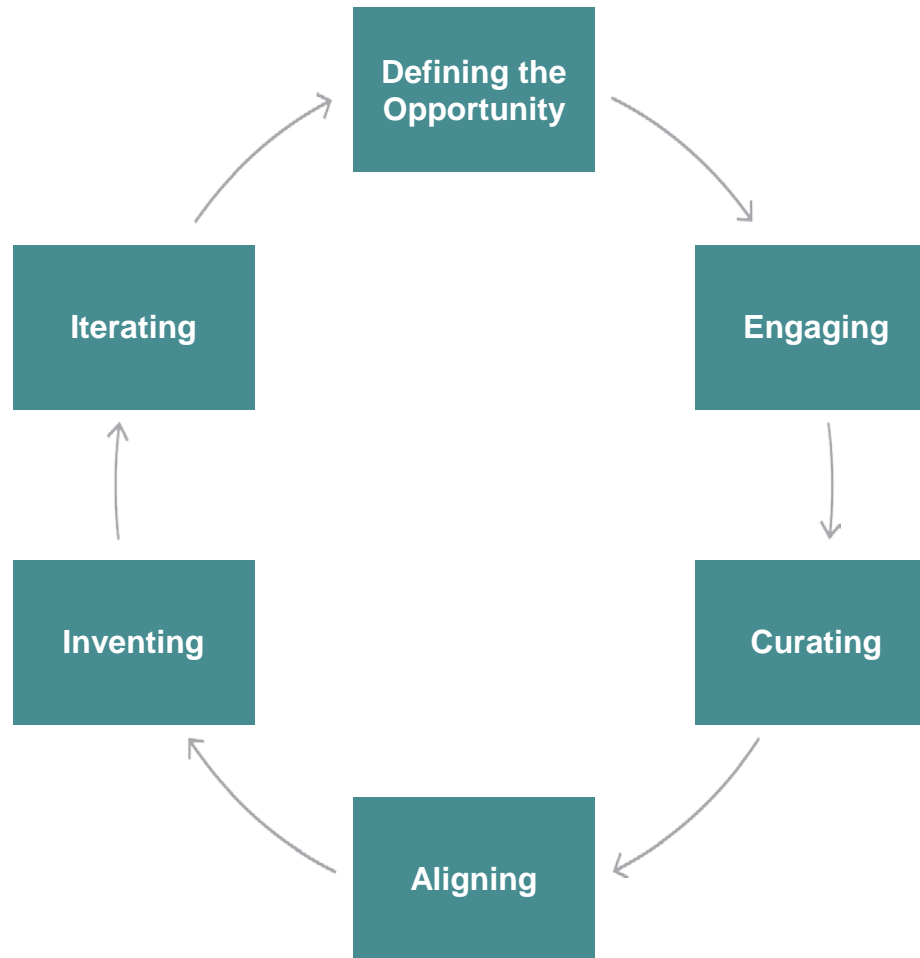


# Convening a conversation for change

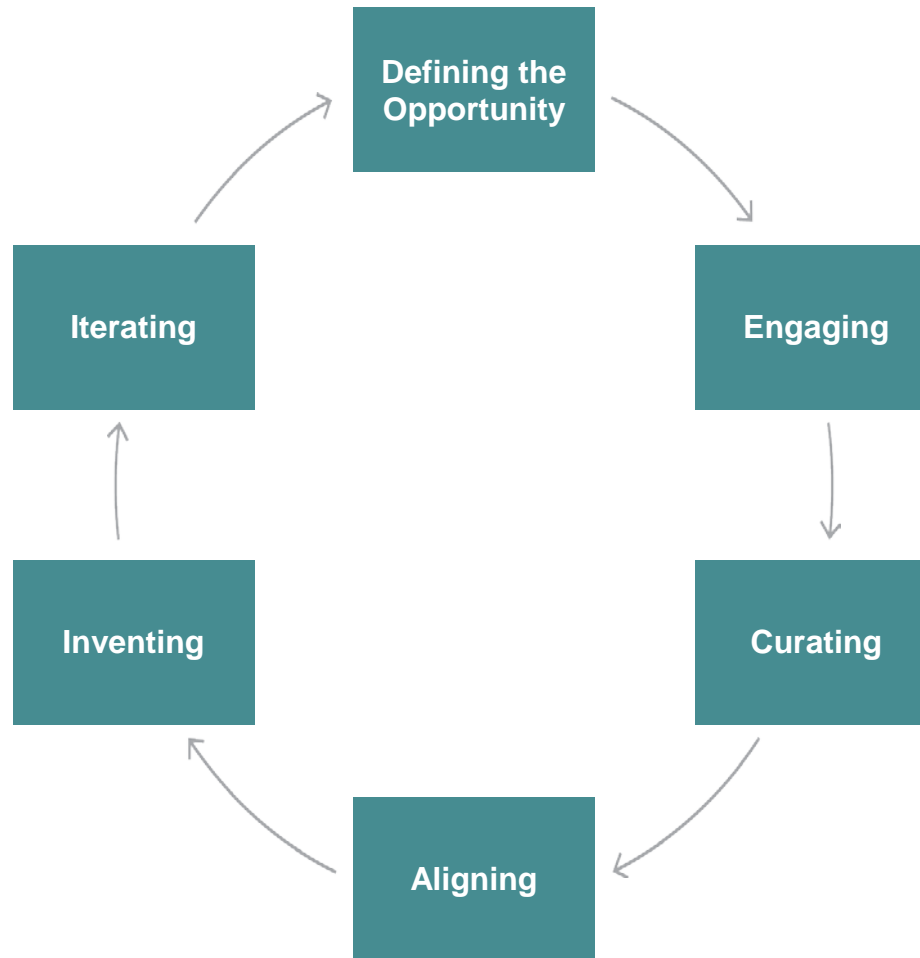
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# Convening a conversation for change

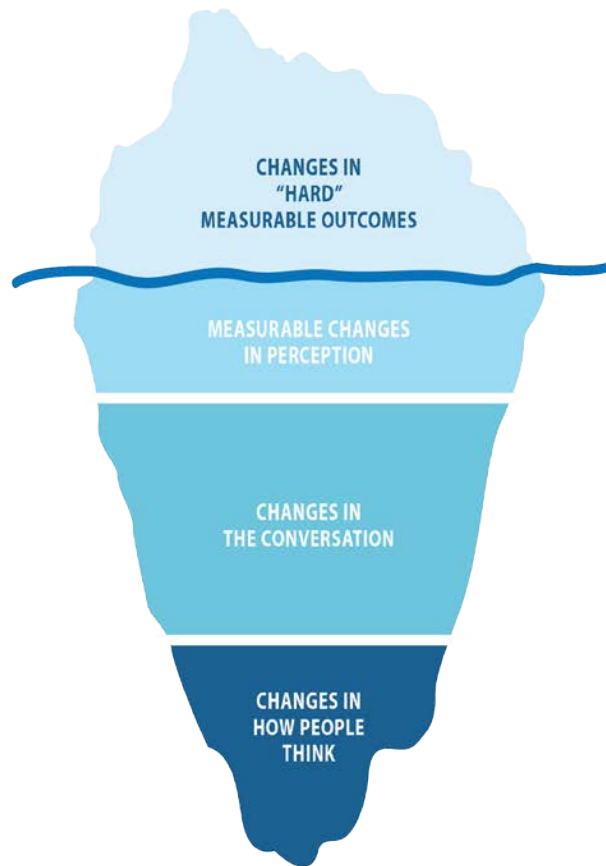


# Convening a conversation for change



# Measuring Design's Impact

17



Jeanne said...

“As an innovation leader,  
design the experiences YOU  
are responsible for”

Reflections on applying design thinking to  
my world

Lis Cowey, Principal Analyst,  
The Treasury



# Challenges I took away from Darden

- Different styles of leadership
- Mind-sets, not just methods
- Adapting design thinking to policy and strategy in government
- We can all be ‘designers’, but how far should we? And where best to apply it?

