Social Innovation Conversation:
Learning with PlayBuild

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Agenda

How We'll Spend the Hour

- Welcome + Purpose

- Who We Are

- The Evolution of a Partnership

- New Developments

- Feedback/Q&A

Who We Are

Dr. Faughnan in the Field

How I See Research

- Pragmatism (William James):
  - Context matters, multiple interpretations
  - Knowledge valid and valued for contribution
  - Inquiry is a valuable problem solving-process
  - Learning through experience

- Ethical impetus: process AND significance AND translation
  - Should maximize direct benefit & reduce harm to participants
  - Should be useful for scholars & practitioners
  - Applying the knowledge to real-world needs

  = Telling stories of 'knowing by doing'

Accidental Playground Entrepreneur

How I See Research

- Opportunity Rationalization:
    - Market sizing
    - Finding white space
    - Validating demand

- Human Insight:
    - Personas
    - User Journeys
    - In-Depth Interviews (IDIs)
    - Ethnography & Focus Groups
    - Quant & Qual Data Gathering

= "Quantifying the Ask"

PlayBuild Origins

Maurice Cox
Former Executive Director, Small Center for Collaborative Design

November 15, 6:30-8:30
Propeller Incubator
4035 Washington Ave

PitchNOLA2012:
LOTS OF PROGRESS

THE LOTS:
New Orleans has thousands of vacant properties

THE PITCH:
Pitch an idea that utilizes vacant lots to benefit the community

THE OPPORTUNITY:
Choose an available vacant lot from our selection to make your pitch a reality

NORA NEW ORLEANS REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY   Tulane University   PROPELLER A FORCE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

Application Deadline: October 22, 2012 at 11:59pm. For more information and to apply online, please visit www.GoPropeller.org/pitchnola2012
Questions? Contact jstewart@GoPropeller.org.

Creative Placemaking Meets Design Education

PlayBuild's mission is the transformation of under-utilized spaces into alternative play environments that encourage hands-on learning about design, architecture, engineering, and related disciplines through immersive programs and experiences.

PlayBuild has evolved into a community space that serves as a hub for local kids and families and hosts a variety of after-school, weekend, and seasonal programs for 4-12 year-olds year-round.

Partnered at the national level with KaBOOM, and at the local level with the Taylor Center for Social Innovation and Design Thinking at Tulane University, PlayBuild has served over 5,000 local children since the organization's inception in 2012.

PlayBuild Today

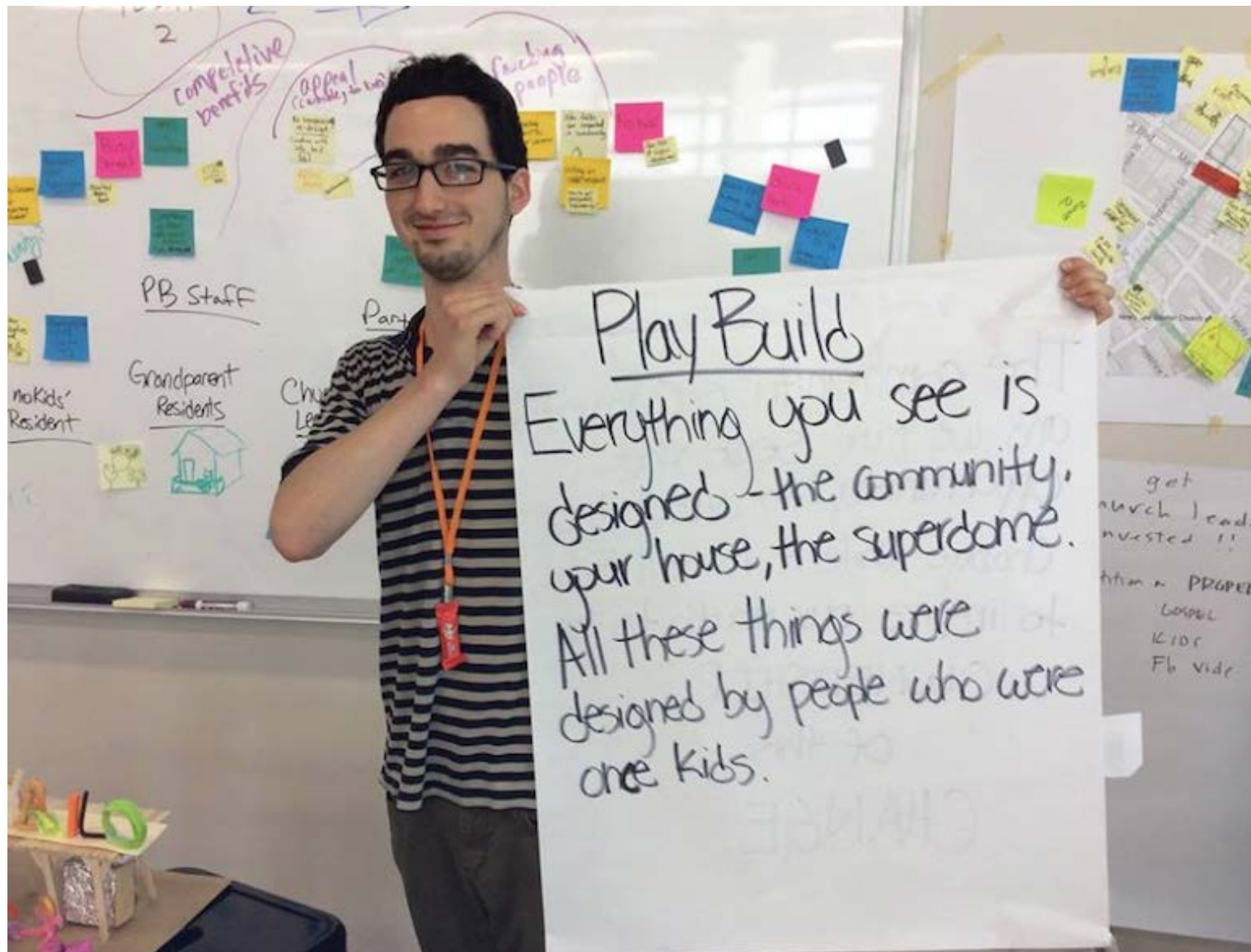| Placemaking	Programming	Pop-Up Events
Central City	After-School & Camps	Outreach Events

