DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

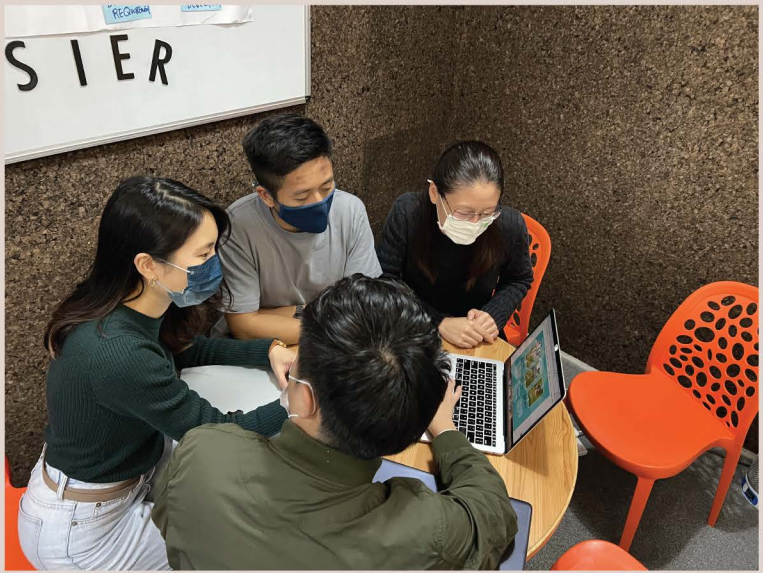
1/Plan 2/Prepare 3/Discover 4/Define 5/Develop 6/Deliver 7/Build community

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

After learning the basics of Design Thinking and getting yourself prepared to start the project, you should begin building your project team. In the upcoming Design Thinking journey, you will need to process a large amount of information, including a lot of work on observations, interviews, analysis and consolidation. Having a capable team will therefore be helpful for such work.

Ideally, each member should have different strengths and expertise, so that they complement each other and enable the team to explore more possibilities. Besides that, it's crucial to establish a team culture and common language, including a basic understanding of Design Thinking – otherwise, the project's progress might be hindered by misunderstandings within the team.

If you can build a team that works at the same pace, team members will be able to utilise their strengths and networks to collect data and connect with the target users together. This will build a strong foundation for the human-centred design process.



Practical Skill 1:

" What does an ideal Design Thinking project team look like? "

It is important to have a clear vision of your ideal team, so that you can work towards your goal together with the other team members. So, what does an ideal team for a Design Thinking project look like?

Suggested Design Thinking team size: 4-7 people

- 4-7 is a desirable number of team members for effective communication and division of work. A good team will encompass a diversity of backgrounds and skills. A team composed of people with too similar backgrounds could limit discussions and the scope of thinking.
- The team should consist of members of different ranks, responsible for decision-making, front-line work and planning respectively.

Develop the team' s common language and process for innovation to achieve the project objectives efficiently

- An ideal project team should be able to apply most of the Design Thinking tools and leverage them for the project work. Mutual understanding of the tools will allow the team to conduct logical discussions and analysis more confidently.
- Each tool has its own steps and expected outcomes. The team' s efficiency can be greatly improved if there is a set of tools that they often use.
- An ideal team should be able to apply the same set of common language, such as "user pain points" and "prototyping", to simplify the innovation process and create a foundation for discussion.

Discuss ideas thoroughly to reach a consensus instead of compromising

- Design Thinking can improve the soft skills of the team, facilitate discussion and help with reaching a consensus.
- As team members have different skill sets and backgrounds, they may not hold similar opinions, or may even have opposite stances towards the same subject.
- When there are divided opinions, the team should try to understand the reasons why different opinions are being formed and stay open-minded about accepting a variety of ideas.
- Team members tend to compromise in a top-down decision-making process. They often compromise on a conclusion because of different reasons. This may limit the team' s discussions on new discoveries and affect the quality of the innovation. Since Design Thinking emphasises high-quality discussions, the team should always work to reach a consensus despite any differences among the members and avoid compromising.

Utilise each member' s strengths and share resources within the team

- Each team member comes from a different background and has different strengths. Hence, the team should make good use of each other' s abilities and complement one another.
- Abilities may include hard skills such as graphic design or data analysis, as well as soft skills such as network building and leveraging resources.

