June 2022

Design Thinking for Health

Evaluation

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What you can find, inside...

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A bit of background

In September 2021, CDC launched their ambitious programme 'Design Thinking for Health', with the desire to get under the skin of the role that SMEs play in using data when designing solutions for public services. This complex and complicated landscape required CDC to pause and unpick how they could contribute to the LCR in order to bring about real meaningful change and impact.

This was the first programme launched by CDC, it created the opportunity to build their culture, release their brand and establish themselves as a leading player in the role of data in public services and the SME economy in LCR.

To support the delivery of this programme, CDC commissioned the help of Capacity, where we worked with CDC to engage with a diverse number of stakeholders, designed the campaign, delivered the programme and shared the insights to shape the development of CDC's culture and future. By working jointly with CDC, Capacity were able to listen and engage with key stakeholders across the region to gather insights and start some solution-based thinking of how best to use civic data to create better public and third sector experiences for the communities effected by them.

This wasn't just about opening doors between the sectors; it was about taking them off the hinges.

And with that, the Civic Data Cooperative's **'What's your problem?'** series was created with five key stages:

1. Stakeholder Engagement:

By gathering insights and understanding both the challenges and opportunities for SMEs designing service facing solution – we were able to listen and present findings in a cohesive insights report. These insights fuelled our first engagement event...

2. 'What's your problem?' the launch event:

By using our previous research, we were able to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders from across the LCR to help identify the biggest problems our public services face - whilst asking the questions about what role data plays in solution thinking. From our conversations on the day, we then launched...

3. 'What's your problem?' webinars:

These events were tailored to our listening and the biggest issues presented in the 'What's your problem?' launch event and included practical and theoretical advice to best support SMEs to better create data led solutions to support public and third sector services.

Partners for these webinars included ORCHA Heath, Liverpool City Region Growth Platform and the LCR Finance Hub.

Through this practical learning, SMEs were able to pitch for...

4. 'What's your problem?' – the finals (application stage):

SMEs now had the opportunity and knowledge to pitch an idea that spoke to one of the themes that emerged from the original 'What's your problem?' launch event. Pitching businesses were supported directly by Capacity throughout with the chance to win a share of £60K seed funding – in addition to some invaluable connections to help get their solution and ideas off the ground, which were chosen at the...

5. 'What's your problem? the finals' - roundtable event:

This finals event brought together an impressive panel of experts to un-pick and critique the strongest SMEs solutions as part of the application. Our panel then chose three businesses/organisations to support with their presented ideas as the first official 'What's your problem?' series came to a close.

The purpose of this evaluation is to capture all approaches taken, alongside our successes and areas of improvement for the programme.

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What we did

Capacity designed and delivered an extensive programme over five distinct phases - driven by better understanding of civic problems across LCR and considering the role SMEs can play in solution generation:

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
Sep - Dec 2021

75 engaged local authorities, organisations and SMEs from across the region

LAUNCH EVENT
Jan 2022

WEBINARS
Feb - Mar 2022

12 SME applications submitted
Jan 2022

ROUND TABLE
Jan 2022

4 SMEs shortlisted to pitch

3 winners **£52.94K** seed funding awarded

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Stakeholder engagement

Over the lifespan of the Design Thinking for Health Programme (and the 'What's your Problem?' – series) stakeholder engagement has been key to delivering something that is informed, considered and that taps into the needs of all the jumbled points of view from within and across the siloed public service and SME communities.

CDC knew that listening and mirroring back what we were hearing across the space, would help to position CDC as a collaborative place led organisation. Prioritising stakeholder engagement enabled us to hear from a wide range of participants to understand their needs, existing frustrations and opportunities within LCR. These insights informed the programme and enabled us to frame the delivery around our first big 3 problems, later to split into to six of the knottiest themes presented to us by public sector leaders.

We found that people have engaged with the programme differently at each stage, and that various methods of delivery have suited our audience based on their maturity, availability and the perceived added value to them at any moment in time.

Our iterative approach to designing and delivering the programme has meant that we could be flexible, adaptive and manage programme priorities in the most suitable manner at each relevant step. This engagement brought people along on an evolving journey, but took several pivots based on regular feedback. Maintaining these relationships became time intensive but delivered invested, valued relationships, connecting individuals together at the right time and nurturing the development of SME's solutions into viable products which spoke to the objectives of the programme. The hours committed to building the right relationships has meant that the programme has evolved into a collective movement of like-minded and driven people who are curious to work together in this space across the existing boundaries.

The first stage of 'What's your problem?' reached out to 75 different stakeholders across the landscape. This varied cross section of individuals heavily influence and contribute to this space, holding meaningful insight on what is really happening at all ends of the innovation process in the region.

By connecting with these stakeholders, we can be confident that the translated views give us an accurate reflection of LCR's real challenges. These insights were gathered into a report which focussed on the problems, opportunities, insights, needs and system challenges that SMEs face when trying to get a data lead solution commissioned by public services, helping us to inform what the programme needed to be focussed on the most.

Read our CDC insights report here

Launch event

From our initial insights phase we were able to define many issues faced by the public sector and SMEs alike. With this, we identified our biggest three problems to take to the launch event for further discussion.

We wanted to better understand the work already happening to address these issues and, begin to frame the system wide challenges so they could be understood by SMEs looking to generate solutions. These also created real examples for stakeholders to think about what role CDC could have in strengthening the use of data within these problem areas.

Our big 3 problems were:

Reducing Childhood Asthma through better environments and awareness

Increasing family support to stop children entering the care system

Making digital feel doable in local authority social care teams

Wrapped around this, we heard from various organisations that relationships were hard to find in the right place at the right time, with different parts of the system feeling despairingly different and hard to access as a private organisation working outside of the public sector.

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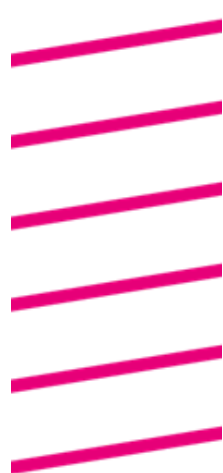
This also meant that relevant information was hard to get to in order to develop new ideas. The 'what's your problem?' launch event was shaped in response to this to do two things:

1. Spend time opening doors between these sectors and really pulling apart some of the market gaps, together.

2. Delve into some of the key challenges public sector leaders currently face so that innovations have a solid ground and insight for new product development.

The event in January brought together people from all across this space to unpick the 3 problems further and really get to the centre of what is and isn't working, how better access to data might inform innovation in these spaces and, offer innovators a chance to ask questions of our public sector colleagues to better inform design, creating better connections along the way.

Prior to the event we pulled together 'Information Packs' for each of the 3 problems made up of reports, articles, case studies, personas, research, local data and links to useful websites where it is possible to pull aggregated data on indicators related to one of these three problems. These were shared on the newly launched CDC micro-site, which gave an overview of the programme ambition and the 3 problems we had landed on. Each problem was framed in more detail here with recordings of some the leaders in this space, explaining each problem in their own words.

The big 3 problems:

Reducing childhood asthma

Download the data pack here

Increasing family support to stop children entering care

Download the data pack here

Making digital feel doable

Download the data pack here

During the event each of the 3 big problems had its own breakout room where public sector leaders, contributors and businesses interested in this problem could talk more about the detail of the problem from the public service perspective, what was already being done, what was not being addressed and where there were opportunities to change and improve.