Our Partnership

PlayBuild + Taylor

Fast 48 Partnership - 2014+

Some design challenges:

<u>Fast 48 V (2016):</u>

How might PlayBuild engage the surrounding community to build awareness and understanding of their mission?

<u>Fast 48 IX (2019):</u>

How might PlayBuild help stakeholders and residents of Central City reimagine its streets and spaces to be more child-friendly?

Above: Angela responds to design ideas presented by teams

Left: PlayBuild Community Manager Joanika Davis with her design team

Pl@y MLk

From the playground to the neutral ground

10,000 Hours*

Characteristics of Action Research

- Doing research on our practice
- Collaborating through collective learning
- Following an open-ended, evolving process
- Solving real-world problems
- Changing ourselves and our spaces
- Building capacity and power
- Advancing human well-being

= We're doing it already, could be more intentional

Action Research

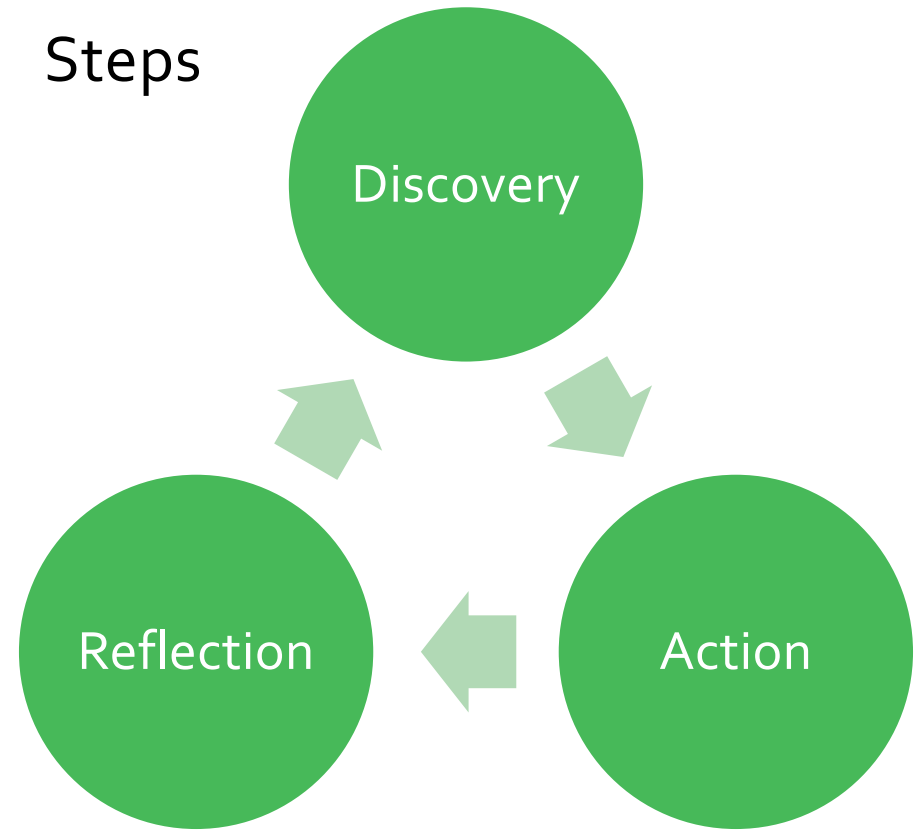## Approaches

- Action Learning
- Participatory Action Research
- Action Science
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Community-Based Participatory Research

