

NATIONAL DESIGN CHALLENGE

Food and Agri Sector
Tropical North Queensland



AUSTRALIAN
DESIGN
COUNCIL

 **FIAL**
The Food and Agribusiness Growth Centre

DESIGNING FOR IMPACT

1

The Australian Design Council's mission is to engage Australia's world-class design sector to help grow more globally competitive Australian firms, and in turn, national prosperity.

3

The National Design Challenge is a framework to scale the impact of design by embedding our world class professional design capability into Australia's National Priority Sectors.

5

The Tropical North Queensland Design Review explored how Far North Queensland's Food and Agribusinesses can become a globally recognised leader within a transition to the Smart Green Economy (SGE) in Australia.

We know design adds significant value to products, services, systems and businesses and across sectors of Australia's economy.

2

With funding from Food Innovation Australia Limited (FIAL), the National Design Challenge has been piloted with the Food and Agri Sector and their Project 2030 Vision that supports the sector's growth in annual value add capability from its current \$59bn per annum to over \$200bn by 2030.

4

“Farmers have always just thought in terms of produce and ship. Other people then create the value. The opportunity for design in FNQ is to assist farmers to think more broadly and create connections for farmers to add value. We are currently over producing in the region and therefore what else can we do? There is an opportunity for more jobs and a sustainable, entirely new level of infrastructure based in this value add space.”



Candy Maclaughlin
General Manager
Skybury

7

This Design Review provided a forum for the design sector to bring clarity to a complex environment. Design Experts challenged assumptions enabling TNQ RFN to design a practical roadmap to deliver greater impact for the region and sector through a design led approach.

9

Our immediate next step is to work with the TNQ RFN to deliver their future roadmap designed in a manner that they can communicate and connect and bring together the right stakeholders and partners in impactful ways.

The Design Review was undertaken with the Tropical North Queensland Regional Food Network (TNQ RFN). Their core business is to develop the financial sustainability and the capacity of members through the creation of opportunities, strengthening of networks and management of resources. Their vision is a sustainable, innovate, profitable regional food supply chain to provide employment, economic stimulus, food security and quality food products

6

The inclusion of Design at this stage did not provide a single solution, but rather allowed for a reframed regional strategy to be visualised and see what problem they should be solving for and consider how they could first design the right thing, and secondly design the thing right, thereby embedding design into their future solution.

8

Longer term, we will continue to work with the TNQRFN and their Food and Agri stakeholders to implement design led approaches that iterate and amplify circular initiatives across the sector.

10

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND FOOD AND AGRIBUSINESS

Far North Queensland covers 1,235 kilometres of the Australian Eastern coastline with a land of 316,663 square kilometres and a population of approximately 276,700 people.

There is a desire for Far North Queensland to become a globally recognised leader of the Smart Green Economy (SGE) in Australia. This will require a rethink on how industries in the Cairns and FNQ region collaborate and operate. Through pursuing interlinked Smart Green Economy opportunities aligned to the region's unique strengths and prominent 'green' market trends, Cairns and FNQ can transform the way in which they operate now and into the future.

The SGE concept consists of clusters with a grouping of 'activation' opportunities that, when examined collectively, set out to unlock economy-wide value. Using centres of excellence and hubs as centre points for industry collaboration and communication, the SGE will be able to deliver sustainable economic growth, innovation, diversification and resilience outcomes in the region across an expansive list of industrial sectors.

The Circular Economy Cluster (TNQ RFN) is aligned with the true aims of a Circular Economy and is designed to activate and embed circularity principles across the SGE to improve material re-use, recycling and stabilise supply chains.

THE DESIGN REVIEW ASKED:

