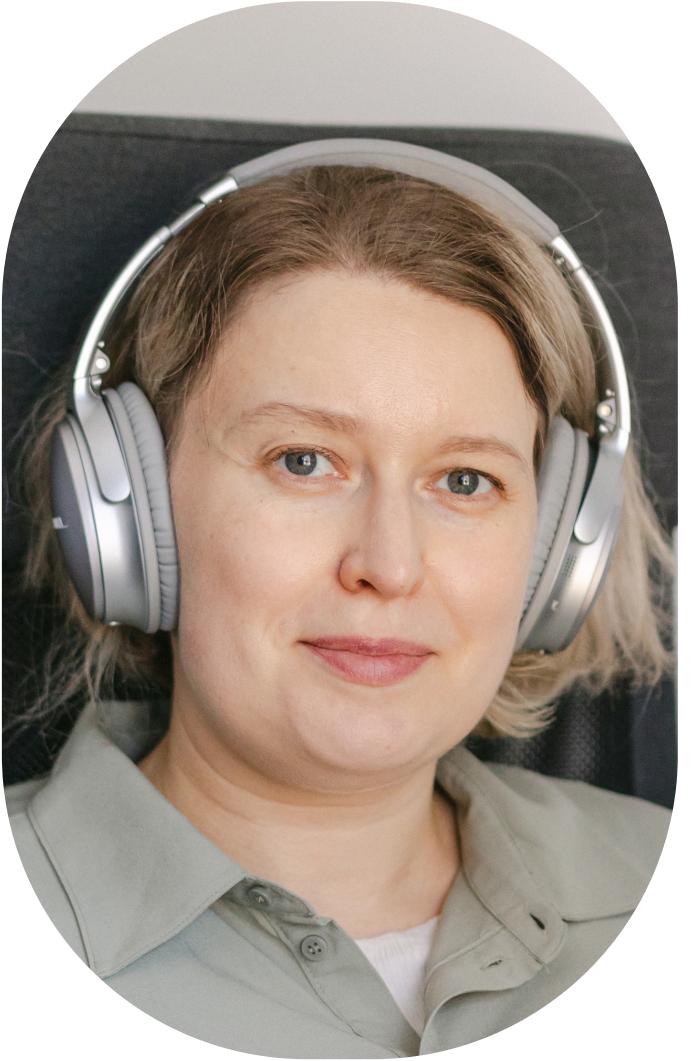


# From Survival to Growth: Enhancing Design Systems via Seamless Collaboration

Hi first

Who are we?



**Varya Stepanova**  
Design System Architect  
[@Bridge-the-Gap.dev](https://@Bridge-the-Gap.dev)



**Irina Illstrova**  
Senior Design System Engineer  
[@Bridge-the-Gap.dev](https://@Bridge-the-Gap.dev)

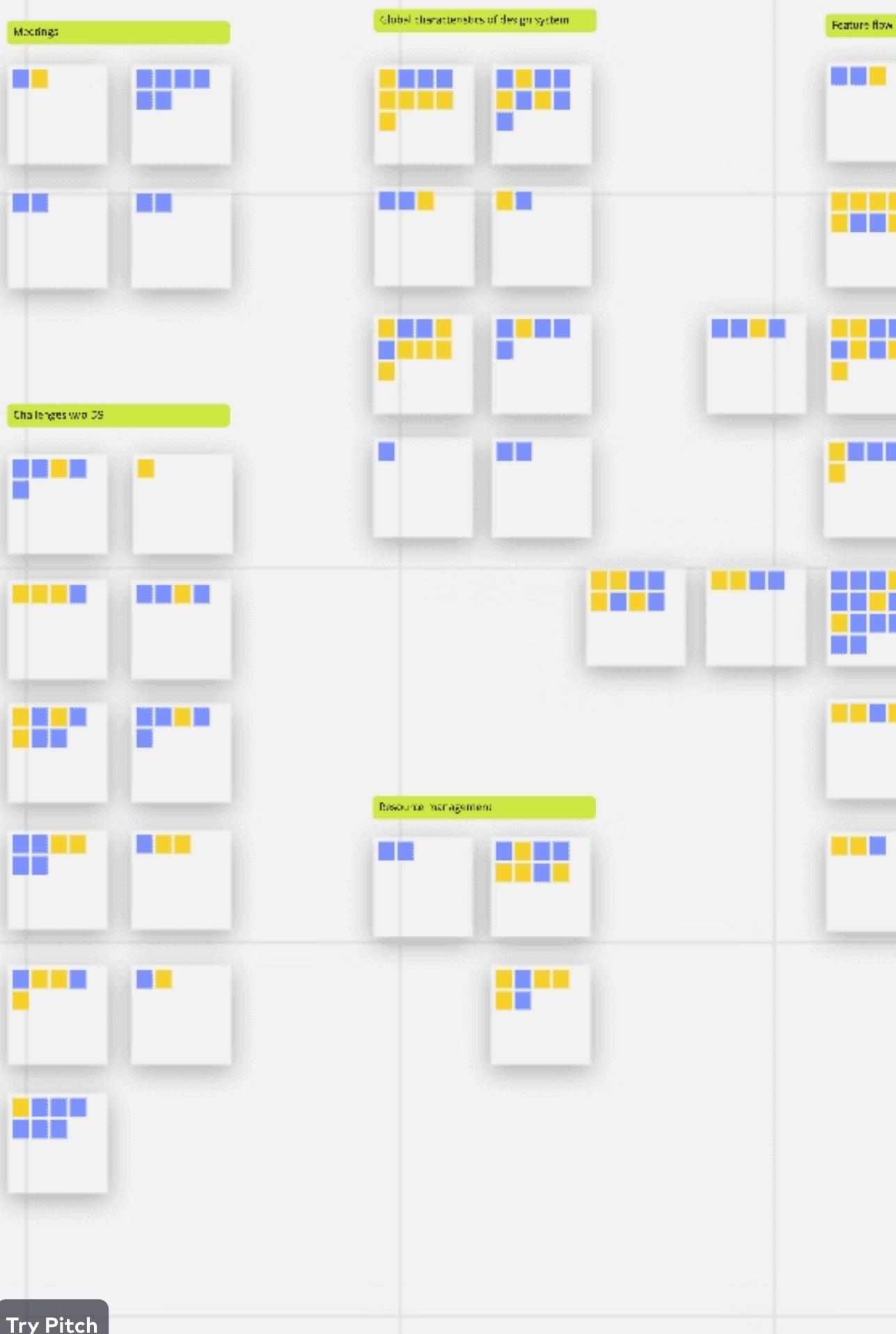


# Bridge the gap



[bridge-the-gap.dev](http://bridge-the-gap.dev)

# Bridging the Gap: Crafting Seamless Collaboration in Design Systems



## Our research

- 30+ interviews with design systems people (designers/developers)
- 300+ stickies on miro board, categorised under 15 topics

## Sample questions:

- How often do you communicate with people of another discipline?
- What problems do you face during your collaboration?
- How do you arrange handover?
- How you prioritize tasks?
- What helps you to ensure seamless communication?
- ....

## Research results

*Design*

*system is*

# not a product

Business doesn't understand the value

Lack of governance

Lack of resources

Designs are not implemented  
No motivation to improve

Scalability

Non-qualified team

Lack of communication

No effective processes

No knowledge sharing

Tooling

DS is treated as UI kit

Misaligned designs and code

No time for maintenance

Lack of contributions

Team changes too often

Adoption challenges

Collaboration difficulties

No interest

Legacy code

Maintaining consistency

DS needs not communicated

Lack of participation

Overthinking

Overengineering

DS team work in silos

Inconsistent documentation

Chaotic handover  
Lack of clear goals

DS is treated as UI kit

# What Should We Do?



A photograph of four business professionals in an office environment. A man in a dark suit and patterned tie is suspended by his tie from a ceiling fixture, looking up. A woman in a grey blazer and purple glasses is leaning over him, looking down at him. Another woman in a white blouse is also leaning over him. A fourth person's head is visible in the foreground, looking down. The background shows office windows and blinds.

