

➤ Innovation from Concept to Ecosystem: Designing Strategies for Change

Overview

In areas ranging from healthcare to the circular economy to energy transition to financial access, innovating is the only way to sustain success. Yet the ability to do so effectively continues to elude many leaders and organizations. Parsons' stakeholder-centric approach to design-led strategy can help organizations learn to apply fresh thinking in addressing challenges and transform ecosystems.

Whether you are looking to enter a new market, launch a new service in the public sector, or design beyond competitive advantage, the Innovation from Concept to Ecosystem program provides you with the tools and methods you need to foster a culture of innovation in response to constant and unpredictable change.

In this hands-on, dynamic program, you master the latest design strategies and techniques, acquire the leadership skills required to implement business and cultural transformation, and develop the strategic ability to communicate, improve, and iterate. Taught by expert faculty and industry leaders at Parsons, the #1 design school in the United States, you discover the full range of opportunities available to create environmental, business, and social value to generate positive change and unlock what we call Return on Design.

Details

Experience

Hybrid and/or in person
5-6 days, 3-8 hours per day

Visit our website for more information on fees and upcoming dates.

Key Learnings

Strategic Design

Learn how to apply stakeholder-centered design techniques to anticipate opportunities and ensure adoption of transformative strategies.

Amplified Outcomes

Navigate organizational silos, innovate through partnerships, assess opportunities, identify use cases and minimum viable products (MVPs), and develop an ecosystem map.

Advanced Storytelling

Hone your skills in storytelling, evangelism, and presentation to articulate and advocate for a vision and secure funding.

Operationalizing Innovation

Define your roadmap by identifying key decision criteria and learn to scale metrics for success and future funding to speed your innovative concept to market.

Meet Your Faculty



Program Lead

Mariana Amatullo, PhD, Vice Provost and Academic Dean for Continuing and Professional Education, The New School

Mariana Amatullo is a practitioner, scholar, and leading design management expert. She has established new measurement frameworks that incorporate design as a cognitive approach that advances innovation. Dr. Amatullo leads The New School's Executive Education division.

“We know innovation is both perceptual and conceptual. This course demystifies the innovation process. It provides a clear roadmap to identify and act on innovation with a designer's mindset and creative confidence.”

—Mariana Amatullo



Program Lead

Jen van der Meer, Assistant Professor of Strategic Design and Management, Parsons School of Design; Co-director, Impact Entrepreneurship Initiative, The New School; Founder, Reason Street

Jen van der Meer is a faculty member at Parsons and co-director of the university's Impact Entrepreneurship Initiative, which helps students develop entrepreneurial skills and growth mindsets and master inclusive design approaches. Van der Meer is also a business model designer at the strategic design consultancy Reason Street.

●● *“We all know that most organizations are disappointed with their innovation performance. Despite the obstacles that exist, the real problem is that we’ve overoptimized for start-up disruption, but we know we all need to make major systems transformation. This course explores the way innovation emerges from the academy, the private sector, the public sector, and the spaces in between. Design attitude is a practice for integrating and including different perspectives and creating generative options for our collective future.”*

—Jen van der Meer

🔴 > Deeper Dive on the Course/Key Topics

Learning Approach

The aim of our innovative action-based, live-case learning approach is to strike the right balance between theory and practice. Along with exploring concepts and tools through expert-led lectures, discussions, and case studies, you engage in real client work, implementing the innovation process from start to finish; receive individualized feedback and support from the expert instructional team; and participate in independent, pair, and group labs, developing fluency in industry-essential topics and techniques.

Pre-Work: Identify Your Next Opportunity Areas

Prepare to hit the ground running with self-paced pre-work. Our Opportunity Assessment Canvas helps you identify challenging areas and questions to bring into the classroom and determine what you want to get out of the course.

🔴 > Identify Your Next Opportunity

One of the best ways to master innovation methods is through practice, so we ask each participant to work on a new concept or innovative idea. In this pre-work exercise, you develop a value proposition based on key assumptions about your intended audience, their needs, your approach, the expected benefits, and existing alternatives.