These discussions were supported by Miro Boards, prompting participants to give their perspective of the problem, it's impact and where there were gaps for solution generation.
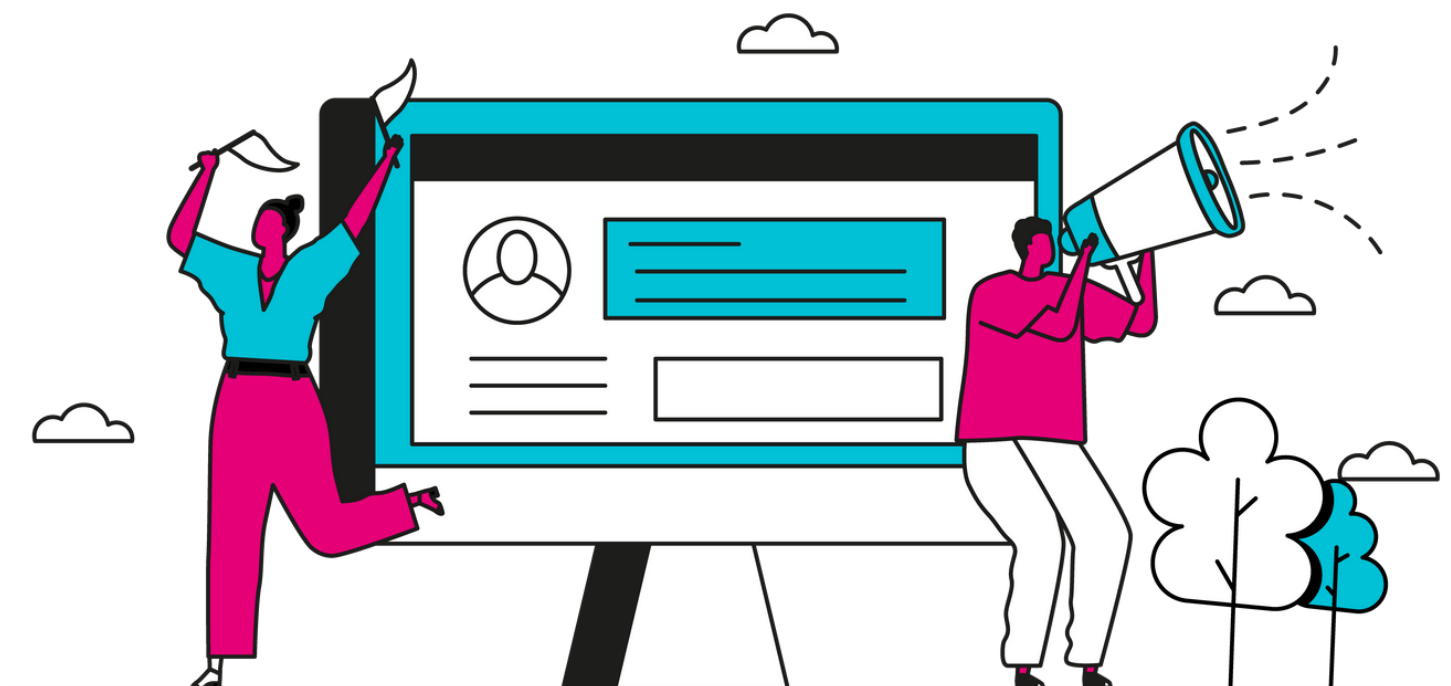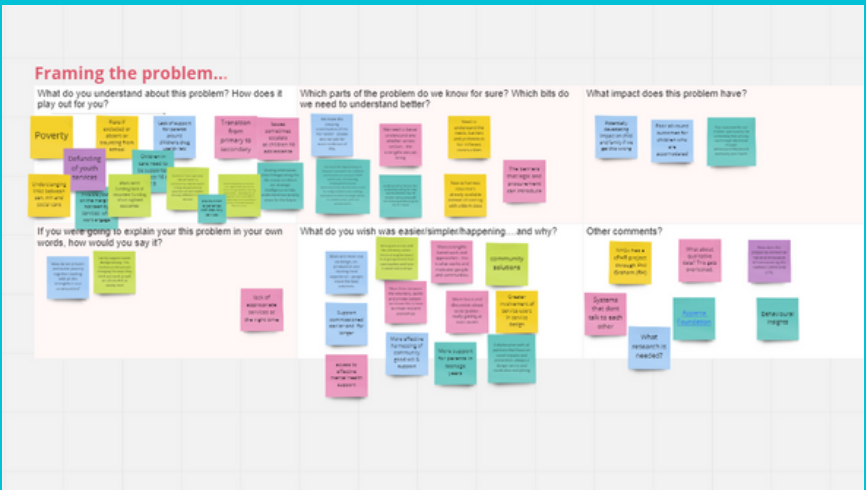
Reducing childhood asthma

Increasing family support to stop children entering care

Making digital feel doable

After originally planning for a face-to-face launch event in January 2022, we had to pivot our plans and move online due to the increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases in the Northwest. Despite this, the online launch event had good traction with a diverse group of attendees, reaching 94 individuals attending the online event: showing a real appetite for a hybrid and virtual delivery.

This movement meant that we had to shorten the duration of the event to prevent screen exhaustion. The move from 5-hour in person event, to a 2-hour Zoom call may have helped us to increase our attendance on the day. However, this did come at a price as we had heard in our initial insights phase that people wanted an opportunity to network with sector leaders to build relationships to help mentor them in their solution design – which is trickier to master online!

As a result of the event discussion, we broke our 3 big problems down into areas we knew CDC could support SMEs with. The new iteration became our knottiest six themes:

1. Digital leadership
2. Digital literacy
3. Helping digital systems talk to each other
4. Data linkage
5. Helping families ask for help
6. Help services be driven by community power

We asked SMEs to apply their thinking to these 6 themes to design a solution for public services. Eligibility to take part in the next phase meant they must demonstrate alignment to one of the 6 priority areas and...

Contribute to improving the economy of Liverpool City Region

Improve the health and wellbeing of the Liverpool City Region

Webinars

Following the launch, we delivered satellite support to SMEs to keep them engaged in the programme and enable them to consider relevant solutions to the problems we had started to un-pick through the insights report and launch event.

Through the insights phase and the launch event, we heard about several areas that SMEs wanted to know more about, which shaped the design of the webinars. This ran parallel to connecting a network of SMEs into the opportunities in the next phase of the programme, where a share of the £60K grant funding was up for grabs.

CDC hosted a total of 5 webinar sessions, aimed at some of the barriers SMEs told us they were facing in the region. These webinars ran from 22nd Feb to 17th March and were supported by:
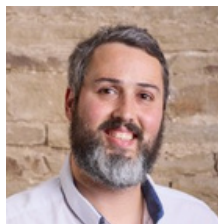
Liz Ashall-Payne   Simon Leigh   Paul S Weston

Regulatory overview and requirements

Paul talked through the Regulatory requirements when developing Digital Technologies for the UK. The session provided a whistle stop tour of the most developed or significant of the regulations and assessment regimes - including the new ISO 82304-2, the NHS DTAC, the NORDIC Baseline Review, the German DiGA, the New Zealand DHMAT and the US Digital Health Assessment. This highlighted the key areas of convergence across these different models and some of the major areas of difference.
13 attendees.

