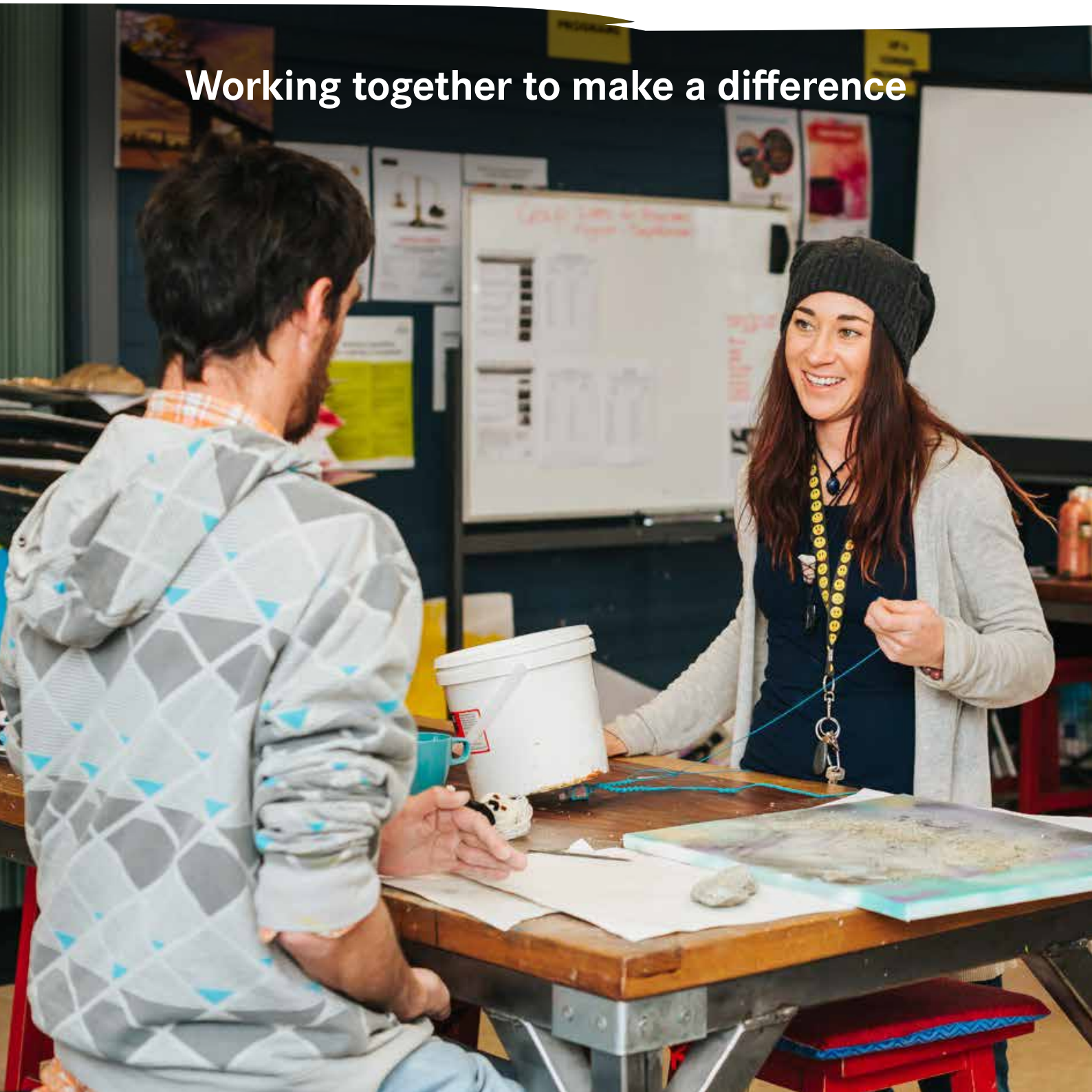
mind®
Help, hope and purpose

Mind's Participation and Co-design Practice Framework



Mind acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise the intergenerational impact of the history of invasion, dispossession and colonisation and are committed to the recognition, respect, inclusion and wellbeing of Australia's First Peoples.

Mind values the experience and contribution of people from all cultures, genders, sexualities, bodies, abilities, spiritualities, ages and backgrounds. We are committed to inclusion for all our clients, families and carers, employees and volunteers.

A culture of inclusion for all.

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1. Setting the scene

Introduction

The communities we interact with every day are the very reason we exist as an organisation. Finding ways to collaborate with these communities is key to Mind's 2021-2026 organisational strategy. This is reflected in the intent to invest in service design and innovation to deliver better services and outcomes and to do this by leveraging our peer workforce and ***embedding co-design and client and carer participation in our operating model so that lived experience drives our service design and delivery, research and advocacy.***

We know that when we involve people with diverse perspectives in problem solving, we uncover ideas and insights that might have otherwise been overlooked by researchers and practitioners alone. For this reason, co-design has been widely heralded as a way to embrace 'whole-of-systems-thinking' and a method to solve complex problems.

