Public Engagement Issue Area Networks

Design Thinking Session | Workshop 1
December 13, 2013
[REPORT EXCERPTS]

OFFICE FOR
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Design Thinking
@ COLLEGE OF DESIGN
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA.
INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

University of Minnesota Office of Public Engagement Issue Area Networks (IANs)

The University of Minnesota Public Engagement Issue Area Networks is a University-wide initiative designed to strengthen the internal alignment of the various public engagement activities focused on a particular societal issue, but which are currently operating independently across various offices, units, and departments.

With more than 200 units that conduct community-engaged work across a broad range of topics, there are many opportunities for the University to play a greater leadership role in making substantial and significant impacts on important societal issues. Because societal issues are inherently complex and multifaceted, no one office, unit, or center alone can address them fully.

This Issue Area Networks initiative is intended to link and encourage synergy among existing engagement projects, partnerships, and activities in ways that can leverage greater collective action and overall impact. A primary goal of this initiative is to encourage the building of a more coordinated, systems approach to public and community engagement by networking existing community-engaged research, teaching, and public service efforts that are focused on large-scaled societal challenges and issues.

The Issue Area Networks are focused on key societal issues including: arts, economic development, youth & education, health, poverty, environment & sustainability, transportation, food, and diversity & inclusion. Any individual (or unit) affiliated with the University who is involved in community-engaged research, teaching, and/or public service/outreach work on the issue area is welcome to participate in the networks.

Design Thinking

Design Thinking is an emerging field applying the tools and processes from the design disciplines to complex, system-wide problems. It applies design processes to engage individuals and groups on specific creative problem solving, and changing the status quo by making systems change while having fun with human creativity!

Design Thinking @ College of Design is a collaborative that provides design thinking research and outreach services across sectors, including within the university. Our audacious goal is to unleash the creative potential of individuals and organizations across all sectors to innovate in fulfilling their mission at the local, regional, national and international level. We are located at University of Minnesota’s College of Design on the Twin Cities campus and can be found online at: dt.design.umn.edu.
INTRODUCTION

Public Engagement Issue Area Networks Design Thinking Series

The goal of the design thinking workshops is to continue to build the Issues Area Networks, as a next step to the meetings hosted by the Office for Public Engagement on the issue-focused themes with community-engaged faculty, staff, students, and others who are interested in taking action in shaping and advancing a University-wide agenda for each issue area.

The design thinking workshops offer a process/means and a space for creative synthesis and production by each IAN themed group to set goals based on needs and users and create their vision and work plan. The outcomes of the design thinking work over the three sessions are intended to accomplish goals of the initiative by networking existing research, teaching and public service efforts, setting the agenda for collective action and creating a design for assessing cumulative overall impact over the various individual engagement efforts.

The Public Engagement Issue Area Networks Design Thinking Series is composed of three sessions, which together, are intended to advance the building of a more aligned institutional approach to addressing challenging societal issues through community engagement.

The first session (December, 2013) focuses on “network building”. This session will engage participants in envisioning and designing what an internal public engagement “network” for each of the nine societal issue area might look like. The expectation is that each issue area network will be unique and look different.

The second session (February, 2014) focuses on “agenda building”. With the network conceptualized, what are the key issues, questions, and goals that each issue area network will address. The agenda for each area network will form the basis for funding support that will lead to the implementation of activities that will help the network achieve its identified goals and secure the network’s strength as an internally aligned collaborative composed of many units but all contributing to and working toward a common set of overarching goals.

The third session (April 2014) focuses on “action planning and implementation”. With the network conceptualized and the designs for each network’s goals designed, the third design thinking session address focuses on building a design for the community engagement activities, the internal alignment efforts, and other activities that will form the basis for action to move the agendas forward in ways that will achieve the network goals identified in session two. The action planning and implementation work will identify specific steps that each network will take to move the network’s work forward. These action plans will be eligible for funding support.
INTRODUCTION

Office for Public Engagement Issue Area Networks (OPE IANs)

Issue Area Networks (IANs)

- ART
- DIVERSITY
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- ENVIRONMENT
- FOOD
- HEALTH
- POVERTY
- TRANSPORTATION
- YOUTH & EDUCATION

Design Thinking
@ COLLEGE OF DESIGN
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Design Thinking Work Session 1

Public Engagement Issue Area Networks: Design Thinking Work Session 1
PROTOYPE PRESENTATIONS
TEAM 2: TRANSPORT

PROTOTYPE 1 - We don’t need to recreate the wheel

Team members: Sandra Cullen, Gina Baas, Arlene Mathison, Shawn Haag, & Cindy Zerger

C.T.S. has been the transportation issue hub for 25 years. We have a good foundation of internal networks, policies and processes in place for facilitating research efforts. This existing structure can be built upon to create connections around public engagement.

