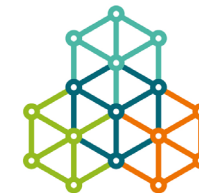


Policy By Design Workshop: Evidence

19 November 2018, 2.00pm – 4.30pm



**The
Policy
Project**

Responsive today,
shaping tomorrow

Context and Purpose

There is much potential knowledge and evidence that policy practitioners aren't making the most of. This motivated the Auckland Co-Design Lab and the Policy Project to co-organise this *Policy by Design: Evidence* workshop.

The purpose of the workshop was **to explore different approaches to enabling policy practitioners to produce policy advice that is better informed by various forms of evidence** – through the lenses of practice-based evidence and evidence-based practice.

Note: This workshop was preceded by a seminar that explored the opportunities for co-design of policy in New Zealand (see separate [conversation tracker](#)).

Workshop Presenter/Facilitator

Penny Hagen

Auckland Co-Design Lab



Panel

Phil Whiting

Auckland Council

Adithi Pandit

Deloitte

Claire Falck

NZ Police

Barbara Annesley

DPMC

This *Policy by Design: Evidence* workshop was attended by 42 policy practitioners from 10 government agencies, the Policy Project, the Auckland Co-Design Lab, the Auckland Council and The Southern Initiative.

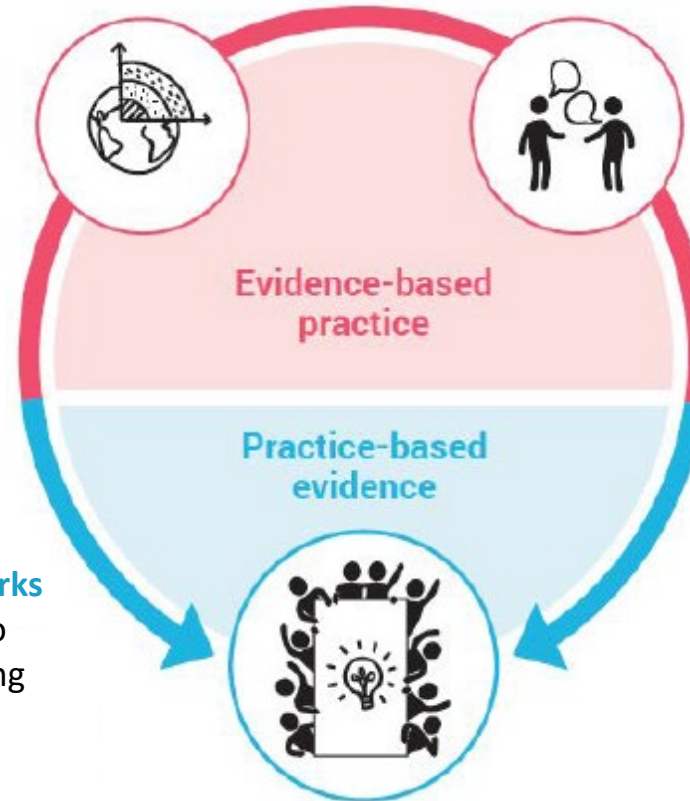
Evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence

Big data, Quantitative

Focus on 'what', 'where' and 'who' is experiencing various indicators of disadvantage

Testing, prototyping, learning what works

Working with communities in context to create action and foundations for shifting outcomes



Thick data, Qualitative

Focus on 'why' and 'how' people experience disadvantage, and what can help to shift indicators

Developed by Dr Ingrid Burkett
taksi.org.au

Practice-based evidence:

- is commonly gathered through co-design processes
- involves developing evidence about how things are, and what works on the ground to achieve outcomes
- is developed through iterations of learning and testing, and developmental evaluation.

More features of practice-based evidence

Practice-based evidence takes account of:

- the outcomes valued by participants
- the preferences of clients and families
- the cultural norms and traditions of diverse communities
- the observations of service providers.

An evidence framework to improve results, Center for the Study of Social Policy (2014)

Practice-based evidence is especially relevant when:

- new knowledge or novel approaches are needed (insufficient evidence exists)
- you need to understand how different elements actually interact in context
- you need to account for place, locality, context and culture.

“Practice that comes from the local community and matches the community context.”

