

UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE

Establishing a Design Justice Initiative:
A Transdisciplinary Approach

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

June and August 2025





Prepared by Dr. Marie Cecile Kotyk and Zahra Khaniki

Photos by Cordelia Yip

UDesign Justice Initiative, 2025

Ethics Approved Study: **REB25-0405**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UDesign Justice Initiative (UDJI) is emerging as a community-led, transdisciplinary platform dedicated to transforming how planning, design, and policy decisions are made in Calgary. At its core is a simple but powerful truth: the people most impacted by spatial inequities must be co-creators of solutions - not bystanders or recipients.

In summer 2025, UDJI hosted four co-design workshops (two in-person and two online) that brought together community members with lived/living experience, students, practitioners, researchers, public-sector leaders, and grassroots advocates. Collaborators developed the foundation for the initiative: its vision, mission, values, and priority focus areas, and identified the partnerships, funding strategies, and governance structures needed to sustain the work.

Across all sessions, collaborators voiced a unified message: **Calgary needs a long-term hub where equity-deserving communities lead decision-making about the built environment.** The insights captured in this report outline a clear, community-rooted roadmap for operationalizing that vision through co-design, cross-sector collaboration, and systems-level action.

This compiled What We Heard Report integrates insights from both workshop phases, establishing the foundation for UDJI's next steps: launching pilot projects, forming working groups and an advisory structure, securing values-aligned funding, and building the infrastructure for a community-embedded design justice hub in Calgary.

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INTRODUCTION

The UDesign Justice Initiative (UDJI) was created in response to a critical gap in how planning, design, and policy decisions are made: communities most impacted by inequities are often the least able to shape the systems that govern their lives. Rooted in design justice principles, UDJI seeks to shift this reality by building a platform where equity-deserving communities, practitioners, and institutions collaborate to transform the built environment.

In summer 2025, UDJI convened four co-design workshops (two in-person and two online) to establish the foundation for a long-term, community-led, and transdisciplinary initiative. These sessions brought together a broad and diverse group of collaborators: community members with lived and living experience, racialized and marginalized groups, design and planning professionals, academics, non-profit leaders, and public-sector partners.



Workshop #1 centred on shared visioning:

- Defining UDJI's purpose and role,
- Articulating values and guiding principles,
- Identifying focus areas for action, and
- Imagining what a just, inclusive, and community-led platform should look and feel like.

Workshop #2 built on this groundwork, focusing on the practical structures needed to bring UDJI to life. Collaborators co-developed strategies for governance, funding, partnerships, and implementation. They outlined actionable steps to ensure UDJI remains transparent, community-embedded, and accountable.

These workshops represent the first phase of an ongoing, iterative process. Their insights form the basis for UDJI's emerging framework, roadmap, and organizational structure. Most importantly, they reaffirm a shared commitment: transforming Calgary's built environment requires centering lived experience, redistributing power, and co-creating solutions grounded in justice, care, and community wisdom.



This report compiles the findings from both workshops, offering a clear and community-rooted foundation for UDJI's next phase of development.



PURPOSE AND APPROACH

The co-design workshops were conducted to build the UDesign Justice Initiative (UDJI) **with communities, not for them**. The purpose of this process was to create a foundation for a community-led, transdisciplinary hub that advances equity and justice in Calgary's built environment through shared leadership, lived and living experience, and collective decision-making.

Across Workshops #1 and #2, collaborators came together to surface priorities, define values, and build the structures needed to sustain UDJI's work.

Our approach was grounded in co-design: creating accessible, inclusive, and relational spaces where community members, practitioners, students, and government partners shaped decisions together. Rather than relying on consultation, the workshops centered those most impacted by spatial inequities as co-authors of ideas, strategies, and action steps.

This iterative, relationship-based process was guided by the principles of inclusion, reciprocity, transparency, and care. The insights gathered across both workshops now form the foundation for UDJI's next phase - outlining a clear direction for collaboration, investment, and systems change, and strengthening a growing collective committed to justice in planning and city-building.

Workshop #1, held on June 24 (in-person) and June 26 (online), 2025, focused on identifying our vision, mission, guiding principles, and focus areas - imagining what a UDesign Justice Initiative led by and for communities should look and feel like.

On August 14 (in-person) and August 19 (online), **Workshop #2** built on this foundational work. Collaborators engaged through three key activity streams to identify funding opportunities and strategies, partnerships, a roadmap to action, next steps, and commitments toward implementing the UDJI framework.

This compiled **“What We Heard”** report summarizes the key insights, priorities, tensions, and possibilities surfaced during these co-design workshop sessions.



ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Workshop #1 used a co-design approach centered on inclusion, relationship-building, and community leadership. We created an accessible, affirming space, with small-group dialogues, guided prompts, and transparent facilitation, to surface values, priorities, and lived experiences in line with UDJI's commitments to justice, reciprocity, and collaboration.

Workshop #2 retained the same core team and engagement model to ensure continuity, trust, and community stewardship. The process again prioritized inclusion, relationship-building, and reciprocity, sustaining an accessible, affirming space aligned with UDJI's values of justice, collaboration, and accountability as we shifted from visioning to implementation planning.



TEAM COMPOSITION AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION

- **Lead and Founding Director:** Dr. Marie Cecile Kotyk.
- **Co-Lead (Education Focus):** Matt Parker.
- **School of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture (SAPL) Student Team (logistics, design, facilitation, notes):** Cordelia Yip, Zainab Ahmed, Rein Gonzales (undergraduate), and Zahra Khaniki (master's).
- **Community Facilitator:** Beng ReyesOng, engaged for her strong ties with Asian communities and experience in outreach and inclusive engagement.



- **External Advisory Group:** A transdisciplinary advisory team with representatives from academia, Black communities, disability advocacy, government, and allied professions met bi-weekly to provide strategic guidance, stress-test the process, and strengthen cross-sector relationships. Members included Josh Taron, Dr. Victoria Fast, Dr. Ajwang Warria, Cindy Moran, and Dr. Bukola Salami.

This transdisciplinary structure and ongoing engagement helped ensure consistency of practice, cultural safety, and community stewardship as we moved from shared visioning toward implementation and roadmap planning.



MEET THE TEAM

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



**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



**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

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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



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

COLLABORATOR RECRUITMENT

Collaborator recruitment for both workshops was guided by an intentional commitment to engage collaborators across diverse racialized, marginalized, and non-marginalized communities. Participants represented a wide range of identities and experiences, including Black, Indigenous, Asian, Latinx, and caucasian community members, as well as people with lived and living experiences of exclusion from planning, design, and decision-making systems.

Our outreach strategy used a multi-pronged approach: direct invitations, snowball sampling, and partner-network referrals across sectors such as design, planning, housing, health, disability justice, grassroots organizing, community advocacy, and education. This approach ensured broad reach and encouraged participation from individuals who are often excluded from traditional city-building conversations.

To meaningfully support participation, especially from community members whose perspectives are systemically underrepresented, honoraria were offered. Priority was given to racialized participants working in non-profit, community-based, or volunteer capacities. Given a limited budget, allocation decisions considered financial need, community-based work, and the historic under-compensation of marginalized collaborators in institutional research contexts.

Adjustments Informed by Workshop #1

Following Workshop #1, we reviewed participation demographics, sector representation, and themes raised by collaborators. This analysis identified gaps, particularly among Black community members, newcomers, youth, and public-facing staff. In response, we refined and expanded our recruitment efforts for Workshop #2.

Recruitment Approach for Workshop #2

Workshop #2 followed the same multi-pronged outreach strategy used in Workshop #1: direct invitations, partner-network outreach, and snowball sampling across disciplines and community sectors.

However, several targeted adjustments were made to strengthen representation:
What Stayed the Same

- Broad, relationship-based outreach through partner organizations and community leaders
- Direct invitations and snowball sampling across racialized, marginalized, and non-marginalized communities
- Clear, plain-language materials and flexible participation options (in-person and online)

What We Adjusted for Workshop #2

- Targeted invitations to groups underrepresented in Workshop #1 (e.g., Black community members, newcomers, public-facing staff, frontline workers)
- Partner-assisted recruitment through culturally specific agencies, grassroots organizations, and newcomer-serving groups to broaden reach
- Follow-up calls and supported registration options to reduce participation barriers

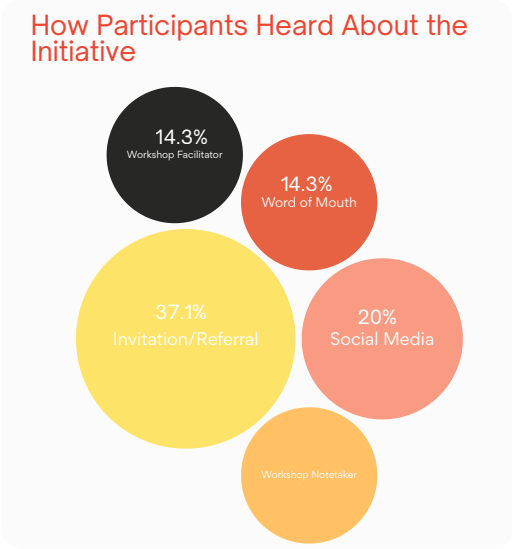
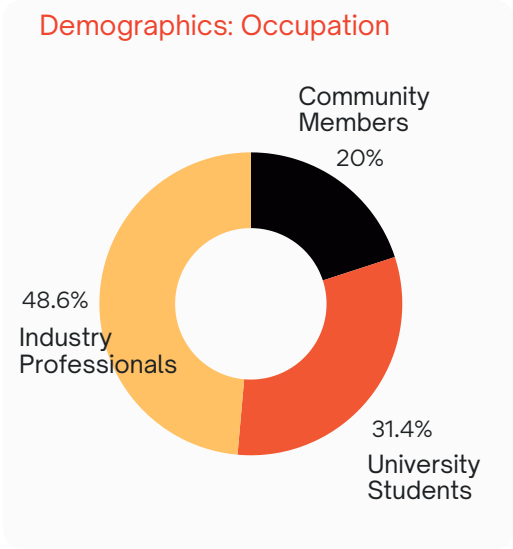
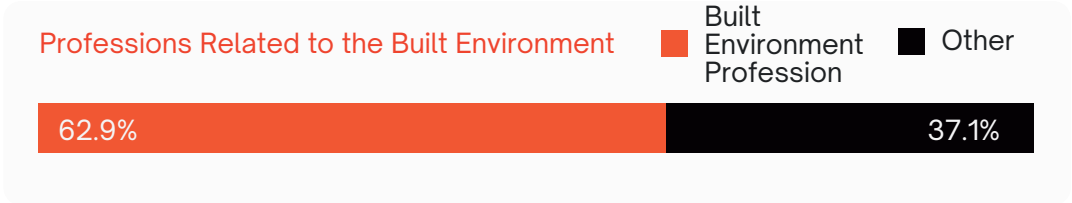
Collaborator Profile

These adjustments resulted in a collaborator group that was broadly diverse across race, ethnicity, age (18–70), gender and sexuality, religion, income, and immigration status, with strong representation from individuals with lived and living experience of inequities in the built environment. This intentional approach strengthened the co-design process and helped ensure the workshops reflected UDJI's commitment to equity, inclusion, and community leadership.



