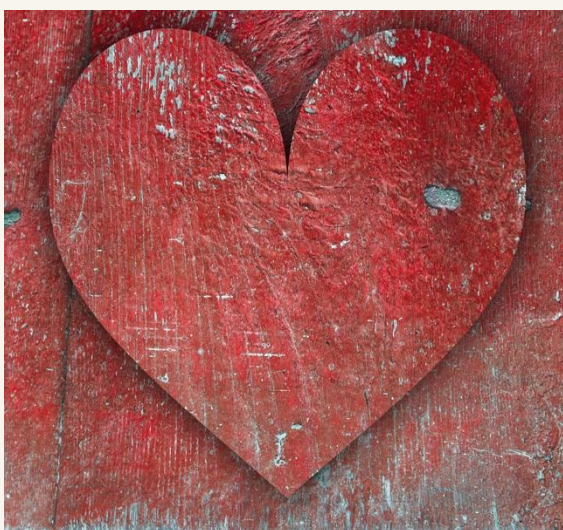


A Quick Guide to the Co-Design Living Labs Compass for How We Work Together for Change

This Quick Guide was created by current Co-Design Leads: Tricia, Pam, Rose, Sam, Ali, Amit, Elise, Gregor, Nargis, Brenton, Julia, Kris, TomCia and previous co-leads Ann and Josie as a Lay Summary for a Philosophy of Practice Paper for Co-Design.

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We value feelings!

A philosophy of practice is a compass that guides the way things are done.

Why does this research matter?

There are many views on what co-design is. Models of care in co-design exist, but it is less common for people to describe the 'philosophy of practice'. Co-designers suggest that **a philosophy of practice can be understood as the compass** that guides us in co-design.

The article is a history of how and why the Co-Design Network began. The approach to co-design genuinely values relationships, experiences and feelings. This is important because as a co-designer creating this Quick Guide said, "by sharing our experience we can improve services and access for other people [based on a] genuine understanding of what people have experienced."

For whom does this paper have relevance?

This paper is for people inside and outside the network to explain the values and approach that guide the work. It points to what is needed to support co-design processes that are led by people with lived experience and puts on paper what's important, so future work and partnerships match these values. It explains how feeling is a major part of what underpins the work of the network. **Relational is something that is 'felt'** and it is important that people know about this way of working. In the network, 'being for' rather than 'being with' or 'being aside' are words used from philosopher Zygmunt Bauman to describe 'togetherness by design' which is our way of working. This reflects "**learning to listen in a different way...that is beyond transactional.**"

Primary Topic: Co-Design, Mental Health Research and Translation, Co-Research Models.

Main Audience: Researchers, service designers, network members, policy and practice people who engage with new service model implementation such as hubs, locals and other mental health and wellbeing supports and staff delivering all services.

What was the focus of the paper and who participated?



The network was developed in 2017 and currently has around 1 900 **members**.

It is now a part of an Australian research centre funded by a research grant.

Flexibility is key and an opt-in approach let's **people choose what they want to be involved in**.

Eight 'mechanisms' are used to frame research co-design process and practice.

These mechanisms are **key ingredients** in experience based co-design.

The **mechanisms form our working together agreements** which we share at the beginning of co-design sessions **to set the table to work together**. These can be read in our Handbook.

A **Handbook** by and with co-designers has been co-created for people new to the network.

We aim to focus on **strengths based**, capacity and capabilities building.

We acknowledge that **some approaches need to change** in different groups and settings.

For this paper, the team included **seven co-design leads** bringing personal lived experience, to carer, family and kinship group members.

We worked together with **five academic researchers** who support the day-to-day running of the network.

This Quick Guide was **collaboratively developed**.



Whose perspectives were shared?

The perspectives of academic researchers and the co-leads were shared in the paper. We described the relational ways of working. Co-designers preparing this summary said that **feeling is a major part of the outcomes**—something has to be felt and that the co-design is not lip service. Wisdom that has come from experience is shared within the network and there is **an openness to listening, hearing and acting on knowledge**.



Key findings, why they matter, what's next?

The paper highlights that **feelings and relationships with people are important** to co-design processes. Within this approach, different types of expertise that people bring to co-design is valued equally.

Safe spaces are created to come together, collaborate and share.

Explaining the network's values and practices is important because it **makes sure that the network's actions match its intentions**.

Genuine co-design led by communities expands lived experience voices within research, **shifting the perception of lived experience being optional** in research. This fosters relational approaches to co-design in research and service design and improvement.

What matters for us as co-designers bringing personal lived-experience and carer, family and kinship group views

"Take the time to do the steps and follow through."

It matters that co-design **creates equity and collective power** amongst communities.

It matters that **co-leadership from people within a co-design network** is fostered and developed.

It matters that we conduct more research that leads to **real-world impact**. It matters that co-design approaches are developed as being central, necessary steps. It matters that **lived experience is centred in the approaches**.