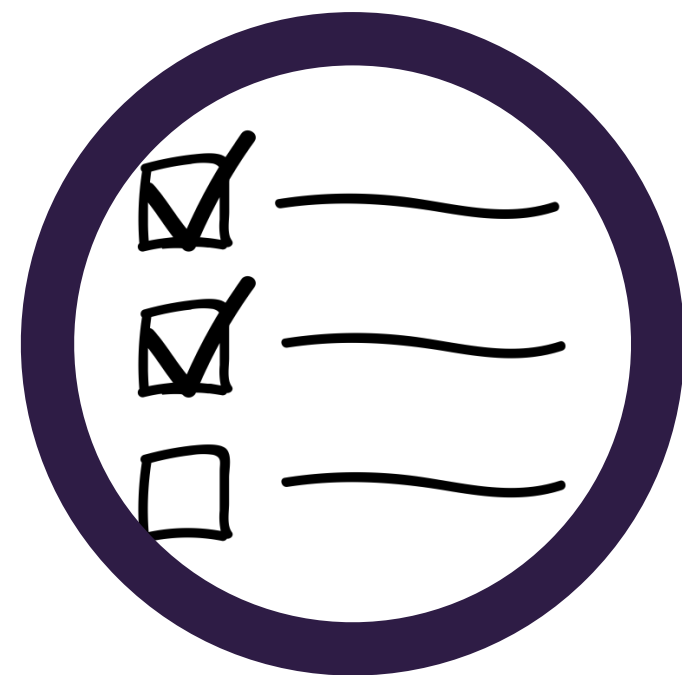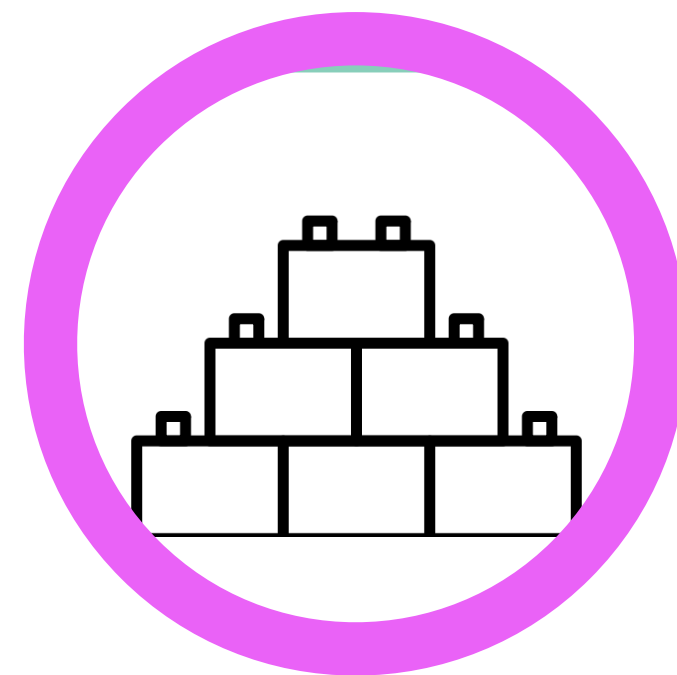# Calibrating Your Project Buying (and Getting) Great Design Research

TACSI

Readiness & Relevance

How ready are you for design research work? Is design research the right ask for this challenge?
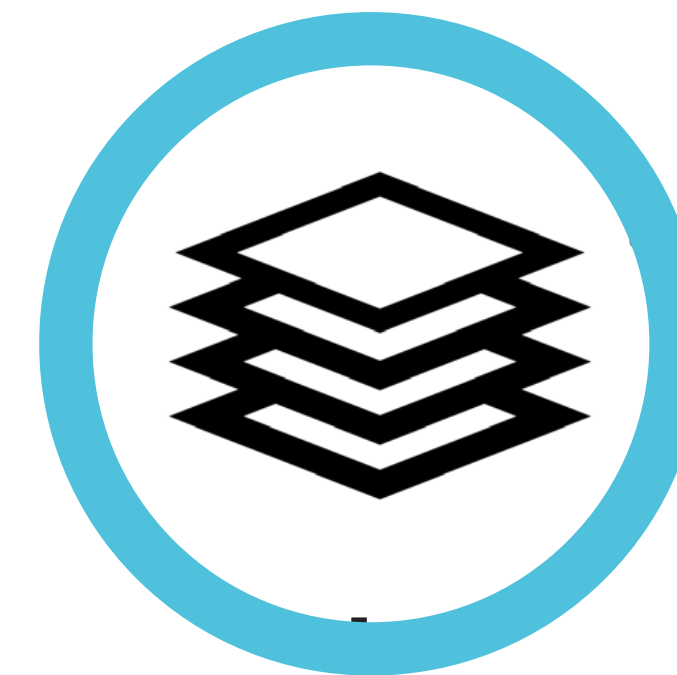
Resources