PROFILE OF WORKSHOP COLLABORATORS

WORKSHOP #1



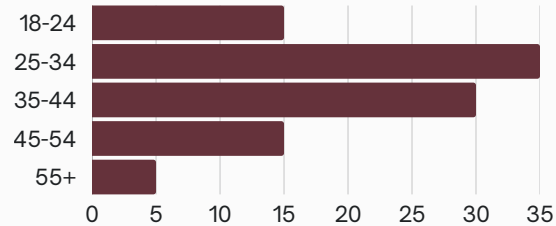
WORKSHOP #2

Gender

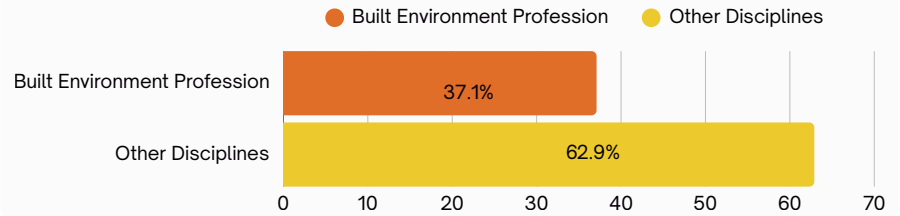


Responses reflect only participants who selected 'man' or 'woman'; other gender identities were not captured in this dataset.

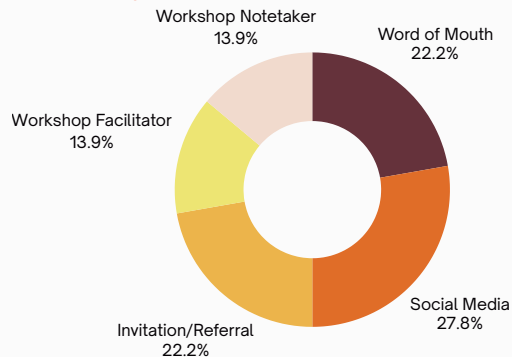
Age Group



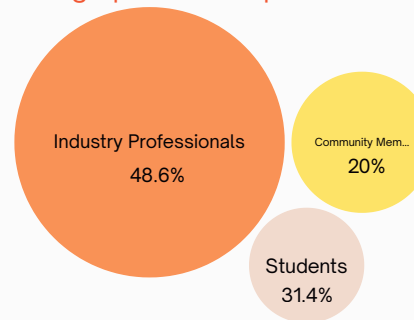
Professions Related to the Built Environment



How Participants Heard About the Initiative



Demographics: Occupation



WORKSHOP FORMAT AND ACCESSIBILITY

The in-person workshops were held at the City Building Design Lab (CBDL), a transit-accessible and physically accessible venue in downtown Calgary. Each session followed a community-centred format grounded in relationship-building, transparency, and accessibility.

Opening & Framing the Space

Dr. Kotyk welcomed collaborators with gratitude and invited brief introductions, creating a warm and relational entry into the work. She grounded each session by acknowledging humanitarian crises affecting several collaborators' communities (e.g., Sudan, Iraq, Palestine), recognizing the emotional and global context shaping the space.

To build shared understanding across collaborators, each workshop opened with a brief presentation grounding the group in Design Justice principles. For Workshop #2, this also included a concise overview of the What We Heard Report from Workshop #1.



This framing supported continuity. Returning collaborators could reconnect with the themes, values, and principles they helped establish, while new collaborators were given a clear and accessible entry point into the ongoing dialogue. Together, these presentations ensured that everyone, regardless of which session they attended, shared a common foundation for the co-design work ahead.

Session Structure

Collaborators were seated in small groups of five to six individuals. Each table included:

- A trained facilitator to guide the discussion
- A dedicated notetaker to ensure contributions were captured accurately
- Printed collaborator guidebooks outlining goals, values, discussion questions, and collaborative activities
- A companion facilitator guidebook for facilitation teams



Community Building & Cultural Care

Each workshop included a shared meal from a local Calgary restaurant, selected to reflect the cultural backgrounds present in the room and to create a sense of community care.

- Workshop #1 featured Filipino food (pancit, spring rolls, salads, and desserts).
- Workshop #2 featured Nigerian cuisine (jollof rice, fried rice, chicken, beef, salads, with halal options).

Collaborators repeatedly noted that the meals helped foster connection, comfort, and a sense of belonging that supported deeper engagement.

Closing Reflections

Both workshops concluded with collective sharing from each table, allowing participants to highlight insights, raise concerns, and identify areas of alignment. This ensured transparency and helped build a shared understanding that informed the next phase of the UDesign Justice Initiative.



ETHICS APPROVAL

The UDesign Justice Initiative received ethics approval from the University of Calgary's Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (Certificate #: REB25-0405). As with Workshop #1, Workshop #2 followed the same approved protocol: all collaborators received information sheets and signed consent forms (including media release forms) to ensure informed participation and clear documentation of the workshops.

Consent Form

Name of Interviewee: Faculty, Department, and Email
Dr. Steve Linder, Faculty, Assistant Professor and Director Indian Studies Program, School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, Washington
slinder@u.washington.edu

Student Projects

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The forecasts of Category 1 impacts for days beyond 40 days have not been updated to the current season (2019-20).

Therapsomys is a member of the family

Discussion of the Study

The study has several objectives to establish its design intent. Learning to recognize diverse influences is developed by exposing the students to a framework. The concept of the LHM (the Innovation Hub) as a sustained business dedicated to creating opportunities for the future business, presented itself as a key in the search of meaningful communities. A developing innovative culture in a company is not something that is imposed from the outside but emerges from its processes, relationships, partnerships, and practical engagement in various communities and projects that build the ecosystem.

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Initial Contact Letter

Name of Researcher, Faculty, Department, and Title
Dr. Mario Cordero-Landolt, Assistant Professor and George James Research Chair, School of Agriculture, Planning and Environment, York University
mario.cordero@utoronto.ca

Title of the Project:

Expanding on Design System Integration: A Framework for a Systemic Approach

References

Theorem 4 (Cohen): Functionalities Relationship between User

References

66. *Source:* Dr. David L. Cole, and I are an Assistant Professor and Group Vice President, Clark at the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture (APL) at the University of Chicago. I am currently leading a research initiative to establish a Group Vice President position.

Drugs have increasingly been used in health-care and community settings to promote positive, dramatic improvements in the education and treatment of children. Disruptive, and, more frequently, dangerous, behavior problems are being managed with safety, efficacy, and confidence. However, the social context of the problem is being ignored. The purpose of the *1998-99 Survey of Schools* is to determine if these trends are creating and transferring secondary emotional-related problems. The School of Architecture, Planning, and Construction at the University of Illinois at Chicago, with a 100 representative sampling of schools, is conducting a study to determine if these trends are creating and transferring secondary emotional-related problems. The purpose of the study is to determine if these trends are creating and transferring secondary emotional-related problems.

The initiative will combine classroom activities, collaborative partnerships, and projects of design philosophy to empower communication and programming in the built environment. Utilizing the Design Futures Laboratory (DfL) as a work hub, design projects in technology in high schools in the Midwest. The ultimate goal is the first step toward meeting the IEEE as well as other some other universities, academic institutions, and various professionals can work together to manage design elements based on factors, design, and action.

The Institute undertakes research in a variety of disciplines in order to help in evaluating the functional aspects of the total system. Ongoing research projects such as:

• What should be the vision, strategy, and focus areas of the LNU?

- Which challenges need to be met to ensure a successful establishment of the TCM?

METHODOLOGY: THEMATIC ANALYSIS

To ensure consistency, transparency, and reliability across both co-design workshops, we applied the same qualitative analysis methodology for all collected data. Our approach was grounded in design justice principles- centering participant voice, privileging lived/living experience, and treating all contributions as meaningful data.

Data Sources

Data were drawn from multiple participation channels to accommodate different communication styles:

- Sticky notes used during group activities
- Written responses in collaborator handbooks
- Facilitator guidebooks with summarized table discussions
- Notetaker records documenting verbal dialogue
- Reflections shared during group report-backs
- Comments submitted through the online session (Workshop #2)

This multi-modal approach enabled rich, layered insights while capturing a wide range of perspectives.

Coding Process

We used a structured, multi-step thematic analysis process:

1.Data Familiarization

All notes, quotes, and written materials were compiled and reviewed by the research team to develop an initial understanding of patterns and recurring ideas.

2.Line-by-Line Coding

Each collaborator's contribution, whether a phrase, a full quote, or a note, was coded individually. Codes were applied inductively (emerging from the data) and deductively (informed by Workshop #1 categories such as vision, mission, guiding principles, and focus areas).

3. Theme Identification

Codes were clustered into themes and sub-themes that reflected repeated patterns across tables, sessions, and workshops. Themes were evaluated for coherence and distinctiveness.

4. Organizational Mentions

When collaborators referenced specific organizations, sectors, or potential partners, these were tagged separately and grouped to support partnership mapping and collaboration planning.

Synthesis & Validation

Themes were synthesized into tables and diagrams included throughout this report. To ensure accuracy:

- Facilitator notes were cross-checked with collaborator guidebooks
- In-depth quotes were validated against original context
- Overlapping or conflicting themes were reviewed by multiple team members

Verbatim reports were also produced to preserve collaborators' voices.