We encourage you to bring to class a concept that can be shared with other participants, such as a new idea emerging from your organization or one you are thinking of developing outside of your company. Alternatively, you are welcome to workshop a project concept in partnership with a start-up, public program, or nonprofit.

➤ Innovation Design Format

Our program will follow a “double diamond” approach, or iterative design process. The two diamonds represent the shift in mindset from exploration, beginning with discovering issues using a wide lens (divergent thinking), followed by engaging in more focused action (convergent thinking), and then iterating to ensure that the right questions are being asked and answered.



Classic design process focuses on a delivery outcome: a product, process, or experience. Innovation from Concept to Ecosystem focuses on a key decision as the outcome of a process: passing through the opening phases of innovation, enrolling financial backers for your concept, and structuring decision making to ensure success.

Unit 1: Innovation Design and Ecosystem Mapping

Develop foundational knowledge of innovation, from theory to practice.

On day one, we cover theory and practice, including new developments in the proven business value of design and design thinking and innovation wave theories of growth and transformation. In studios and workshops, you share your early-stage concepts and identify your current networks and capabilities while mapping out your ecosystem space. The class then explores the latest thinking on the Three Horizons as a social innovation tool for imagining transformation scenarios. We encourage you to expand the scope of your innovation concept to reach into the future, connect more deeply with your customers and stakeholders, and invite partners to participate in your innovation journey.

Topics covered include:

- What does it mean to be innovative? What are the leading theories of innovation?
- Why do individuals and organizations struggle to move beyond making incremental gains to become innovators?
- How can developing insights and reframing challenges through new lenses help you identify new opportunities? Is timing everything? How do we understand innovation cycles within current and future operating environments?
- How can you use an innovation portfolio to ensure that you are designing for both the short-term and long-term viability of your organization?
- What is a design attitude, and how can it help you build a culture of transformation?

Unit 2: Clarifying and De-risking Your Offering

Explore ways to validate your innovation concepts so that you can choose the right opportunities, assess feasibility, and make resource-wise decisions.

On day two, we explore the leading, often conflicting methods used in value proposition design. The Innovation from Concept to Ecosystem method addresses open innovation spaces that connect the private sector with either social impact or the public sector, where value propositions must address multiple stakeholders and perspectives on value. During studio time, you work to uncover the needs, both conscious and unconscious, of your primary stakeholders. We then use best of lean practices to de-risk the first iteration of your concept and refine, simplify, and test the core value of your offering. You receive feedback from leading innovation practitioners during afternoon design charrettes and collaborative sessions.

Topics covered include:

- How can you prioritize opportunities to determine where you will first invest and why?
- How can you reduce the risk of your first offering using the best of lean thinking?
- How should you assess your current and future capabilities to deliver?
- How can you define the scope of and requirements for a high-potential opportunity?
- How can you validate the difference between pains, needs, and wants?

Unit 3: Foresight and Options Generation

Increase the value of your innovation portfolio and design your roadmap.

On day three, we reflect and broaden our perspective, looking into the future using the Backcasting method, working backward to remove obstacles and barriers, and shaping the path forward to innovation. We investigate options for innovation portfolios and test your concept in different scenarios. Guest innovation leaders provide feedback and discuss possibilities for your concept and innovation portfolio.

Clarifying the Value Proposition and the Path Forward

Topics covered include:

- How can you capture and convey the full scope of an innovation opportunity?
- How can you anticipate future scenarios and distinguish hype from true opportunity?
- How can you increase the value of digitization through successive waves of technological development?
- How can you identify likely barriers and develop strategies to remove them?
- How can you move beyond the dominant logic to develop tolerance for ambiguity in order to see new sources of value?