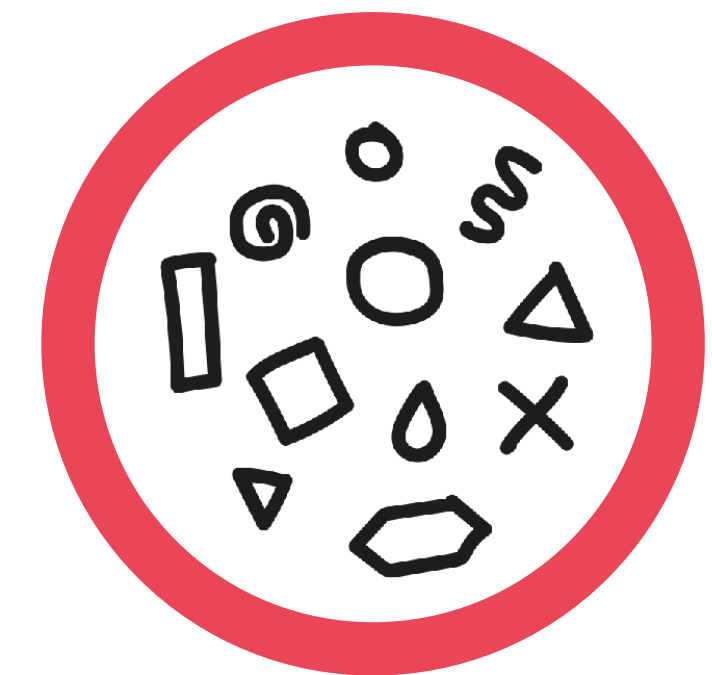What timelines and funding will set the project up for success?

Participatory Approach

What is the best project design for this ask? What degree of participatory research should we consider?

Deliverables

What kinds of outputs will be most useful for us? How can we create accountability and responsiveness in the contract and process?

Expertise & Capability

Which skills and demonstrated experience is needed for the work?

Calibrating Your Project Buying (and Getting) Great Design Research

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1. Describe a design research project that you've recently worked on or are planning to commission.

2. What aspects are most important to do well?

3. How has this shaped the procurement process? How has this shaped the project design?

Readiness & Relevance

How ready are you for design research work?
Is design research the right ask for this challenge?

TACSI

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1. Describe what you'd like to do design research on and what you're aiming to achieve.

3. What's your reflection on readiness and relevance level? What adaptions might you make?

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2. Where do you fall on this spectrum?

Might require adaptations

Great Fit

We have a solution already and want some post-rationalised data to validate or support our concept.

Lots of research already exists in this area.

Clients are fatigued from over-consultation.

We've got a lot of quantitative data but want to understand why's hows and new patterns.

We've identified a phenomenon that has the potential to unlock new ways of thinking, working and being - if only we could understand why this was happening.

What timelines and funding will set the project up for success?

TACSI

1. Describe your ambition, timelines and funding bracket.

3. Considering each tick will require more time to do well and safely, what's your reflection on resources level? What adaptions might you make?

2. Which of these feature are essential to the project?

Features	Tick	Why?
Training of our internal team		
Working with peer researchers		
Multiple methods (interviews, ethnography, group workshops, desk research, surveys)		
Building relationships with a community		
Insights about a specific cohort		
Insights about multiple actors		
Insights about a service		
Insights about a policy context		
Insights about a complex system		
Initial prototyping or testing of concepts		

Small projects can be completed in about 1 month. They may be workshop based or draw from a small sample size. They can give you a quick look into a specific area or cohort. They help set the stage for further design research.

Medium projects can be completed in about 3-6 months. They may include peer researchers and explore insights at multiple levels. They can help you gather a deep set of insights about people and situations.

Large projects can be completed in about 7-14 months. They will likely include peer researchers, use multiple modes of data collection, focus on multiple cohorts and explore complexities across a system. They can help you develop deep insight and identify opportunities and co-produce concepts.
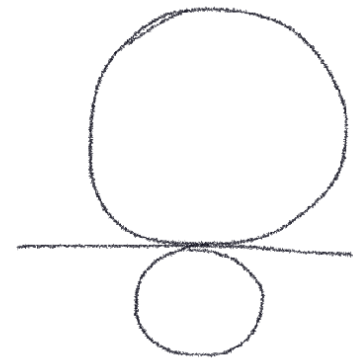
Participatory Approach
What is the best project design for this ask? What degree of participatory research should we consider?
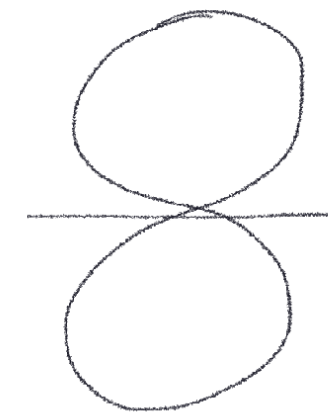
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1. Describe the community you're looking to work with. What kinds of power imbalances or vulnerabilities should be considered?

