



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

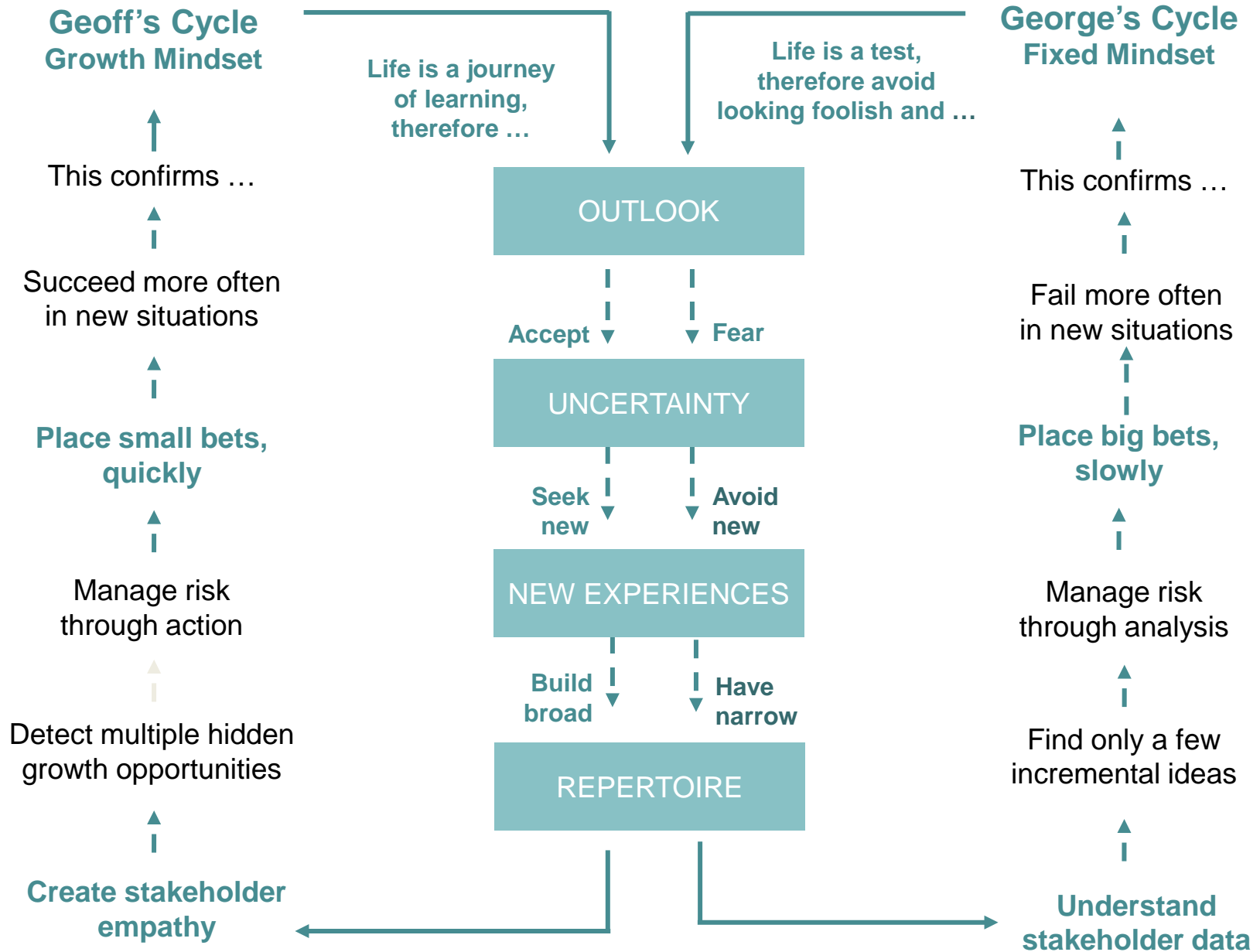
The background is a solid teal color with a pattern of overlapping, semi-transparent teal circles and lines, creating a complex, organic, and interconnected visual texture.