This practice framework presents Mind's position and understanding of participation and co-design. Alongside the history and context, this framework steps through what we can do to create the conditions for successful collaboration with the Mind community. It provides Mind practitioners with case studies and examples of this work and highlights the resources and tools they have available for participation and co-design to be embedded as everyday practice. True co-design and co-production is ambitious, but certainly achievable.

While there is no precise checklist or explicit 'how to' guideline on how to facilitate co-design initiatives, this practice framework will offer a template of ideas, opportunities and considerations to empower Mind employees to authentically engage communities in decision-making with confidence.

This practice framework is an example of participation and co-design itself. It is influenced by innovative and leading work from within Australia and internationally, however most of the content has been developed with direct input from Mind's Lived Experience Advisory Team and practitioners across the organisation. Included in the framework is a position statement: ***Working together to make a difference*** (page 12) which was entirely led and designed by people who have been involved in co-design at Mind to share some key success criteria with practitioners.

Definitions

Participation is essentially how people accessing our services, their families and carers engage with decision-making processes and governance at Mind. Examples of participation might be focus groups, interviews, workshops or any activity where clients, families and carers have a voice or influence in the way Mind operates. At Mind, we utilise research and human-centred design methodology to facilitate engagement activities that are creative and equitable to allow us to create journey maps or better understand the experience of people who access our services.

Co-design is more than having a voice or influence in decision-making; it's where members of the Mind community (clients, carers and family), practitioners and leaders become equal partners in decision-making. Rather than being viewed as a source of information to input, participants actively work to shape the definition and direction of a project. It's an intentional approach that aims to create solutions, innovation and open up possibilities for better outcomes (McKercher, 2020). Bringing people along on the journey means the process has the potential to be as powerful as the outcome.

> ***Co-design is more than a process - it is a social movement focused on challenging and changing inequitable power structures. Designing with, not for people.***
> (McKercher, 2020)

Co-production like co-design is transformational, not transactional. It sees consumers involved in defining the problem, designing and delivering the solution, and evaluating the outcome, either with professionals or independently. Co-production requires lived experience leadership and collaboration not just in the co-design stage of a project, but in the planning, delivery and evaluation of an initiative (Roper, Grey & Cadogan, 2018).

> ***The most important part of co-production is shifting mindsets and establishing a culture that embraces exploration and learning, and genuinely values consumer knowledge and expertise.***
> (Roper, Grey & Cadogan, 2018, p. 2)

Background and context

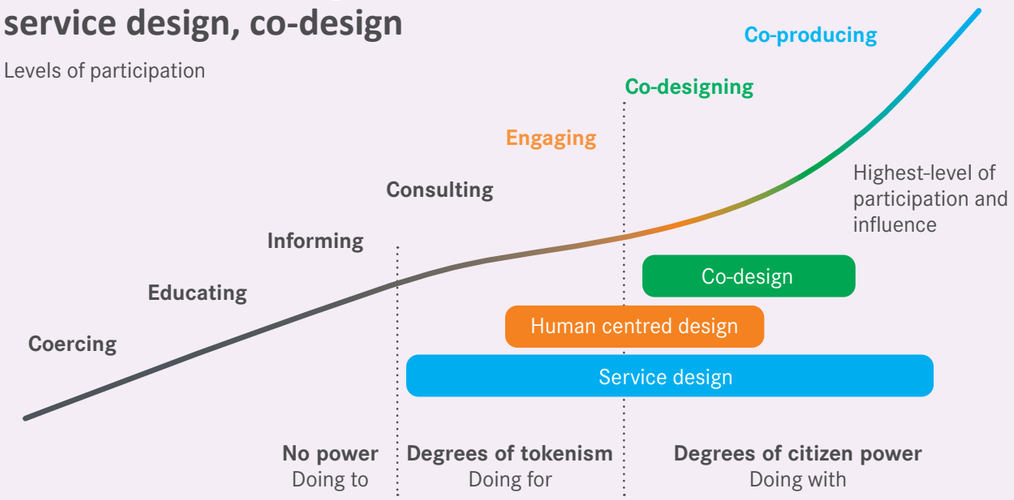
Mind's Participation and Co-design Practice Framework has been developed after consultation over two years with a broad intersection of Mind employees, participants and family members. Participation and co-design are not new concepts. They draw on ways of learning, understanding and collaborating that many cultures, including First Nations peoples, have been practicing for thousands of years and they build on the practice of activists and grass roots advocacy groups who for many years have fought to be heard and for 'seats at the table'.

There are many different types of community participation, many of which build on the ladder of participation described by Sherry Arnstein (1969; Slay & Stephens, 2013). This has since been modified and adapted, with versions existing today such as The International Association for Public Participation's spectrum: inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower. In addition to these engagement models, there has been a shift towards the use of co-design and co-production methods to partner with people with lived experience in service design and delivery which is what Mind strongly advocates and prioritises opportunities for.

The evolution and uptake of lived experience and co-design in the past five years has been remarkable. Lived experience leaders are now not only advocating from outside, but also activating from within systems and structures, offering unique opportunities as well as new challenges to navigate. With the service design, human-centred design and user-research industries building on elements of community development and participatory design, the roots of consumer participation are at risk of being nudged out by new language and structures. The table below by leading social designer Jo Szczepanska (2021) helps outline where some of these terms cross over.