Building your ROI and ESF

Simon discussed building evidence to support your business model and ROI. In this session health economics expert Simon Leigh examined techniques and tips for getting digital health products into the NHS. Simon explained how to provide evidence for technology, how to demonstrate the benefits of the technology, and also detailed how businesses can use health economic data to assist in the procurement of their technology.
 4 attendees.

Stakeholder engagement and developing your value proposition

In this session Liz analysed the current state of the global digital health app and accreditation landscape, recognising the lack of solutions that meet regulatory standards. By focusing on the main barriers to using and adopting digital health tools, Liz discussed the uptake of these solutions by health and care professionals, the effect of COVID-19 on digital health adoption, and key case studies. This session examined regulations in the digital health space, and how assessment and accreditation processes can help to overcome some of the challenges faced. Liz also discussed the steps needed to truly support the digital patient.
6 **attendees.**

Gary Leeming

A guide to Information Governance

Gary Leeming discussed NHS Information Governance and how this can impact your projects. The purpose of the session was to gain an understanding of NHS Information Governance policies, how they are derived from a combination of the data protection act known as GDPR, the common law duty of confidentiality, and obligations under the NHS Act. The ability to understand and meet these obligations is important for companies and organisations working with the NHS in order to demonstrate that they can work with patient data safely, meeting national guidance provided by NHS Digital and others. This session outlined how NHS IG can impact projects, how to respond to the challenges, and the intersection with security and other common practices such as ISO27001.
6 attendees.

Supporting Businesses in Liverpool City Region: Growth Platform & Innovation Agency

The Growth Platform talked about how they can support businesses in Liverpool City Region. The aim of this webinar was to give attendees an overview of Growth Platform's business support landscape, and key services they offer to support at every stage of the business growth journey as well as giving attendees the opportunity to ask questions they may have. From starting to growing, sales to strategy, funding to talent Growth Platform are here to support local businesses realise their potential for growth.
29 attendees.

SME application process

Following the launch event, the CDC invited organisations to submit an EOI of their solution responding to one of the **knottiest 6 themes.**

During this period, we found that SMEs needed encouragement to engage with the process and further understanding of the ask. Capacity spent time reaching out to further SMEs in their network to inform them on the objectives of the programme and offer time to chew through initial ideas to make organisations 'pitch ready.'

We provided SMEs with an applicant pack, bringing to life how they could grow their thinking into solutions, what questions they would need to consider and how they would be marked to progress to the next phase of the programme. Applications were submitted via a Microsoft Form, with an additional anonymous survey on D&I.

Download the application pack here

Throughout this phase, we directly engaged with 15 organisations, 12 of whom submitted a EOI to the programme for shortlisting:

Engaged after the launch event and engaged in the application process

Engaged after the launch event and submitted a pitch
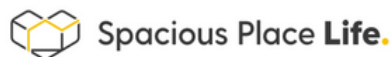

Submitted a pitch

Attended the launch event, attended 5/5 webinars, engaged in the application process and submitted a pitch

Took part in insights phase, attended launch event, attended 1/5 of webinars, application process, submitted a pitch and were shortlisted

Attended launch event, engaged on the application process, submitted a pitch and were shortlisted

Attended launch event, engaged in application process, submitted a pitch and were shortlisted

Submitted a pitch

Took part in insights phase, attended the launch event, engaged in the application process and submitted a pitch

Engaged after the launch event, engaged in the application process, submitted a pitch and were shortlisted

Attended the launch event, attended 1/5 webinars, engaged in the application process and submitted a pitch

Took part in the insights phase, attended the launch event, engaged in the application process and submitted a pitch

Attended launch event, attended 5/5 webinars, engaged in the application process but did not apply

Attended launch event, engaged in the application process but did not apply

Took part in insights phase, attended the launch event, engaged in the application process but did not apply

The finals - Pitch & Roundtable event.

The final phase of the programme put the most promising solutions in front of a panel from both public services and innovation.

We also invited key stakeholders who play an active role in LCR's public services, or in the data and digital environment and who had engaged with the earlier stages of the programme, to join a roundtable discussion with the 4 shortlisted ideas submitted through the EOIs. Prior to the event we circulated a 'Who's at the table' to all SMEs and stakeholder, to help give some context to who would be in the room on the day.

This stage was split into two distinct sections; firstly, the pitch and funding decision, followed by the Roundtable discussion. This meant that SMEs had privacy from the competing SMEs when presenting their ideas, where the panellists had an opportunity to dig a little deeper into the details and feasibility of each of the solutions. After this section all panellists and SMEs were brought together to have a wider discussion about the system, where CDC could add value and what was needed to better support idea development in the LCR.

The 8 applicants who submitted an EOI but did not make it through to this final stage were each offered the opportunity to speak directly with the CDC programme manager to feedback on their application. They were also directed into other relevant services and SME support that could help develop their solution thinking further.
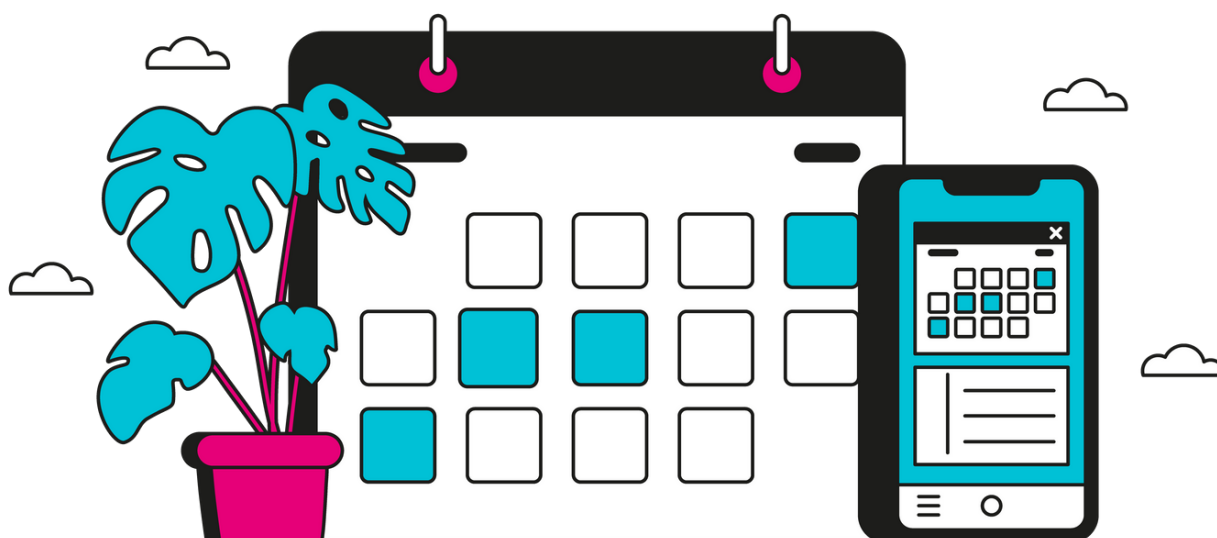
The Roundtable Stakeholders:

The Panel

Lorna Green, Chief Executive, **Lyva Labs and LCR Ventures Ltd**
Si Bowers, Chief Medical Officer and GP, **Blinx**
Liz Ashall-Payne, Founding CEO, **ORCHA**
Gary Leeming, Director, **Civic Data Cooperative**
Iain Buchan, Chair in Public Health and Clinical Informatics, and Associate Pro Vice Chancellor for Innovation, **University of Liverpool**

Public sector and SME experts

Tillie Jones, Head of Therapy and Reablement, **St Helens Council**
Damian Nolan, Divisional Manager - Adult Social Care, **Halton MBC**
Paul Boyce, Consultant and Ex Director of Children's Services at **Wirral MBC.**
Claire Liddy, Managing Director of Innovation, **Alder Hey**
Alice Lee, Research and Innovation fellow in healthcare inequalities, Lab to Life Child Health Data Centre, **Alder Hey**
Rob McGuire, Clinical Director, **Picton Primary Care Network**
Lee Reevell, Head of Innovation & Architecture, **Halton Housing**
Jonny Clark, Consultant , **LCR Combined Authority**
Leon Rossiter, Co-founder & CEO, **Peepl**

1-2-1 SME Workshops

George Wright, Investment Manager - Finance Hub Lead, **LCR Finance Hub**
Tim Andrews, Co-Founder & Chief Operating Officer, **ORCHA**

The event was supported by **Liverpool City Region, Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram** who attended as a keynote speaker to bring to light the importance of the programme in relation to the development and future of the city region.