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Discuss ideas based on objective evidence, not subjective opinions

- The Design Thinking team should always conduct discussions based on actual discoveries and facts
- The team should avoid saying “I think/I feel that…” since these propositions are usually not based on facts and will hinder your discussions.
- Whenever team members attempt to understand the project users or observe incidents, they usually learn only about some parts of what actually happened. This may lead to controversies in a team discussion. The team should review and verify such controversies so as to understand the users or the incident more comprehensively.

Establish a culture of sharing

- Sharing is the most fundamental skill that a Design Thinking team should have. You should share your insights with your team at any stage, any time.
- Creating a space for open discussion is crucial to establish a culture of sharing. If team members are willing to exchange their thoughts throughout the project, they are more likely to be successful in innovation.

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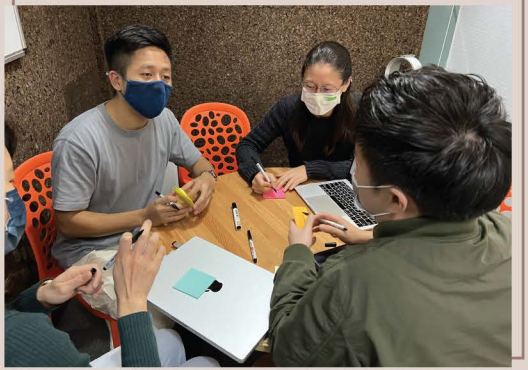

“Fail Forward”

- Failure is a normal part of the innovation process. While Design Thinking allows the team to adapt and respond to failures quickly, the team need to cultivate their agile thinking and observation skills in a bid to identify problems within a short period of time, then tackle them and learn from the experience.
- Many solutions might need to be reviewed when major issues/changes arise (e.g. pandemic, economic recession). The team should learn from the experience and be adaptive to maintain the feasibility of the solutions.

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"Design Thinking always involves the use of 'tools'. What are these tools?"

Design Thinking is a systematic approach to innovation. The team can make use of various tools to discover and define problems, and subsequently develop and test ideas.

These tools can help you to…

- Collect and analyse different data effectively to discover meaningful insights, and identify blind spots that might previously have been omitted, so that the team can gain in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the matter.
- Summarise your insights regularly: The summaries of your team's insights can always be updated. When there are changes in the understanding of your target users or in the objective context, your team should be able to reach a new consensus.
- Strengthen the team's consensus: Each Design Thinking tool has its unique functions and features, and these tools can be applied at different stages of the project. By cross-checking and validating the findings of different tools, the team can strengthen the consensus between team members.
- Establish a common language: The tools allow team members to follow the same goals and steps systematically during the innovation process. They also help the team understand which phase of innovation they are in and the goal of each phase. By recording the process and results/outcomes in each tool, the team will be able to review the innovation journey and insights from each phase at any time.

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Please note:

- The function of the Design Thinking tools is to aid in the process of innovation. In case the team has new findings or better ideas during the process, the tools can always be updated accordingly.
- There is no standard or perfect answer when applying the Design Thinking tools. The team can keep verifying the results and revise the tools accordingly in the process. Therefore, there could be a Version 1, Version 2 or multiple versions of a tool.
- Design Thinking tools do not have a specific order for usage. The team can be flexible with them based on the actual circumstances and resources available.

Practical Skill 2:

" Does the team need to be very familiar with Design Thinking before starting the project? "

In fact, the project team does not necessarily have to be very familiar with all the steps of Design Thinking at the beginning. However, to start applying Design Thinking, the team should have a basic understanding of its methodology, including its framework, core concepts and tools. Of course, it is always good to have someone in the team who is knowledgeable and experienced in applying Design Thinking, so that the innovation process can be smoother.

- **Scenario 1:** If there are Design Thinking experts in your organisation, you may consider asking them to become consultants to the project. Since they will be familiar with both the organisation' s culture and Design Thinking, they will be able to lead the team to innovate effectively.
- **Scenario 2:** External consultants could also be hired to introduce their Design Thinking methodology and good innovation strategies to the team.
- **Scenario 3:** External Design Thinking trainers could be hired to provide a one-day training course to equip the team with basic knowledge of Design Thinking. Innovation coaching sessions could also be arranged for the project team every 2-4 weeks to provide professional advice on the challenges they encounter.

