DESIGN
JUSTICE
INITIATIVE

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE,
PLANNING AND LANDSCAPE

UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE

Community-Led. Justice-Driven. Transdisciplinary.

2025

www.udesignjusticeinitiative.com   udji@ucalgary.ca

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Deepest Thanks To:

Community collaborators, youth, families, and people with lived and living experience
Your insight, leadership, and courage ground this work and shape every decision we make.

Community partners and grassroots organizations
For trusting us, challenging us, and co-creating brave spaces for justice-driven design.

Government, nonprofit, academic, and industry partners
For your commitment to shared learning, systems change, and collective impact.

Funders and supporters
Including the University of Calgary's Transdisciplinary Connector Grants, City of Calgary, Calgary Foundation, Calgary Public Library, Quality in the Built Environment, and Bridge to Oasis Foundation for supporting Housing Justice in Action and UDJI's ongoing work.

SAPL faculty, students, and staff
For your creativity, passion, and commitment to transforming education and practice.

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INTRODUCTION: WHO WE ARE

The UDesign Justice Initiative (UDJI) at the University of Calgary's School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape (SAPL) is a transdisciplinary, community-led hub transforming how cities are designed, planned, and governed. Rooted in equity, lived and living experience, and collective problem-solving, UDJI brings together community members, students, researchers, practitioners, and government partners to reimagine Calgary's built environment through a justice-driven lens.

UDJI was created in response to a simple but urgent truth: the people most impacted by inequity in housing, mobility, public space, and planning systems are rarely the ones shaping the solutions. Traditional approaches— consultations, short engagements, top-down planning—have not meaningfully shifted power or outcomes.

Through co-design workshops and ongoing collaborations across sectors, UDJI has developed a shared vision, mission, and set of values that guide our work. We move beyond consultation to co-creation, building the relationships, tools, and action projects that turn community wisdom into policy, prototypes, design interventions, and practice change.

At its core, UDJI is about shifting who gets to design the city—redistributing power, embedding accountability, and ensuring that equity is not an afterthought but the foundation of every process, decision, and project shaping Calgary's future.

WHY UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE? PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE

Design shapes how we live, but not everyone benefits equally. Planning, architecture, housing, infrastructure, and digital systems distribute power, safety, opportunity, and dignity. Historically, these systems have privileged some groups while marginalizing others, embedding inequities into the physical and social fabric of cities.

1.DESIGN HAS ALWAYS HAD POWER, WHETHER ACKNOWLEDGED OR NOT

Urban planning, housing, architecture, and digital systems shape who gets access to safety, mobility, economic stability, and cultural belonging.

When design decisions concentrate power and privilege, inequity becomes literally built into the environment.

Design Justice makes that power visible and accountable, ensuring it is used to expand rights and wellbeing rather than restrict them.

2. THE PEOPLE MOST IMPACTED BY DESIGN ARE TOO OFTEN EXCLUDED FROM SHAPING IT

Communities facing discrimination or material precarity are the ones who feel the consequences of bad planning the hardest.

Traditional consultation is often symbolic, extractive, or inaccessible.

Design Justice repositions lived expertise as essential, not optional, placing decision-making authority where the impacts land.

3. EXCLUSIONARY DESIGN CREATES EXPENSIVE FAILURES

From transit systems that leave mobility-limited residents stranded, to housing policies that deepen homelessness, inequitable design forces governments and organizations into cycles of repair.

Justice-aligned design is preventative, reducing long-term social and financial costs by getting it right upfront, reducing the need for expensive retroactive fixes.

4. COMMUNITIES HOLD KNOWLEDGE THAT MAKES CITIES SMARTER AND MORE RESILIENT

When diverse worldviews shape design, the results are more innovative, culturally grounded, and adaptable to social and climate change.

Communities carry expertise about care, safety, belonging, sustainability, and collective wellbeing that professional systems often overlook.

Design Justice unlocks new ideas by widening who gets to define success, fostering environments that adapt more effectively to social, environmental, and economic change.

This Is Why UDJI Exists

The UDJI was created to:

- Shift decision-making power toward communities
- Embed justice, equity, and care into planning and design systems
- Reimagine how cities are shaped—through collaboration, not extraction
- Build long-term structures for community participation and leadership
- Close gaps in planning, policy, and design education

UDJI emerges in response to a clear problem: Our built environment is inequitable, and unless we redesign the systems that produce it, inequity will persist.

VALUE PROPOSITION

FOR COMMUNITIES

Real influence, safer spaces, tangible results, and strengthened networks.

FOR PUBLIC SECTOR AND FUNDERS

Community-informed projects, better policy fit, measurable equity progress, and trust gains.
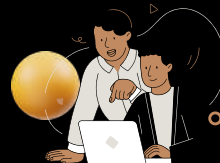
FOR INDUSTRY AND PRACTITIONERS

Clear pathways to partner on values-aligned work that meets community needs and goals.

ACADEMICS AND STUDENTS

A live lab for co-produced research, practice-ready tools, and pedagogy shifts.

WHAT IS DESIGN JUSTICE?

