Final Submission Toolkit

Setting yourself up for success

The Early Childhood Innovation Prize

Why this toolkit?

To make sure you get the most out of this challenge, we want to share some insights about the Final Submission Phase from the 6+ years that we've been running challenges like the Early Childhood Innovation Prize. In this toolkit we describe topics that often come up.

A step back: where in the design process are we?

You've been on quite a journey since you first submitted your idea to the Challenge. Maybe you're a seasoned design thinker who is used to iterative design processes. But if you're new to all of this, here's a quick summary of your design journey so far.

Firstly, let's acknowledge that a large part of the design process is quite messy, and only now towards the end, you've found some structure. That's totally ok. In fact: it's vital to explore different viewpoints! We often share the image below to show what happens in your brain - and on the drawing board - in a design process:
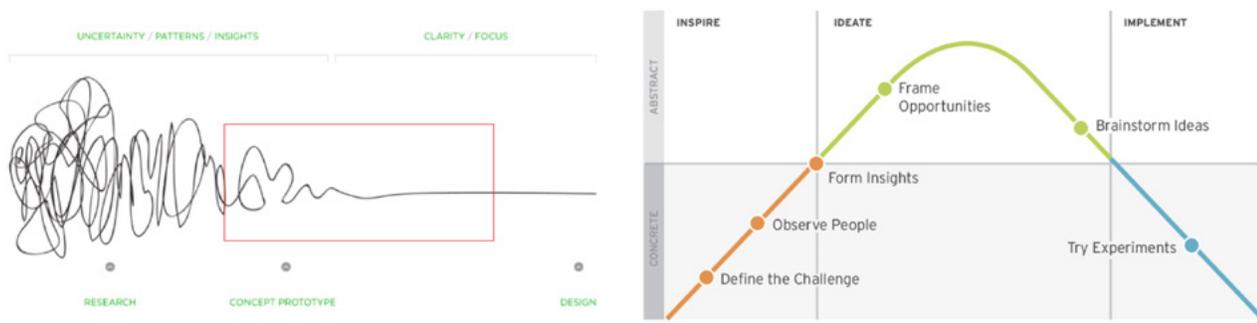
Here's another image (above right) that shows the phases you've been through - from defining the challenge to forming insights to brainstorming opportunities and ideas to testing your assumptions to where you are right now: ready to submit your solution!

Six Things To Keep In Mind During The Challenge

- **Summarize your solution:** You have about one second to grab your audience's attention, so make sure that your one sentence description of your solution sparks their interest!

- **Go visual:** Now that you've captured their attention, make sure you keep it. Visualize your work (for example with an experience map) so your audience gets a deeper understanding of your work, and document your process with sketches and pictures (doesn't have to be pretty!) that help them relate to your journey.

- **Support your decisions with research:** Explain why you've made certain design choices by sharing insights from user.

- **Do a user test:** Ask someone who doesn't know about your work to read your submission. Ask them if they understand your description and visuals, and let them catch typo's.

- **Celebrate your team:** Introduce your team and explain how these super stars will help with the development of your solution.

- **Involve the community in time:** There's a wealth of knowledge in the community, but they also have full agenda's. Ask for feedback about a week before you need to get the most out of this incredible hive mind.

Take a step back: while you are deep in your work, for most people this is the first time they learn about your solution. Explain it as simple and concise as possible, as if you're explaining it to a child.

Five Things To Double Check Before The Challenge Deadline

- **Familiarize yourself with the platform:** Check out how to upload PDFs and attachments for example, so you don't have to figure this out right before the deadline. Understanding the platform and how to finalize or update your concept will help relieve any last minute stress!

- **Format with clarity:** Make your submission as easy to read as possible. Use headers and images, and keep your paragraphs short and sweet. Frame your summary in terms of the problem and your solution (see for example this storytelling structure). Then take advantage of the attachment section to provide content for readers who want more.

- **Talk about your next steps:** We sure hope you'll take your solution to the next level, whether you win the Prize or not. By sharing your plans for the future, you might entice other participants to join you - or funders to fund you!

- **Publish your draft:** Seriously! You won't believe how many challenge participants forget this essential step. (We usually catch this and will send you a friendly reminder if this seems to be happening, but to be sure, please check for yourself.)

- **And do all of this well before the deadline:** Especially if you're in an area with unreliable internet, make sure you make your final edits and submit your solution ahead of the deadline.

The Final Submission deadline is February 15th at 11:30pm PST!

Good Luck!