The 4 SMEs who were invited to pitch at the round table event were:

Koala North West

Helping families ask for help – research around how to support families in the early stages

Redmoor Health

Digital Leadership – implementing digital tools in Adult Social Care

Spacious Places Life

Data linkage & Helping services be driven by community power – Home management systems

Damibu

Helping digital systems talk to each other – coding and categorisation of health information and guidance

The judging panel was made up of 5 key stakeholders who had a mix of expertise in innovation, data, public services and health to challenge and refine the thinking of the pitching SMEs. Each SME had a closed-door opportunity to pitch their solution to the room of experts, where the roundtable experts could ask further questions about the ambition and direction of each solution.

Running alongside the presentation, we also hosted rotating 1-2-1 workshops for each SME to have a discussion with relevant organisations that could also help to develop thinking to progress their idea closer to realisation, involving:

A summary of the needs assessment, marketplace report & Digital Technology Assessment criteria advice and how it relates to each innovation.

Mini business clinic to discuss potential routes to funding in LCR.

After all four presentations and parallel workshops had taken place, the panel decided which organisation would be successful in receiving funding, based on the ideas and discussion in each presentation. Three SMEs were successful on the day, receiving the full amount of funding requested in their bid:

Spacious Places Life
£16,700

Koala North West
£20,000

Damibu
£16,240
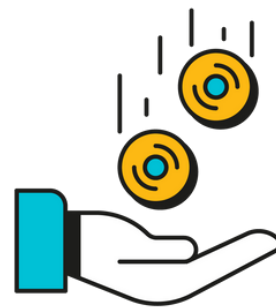
Following the funding award, we re-grouped into one space for a roundtable discussion with all stakeholders, panellists and SMEs in the room to discuss how CDC could further support these organisations with the development of their solutions: including what data would they need and how the programme should continue to support the development of the winning organisations.

This honest discussion was crucial for CDC to learn from the horse's mouth how SMEs and public services felt CDC should position itself in the digital and data LCR landscape.

What we discovered

To recap and reflect, the delivery of the programme can be summarised five key phases:

1. Engagement

2. 'What's your problem?' launch event

3. Webinar series

4. SME application process

5. 'What's your problem? The finals' - Roundtable event

Engagement

The commitment of many of our public sector leaders and local SMEs to this programme has reinforced the role the CDC should play and the innovative use of data across the LCR. Starting the conversation of how data can give a framework to innovation and support public services and impact local citizens has prompted CDC and others to challenge their place and the approach to siloed teams within a larger system. The complexity and diversity of entire landscape has meant that regular and meaningful engagement has been central to developing solutions and building connections in this space. This has been the most time-consuming part of the process, but has contributed significantly to how connected SMEs and VCSEs have been to the programme.

Different perspectives on the complex problems in the region were challenged in the initial Insights Report by leaders within our public services, local authorities, health, and also by the organisations that deliver support to SMEs in LCR. The final version of this report was well received, widely shared highly acclaimed as revealing, relevant and constructive. We believe that part of this success was due to the report's tone as a non-academic document, where traditionally we see only academic facing publications in this space.

"The length of the Insights Report (in terms of generating interest to participate as an SME) was great. The challenges raised were quite specific, which was good that it gave clear direction but at first we were not sure if our product was right for the programme - this was later clarified in the webinar series." – Damibu

We are confident that a major output of this programme has been connection building across public and private sector spaces, as well as connections between providers and authorities. We have been told by SMEs as well as providers that these connections are one of the most practical and valuable parts of the programme that participants feel they've benefitted the most from.

The early insights pulled together many of LCR problems, some of which have not been progressed further this time around. Future versions of the programme should re-visit these issues but be cautious that public sector problems and priorities are continually changing and in flux depending on wider system challenges and pressures.

What's your problem - launch event

The programme has delivered a variety of people facing events and webinars over it's course. The hybrid nature of this delivery has meant that people have engaged differently at different stages, extending the reach and further informing how CDC will need to consider hosting in person vs. virtual content in the future.

The virtual event may have helped to increase attendance, due to the ease of joining and reduced time committed on the day, however we understand that moving online also means that the value of connection building and door opening wasn't as feasible as we had initially hoped. The Roundtable event was held in person and it was clear that deeper more engaged conversations happened in real life, with better connections being made than at the virtual launch event.

The early conversations centred around the 3 problems were rich in content and gave further insight on how people working in these environments perceive each problem from a variety of angles, giving greater insight to SMEs about how these complex issues present in different parts of the system under different guises. The use of Miro Boards helped the facilitators to prompt discussion and quickly organise contributions into themes to present back during the session. The discussion was centred around the problems themselves and intentionally did not leave not leave a lot of space for SMEs to contribute their views on solution generation with a view to explore how to be better positioned to approach public services with innovative solutions.

What did we learn?

We learnt that the effectiveness of the breakout rooms could be streamlined by allowing each participant to choose which room to enter as the rooms are launched, instead of trying to pre-assign stakeholders. The pre-assigning of invites did not pick up people who unexpectantly attended the open event and caused some confusion for the coordinators when other invitees joined the session with an email address that wasn't recognised, this meant the movement into breakout rooms was a little clunky.

Post launch event we needed a clearer output to summarise the conversations and explain how the 3 problems converted into 6. In the later part of the programme when communicating with SMEs, we realised that by not following this up we caused a lag in the understanding of what problems SMEs could hook their ideas off, and a reduction in confidence that their solution fitted in with the prospect to pitch in for the £60K seed funding on offer.

Webinar series

The webinar series was designed to engage with SMEs, providing extra support in the space for sticky issues we heard SMEs were experiencing in LCR, where they had told us they needed extra support.

These 5 webinars were attended by a mix of individuals who had already connected with the programme, but we also saw new audiences attend or show interest in these sessions, the below evaluation highlights these interactions:

Regulatory overview and requirements

171 views

(150 from Eventbrite's discovery platform, 20 from direct traffic through the event link shared, 1 via Eventbrite's automated email promotion)

13 tickets were sold from these views.

Building your ROI and ESF

35 views

(32 from direct traffic through the event link shared, 3 via Eventbrite's automated email promotion)

4 tickets were sold from these views.

Stakeholder engagement and developing your value proposition
99 views

(82 from Eventbrite's discovery platform, 17 from direct traffic through the event link shared)

6 tickets were sold from these views.