# 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:**

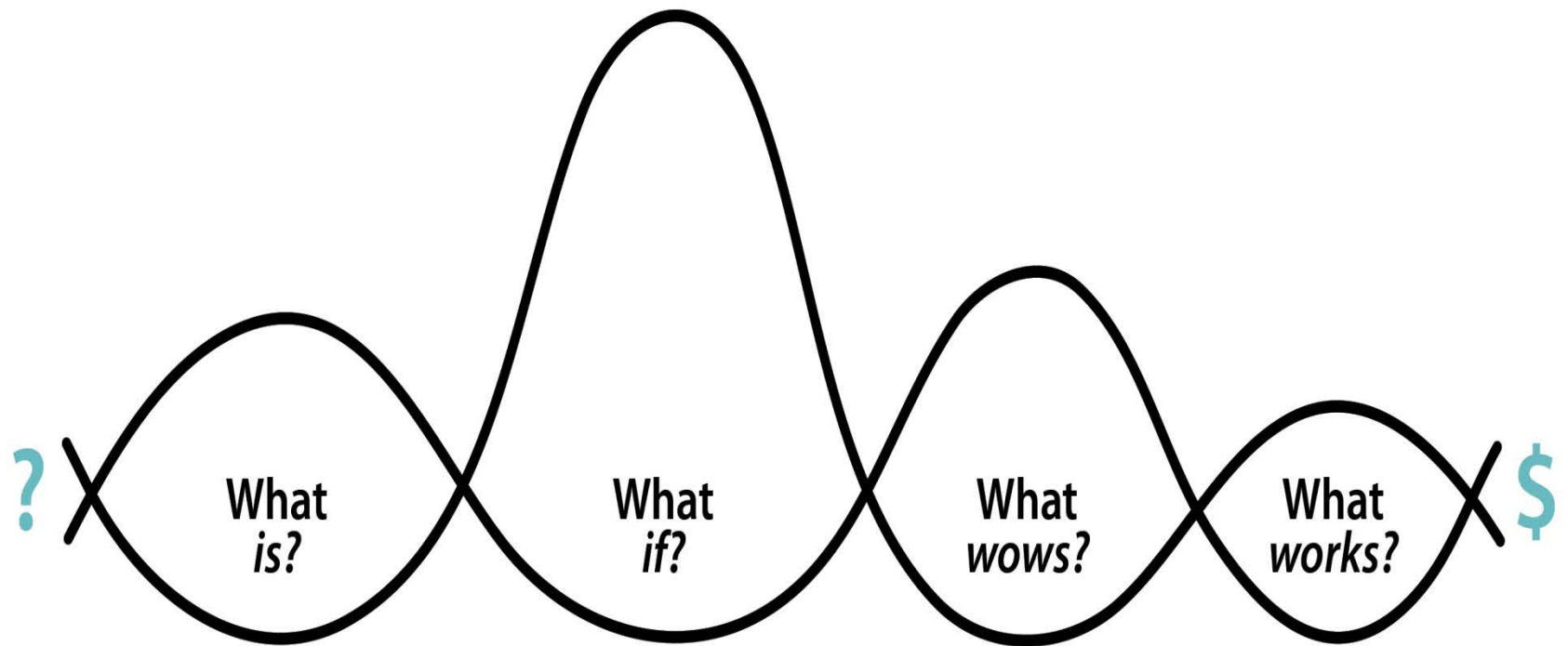
**Empathy** – Start by establishing a deep understanding of human needs