*Design System is not recognized*

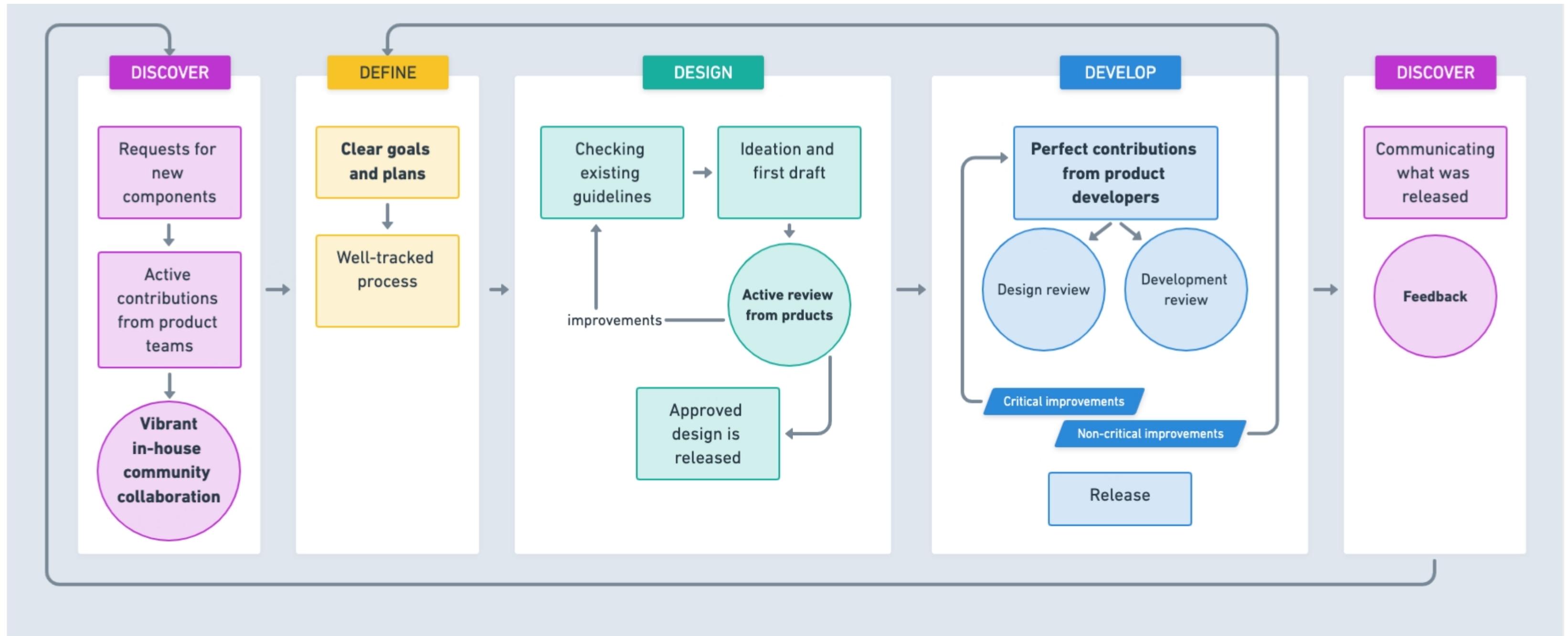
**as a PRODUCT**

*because of*

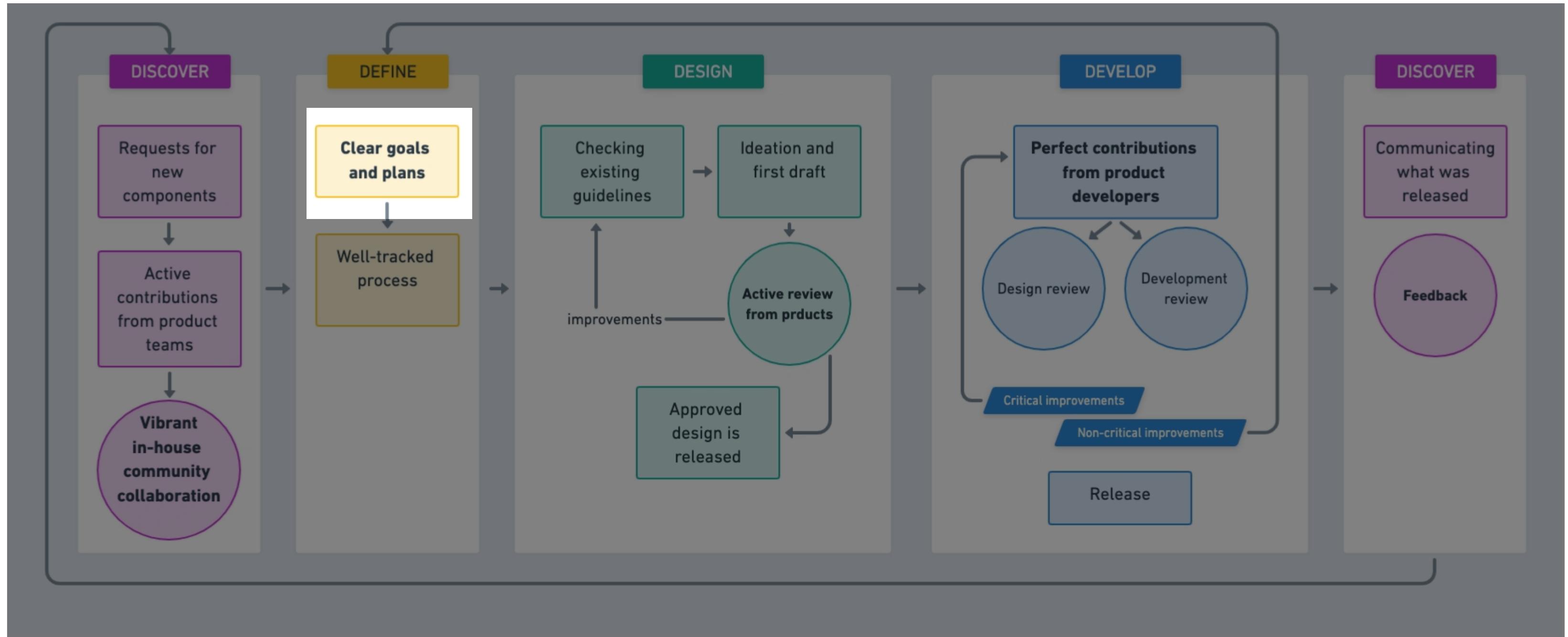
**COLLABORATION  
BREAKDOWNS**

# From Survival to Growth: Enhancing Design Systems via Seamless Collaboration

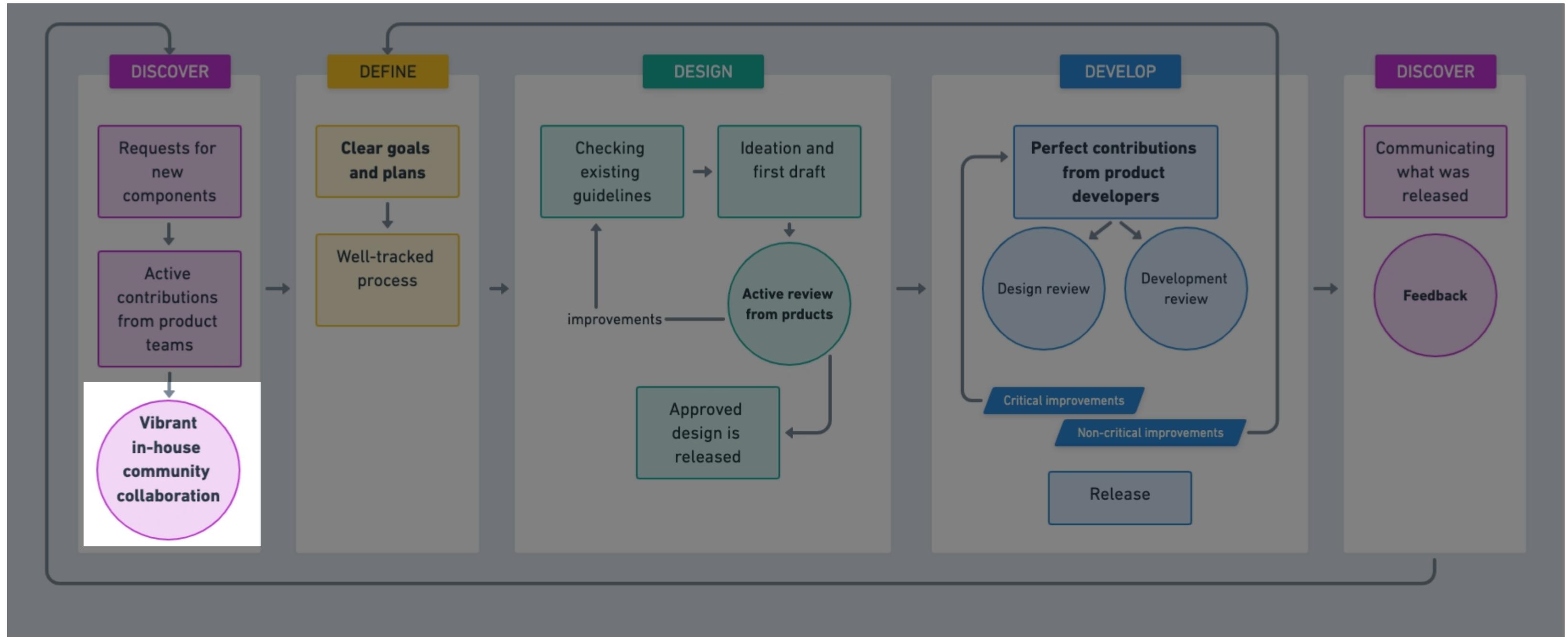