Using the same methodology across both workshops allowed us to:

- Maintain continuity between phases of the co-design process
- Identify shared priorities across diverse collaborators
- Trace the evolution of ideas from conceptualization (Workshop #1) to implementation planning (Workshop #2)
- Build a transparent, rigorous evidence base for UDJI's framework and roadmap

CO-DESIGN WORKSHOP #1

IDENTIFYING:
VISION,
MISSION,
GUIDING PRINCIPLES,
AND FOCUS AREAS



WHAT WE ASKED

Guided by the collaborator guidebook, attendees shared their lived experiences, professional insights, and community knowledge to co-develop a shared vision, mission, values, principles, and focus areas for the UDesign Justice Initiative. The guidebook's thematic prompts encouraged flexible engagement, through writing, speaking, or using sticky notes, and supported participants in naming priorities, identifying gaps, and envisioning more equitable built environments. Facilitators ensured inclusive dialogue and helped connect contributions to the initiative's broader goals.



COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

1) Co-Creating the Vision: Imagine the Future

Collaborators were invited to envision the UDesign Justice Initiative five years into the future, imagining it as the best possible version of itself. Using sticky notes and a “Vision Web” format, they responded to prompts across several categories and posted their ideas on a flip chart.



55. DESIGNING THE DESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE

2. Co-Creating the MISSION: What We Do, and How We Do It

Time: 30 minutes

- What is the purpose of the UDesign Justice Initiative?
- What communities or groups should always be centered in our work?
- What kind of impact do we want to make, and how do we make it?

2.1. Mission Mapping

[Purpose] We exist to

[Audiences/Communities] We work with

[Methods/Actions] We do this by

2. Co-Creating the Mission – What We Do and How We Do It

Collaborators explored the purpose of the Initiative, the communities and groups that must always be centered, and the kinds of impacts the Initiative should achieve.

- **2.1 Mission Mapping:** Collaborators mapped out desired impacts and strategies for achieving them.
- **2.2 Mission Draft Starter:** Small groups began drafting statements to capture the Initiative's mission.

3. Co-Creating the Guiding Principles – The Ethical Foundation

This activity focused on identifying the values that should guide UDesign's actions and relationships.

- **3.1 Naming Values:** Collaborators wrote values on sticky notes and posted them on the flip chart.
- **3.2 Turning Values into Principles:** Groups translated these values into actionable principles, discussed how collaborators should treat one another, and considered mechanisms for accountability.

CO-DESIGNING THE UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE

3. Co-Creating the GUIDING PRINCIPLES: The Ethical Foundation


Time: 30 minutes

The principles should reflect values in action: not abstract ideals, but commitments to how the initiative behaves, builds relationships, and holds itself accountable.

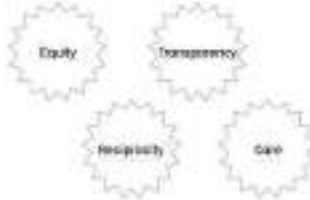
- What values must guide everything the initiative does?
- How should we treat one another as collaborators?
- How should this initiative be held accountable, and by whom?

3.1. Naming Values

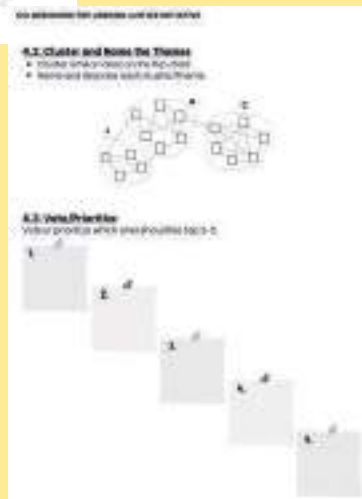
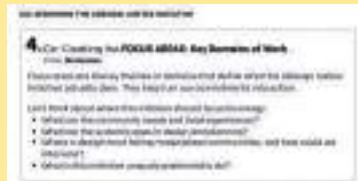
Please use your sticky notes to write down your ideas, and post your responses on the flip chart.



Examples (just for inspiration):



4



4. Co-Creating the Focus Areas – Key Domains of Work

Collaborators brainstormed the Initiative’s priority areas based on community needs, lived experiences, systemic gaps, and opportunities for intervention.

- **4.1 Possible Focus Areas:** Ideas were shared on sticky notes and posted to a flip chart.
- **4.2 Cluster and Name the Themes:** Similar ideas were grouped and named.
- **4.3 Vote/Prioritize:** Collaborators voted on their top 3–5 focus areas, with each cluster/theme described in detail.

Through these four activities, collaborators shaped a shared vision, mission, guiding principles, and focus areas, laying the foundation for the UDesign Justice Initiative’s next steps.

WHAT WE HEARD

The verbatim report compiles all documented quotes and comments from our sessions and serves as the foundation for our analysis. It captures direct participant contributions, gathered through notetaker records, sticky notes, and responses in the participant guidebooks. All quotes and comments are organized by workshop activity and corresponding sub-questions.

To ensure accuracy and completeness, we made certain that every participant's contribution was captured and preserved. This comprehensive record reflects the richness and diversity of perspectives shared during the sessions.

668
comments

The full report can be viewed on our website:
udesignjusticeinitiative.com



COLLABORATOR RESPONSES

1. THE VISION: IMAGINE THE FUTURE

1.1 Postcard from the Future

Greetings from Calgary, With Love



24/06/2030

Dear Friend,

Today, Calgary has become a welcoming and equitable city where every voice is expressed, and communities feel vibrant, connected, and empowered to shape their own environments. Housing, food security, safety, education, and recreation are accessible to all, and wealth circulates within the community rather than concentrating in the hands of a few. The UDesign Justice Initiative has grown into a decentralized, inclusive, culturally diverse, and place-based network of residents, practitioners, and decision-makers from different organizations and generations, who meet regularly and constantly to exchange ideas, track progress and impacts, and advocate for change.

Architecture and urban design have shifted from a model of top-down authorship to facilitation, collaboration, and shared ownership practice. Designers now act as facilitators, connectors, and advocates who work alongside communities to co-create spaces that reflect diverse needs, cultural richness, and a humanist approach.

Marginalized groups participate in shaping the systems that affect their lives. Through open communication and ongoing feedback, Calgary's communities have laid the groundwork for structural change, demonstrating that collective action can build a city grounded in justice, inclusion, and joy even in as little as five years. The city's built environments reflect this progress by embracing diversity and ability justice, ensuring care and accountability.

1.2 Vision Web

a. What Is It?

“A vibrant and inclusive “third space,” a knowledge hub, advocacy platform, decision-making forum, and catalyst for change, grounded in collaboration, community consultation, and care, and shaped by the power of lived experiences and shared stories.”

Core Theme	Sub-Themes	Theme Description
Knowledge Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating knowledge• Connecting students-organizations• Knowledge resource• Sharing knowledge• Students’ education• Training/learning network	A hub for researching, generating, sharing, and testing ideas that connect students and organizations through learning networks, training opportunities, and national platforms, informing both academic and real-world practice.
Change Engine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future-oriented thinking• Adaptive design• Challenging dominant systems• Challenging systemic inequities• Challenging the norms• Embedded systems• Equity lens• Framing justice• Perspective shifting• Responsive• Shift narrative• Systemic barriers	A responsive platform for shifting narratives and challenging the embedded and systemic inequities in current practice, through an equity and diversity-driven lens, which is responsive and future-oriented.

Core Theme	Sub-Themes	Theme Description
Advocacy Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalized communities advocacy • Justice advocacy • Grassroots advocacy • People's needs • Value people 	A platform for justice advocacy and grassroots action that centers the needs of marginalized communities and values every individual.
Decision-Making Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approving body • Consultation • Decision principles • Design guidelines • Design quality • Ethical practice • Influence decisions • Addressing policy barriers 	An approving body and consultation platform that promotes inclusive design and influences policy decisions while addressing systemic barriers.
Community Consultation & Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care & support • Connect stakeholders • Connecting people • Giving voice • Service provision 	A caring and supportive space for communities that connects stakeholders, practitioners, provides services, and gives voice to the communities.

Core Theme	Sub-Themes	Theme Description
Third Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering hub • Common/shared space • Cultural common • Dialogue space • Non-consumerist • Public space 	A public, common, non-consumerist third space for gathering, dialogue, community building, and cultural events.
Collaboration Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transdisciplinary • A collaborative • A community • Collaborative approach • Community project • Connecting pieces • Consult with community • Cross-group collaboration • Diversity in capacity • Justice through interaction 	An egalitarian project, where diverse disciplines and communities collaborate and solve problems together.

Core Theme	Sub-Themes	Theme Description
Inclusive Platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility & socioeconomic inclusion • Accessible • Community accessibility • Decentralized decision making • Inclusive housing • Inclusive process • Inclusive space • Participation • Participation & ownership • Safe, non-judgmental space • Welcoming 	<p>A physically and socially welcoming and accessible space, which is an open, decentralized, and non- judgmental environment, where everyone is invited.</p>
Narrating Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytelling • Deep empathy • Inspiration 	<p>Centring lived experiences and personal narratives, to inspire understanding and action.</p>

b. Who Does It Serve?

The UDesign Justice Initiative exists to center and serve those historically excluded from shaping the built environment, including:

- **Physically Marginalized Communities:** People with disabilities, mobility challenges, and diverse physical needs.
- **Socially Disadvantaged and Underrepresented Groups:** Individuals with limited access to resources, those with low visibility or voice, isolated communities, young people in the foster system, and others often left out of decision-making.
- **Racialized Communities:** Including Indigenous Peoples, Black communities, and other racialized groups.
- **Immigrant and Newcomer Communities:** Including refugees, asylum seekers, and recent migrants.





- **Neurodivergent Individuals:** Those with diverse cognitive and neurological experiences.
- **Students:** Across educational levels and disciplines.
- **Multi-Generational Communities:** Recognizing the value of intergenerational knowledge and collaboration.
- **Care Providers:** Formal and informal caregivers whose perspectives shape inclusive environments.
- **All People and Diverse Communities:** Embracing the richness of multiple identities and experiences.
- **Nature and All Living Beings:** Affirming our responsibility to care for the environment and non-human life as integral to just design.

c. What Does It Change?