Design Justice is both a framework and a movement that examines how design- across planning, housing, architecture, and public systems - distributes benefits and burdens among different groups. It asks a simple but transformative question: ***Who is this design for, and who gets left out?***

Drawing on the work of Sasha Costanza-Chock (MIT, 2020), Design Justice challenges the ways design can reproduce systems of oppression, such as white supremacy, ableism, colonialism, and gendered power structures, and instead works to create processes that are equitable, accountable, and community-led.
(Costanza-Chock, Design Justice: Community-Led Practices to Build the Worlds We Need, MIT Press, 2020)

Sasha Costanza-Chock

At its core, Design Justice:

- Centers people who are most impacted by inequities in shaping decisions
- Redistributes power in planning, design, and policymaking
- Recognizes and honours community, Indigenous, diasporic, and place-based knowledge
- Builds systems and environments that enhance collective well-being, not just efficiency or aesthetics

In cities like Calgary, where Black, Indigenous, racialized, newcomer, disability, and low-income communities continue to experience disproportionate barriers in housing, mobility, safety, and access to services, Design Justice offers a new direction. It replaces extractive consultation with co-creation, prioritizes lived/living experience as expertise, and ensures that planning decisions reflect the realities of those most impacted.

The UDesign Justice Initiative is grounded in this movement. It adapts Design Justice principles to the realities of planning and city-building in Calgary, working with communities, practitioners, and institutions to transform how systems are designed, implemented, and evaluated.

Design Justice is not just a concept—it is a practice, a set of commitments, and a pathway toward a more just built environment.
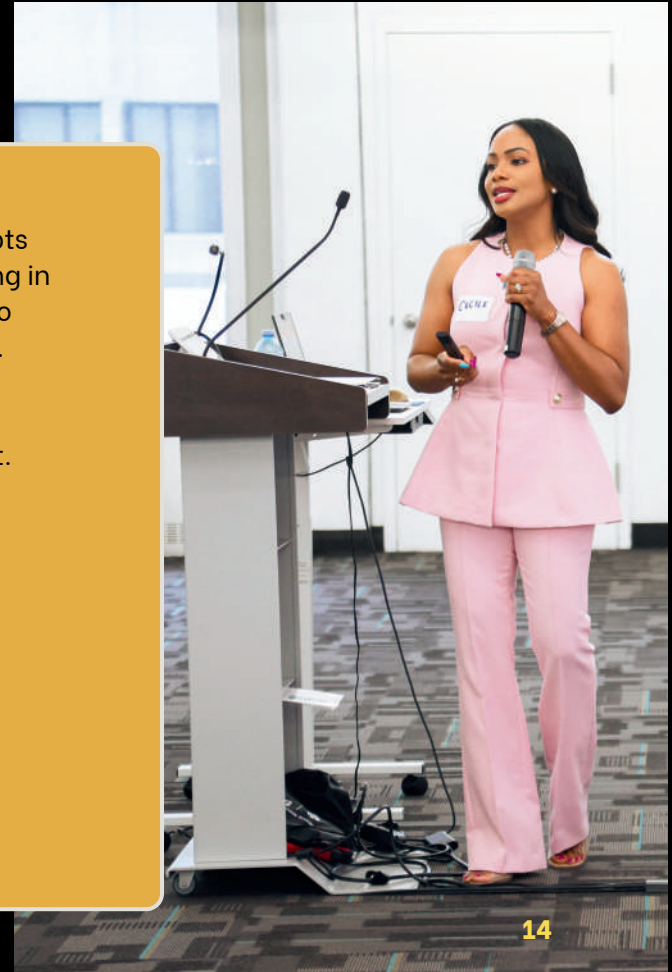
UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE:
VISION, MISSION + GUIDING PRINCIPLES

OUR VISION

A Calgary where people most impacted by spatial injustice lead decisions about housing, mobility, public space, and services, so policies and projects reflect community needs, strengthen belonging, and improve resilience.

OUR **MISSION**
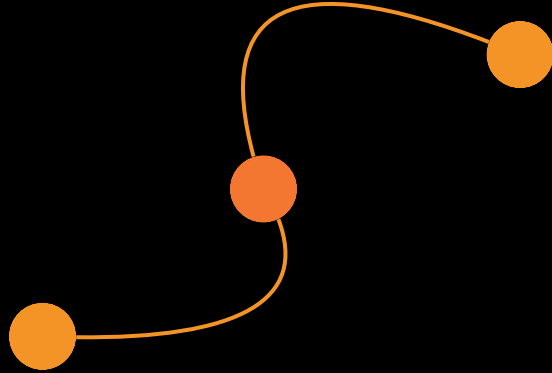
To **convene**, **co-design**, and **catalyze** justice-centered solutions with communities, practitioners, and institutions - pairing storytelling and evidence to influence decisions, embed accountability, and deliver practical action projects that improve daily life.

OUR **MISSION STATEMENT**

The UDesign Justice Initiative is a platform that directly addresses community issues through design.

It exists for all the diverse and underrepresented communities.

It challenges the dominant design methodologies, narratives, processes, and systems in academia and practice, and tests new ideas.