# This is what we want



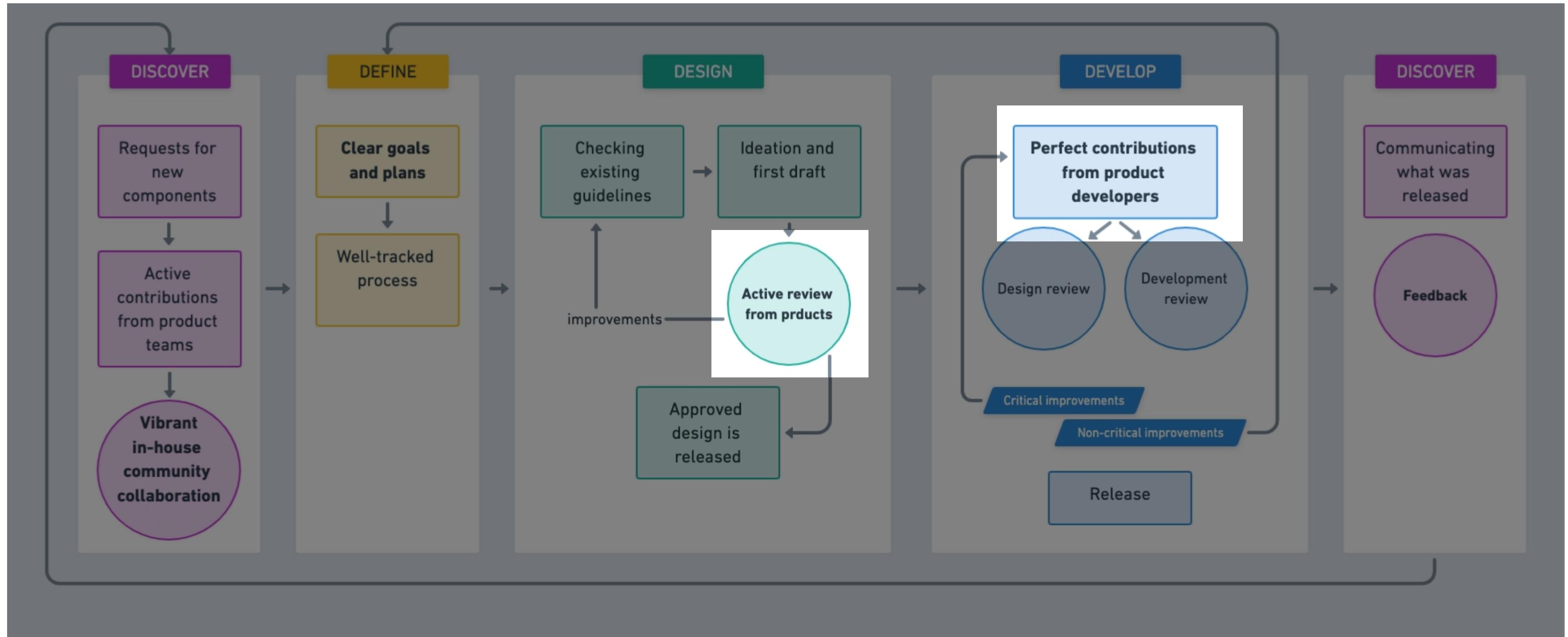
# This is what we want



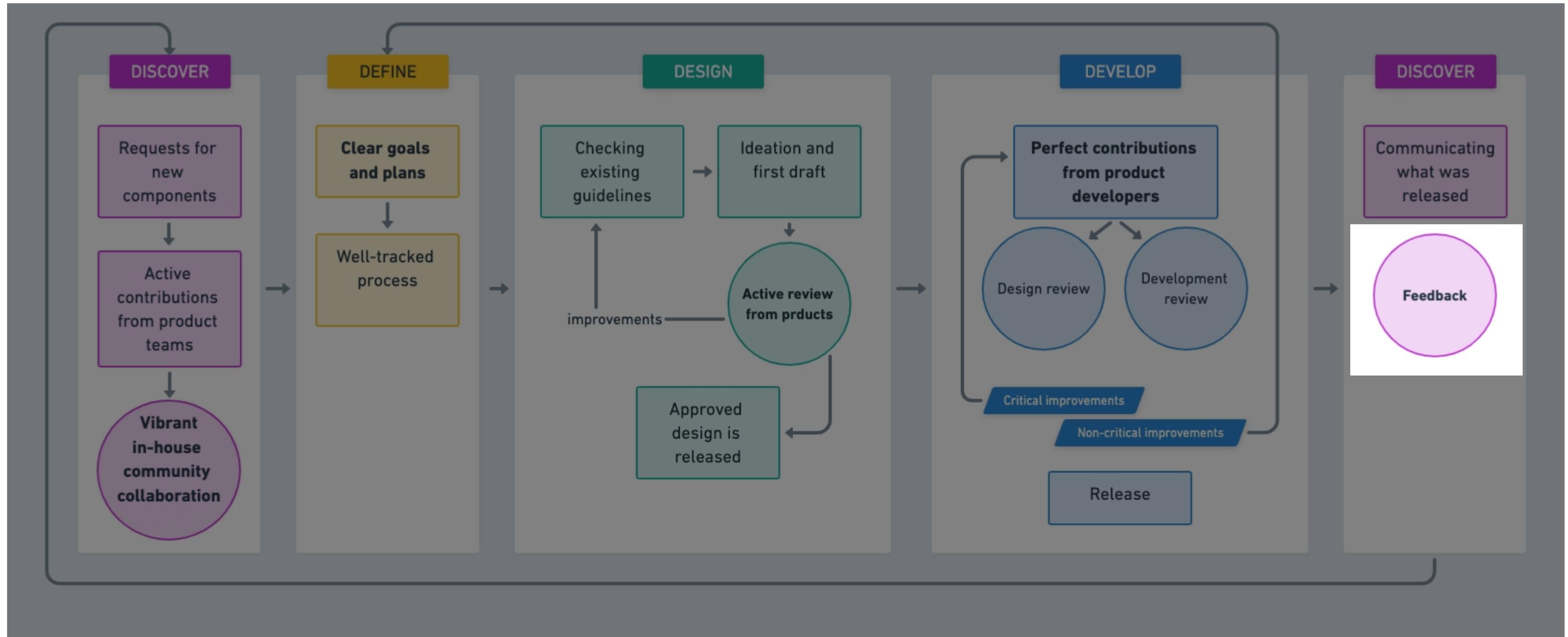
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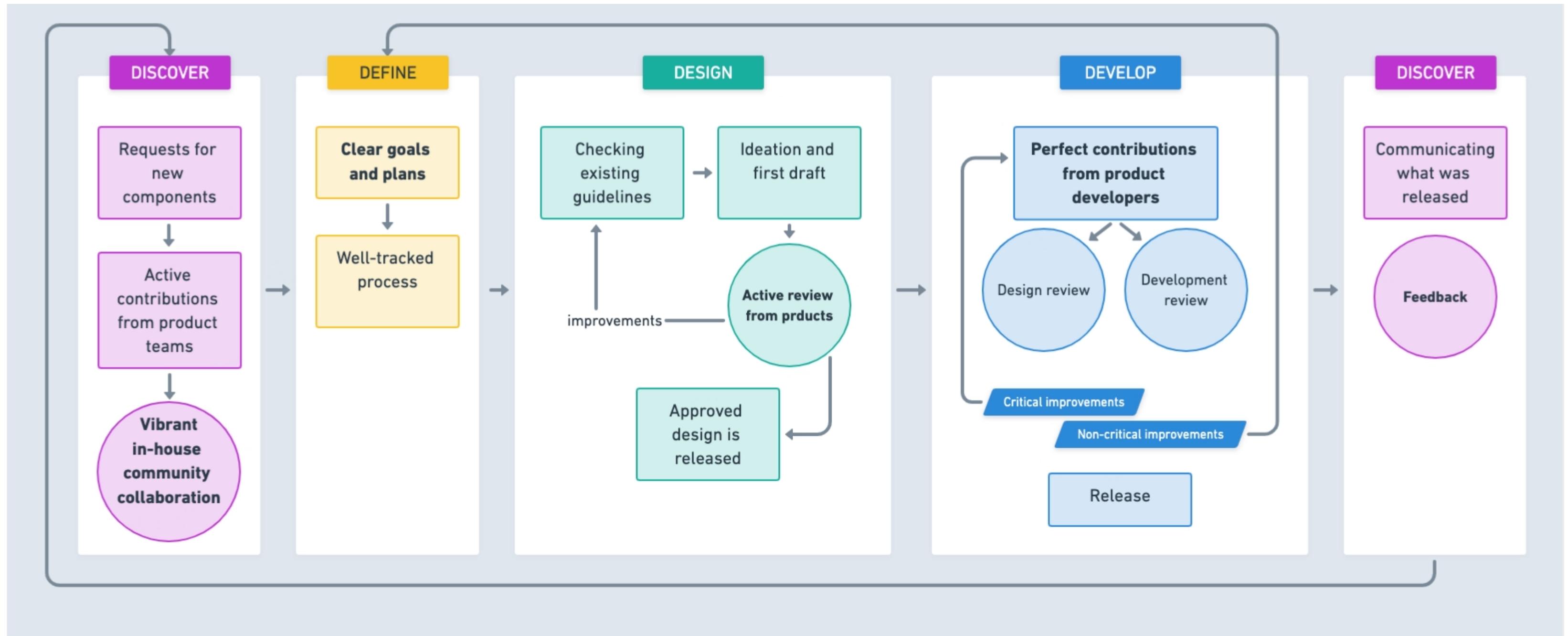
# This is what we want