Human centred design, service design, co-design

Levels of participation



Credit: Jo Szczepanksa, Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria, 2021

Benefits of participation and co-design

Participation and co-design can offer significant benefits to organisations and social change, as well as the individuals and communities involved. This was demonstrated in the development of this practice framework where participants and members of Mind's Lived Experience Advisory Team (LEAT) told us:

> ***The best thing you get (by participating) is your happiness - you can't put a price tag on that. I'm happy to have an avenue to voice my concerns and hopefully make a change, make a difference.***
> Billy, Mind QLD

> ***I stepped out from being another person with a problem and tried to help. We did something together that was good, not just for us, but the community. Something that will outlive us that will be good for the rest of the community.***
> Julian, Mind QLD

> ***I am just so grateful to have been given the opportunity to be involved in the LEAT. I feel that LEAT has given me the confidence and expanded the opportunities for me.***
> Sarah, Mind WA

The table below adapted from Sandhu (2020), further outlines some of the benefits both to the organisation and to the individuals involved in participation and co-design initiatives:

Benefits for the organisation and social change	Benefits for the individuals involved
• Leveraging the wisdom of lived experience ensures services are meeting the true needs of the community and effect greater positive impact in the communities we work in. • Lived experience perspectives are an underutilised resource, not just by volume but by the depth and complexity on offer. • When we engage with the community we get to understand the interrelated challenges that we face in the sector, not just the 'mental health' challenges. Involving diverse people with broad range of experiences creates a replica of the systems and becomes 'systems-thinking in action'. • It humanises activities and programs and helps brings research or policy issues to life. • It improves sense-making of strategies and operations, and offers additional capacity for innovation. • It also strengthens Mind's legitimacy and credibility in the community.	• People are no longer passive but active participants in finding opportunities to be involved in decisions that affect them. • It brings people together for less 'us' and 'them'. • Safe spaces are created for everyone. • It contributes to improved trust in services and system, creating greater hope and optimism. • There is the potential for strengthening the participant's skill set, personally and professionally.

Benefits to Mind

Some of the organisational benefits of participation and co-design to Mind are highlighted in the diagram below, they include:

- upholding of universal **human rights** and Mind's *What We Believe* statement
- creation of opportunities for **continuous improvement** of our services when we build open channels and mechanisms for participation
- improved **workforce culture and experience** due to acknowledgement of lived expertise
- increased **community credibility and connection** when we engage with community and partnering organisations

> ***I'm glad I understand that while language is a gift, listening is a responsibility.***
> Nikki Giovanni

- **business growth** and new service opportunities due to better alignment of our services to people's needs
- making our data, **outcomes, evidence, influence and impact** reflective of people's lived experience and stated needs.

Rationale

2. Creating the conditions

This section will highlight:

- Mind's commitment to lived experience participation and co-design
- The principles of participation and co-design from which Mind operates
- Tips for how to understand and measure the success of participation and co-design activities
- Actions that lead to a team and organisational culture that supports participation and co-design
- A position statement from the Lived Experience Advisory Team Working Together to Make a Difference that outlines engagement planning and essential considerations
- The functions and goals of Mind's Participation Team

Commitment

> ***Commitment is the other side of apathy.***
> David Wilcox (1994)

Lived experience is a central feature of Mind's 2021-2026 organisational strategy, particularly in relation to the growth of peer and lived experience workforces and, the critical role of participation and co-design. Mind's organisational strategy and decision-making processes are supported by the Participation Team and the Lived Experience Advisory Team (LEAT) and at a service level, people accessing services and their families are engaged through co-design and co-production processes, reference councils, feedback systems and service development projects.

Mind's whole of organisation approach to lived experience is defined through our *Lived Experience Strategy*. It includes a detailed account of Mind's rationale, approach and commitment to lived experience and outlines key deliverables and targets for the strategy to achieve over a three-year period. This framework and *Mind's Peer Work Framework* provide practice guidance to support the delivery of the strategy.

Principles and culture

> ***It's not about adding diversity for the sake of diversity, it's about subtracting homogeneity for the sake of realism.***
> Mary Robinette Kowal (2014)