– Bartgis, J.U., & Bigfood, D. (2010)

Using different approaches to evaluating learning



Prototyping

Multiple Loops of Learning

Fast learning, cheaper, in context



Pilots

One Loop of Learning

Slow, resource intensive, in context



Randomised Control Trials

Controlled learning outside practice

Slow, resource intensive, removed from context

Practice-based Evidence



Evidence-based Practice

Developed by Dr Ingrid Burkett
taksi.org.au

A hypothesis to be refined, changed or dropped.

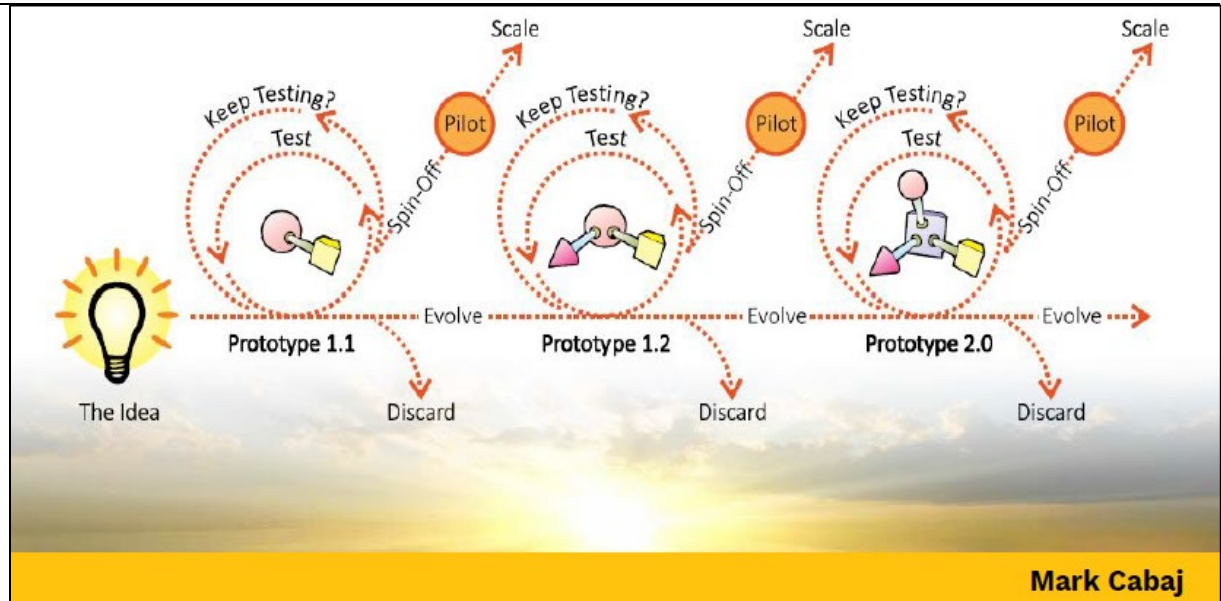
Solution is largely identified and refined; ironing out the creases.

Is it working as expected? Focus on impact over implementation.

Prototyping to enable practice-based evidence

Prototyping:

- means early trialling of inexpensive, scaled-down versions of solutions
- tests the practicality of proposed solutions
- enables collection of critical practice-based evidence about why, how (and what) would work
 - on the ground, and
 - in particular communities.



Establishing rigour for prototyping – ask:

- Are the methods **relevant** to answer key questions?
- Are they **credible** – who was involved in testing and where was it tested?
- Is there an **appropriate burden of proof** – given the nature of what we are trying to learn (early ideas or revealing feasibility and outcomes)?
- **Timely** - are results being fed back in real time to support iterations of the prototype?