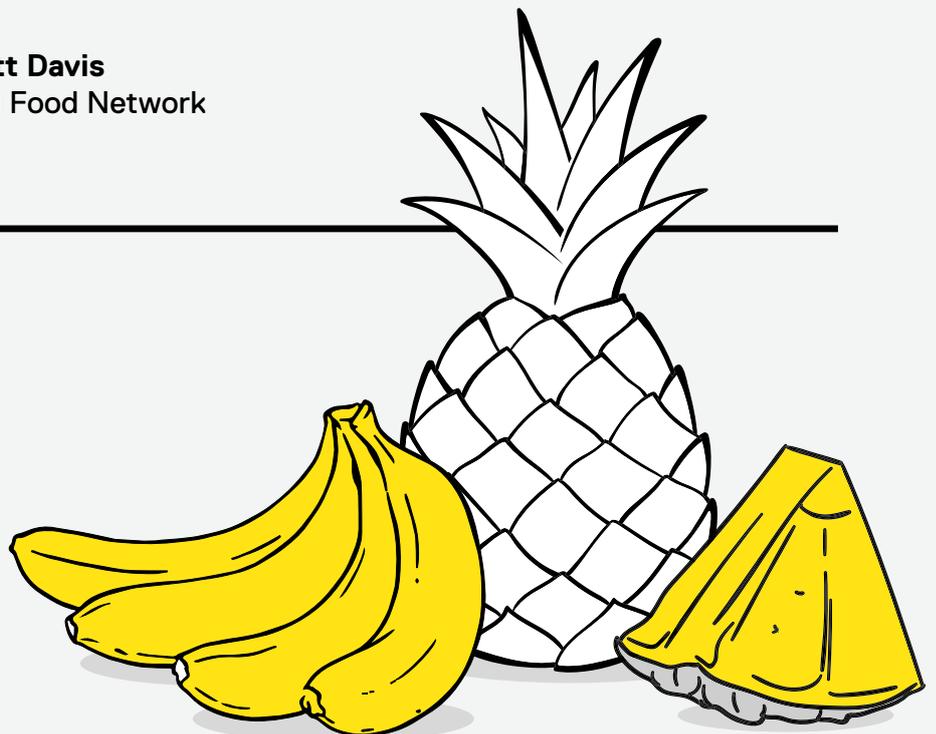
- **How might we co-design a FNQ Circular Economy Hub implementation roadmap which unlocks business and regional growth by design?**
- **How might we leverage the FNQ Food and Agri waste streams to deliver impact and build business resilience for the Region?**



“Having not been in a design process before I found it enabled us to get past the granularity and focus, like a big funnel and refine our thinking across the industry policy and landscape. It stretched our thinking and enabled me to take a step back from being lost in the detail. It allowed us to refine our thinking and test our assumptions. It created a space where there were no wrong answers and allowed us to explore what the future could look like. The Design Review process has enabled us to confirm our collective understanding and seek support and move the agenda forwards, which is quite powerful.”



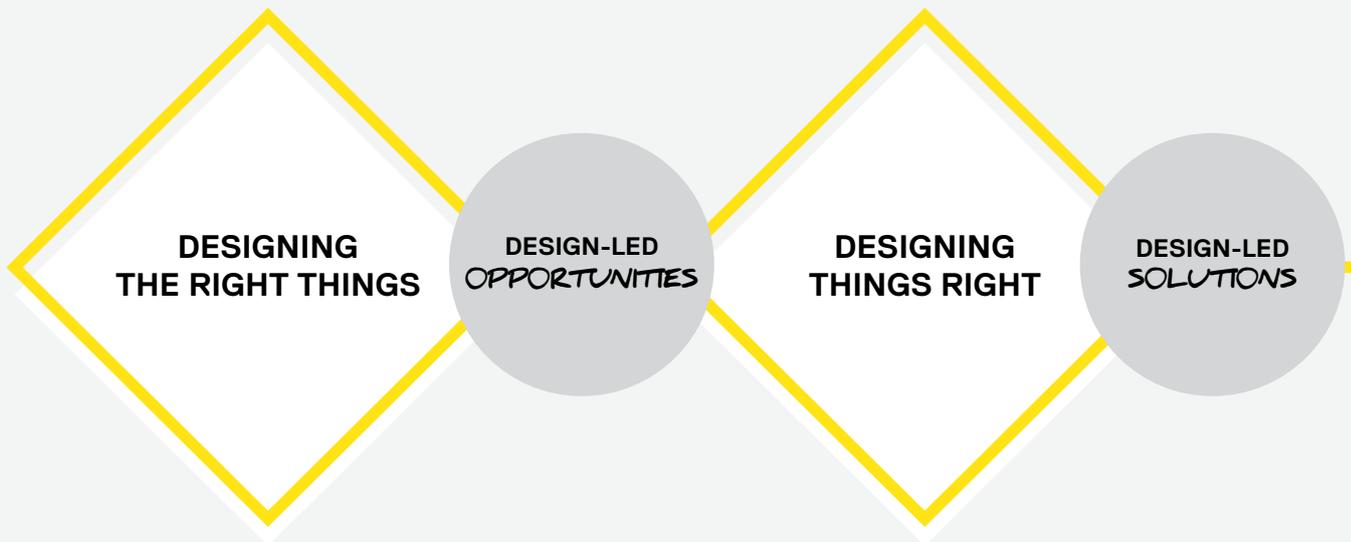
Dr Scott Davis
Tropical Food Network



DESIGN REVIEW APPROACH

The Design Review focused on the ‘Designing the Right Things’ diamond. Our starting point was the Tropical North Queensland Regional Food Network Cluster Strategy and the FIAL Project 2030 Strategy.