It does these actions by centring community-led processes, decolonizing practices, understanding the narratives, and amplifying the voices of marginalized populations.

The initiative seeks to reframe how we understand oppressions and exclusions, and co-create more equitable, just, and inclusive spaces, policies, and practices.

VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CO-DESIGN OVER CONSULTATION

Communities co-author agendas, research, and projects.

EQUITY, INCLUSION, ACCESSIBILITY, AND RECIPROCITY

Center racialized, marginalized, and otherwise excluded communities, remove participation barriers, compensate lived/living expertise, and use accessible formats.

TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Maintain visible feedback loops, measure impact, and follow through.

TRAUMA-INFORMED, CULTURALLY GROUNDED PRACTICE, AND CARE

Ensure choice and consent, follow do-no-harm principles, and respect cultural protocols.

TRANSDISCIPLINARY & PLACE-BASED

Blend community knowledge with technical expertise across disciplines.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe design can be a tool for justice, not exclusion.

We believe communities hold the knowledge to shape their own futures.

We believe equity must be designed into every process, policy, and place.
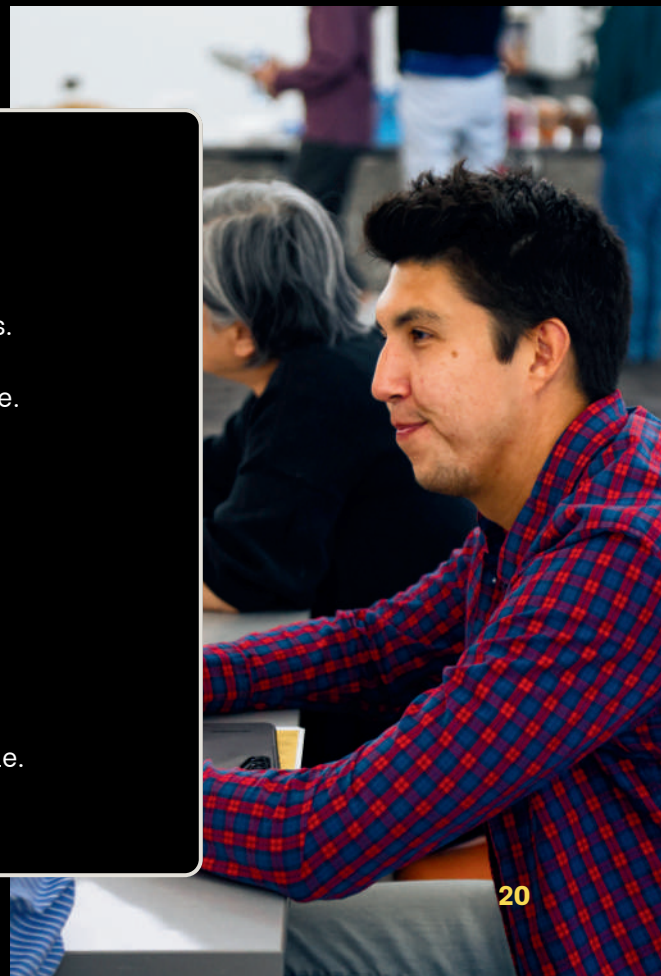
We believe collaboration across sectors drives meaningful change.

We believe transparency, accountability, and reciprocity build trust.

We believe lived and living experience is expertise.

We believe good design starts with listening.

We believe justice in the built environment begins with who is at the table.

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WHO WE SERVE

People most affected by design inequities
(e.g., racialized, marginalized, and otherwise
excluded communities) and the **cross-sector
partners** (community organizations,
students/academics,
designers/planners/architects, government
agencies, service providers) who work with
them.

People Most Affected by Design Inequities

Cross-Sector Partners

Other Interested Parties
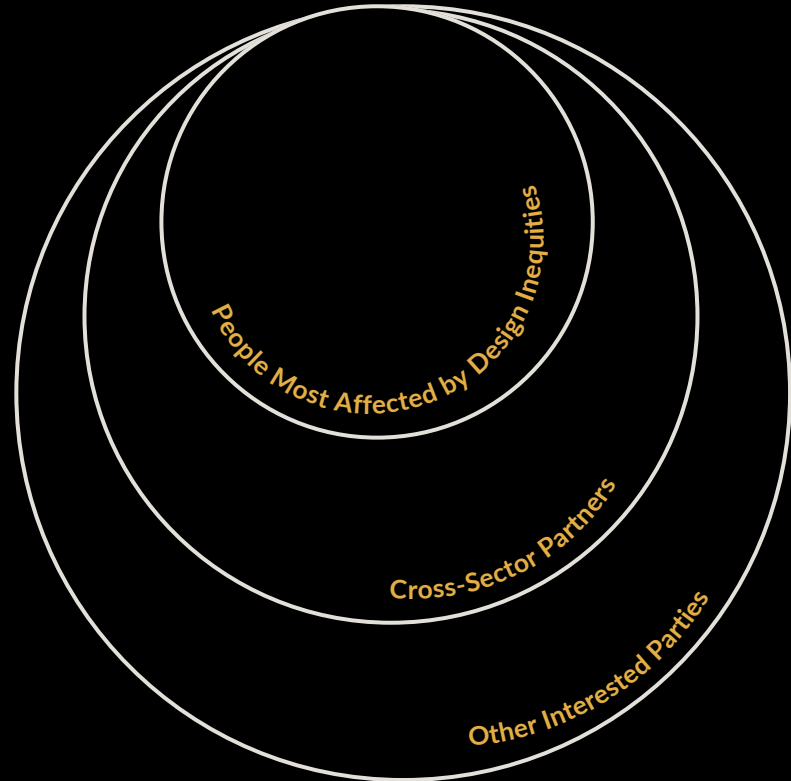
UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE: OUR APPROACH