3. What kind of participatory approach might you ask for? How would you make the case for choosing this one?

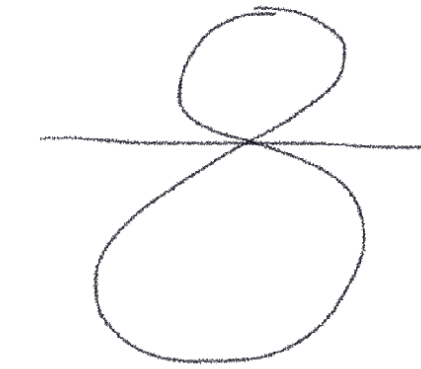**2. Which tradition of design seems most appropriate?**

Mostly in
Design Thinking

Bringing expertise and life expertise into the room

In and out
Human-Centred Design

Interviews and ethnography

Mostly out
Participatory Design

Peer researchers and designers

Selecting Capability
Which skills and demonstrated experience is needed for the work?

TACSI

1. Reflecting on the previous canvases, what are the three most important aspects of your project design?

3. Based on any capabilities marked 'high,' what demonstrated capacity, project experience, or output examples might help you assess capability?

2. **Which additional capabilities are needed for your project?**

Capabilities	Low relevance	Moderate relevance	High relevance
Specific cultural connections or knowledge			
Deep understanding of a system (e.g. health system)			
Understanding of a specific type of practice (e.g. child protection casework)			
Understanding of a specific cohort			
Experience training peer researchers			
Experience training staff to participate			
Facilitating large workshops with multiple cohorts and stakeholders			
Experience in the design research process (research, analysis, insight development)			

What kinds of outputs will be most useful for us? How can we foster accountability and responsiveness in the contract and process?

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1. What key actions would you like to see happen as a result of this work?

2. Name some key audiences who need to hear about, see or use the learnings from this work.

Audience
The people who need to hear about or use the learnings

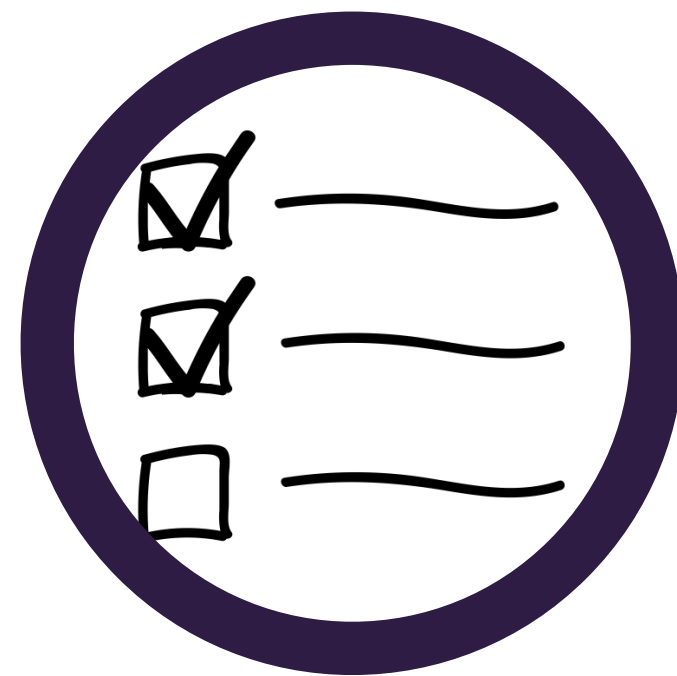**Use Case**
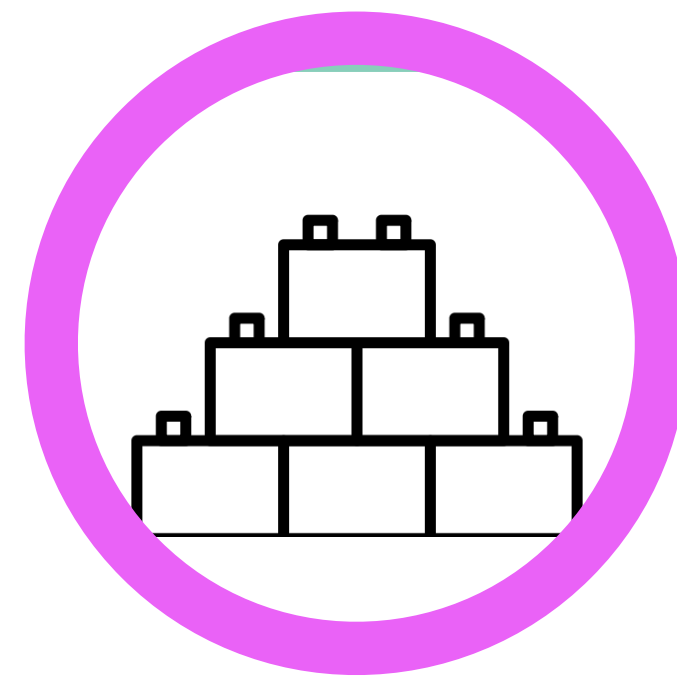Actions we'd like to see as a result