DESIGNING A MORE



ANALYSIS

The Australian Design Council undertakes Program or Project reviews to seek clarity on the problem definition, impact and alignment to government policies, ensuring we are designing the right things.

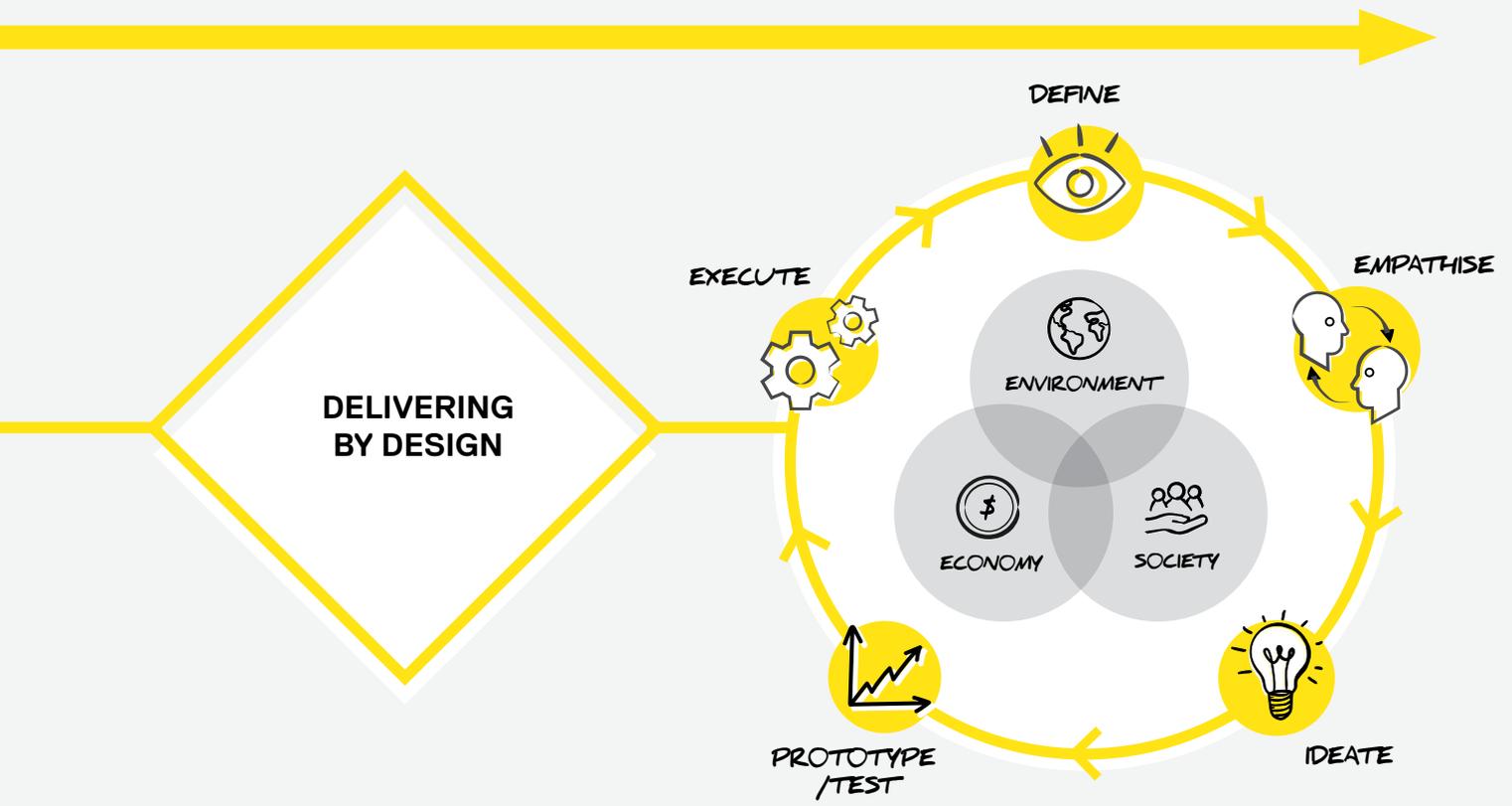
Australian Design Council Experts make recommendations on how the Program/ Project could be reframed to embed professional design capability to deliver a greater impact.