HOW UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE WORKS

The UDesign Justice Initiative is built on a community-led, transdisciplinary, and systems-thinking approach designed to shift how decisions about the built environment are made.

Our approach is grounded in equity and driven by the people most impacted by spatial injustice.

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1. COMMUNITY-LED + CO-DESIGN MODEL

UDJI centers the leadership, wisdom, and lived/living experience of communities who have historically been excluded from shaping planning and design decisions.

We:
- Start with relationships, not projects.
- Create accessible, culturally grounded, trauma-informed spaces.
- Treat lived experience as expertise.
- Ensure community members co-author - not merely advise - ideas, evidence, designs, and decisions.

This model moves **beyond consultation** toward shared ownership, shared problem-solving, and shared accountability.

2. TRANSDISCIPLINARY STRUCTURE

UDJI operates as a **cross-sector hub** bringing together:

- Community organizations
- People with lived/living experience
- Students and academics
- Urban planners, architects, and designers
- Government and public sector partners
- Non-profits, service providers, and industry professionals

Rather than working in disciplinary silos, we integrate knowledge across fields – and from outside academia – to generate solutions that reflect social realities, cultural contexts, and systemic complexity.

Our transdisciplinary stance recognizes that no single discipline can solve inequities in housing, planning, or the built environment. Meaningful change requires multiple ways of knowing working together.

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3. Three Core Pillars of Action

UDJI organizes its work around three interconnected pillars that ensure justice is embedded from idea to implementation to evaluation:

01

CO-CREATE
- Collaboratively define challenges with communities
- Build shared vision, values, priorities
- Develop ideas, prototypes, and pathways grounded in lived and living expertise

02

CO-IMPLEMENT
- Pilot design-justice interventions
- Translate insights into policy, programs, spatial projects, and tools
- Support partners in delivering equity-focused actions

03

CO-EVALUATE
- Assess impacts with communities through accessible, participatory methods
- Measure equity outcomes, unintended consequences, and system shifts
- Ensure accountability and transparency

These pillars ensure that justice is not a stage, it is integrated throughout the entire lifecycle of our work.

4. Systems-Thinking Orientation

UDJI approaches every challenge through a systems lens, recognizing that inequities in the built environment are produced by intersecting policies, power structures, histories, and institutions.

Our systems-thinking approach includes:

- Understanding root causes, not only symptoms
- Mapping relationships between community needs, planning systems, and policy structures
- Identifying leverage points for long-term change
- Integrating narrative, data, and lived experience as a combined evidence base

This ensures that solutions **address structural barriers**, not just design outcomes.