- **Elevating voice and contribution of lived experience** - speaking 'with' people, not 'about' them. 'A seat at the table' is just the beginning. We commit to creating equitable and inclusive spaces so people are free to be true partners in decision-making and service provision.
- **Working from strengths** - participants and their lived experiences are an incredible asset to all of our work, we acknowledge this and build from our individual and group strengths and skill sets. We build from what is already working within the community.
- **Understanding and acknowledging power** - actively create awareness and sensitivity to understanding the impact of power and oppression in design and service delivery processes. Embracing a growth mindset helps to ensure some equity in the process also, a saying often used in Mind LEAT engagements is "We all have something to learn, we all have something to teach" to remind us all of the approach and position we hold.
- **True collaboration –** share power in decision-making and challenge parochial structures where needed, helping bridge any gaps between 'them' and us'. Collaboration requires everyone to respect lived expertise as equal to learned knowledge. It means Mind facilitates, rather than delivers, initiatives and services. Identifying inequities will also help identify opportunities. As one of our participants told us, collaboration means, "Go beyond the surface to understand the problem – the invisible things, not just what you can see. Get to the bottom of problems."
- **Inclusive engagement –** sometimes we need to shift the usual processes and methods, to get the best out of people and ensure safety. Some key questions to consider might be:
  - What is the digital or English literacy capability of the group you are collaborating with? How can we make sure that the information and context of the project is understood by everyone?
  - Is the location of the meeting place accessible, is it reasonably close enough to where people live and is the physical venue accessible for anyone who has additional mobility requirements?
  - Do the activities or methods of engagement need to be tailored to the preferences of the participants? For example, do the participants prefer to meet online via Teams or Zoom, or do they prefer to meet in person? Do participants better engage when they can talk through the content as a group, or do they prefer to read information ahead of the meeting individually and have time to process or make notes?
  - Cultural safety considerations should be a part of any planning for engagement, particularly considering the needs and experiences of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse and LGBTIQ+ people and communities as well as people living with a disability. For example, yarning circles might be more appropriate when working with First Nations people and the location of the meeting might need to be in a place that is more comfortable to the people we need to engage, rather than a Mind site or office space. For participation and co-design to be genuine, engaging and safe, the participants should be provided an environment that is known or offers some gestures of familiarity.
- **More than good intentions –** the work must aim to be safe for all participants and resourced sufficiently. Participation initiatives will be purposeful and meaningful, and have clear objectives to operate from a trauma-informed framework. Before a workshop or engagement activity, it is critical to understand what the impacts of trauma might be for the group, in relation to the topics to be discussed. Systemic issues take a long time to dismantle, so it's important to acknowledge the generosity of people with lived experience who share their deepest experiences and organisations should commit to action (however much that is manageable) in return. All of our engagement work will enable reciprocity and mutuality with an aim to become catalysts for systemic change.
- **Recognition by payment or reimbursement** - can help to equalise the power dynamics. Mind has a *Paid Participation Fact Sheet* and procedure to ensure that people who participate in co-design projects, who are not staff members of Mind, are paid accordingly and appropriately for their time and expertise.
- **Understanding when it is not appropriate for co-design** - if a decision has already been made, or there is no influence or scope for change, then in some cases of engagement it might be irresponsible to ask people affected to point out ways that the system is not working. Sometimes there is already existing research available that should be utilised instead. Mind's Design Workshop Activity Handbook offers some checklists to help practitioners determine what might be an appropriate approach and the matrix on page 15 of this guide can also help staff understand and explain to others what influence the activity will have. Informal conversations can be a good place to start and often the 'hallway chats' can be the beginning of something meaningful too.

Measuring success

The Theory of Change, as illustrated below, should help you understand what you are measuring as success and reflect on whether your engagement has been beneficial. You do not need to develop a theory of change before engagement projects, but using this as a discussion tool can be a very effective way to bring everyone together to work towards the same objectives. The Theory of Change diagram below has been adapted from 'An Introduction to Co-design' by Ingrid Burkett (2016).

If we:	By:	This will result in:	And eventually lead to:
• create brave and safe spaces for innovation and collaboration • recognise and harness lived expertise and practitioner expertise alike • utilise prototyping to test, refine from a broad range of stakeholders	• resourcing participation and co-design • build trusting relationships and agree on mutual objectives • have a culture that supports successes and learnings	• development of more more innovative and effective service systems that are directly informed by lived experience, without assumptions, and built from existing assets • more effective engagement of community	• building of more effective systems that cater to diverse groups • improvement of outcomes within the community • reduction of social and economic costs of social exclusion, disadvantage and inequality

Working together to make a difference

The position statement: ***Working together to make a difference*** was led and designed by people who have been involved in participation and co-design initiatives at Mind, from a lived experience perspective.

Participation and co-design are used to make sure that people who use Mind's services, including consumers, family members and carers, are involved in making decisions.

As people with lived experience who have taken part in participation and co-design activities at Mind, we want to share what we have learned to help create more opportunities for people to have a say.

Being involved in participation and co-design activities at Mind gives us:

- a chance to learn about issues that affect us
- the space to try new things and develop our skills
- an opportunity to meet new people and build relationships
- a reminder of what we are capable of achieving (and what's possible)
- something to focus on and a sense of hope
- an avenue to voice our concerns and make a difference.

