AmazonNext Design Challenge Brief (2024)

There's great power in design—it shapes the way we work, play, and view our lives. Everything we do has consequences and can easily reinforce or break long-held stereotypes and biases.

Inclusive design helps us create experiences that are accessible to as many people as possible. Reginé Gilbert, a user experience designer, educator, and author has said "personal technology now plays a part in the everyday lives of most of us, and thus it is a responsibility for designers of apps, web pages, and more public-facing tech products to make them accessible to all."

This year's theme is 'Accessibility in Design.' Your challenge is to redesign an existing app, website or experience to include and/or improve the experience of a customer group that is excluded by the current design. Your approach should consider a specific customer, then create a solution that will provide the customer with an improved experience.

GETTING STARTED!

1. **WHO - *Empathize and think about the users*.** Observe your own and others use of everyday products, services, environments, and apps. Think about how people's cognitive, physical, or perceptive abilities, socio-economic status, identities, health status, shape, size, and other factors impact their experience. Ask people questions rather than making assumptions.
2. **WHY - *Define what problems need to be solved.*** Gather all the information from your observation, as you notice similarities—group them. Would any of the people you interviewed face obstacles when using the app or navigating the website? Ask "in what ways could we…" or "how might we…" (e.g., how can we make a camera app easier to use for users with vision impairment?) to help frame key issues. Write down each question.
3. **HOW - *Ideate on different potential solutions*** - Taking what you have learned from the "WHY" portion of this process, begin brainstorming as many solutions for them as possible and write them down. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers at this stage.
4. **WHAT - *What the revised experience will be like.*** What will the redesigned experience be like? As a group, decide which solutions will be most meaningful, impactful, and/or exciting for the customer. Within your PowerPoint deck OR a video pitch, describe *(either visually or in written/spoken word)* what this redesigned experience will be and how it could create an improved experience for the customer.

No experience is necessary – all you need is your unique point of view. The more unique perspectives, the better! The challenge is open to all CodePath students currently-enrolled at the participating institutions (see the full list here).

There are no specific major, academic program, or GPA requirements. ==Groups of 3 to no more than 5 people== can register to participate. We are unable to accommodate matching students with other participants, so please ensure you include your team's name during individual registration.

CHALLENGE FINAL SUBMISSION

Students will submit either a PowerPoint slide deck (10-slides) <u>**OR**</u> a video pitch no more than 5 minutes; <u>**AND**</u> a 150-word summary to answer the following:

1. **Who is your customer?**
2. **How did you identify your customer problem?**
3. **How is the app, website or experience designed in a thoughtful and meaningful way using visuals of screens, sketches, and/or wireframes to help illustrate the redesign?**
4. **What features are you creating or redesigning?**
5. **How does the solution address a target audience and their needs?**

CHALLENGE TIMELINE & DETAILS

Design Challenge Kickoff Event (Virtual): On **Wednesday, November 20, 2024, from 4:00-5:30 PM ET**, attend a 90-minute virtual kickoff event. Amazon Design industry leaders will present the design challenge prompt, offer professional tips and strategies for design ideation and creation, and provide examples and templates. At least one person from each prospective team must attend.

Missed the kickoff event? Watch the recording **here**.

Team Registration: Register your team by **Sunday, December 1, 2024, at 11:59 PM ET**. Complete the **registration form** to secure your place in the challenge and list your team members. Teams should consist of 3-5 members, ideally from diverse majors and backgrounds for a well-rounded approach.

Design Challenge Period: From **Monday, December 2, 2024** to **Wednesday, January 15, 2025**, work with your team on the challenge. Expect to spend about 5-10 hours on design, with time commitment varying based on research depth and team size. All work produced will be owned by you for future use.

Amazon Design Review: Between **December 2, 2024** to **January 15, 2025**, take advantage of the opportunity to network with Amazon professionals and seek input on your designs. Teams must attend at least **one** office hours session in December (12/4-12/18) and at least **one** session in January (1/6-1/13) for design reviews. If the entire team is unable to attend, send 1-2 representatives to join. *Bonus points are awarded to students for attending one session, each week of office hours.*

Final Submission: Submit your final design by **Wednesday, January 15, 2025, at 11:59 PM ET**. Amazon industry specialists will review all submissions to determine the five finalist teams.

Design Challenge Finale (Virtual): Finalists will be invited to present their designs to Amazonians during the virtual Design Challenge Finale on **Thursday, January 30, 2025** (time TBD). Grand prize winners will be selected during this event.

OFFICE HOURS AND DETAILS

We will offer 'Design Office Hours' for students throughout the design challenge period. This will be a unique opportunity for students to network with Amazon designers and get inspired by professionals at one of the biggest companies in the world.

Teams must attend at least **one** office hours session in December (12/4-12/18) and at least **one** session in January (1/6-1/13) for design reviews. If your entire team is unable to attend, please send 1-2 representatives to join the office hour sessions.

Bonus points will be awarded to students who attend one session for each 'week' of office hours.

Design Office Hours	Date	Start Time *All times are in Eastern Time*	End Time
Office Hours (Week 1)	Dec 4, 2024	5:00 PM	6:00 PM
Office Hours (Week 1)	Dec 6, 2024	4:00 PM	5:00 PM
Office Hours (Week 2)	Dec 11, 2024	5:00 PM	6:00 PM
Office Hours (Week 2)	Dec 13, 2024	3:00 PM	4:00 PM
Office Hours (Week 3)	Dec 16, 2024	4:00 PM	5:00 PM
Office Hours (Week 3)	Dec 18, 2024	5:00 PM	6:00 PM
Office Hours (Week 4) – Design Review	Jan 6, 2025	4:00 PM	5:00 PM
Office Hours (Week 4) – Design Review	Jan 8, 2025	5:00 PM	6:00 PM
Office Hours (Week 4) – Design Review	Jan 10, 2025	3:00 PM	4:00 PM
Office Hours (Week 4) – Design Review	Jan 13, 2025	4:00 PM	5:00 PM

INSPIRATION

- Amazon's Buy Black store front to amplify and find the Black-owned seller storefront on Amazon all year round.
- Amazon's Fire TV expands Audio Streaming for Hearing Aids to Cochlear implants
- A motor vehicle adaptation for drivers with dwarfism
- LEGO braille bricks for children who are blind or have a visual impairment
- Sensory-friendly clothing for kids with sensory processing challenges or autism
- Interview with Regine Gilbert, author of 'Inclusive Design for a Digital World: Designing with Accessibility in Mind'
- Opening Apps to All

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Creative Reaction Lab's Equity-Centered Community Design Field Guide *Free download: https://crxlab.org/shop/p/field-guide-equity-centered-community-design*
- IDEO The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design *Free download: https://www.designkit.org/resources/1*
- Article on 'Designing for inclusion: Kat Holmes' Mismatch' *https://medium.com/hippo-digital/designing-for-inclusion-kat-holmes-mismatch-39bb2dc2aa53*

- Understand the Social Needs for Accessibility in UX Design *(Interaction Design Foundation):* *https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/understand-the-social-needs-for-accessibility-in-ux-design*