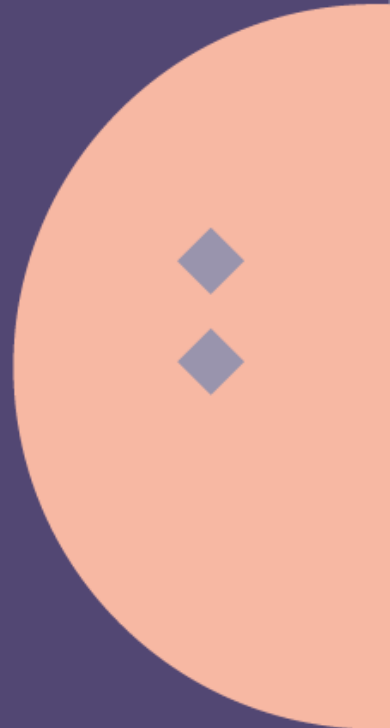




VISITOR STUDENT WORKSHOP · FULL DAY

Design Thinking for Sustainable Enterprises

Wednesday 14 October 2026 · 10:00–15:30



Today's Timetable

01

10:00–10:30 · Welcome and design thinking introduction

02

10:30–11:00 · Campus tour / Dr Binh presentation (TBC)

03

11:00–12:00 · Design thinking activities + LEGO Serious Play ® introduction

04

12:00–13:00 · Lunch and networking

05

13:00–14:00 · LEGO Serious Play® activities and prototype building

06

14:00–14:20 · Pair presentation preparation

07

14:20–15:30 · Pair presentations, feedback, final reflection and close

FULL DAY · 10:00–15:30

What You Will Be Able to Do Today

01 Explain the process

Describe the five stages of design thinking.

02 Understand a need

Use a short interview to identify a user need.

03 Frame and build

Interviews, “How might we...?” questions and thinking with LEGO® models.

04 Share and improve

Be ready to prototype and present

What Is Design Thinking?

Solve problems by starting with people.

Used by designers, businesses and social enterprises.
Helps us understand needs before we create solutions.
Works well for complex problems with no clear answer.

IN THREE WORDS

DESIGN THINKING IS...

Human-centred

Starts with real needs

Creative

Explores many ideas

Experimental

Tests ideas early

Why Use It for Sustainability?

01 Complex problems

Sustainability challenges have many causes and no simple answer.

02 Many people affected

Customers, workers, communities and the environment all matter.

03 Real needs first

Starting with people helps us avoid solving the wrong problem.

04 Less waste

Testing small ideas early saves time, money and resources.

Balance people, planet and long-term value.

The Five Stages of Design Thinking

1

EMPATHISE

Understand the people you are designing for.

2

DEFINE

Name the real problem to solve.

3

IDEATE

Generate many possible ideas.

4

PROTOTYPE

Make a quick, simple version of an idea.

5

TEST

Share it, listen and learn.

Empathise: Start With People

Understand what people really need.

Listen. Observe. Ask “why?”

See the problem through someone else’s eyes.

Put your own assumptions to one side.

STAGE 1 OF 5

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

Interviews

Ask open questions

Observation

Watch what people do

Empathy map

Say · Think · Do · Feel

Define: Name the Real Problem

Choose one clear problem to solve.

Look for patterns in what you heard.

Focus on one important need.

Write it as a question: “How might we...?”

STAGE 2 OF 5

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

Point of view

One person, one need

How might we...?

A question that opens up ideas

Problem statement

A clear, short sentence

Ideate: Generate Many Ideas

Go for quantity first. Choose later.

Aim for many ideas, not one perfect idea.

Build on other people's ideas.

Do not judge ideas yet.

STAGE 3 OF 5

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

Brainstorming

Say ideas out loud

Crazy eights

8 quick sketches in 8 minutes

Mind mapping

Connect ideas visually

Prototype: Make Ideas Visible

Make a quick, rough version of your idea.

A prototype gives people something real to react to.
Keep it simple, cheap and fast.
It is a tool for learning, not a finished product.

STAGE 4 OF 5

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

Sketches

Drawings and storyboards

Models

Built from simple materials

Role play

Act out an experience

Test: Learn From Feedback

Share your idea and learn what works.

Ask people to react, not just to agree.
Listen for what confuses or surprises them.
Improve the idea and try again.

STAGE 5 OF 5

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

I like... I wish...

A simple feedback format

Observe use

Watch people try it

Iterate

Improve, then test again

It Is a Loop, Not a Line

01

People say it does not solve their real problem

Back to Empathise

02

We framed the problem too widely

Back to Define

03

None of our ideas feel new or useful

Back to Ideate

04

The prototype confuses people

Back to Prototype

Going back is progress, not failure.