The team should equip themselves with basic knowledge about Design Thinking through relevant training. The team also need to have good project management skills to handle different events and activities throughout the Design Thinking journey.

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Besides the core project team, other stakeholders can be invited to participate or collaborate with your team throughout the innovation process to reduce the team' s workload. These stakeholders could be:

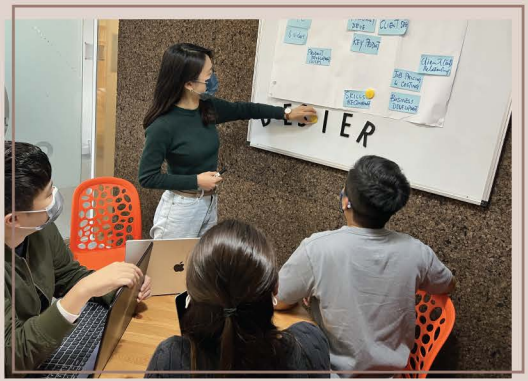
- Consultant team: A consultant team within your organisation or external consultants can provide opinions on the core team' s application of Design Thinking methodology and tools during the project.
- Supporting teams from your organisation: Besides the core team, colleagues from different departments or units of your organisation can provide assistance to the core team' s work, such as referring interviewees, assisting with event planning, and resource allocation.
- Volunteers: Volunteers within or outside your organisation.

Practical Skill 3:

" When the team is ready to start the project, what should be included in the initial team meeting? "

After the team members are confirmed and equipped with a basic understanding of Design Thinking, it' s time to start your project. You can sit down with your team and get started with an initial team meeting.

First of all, every team member, especially the core team members, should attend the first meeting. This is to avoid having any discrepancy in project understanding or participation with other team members from the start.



The first thing to do in the meeting is to ensure that the whole team has a clear and shared vision of the project. The team should set precise expectations of the project and reach a consensus. After that, they can build a timeline for the project so that everyone is aware of the project schedule and works at the same pace.

Next, the strengths and weaknesses of the team and each team member should be recognised and analysed, in order to have a proper division of labour. Do not hesitate to reach out for help if there are any shortcomings in the team. If the project involves external parties such as collaborating organisations, designers or innovation consultants, they should also be invited to the opening meeting to understand the project goals and key stages.

Tool 1:
Project Alignment Form

This tool allows the team to reach a consensus and set clear goals for the project by discussing and recording the project details.

Duration	45-60 minutes
Environment & materials required	Tool worksheet (A3 size), pens, post-it notes, records relevant to the project, list of collaborating partners
Attitude and skills	Be open to discussion while paying close attention to the details and choice of words
Participants	Project manager and all team members
Expected outcome	Enable the team to reach a consensus on their expectations towards the project, develop a mutual understanding of the team' s capacity and draft a project alignment form which can be reviewed and updated at any time in the future

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 1:
Project Alignment Form

Tool Sample

Scoping for Proposal	Project Name:	Person in Charge:	Version:

Team Expectations	Target Users	Key Metrics of the Project

Limitation of the Space	Resources Available	Partners

Team Members and Strengths	No. of Team Members:_____		Skills lacked the most

Project Milestones

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 1:
Project Alignment Form

Example

Scoping for Proposal | Project Name: **Behind the Hub** | Person in Charge: **Tracy** | Version: **3**

Team Expectations

- try out innovative methods
- improve existing services
- find new ways to engage the young users
- become a youth centre loved by its users

Target Users

- 12-24-year-olds
- stressed
- in need of expressing their feelings

Key Metrics of the Project

- Complete the design within seven months
- Number of users
- Improvement in mental health

Limitation of the Space

- No open-fire cooking
- No overnight staysn
- No pets

Resources Available

- Volunteers of the centres
- Innovation Department of the organisation
- Technical Department of the organisation

Partners

- School network
- Construction companies
- Design Thinking consultants

Team Members and Strengths No. of Team Members: 4

Eric / Local Networking	Hill / Art Therapy	
Fafa / Administration & Management	Tracy / Organising Activities	
Gilbert / Counselling		

Skills lacked the most

- Design
- Use of Technology

Project Milestones

- Exchange Tour to Australia (23-29/10)
- Submission of the Hub' s Initial Concept (30/11)
- Exam Period for nearby schools (15-22/12)
- Annual Carnival of the organisation (22/1)
- Completion of Renovation (20/2)