# This is what we want

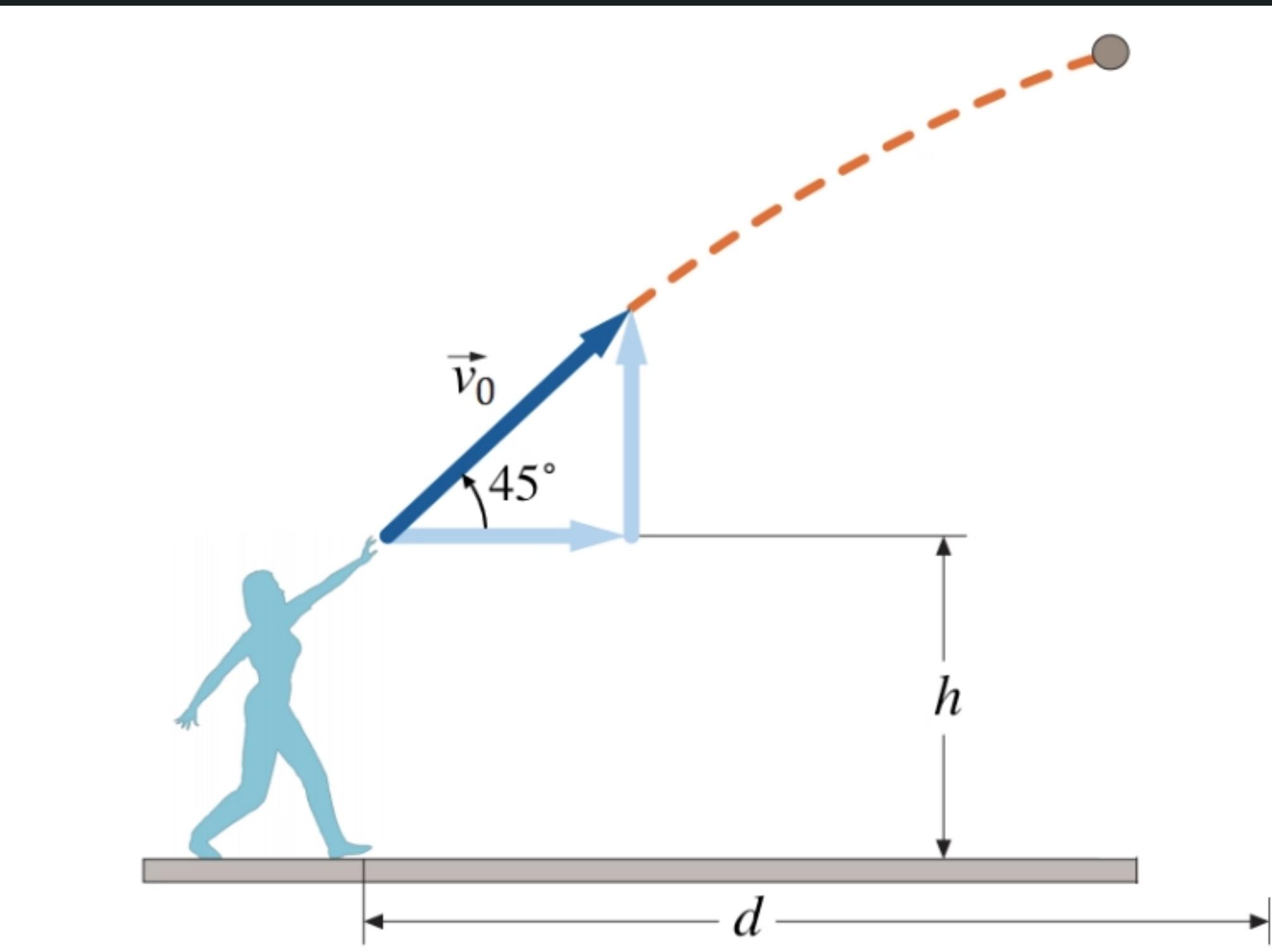


# This is what we want





# What Could We Do?



# Collaborate vertically



# Collaborate horizontally

Into Design Systems

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# Collaborate vertically

Try Pitch



# The Never-Ending Job of Selling Design Systems

by Ben Callahan @ A List Apart on February 11, 2021

<https://alistapart.com/article/selling-design-systems/>



data!

## 1. Collect design system adoption data

- + Ready-made solution
- + Custom-made solution

## 2. Process and interpret

- + Business-specific metrics
- + Reliable calculations





## Bridge the Gap

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- ROI (= return of investments)

# Button: **without DS** and **with DS**

Product	Without Design System	With Design System
Design System	-	10 hours
Product 1	10 hours	2 hours
Product 2	10 hours	2 hours
Product 3	10 hours	2 hours
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>30 hours</b>	<b>16 hours</b>

# 3 components with and without design system

Component	Production (h)	Lifetime (y)	Support (y)	Integration (h)	Projects	w DS	w/o DS	Saved
Button	10	3	20	2	5	80	350	
Input	20	3	40	2	4	148	560	
Hero	30	1	60	10	2	110	180	
<b>Total</b>						338	1090	<b>752</b>

**COST SAVINGS:** 752 HOURS = 18.8 WEEKS = 4 MONTHS

**LEARN MORE:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaqBxIp15hg>

€ 3 000 000



Bridge the Gap

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# Speak numbers with business

- ROI (= return of investments)
- Adoption rate
- Adoption dynamics
- Component usage over time
- Migration maturity

Flowers need  
time to bloom.  
So do you ❤

Quando comincio  
il piano

Climb Higher,  
Communicate Smarter!