# Different styles of leadership: the system needs both to deliver and innovate

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## Leading innovation: two models



The 'hero' leader?

Hirschhorn Gallery, Washington DC



"The innovation leader creates **empty space** for others to fill.

They design conversations that invite the conflict into the room, surface it and resolve it in pursuit of higher order solutions." (Prof Jeanne Liedtka)

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# Creating empty space by...

## Inviting others into our analysis:

- Labour market forum workshop: 'poster gallery' style
- Treasury regional stakeholder consultation: starting with assumptions



# Mind-sets, not just methods

- People-centric: public sector systems are just people doing stuff really!
- Moving from 'being smart is being right' to being inquiry-based
- Exposing mental models to connect across difference - visualisation can help

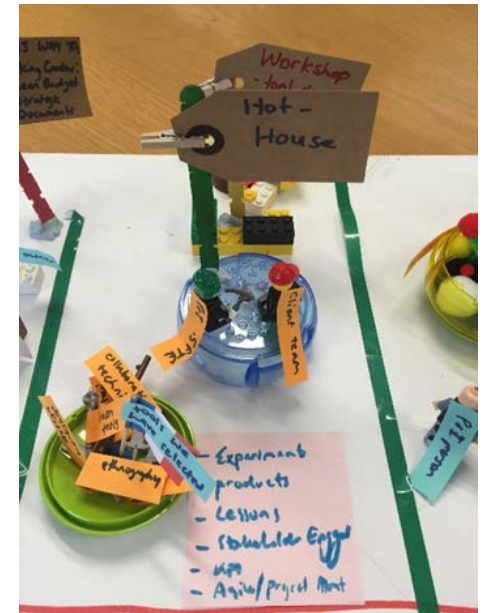
# Using a different mind-set...

Helps us reveal our mental models



Novel methods can get in the way  
– but also give unexpected  
information... User feedback included:

*“My thoughts about this: I’m wondering how come you have the time to play around with lego.”!*



Senior support needed: starting discussion further back takes time – but can create richer engagement, not just ‘buy in’

The word “experiment” can freak people out!

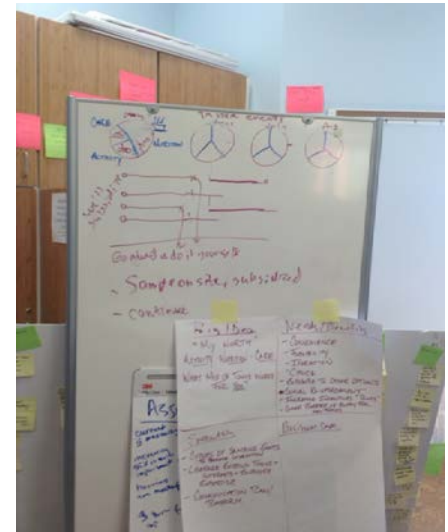


# How can design thinking help government policy and strategy?

- Fresh starting points for analysis: *further back* and *out there with people*
- Adaptive strategy: Hypotheses, prototypes and “experiments”, c.f. framework-trial-rollout
- ‘Value chain’: understand what influences behaviours in different parts of complex adaptive human systems, not just end users

# Challenges in using design thinking for policy

- Ethics, duty of care and expectations management
- Role of Ministers
- Being brave enough to expose early, messy thinking
- Practical challenge of applying approaches to large, complex systems



# We can all be designers?

- Role for professional specialism c.f. democratisation: more clarity required
- Application to leadership (facilitative open style)
- Application to professional relationships, 'services' we offer each other at work



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# Upcoming Applied Learning Seminars

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**Un-plan the future: futures and stories for public policy**

Speaker: Dr Adrian Kuah

Wellington

28 October

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## Enquiries

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## Upcoming Executive Education Workshops

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### **Managing Regulation, Enforcement and Compliance**

Course leader: Professor Malcolm Sparrow

Wellington

16-21 October

### **Evidence for Decision-Making**

Course leader: Dr George Argyrous

Melbourne

25-26 October

### **Women in Leadership: Achieving and Flourishing**

Course leader: Christine Nixon

Wellington

15-18 November

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