MARKETPLACE

Program or Project consortia connect with professional designers through the marketplace and engage their services to ensure things are designed right.

The Platform makes the process of identifying suitable design expertise and ensures connection to the analysis and transformation stages.

PROSPEROUS AUSTRALIA



TRANSFORMATION

Australian Design Council Experts provide independent design governance to the Program / Program teams to ensure they are leveraging the design capability to deliver greatest impact and/or pivot delivery as necessary.

Data is captured as part of the review to demonstrate impact and wider sector benefits.

BENEFITS AND OUTPUTS

Growth in internationally recognised, design-led Australian firms with competitive advantage, improved profitability, increased exports and growth in jobs and skills.

At the sector level, wider economic growth, social impact and environmental benefits.

DESIGN REVIEW FINDINGS AND OUTCOMES

As with all design reviews, we wanted to open up the problem space by introducing a divergent thinking mindset. We began by listening to SME's from the region and hearing their challenges, frustrations and needs in achieving their circular aspirations and the support they required to transform their business to the smart green economy. What we found was a level of maturity of businesses that are making significant progress to adopting circularity in their business model to drive growth.

The assumptions that SME's needed support with becoming circular were dispelled, there was a high level of circular expertise already in the region. We discovered business support and communications was where SME's really needed the most assistance.

We then asked who would provide the system leadership in the region to transition to a Smart Green economy? We worked with the Tropical North Queensland Regional Food Network to align their strategy to support the transition of businesses to a Smart Green Economy.

What we found was that their strategy was too broad. They were operating within a crowded and noisy environment with many organisations competing in the same space with duplication of products and services resulting in inefficiencies and creating mixed and confusing messaging. They could not clarify who their customers were and how they were delivering value or impact for them.

We then challenged the Tropical North Queensland Regional Food Network strategy further by seeking alignment to the FIAL Project 2030 vision.

What we discovered was the region was uniquely placed to capitalise on a number of the pillars to enable Queensland to grow to almost AUD\$43 billion by 2030 in value added, resulting in 176,000 jobs. There were clear opportunities in Food and Agribusiness Innovation that needed to focus on Health and Wellness opportunities, Supply Chain Transformation and Food Loss and Waste, specifically soil and water management.

The Far North Queensland region is renowned for its significant agribusiness value pre farm gate. However, some of the biggest challenges for the region are caused by its longer value chains, resulting from the region's physical isolation from the mass population centres of Southern Australia.

■ Design Insight

The design led discussion brought the TNQ RFN to the realisation their core focus should be about raising awareness and amplifying the achievements of the SME business leaders in the region. They had been focussing on the wrong customers.

■ Innovative step

The design led discussion revealed a gap within the regional ecosystem, we identified an opportunity for a system leader to stand-up and drive the region towards Project 2030. The TNQ RFN were in a unique position to be able to rise to the opportunity.

The Design Review then shifted to a process of convergent thinking. We posed the question:

What if the TNQ RFN were to connect its network of members to the SGE strategy and accelerate the regional producers to achieving the FIAL opportunities?

Taking this approach the TNQ RFN were able to clearly see who their customers were and the needs they could solve for.

The TNQ RFN were now in a position where they had focus, direction and motivation from which to create their future vision, strategy, and strategic roadmap.

KEY OUTCOME

The Design Review demonstrated a macro to micro mindset that helped re-frame the 'problem to solve' in Tropical North Queensland, and empowered the TNQ RFN to identify and understand its role as a future systems leader accelerating the region.

BEFORE

The Tropical North Queensland Food and Agribusiness sector has the vision to:

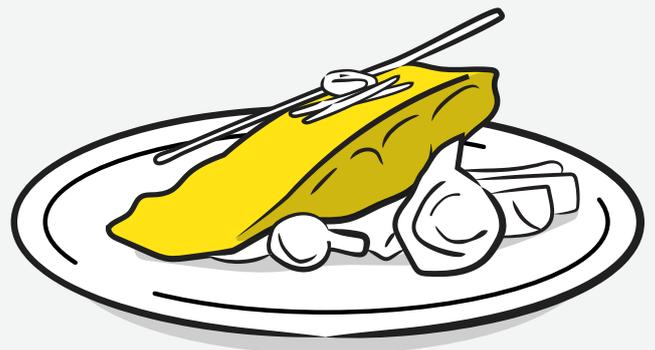
“Become a globally recognised leader of the Smart Green Economy.”