MUITA PRESSA, LEMBRAR  
O tempo é curto



Into Design Systems

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# Collaborate horizontally

# Designers/Developers Collaboration challenges

The design is shared only after it is done and approved, but often technical feasibility is not taken into account

Developers are pressured to get features done, and don't have time to implement components right

Designs are not implemented as intended, and there is no process to validate them before it's published on production



# Documentation

# Documentation



User Research

Industry Research

Structure

Automation



Cross-team survey



Live workshops with design system users



Collect analytics of design system documentation



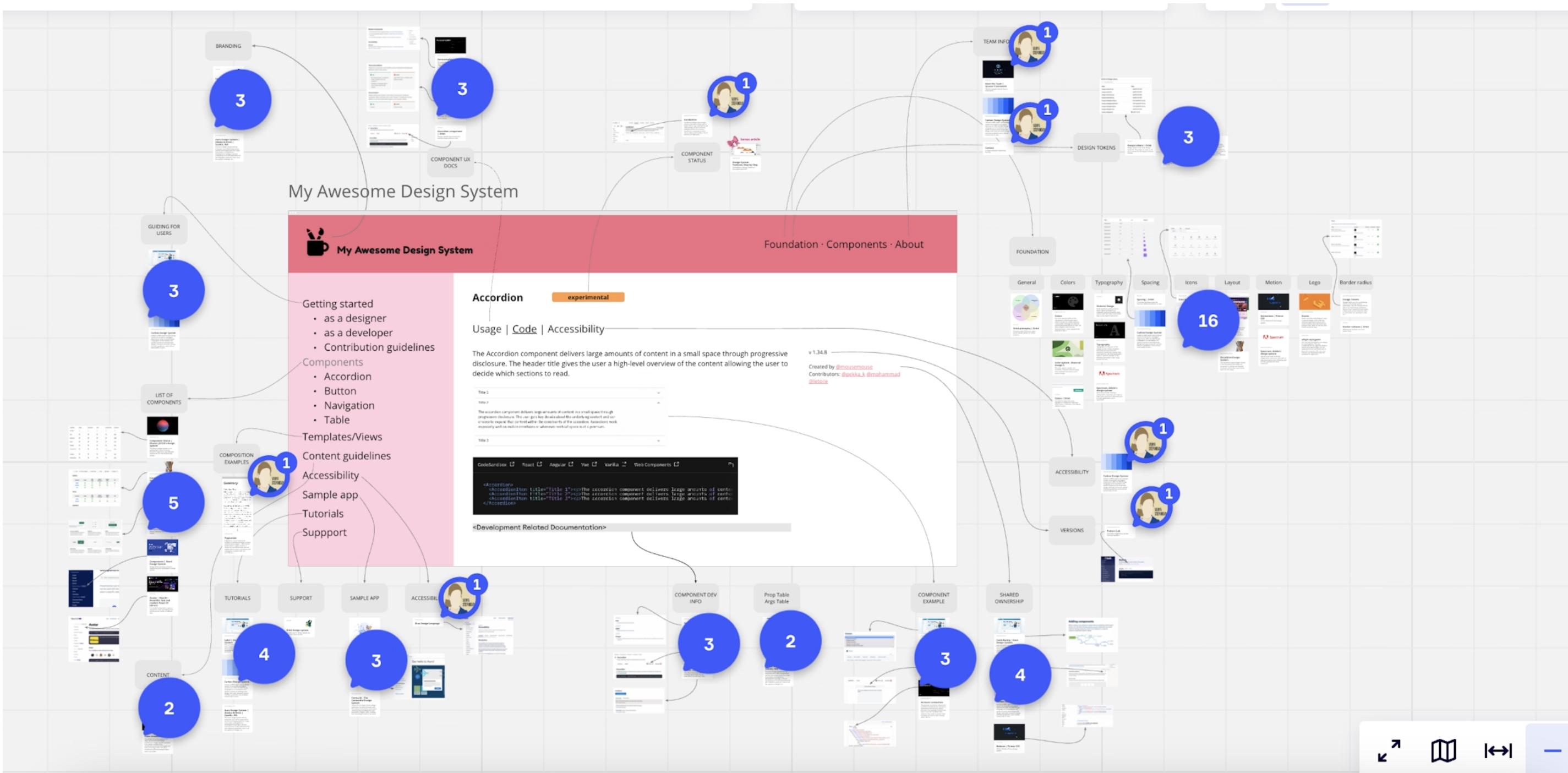
Tracking most common users questions

## User Research

## Industry Research

## Structure

## Automation



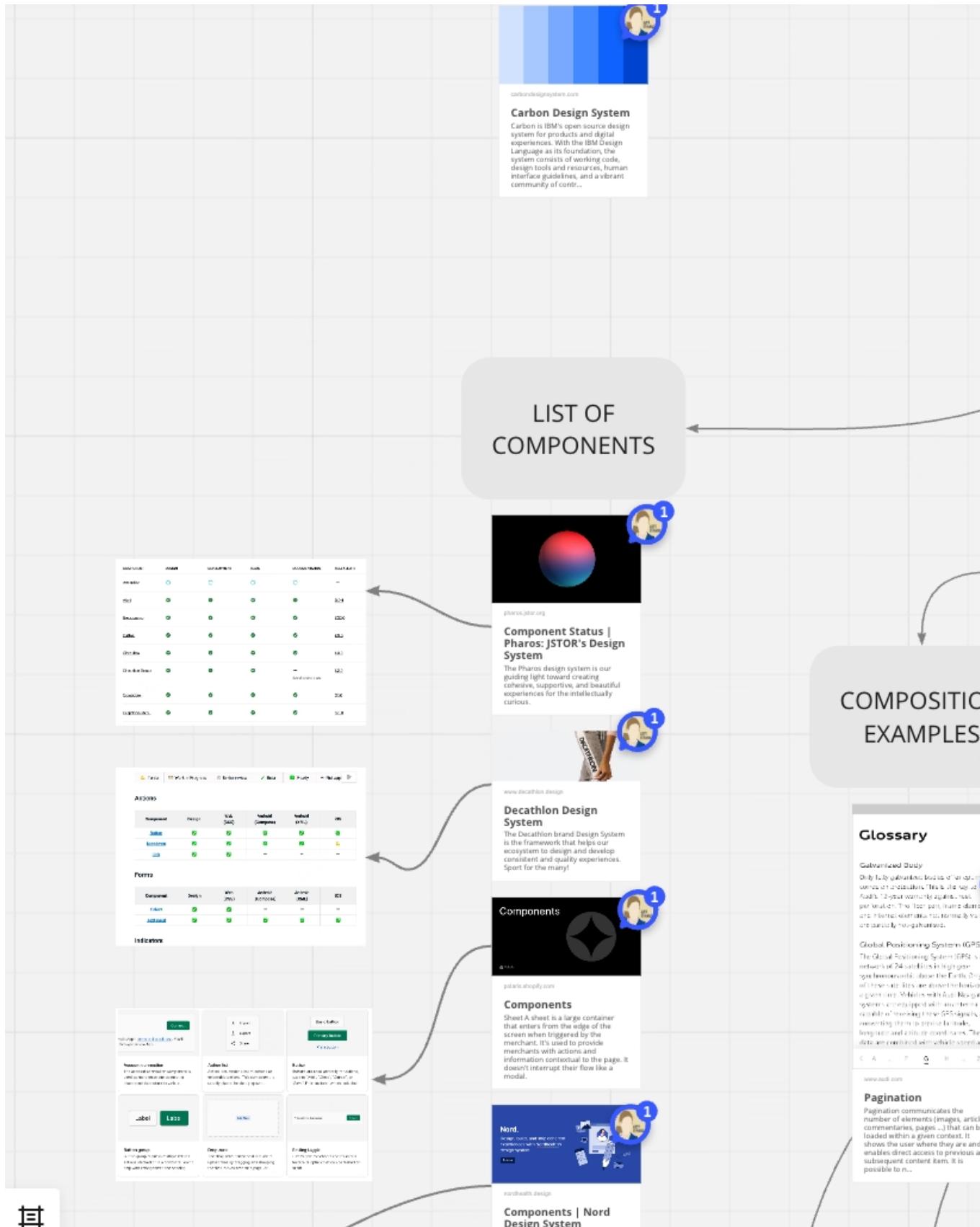
[Link to Miro](#)

## User Research

## Industry Research

## Structure

## Automation



- as a designer
- as a developer
- Contribution guidelines

### Components

- Accordion
- Button
- Navigation
- Table

### Templates/Views

### Content guidelines

### Accessibility

### Sample app

### Tutorials

### Support

## COMPONENTS

- Description
- Do's and don'ts
- Component API
- Examples/playground
- Patterns with component
- Links to code/design resources
- Changelog
- ...