Tool 1:

Project Alignment Form

Why:

- This tool enables the team to set mutual expectations and goals for the project by recording and discussing the key information
- As a large amount of information will be gathered at later stages, it identifies the most important details of the project and allows the team to update the information from time to time so as to minimise conflicts
- It allows the project timeline and resource allocation to be discussed, so that the team can seek relevant assistance in an early stage

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 1:
Project Alignment Form

How:

Step 1:
Collect the team' s expectations and set up key metrics of the project

- Ask each team member to write down three expectations of the project on three separate post-it notes.
- Consolidate and summarise the team' s expectations and discuss the rationale behind each of the expectations.
- Write down the key metrics of the project on post-it notes (one on each note). Including concrete numbers if appropriate.

Step 2:
Discuss the details of the project

- List the tentative target users of the project and describe their characteristics with key adjectives. The team can revise or narrow down the group of target users later on.
- Discuss the possible limitations and rules of the space (such as 'no open-fire cooking', 'no overnight stays') and the reasons behind them. Setting these rules and limitations may affect the feasibility of solutions generated at later stages. Such rules will also allow target users to understand the basic setting of the space.

Step 3:
Brainstorm the list of resources available and partners

- List resources available to the project for future use, such as the innovation department of your organisation and volunteers of the centre, in the interests of allocating human resources in the future.
- You may request extra resources and manpower from your organisation and recruit new participants or volunteers if necessary.

Step 4:
Share the strengths and weaknesses of the team members and time allocation in the upcoming 12 months

- List the strengths of each team member and discuss the overall weaknesses of the team.
- Discuss whether there is a need to recruit extra manpower, provide training or engage partners.
- Write down on post-it notes any events or incidents affecting your organisation or team members that might affect the project in the upcoming 12 months. Write one event on each note.
- Identify the peak season of the coming year to prevent the team from overworking.
- List other incidents that might affect the project, such as "examination period of nearby schools".

Step 5:
Discuss the team' s feelings towards the project

- Ask each team member to write down his/her feelings and concerns regarding the project.
- Consolidate and summarise the general feelings of the team.
- Make use of the information gathered through the tool and brainstorm possible solutions to address the concerns.

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 1:
Project Alignment Form

Tips:

1 The main objective of this tool is to manage the team' s expectations of the project, allowing all team members to understand the project details and have a brief idea of its timeline.

2 This tool also encourages the team to foster a culture of sharing by exchanging one another' s feelings and concerns, and to brainstorm solutions to address them at an early stage.

3 The team can place the completed tool at a location where all team members can access and review it easily. It can also be saved in a digital format to make future amendments easier.

Tool 2:
Execution Plan

Let the team refer to the previous experience of other LevelMind@JC hubs, then write a plan for the major activities so that the team can estimate their workload easily.

Duration	60 minutes
Environment & materials required	An Execution Plan printed on A3 paper, pen, post-it notes, Project Alignment Form, meeting minutes related to the project
Attitude and skills	Focus on feasibility and point out the difficulties of the project
Participants	Project manager and all team members
Expected outcome	Create an overall event/activity plan for the Design Thinking project, and develop the team' s mutual understanding of the workload and timeline of the project

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 2:
Execution Plan

Tool Sample

Execution Plan

Phase	Type	Description	Confirm to implement (Y/N)	Key dates (DD/MM)	No. of Participants/ Frequency
2 Prepare	Event	Initial team meeting			/
	Training	Project Management (Design Thinking)			/
	Training	Creativity Management			/
	Training	Teamwork/Communication			/
	Training	Fostering a Culture of innovation (Growth Mindset)			/
	Training	Design Thinking			/
	Event	Case study research and sharing			
3 Discover	Event	User Interviews	Y		
	Event	User Observations (Field Visits)			
	Event	Apply Tool: User Journey Map	Y		
4 Define	Discussion	Apply Tool: Persona	Y		
	Discussion	Apply Tool: Empathy Map	Y		
5 Develop	Discussion	Workshop Preparation Meeting	Y		
	Event	Co-creation Workshop	Y		
	Discussion	Feasibility Meeting	Y		
6 Deliver	Event	Survey for Initial Concept	Y		
	Discussion	Workshop Preparation Meeting	Y		
	Event	Feedback Workshop 1			
	Event	Feedback Workshop 2			
7 Build Community	Discussion	Apply Tool: User Engagement Ladder			

