

CASE STUDIES

Case studies are useful tools to communicate the details and impact of your project to people who may know nothing about it. The most successful case studies provide inspiration to fellow designers and serve as learning tools that can be shared with clients, media, other designers and the public. This template walks you through what topics to cover—such as research, strategy and effectiveness—to demonstrate the value of design in a clear, compelling and accessible way.

After filling in these details, please format all of the written and visual content in a way that communicates the story of your project in an engaging way.

Project Details

Provide this information to give readers a quick overview of your project

- » **Title of Project**
- » **One-sentence project description** (elevator pitch)
- » **Overview of design challenge.** Summarize your project in a couple of paragraphs, touching on the challenge, design approach, and outcome of the project.
- » **Date(s) / Duration**
- » **Location**
- » **Partner / Client** (include short description of their organization or mission)
- » **Community / organization being served**
- » **Team members**

Design Process

Provide details about how you worked through your project, from defining the challenge to assessing the value of the final designs.

1. **Baseline Information**
Outline what you knew about the design challenge at the project's start
 - » This might have included images of existing design elements, environment, user experience, etc; responses to interviews from community members or users, place-based observations and assessments, and facts that provide contextual information about the challenge. You may have accumulated this "before" information throughout your project.
2. **Research**
Describe how you investigated the problem. Your research may have taken many forms in order to understand and assess the needs of the project, and may have included resources like:
 - » Websites, books, case studies, articles, white papers, etc
 - » Data gathering or behavioral insights
 - » Observations, interviews, and other user insights
3. **Engage**
How did you involve/integrate your partners, clients, end-users, or stakeholders?
4. **Summarize Findings into a Needs Assessment**
Describe how your research and engagement informed the approach of your project?
5. **Design Solution**
Detail the different aspects of your final design solution and describe how the final design solution took shape
6. **Assess Impact**
Describe the outcome of your project, as it compares to the baseline conditions. Why is your design effective or ineffective? Who benefited (or will benefit)? What has the reaction been from the community, partner, or client so far? To help guide your answers, consider providing both qualitative insights, quantitative data, direct and indirect results, "before and after" images, statistics, figures and facts, stories, interviews, and quotes

from stakeholders. The impact could fall into one or more of these categories:

- › **Economic:** Has the design solution created new jobs, increased business, provided more services for lower cost, etc? What's the Return on Design?
- › **Social:** Has the design changed social dynamics in the community. Has it increased interactions, networks, activities that have strengthened the social bonds?
- › **Environmental:** How has your project affected the environment: through conservation of energy, water or materials, use of recycled or sustainable materials, or alternate ways to communicate information (converting printed materials to digital materials).
- › **Health:** How has your project improved people's health. Will it help increase physical activity and mental well-being? Help with weight-loss, better eating habits and reduction of health risk indicators?
- › **Cultural:** Have there been any new cultural, artistic and educational opportunities? Have any new cross-cultural/generational/ethnic interactions occurred?
- › **Political:** Consider how your project has or might lead to a shift in policy around the issue. Might it lead to more collaboration between designers and policy analysts or politicians? Could laws change as a result?
- › **Educational:** Did your design help to educate your target audience on the topic of your project? Did any new educational programs begin because of the design? Is your client or the end user able to use and/or adapt your designs as a tool to educate others?
- › **Another:** Has there been another kind of impact? Please explain.

Reflections

Consider **why** your project was important, **what** tools, methods or frameworks helped you work through the project, and **how** others might get involved in this kind of social impact project in the future.

Why

- › Would you describe the kind of impact you want to have as social, economic, environmental, health, cultural, political/policy, some combination of these, or another kind?

What

- › Have you developed or utilized any particular skills, methods, or toolkits/frameworks during this project? If so, how useful were they? What were their strengths and shortcomings?
- › How did you ensure that the client/partner/end user takes ownership of the final design in the end?

How

- › How has this project changed the way you work? Is there anything you would change if you could do this over again? What would you do the same?
- › Can you think of any additional partnerships that will need to be established for a complete and successful implementation of the design at community, city, or industry levels?
- › Are there innovations that can/should be scaled up?
- › Any additional budgeting, funding, or organizational considerations?

Assets

Provide this essential content to help illustrate the story of your project.

7–10 images or illustrations of

- › Research
- › Sketches from several points/iterations during the process
- › Visual designs (print, web, environmental, motion, etc), implementation, etc

3 compelling statistics about your project

- › Before/after; baseline conditions

3 quotes

- › From users, partners, clients
- › Based on interviews and/or user-testing

Image requirements

- › High resolution (300 dpi), Horizontal, Color
- › Caption of image
- › Image credit (e.g., "Photo: Photographer's Name" or "Source: www.websitename.com")