## FOUNDATIONS

- Design tokens
- Accessibility
- Localization
- Responsive design

## RECIPES/PATTERNS

Reusable UI fragments composed of core components

## GENERAL INFO

- Introduction
- Technical instructions
- Contributions
- What's new (Changelog)
- Roadmap
- ...

User Research

Industry Research

Structure

Automation

```
/** Component description, auto-generated from code comments */
export const ComponentName = (props) => {
  ...return <div>My awesome Component</div>
```

## ComponentName

[Github](#) | [Figma Design](#) | [Guidelines](#)

### Overview

Component description, aut-generated from code comments

```
import { ComponentName } from '@brand/package-mname';
```

Copy

🔍 🔍 🔍

Live Demo

Show code

### Props

Name	Description	Default
propName	Prop description and type, autogenerated from code string	"default value"

### Variants

#### Variant 1

Story description, generated from code comments

Table of Contents

Overview

Props

Variants



Storybook 7+

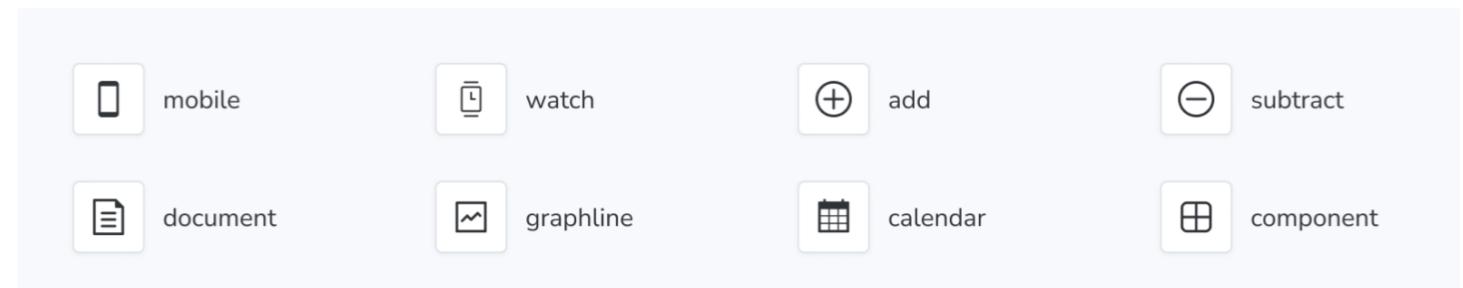
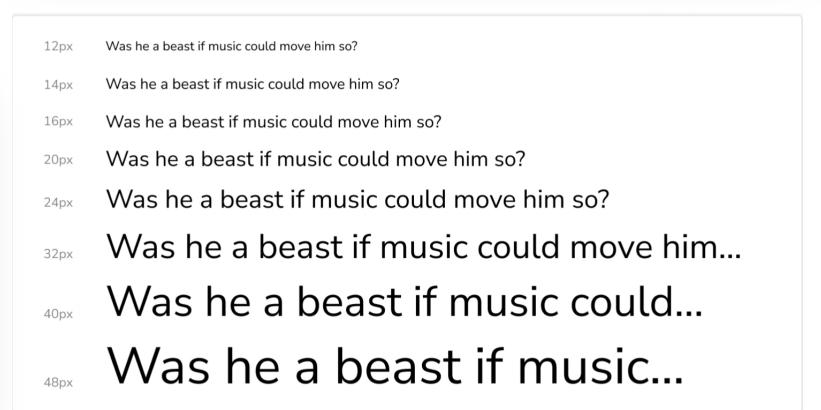
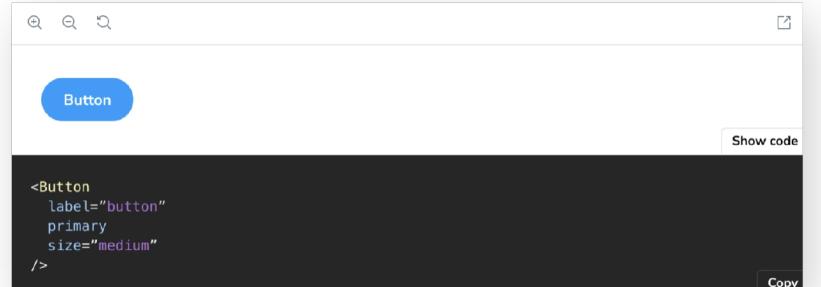
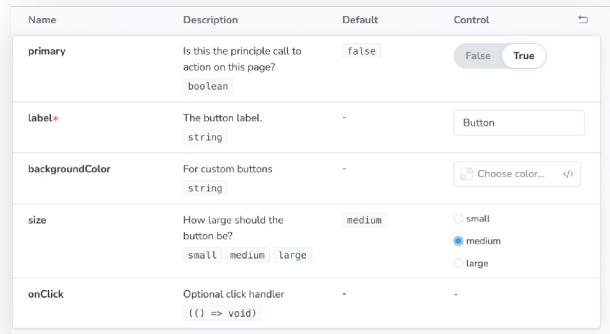
Try Pitch

User Research

Industry Research

Structure

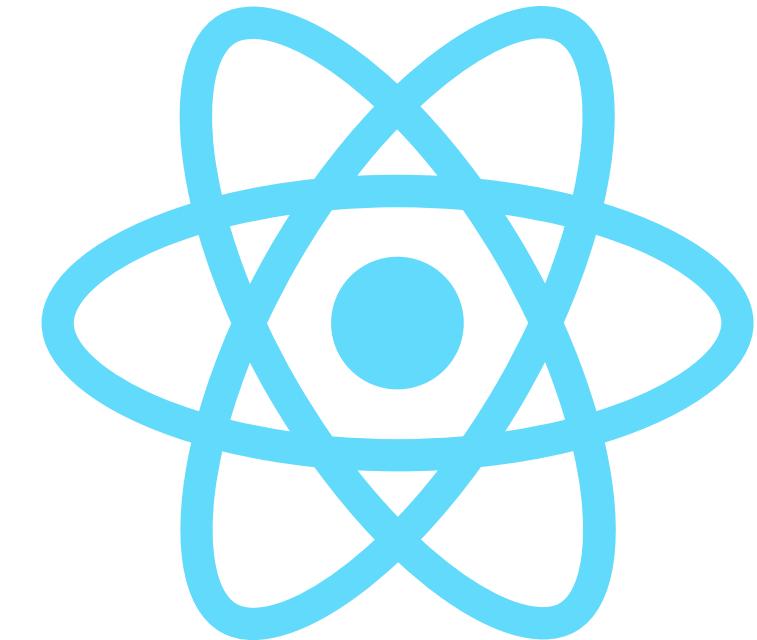
Automation



# Doc Blocks

+

# Custom Doc Components



A classroom setting with several students at their desks. In the foreground, two boys are resting their heads on their desks; one has his hands behind his head, and the other has his arms folded. Behind them, other students are also resting or looking down. The room has wooden desks and chairs, and bookshelves filled with books are visible in the background.

# Engaging In-House Community

-  Onboarding
-  Demos
-  Updates on channels
-  Feedback and Research
-  ...

DIRECTOR'S CUT!

# Design System Cafe

Hey Design and Engineering Crew!

Just a quick heads-up, this Friday we're rolling out the red carpet for our Design System Cafe session. It's a chill, open-door event for everyone who gets a kick out of UI development or design. Think of it as an easygoing place for snappy presentations, thought-provoking discussions, and invaluable feedback sessions – all around the amazing XXX design system and UIs at large.

This week, we're excited to present [...].

So, come on down! We're stoked to share our latest work and even more eager to hear your insights. See you there!