> ***We did something together that was good, not just for us, but the community.***

> ***Co-design gives me a sense of accomplishment that I can use my experience to improve the system.***

> ***If I contribute to developing services, it will benefit me if I need to use them again..***

Supporting participation and co-design

Practical tips from people with lived experience of mental ill-health and recovery

	Before	During	After
People with lived experience may feel...	• Worried • Unsure • Under pressure	• Overwhelmed • Vulnerable • Confident	• Tired • Proud • Accomplished
wonder... or think...	Is my experience relevant? Who else will be there? How will I come across?	Am I on track? Making sense? This is hard to talk about. I have important things to say.	Did I say the right thing? I wish I had said... I had a go and did my best Will anything change?
To help participants or co-designers feel safe and supported, staff can...	• Have a clear purpose • Involve people with relevant lived experience as equal partners • Ask people how they prefer to communicate and what support they need to participate • Share information beforehand in an accessible way • Let people know participation is voluntary	• Ask people to introduce themselves • Create guidelines to take care of one another • Offer guidance to help people stay on track • Give everyone a fair go and opportunity to contribute • Check in and give feedback to make sure people feel heard, understood and valued • Outline the next steps	• Thank people and pay them for their contributions • Provide contact details for any follow up thoughts or ideas • Encourage self-care and give information about where to seek additional support • Keep people updated on what's happening • Invite them to participate again

Stepping stones for success

We benefit most from participation and co-design when there is:

Respect
Our unique lived experiences are recognised and valued.

Inclusion
We are all worthy and have something valid to offer.

Connection
We share our experiences openly, without judgement.

Freedom
We choose to participate or not and decide what we feel comfortable to share.

Trust
We are confident that what we say will be heard and acted upon.

Unity
We work together for the good of the community.

Mind's Participation and Co-design Team

The Participation and Co-design Team sits within the Inclusion and Participation Division at Mind to support and design innovative and effective channels for client, family and carer participation and engagement. The team's goal is to create genuine participation and co-design opportunities that are beneficial for all involved.

We do this by:

- building capability in service delivery teams across Mind to improve and embed participation as everyday practice, and maintaining a participation and co-design toolkit on the intranet
- supporting Central Office teams to design, crosscheck or review processes and initiatives with the broader Mind community
- facilitating and leading projects with a creative approach to problem solving that starts with people at the centre, and ends with innovative solutions that are tailored to suit the needs of the community to our best ability.

The Participation and Co-design Team, in partnership with the LEAT also offer learning opportunities including:

Co-design Collective

Mind's Co-design Collective will be launched in late 2021 as a community of people (employees, clients, families and carers) who have a particular interest and passion for participation and co-design. The community will share challenges, successes and internal or external learning opportunities as they arise.

Mind's Participation 101 training

Participation 101 training is available to Mind clients with an interest in using their lived experience to inform decision making at Mind. The training will be delivered in partnership with Mind Recovery College™ and give people a greater understanding of what participation is and the different types of engagement opportunities available at Mind. The training focuses on building the skills and capability of people with lived experience to participate to the degree that they choose within their service or at Mind.

Lived Experience Leadership training

Lived Experience Leadership training is co-designed with senior lived experience leaders at Mind for LEAT members and Mind clients who have participation and co-design experience and are emerging lived experience leaders. The training explores the concept of lived experience leadership, identifies participants' unique strengths as a leader and reflect on how they can use their lived experience for social change. This training supports participation in high-level opportunities within Central Office, such as tender bids or representing Mind in public forums.

3. Collaborating

What does participation and co-design look like at Mind?

There are many different objectives and engagement methods currently implemented at Mind. The matrix below outlines some of the activities and opportunities for the Mind community to be involved in for shaping Mind as an organisation.

This section will also offer examples of what participation and co-design looks like in practice at Mind, with case studies to highlight projects that have occurred in different arms of the organisation.

	Understand	Involve	Collaborate	Co-design
Governance, service design and innovation	• Regular meetings with LEAT and Executive • Mutual learning partnerships	• Representation on committees and governance groups • Representation in recruitment of senior leader positions • Attending funder interviews or accreditation panels • Ideation workshops for strategic planning purposes • Seeking feedback and input on strategic pieces of work for Mind		• Lived experience identified roles in senior leader positions • End-to-end co-design of strategic business planning • Lived experience identified position on Mind Board • Co-design of service models
Service delivery	• Shared decision-making in individual treatment, care and planning • Focus groups • Interviews • Experience surveys	• *Your Voice Matters* – feedback loop closed • Program planning • Review and feedback of brochures and communications material • Co-facilitation of Recovery College™ courses	• Co-authoring of case notes • Reference councils • Clients and carers involved in recruitment of new staff • Community meetings – co-facilitation	• Reviewing participation practices ongoing with clients and carers • Peer practitioners • Identified co-design projects
Organisation systems and operations	• Feedback analysis • Interviews • Focus groups	• Workshops and special projects • Review and feedback into policies, documents or processes	• Direct input into models of care, practice guidelines and tools • Representation on steering committees • Workshops and special projects	• Co-design of policies, practice guidelines and tools • Co-design of client communication materials • Co-production of Recovery College™ courses
Advocacy, influence and systems change	• Research interviews • Surveys	• Review and feedback of outcomes measures for services • Synthesising of research data and identifying themes for research projects • Input into policy submissions	• Peer researcher positions • Conference presentations • Media and advocacy campaigns	• Co-authoring papers • Co-presentation of papers at launches and external events • Lived experience led campaigns • External events (i.e. Melbourne Knowledge Week)

People as participants
We want to understand participant experiences and perspectives

People as partners
We want to partner with people with lived experience to participate in the design process; they might be involved in identifying problems and solutions

People as leaders
The process is led by people with lived experience, to design and deliver services that best meet community needs

Opportunities in governance, service design and innovation

> ***Change happens at the speed of trust.***
> Stephen Covey (2006))

Mind's Lived Experience Advisory Team (LEAT) model
Mind's Lived Experience Advisory Team (LEAT) is a diverse group of people from across Australia who work to ensure the perspectives and experiences of Mind clients, carers and family are centred in high-level and strategic decisions at Mind. Team members bring a breadth of lived expertise, skills and strengths to Mind.