Unit 4: Beyond Slide Design: Developing Your Transformation Story

On day four, you learn to build creative confidence through effective storytelling. The class returns to focus mode to shape the narrative and identify the numbers behind your story. Your transformation story needs to speak to both financially minded investors and decision makers and your key backers and supporters. You learn storytelling techniques that present evidence that you're on the right track, eliciting productive feedback and a positive response from your audience.

Topics covered include:

- What are the design principles of effective storytelling?
- How can you use the numbers behind innovation to reach your objective?
- How can you organize and write a compelling presentation using an effective story structure?
- How can you meet your audience where they are?
- What visualization techniques can you use to build a compelling argument that invites productive debate and wins support?

Unit 5: Designing Open Ecosystems and Cultivating Resonant Leadership for a Disciplined Innovation Culture

On day five, we explore organizational insights and decision methods and criteria used by leading innovators. We practice the art and science of designing the innovation decision and organizational structure and developing the means to create a culture of resonant leaders. To address the inherent tensions that develop in the process of trying to innovate in legacy sectors, resonant leaders build trusting, engaged, and energizing relationships and create sustained and desired change across hierarchies, organizational boundaries, and social groups. At the end of the program, you'll have access to open-source tools and frameworks to bring back to your own organization.

Topics covered include:

- How can you identify the internal and external collaborators you will need? How can you convey innovation strategy externally and internally?
- How can you create a culture of resonant leaders?
- What decision criteria will enable you to choose the best concepts?
- How can you strengthen your ability to deliver new opportunity areas?
- How can you embrace transformation to future-proof your organization?

➤ Outcomes

Upon completion of the program, you will be equipped with actionable frameworks, skills, and leading practices for delivering innovation, including:

- Knowledge of design thinking fundamentals
- Practical tools for fast-tracking compelling, innovative experiences to market
- The ability to communicate value and vision to key stakeholders to gain alignment and buy-in
- The capacity to drive structural change to unlock innovation potential
- The ability to develop innovation cultures and ecosystems

In addition, your concepts will have been stress-tested by and strengthened with the input of design industry leaders.

🔴 > Participant Profile

This program is designed for mid- to senior-level executives, professionals from private and public sectors looking to acquire new tools and skills, expand their network, and develop their ability to use uncertainty to deliver purposeful innovation.

🔴 > Enroll as a Team or Organization

Parsons Executive Education programs are designed to deliver results. Partner with us to create customized programs tailored to your teams—programs that align with your organizational strategy and deliver on your business goals. Consider us an extension of your team, working toward a shared goal of addressing organizational and market challenges and developing innovative solutions for your stakeholders and customers. You identify the challenges; we customize and design our presentations, exercises, case studies, and breakout sessions to help you achieve your goals. Scheduling is flexible, and we work around your time constraints.

Learn more at

execed.newschool.edu/organizations

◉ > Why Parsons Executive Education?

Parsons Executive Education operates at the intersection of design and the global socioeconomic trends transforming our organizations and communities. Our programs are designed for industry leaders and entrepreneurs who have the courage to engage in high-impact learning—those who come at challenges differently, celebrate creativity, and are capable of acting in the face of continuous change. While most curricula focus on ROI, our courses take you on a journey that delivers Return on Design (ROD)—improved performance, increased resilience, dynamic new customer experiences, and maximum growth. As the #1 design school in the United States, an institution that is leading the thinking and output of industries the world over, we offer a high-impact learning environment that will enable you to:

- Practice approaches to problem solving that will maximize your ability to adapt to change
- Acquire human-centered methods that will help you effect organizational transformation and create memorable experiences for your audience
- Harness new sources of value for building successful products and services while designing risk out of the process
- Master the art of prototyping and make ideas tangible to maximize stakeholder and customer buy-in
- Create multilevel impact by employing systems thinking and ecosystem business models, an approach well suited to the new era of complexity



Take the Next Step

Have questions about Innovation from Concept to Ecosystem? Our team can help you determine whether this program is right for you and your learning goals.

Contact us at

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Register at

execed.newschool.edu