A guide to Information Governance

53 views

(44 from Eventbrite's discovery platform, 9 from direct traffic through the event link shared)

6 tickets were sold from these views.

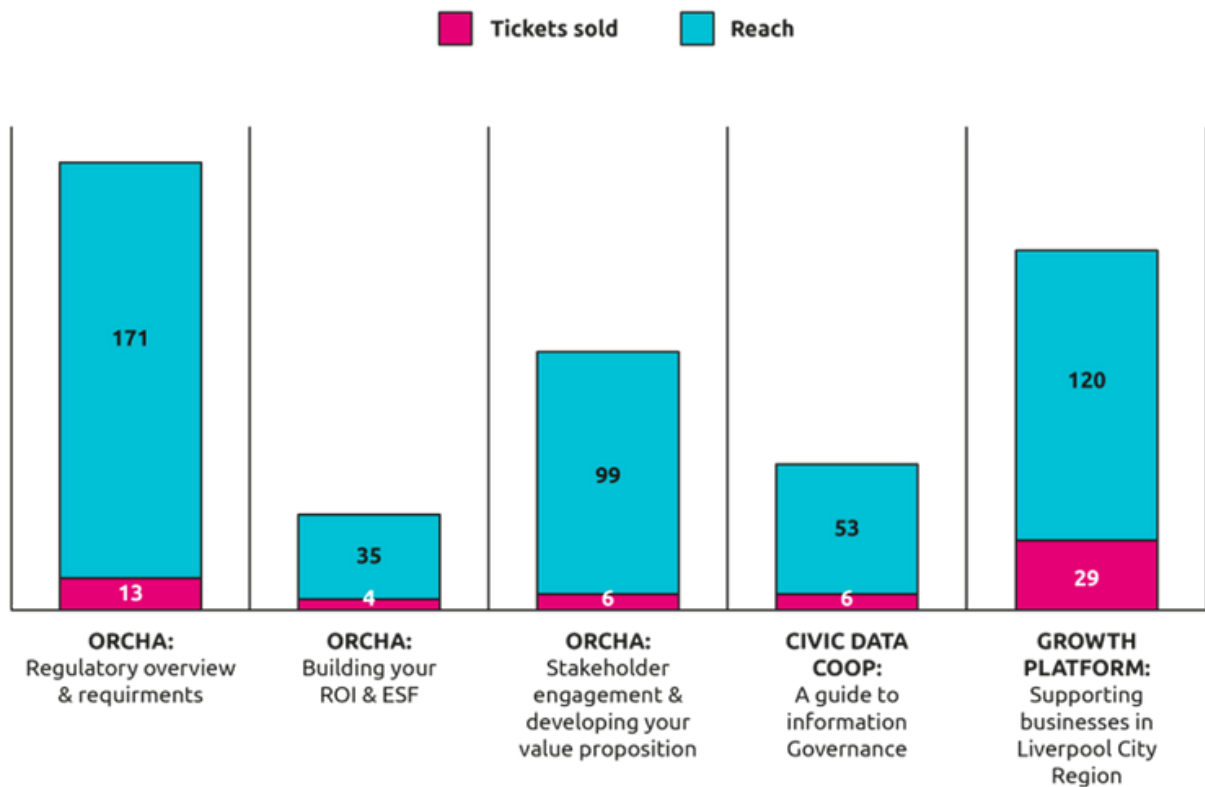**Supporting Businesses in Liverpool City Region**

120 views

(105 from Eventbrite's discovery platform, 14 from direct traffic through the event link shared, 1 via Eventbrite's automated email promotion)

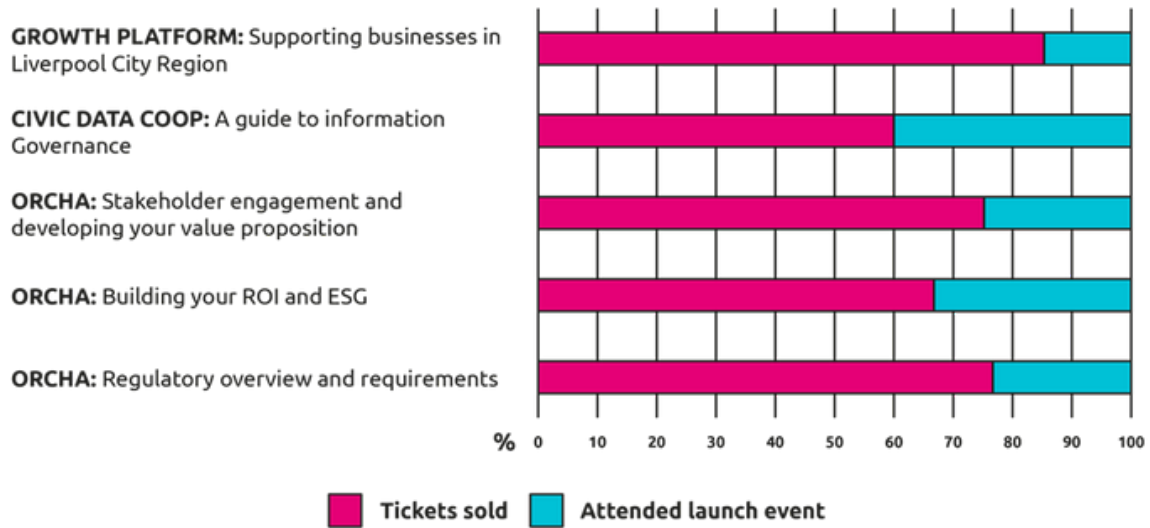**29 tickets were sold from these views.**

From individual visits to the Eventbrite event pages, we saw an average of a 12.12% conversion rate into reserving a ticket. Almost a third of the attendees were individuals who had attended our launch event.

Our best attended event was delivered by Growth Platform and Innovation Agency (29 attendees), which was widely shared through the existing Growth Platform mailing lists across LCR. We saw our lowest SME percentage of webinar participants who attended the launch event represented at this session (17%). There could be more potential here to partner with existing support organisations to publicise any material or project information to reach a wider pool of SMEs who may want to engage in future programmes.

Webinar reach & attendance

■ Tickets sold   ■ Reach

	Tickets sold	Reach
ORCHA: Regulatory overview & requirments	13	171
ORCHA: Building your ROI & ESF	4	35
ORCHA: Stakeholder engagement & developing your value proposition	6	99
CIVIC DATA COOP: A guide to information Governance	6	53
GROWTH PLATFORM: Supporting businesses in Liverpool City Region	29	120

Percentage of webinar attendees who attended the 'What's Your Problem?' launch event

GROWTH PLATFORM: Supporting businesses in Liverpool City Region

CIVIC DATA COOP: A guide to information Governance

ORCHA: Stakeholder engagement and developing your value proposition

ORCHA: Building your ROI and ESG

ORCHA: Regulatory overview and requirements

% 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

■ Tickets sold ■ Attended launch event

We believe there is still a way to go for SMEs to understand the LCR business support sector, with huge potential here to link in with Liverpool's 'Levelling Up' plan in relation to economic gain. By partnering with organisations such as Growth Platform (who have a wide reach to SMEs in LCR, positively impacting sign ups and event views), we see a real opportunity to collaborate further in the future with businesses support organisations to help reach further SMEs.

SME application process

We quickly realised after we hosted the event and launched the webinar series, that we needed to encourage SMEs to continue to engage and apply into the programme. This was due to external time pressures and low confidence that their thinking was relevant to the programme. Distilling and articulating to lesser engaged stakeholders how the programme held relevance to their business, as well as helping develop each pitch to be ready for submission by giving feedback on relevance and areas for improvement, took more time than we originally planned for.