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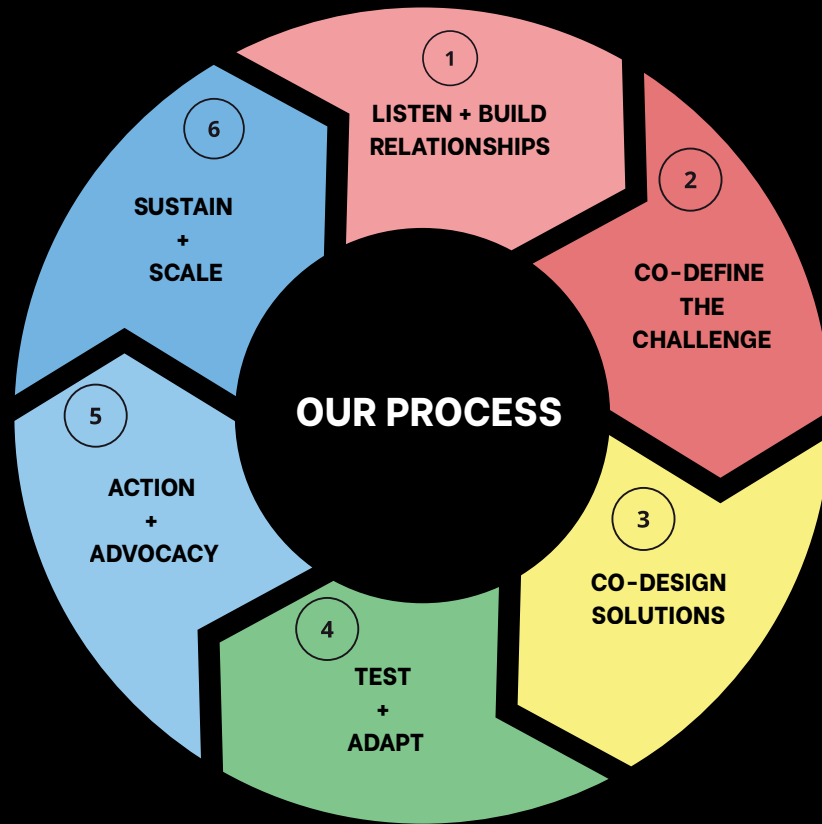# UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE:
OUR PROCESS
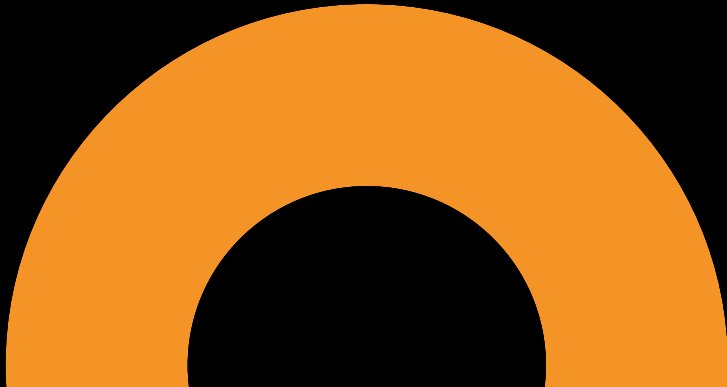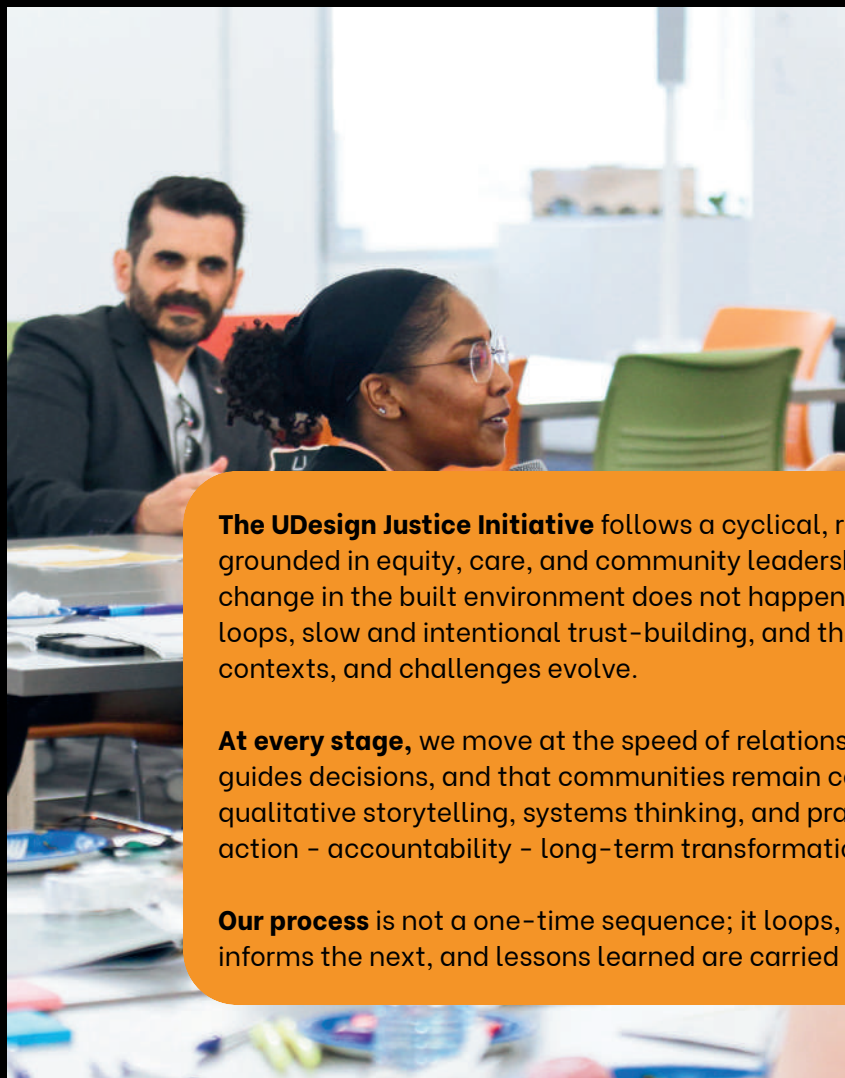
The UDesign Justice Initiative follows a cyclical, relationship-centred, and iterative process grounded in equity, care, and community leadership. Our approach recognizes that meaningful change in the built environment does not happen in a straight line. It requires continuous feedback loops, slow and intentional trust-building, and the flexibility to adapt as community priorities, contexts, and challenges evolve.

At every stage, we move at the speed of relationships—ensuring that lived and living experience guides decisions, and that communities remain co-authors, not observers. This process blends qualitative storytelling, systems thinking, and practical design methods to move from insight - action - accountability - long-term transformation.