Five Habits of a Design Thinker

1 Stay curious

Ask questions and look for what you do not know yet.

2 Put people first

Start with real needs, not your own assumptions.

3 Welcome many ideas

Wait before judging. More ideas lead to better ideas.

4 Try, test, improve

Rough and early is better than perfect and late.

5 Work together

Different views make ideas stronger.

Interview a Partner

Ask your partner about a sustainable habit that they find hard to keep.

Work in pairs: 2 minutes each, then swap.

Listen more than you speak. Take short notes.

Finish by sharing one surprising thing you heard.

4 MINUTES

YOU CAN ASK...

“Tell me about a time...”

Ask for a real story

“Why was that important?”

Keep asking why

“What was hardest?”

Find the barrier

Write a How Might We Question

Choose one need from your interview. Turn it into a question.

Describe the need, not the solution.

Not too broad, not too narrow.

Example: How might we help students avoid plastic waste in the canteen?

3 MINUTES

USE THIS FORMAT...

“How might we...”

Start with these words

“...help [who]...”

Name the person

“...do [what]?”

Name the need

Crazy Threes

Sketch 3 ideas to respond to the question in 3 minutes.

Fold a sheet of paper into 3 parts.

One idea per part, about 1 minute each.

Words and stick figures are fine. Share your favourite with a neighbour.

3 MINUTES

REMEMBER...

Quantity first

Do not stop to judge

Be bold

Wild ideas are welcome

Rough is fine

Words and sketches work

One Takeaway

Think for one minute.

Then tell your partner. Complete the sentence:

“One thing I will remember about design thinking is...”

Thinking With Your Hands

Use LEGO Serious Play® models to make ideas visible and easier to discuss.

Build first, then explain what the model means.

Every person builds and every person shares.

The model becomes a shared object for questions and reflection.

WHY USE IT?

Think differently

Hands can unlock ideas

Make ideas visible

Others can see your thinking

Give everyone a voice

Everyone builds and shares

What Makes LEGO® Serious Play® Different



A facilitated method where everyone builds, gives meaning and shares a story.

- 1** The facilitator asks a question
- 2** You build a model
- 3** You give the model meaning
- 4** You share the story
- 5** The group reflects

The Four Steps We Will Practise Today with Lego to support Design thinking!

1 CHALLENGE

Listen to the question

2 CONSTRUCT

Build your response

3 SHARE

Tell the model's story

4 REFLECT

Notice patterns and ideas

Rules for Building and Sharing

1

Everyone builds and everyone shares

2

The builder owns the meaning of their model

3

The model is the answer to the challenge

4

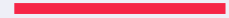
Ask questions about the model, not the person

5

Listen without judging: there is no one right model

Build a Tower

Build the tallest free-standing tower you can.



Choose any pieces.
Build quietly.
Stop when time is called.

2 MINUTES

YOU CAN SAY...

“My model shows...”

“This piece means...”

“The most important part is...”

Build a Team Strength

Build a model showing a strength you bring to a design team.

Build for 3 minutes.
Share for 30 seconds.
Start: “This strength will help a team because...”

3 MINUTES

YOU CAN SAY...

“My model shows...”

“This piece means...”

“The most important part is...”

What Did You Notice?

01 Was it easier to build or to explain?

02 How did the model help you find words?

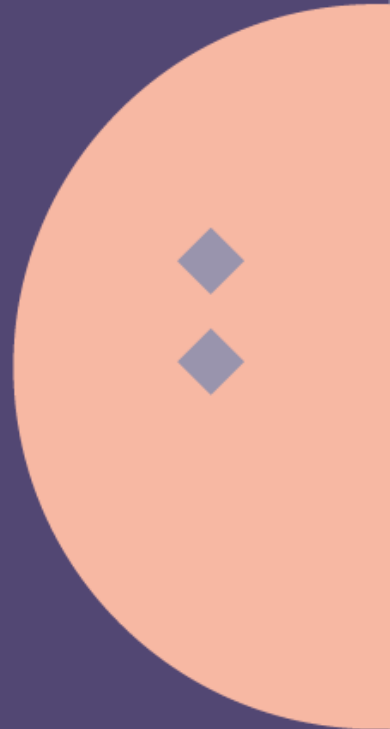
03 What did you learn from another person?