The LEAT use their individual, and shared:

- lived experiences
- interest in mental health and recovery, and
- related skills, knowledge and relationships.

The LEAT have been involved in focused, collaborative and creative work that supports and informs Mind's practice and influences the broader mental health system.

In addition to facilitating effective channels for senior leaders at Mind to engage with and understand the community, one of the primary aims of the LEAT model is to build people's skills and capabilities, including personal resources such as self-esteem, confidence, skills and knowledge, problem solving, and negotiation, communication and service design skills. The dynamic model of the LEAT and the partnership with senior leadership at Mind helps to reinforce and shape these individual resources, with an aim to improve personal wellbeing too.

An evaluation of Mind's LEAT was facilitated in 2021 and showcased the elevation of LEAT over the previous 18 months and undertakings, measuring the experience of the lived experience members. The LEAT shared that they felt valued and skilled to provide insight, feedback and knowledge to Mind. Their input contributed to the development and improvement of services and consumer engagement. It has been a positive time, where additional abilities were attained and the members felt their contribution was valued.

By building a strong community and connection to Mind, and a thorough understanding of what Mind delivers, what Mind stands for and what Mind aims to achieve, as well as strong working relationships with Mind senior leaders, the LEAT has achieved sizeable success and reputation.

Representation at Board level
As further demonstration of Mind's commitment to lived experience, for ten years the organisation has appointed a lived experience Board member as a voice for consumer perspectives at a governance level.

Governance committees with partners
In recent times, members of the LEAT have been involved in external governance committees with Mind clinical partners. This has been an incredibly valuable experience on all sides and senior leaders at Mind are looking to expand this model to seek further opportunities to share the value that lived experience participants bring.

Service design and business development
Mind adopts an evidence informed approach to designing new services. Mind's LEAT and other community members have contributed significantly to various projects and initiatives that shape the way Mind staff deliver programs, and the way clients, families and carers experience Mind services. Examples of Mind leadership collaborating with the Mind community include the development of Mind's strategic plan and Mind's *What We Believe* statement. Lived experience consultants also attend interviews for tenders, where possible and contribute to decisions made at the very initial states of a service model design.

Opportunities in service delivery

Participation and Co-design Toolkit
Mind's *Participation and Co-design Toolkit* is available on the Mind intranet and provides links to a range of resources and tools to support participation across the organisation, from service design to service delivery:

- The **Participation Checklist** is a brief document offering a range of different ways the community can be involved in decisions at a service delivery level. It is recommended that teams reflect on this document together, on a regular basis to identify opportunities that might exist for participation and co-design within their service.
- The **Paid Participation Fact Sheet** offers advice and guidance on all paid participation activities, including when, and how to pay Mind community members for their involvement in service improvement or design.
- The **Reference Council Fact Sheet** provides advice and addresses common challenges for teams who are looking to establish and maintain a local consumer Reference Council or Advisory Group.
- **Involving Clients and Family in Recruitment** will offer guidance and ideas on the different ways Mind's community can be involved in recruitment, whether it is writing interview questions or attending interview panels. Clients can share scenarios and ideal outcomes with hiring staff ahead of the interviews.
- **Design Workshop Activity Handbook** is a collection of ideas, facilitation tips and activities people can utilise in design workshops to enable a process that is inclusive, equitable and accessible for all participants.

Feedback processes
Mind strongly encourages both complimentary and constructive feedback from the communities we serve, and there are a variety of ways to solicit and embrace feedback from people accessing Mind services, their families and carers. There are formal processes to manage complaints, as outlined in Mind's *Feedback and Complaints Policy*, and there are many ways to encourage feedback within services to enable continuous improvement. The following is a number of methods services from across Mind have facilitated feedback:

- Volunteers or people on student placements have called clients and families by phone with a series of questions to ask about people's experience with the service, and suggestions for improvement.
- Focus groups have been facilitated by peer practitioners, or other Mind employees with lived experience.
- Surveys are a regular feature of our Prevention and Recovery Centres (PARC's) and many other services across Mind.
- Informal family BBQs and gatherings are held at some of our youth residential services. The Family Engagement Worker at one of these services highlighted it as a most effective way to check in on families and see if there were ways support to carers could be improved.
- Individual or group interviews are a common feature of much of our research evaluation projects.