**Invention** – Discover new possibilities

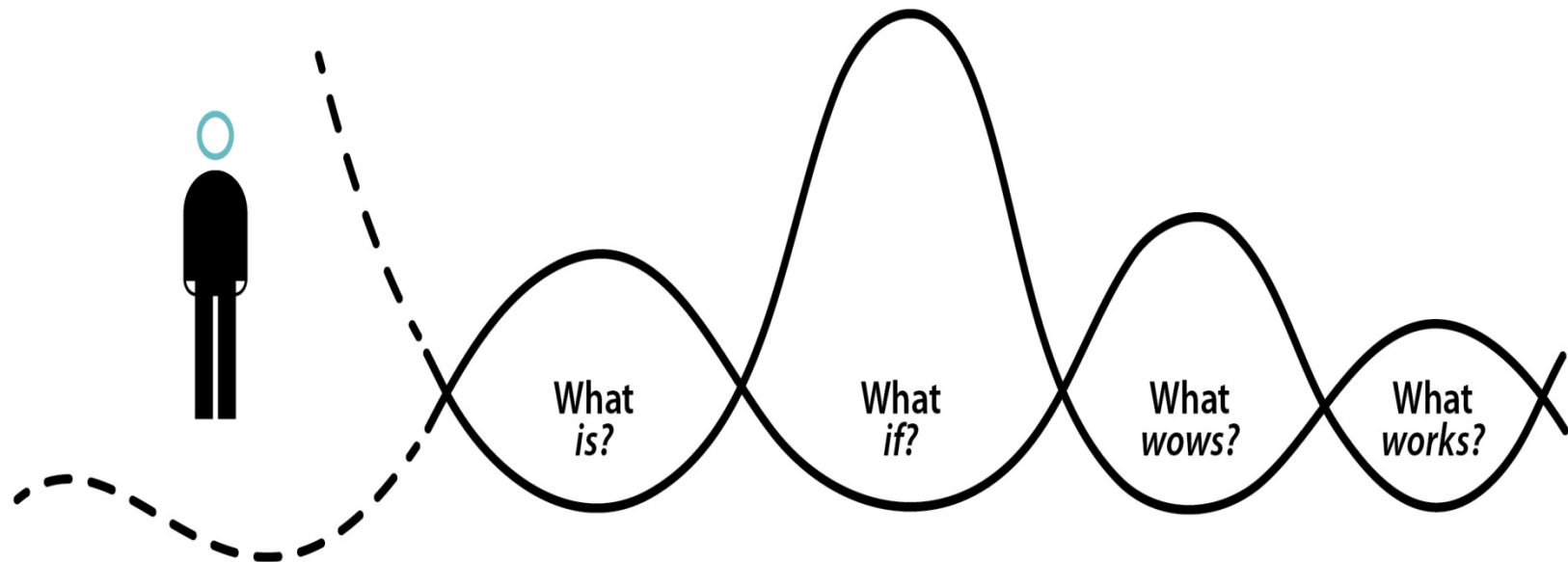
**Iteration** – Use the first solutions only as stepping stones to a better one



# Design as a Problem Solving Approach



# Steps to Designing For Growth



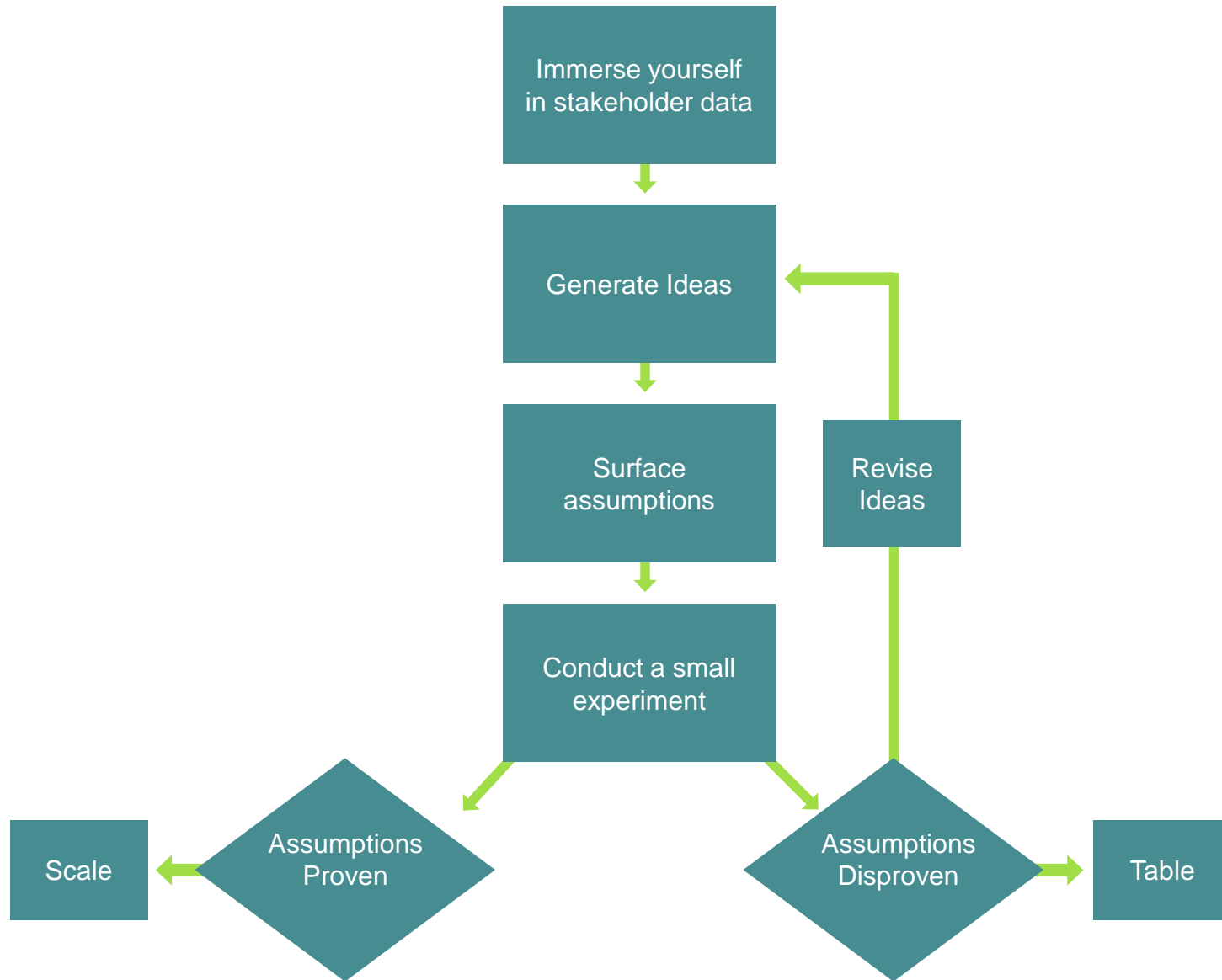
- 1 Identify an Opportunity
- 2 Scope Your Project
- 3 Draft Your Design Brief
- 4 Make Your Plans