Output options
The kinds of key deliverables that will assist with that

3. What in-progress outputs might be helpful to see along the way to support the involvement of your team in the process of this work?

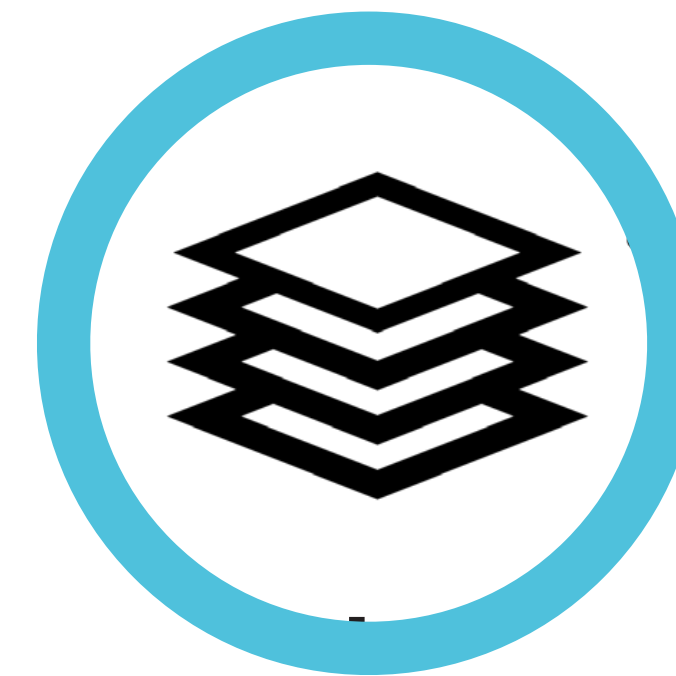# Calibrating Your Project Buying (and Getting) Great Design Research

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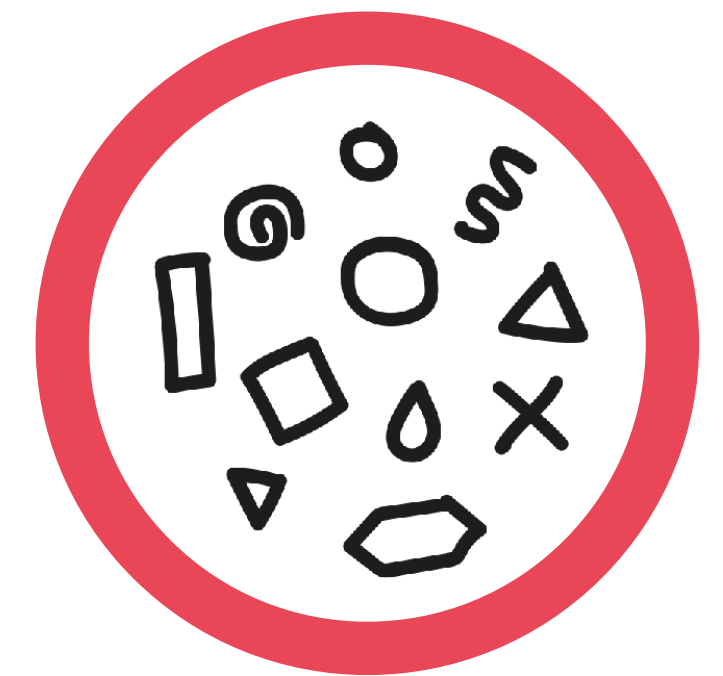
Readiness & Relevance　　**Resources**　　**Participatory Approach**　　**Deliverables**　　**Selecting Capability**

Key Implications for RFQs, Project Design or Contract management: