



# Localization Toolkit

Translating Your Global Work into a Local Context



## The Early Childhood Innovation Prize



# Why this toolkit?

This Prize is focused on solutions that can be implemented in the United States. If you are an innovator from another part of the world, we welcome your participation though ask that you address how your solution fits into the early childhood context in the United States.

Given this aspect of our Prize design, we've built the following toolkit to support those innovators who may not currently be doing work in the US, but will be articulating how their concept might translate within their proposal. The following tips, pointers and tools are meant to be a resource to those of you on this journey.

We can't wait to learn more about your outstanding ideas, why they work in your local context, and how they might translate to additional innovation contexts as well!

*Socrates said, "Know thyself."*

*I say, "Know thy users."*

*And guess what? They don't think like you do.*

— Joshua Brewer, former Principal Designer at Twitter,  
Fast Company's 50 designers shaping the future of design

## DID YOU KNOW?

---

The group Child Care Aware notes that about 11 million children under age 5 spend an average of 35 hours a week in child care. For infants in center-based care, the average annual cost ranges from \$5,496 in Mississippi to \$16,549 in Massachusetts.

# What's important about localization?

Imagine that you are browsing two websites because you want to buy toys for your toddler. On the first page, you see children wearing clothes that are unfamiliar to you, playing games you don't know with toys you've never seen before, and with prices in a currency that is not your own. On the second website, the graphics make sense to you, and prices are in your own currency. Easy guess where you'll buy your new toy!

Making your innovation work in a different geographical context requires more than simply translating your website. It's about connecting with your users on a personal level, and translating the value of your product or service to be accessible and useful to them.

*“So much of design is context.”*

— Steve Madden, fashion designers and businessman

What are the pain points American parents and caretakers experience? What are the existing alternatives to your product or service? What do you know about the trends and developments in Early Childhood Education in the United States? Answering questions like these is crucial for your innovation to work in a new context.

## DID YOU KNOW?

---

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 28% of mothers with young children worked in 1975, more than doubling to 60% by 2013. Over the same period, the number of daycare industry employees increased by nearly 250%.

# Localization in practice

The internet is full of stories of market expansion strategies gone wrong. For example, when Pepsi entered the Chinese markets, they discovered that their slogan “Come Alive with the Pepsi Generation” was literally translated in Chinese as “Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the dead” - a less than ideal way to promote soda.

**Luckily, careful research can help you create a successful localization strategy, that might lead to dramatic shifts in your product or service.**

## **Localization Example 1: An alternative for McDonald’s signature dish**

When entering the Indian market, McDonald’s had to radically redesign their offerings, as cows are considered sacred in India and offering McDonald’s signature beef and pork hamburgers was out of the question. McDonald’s had to build a primarily vegetarian menu to enter the market, that is still recognizable as the comfort fast food McDonald’s is famous for. Source: [BBC](#)

## **Localization Example 2: Gillette Razors for an emerging market**

Gillette (P&G) wanted to test a new razor among Indian consumers before launching it in India. Instead of making the costly trip abroad, they had Indian students at MIT test the razor. The students all loved it. But when Gillette launched the razor in India, the razor flopped. Indian men didn’t use running water and without that, the razor stayed clogged.

“Going to India after that, and seeing people shave without running water was a big ‘a-ha,’” said Alberto Carvalho, vice president of global Gillette. “I had never seen people shaving like that. It taught us the importance to not just to talk to people, but observe and spend time with them to gather the key insight.”

After the trip, the company designed new single blade razors. Gillette's market share for razors and blades in India has grown to 49.1 percent, according to Euromonitor. Source: [Harvard Business Review](#)

**What do you know about Early Childhood Education in the United States? Are you willing to challenge your assumptions, even if that leads to introducing a radical redesign to your product or service offerings?**

## DID YOU KNOW?

---

According to Census Bureau data, a third of young children — or 6.7 million — receive care from a nonrelative on a regular basis, including 4.8 million children who attend an organized preschool or daycare facility.

# The American Culture - Get Curious!

We challenge you to get curious about the United States, and especially about the American perspective on Early Childhood Education. In fact, you might want to go one level deeper and focus on a specific region within the United States, as the country is a patchwork of cultures, identities and customs - and has no less than six time zones!

As a designer, it's tempting to design from what you (think you) know. We invite you to take a step back, and explore the problem you're trying to solve with an American lens. What are the current challenges in Early Childhood Education? Does the problem you're trying to solve even exist in the US, or does it take a different shape?

Before you begin any research, consider asking yourself a few questions:

- **What does the landscape look like in the context for which you are designing?**
- **What is the problem you're trying to solve?**
- **Does this problem exist in the context you're designing for?**

Confirming the answers to questions like these will help ensure your research and design is rooted in a solid problem.

## **A STARTING POINT: WHAT'S YOUR LENS?**

---

It's very likely that the way you look at Early Childhood Education is informed by your own local context. Are you aware of how your country compares to the United States? The [Hofstede Comparison](#) is an easy way to start your localization journey.

Here are some observations, not meant to be exhaustive, on American culture by [Commisceo](#) to get you started:

## Family

In the United States, the family unit is generally considered the nuclear family, and is typically small. Extended family relatives live in their own homes, often at great distances from their children.

## Gender Roles

In theory genders are equal within American society and law. Although most women do work, they are also generally still responsible for areas such as child-rearing, cooking and housecleaning.

## Socialization

Infant care depends on economic status first and foremost. Less affluent families rely on the mother or extended family to look after and raise children. Wealthier families will often have nannies or use day care centres. Children can attend school from the age of five.

**Want more? Explore American culture and society, and trends on Early Childhood Education in particular with IDEO's secondary research method!**

## Secondary Research

Getting smart around your challenge is crucial to success in the field.

## Looking for resources? We recommend these (but challenge you to find more!):

- [Harvard's Center on the Developing Child](#)
- [The National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning](#)
- [American Institutes for Research' work on Early Childhood and Child Development](#)
- [The National Institute for Early Education Research](#)
- [The University of Chicago's Center For Early Childhood Research](#)

### DID YOU KNOW?

---

Childcare workers (excluding preschool teachers) continue to be paid some of the lowest wages of any professional field — just \$21,490 on average.

# The Importance of Empathy

Empathy is central to IDEO's human-centered design approach, and will help you effectively articulate a strategy to translate products and services to the US context.

Empathy is defined as the capacity to step into other people's shoes, to understand their lives, and start to solve problems from their perspectives.

*"I can't come up with any new ideas if all I do is exist in my own life."*

— Emi Kolawole, Stanford University d.school

The following pages will provide you with tools that IDEO designers have successfully applied to empathize with designated users and design culturally relevant products, processes and services.

## DID YOU KNOW?

---

According to a 2014 Pew Research Center report, families earning less than \$18,000 annually spend about 40% of their income on childcare (compared to 7.2% of income for all families).

# Tools for understanding your users' unique context

It's great to read up on American culture, but it's even more important to get to know your designated users in person, and experience their needs, desires and frustrations first-hand.

Whether you're revamping an existing innovation for the American context, mapping out a potential implementation plan or designing a completely new solution, make sure you get to interact with your target group, even when you're not physically in the United States!

**Wondering how to get in touch with users and Early Childhood Education experts? One way is to post your question in the [OpenIDEO](#) community under your idea or someone else's to get the feedback you need!**

## DID YOU KNOW?

---

A [2014 Pew Research Center report](#) notes that the number of stay-at-home mothers has increased over the past 15 years, a trend that may be explained by prohibitive childcare costs.

IDEO's Design Kit provides many human-centered design strategies that can help you on your localization journey:

### Interview

There's no better way to understand the hopes, desires, and aspirations of those you're designing for than by talking with them directly.

### Group Interview

You can come to a quick understanding of a community's life, dynamics, and needs by conducting a group interview.

### The Five Whys

This easy research method will help you uncover the deep motivations and assumptions that underpin a person's behavior.

### Photojournal

Photos are a fantastic way to learn about a person's life, especially if they're the one taking them.

Be aware of unconscious decisions you make when reaching out to your designated users. For example: don't just interview people on the coasts if you're designing for the whole US market, as you might miss out on crucial insights from people living in Texas or Oklahoma, for example.

# Tools for designing with a context-appropriate concept

If you're designing a new solution, here are some helpful tools from IDEO's Design Kit for designing solutions based on your insights in your users' unique context.

## Create Insight Statements

A critical piece of the Ideation phase is plucking the insights that will drive your design out of the huge body of information you've gathered.

## How Might We

Every problem is an opportunity for design. By framing your challenge as a How Might We question, you'll set yourself up for an innovative solution.

## Journey Map

A Journey Map allows you to identify and strategize for key moments in the product, experience, or service you're designing.

## Create a Concept

Move from a handful of ideas and insights into a fully-fledged concept, one that you'll refine and push forward.

# Tools for testing your innovation with users

Testing your innovation with your designated users is essential for success - and it's fun!

Here are some tools from IDEO's Design Kit to learn how your innovation might work in the real world:

## Determine What to Prototype

There are so many ways to prototype an idea. Here's how to isolate what to test.

## Storyboard

A quick, low-resolution prototype, a Storyboard can help you visualize your concept from start to finish.

## Rapid Prototyping

Build your prototypes quickly, share them immediately, keep learning.

## Keep Iterating

Testing, getting feedback, and iterating will help you get a great solution to market and let you know where to push it when you do.

Inspired? These and many other tools can be found in [IDEO.org's The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design](#), a [step-by-step guide that will get you solving problems like a designer.](#)



Submit to the Prize

# Good Luck!

and refugees and displaced people.  
er than an asset. NaTakallam gives  
naturally fosters global discussion,  
standing.

involving different stakeholders  
as cultures and peoples  
opportunity for impact and

**Key Risks**

## Reflections + Thoughts