"We weren't sure if our idea would be something CDC would be interested in, but the application process was really easy. I had and idea, but the process made me think even more as I was filling it in. The questions helped me with my thinking and helped me to explore a few more ideas." – Koala NW

A product of this consistent support and targeted consideration was that SMEs told us the application process was simple and accessible with clear directions for how to approach the pitch making it easy and less intimidating to submit and EOI into. The early language we had used around data and digital fostered anxiety in SMEs who did not consider themselves as leaders or confident in this area. The common factor here was someone to speak to and reflect their idea thinking off and to give advice and encouragement to the applicants.

"[The application process] really was a breath of fresh air, I was anticipating a long, structured and bureaucratic tender document but instead was welcomed by a sensible, easy and forgiving web form. The ability to be flexible with word counts really made it easy to answer the questions properly. We were vaguely interested with the idea of a video submission, but ultimately felt more comfortable with text - glad there was a choice." – Damibu

As the programme matured we steered away from thinking about finding the people who exist or are hidden in the system with great ideas, who potentially have not considered entrepreneurship before, to existing and more established SMEs and VCSEs in the region. Future programmes could spend more time considering how to tap into this resource of people who might have a bright idea to bring to life, with real lived experience of a problem, as well as diversifying their connection to local SMEs who may not have been aware of the first run of this programme.

The expression of interest form went live two weeks after the initial **'what's your problem?'** launch event, with the deadline for submissions falling 2 months after this launch. We have reflected as part of the launch event or following on shortly afterwards, there could have been more concise follow up with SMEs and VCSEs to promote the next stage of the programme, articulate the process, what solutions we were looking for and what support could be on offer to help with submitting a bid to encourage and engage better with those who we wanted to generate ideas.

The period of time between the launch event and the deadline for submissions could be more structured, allowing a space for SMEs to have collaborative conversations with stakeholders embedded into the system to give advice, and more specific detail relevant to idea generation. This approach could help move ideas from the early thinking stage further down the line to create innovations that have roots in real practical applications with a public sector partner.

'What's your problem? The finals' - Roundtable event

The **'what's your problem? - the finals' roundtable** delivered meaningful conversation and an inspiring opportunity for SMEs to get real time and varied feedback on their ideas, giving value at both ends where collaboration encouraged stakeholders to be more open to early stage progression of innovators.

The overall objectives of the event were met, with the funding available being awarded to 3 out of 4 of the shortlisted pitches, following a group discussion and panel scrutiny of the ideas. The space we created meant we could bring together like-minded people in the data and digital innovation space to connect with stakeholders who did not consider themselves as forward thinking in the digital environment.

The pitches we heard from SMEs were all early-stage solution thinking, but with collaborative discussion and progressive conversation stakeholders felt confident that each idea could give value to the system, but more time was needed to really develop the core component of each innovation.

"The Roundtable was daunting when we got the list through of all the people on the panel, we weren't sure what to expect, but it's been a really, really good day, I've enjoyed myself." – Koala NW

Watch videos from the day here.
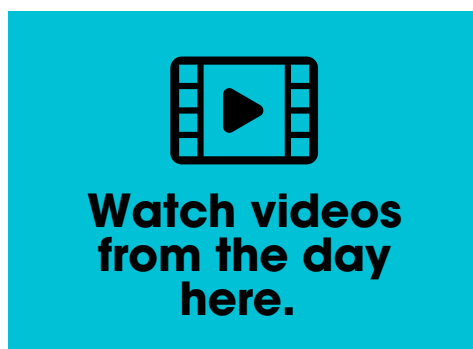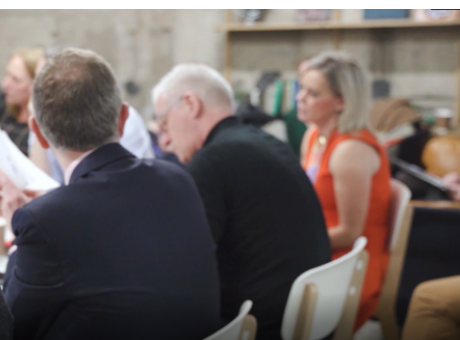
Throughout and after the session we heard feedback that attendees really valued being in a space with a diverse team of experts from within and outside of their own fields, who were passionately focused on changing and improving outcomes for people. The discussion on the day was honest, with input from numerous inspiring leaders in the room. Commissioners could openly share work that has resulted in poor outcomes and shared their experiences of pressures put on service delivery to demonstrate impact. This in itself is knotty and complex as we heard sometimes commissioners don't know what impact solutions will have but feel making decisions based on the confidence they hold that solutions are addressing the right line of enquiry.

"I think (understanding the impact) is the next challenge. We really need to see the impact of the projects and I think we need to keep on beating the drum about trying things out and making mistakes rather than the usual ultra-cautious- 'where is your proof before we can invest?'" Paul Boyce

The face-to-face nature of the event boasted a good energy and created a transparent opportunity for great networking from various areas of the public and private sectors of LCR. However, upon reflection we also know we should have used a bigger, more accessible space that was not split across various floors, but still allowed for presentation privacy and a larger space for brining everyone together.

"The venue was a little tight but overall the format was really good. I was kept busy with intermediary activities and chats when not pitching. It was good that we were able to informally meet and chat with other pitchers. Waiting round for the results was a little nerve wracking but ultimately a good thing - it was nice we got pulled aside before any public announcement. The pitch itself, it would have been nice to have a little more time because of the number of people in the room, I wonder if some people had questions I couldn't answer. However, it did feel like people already had read the background info as the questions were interesting and specific." – Damibu

The last activity at the Roundtable event was an opportunity for all the stakeholders and SMEs to come together and discuss what would come next as a result of the programme, and how CDC could wrap its development around this. We heard from the participants that CDC should:

SME co-development principles

Be pragmatic, this is not about publishing research papers this is about getting on and doing

Help join up and connect the dots of across the data and digital innovation landscape

Bring public services along on the journey by developing products/processes which can support ongoing interaction between CDC, Public Sector and Business

Contribute to helping us understand need, use this to drive solution generation and capture the impact of these changes

Be brave and curious. Don't tie yourself to outcome measures, instead keep anchored on lines of enquiry

Be scouse-keep it focussed on LCR and talk the language of Liverpool

What's changed so far?

As we draw the delivery of the programme to a close, it's important to reflect on the impact and reach achieved across its life cycle.

By involving the feedback from stakeholders at each stage of the programme we have pulled together the SME, public and VCSE sectors as mutual partners. We are confident that we have framed the right questions by allowing the public sector to share their biggest challenges and opening up a diverse discussion about the best ways to tackle our region's issues with the help of local business. This approach has cut across the typical silos, and opened doors for a wide spectrum of people to connect and understand some of the challenges before diving into discussing solutions that get to the heart of LCR's complicated challenges.

Developing connections
=
Understand the problems
=
Better solutions
=
More opportunity to collaborate

By regularly challenging our assumptions Capacity and CDC have co-designed and delivered a programme that has been exciting and inviting for stakeholders to attend, feeling like a real collaboration in a complex and confusion environment.

The programme **reached 174 individuals** through it's various outputs.

Each individual represented LCRs public services, the local SME and VCSE economy and supporting organisations.