Steps

Discovery

Action

Reflection

Source: Adapted from James, Slater & Bucknam

Our Desired State

STAGE 1
**Question
and Hypothesise**

STAGE 2
**Prototype
and Experiment**

STAGE 3
**Synthesise
and Iterate**

STAGE 4
**Release
and Measure**
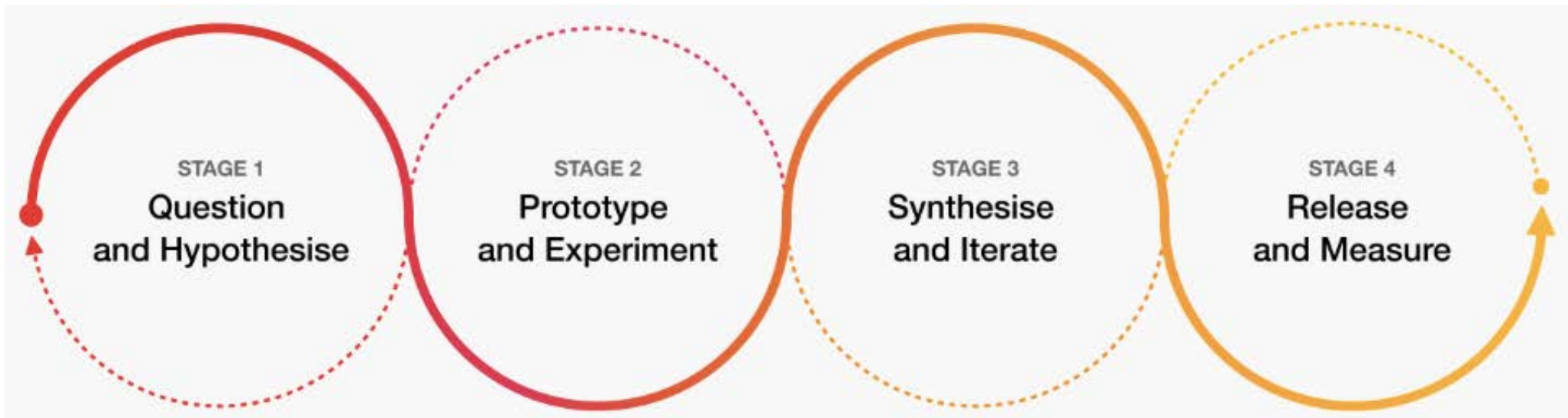
New Developments

"The Pull Factor"

- The founding of the PlayBuild Community Board

- Organic "demand" for DT and HCD training

- Shifting power

Meet the PlayBuild Community Board

Cola   Artisha   Tiffany

Chantel   Ms. Kennedy

Established 2019

Community-Engaged Research

- We received the Center for Public Service's Community Engaged Research Program grant
- Principal Investigators:
  - Dr. Maille Faughnan
  - Dr. Laura Murphy
  - Dr. Lesley-Ann Noel

New Research Questions

How can social innovation methodologies such as human-centered design and systems thinking support the development and effectiveness of a grassroots neighborhood entity?

- What value do they see for themselves as individuals, the board and PB as organization?
- How do they use it? Integrate it into their practice?
- How can these tools help them solve problems (internal development, external impact)
- What else might be needed?