Our process is not a one-time sequence; it loops, adapts, and deepens over time. Each phase informs the next, and lessons learned are carried forward to strengthen future work.

OUR PROCESS

1 LISTEN + BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

2 CO-DEFINE THE CHALLENGE

3 CO-DESIGN SOLUTIONS

4 TEST + ADAPT

5 ACTION + ADVOCACY

6 SUSTAIN + SCALE

OUR PROCESS

1. Listen and Build Relationships

We begin by engaging with communities most impacted by spatial inequities, creating culturally grounded, trauma-informed spaces where stories, priorities, and lived expertise lead.

2. Co-Define the Challenge

Together with cross-sector collaborators, we clarify what needs to change, who must be involved, and what "success" means from a community perspective, not an institutional one.

3. Co-Design Solutions

We translate community knowledge into prototypes, tools, and strategies such as design interventions, policy ideas, visualizations, and actionable pathways.

4. Test and Adapt

Prototypes are piloted and refined through community and partner feedback, ensuring the solutions are practical, culturally appropriate, equitable, and grounded in lived reality.

5. Move into Action and Advocacy

We transform insights into real projects, capacity-building, and policy influence - pushing for measurable shifts toward equity in planning and the built environment.

6. Sustain and Scale

We support long-term transformation by sharing learnings, building institutional memory, and strengthening the networks needed to sustain community-led change.

UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE:
FOCUS AREAS

FOCUS AREAS

The UDesign Justice Initiative focuses on the following key areas to advance equity in the built environment.

1 **2** **3** **4**

COMMUNITY RESEARCH & DATA LAB

Build a community-led research program that closes evidence gaps, pairs storytelling with data, and shares results accessibly for practice and policy.

COMMUNITY HUB & ENGAGEMENT

Sustain a safe, responsive space for relationship-building, participatory co-design, and ongoing reciprocity, ensuring people most impacted are central to decisions and delivery.

EDUCATION & FACULTY PARTNERSHIPS

Align courses, studios, and faculty research with design-justice objectives; co-create toolkits and workshops; train students and practitioners to apply equity, inclusion, and accessibility in real projects.

TRANSDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION NETWORK

Operate as a hub where community partners, researchers, students, and industry collaborate across disciplines to tackle complex built-environment challenges.

5 — PRACTICE & INNOVATION CLINIC

A hands-on clinic to test and evaluate real-world design-justice interventions, generating case studies and implementation guides.

6 — POLICY & ADVOCACY STUDIO

Translate community insights into policy and design recommendations, equity-centered monitoring frameworks, and advocacy campaigns that embed justice in planning and delivery.

7 — KNOWLEDGE & CAPACITY EXCHANGE

Host open resources, events, and learning sessions to mobilize research, share methods, and strengthen community and practitioner capacity across sectors.

8 — FUNDING & SUSTAINABILITY

Secure values-aligned grants and in-kind support to sustain community-driven work; coordinate "fund-navigator" scans and help partners resource projects responsibly.

WHAT WE DO

CONVENE

Host inclusive co-design workshops, action dialogues, and working groups that move from ideas to pilots.

EDUCATION + CAPACITY-BUILDING

Training, short courses/credentials (exploratory), curriculum development , mentorship, partner incubator/light support for community projects.

RESEARCH + EVIDENCE

Community-led research, community-engagement, verbatim capture, data analysis, "what we heard" reporting, and practical toolkits.

DESIGN + PROTOTYPING

Small pilots, design builds, pop-ups, storytelling/visual synthesis.
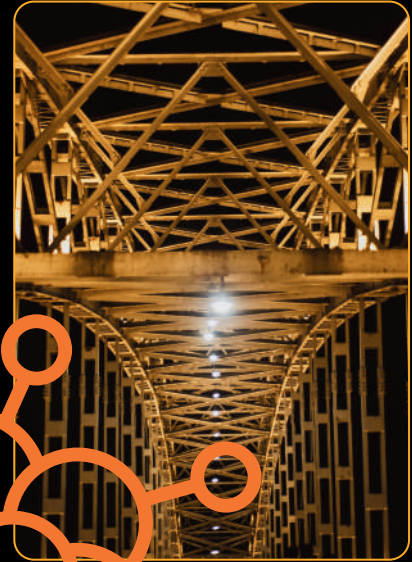
POLICY + PRACTICE TRANSLATION

Turn inputs into policy-ready recommendations, data layers, and implementation guides.

UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

OUR
STRUCTURE

UDJI's structure is intentionally designed to share power, maintain accountability, and ensure community leadership at every level.

1. EXTERNAL ADVISORY GROUP

Provides strategic guidance, accountability, and cross-sector insight.

Our External Advisory Group guides the UDesign Justice Initiative with strategic insight, accountability, and cross-sector expertise, ensuring our work remains community-centered, justice-aligned, and grounded in diverse lived and professional perspectives.