LUNCH & NETWORKING

Morning work complete
Return at 13:00 ready to build

12:00–13:00 - lunch

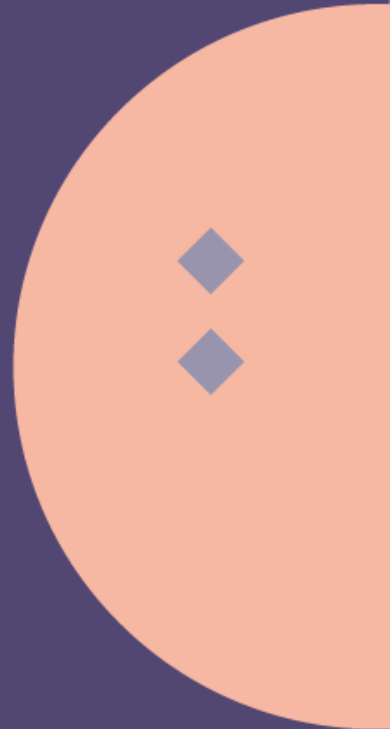




BUILDING WITH LEGO SERIOUS PLAY

Building and Presenting with Lego Serious Play!

13.00-15.30



From Challenge to Enterprise

01 Focus

Choose a specific problem

02 Understand

Build the user and need

03 Create

Build a possible solution

04 Connect

Share model

05 Test

Respond to change

Choose Your Pair Challenge – You can re-use the ideas from previous Training sessions!

1 Circular economy

2 Food and natural resources

3 Clean energy and low-carbon business

4 Climate-resilient communities

5 Sustainable places, transport and lifestyles

Do not solve the whole global problem. Choose one specific part, one target user and one context.

13:05 · Build Your Prototype in Pairs

Use your strongest idea in pairs to build a LEGO® prototype that you will present later.

Build and make the user, need and solution visible.
Be ready to explain what each important part represents.

45 MINUTES

YOU CAN SAY...

“My model shows...”

“This piece means...”

“The most important part is...”

Make One Shared Pair Model



- 1 Target user and need
- 2 Product or service
- 3 How the initiative operates
- 4 Key partners and resources
- 5 Environmental and social value
- 6 How the enterprise remains viable

Your Pair Model Prototype

A model should improve the situation

Choose a product, service, platform, social enterprise or community initiative.
Show how the idea works.
Prepare a story to present around this idea.

YOUR MODEL SHOULD SHOW...

- who benefits
- how value is created
- environmental and social impact
- what makes the idea viable

13:50 · Refine and Test Your Prototype

Share your model with another group and improve it using their questions.

Check that the user, need, idea and sustainability value are clear.
Identify one useful change before presentation preparation.
Keep the model simple enough to explain in 3 minutes.

10 MINUTES

YOU CAN SAY...

“My model shows...”

“This piece means...”

“The most important part is...”

Feedback From Other Pairs

Give 2 minute feedback on the model, not the people.

1 CLEAR

One part of the model that is easy to understand

2 VALUABLE

One benefit that matters to the target user

3 SUSTAINABLE

One strong environmental or social contribution

4 QUESTION

One assumption the pair could test to support improvement?

14:00–14:20 · Prepare Your Three-Minute Story

Another pair should be able to point to each part of the model.

1 USER

Who experiences
the problem and
what do they need?

2 IDEA

What does your
prototype propose?

3 MODEL

What do the
important pieces
represent?

4 VALUE

How does it help
people or the
planet?

5 NEXT TEST

What would you
investigate or
improve next?

14:20–14:45 · Present Your LEGO Serious Play ® Model Prototype



**Five pairs · 3 minutes to present · up to
2 minutes for questions**

- 1** Both partners speak
- 2** Point to the model as you explain it
- 3** Focus on the user, idea and sustainable value
- 4** Do not explain every brick
- 5** Finish with the next change you could test with the model

While Other Pairs Present

- 1 **CLEAR** · What was easy to understand?
- 2 **VALUABLE** · What would matter to the user?
- 3 **SUSTAINABLE** · What helps people or the planet?
- 4 **QUESTION** · What further assumptions should be tested?
- 5 **Keep feedback specific, brief and constructive.**



14:45–15:00 · Notice, Question, Suggest

Visit two models and leave brief post it note feedback. Focus on the model, not the people.

1 **1 · NOTICE**

One feature that is clear or effective

2 **2 · QUESTION**

One question you would ask the user

3 **3 · SUGGEST**

One suggestion for the next version

4 **4 · THANK**

Recognise one idea you would like to build on

15:00–15:15 · What Did You Learn?

Think individually, then discuss with your partner.

What was the best model and why?

“One thing I learned... One thing that surprised me... One thing we would do differently if doing this exercise again...”



FROM PROTOTYPE TO EVIDENCE

Final Thoughts...

Your LEGO® model is a visible hypothesis, not proof that the idea will work.

Next tests could be with specific users:

- **DESIRABILITY** · Do users need it?
- **FEASIBILITY** · Can it be delivered?
- **VIABILITY** · Can it continue?
- **SUSTAINABILITY** · Does it create real value for people and planet?

Photographs of models and close of day!

THANK YOU!