Case study:

Your Voice Matters was developed as a service improvement initiative in Queensland in 2016 as a way of enhancing participation in service delivery by collecting and responding to feedback from clients, families and carers. In 2020, the Participation Team worked together with the Quality and Practice teams to inform the national roll out of Your Voice Matters across Mind. The Participation and Quality and Practice teams together identified which elements of the initiative were flexible and open to change, and then developed a plan to co-design these elements with clients across a number of residential services. The Participation Team conducted a series of workshops using design-thinking tools including journey mapping, ideation techniques and storyboarding to ensure our workshops were inclusive, and as visual and engaging as possible. Based on the input from workshop participants, some prototype postcards and posters were designed with support from the Marketing and Communications Team and revised by two LEAT members, prior to being finalised. Insights from the workshops guided recommendations for how to roll out and use Your Voice Matters resources in services.

The most important element of feedback in any Mind service is the aim to 'close the feedback loop' and ensure the people involved in providing feedback are informed of any actions that follow, because of feedback received. There might also be opportunity for people providing feedback to be involved in implementing solutions.

Flagship co-design projects
Mind's Participation Team can also support co-design initiatives in services by providing advice, ideas and activities to guide the development of co-design and build capability within the organisation and our broader community. For example, in 2020-21 the Participation Team collaborated with the four Youth Residential Rehabilitation services in Victoria to support young people to better understand what it is like to live at the service, and what their role and responsibility in this service might look like.

Case study:

The Buddy Program was developed as a result of the staff at Youth Residential Rehabilitation services in Victoria having a desire to create a resource to share amongst all four services, that helped provide some insight into what it was like to live at one of the sites for young people.

Through utilising the co-design process with the residents and asking the Peer Practitioners to lead the engagement activities, we were able to learn more about what it looked like and what it felt like to live at one of these residential services.

We relied on creative activities that taught us some aspects that the young people may not have identified through direct questioning and adopted a co-design process from the Auckland Co-design Lab (2018) to guide us through the initiative. This process allowed us to understand the journey with a deeper level of understanding and have young people involved in decisions and shaping the direction at each step of the way. We were able to connect and provide four potential outputs and means for information sharing.

The young people voted on a Buddy Program that provides key points of discussion and a script for current residents to use when introducing new residents to the service, enabling a welcoming environment and helping new residents understand the experience of living at a Youth Residential Rehabilitation service through another young person's lens. The Buddy Program also helps new residents build rapport and connection with fellow residents.

Mind Recovery College™

Another way Mind demonstrates our commitment to lived experience-led program delivery is through Mind's Recovery College™. The college is an education-based approach to supporting mental health recovery through a framework of shared learning and co-production. It is based on the United Kingdom models, with principles and values including the following:

- Co-production and co-design to break down the clinician – patient power dynamic often found in traditional models of care. Courses are varied and developed via a co-design process, and subject matter might include confidence, mindfulness, tackling stigma and physical health for example.
- Bringing people together as the course offerings are open to all members of the community (not just Mind clients) and provide an opportunity for people to build connections with the community.
- Education focus as an objective of the recovery college model is to help people learn new skills and gain new knowledge, which supports recovery, growth and development (State of Victoria, 2021).

Opportunities in organisational systems and operations

Practice development

Mind has an ongoing commitment to continual quality improvement. The Practice Development Team work closely with services to support compliance to Mind's *Model of Recovery Oriented Practice*, helping Mind teams to adopt a person-centred approach in all its work. The Practice Development Team will engage with people accessing our services when developing new or tailoring existing processes for service delivery, such as policies, procedures, operations manuals and communications materials. A recent example of this was the co-design of the Physical Health Checklist summarised below:

Case study:

In 2020, the Practice Development Team identified that the **Physical Health Checklist** and the Physical Health Checklist Guideline were due for major review to make them more contemporary. The Practice Development and the Participation teams worked together with the Lived Experience Advisory Team and community mental health practitioners to co-design a new way to approach physical health to align with the My Better Life® goal planning model, current evidence-informed practice and the Equally Well Consensus Statement.

Following a practice audit of Prevention and Recovery Care/Step Up Step Down services, a series of workshops and surveys were held with LEAT and community mental health practitioners from across Australia. Through an on-going process of dialogue and review, the participants developed practice principles to support clients with their physical health needs, transformed the checklist into the *My Physical Health* tool and developed guidance for clients and staff about what they could do to support physical health.

Opportunities in advocacy, influence and systems change

Media campaigns
In 2021, Mind's Marketing and Communications Team approached the Lived Experience Advisory Team to lead and deliver our organisation's promotion of World Mental Health Day.

Research, Advocacy and Policy Development
Mind's Research, Advocacy and Policy Development Team advocates for social change at a systems level, and cannot do this without the voices and experiences of those who are most affected. Engaging people with lived experience is key to the important work of undertaking research, developing key policy submissions, evaluating our services and raising awareness with key stakeholders.

There are many ways Mind currently does this, including but not limited to employing peer researchers on key projects, and working directly with people in communities to understand the gaps and opportunities in the mental health service system. One example of this work was the recent collaboration with the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) on a national study to develop a clearer understanding of the relationship between the housing and mental health pathways of people with mental illness.

This research project was titled: *Trajectories: the interplay between mental health and housing pathways* (Brackertz et al., 2020) and key to this project, was the involvement and leadership of people with a lived experience at each step of the way.