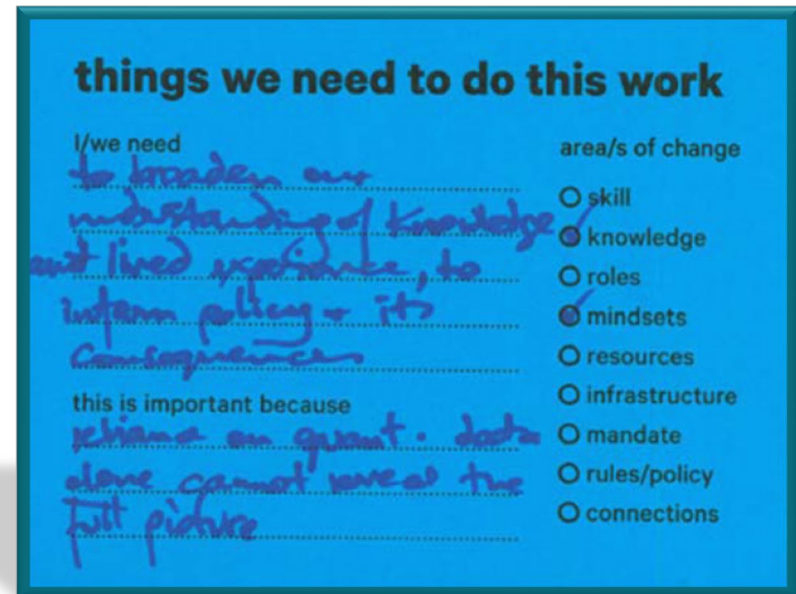
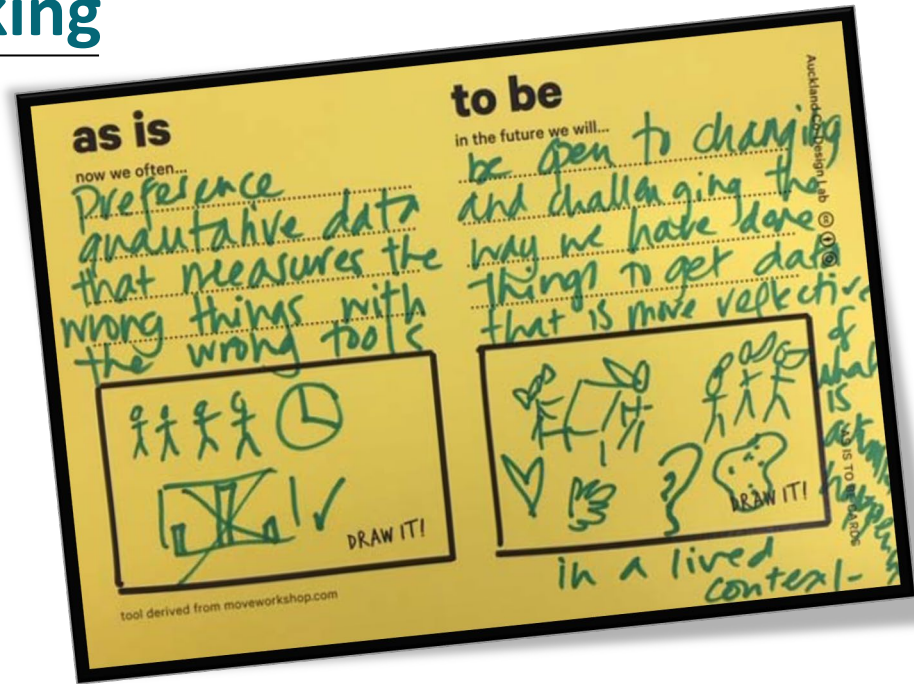
Value of prototyping for practice-based evidence and policy

- Testing out and **localising existing evidence-base**.
- Materialising interactions in complex systems **including how policies interact** on the ground.
- Exploring and generating **new plausible approaches** – when existing evidence is not sufficient.
- **Enabling local input and leadership** into the development and understanding of what is needed in particular settings.
- Developing **new knowledge through collaborative action** between different groups working together.
- **Building capacity for the change** (new skills, structures, connections, capability) through the process of prototyping different ways of working.

What I need to do design thinking

Feedback from participants included the need to...

- challenge the conventional policy cycle and 'policy shop culture'
- access examples of successful design work in local policy shops to persuade risk averse managers
- receive a clear mandate from their leaders to do design work
- unlock resources and the permission to experiment, collaborate and iterate.