AFTER

The TNQ RFN re-designed their vision to become:

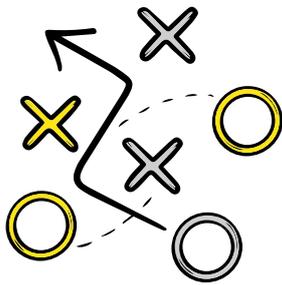
“Creating a healthy circular FNQ food and agriculture future.”

To answer our starting question: 'Are we Designing the Right Thing?', the Design Review reframed the problem from the design of a Circular Hub to support SME's, to the need for a system leader to bring together stakeholders to deliver the vision.



ROLE FOR DESIGN TO AMPLIFY IMPACT

To amplify the impact of the reframed approach, the Design Review overlaid how the role of professional design capabilities could be embedded into strategy. The review identified the need to:



BUILD A DESIGN LED COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

To socialise and uplift the messages of circular success within the network membership, and across a broader regional, national and international audience.



ENABLE

Tropical North Queensland Regional Food Network to co-design their business model with a clearly defined value proposition with stakeholders.



EMBED

Design capability to amplify the impact of the SME's who are already on the journey to transition to a circular economy.



SHOWCASE

Success through well designed case studies which clearly articulate the impact they have created.



PILOT

Collaborative projects that can scale through a design led framework, clearly articulating customer value from the start.



BUILD DESIGN EDUCATION AND MENTORING IN REGION



TRACK AND MEASURE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Beyond this Review phase, there is an opportunity for the Tropical North Queensland Regional Food Network to Deliver impact by Design. The long term role of design within the TNQ RFN would be to uphold design principles within the leadership team, and maintain their implementation within the organisation:

- Be vision centric
- Be customer centric
- Experiential mindset
- Hold the Board and staff accountable and stay focused
- Ensure adaptive leadership

SUMMARY

Outcomes and Impact

AUSTRALIAN FOOD AND AGRIBUSINESS

The Design Review identified the key stepping stones to realising the opportunity identified in the FIAL Project 2030 to capitalise on the \$43B, and 176,000 skilled job opportunities for the region.

The outcomes of a Smart Specialisation strategy of waste valorisation in the area of Northern Australia will not only unlock new value for domestic consumption but continue to grow exports to the region's northern and Pacific neighbours.

Through focusing on what strengths and regional opportunities are currently available in the ecosystem, the cluster has the potential to lead a new age of food value adding and grow the relatively low post farm gate value in the region as it simultaneously continues to provide state leading pre farm gate value.

TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND FOOD AND AGRIBUSINESS SECTOR

The Design Review identified the need for system leadership aligned to key areas of national focus. This will lead to opportunities for Food and Agribusiness stakeholders that span:

- Creating new businesses and employment opportunities aligned to a priority sector
- Support existing industries transitioning to the Smart Green Economy
- Attract investment, and build international trade
- Support indigenous pathways to employment
- Achieve climate mitigation and resilience

DESIGN COMMUNITY

As we move into the 'Design the Right Thing' and Deliver by Design phases, future opportunities for designers to operate in new business sectors to create meaningful change will emerge. Specifically there will be opportunities to leverage Australia's world class professional design capability to work with businesses who want to be world leaders in Food Waste innovation. This will elevate the position of design as a vital approach for strategy and innovation that future proofs businesses and the region.

PARTICIPANTS

Scott Davis

Design Review Sponsor and Secretary TNQ RFN

James Krahe

Innovation Manager Food Innovation Australia Limited (FIAL)

Rowan Lamont

Design Review Lead and Strategy Designer Business Models Inc

Candy Maclaughlin

General Manager Skybury

Irene Pollak

Chair Circular Economy FNQ

Tahna Jackson

Owner Stockade Farm

Tony Matchett

CEO Savannah Sun Foods and Chair TNQ RFN

Stirling Tavener

CEO Cocovera and Bugs Alive and Treasurer TNQ RFN

Lara Wilde

CEO FNQ Food incubator

Sam Bucolo

CEO Australian Design Council

LEVERAGING AUSTRALIA'S DESIGN-LED INNOVATION CAPABILITY

The Australian Design Council is a not-for-profit industry body advocating for a design-led future for Australia to deliver long term growth and national prosperity. It champions the role of design in addressing complex social, economic and environmental challenges.

australiandesigncouncil.org

+61 2 8015 6680 | info@australiandesigncouncil.org

AUSTRALIAN
DESIGN
COUNCIL