- 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

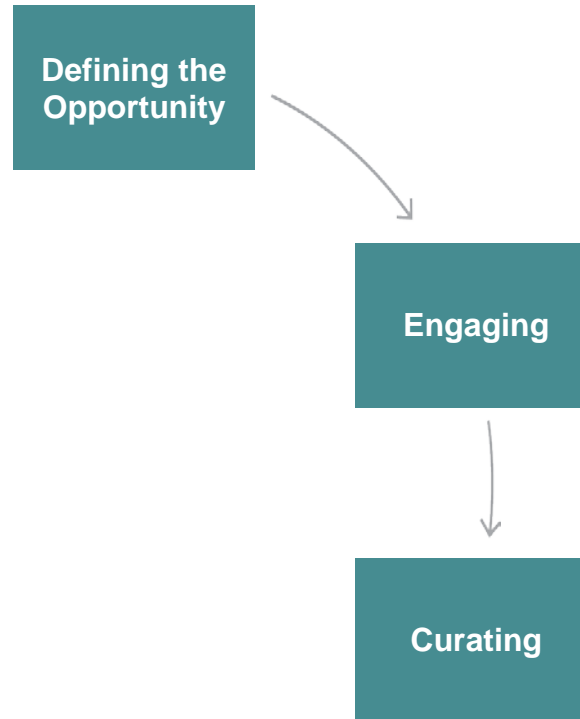
Defining the  
Opportunity



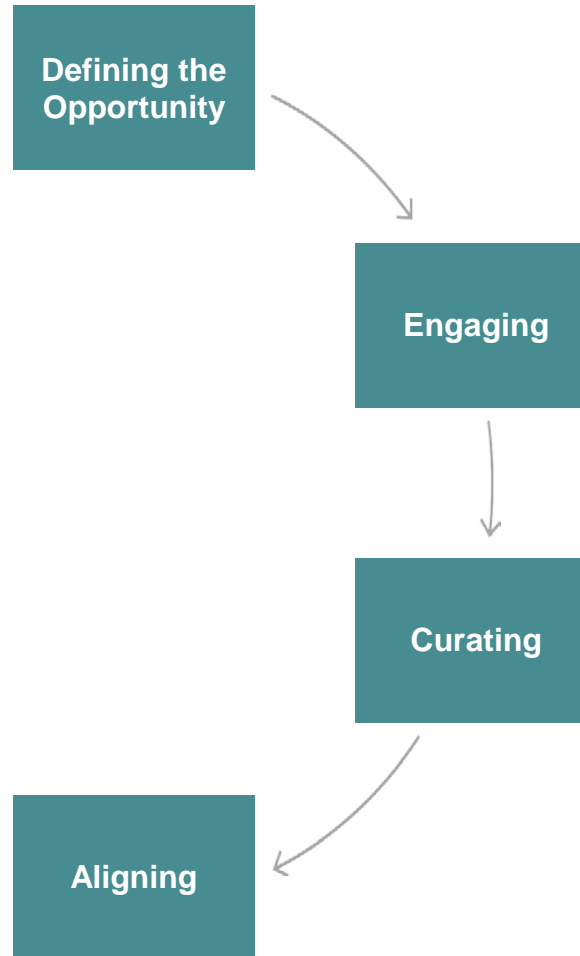
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graph TD; A[Defining the Opportunity] --> B[Engaging]
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Engaging