> ***In recent years an approach to research that embeds active participation by those with experience of the focus of that research has been championed both from the human rights perspective, that people should not be excluded from research that describes and affects their lives, and from a methodological perspective in terms of rigorous research:*** … ***knowledge constructed without the active participation of practitioners can only be partial knowledge.*** Somekh, 2022, p.90

The *Trajectories*: *the interplay between mental health and housing pathways* project, research partners Mind and AHURI acknowledged a desire to ensure people with lived experience were actively involved in the research and policy development to come from the project. Mind recruited, trained and supervised three peer researchers who contributed their lived expertise knowledge and perspectives to add great value to the project. The project involved over 130 consultations, interviews and focus groups with consumers, carers and people with lived experience of housing stress, homelessness and mental ill-health with Mind and AHURI coordinated and facilitated over the course of the project. The consumer and carer consultation process also included a focus on Indigenous participation, which was sensitively and respectfully designed and implemented by Mind.

In a later part of the *Trajectories* project, which focused on policy development, Mind recruited and coordinated the participation of five people with lived experience of mental ill health and housing insecurity to advise and inform the policy recommendations, alongside senior policymakers from the housing and mental health space.
With an aim to privilege the views and input of lived experience, and additional workshop was facilitated with the group to ensure the policy recommendations aligned with community views.

Your role in leading change

- Read over the **Opportunity Matrix** on (page 15) of this document to reflect on current practice in your team and speak to your manager if you have any ideas for participation or co-design in your work.
- Understand the **Principles** (page 10) that participation and co-design at Mind should be based on.
- Refer back to the **Position statement: Working together to make a difference** (page 12) and understand what you might need to do before you engage the wider Mind community in your work. Are you able to provide participants with the right environment and experience?
- Refer to the **Participation and Co-design Toolkit** on the Mind Intranet to see what tools and resources are available for you to implement this work.
- Reflect and understand how your influence and position (professional or otherwise) might potentially affect the agenda that is prioritised?
- Think through where and who do the project resources and success flow to? Who can present the findings at conferences or present back to leadership?
- How can we make sure the experience been beneficial for all involved? How can you show you have built capability or delivered any outputs?
- How can you ensure the feedback loop will be closed and that everyone involved will be informed of any outcomes?

Related Mind policies and procedures

Participation Policy
Paid Participation Fact Sheet
Participation and Co-design Toolkit
Your Voice Matters Practice Guide
Buddy Program – for youth residential services
Feedback and Complaints Procedure
Diversity and Inclusion Framework
Peer Work Framework
Lived Experience Strategy

Further reading

Mind continues to be led by evidence and best practice, partnering with other organisations and communities across Australia. Some of the concepts in this practice framework have been informed by leading work in Australia and internationally. Below are some links for further reading that align with the principles and methodology outlined in the framework:

Participation and engagement resources

Index of Community Engagement Techniques - Tamarack Institute
https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca/hubfs/.Resources/Index%20of%20Engagement%20Techniques.pdf

Stretch2Engage Resources - Queensland Mental Health Commission
https://www.qmhc.qld.gov.au/engage-enable/lived-experience-led-reform/stretch2engage

Co-design/service design resources and articles

Co-design Training Resources – TACSI (The Australian Centre for Social Innovation)
https://tacsi.org.au/co-design-training-resources/

Design for Belonging – D.School Stanford
https://dschool.stanford.edu/resources/design-for-belonging

What is Co-design – Beyond Sticky Notes, KA McKercher
https://www.beyondstickynotes.com/what-is-codesign

Co-design Toolkit – WACOSS
https://www.wacoss.org.au/library/introduction-to-the-co-design-toolkit/

If We Want Design to be a Tool for Liberation, We'll Need More Than Good Intentions – Design Justice Network
https://eyeondesign.aiga.org/for-design-to-truly-be-a-tool-for-liberation-were-going-to-need-more-than-just-good-intentions/

Resources - Auckland Co-design Lab
https://www.aucklandco-lab.nz/

2020 Human-centred design playbook – Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet
www.vic.gov.au/designplaybook

'Why am I always being researched?' Guidebook - Chicago Beyond
https://chicagobeyond.org/researchequity/

Digital Service Toolkit - NSW Government
https://digital.nsw.gov.au/digital-service-toolkit/activities-and-templates

Co-production resources and guidelines

The 15 practices of rural community co-produced mental health initiatives – Jasmine Knox, Tracy De Cotta & Jane Farmer
https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2021-05/apo-nid312216.pdf

Co-production: putting principles into practice by Cath Roper, Flick Grey, Emma Cadogan
https://healthsciences.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/3392215/Coproduction_putting-principles-into-practice.pdf

Community Power: The Evidence - New Local UK
https://www.newlocal.org.uk/publications/community-power-the-evidence/#exec

Co-production Project Planner - Iris UK
https://www.iriss.org.uk/resources/tools/co-production-project-planner

Trauma informed design resources

Resources – Blue Knot Foundation
https://blueknot.org.au/

The Trauma Informed Toolkit - Klinick
https://trauma-informed.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Trauma-informed_Toolkit.pdf

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