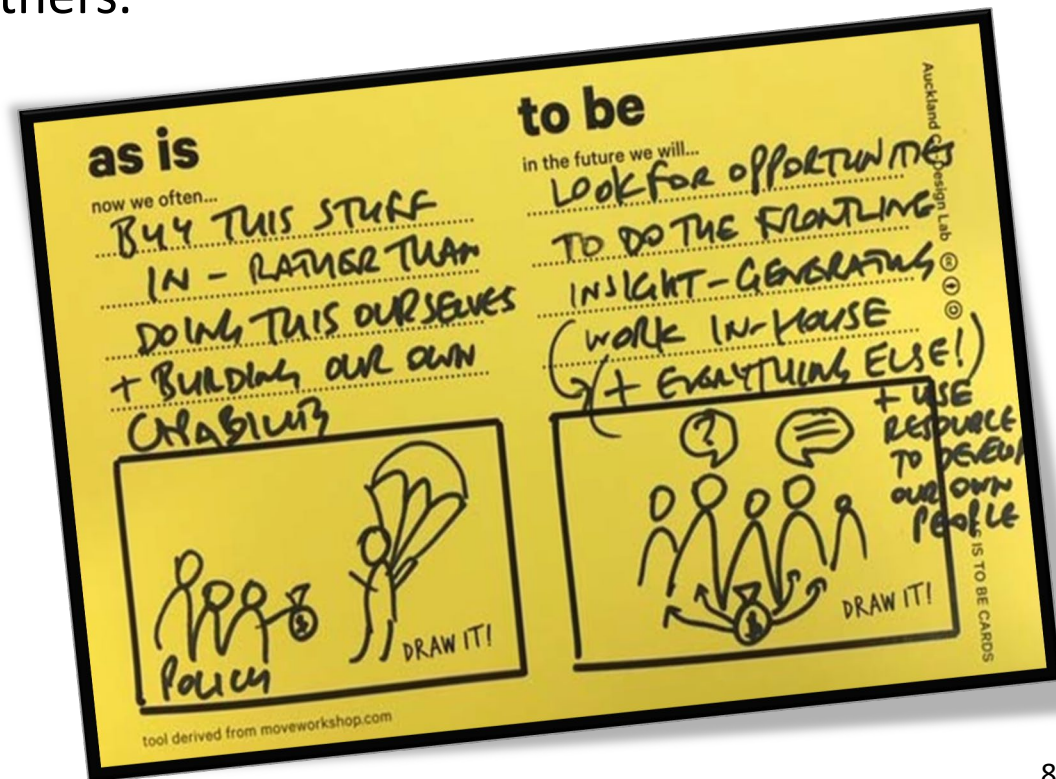
Having the right breadth of skills and learning opportunities

Many policy practitioners don't feel they have the right skills and experience to plan and lead design work that generates practice-based evidence; our workforce lacks diversity and we tend to rely on external design expertise rather than develop internal capability.

There is little to draw on in terms of design training, guidance or tools that is policy-specific, or which recognises our local context. People would welcome structured opportunities to learn from others.

“There are no (policy-specific) design training courses, frameworks, tools; no community of practice or centre of excellence, to build capability and ensure consistency.”

“We need to hire and value a more diverse workforce (both in terms of demographics and professional background).”



What will I take away from this workshop?

“Greater appreciation of the depth of interest in/experience with co-design across a wide range of govt. agencies.”

“The idea that asking ‘what is the problem we are trying to solve?’ is not enough.”

- A sense of the growing interest, activity and momentum in this space.
- A better understanding of how policy and design methods could be combined – and some of the challenges.
- Confidence and renewed determination that this is something policy people can do and should do.

“To overcome challenges, we need to work across functions... Don’t wait for a mandate or directive – just do it.”

“Contact details of presenters and others interested in policy and design who are resources I can draw on in future.”

What do we want to see next... or more often?

“[We need] more opportunities like this” ... “safe spaces to create friction.”

“It would be great if similar training aimed at higher management leadership was available.”

- Stay in touch with others who are interested / practicing in this area
- Follow-up sessions – think about who is in the room, and who else could be brought in
- Establish a community of practice – share what we’re doing and learning
- Practical guidance, resources, training to develop skills and build confidence.

“More on how to practically manage political timeframes against a slower ‘policy by design’ timeframe.”

“A policy/design framework with criteria to select the most appropriate way to address a problem.”

Acknowledgements

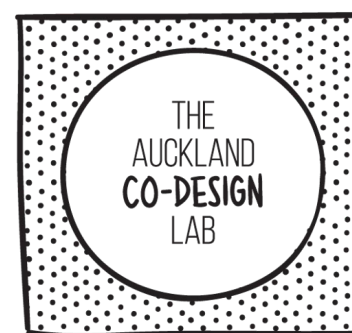
We would like to thank and acknowledge all the agencies, collaborators and individuals who gave their time and shared their learning, making this workshop possible.

Auckland Co-design Lab makes available the tools used for the workshop. These tools and many other valuable resources are available on their website under a creative commons licence.

www.aucklandco-lab.nz

The Policy Project is about building a high performing policy system that supports and enables good government decision making. The Policy Project offers policy frameworks, a toolbox and conversation trackers (like this one) on our website.

www.dPMC.govt.nz/policyproject



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