Design Features
• HUB: CTS
• Scholars Program - 50 to 60 Faculty and research scholars meet on ongoing basis to share their research
• 5 Councils - 4 research focused and 1 focused on education and outreach activities
• Consolidated RFP Process - Sponsors faculty research proposals
• Centralized Communications Mechanisms - Conversation on the transportation work going on at the university
TEAM 2: TRANSPORT

PROTOTYPE 2 - Adding spokes to the wheel

Team members: Sandra Cullen, Gina Baas, Arlene Mathison, Shawn Haag, & Cindy Zerger

This prototype is based on facilitating and adding an engagement focus, and connecting with new units and people. We have a good system for research and ‘Adding spokes to the wheel’ means building on the existing system to do better engaged work with the community. The new features proposed to be added are explained in the design features below.

(For additional material generated by the team, see Appendix page 00-00)

Design Features

- Introduce other programs/ departments within the university to encourage working with or through CTS in research
- Idea jam - a place in the university where researchers and people who are doing engagement around transportation can come together around an idea and work on the solution together
- New engagement RFP
- Award around engagement
- Engagement focus to existing communications mechanisms (video, articles/blog posts, system map of “engages”/researchers)
TEAM 2: TRANSPORT

TEAM MEMBERS
Sandra Cullen
Gina Baas
Arlene Mathison
Shawn Haag
Cindy Zerger

We are transportation

We don't need to recreate the wheel
In the middle is CTS; the colleges and departments surround
Sixty research scholars and five existing councils

Consolidated RFP as a process and centralized communications help to tell our story
Adding spokes to the wheel by reaching out
An idea jam that brings people together
Maybe a new engagement RFP as well.

-Jennifer Hegland

Public Engagement Issue Area Networks: Design Thinking Work Session 1
TEAM 2: TRANSPORT

PROBLEM/ OPPORTUNITY

IDEATE & CLUSTER

MATERIALS
TEAM NO: 2 - TRANSPORT

PROTOTYPE 1

CREATIVE TITLE:
WE DON'T NEED TO REINVENT THE WHEEL

1-2 SENTENCE DESCRIPTION:
CTS has been the transportation brain hub for 25 years. We have a vast foundation in our research efforts stemming from strategies that can be built upon to create connections around public engagement.

DESIGN FEATURES:
- Hub
- CTS
- PPP Process
- Scholars/Comm
- 5 Councils
- Communications Mechanics

TEAM NO: 2 - TRANSPORT

PROTOTYPE 2

CREATIVE TITLE:
ADDING GEAR TO THE WHEEL

1-2 SENTENCE DESCRIPTION:
Facilitating and adding a more engagement-focused and connecting worldview unitary project.

DESIGN FEATURES:
- Idea Jam
- New Engagement PFP
- Engagement tools to existing communications mechanics (videos, articles, blog posts, social media, events)
TEAM 2: TRANSPORT

FEEDBACK

I LIKE
- Utilization of existing resources—working with what we have
- “Don’t need to recreate the wheel” Clever!
- The ways they are telling their stories
- Using good structure
- Being able to see the ways things are currently structured
- CTS as existing strength!
- Leveraging CTS

I WISH
- The team was open to more radical thinking—less of a presentation of what you already do

WHAT IF
- It was more closely tied to research, development
- How does culture/demographics affect CTS work? Beyond research?
- RFP would need a broad-based college/center proposal
- Transportation could be linked to urban development, sustainable communities, etc. CTS not the center point maybe?

THIS MAKES ME THINK OF
- How little I know about transportation on campus
- How do we take the best practices of CTS to other units
- A well oiled machine
- What are opportunities for engagement
- Will all folks feel welcome into this existing structure

We could think about transportation within a systems rubric
Scholars program
The wheel be modified
The community impact paths were more visible
The features of CTS could be replicated in other domains!
There was more mass routes community engagement. Doing more “with” not “on” research....