"This program has really supported a truly collaborative approach to dealing with fully understood problems across the city region. The program was well organised - well promoted and well considered." Liz Ashall-Payne

Our honest and open approach to programme delivery has created real relationships and opened doors for organisations to progress solutions faster and be more informed by public sector expert knowledge, at the same time giving CDC a chance to understand how the use of civic data can inform these and similar SMEs to design and prove their ideas.

"I've taken away a better network, better understanding of the true challenges- a shared vision for LCR. We now all have more opportunities for innovations cross sector." Liz Ashall-Payne

Three LCR focused SMEs have now been awarded a total of £52.94K worth of seed funding and further opportunities to work with CDC to embed real data into the development of their product or research.

Many other SMEs or individuals have connected with the programme via the webinar series of support and launch event.

The programme will need to continually measure impact as the winning solutions progress in delivery. It will be important to consider here how these organisations are really impacting LCR; are we seeing real change supported by data because of these solutions? Perhaps it's too early to tell at this stage.

Where we've got to

The 'Design Thinking for Health' to the 'what's your problem?' series, this programme has tapped into some of the priority problems in the LCR region. While there is a long road to travel in finding well developed, linked up solutions in these spaces, we found that bringing the right people together to start an open and honest conversation about barriers and solution generation we have started on a path that opens doors and looks to empower organisations with the right data at the right time.

Time, or lack thereof was a big theme that has run throughout the programme, with public services feeling the strain of teams that are working at full capacity with little flexibility to think about innovation, or SMEs that want to spend time with experts in the field to help with mentoring and connections to move solutions closer to realisation. Good communication has been the backbone of the programme, paving the way for true innovation, first fully understanding the problem, then creating a protected space to chew through solutions and design data informed products.

Our recommendations centre around the wider design of the programme and the approach CDC and Capacity have taken, to build on future products. We have broken this down into four themes: Engagement, LCR problems, Data and informing who CDC become.

Engagement

With a broad and diverse number of stakeholders now involved and interest in the programmes CDC have launched and will run in the future, CDC needs to consider how it will keep stakeholders engaged in collective thinking, ensuring that we can continue to gather insights, but also deliver something of value and meaning to the individuals who come to sit at the table to share time and ideas. So far, CDC have developed a robust network of stakeholders who have engaged with the concept of CDC, who can only be retained if we build, report on and share further significant outputs and change through the delivery of their next projects.

"I found the program stimulating. Taking people outside of the norm to get them to think about problem solving rather than solution finding, bringing together data and problems is really exciting and the proof of the pudding is in the results. Good prize winners!" - Paul Boyce

We know that SME engagement takes time and needs nurturing, this isn't a transactional process, it's a relational one. SMEs repeatedly told us that the appeal of the programme was not the value of the seed funding (which was relatively low in terms of potential reward and impact on the SMEs who engaged) but the real life connections and door opening that the programme offered. This said, the Design Thinking for Health programme has only just scratched the surface when getting to know and support SMEs in the region.

What we could do differently?

Future iterations of this programme should consider how to keep SMEs who are relevant to the objectives better engaged. More mapping could be done to understand who has engaged, if they are adding value to solutions, and scoping out additional SMEs who would benefit from participating. There is a fine line to maintain between delivering support to SMEs who need it, but are not relevant to the problems identified, but still aiming to be a connector, mentor or critical friend to these examples, without losing focus on moving the programme forwards.

On the issue of digital leaders and digital progression in the public sector environment, there is a prospective opportunity here to engage and embed students and young people into programme thinking to build and implant local communities and retain knowledge and expertise in LCR for the future, something which could be improve future iterations of this programme and thinking.

First Phase - Problems	Second Phase - Themes
Reducing Childhood Asthma through better environments and awareness.	Digital leadership
Increasing family support to stop childdren entering the care system	Digital literacy
Making digital feel doable in local authority social care teams	Helping digital systems talk to each other
	Data linkage
	Helping families ask for help
	Help services be driven by community power

Liverpool City Region problems

From the Initial Insights gathering we heard from public sector leaders that there are a long list of problems keeping our leaders awake at night, this programme initially focused in on 3 of those, then dived in deeper to look at how CDC could support innovation best by reviewing these into 6 more focused areas:

Although we understand that the public sector problems will evolve and reprioritise depending on various socio-economic factors, there is still learning to take away here and consider for future editions of this programme. From the initial insights with public sector leaders there were 6 other areas that have real potential to weave in SME innovation, including:

1   **Communication across internal siloed teams**

2   **Improving our environments to have a lasting impact on population health**

3   **Co-production with service users in statutory services**

4   **Improving poor housing stock**

5   **Poor educational outcomes**

6   **Community mobilisation via data and tech**

As more time passes there is a risk these areas might become less relevant for innovative thinking, but CDCs short to medium term thinking could re-visit these areas in upcoming work or projects, when thinking about how data can support new thinking to wrap around these local issues.

LCR's public service leaders have given their time generously to support at different stages, contributing to framing the problems and spending more time with us to challenge solution generation. Their role in the programme and what gains they receive by spending time contributing to support and the different phases should be defined and considered before further delivery.

Data

Many of the stakeholders are now poised to watch what CDC will do next. There is an expectation that a bulk of this work will be around data; connecting granular data up and giving people access to a place where useful, governed, secure and trusted data can be extracted to analyse and really understand the complex issues faced by the residents living in LCR.

'Data' and 'digital' work is often discussed as one synonymous approach by stakeholders, showing us that public services are looking at data as a way of implementing and using better technology and solutions to plan services and understand future need and trends. Our public service leaders have been honest with the programme, admitting this space is big, overwhelming and difficult to navigate, but feel there is a real opportunity to learn from organisations such as CDC about how to govern, commission and use accurate data better.

SMEs have also shown us that with better access to data that isn't aggregated to a point of irrelevance, more understanding of population health and social issues can empower more informed and more robust solutions to problems, which can be scrutinised through a better lens, instead of a more broad-brush approach.
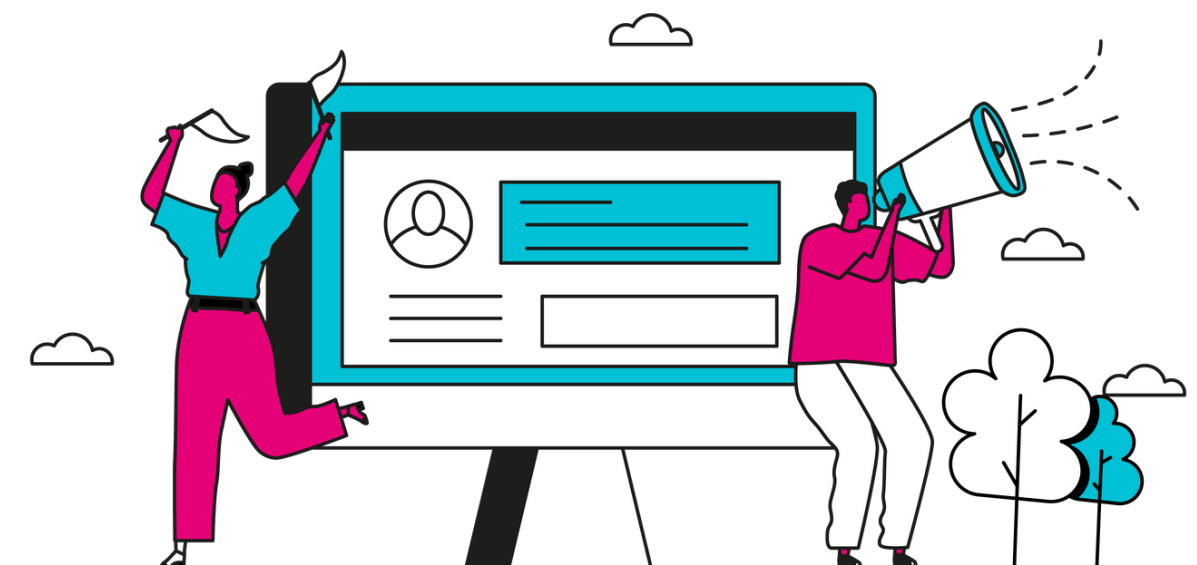
Informing who the Civic Data Cooperative become...