# Knowledge sharing

- invite your peers
- share screen
- do real task

Designer ↔ Developer

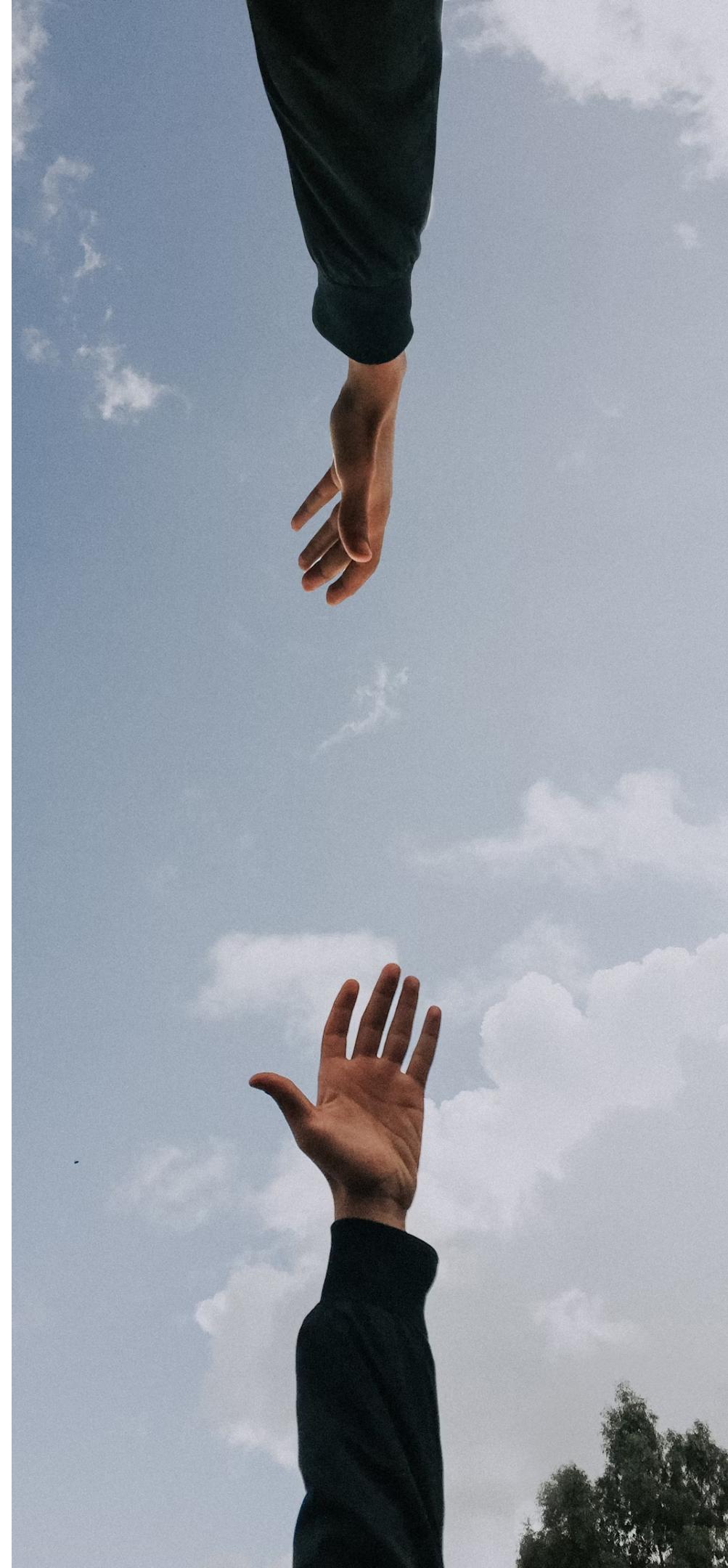


# Design System Ambassador

DS team → Product team

Product team → DS team

# Design System Associate



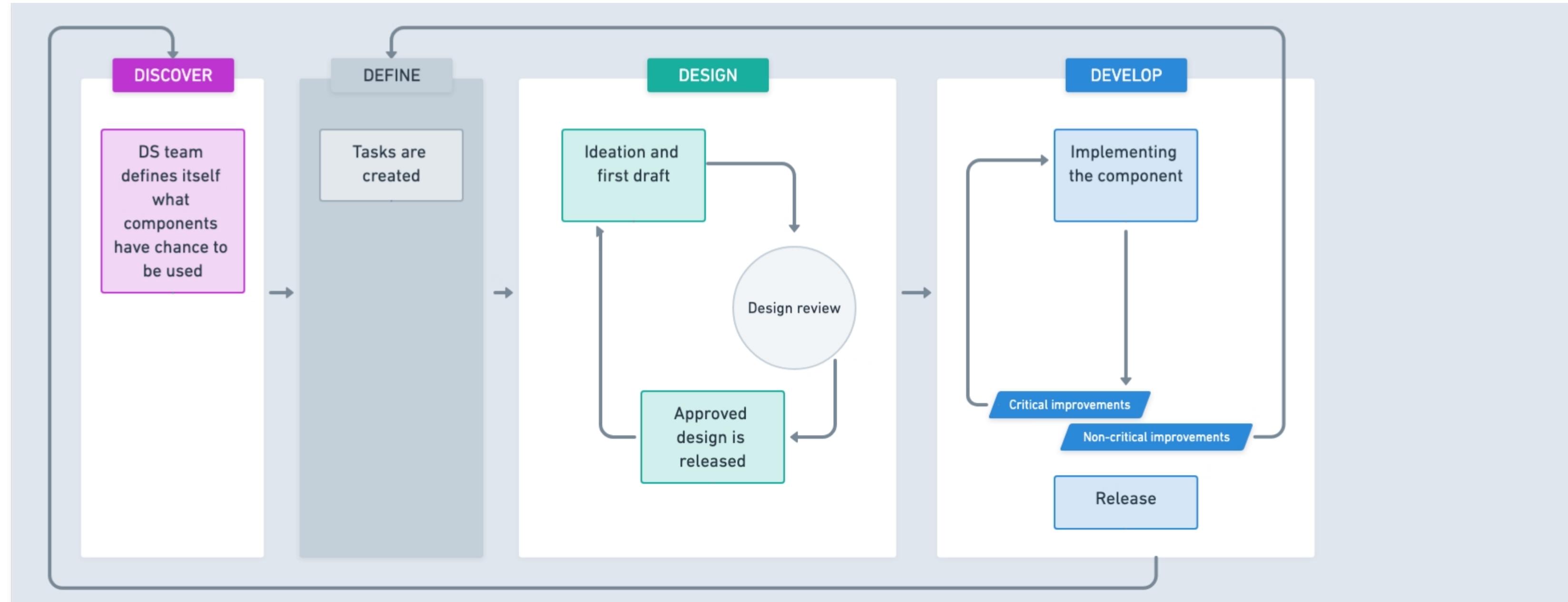


anything  
else?