They include leaders from:
- Academia
- Black and racialized communities
- Disability and accessibility advocacy
- Government
- Housing and social services
- Architecture and planning

Their role is to:
- Stress-test ideas and processes
- Ensure cultural safety and justice alignment
- Strengthen cross-sector relationships
- Support long-term visioning and governance

DR. JOHN ROOK

CEO SIMON HOUSE
RECOVERY CENTER

DR. BUKOLA SALAMI

PROFESSOR – NURSING,
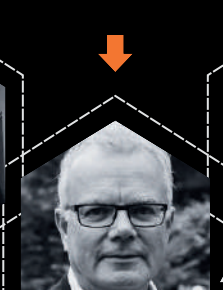AND TIER 1 CANADA
RESEARCH CHAIR

CINDY MORAN

BC HOUSING SENIOR
RESEARCHER

BENG REYES ONG
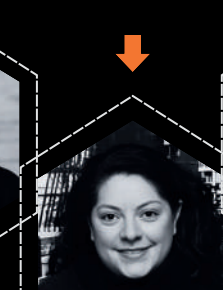
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGIST

DR. VICTORIA FAST

RESEARCHER,
ACCESSIBILITY
ADVOCATE, AND
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
– GEOGRAPHY

JOSHUA TARON

ASSOCIATE DEAN OF
RESEARCH +
INNOVATION, AND
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
– ARCHITECTURE

DR. AJWANG WARRIA

RESEARCHER, AND
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
– SOCIAL WORK

Founded by Dr. Marie Cecile Kotyk, the UDesign Justice Initiative is led by a team that provides academic, strategic, and operational direction to advance justice-centered design and community-driven change.

Dr. Marie Cecile Kotyk — Founding Director
Leads the initiative's vision, research agenda, partnerships, governance, and long-term strategy.

Matt Parker — Co-Lead (Education Focus)
Guides curriculum transformation, design justice pedagogy, student integration, and faculty partnerships.

2. CO-LEADS

Provide academic, operational, and strategic leadership.

DR. MARIE CECILE KOTYK

Social Planner, Assistant Professor, Design Justice Research Chair, & Founding Director of UDJI

MATT PARKER

Architectural Designer, Assistant Professor, & UDJI Co-Lead - Education Focus

At the heart of UDJI's day-to-day work is a dedicated group of emerging designers and planners who help bring our projects to life through logistics, design, facilitation, and careful documentation.

They contribute leadership in:
- Research support and synthesis
- Communications, visual design, and storytelling
- Workshop and event facilitation
- Data analysis and documentation
- Logistics coordination and community engagement
- Graduate-level research development and design-justice inquiry

They strengthen UDJI's ability to deliver community-engaged work that is thoughtful, accessible, and grounded in justice-centered practice.

3. SAPL STUDENT TEAM

Project-based teams where implementation happens.

ZAHRA KHANIKI

Architectural Designer, Graduate Research Coordinator, & Master of Design Research (MDR) Student

CORDELIA YIP

Research Assistant/Marketing Coordinator, & Second Year International Relations Student

REIN GONZALES

Research Assistant/Marketing Coordinator, & Third Year Bachelor of Design in City Innovation (BDCI) Student

ZAINAB AHMED

Research Assistant & Second Year BDCI Student

4. WORKING GROUPS

Project-based teams where implementation happens.

Our Working Groups are action-driven teams that translate UDJI's vision into on-the-ground impact, bringing together academics, researchers, community partners, practitioners, students, and lived/living-experience collaborators to co-design and deliver tangible change.

Current Working Groups:
- **Housing Justice Working Group:** Focus on housing precarity, systems change, and pilot projects.
- **Education & Curriculum Working Group:** Supports design justice curriculum transformation and teaching innovation.
- **Partnerships & Collaboration Working Group:** Builds relationships with communities, government, and industry.
- **Youth & Capacity-Building Working Group:** Designing the UDJI Youth Summer Camp and youth pathways in design/urbanism.

5. COMMUNITY & LIVED/LIVING EXPERIENCE COLLABORATORS

The heart of UDJI. Decision-shapers, not "consulted participants."

At the core of UDJI are the community members and people with lived and living experience whose insight, leadership, and wisdom guide every decision we make.

They are not "participants" – they are co-designers, co-leaders, and knowledge holders who:

- Co-define priorities and challenges
- Shape research questions and areas of inquiry
- Lead and co-facilitate design and engagement activities
- Validate solutions, prototypes, and recommendations
- Ensure cultural, contextual, and experiential accuracy
- Anchor our work in justice, care, and community reality

UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE:
ROADMAP TO ACTION

As UDJI continues to grow, we are moving with intention from vision to implementation. Our roadmap outlines the next steps in building a sustainable, community-led, and transdisciplinary hub—highlighting where we are headed, what we aim to strengthen, and how collaborators can join us in shaping the future of design justice in Calgary and beyond.

SHORT-TERM (6-12 MONTHS)

Building on this foundation, UDJI will expand community research lab activities and reports, launch a quarterly newsletter, deepen partnerships with government, community, and industry, advance planning for a Youth Summer Design Justice Camp, and secure values-aligned funding through an expanded fund-navigator function to sustain and scale this work.

LONG-TERM (12+ MONTHS)

Over the longer term, UDJI aims to develop a physical or hybrid hub, launch design justice short courses and micro-credentials, and co-develop practice-based toolkits with community and industry partners. We will build a citywide transdisciplinary collaboration network, scale pilot projects into ongoing community–university-practice partnerships, and grow a sustainable funding ecosystem (grants, in-kind support, and partnerships) so that UDJI becomes a recognized model for community-led design justice in Canada.

NOW (0-6 MONTHS)

UDJI will formally launch the Housing Justice and Education & Curriculum working groups, publish our How We Engage framework and values, map partners and funding opportunities, and begin pilot projects emerging from Housing Justice in Action, alongside initial community research and reporting.

UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE:
FUNDING STRATEGY

Our funding strategy focuses on building a diversified, values-aligned portfolio that sustains UDJI's core programs while ensuring accountability to the communities most impacted by spatial inequity, guided by principles of ethical partnership, strategic diversification, and practical, community-centered fund development.

GOAL

Secure a diversified, values-aligned mix of funding (public, philanthropic, community, academic, corporate/in-kind) that sustains UDJI's core programs while keeping accountability to communities most impacted by spatial injustice.

PRINCIPLES

- **Portfolio (Diversified):** Blend public (City/prov/fed), foundations (e.g., Calgary Foundation, McConnell, Trico, AREF, Rick Hansen), academic (SSHRC, Mitacs), community grants (Activate YYC), and in-kind (firms, small businesses).
- **Practical Tactics:** Stand up a light "fund navigator" function, map funders by sector, start with small/renewable 6–12 month opportunities while preparing multi-year bids, pair storytelling + evidence, and maintain relationships.
- **Guardrails:** Screen for value conflicts, consider earned-learning (short courses/credentials) or incubator models only where they strengthen equity outcomes.

FUNDING BY FOCUS AREA

1. COMMUNITY HUB AND ENGAGEMENT

- **Fund:** Community-led co-design sessions, accessibility supports, honoraria, translation, relational outreach.

- **Likely Sources:** City community development streams, Activate YYC; foundation community grants; in-kind venue/catering/printing; small corporate sponsorships tied to events.

2. RESEARCH & EVIDENCE

- **Fund:** Lived-experience research, rapid syntheses, monitoring frameworks, StoryMaps, briefs and reports, academic journals, and toolkits.

- **Likely Sources:** Tri-Council/SSHRC (Connector/Partnership), Mitacs, UCalgary institutes (e.g., Taylor Institute, Health Equity Hub), CMHC/NRCan/NRC research calls, and AREF for applied housing/planning work.

3. EDUCATION & PRACTICE SHIFT

- **Fund:** Design-justice short courses, toolkits, practitioner clinics, curriculum development, and student mentorships.

- **Likely Sources:** Academic teaching/innovation grants, foundation learning streams, firm in-kind (guest teaching, materials), and paid PD/short courses as modest earned revenue (values-screened).

4. POLICY & ADVOCACY STUDIO

- **Fund:** Community-translated policy/design recommendations, equity monitoring, toolkits, and public briefs.

- **Likely Sources:** Foundations (equity/anti-racism/accessibility), municipal partnerships, media/messaging micro-grants, and in-kind comms from partners.

5. PRACTICE & DELIVERY (CLINICS/PROJECTS)

- **Fund:** Small, place-based starter projects (e.g., wayfinding, accessibility fixes, micro-public realm, tactical urbanism), and evaluation.

- **Likely Sources:** City innovation/micro-grants, parks/arts placemaking funds, private sector materials/labor in-kind, community foundations, and social-innovation hubs.

6. ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

- **Fund:** Accessibility audits, interpreters/translation, sensory-friendly design, childcare, mobility, culturally appropriate design, trauma-informed design, etc.

- **Likely Sources:** Accessibility-focused foundations (e.g., Rick Hansen), City accessibility programs, and targeted philanthropy.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

- Join a Working Group (Housing, Education, Partnerships, Youth, and more)
- Participate as a community collaborator or lived-experience contributor
- Partner on research projects, courses, or pilot initiatives
- Offer policy, design, or practice expertise
- Volunteer for events, workshops, and community engagements
- Sponsor events, pilot projects, research, etc.

CONNECT WITH US

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🌐 www.udesignjusticeinitiative.com

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UDESIGN
JUSTICE
INITIATIVE

IF we bring together communities, designers, and decision-makers to co-create spaces and systems grounded in justice and belonging...

AND we transform lived experiences into tangible evidence— stories, data, prototypes, and policy ideas that shape real decisions...

THEN we will build trust, accountability, and shared power between institutions and the communities they serve...

BECAUSE when people most affected by inequities lead the design of solutions, the outcomes are more inclusive, effective, and enduring...

RESULTING IN a Calgary where the built environment, policies, and practices reflect the diversity, dignity, and aspirations of all its people—creating a city designed with communities, not for them.

www.udesignjusticeinitiative.com

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University of Calgary,
School of Architecture,
Planning, and Landscape
Architecture (SAPL)