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 2:
Execution Plan

Example

Execution Plan

Phase	Type	Description	Confirm to implement (Y/N)	Key dates (DD/MM)	No. of Participants/Outputs
2 Prepare	Event	Initial team meeting	Y	04/09	/
	Training	Project Management (Design Thinking)	N	/	/
	Training	Creativity Management	N	/	/
	Training	Teamwork/Communicatio n	Y	04/09	/
	Training	Innovation (Growth Mindset)	Y	04/09	/
	Training	Design Thinking	Y	11/09	/
	Event	Case Study Research and Sharing	Y	27/09	1 session (10 relevant case studies)
3 Discover	Event	User Interviews	Y	Complete by 31/10	45 people
	Event	User Observations (Field Visits)	Y	17/10, 24/10	2 sessions, 2 hours each
	Event	Apply Tool: User Journey Map	Y	Same time as user interview	/
4 Define	Discussion	Apply Tool: Persona	Y	31/10	1 session (3 Personas)
	Discussion	Apply Tool: Empathy Map	Y	31/10	1 session (20 Empathy Maps)
5 Develop	Discussion	Workshop Preparation Meeting	Y	04/11	1 meeting
	Event	Co-creation Workshop	Y	11/11	1 session, 3 hours
	Discussion	Feasibility Meeting	Y	12/11	1 meeting
6 Deliver	Event	Survey for Initial Concept	Y	distribution) 4/12 (result	surveys, a set of physical surveys
	Discussion	Workshop Preparation Meeting	Y	26/11	1 meeting
	Event	Feedback Workshop 1	Y	27/11	1 session, 3 hours
	Event	Feedback Workshop 2	Y	12/12	1 session, 3 hours
7 Build Community	Discussion	Apply Tool: User Engagement Ladder	N	/	/

Tool 2:
Execution Plan

Why:

- The team will be able to understand the workload of the project and draft an execution plan for the major Design Thinking events and activities together
- This can be a useful tool for helping all team members manage their own responsibilities and avoid overworking

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 2:
Execution Plan

There are various events and meetings in a Design Thinking project:

Event	**Initial Team Meeting**	Allows the team to reach consensus over the project' s details, workload and objectives
Training	**Project Management (Design Thinking)**	Deepens the team' s understanding of managing a Design Thinking project through training, so that the project can progress more efficiently
Training	**Creativity Management**	Helps the team learn about different ways of handling new ideas, and incorporates them into the team' s culture
Training	**Teamwork/Communication**	Enables a suitable mode of collaboration and communication to be devised
Training	**Fostering a Culture of Innovation (Growth Mindset)**	Equips the team with an innovation mindset and removes self-limiting beliefs
Training	**Design Thinking**	Equips the team with adequate knowledge of Design Thinking and hence the confidence to get the project moving
Event	**Case Study Research and Sharing**	Conducts and shares relevant case studies within the team to explore different possibilities of the project
Event	**User Interviews**	Talks to target users to understand their relevant experience and needs
Discussion	**User Observations (Field Visits)**	Allows direct observation of the users' behaviours to validate the team' s assumptions of them
Discussion	**Apply Tool**	Records the users' journeys and feelings by interviewing them
Discussion	**Apply Tool**	Defines the target users and their characteristics and makes the innovation process more user-centric
Discussion	**Apply Tool**	Reviews the user interviews using the tool to understand their needs
Discussion	**Workshop Preparation Meeting**	An opportunity to discuss preparation work ahead of the Co-creation Workshop, including information collection, data analysis and consolidation, venue set-up

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 2:
Execution Plan

There are various events and meetings in a Design Thinking project:

Event	**Co-creation Workshop**	Invites users to brainstorm collectively and propose ideas on the interior design
Discussion	**Feasibility Meeting**	A chance to discuss the feasibility of the proposed ideas, as well as select and combine different ideas
Event	**Survey for Initial Concept**	Collects feedback from a larger group of target users through surveys and further promotes the project
Discussion	**Workshop Preparation Meeting**	An opportunity to discuss preparation work ahead of the Feedback Workshop, including information collection, data analysis and consolidation, venue set-up
Event	**Feedback Workshop 1**	Collects users' feedback on the proposed ideas for the hub's space, such as the functions of the space and the positions of different facilities
Event	**Feedback Workshop 2**	Collects users' feedback on the proposed design details, such as the style and colours of the space
Discussion	**Apply Tool**	User Engagement Ladder: Lets the team explore different forms of user engagement with the tool

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Tool 2:
Execution Plan

How:

Step 1:
Review the Project Alignment Form
- Review the timeline stated in the Project Alignment Form.
- Review the strengths and weaknesses of each team member.