The UDesign Justice Initiative seeks to transform the built environment and the systems that shape it by:

- **Design Practice:** Reimagining how design is done by challenging outdated codes, adopting inclusive and iterative processes, and embedding innovation, ethics, and long-term thinking into every stage - designing with communities, not just for them.
- **Education & Awareness:** Raising public understanding of design's role in justice, shifting mindsets, and promoting critical thinking through accessible education, storytelling, and knowledge sharing.
- **Inclusive Spaces:** Creating environments that are physically, socially, and culturally accessible; addressing racial bias, affordability barriers, and intergenerational needs; and ensuring spaces honour Indigenous Peoples, disabled communities, and all marginalized groups with dignity and care.
- **Lifestyle & Belonging:** Strengthening community connections, fostering social integration, and enhancing emotional well-being by addressing isolation and cultivating collective belonging, trust, and safety in shared spaces.





- **Narrative & Perception:** Reframe dominant narratives about place by centering lived experience and elevating diverse voices. Challenge the stories that define “who belongs” in certain spaces, and cultivate new ones that reflect the histories, perspectives, and aspirations of marginalized communities.
- **Policy & Governance:** Influence policy by reducing systemic barriers, embedding long-term equity commitments, and incorporating community-driven decision-making into housing, budgeting, and planning frameworks.
- **Power/Institutional Structure:** Challenging power dynamics requires designers, developers, and other institutions to rethink their roles, not as design owners, but as facilitators, by redistributing influence among stakeholders. This also means being vigilant about who holds decision-making power.
- **Urban Form/City Design:** Advocate for neighbourhoods and cityscapes that are adaptable, compact, vibrant, and community-oriented. Move away from expansionist growth patterns and toward inclusive and resilient infrastructure that prioritizes social cohesion and environmental stewardship.

d. How Does It Feel?

It is a hub that feels:

- Accessible
- Adaptable
- Agency
- Aspirational
- Belonging
- Caring
- Changing
- Comfortable
- Compassionate
- Constantly improving
- Curiosity
- Empathic
- Empowering
- Enthusiasm
- Exciting
- Exhaustion of activism
- Fitting
- Flexible to happenings
- Flexible to people
- Good
- Grounded
- Inspiring
- Intersectional
- Joyful
- Kind
- Liberating
- Like touching grass
- Loving
- Not for profit
- Pragmatic
- Purposeful
- Radical
- Respecting
- Responsive
- Revolutionary
- Safe
- Sense of belonging
- Soft
- Source of inspiration
- Harmonious
- Healing
- Hearing voices
- Helpful
- Hopeful
- Human
- Inclusive
- System thinking
- Transformative
- Unbiased
- Uncontained
- Understanding
- Valued
- Visionary
- Voice
- Warm
- Welcoming



2. THE MISSION: WHAT WE DO, AND HOW WE DO IT

2.1 Mission Mapping

a. Purpose (We exist to...)

“We exist to be inclusive, supportive, and take action through research and education.”

Purpose	Sub-Themes
Be Inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessible for all• Feel welcomed• Include marginalized groups• Include impacted communities• Engaging with diverse groups• Be inclusive• Amplify community voices• Bringing excluded voices• Bring people together• Solve challenges together• Advocate for the unheard
Be Supportive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove burden• Help• Liberating• Share perspectives



Purpose	Sub-Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect • Empower • Empower others • Live a comfortable life • Connect communities • Representing communities • Empower the unheard
Action-Oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change design practice • Climate-responsive design • Decolonize design • Create equitable cities • Approve design • Remove barriers • Challenge frameworks • Challenge systems • Activate communities • Challenge dominant design paradigms • Rethink the design justice concept • Create inclusive places • Challenge oppressive systems



Purpose	Sub-Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create change • Decolonize design systems • Taking actions • Challenge narrative • Promote actions • Measure decisions • Develop equitable spaces • Expand transportation options
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical research • Study communities • Research inclusive processes • Prepare and test methods • Gathering information • Measure decisions • Inform policies
Educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve education • Inspire



b. Audiences/Communities (We work with...)

“We work with everyone, from marginalized and excluded groups to built environment professionals and other collaborators.”

Audience	Sub-Themes
Marginalized/Excluded Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immigrants• Newcomers• Racialized communities• Disabilities• Marginalized communities• Historically marginalized• Marginalized people• Communities historically excluded• Indigenous nations• QSLGBTQ communities• All those impacted by colonization• Historically marginalized communities• Queer youth• Indigenous communities• Black communities• Other racialized communities• People with lived experiences



Audience	Sub-Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with lived experiences • Communities that are often not heard from • Newcomers • Communities on the Calgary equity index, lacking sources • Stakeholders, with a focus on those who are typically underrepresented • Unhoused • Anyone who is not heard
Built Environment Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural background • School of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape Architecture • Other labs • Building community • City planners • Policy makers • Professionals • Other universities



Everyone Marginalized & Excluded Groups

Built Environment Professionals
Other Professionals

While these core themes help guide our understanding of who UDJI is for, collaborators also emphasized the complexity of defining an audience too narrowly. Several noted that “defining can make it exclusive,” and that “you can’t include everybody all the time.” They reminded us that centring those most impacted - an essential design justice principle - can also mean “marginalizing others by definition.”

These reflections highlight important considerations: audiences are not fixed, people’s participation will ebb and flow, and “the target demographic may shift on a project-by-project basis.” Rather than rigid definitions, these insights point to the need for an adaptive, context-responsive, and community-centred approach - one that remains grounded in relationships, equity, and the specific needs and lived realities of each collaboration.

c. Methods/Actions (We do this by...)

“We do this by engaging with communities, prioritizing education, fostering inclusion, thinking critically, empowering others, and remaining flexible in our approach.”

Methods and Actions	Sub-Themes
Being Inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involving different backgrounds• Embracing diversity• Hearing all voices• Bringing attention to differences• Not unintentionally exclude by including some• Not just academic backgrounds• Anti-tokenism• Inclusive methodologies• Work together• Accessible communication• Anti-racism & inclusion lens• Creating platforms for voices• Diversity• Welcoming space• Inclusive programming• Expanding connections• Culturally appropriate engagement• Building community



Methods and Actions	Sub-Themes
Engaging with Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-based approach • Being supportive • Working with communities • Listening to communities • Narrating stories • Inviting to share ideas • Asking: how can we help you? • Co-design • Involving folks in the process • Feedback loop with communities • Bottom-up decisions • Process-oriented design • Localized justice • Co-creating methodologies • Listening • Community-led design • Storytelling • Stakeholders • Community members • Centring communities rather than funders • Relationship building • Hearing stories • Relationship building • Creating connections • Understanding all the perspectives



Methods and Actions	Sub-Themes
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching & curricula • Workshops & events • Educating decolonial practices • Educating the next generation • Educating students for future practice • Educating & mentoring
Being Critical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have tangible impact measurement • Critical approach • Make it tangible • Thinking of diverse exclusions • Rethinking community outreach • Justice language • Narratives power • Challenging building conventions • Dubious of the systems • Defining marginalized communities • Critical research & pedagogy • Grounded theory • Systemic change
Empowering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower under-represented voices • Opening barriers • Give agency



Methods and Actions	Sub-Themes
Being Flexible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave room for change • Testing different methods • Malleable • Learn from mistakes & move forward
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being resilient • Creativity



2.2 Mission Draft Starter

“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 and policies.”



3. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES: THE ETHICAL FOUNDATION

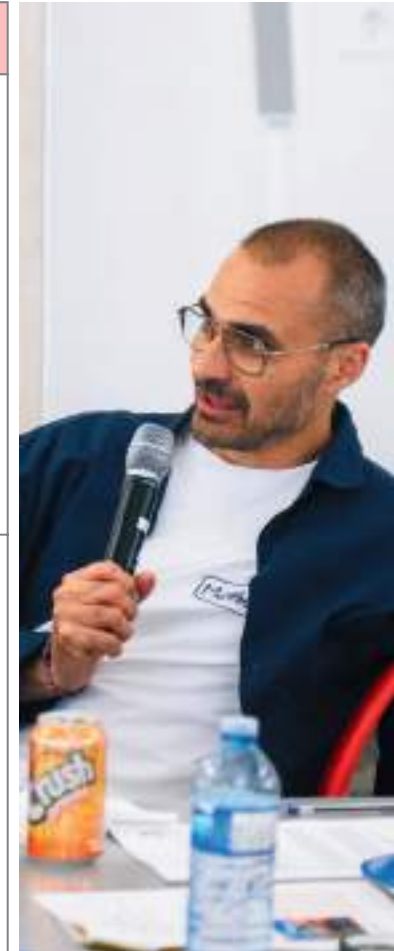
3.1 Naming Values

"Our values are rooted in accountability, compassion, and ethical practice; we are committed to being engaging and inclusive, welcoming diverse voices and practicing reciprocity, being flexible and innovative, and approaching our work with long-term thinking and ongoing reflexivity."

Values	Sub-Themes
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accountable for harms• Accountability to the community• Accountable for making systems• Accountable for our actions• Accountable through feedback loops• Commitment to accountability• Data-driven• Impact on communities• Information accuracy• Responsibility• Self-accountability• Accountable for biases
Compassion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active listening• Care



Values	Sub-Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dignity • Empathy • Grace • Hospitality • Joy • Kindness & compassion • Love • Speak to hearts • Speaking with heart • Strength-based • Understanding • Vulnerability
Ethical Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authenticity • Cautious of communication • Cautious of the language • Clarity • Clear & accessible communication • Compromise • Consensus • Consent • Data accuracy • Easy to understand • Equality



Values	Sub-Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounded • Honesty • Humility • Integrity • Justice • Make sure to stay true • Not for profit • Openness • Respect • Restoration • Sincerity • Staying true to values • Transparency • Trust
Engaging & Inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility as a baseline • Access • Approaching differences • Collaborative • Collective motivation • Collective ownership • Community autonomy • Community-appropriate mixed-use • Community-driven



Values	Sub-Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-focused • Embed lived experiences & community voices • Including people in every part • Inclusive & belonging • Intentional engagement • Knowledge sharing • Lived experiences • Meeting people where they are at • Mixed-use • Not missing unheard voices • Open access resources • Process-oriented design • Solidarity • Stewardship
Welcoming & Reciprocity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible • Building connections • Inspirational • Meaningful connection • Prioritizing relationships • Reciprocity • Safe • Sense of tolerance



Values	Sub-Themes
Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerance • Welcoming • Adaptable • Be flexible • Challenge status quos • Change • Modular design
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative • Curiosity • Ingenuity • Innovative • Innovative communication • Open source
Long-Term Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergenerational responsibility • Continuity • Investment loop • Longevity • Long-term investment
Reflexivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge privilege • Cultural intersectionality • Evaluation



Values	Sub-Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback loop • Learning from mistakes • Recognizing different perspectives • Self-reflection • Understanding different approaches • Welcome discomfort
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just sustainability • Transformative



3.2 Turn Values into Principles

“We believe that collaboration, care, solidarity, and collective accountability are foundational to creating a safe and inclusive space: one where everyone has a seat at the table, where human-centred approaches drive social justice, and where mistakes are met with empathy and learning.”

