

About RADIUS

RADIUS is a social innovation hub based out of Simon Fraser University's (SFU) Beedie School of Business. We believe an economy that works for everyone is one that is dynamic, just, sustainable, and resilient and to support our vision, we deliver programs to collaboratively develop, test, and accelerate innovative responses to tough social problems. Drawing on this leading-edge work, we also offer training, events, and educational opportunities to build collective capacity to respond to the challenges of our time.

RADIUS holds expertise in a variety of innovation methods, tools and processes, including innovation process and program design, equity-centred design, prototyping and lean experimentation, evaluation, and impact measurement. As an organization with a vision to transform the economy through collaboration and community engagement, a tenant to our work is recognizing the unique position in which we are to share our experiences and learnings from working alongside diverse communities all while embedding and centering the following Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) [principles](#) into all of our work:

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We centre equity in our design, strategy, and daily work.

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We value the knowledge, experiences, and histories in the margins of any given system.

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We engage in reciprocal relationship building.

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We are an open, learning organization.

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We know future systems will draw on the new and the old.

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We balance this ambitious work with honouring our limits.

Inclusive Design - Methodologies & Approaches

Design Thinking is a one solution-finding technique that originally came from the product design world but has since been widely adopted across sectors. It highlights a process of five phases to designing solutions:

- **Empathize:** Develop a deep understanding of the challenge
- **Define:** Clearly articulate the problem to be solved
- **Ideate:** Brainstorm potential solutions
- **Prototype:** Try out an idea in the simplest way possible
- **Test:** Continuous short-cycle innovation process to improve the design

The design thinking process, however, fails to acknowledge the power which the designer holds throughout: the ability to choose who they seek to empathize with, how they interpret results, to choosing the solutions to prototype. Without acknowledging the power and potential biases we bring as individuals and organizations to the design processes, we can inadvertently perpetuate harmful practices and fail to create solutions that truly meet the needs of the communities we seek to support.

Inclusive design practices, like Equity-Centered Design (ECD) founded by Liberatory Design, seek to address these gaps. ECD guides us by first understanding our role and position as a designer, centering those that are most impacted by the challenge at every phase, and addressing and dismantling the power dynamics that create barriers to true co-creation.

ECD embeds these into the Design Thinking methodology through the addition of two stages 'Notice' and 'Reflect'. These additional phases are centred throughout each phase and seek to:

- **Notice:** Acknowledge and build critical self awareness from both an individual and organizational lense in order to enter the design process ready to co-create by shifting power to and centring the voices of those most impacted by the design work.
- **Reflect:** Take pause, notice emotions, and reflect on learnings to ensure equity and inclusion are embedded during each phase.

Through the addition of these two phases, ECD seeks to design solutions with (not for) and alongside communities to create meaningful and transformative change. These processes create conditions for collective liberation and result in reciprocal, (re)built community relationships.



Figure 1: from Liberatory Design