# Convening a conversation for change



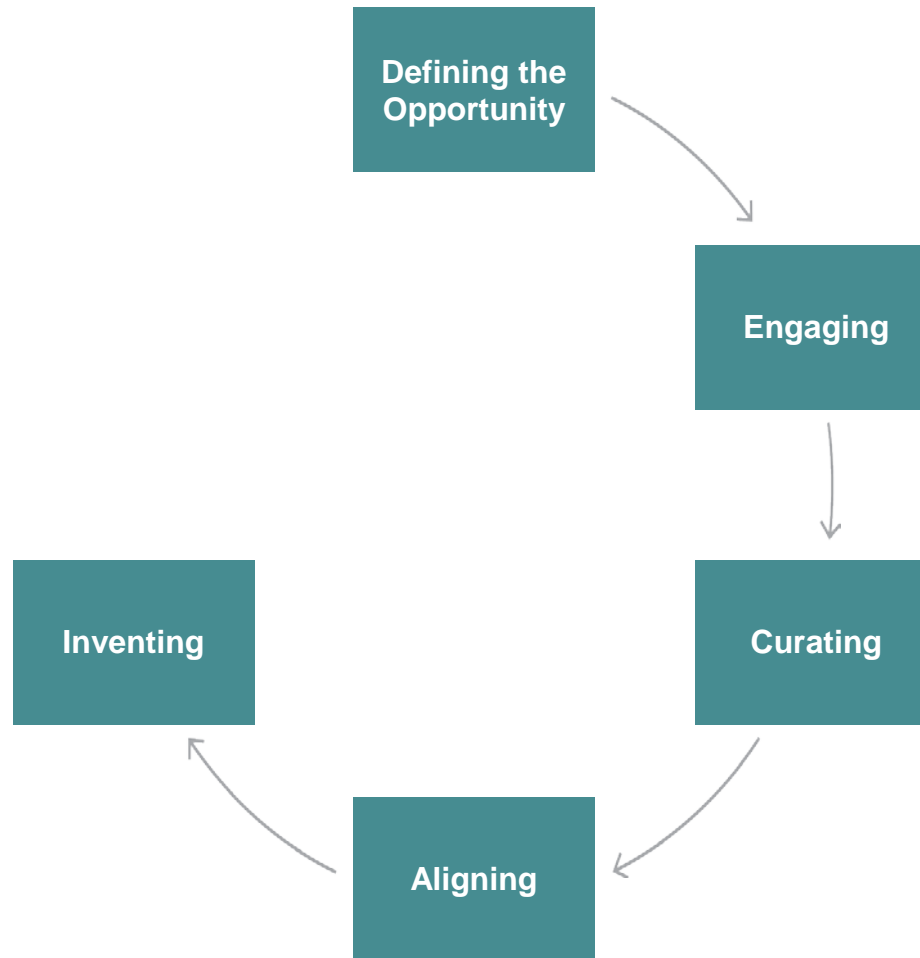
# Convening a conversation for change



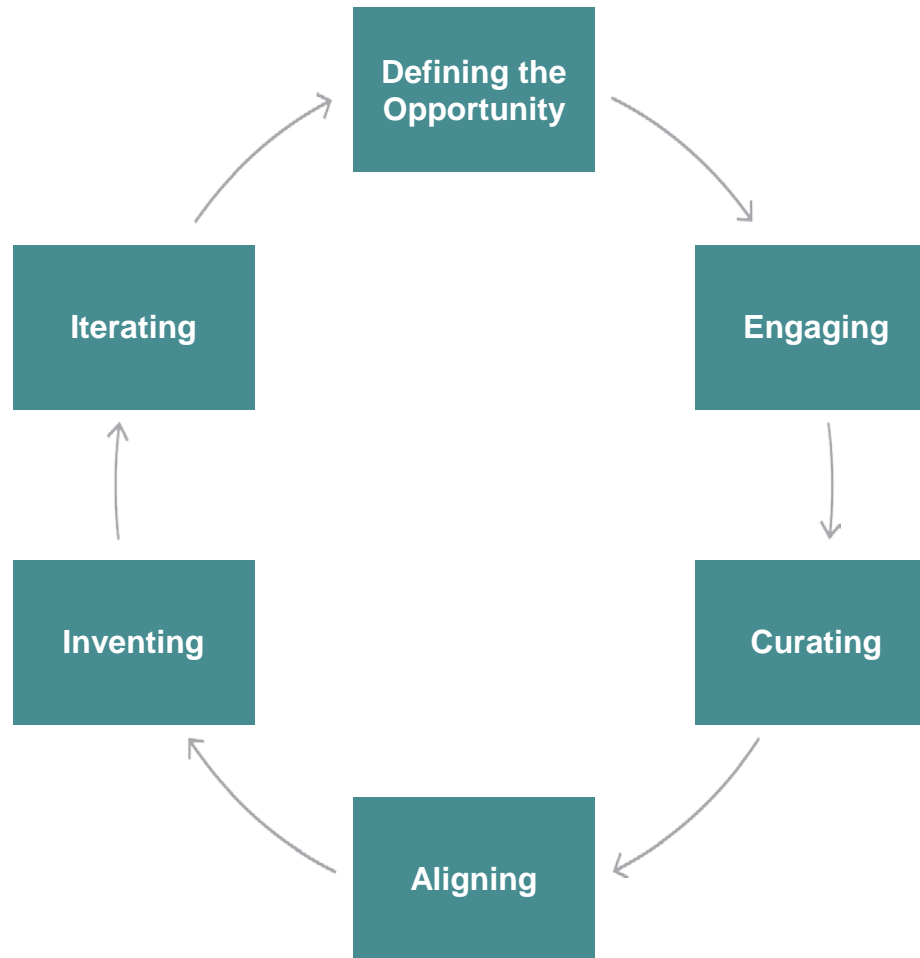


# Convening a conversation for change

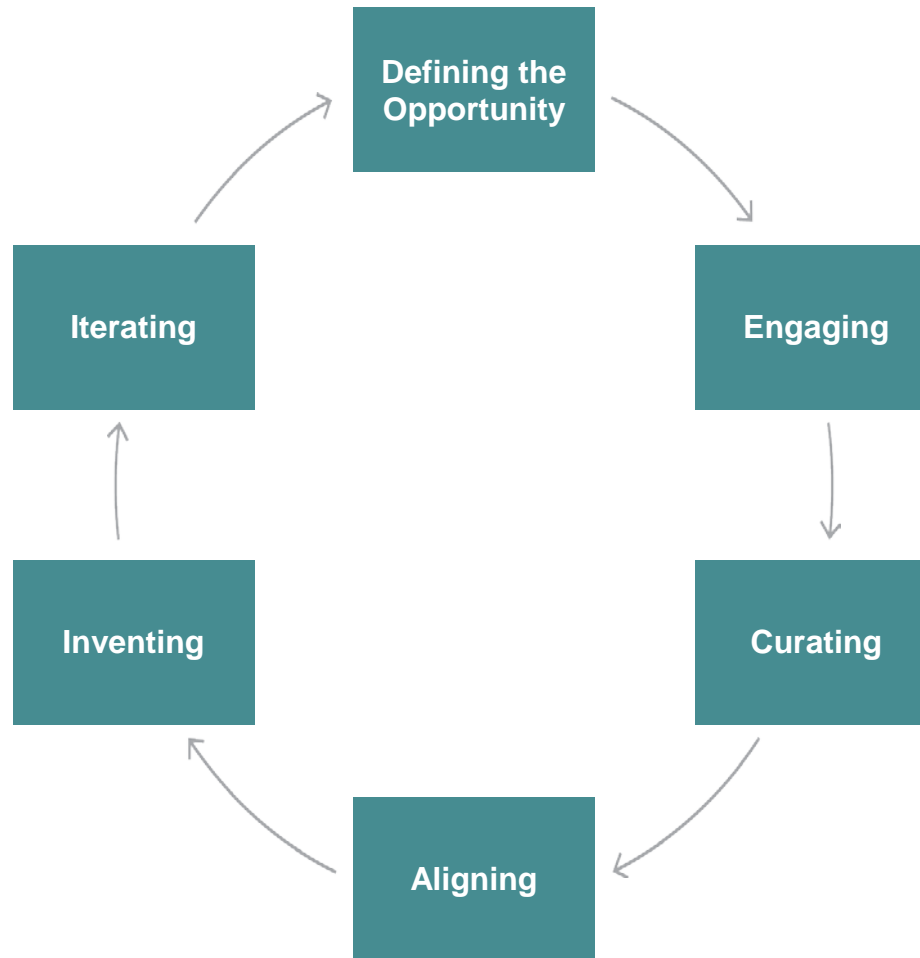
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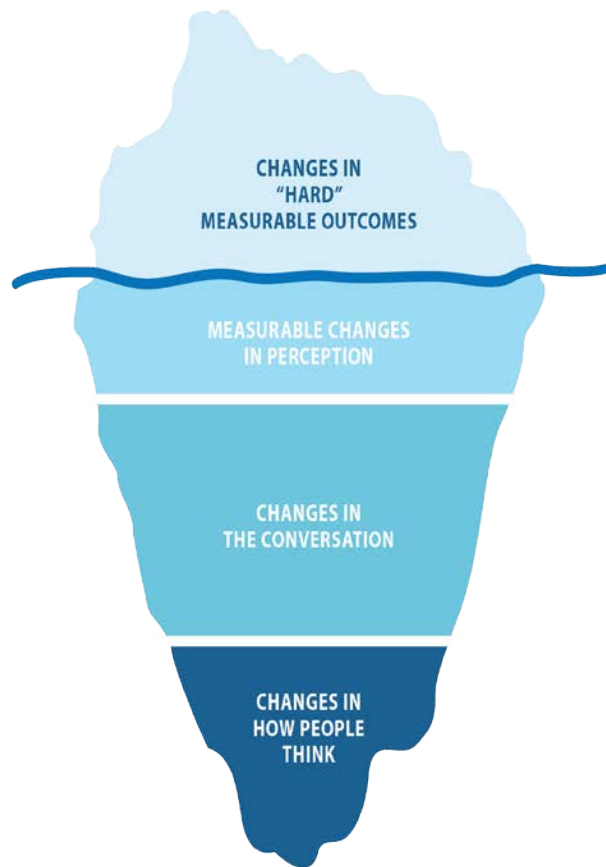