“We are committed to respect, transparency, inclusivity, and fostering belonging, and centring humanity in all decisions. Through collaboration, innovation, open communication, and continuous reflection, we aim to care for one another’s needs, acknowledge our vulnerabilities, co-developing equitable entry points, and create spaces where learning and growth are shared responsibilities.”

“We recognize that design is a vulnerable act and mistakes are part of the journey, but we hold ourselves and each other accountable, and we create a safe and welcoming space for learning, growing, and co-creating more responsibly. As a collective hub, we are committed to equitable design, clear and open dialogue, and designing with communities, ensuring everyone is heard and included. We bridge real-world experience and learning to create positive change without placing burdens on those we serve.

Grounded in humility and social justice, our approach centers humanity, care, and shared leadership in all aspects of engagement.”



4. THE FOCUS AREAS: KEY DOMAINS OF WORK

"Our focus areas include education, research, and advocacy, grounded in community engagement, lived experiences, and the needs of communities and marginalized groups, by building awareness, sharing knowledge and information, and funding, to advance practice, policy, and accessibility."

Focus Areas	Sub-Themes
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curriculum• Capacity building• Practice-based• Design education• Advisory education
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy• Policy advocacy• Informing policy• Approving body
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessibility• Accessible language
Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community partnership• Studying lived experiences

Focus Areas	Sub-Themes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capacity building• Urban vibrancy• Storytelling• Intentional engagement• Building allyship
Community Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community needs• Responsiveness
Lived Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Studying lived experiences• Lived experiences• Narrating lived experiences

Focus Areas	Sub-Themes
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy • Equity in design • Right to housing
Marginalized Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalized groups • Reparative design • Indigenous land • Underrepresented groups
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice • Practice + academia • Adaptive sustainable design • Infrom practice • Change practice norms
Knowledge & Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge sharing • Advising • Data resource • Non physical space • Mobilizing research • Learning hub • Consultation

Focus Areas	Sub-Themes
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research history • Research context • Iterative • Mapping ecosystems • Research shared challenges • Research causes • Program sustainability • Applied research • Research outreach • Social value measurement
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersectionality • Network • Relationships • Design

Marginalized
Groups Funding
Advocacy
Research
Knowledge Information
Accessibility
Education
Community Engagement
Lived Experiences
Community Needs
Other Policy
Practice



SUMMARY

The first co-design workshop for the UDesign Justice Initiative marked a powerful beginning. Collaborators from diverse backgrounds: community members with lived experience, students, professionals, and advocates, came together to imagine a future in which Calgary's built environment reflects justice, inclusion, and care. Guided by the collaborator guidebook and collaborative prompts, they co-developed a preliminary vision, mission, guiding principles, and focus areas for the initiative. Central themes included resisting tokenistic engagement by centring the voices of those most impacted by spatial inequities, reimagining design practice to be inclusive and iterative, and building trust through transparent, reciprocal relationships. Collaborators articulated a shared desire to create a "third space" - a knowledge hub, advocacy platform, and change engine - that brings together marginalized communities with practitioners and allies to confront systemic barriers and spatial inequities.

The workshop also surfaced concrete domains for action: transforming design practice, expanding education and awareness, creating inclusive spaces, strengthening community belonging, shifting public narratives, embedding equity into policy and governance, redistributing power, and rethinking urban form. These insights laid the groundwork for the next phase of engagement.

The second workshop refined the framework, identified partnerships and funding strategies, and mapped a path forward. By grounding its work in co-design and relational accountability, UDesign Justice Initiative is poised to become a transdisciplinary platform that not only identifies injustices but mobilizes collective expertise and imagination to build a more equitable built environment.

CO-DESIGN WORKSHOP #2

IDENTIFYING:
FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES,
PARTNERSHIPS,
ROADMAP TO ACTION



WHAT WE ASKED

Guided by the collaborator handbook, attendees drew on lived experience, professional insight, and community knowledge to move from shared visioning to defining the structures, partnerships, and strategies that will sustain UDJI's work. The prompts enabled flexible participation (writing, speaking, sticky notes) and supported identifying funding opportunities and strategies, mapping partnerships, and building a clear roadmap to action. Facilitators ensured inclusive dialogue and tied contributions directly to the Initiative's goals.



COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

1) Identifying Funding Opportunities & Strategies

Collaborators identified values-aligned funding to sustain UDJI's work by:

- **Exploring Existing Knowledge:** What private, public, or other sources has your organization received funding from in the past? What worked well?
- **Mapping the Landscape:** Using a quadrant diagram to brainstorm and name potential funders/collaborators across the public sector, community-based organizations, private/academic sectors, and philanthropy/foundations.
- **Strategy Building:** Prioritizing realistic opportunities for the next 6–12 months, and brainstorming the roles/relationships needed to access those sources.

1. Identifying FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES and STRATEGIES

Exploring Existing Knowledge

1.1 Mapping the Landscape

PUBLIC SECTOR (City, County, State, Federal)	PRIVATE/ACADEMIC (Professors, Researchers)
COMMUNITY-BASED (Local Organizations)	PHILANTHROPY/FOUNDATIONS (Private Foundations)

1.2 Strategy Building

Mapping Funding Opportunities

CO-DESIGNING THE UDESIGN JUSTICE INITIATIVE

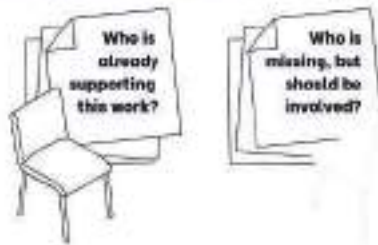
2 • Identifying PARTNERSHIPS

Time: 30 minutes

- Who are you already working with or have worked with in the past on projects related to design, justice, planning, or equity?
- Are there individuals, community members, or groups whose work aligns with the UDesign Justice Initiative?

2.1. Who's at the Table? Who's Missing?

Please use the sticky notes to brainstorm current and missing partners.



2.2. Partner Brainstorm Map

Please use the sticky notes to generate and categorize potential partners.



2) Identifying Partnerships

Collaborators examined current and potential relationships by asking:

- Who are we already working with (or have worked with) on design, justice, planning, or equity?
- Whose work aligns with UDJI, and who is missing?

Activities included:

- “Who’s at the table? Who’s missing?” to surface current and underrepresented partners.
- A Partner Brainstorm Map to categorize partners, clarify roles, and deepen reach, accountability, and relationship-building.
-

3) Identifying Next Steps

Collaborators translated insights into near-term action by considering:

- What are we hearing from community partners that we need to act on now?
- What should we build on immediately? What's one action we can take in the next three months? What should we prioritize?

Activities included:

- **Start/Continue/Stop:** Identify actionable next steps by clarifying what's working and what needs to change (Start - new actions/practices; Continue - what to maintain; Stop - what no longer serves).
- **Roadmap to Action:** Build a shared timeline for now (0–3 months), soon (3–6 months), and later (6+ months) by answering: What should happen in each phase? Who needs to be involved? What resources are needed? What would success look like?

Outputs included responsibilities, required resources, and success indicators for each phase.

Through these three activities, collaborators defined the next phase of operationalizing UDJI.

3. IDENTIFY NEXT STEPS
THIS WEEK

- What are we hearing from community partners that we need to act on?
- What should we build on right now?
- What's one action we can take in the next three months?
- What should we prioritize?

3.1 Start, Continue, Stop
Identify, describe, and plan changes for a continuous 3-month period of monthly change.

START	CONTINUE	STOP
WHAT NEW ACTIONS OR PRACTICES?	WHAT SHOULD WE MAINTAIN?	WHAT'S NO LONGER SERVING?

4. ROADMAP TO ACTION
Subsequent timeline to next three parts:

- What should happen in each phase?
- Who needs to be involved?
- What resources are needed for each phase?
- What would success look like?

NOW (0-3 MONTHS)	SOON (3-6 MONTHS)	LATER (6+ MONTHS)

WHAT WE HEARD

VERBATIM REPORT

This report compiles all documented quotes and comments from Workshop #2 and underpins the analysis of this report. It captures direct collaborator contributions from notetaker records, sticky notes, and collaborator guidebooks, organized by activity and sub-question. We ensured every contribution was recorded to reflect the full range of perspectives shared.

1016
comments

The full report can be viewed on our website:
udesignjusticeinitiative.com





COLLABORATOR RESPONSES

1. IDENTIFYING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND STRATEGIES

1.1 Exploring Existing Knowledge

In the discussions on existing knowledge, collaborators identified a wide range of funding mechanisms and specific funders. The following tables synthesize those insights, distinguishing between funding types and mechanisms, effective practices, and specific organizations and funders.

a.Funding Types and Mechanisms

Collaborators proposed a diverse range of potential funding sources and strategies, grouped under key categories.