Four key areas shone through across the programme:
1. Strong **programme identity**
2. The development of the **Data Commons**
3. The need of **clarity of message** with stakeholders
4. **Clear communication and branding** to re-enforce who CDC are

Throughout the life span of this programme CDC and Capacity have maintained a good, balanced relationship, jointly leading and designing how the programme would be delivered and engaging with stakeholders at relevant times. After making an early decision to pivot away from focusing solely on health SMEs, where we heard social care was being left behind, the name of the programme, 'Design Thinking for Health', had become less connected to our deliverables, this is when we shifted towards the 'What's your problem?' programme name, which represented the ambition of the programme better to boldly attract stakeholders from services and SMEs at once, ensuring a strong **programme identity**.

We saw good engagement from stakeholders from the early conversations we had when pulling together the insights report, to coordinating the roundtable of experts. Participants are interested in what CDC will become and what value can be brought to this data space, which can feel overwhelming, confusing and hard to access. There is a risk here of needing to deliver a product that CDC can own, anchoring the connection of data into something tangible for stakeholders to see and use. An example of this is the **Data Commons**, which is in it's early development, but a realistic timeline of what this is going to become and when it will be available in it's first iteration could be beneficial.

CDC have been flexible in defining what their outputs and organisation needed to become, based on the feedback from stakeholders across the breadth of the project, but this can cause some confusion over clarity of message over how connected to data they are. CDC have recognised throughout that getting something done is better than it being perfect, and have kept pace to be proactive and challenge the expectations of 'the system'.

This landscape is going through a period of flux, with various new partnerships and organisations aligning themselves with the region's data. Noise from these other projects can be confusing for the profile of CDC and can add confusion to a space that is difficult to navigate. **Clarity of message** is really important to define to separate out the focus of each organisation to ensure work is not being duplicated across LCR and that public services, citizens and the local business can define what CDC's purpose and added value is.

Some of this challenge could be addressed with **clear communications and branding** that speaks to a variety of stakeholders and is pushed out and used well on every platform, and in each stakeholder facing interaction.

There is a challenging weigh up of CDC's priorities:

System Change

Skills & Enterprise

Project(s)

...to become a purpose driven organisation
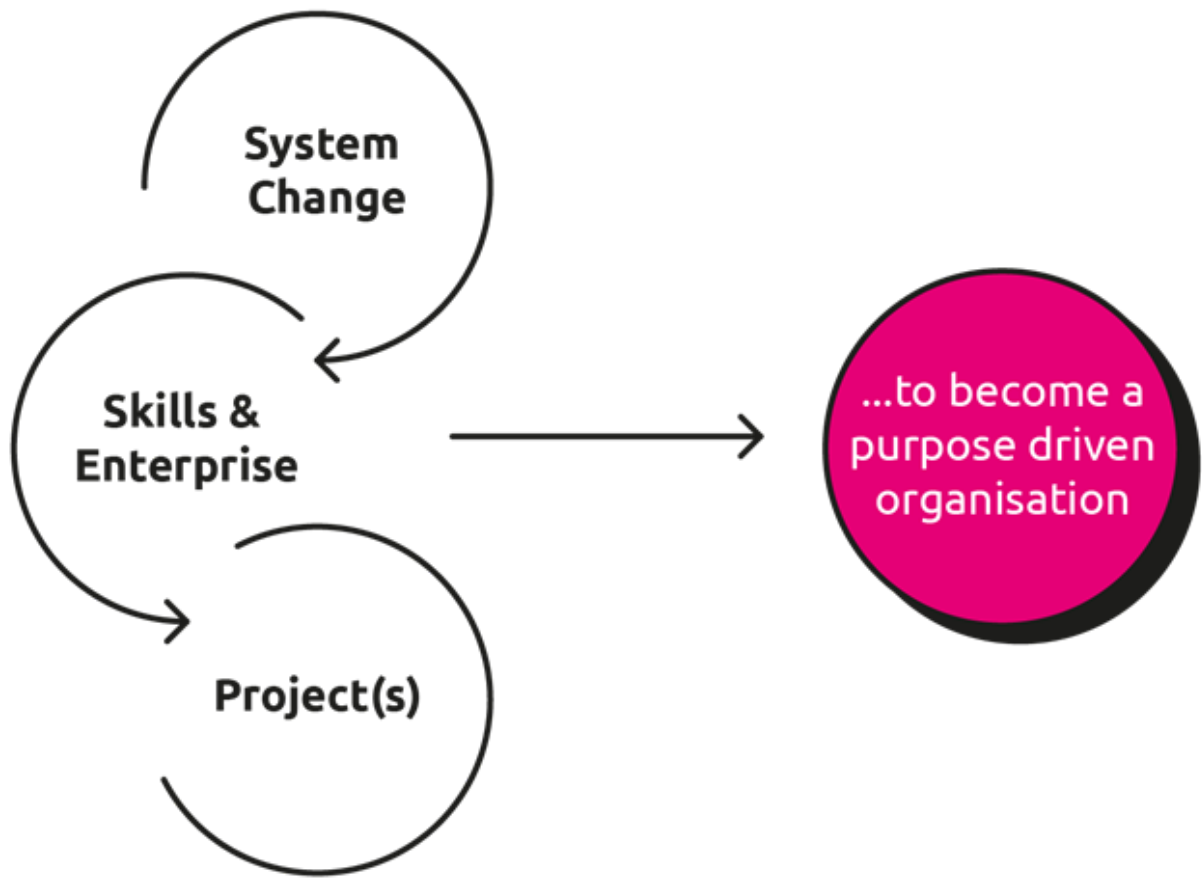
Next steps

CDC have successfully delivered a programme that has met its own objectives and will continue to monitor and evaluate the progress made by the **3 winning SME innovations.**

There is a **sustainable opportunity** to re-run similar programmes in the future, to build on the learnings and insights gathered and continue to **inject seed funding cash and build better relationships** with growing organisations, innovators and public services in LCR.

CDC are **uniquely positioned** to work with public services, SMEs, VCSEs and the general public to co-design and collaborate on projects with a **community focus letting the citizens lead** on what problems feel real and impactful to them. The role of data is key here to weave in intelligence, research, justification and impact management when helping our regions leaders deliver lasting change to the people living in LCR.

Useful links

CDC Insights Report

Save the date

'What's your problem?' microsite

Launch event Information Packs

Childhood Asthma: Childhood Asthma

Children in Care: Children in Care

Digital Care Teams: Digital Care Teams

SME applicant pack

Diversity and inclusion questionnaire

Expression of interest form

Webinar series: CDC Webinar Series

Who's at the table document