Research Activities

- Planning
- Trainings
- Interviews
- Group Discussions
- Class Exchanges
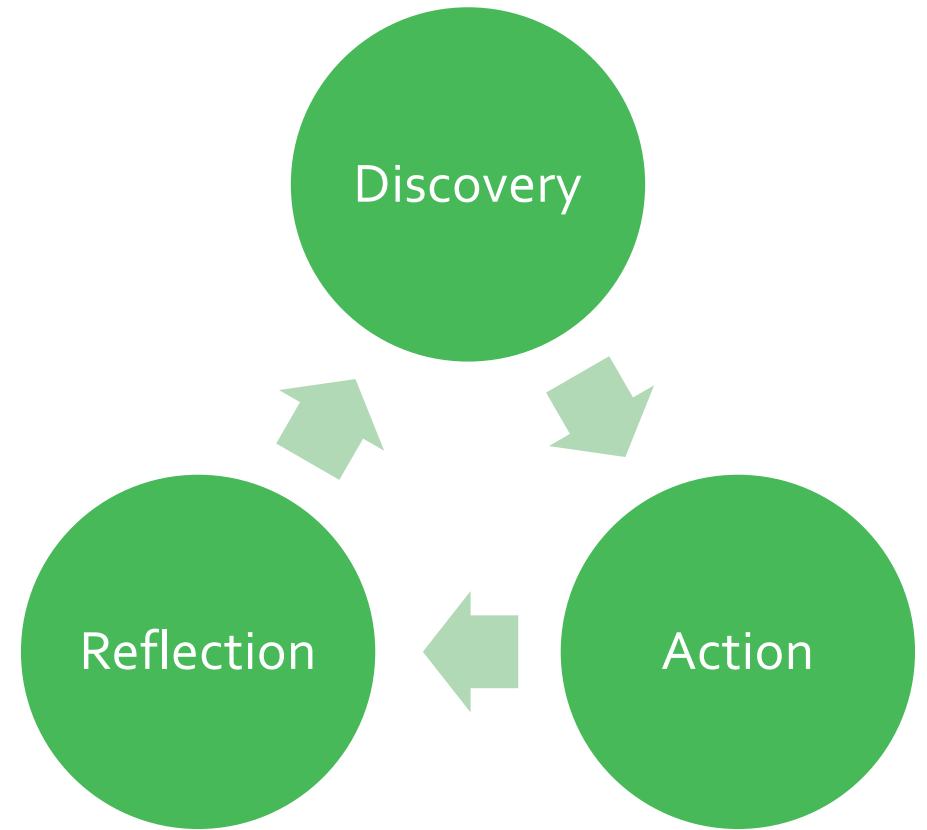
Timeline of Activity

Activity	Nov-Dec	Jan-Feb	Mar-April	May-June	July-Aug	Sept-Dec
Planning	XX Kick-off	XX Check-ins	XX Check-ins	X Check-ins	XX Check-ins	X Follow-up
Training w/CB	X	XX	XX Fast 48	XX		
Class Visits to PB	XX	XXX	XXX			
CB Class Visits	X	XXX		XXX		
Group Discussions	X	X	X	X		
Interviews		XXX	XX	XX	XX	
Sense-Making			X	X	X	XX
Dissemination		X SI Conversation	X Ashoka U Exchange		XCB & PB	X ISIRC X Publication

Detailed Budget

Budget item	Number of item	Cost per item	Total Requested	Other support
Activity Stipends for Board (e.g. training, class visit, interview)	125 hourly stipends	$25/hour/person	$2225	$900
Graduate Research Assistant	100 hours	$15/hour	$1500	
Venue Rental	3hours	$100/hour		$300
Event Refreshment	5 events (for 20=30 people/event)	$100/event		$500
TOTAL			$3725	$1400

Scoping Insights – the Board

"We want to engage the community...because we have people from community who do want to get involved. We are at a phase where we want the community to be responsible for running PlayBuild, but that means getting more parents coming out, getting involved in art and design. We're from the community and we're trying to make it safe. We understand the pros and cons. We want to bring more activity back to the neighborhood. You got to be interested in what PlayBuild offer, but also seeing what other community members can offer. For example, I represent mental health, S. cares about domestic violence, L. always brings the healthy snacks. The board represents different things, so it's about bringing it all together and resources that we all have. An improvement district is about what we can improve in the community...seeing where their heart is and what they want to do."

-Q, Long-term neighborhood Volunteer on the Community Board

Insights – Value of Design Thinking

3 board members shared what they valued about design thinking (Aug 2019)

- **Collaboration: B**eing in a collaborative environment, teamwork and multiple perspectives

- **Empathy**: Developing empathy from a user's point of view, such as by taking a kid's perspective

- **Creative Agency:** Creativity around solving problems, inviting people to think in out of the box ways, to get new ideas and feel excited about taking action

"I liked that they were being kids again. It brought PL@Y MILK to life for me in a whole new vision. We could benefit from [a Fast 48] every fall because you still get something fresh and new out of it. That was the most impressive part to see all these professionals who are supposed to be serious, and for them to get in that room and be 6 or 7 years old again and coming together with people you've never met – it showed that they really cared about what we needed, they cared about PB, that's the most important thing."

-L, Long-term Neighborhood volunteer on the Fast 48 experience

Insights – Using Design Thinking

- ## Different desires (from PIs, ED, Board)
  - Training trainers to facilitate DT with others (e.g., PB kids, community members, other organizations)
  - Training Board members to continue using DT in different programs and neighborhood initiatives
  - Using design sessions together to address pressing issues (e.g., around safety, children's mobility)
  - Using design sessions as a mechanism to get more people in neighborhood network involved with PlayBuild

Thank You

Questions for Audience - Action

- What does an effective and meaningful university- community organisation partnership look like around research (next 10,000 hours)?

- What do you think about our intended direction for design thinking with the community board?

Questions for Audience - Process

- How do we balance the tensions around "participation" – ownership and burden of commitment?

- In a "reflection" phase, how do we balanace the sharing data part with confidentiality and micro-politics?

References

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