Category	Examples
Government Sources	Federal, Provincial, and Municipal grants (CMHC, City of Calgary, Government of Alberta); Council Innovation Fund; and Capital Improvement Programs.
Corporate & Industry Sources	Corporate sponsorships, socially responsible firms, developers, builders, and energy sector (ENMAX, Oil & Gas).
Community-Based & Social Finance	Community foundations, neighbourhood grants, cooperative investment, mutual aid, and social enterprises.
Philanthropy & Individual Giving	Private donors, philanthropists, family foundations, charity drives, and in-kind donations.
Academic & Institutional Partners	Universities, research institutes, UCalgary, Taylor Institute, student clubs, and education projects.
Innovative & Alternative Mechanisms	Crowdfunding (GoFundMe), certification (WELL AP, LEED), storytelling/narrative fundraising, and tactical urbanism projects.

b. What Has Worked Well

Collaborators reflected on past funding experiences and highlighted the following as effective practices:

- Collaboration and relationship-driven approaches
- Flexible and agile funding that can pivot to emerging needs
- Milestone-based funding and impact-based metrics
- One-on-one meetings with small organizations
- Leveraging existing networks and collaborators
- Linking to projects at conferences or incubators
- Partnering with socially minded firms and community foundations
- Using business or social enterprise models
- Combining formal and informal networks
- Volunteer and in-kind contributions



c. Specific Organizations and Funders Identified

Collaborators named specific organizations and programs that align with potential funding priorities, grouped thematically, and deduplicated for clarity.

Theme	Organizations and Programs
Government & Public Funding	CMHC, Tri-Council Agencies, NRC, NRCAN, IRCC, Ministry of Justice Anti-Racism Program, Government of Alberta, Forestry Innovation Investment (FII), FP Innovations, Provincial Housing Grants, City of Calgary, and Calgary Housing Company.
Community & Philanthropic Foundations	Calgary Foundation, Stepping Stones, McConnell Foundation, Trico Foundation, O’Brien Institute Catalyst Grants, Sinneave Family Foundation, Rick Hansen Foundation, Parks Foundation Calgary, Vancity, and United Way.
Corporate, Industry & Design Sector Partners	Alberta Real Estate Foundation (AREF), ENMAX, Stantec, Perkins & Will, HOK, IBI (Arcadis), Teknion, and Oil & Gas firms.
Academic & Institutional	University of Calgary (SAPL, Taylor Institute, Health Equity Hub), UCalgary UPR Program, LEAD and WELL AP Certificates, and Mitacs.

Community-Based & Non-Profit Organizations	Activate YYC, Beltline Urban Mural Project (BUMP), Federation of Calgary Communities, Building Safer Calgary, Chinatown Cultural Centre, and Youth Central YYC.
Innovation, International & Specialized Funds	OAK Foundation, O'Brien Institute Catalyst Grants, Health Equity Hub YYC, Resolve Campaign, MID Team Incubators, Level Up Program, and International Innovation Funds (Japan, Italy, Latin America, Europe).



d.Additional Reflections

Collaborators emphasized that funding is not just transactional but relational. Securing and maintaining funding requires:

- Clear articulation of project vs. operational funding
- Regular communication and quarterly check-ins
- Transparency and public acknowledgment of donors
- Awareness of systemic barriers and accessibility in funding
- Use of storytelling and narrative as impact tools



1.2 Mapping the Funding Landscape

This section consolidates all identified funders and funding opportunities discussed during the workshop sessions. All duplicates have been removed, and each organization or initiative has been placed under its most relevant category.

a. Public Sector

Organization Type	Specific Organizations
Government Grants & Initiatives	City of Calgary (Planning, Social Planning, Community Development, Anti-Racism, CADA, CED), CMHC, Alberta Government (Social Innovation, Cross-Ministerial), BC Housing Research Grant, Provincial & Federal Housing Funds, SSHRC Partnership Grant, OCIF (Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund), Forestry Innovation Investment (FII), National Research Council Canada (NRC), and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan).
Municipal & Community Programs	Activate YYC, Federation of Calgary Communities, Building Safer Communities, United Way, Attainable Homes Calgary, Calgary Homeless Foundation, and Trellis.
Innovation & Accessibility Programs	City Council Innovation Fund, Federal Accessibility Commission, Horizon BC, SCSS, and Multicultural & Anti-Racism Programs.

b. Philanthropy & Foundations

Organization Type	Specific Organizations
Major Foundations & Trusts	Calgary Foundation, Catherine Donnelly Foundation, McConnell Foundation, OAK Foundation, Trico Foundation, Rick Hansen Foundation, Rosa Foundation, Ban Ki-Moon Foundation, and Brenda Stafford Foundation.
Community & Corporate Donors	AREF (Alberta Real Estate Foundation), FP Innovations, HomeSpace Society, and United Way.



c. Community-Based

Organization Type	Specific Organizations
Neighbourhood & Grassroots Organizations	Bowness Community Association, Activate YYC, Federation of Calgary Communities, Sustainable Calgary, Alberta CIP Grants, and Calgary Foundation Grants.
Arts & Placemaking Initiatives	BUMP: Beltline Urban Mural Project, D Talks, Critical Mass Rides, Youth On Route, and YYC Bike.
Community-Led Financing & Social Enterprise	Crowdfunding (GoFundMe, Kickstarter), Casino & Sports Fundraisers, Neighbourhood Grants, Pro Bono Consulting, and Social Enterprise Models.
Partnership Networks & Advocacy Groups	HomeSpace Society, More Neighbors, Strong Towns, and VanCity.

d. Private and Academic Sectors

Organization Type	Specific Organizations
Corporate & Industry Partners	Developers (Jayman, Truman, Trico, Remington), Builders (Jayman, Excel), Energy Sector (ENMAX, BP), Teknion, and Trico Building Company.
Academic & Research Partners	University of Calgary (SAPL, Taylor Institute, Health Equity Hub, Social Innovation Hub, Innovate Calgary), MITACS, SSHRC Connector Grant, and Transdisciplinary Connector Grant.
Collaborative & Innovation Campaigns	Resolve Campaign, and Social Innovation Hub (Innovate Calgary).

e. General Insights (Strategic Approaches)

Collaborators emphasized that successful funding strategies rely on sustained relationships, equity-driven storytelling, and clear alignment with funders' missions.

The following practices were recommended:

- Customize pitches and proposals to align with each funder's priorities and timing
- Advocate for equity and community-centered outcomes
- Leverage incubators, innovation hubs, and partnerships for co-funded projects
- Integrate storytelling and measurable impact into all communications
- Combine public, private, and philanthropic partnerships for greater resilience



1.3 Strategy Building

This section summarizes the realistic roles and relationships the UDesign Justice Initiative (UDJI) needs to build over the next 6–12 months to effectively access and sustain diverse funding sources. Duplicate entries have been removed, and funders or strategies have been organized under clear, non-overlapping headings.

a. Core Themes and Sub-Themes

Core Theme	Key Sub-Themes / Actions
Business Partnerships	Localized business funding, small businesses, in-kind organizational support, and mutually beneficial partnerships with local enterprises.
Community-Embedded Funding	Volunteer and community funders, local and mutual-benefit funding partnerships, community engagement and knowledge sharing, crowdfunding, community grants, and building long-term relationships that sustain shared impact.
Governmental Funding	Engage with municipal, provincial, and federal agencies; apply for city and federal housing-related grants; and build relationships with policymakers and council members.
Research & Program Funds	Pursue research, conference, and event-based funding opportunities; align academic and programmatic goals with funding calls.

Study & Research Infrastructure	Develop structured studies and literature reviews, fund research students, create grant application materials, establish funding priorities, and align short-, medium-, and long-term strategic, marketing, and financial plans.
Funding Models	Adopt a social innovation funding model that integrates professional training, ethical business practices, and in-kind donations under a justice-oriented framework.
Incubators & Innovation Hubs	Collaborate with incubators and accelerators to co-develop sustainable business models and pilot funding streams.
Organizational Partnerships	Partner with small-scale organizations that are accessibility-focused, Indigenous groups, and organizations supporting women fleeing violence.
Strategic Alignment & Planning	Prioritize realistic and achievable grants, align with funders' missions, build collaborative strategies, consult communities, and create cohesive funding proposals. Identify funder alignment areas, articulate key messages, and establish an advisory role for UDJI.
Scaling Funding	Begin with small, task-based grants and consolidate them into larger funding streams. Leverage conference networking and academic partnerships to scale collaborations gradually.

Scaling Projects	Develop smaller community-centered pilot projects that can grow into scalable program streams.
Sustaining Funding	Pursue multi-year and renewal-based funding to maintain organizational capacity and support ongoing initiatives.
Specific Partners	Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning, Calgary Economic Development, Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), Connector Grants, Calgary Foundation, University of Calgary.

To actualize these strategies, UDJI should prioritize establishing reciprocal relationships across public, private, academic, and community sectors. Building sustained partnerships with key institutions, such as the University of Calgary, Taylor Institute, Calgary Foundation, and City of Calgary, will help diversify and stabilize funding streams. Focusing on small, achievable goals and scaling through collaborative and community-informed initiatives will ensure the longevity and justice-oriented integrity of the funding strategy.

2. IDENTIFYING PARTNERSHIPS

2.1 Who’s At The Table? Who’s Missing?

This section synthesizes feedback from collaborators about existing and missing partnerships relevant to the UDesign Justice Initiative. Duplicate entries and personal names have been removed. Organizations and groups have been categorized under clear, non-overlapping headings.

a. Who is Supporting/Who’s at the Table?

Category	Examples of Existing or Supporting Partners
Academic & Research Institutions	University of Calgary (SAPL, Health Equity Hub), post-secondary researchers, students, and academic collaborators.
Government & Public Agencies	City of Calgary (Planning, Social Planning, Anti-Racism, Community Development), CMHC (Calgary Mortgage and Housing Corporation), provincial and federal government departments.
Community & Non-Profit Organizations	Activate YYC, Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association (Mobility Committee), Calgary Climate Hub, Federation of Calgary Communities, Mustard Seed, Inn from the Cold, Salvation Army, Trellis Housing, Arusha Society, United Way Calgary, Drop-In Centre.

Design, Planning & Development Partners	City builders, architects, urban planners, professional designers, developers, and industry collaborators engaged in inclusive design and city-building efforts.
Faith, Cultural & Ethnic Organizations	Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, Centre for Newcomers, Filipino Rising, and other cultural or settlement-focused organizations.
Community Engagement & Advocacy Groups	Ever Active Schools, East Village community networks, Stampede Foundation, Youth on Route, and other community-based engagement initiatives.



b. Who is Missing?