Step 2:
Brief the team about different events
- Introduce the possible events and meetings in a Design Thinking project.

Step 3:
Select the necessary training and events to be organised (leave the grey grids blank)
- Select suitable training for the team according to the skill sets lacked and the team' s needs.
- Discuss which events need to be organised, decide the dates, number of participants and sessions.
- Identify items that might be difficult to implement and the reasons for that.

Step 4:
Keep a record of the Execution Plan
- Place the completed Execution Plan at a location where all team members can access and review the tool easily. The tool can be saved in a digital format to make future amendments easier.

Step 5:
Update and review the Execution Plan when necessary
- Feel free to leave blanks or mark with coloured pens if the event details are not yet confirmed. The team can update and review the event arrangements when necessary.
- Make sure all team members are informed when changes have been made to the execution plan.

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Tool 2:
Execution Plan

Tips:

1 Fill in the Execution Plan with a pencil or erasable pen so that the team can update the plan easily.

2 In case the team encounter difficulties when filling in the plan, refer to the above example or discuss with a consultant who has Design Thinking project experience.

Tool 3:
Lightning Talks

Foster the culture of knowledge sharing within the team. Expand the team' s horizons to understand different possibilities through a simple and quick activity.

Duration	10 mins for each case
Environment & materials required	Lightning Talks Tool printed on A4/A5 paper, pens and relevant printed photos
Attitude and skills	Notice and point out the key issues, have an intense discussion on special points in the case and use critical thinking skills
Participants	Project manager and all team members
Expected outcome	Understand various case studies and explore more possibilities for the project

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 3:
Lightning Talks

Tool Sample

Lightning Talks

Photos / Pictures/ Infographics
Brief Description:
Source: / Relevance to the Project (1-5):

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Tool 3:
Lightning Talks

Example

Lightning Talks

Photos / Pictures/ Infographics

Brief Description:

The Headspace Centre made use of the walls to let young users express their thoughts and feelings so that they had a strong sense of belonging to the space. The space also has a lot of mental health tips about self-care.

Source:
Social worker's site visit to a youth mental health centre in Australia

Relevance to the Project (1-5):
5

Tool 3:
Lightning Talks

Why:

- The team will be able to unleash the potential of the project through learning about various case studies
- It simplifies the knowledge-sharing process
- You can discover relevant case studies to inspire the team

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 3:
Lightning Talks

How:

Step 1:
Decide the number of cases needed and the timescale for case sharing

- Introduce the tool to the project team members.
- Discuss the sources of research and quantity of the case studies.
- Set a date for case sharing.

Step 2:
Fill in the tool

- Research relevant and interesting case studies.
- Notify the team about the case you will be researching to avoid repetition.
- Summarise the main points of the case and fill in the tool. Include the source of the information, such as the website.
- Print relevant photos or pictures to make it easier for others to understand.

Step 3:
Share the case with your team

- Choose a suitable time to share the case with your team.
- Discuss why the case is an innovative one and how it relates to your project.
- Record the unanswered questions raised by your team; conduct further research on them and update the tool accordingly.

Step 4:
Consolidate the insights and make use of the case studies

- Consolidate and record the insights generated from the most relevant case studies.
- Review the potential of the project with reference to the case studies.
- Apply the most relevant insights when you are brainstorming ideas for your project, to create room for imagination by the team and participants.

DESIGN THINKING WORK KIT

Tool 3:
Lightning Talks

Tips:

1 Think critically when assessing a case. Verify the information if it is only found from a single source. Verify it against different sources to avoid hasty generalisation.

2 Share pictures of the case to make it easier for your team to understand.

3 The case studies may cover different aspects related to your project, including ways to de-stress and young users preferred ways of social interaction.