# Convening a conversation for change



# Convening a conversation for change



# Measuring Design's Impact



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

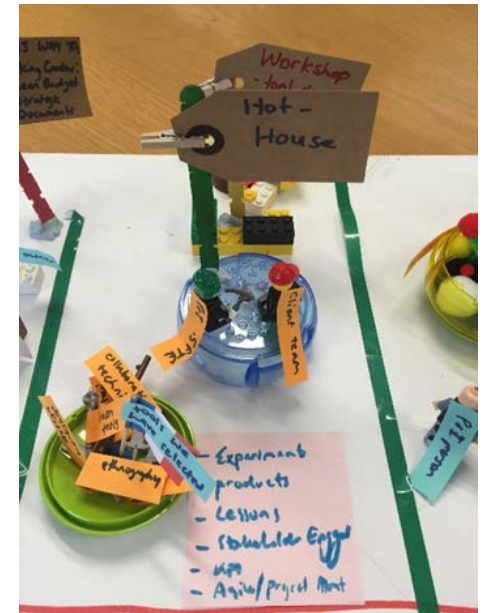
# Using a different mind-set...

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!

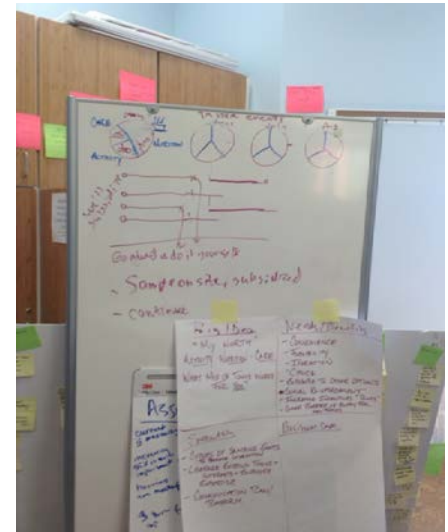


# How can design thinking help government policy and strategy?

- 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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### **Enquiries**

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