Category	Examples of Missing or Underrepresented Partners
Academic, Research & Educational Institutions	Additional universities and faculties (e.g., social work, law, education, health sciences), school boards (CBE, CSSD), and youth-serving organizations.
Government & Policy Makers	Councilors from underserved wards, elected officials, policy and decision-makers across all government levels, and agencies overseeing housing and social policy.
Arts, Culture, & Media	Local arts organizations (Contemporary Calgary, C-Space), art collectives, design justice networks, creative industry professionals, and media outlets for awareness and storytelling.
Health & Social Services	AHS, healthcare providers, harm reduction and addiction service organizations, disability advocates (e.g., Disability Action Hall), seniors' support agencies, and organizations serving unhoused or precariously housed populations.

Equity-Seeking & Marginalized Communities	LGBTQ2S+ organizations, racialized and immigrant groups, sex worker organizations (e.g., SafeLink), newcomers, and mutual aid groups.
Indigenous Communities	Indigenous communities, Métis Nations, and First Nations health authorities
Private & Corporate Sector	Banks, business associations, developers (large and small), energy and construction companies, and corporate sponsors interested in equitable community development.
Faith-Based & Community Organizations	Churches, mosques, temples, and other places of worship; faith-based charities and community centers supporting inclusive housing and social well-being.
Civic, Environmental & Advocacy Groups	Calgary Pride, Calgary Construction Association, Calgary Design Week, Calgary Downtown Association (CDA), Calgary Climate Hub, and sports or recreation organizations with public outreach capacity.
Vulnerable & Underrepresented Populations	People with lived experience of housing insecurity, those with disabilities or limited mobility, seniors, children and youth, newcomers, and families affected by systemic barriers.

The mapping of partners highlights both the breadth of existing collaboration and the opportunities for deeper inclusion. Expanding participation across equity-seeking groups, health and social sectors, and private industry partners will strengthen UDJI's collective impact. Moving forward, UDJI should prioritize outreach to underrepresented organizations, integrate multidisciplinary academic perspectives, and establish a more inclusive network that reflects Calgary's diverse communities and shared aspirations for equitable urban futures.



2.2 MISSING IN DESIGN & PARTNER BRAINSTORM MAP

Who is missing in design? People and communities whose daily realities are least reflected in space-making including children, seniors, people with disabilities (visible, invisible, undiagnosed, and temporary), newcomers, LGBTQ2S+ communities, people with lived experience of homelessness or incarceration, low-income residents in underserved areas, and others systematically excluded, must be centered so that safety, belonging, access, and walkability become baseline design outcomes rather than afterthoughts.

a. Missing in Design

Theme	Examples/Needs Highlighted
Safety, Belonging & Social Inclusion	Communities seeking belonging; socially safe places; communities needing spaces that reflect unique cultural and social needs; profit motives overriding community needs; rezoning impacts on vulnerable groups.
Children & Youth	Children playing safely; youth-friendly, supervised, and inclusive spaces; safe routes to schools and activities.
Disability Inclusion (Visible, Invisible, Temporary)	Individuals with disabilities, sensory-friendly spaces for autistic people, inaccessible transit, temporary disabilities, limited mobility, universal access across public facilities and streets.

b.Partner Brainstorm Map

Potential partner types and organizations have been consolidated, deduplicated, and placed under the most relevant headings. Personal names have been removed.

Partner Types

Category	Examples of Partner Types
Government & Public Sector	Municipal, regional, and provincial/federal government bodies; city hall and council offices; policy and legislative agencies; public sector departments (planning, social policy, housing, accessibility).
Education & Training	High schools and school boards; universities and research institutes; architecture/urbanism programs; professional training providers.
Community & Nonprofits	Community associations and hubs; community foundations; settlement and immigration services; youth and senior associations; mutual aid and social justice organizations; libraries and recreation centers.
Health & Social Services	Health agencies, health equity and harm reduction organizations, housing and homelessness service providers, and employment services.
LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion	Queer-affirming, safe, and accessible public and service spaces.

Housing, Development & Industry	Homebuilder associations; housing providers; developers with social responsibility; construction and real estate associations; HR professionals connected to workforce housing.
Environment & Sustainability	Environmental advocacy groups, urban sustainability coalitions, and climate action networks.
Media & Communications	Local media, community radio, and news outlets; communications and advertising partners to expand reach.
Indigenous & Equity-Serving Organizations	Indigenous representative bodies; disability advocacy; LGBTQ2S+ organizations; groups serving racialized communities.
Corporate & Business Partners	Corporate ESG partners, local businesses, chambers of commerce, corporate philanthropy, and sponsorships.
Health, Pregnancy & Aging	Pregnant people needing rest areas; seniors aging in place; trauma-informed, dignified amenities for varied health needs.
Housing & Neighbourhood Equity	Individuals experiencing homelessness; middle-scale housing options; walkability; systematic exclusion in east-side neighbourhoods; Forest Lawn infrastructure and historic disadvantage; reintegration supports for formerly incarcerated people.
Newcomers & Language Access	Newcomers facing language barriers; culturally responsive wayfinding, services, and engagement.

c. Potential Partner Organizations

Category	Organizations
Education (Secondary)	Bishop McNally High School; Crescent Heights High School; Father Lacombe High School; Forest Lawn High School; Livingstone Range School Division (LRSD).
Housing & Homelessness	Calgary Homeless Foundation; Habitat for Humanity Southern Alberta; housing providers and service agencies.
Media & Communications	CJSW (community radio), local media, and news outlets.
Environment & Sustainability	Suzuki Foundation; local environmental coalitions.
Community & Civic	Vibrant Communities Calgary (VCC), community associations, community hubs, Walls Down Collective.
Civic Institutions	City Hall, municipal departments, and partnerships.
Accessibility & Inclusion	Rick Hansen Foundation, disability advocacy groups

Filling the gaps in design representation requires targeted partnerships across government, education, community, health, industry, and media. By prioritizing equity-serving organizations and place-based partners in historically under-resourced areas, UDJI can co-create projects that deliver safety, access, and belonging - while building a broader coalition that sustains impact over time.



3. IDENTIFY NEXT STEPS

To translate Workshop #2 insights into action, we outline Start/Continue/Stop priorities and a phased Roadmap to Action (Now, Soon, Later) that assigns clear themes, concrete actions, owners, and timelines.

3.1 START/CONTINUE/STOP

Collaborators defined next steps by naming what to start, what to continue, and what to stop, clarifying what’s working, what needs to change, and where new effort is required.

a. Start — What New Actions Should We Take?

Category	Actions
A) Collaboration & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broaden Convenings: Multi-stakeholder/funder convention; “ideas party”; topic-specific convenings; invite cross-disciplinary partners.• Targeted Outreach: Approach the City; meet councillors; connect with community associations, centres, churches, small grassroots groups, and high schools.• Community Presence: Host engagement/education sessions; tables at Neighbour Day & Pride; attract volunteers (reduce student barriers).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship Building: Local communications; partner cultivation; shared online forums for dialogue.
B) Organizational Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand Up the Initiative: Establish governance & team (including finance/marketing); clarify priorities & outputs; map partnerships; define progress indicators. External Posture: Website, statement, business card; pitch framework; Instagram/paid ads (as appropriate). Ways to Engage: Publish how the public can participate; adopt transdisciplinary, human-centred approach; scale incrementally; demonstrate commitment & care. Operating Model: Explore business models; professional credentials (where relevant); be explicit about accountability & expected frictions.
C) Raise Awareness & Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach & Media: Social/TV/transit ads; promo videos; posters; targeted cold outreach (including private companies). Presence & Events: Attend conferences; identify community events; amplify word-of-mouth; expand informal networks.
D) Research & Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-Led Inquiry: Needs assessment; define problems/outputs; ecosystem/challenge mapping; document community histories & historic exclusions. Alignment Mapping: Map marginalized communities and alignments with UDJI; identify design-justice service opportunities; manage differing needs.

E) Funding & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant Finding: Scan public, philanthropic, community, private/academic sources; prioritize realistic 6–12 month opportunities; plan relationship pathways.
F) Focus Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing: Start with housing; explore mid-scale housing policy. Accessibility: Elevate accessibility (e.g., accessible pathways) as an early deliverable.
G) Support Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incubator: Pilot a light-touch incubator/support function for partner projects.



b. Continue — What Should We Maintain?

Category	Actions
A) Collaboration & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-Design Practices: Consultations, workshops, transdisciplinary gatherings; collaborate directly with communities & associations.• Relationships: Invest in long-term community relationships; include privileged groups where influence is needed; keep space welcoming and “liberatory.”• Transparency: Share progress with public-facing community; maintain an active website/live forum.
B) Organizational Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action + Learning Loop: Continue consultative feedback cycles; document & share projects; keep the site updated; work smart & iteratively.• Framework Stewardship: Keep refining the UDJ framework as projects evolve.
C) Raise Awareness & Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grow the Network: Join community events; reach beyond the field; engage major civic moments (e.g., Calgary Stampede).• Communications: Maintain marketing/media & word-of-mouth; publish upcoming events on the website.
D) Research & Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Understanding: Ongoing learning about communities’ needs & contexts.

E) Support Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incubator: Continue nurturing early-stage partner ideas.
F) Inclusivity & Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and Broaden: Maintain a list of collaborators; sustain and grow diversity across collaborators & partners.



c. Stop — What’s No Longer Serving?

Category	Actions
A) Current Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Power & Process Pitfalls: Top-down/siloed approaches; centring academic voices; speaking for rather than with communities; asking marginalized groups to “wait.”• Engagement Anti-Patterns: Token forums; short-termism; not listening; negative framing; prioritizing comfort over needs; treating safety as a barrier to transit-user engagement.
B) Current Designs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form Biases: Car-first planning; oversized buildings; long corridor typologies that hinder accessibility & social connection.
C) Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overreach: “Thinking too big” before capacity & relationships are in place - right-size scope to resources and community pace.

3.2 ROADMAP TO ACTION

Collaborators built a shared timeline for near-term goals, specifying what should happen in each phase, who needs to be involved, the resources required, and what success looks like at each stage.

The tables are organized into Now (0–3 months), Soon (3–6 months), and Later (6+ months) to sequence actions by urgency and horizon, clarifying what happens first, what follows, and what is planned for longer-term implementation.

a.Now (0–3 Months)

Theme	Actions
Engagement & Partnerships	Form local connections; start “small talks;” host initial workshops/engagement sessions; collaborate with similar projects; build relationships and network; meet councillor candidates; and reach out to community associations/centres/churches/grassroots groups/high schools.
Organizational Development	Create business plan; map assets, resources, and skills; set progress indicators; define roles & governance; prepare outreach materials; develop a community engagement strategy; and approach Social Innovation Hub.

Marketing & Awareness	Launch media/marketing; publish short posts and videos; conduct diverse interviews; raise awareness and widen participation; and place accessible posters/materials.
Research & Study	Scan similar projects; synthesize post-consultation insights; identify prospective partners; and map partnership landscape.
Funding & Resources	Seek/scan short-term funding opportunities (public/philanthropic/community/private/academic); shortlist realistic 6–12 month targets; and plan relationship pathways.
Inclusivity & Access	Maintain and broaden diversity; uphold transdisciplinary approach; actively bring more voices into the process; and use plain language.
Education	Plan near-term education touchpoints (talks, class visits, mini-modules).
Narratives & Storytelling	Integrate storytelling into outreach and engagement materials.

b. Soon (3-6 Months)

Themes	Actions
Engagement & Partnerships	Maintain connections; engage affordable housing providers; collaborate with Centre for Newcomers; connect with Health Policy Centre; and engage City Councils.
Organizational Development	Finalize action plans; initiate a pilot project; allocate resources; and (if pursued) begin non-profit formation steps.
Funding & Resources	Stand up Fund Navigators; implement a fundraising plan; and secure early grants/agreements.
Education	Produce “ready designs” with SAPL students; develop community engagement modules; and begin influencing university design curricula.
Marketing & Awareness	Expand presence at conferences and community events; and continue targeted outreach, and word-of-mouth amplification.

c. Later (6+ Months)

Themes	Actions
Engagement & Partnerships	Sustain local connections; deepen transdisciplinary collaboration; and co-create projects with partner organizations and community representatives.
Organizational Development	Grow team with diverse skills/backgrounds; consolidate resources; and explore a physical UDJI space.
Marketing & Awareness	Run a photo competition; stage a public exhibition; and launch a recurring UDesign community newsletter.
Research & Study	Study challenges of engaging privileged groups; and review and iterate on actions based on evidence.
Education	Host panel discussions; develop a Certificate in Design Justice; and offer professional/CPD and short courses.
Inclusivity & Access	Ensure transparent, accessible information; and adopt a collective impact approach for shared measurement and aligned action.
Support Others (Incubator)	Operate a light-touch incubator for partner and community projects.

SUMMARY



This summary distills what we heard in Workshop #2: Key funding pathways and guardrails, partnership strengths and gaps, and collaborator-proposed next steps, organized into a phased roadmap.

1. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES & STRATEGIES

- **Values-Aligned Mix:** Public (City/prov/fed), philanthropy (Calgary Foundation, McConnell, Trico, AREF, Rick Hansen), community grants (Activate YYC), academic (SSHRC, Mitacs, NRC/NRCan), and in-kind (firms, small businesses).
- **Tactics:** Create a fund navigator function; quadrant mapping; start with small/renewable 6–12-month grants while preparing multi-year bids; pair storytelling + evidence; maintain relationships.
- **Guardrails:** Screen for values conflicts, explore social enterprise/incubator models, and credentialing tied to design justice.

2. PARTNERSHIPS

- **At the Table:** Community organizations, students/academics, designers/planners/architects, select City staff, non-profits in justice/housing/mobility/health.
- **Missing (Priority Outreach):** People with disabilities, unhoused residents, newcomers with language barriers, youth/Elders, Indigenous partners, 2SLGBTQIA+, frontline providers, developers/builders, policymakers, local media.
- **Strengthening the Network:** Partner map with roles/responsibilities; co-host with culturally specific orgs; use schools/libraries/rec centres; leverage citywide events (Neighbour Day, Pride).



3. NEXT STEPS

- **Start:** Formalize governance; clarify vision/mission for external pitches; launch outreach/communications; run community-education touchpoints.
- **Continue:** Co-design, interdisciplinary collaboration, relationship-building, visible feedback loops.
- **Stop:** Top-down/siloed approaches; engagement without action; privileging only those with time/access; speaking for, not with communities.



CO-DESIGN WORKSHOP CONCLUSION



WHAT IT MEANS AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

Across both co-design workshops, collaborators helped move the UDesign Justice Initiative (UDJI) from concept to activation.

Workshop #1 laid the foundation - articulating a shared vision, mission, values, and focus areas - while Workshop #2 advanced this work by identifying the structures, partnerships, and strategies required to bring the initiative to life.

Together, these sessions affirmed a collective commitment: **UDJI must function as a long-term, community-led, and transdisciplinary hub where those most impacted by spatial inequities are not simply consulted but are co-creators of solutions.**

OPERATIONALIZING THE FRAMEWORK

Workshop #2 clarified three core pillars that will guide UDJI's next phase:

1. Funding & Resourcing

UDJI will pursue a values-aligned mix of public, philanthropic, community, academic, and in-kind supports. A light fund navigator function will coordinate scanning, relationship-building, and strategy while ensuring accountability to principles of equity.

2. Partnerships

UDJI will finalize a partner map, identify gaps, and expand outreach, particularly to groups underrepresented in Workshop #1. Future engagements will be co-hosted with culturally specific and community-rooted organizations to deepen belonging and accountability.

3. Roadmap to Action

UDJI will organize deliverables into Now (0–3 months), Soon (3–6 months), and Later (6+ months), each with defined roles, required resources, and success indicators. Regular public updates will ensure transparency and shared progress monitoring.

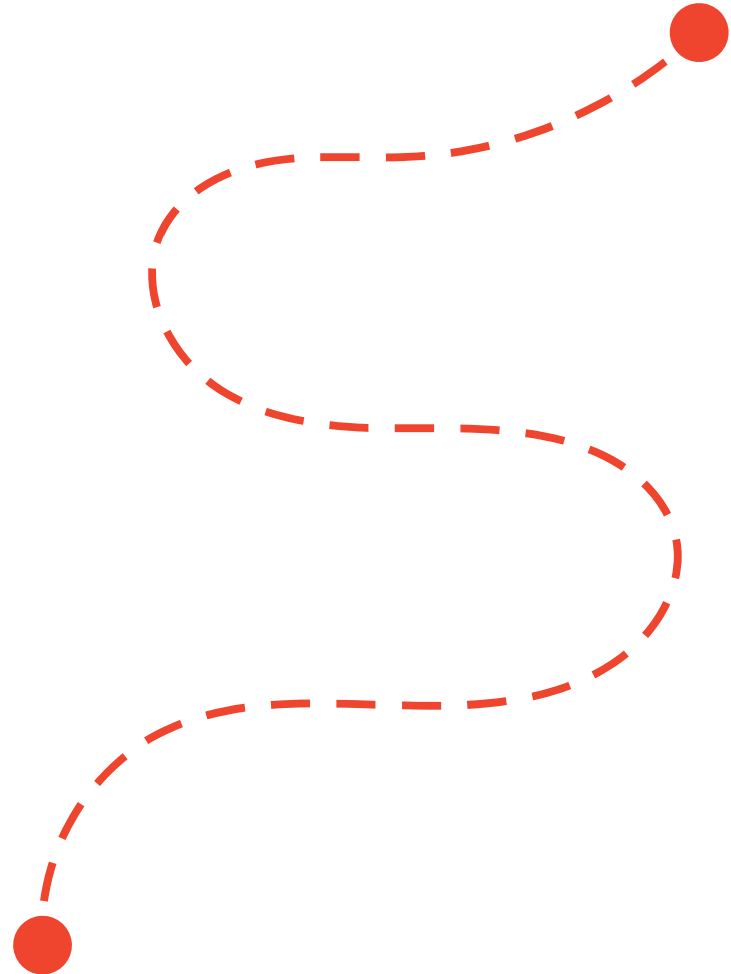
To safeguard the integrity of this work, equity guardrails, including values-alignment screening and exploration of social-enterprise, incubator, and micro-credential models, will be built into all decision-making.



WHAT'S NEXT (0-6 MONTHS)

UDJI's next steps focus on building the foundation for long-term, community-led transformation:

- Launch an open call for collaborators to form an Advisory Committee for governance and accountability.
- Establish working groups aligned with UDJI's focus areas, including housing, education, partnerships, and youth capacity-building.
- Deliver pilot projects in housing and education.
- Apply for grants to support community-led ideas identified in both workshops.
- Publish a quarterly progress brief to maintain transparency and momentum.
- Develop a comprehensive framework and business plan, outlining UDJI's vision, governance, operations, and long-term funding strategy.



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.



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.



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.

REAFFIRMING OUR PURPOSE

The ultimate goal of UDJI is to transform how decisions about the built environment are made, ensuring equity-deserving communities are centered in planning, policy, and design processes. Across the workshops, collaborators emphasized the need to:

- Resist tokenistic or extractive consultation
- Reimagine design practice to be inclusive, iterative, and relational
- Build transparent, reciprocal partnerships
- Challenge harmful systems, policies, and planning norms
- Strengthen community capacity and shared knowledge
- Redistribute power in design and decision-making

Collaborators repeatedly described UDJI as a needed “third space”: a knowledge hub, advocacy platform, and change engine rooted in lived/living experience, collective wisdom, and relational accountability.





LOOKING FORWARD

As UDJI transitions into implementation - guided by community insight, design justice principles, and cross-sector collaboration - it is positioned to become a transformative force in addressing systemic inequities in Calgary's built environment.

The next phase is about activation: putting relationships, ideas, and commitments into motion through pilot projects, partnerships, capacity-building, and sustained engagement.

The strength of UDJI lies in its collaborators. Their knowledge, honesty, and imagination have shaped this framework and will continue to guide its evolution.

Together, we are building the conditions for long-term, community-driven change - ensuring that equity, accountability, and care shape the cities and systems we create.



For More Information:



udji@ucalgary.ca



www.designjusticeinitiative.com