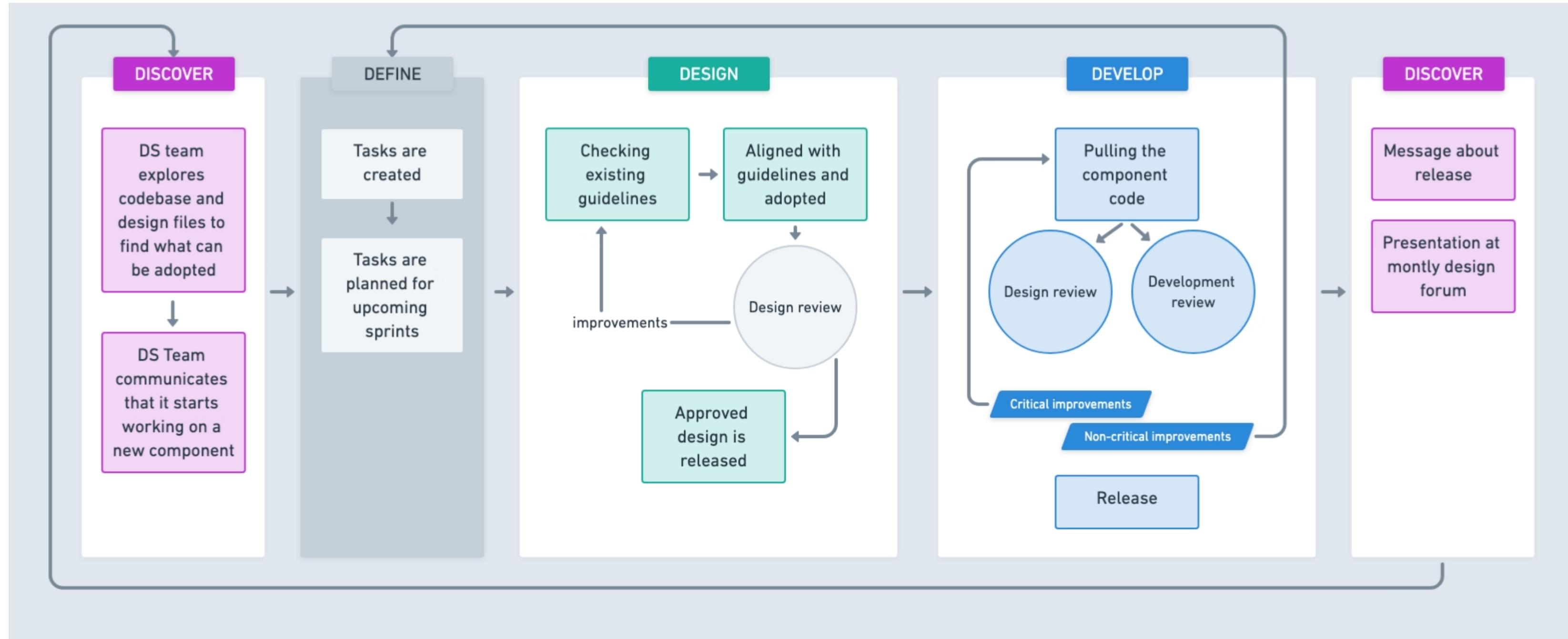
# Design System Process Evolution

# I do everything myself



← Maturity level

# Pulling out contributions



# Getting first contributions





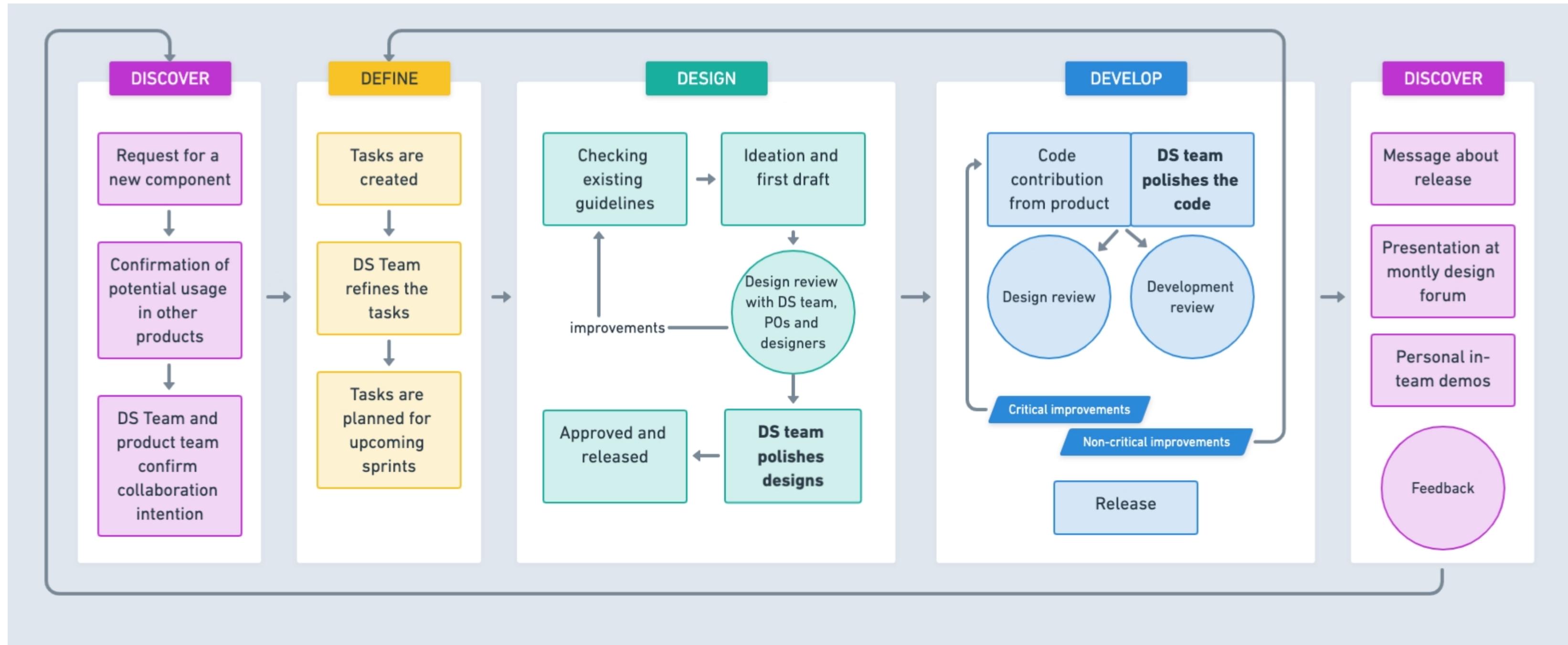


Try Pitch

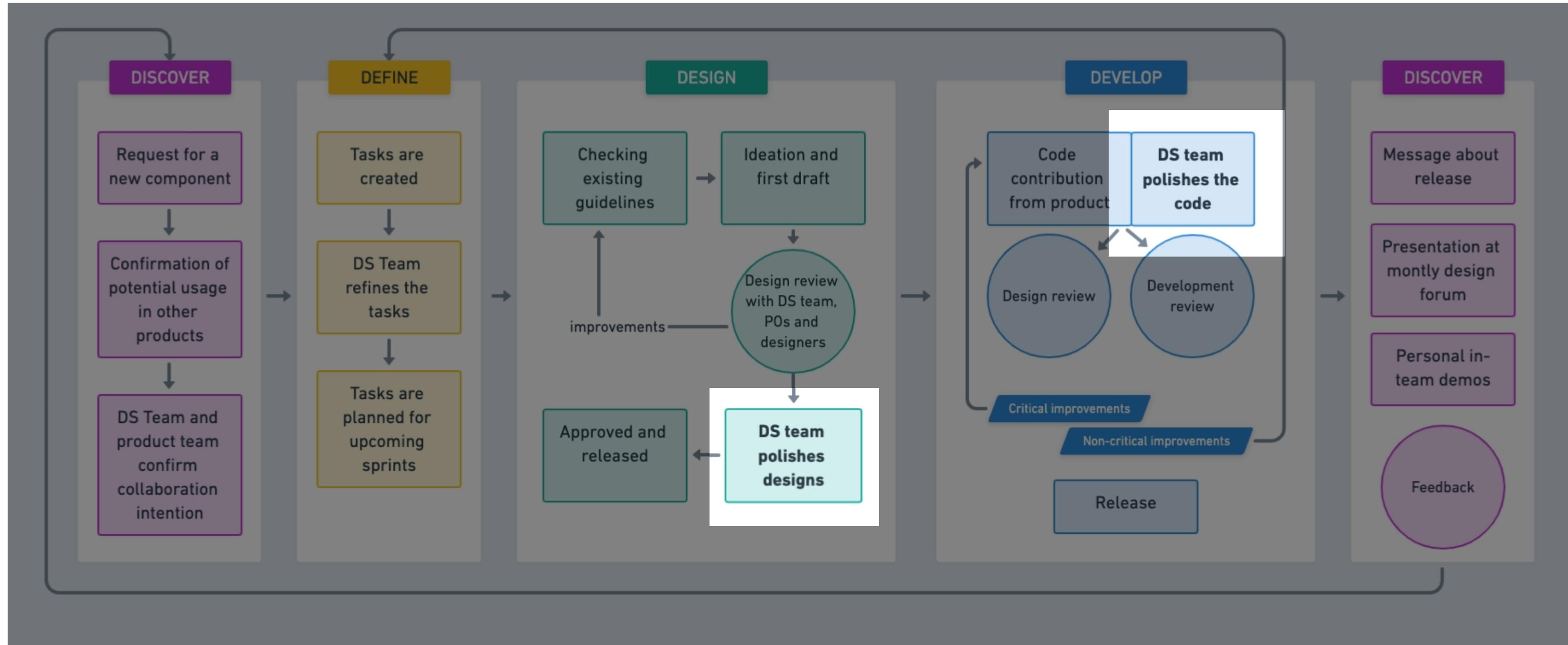
# GATEKEEPER

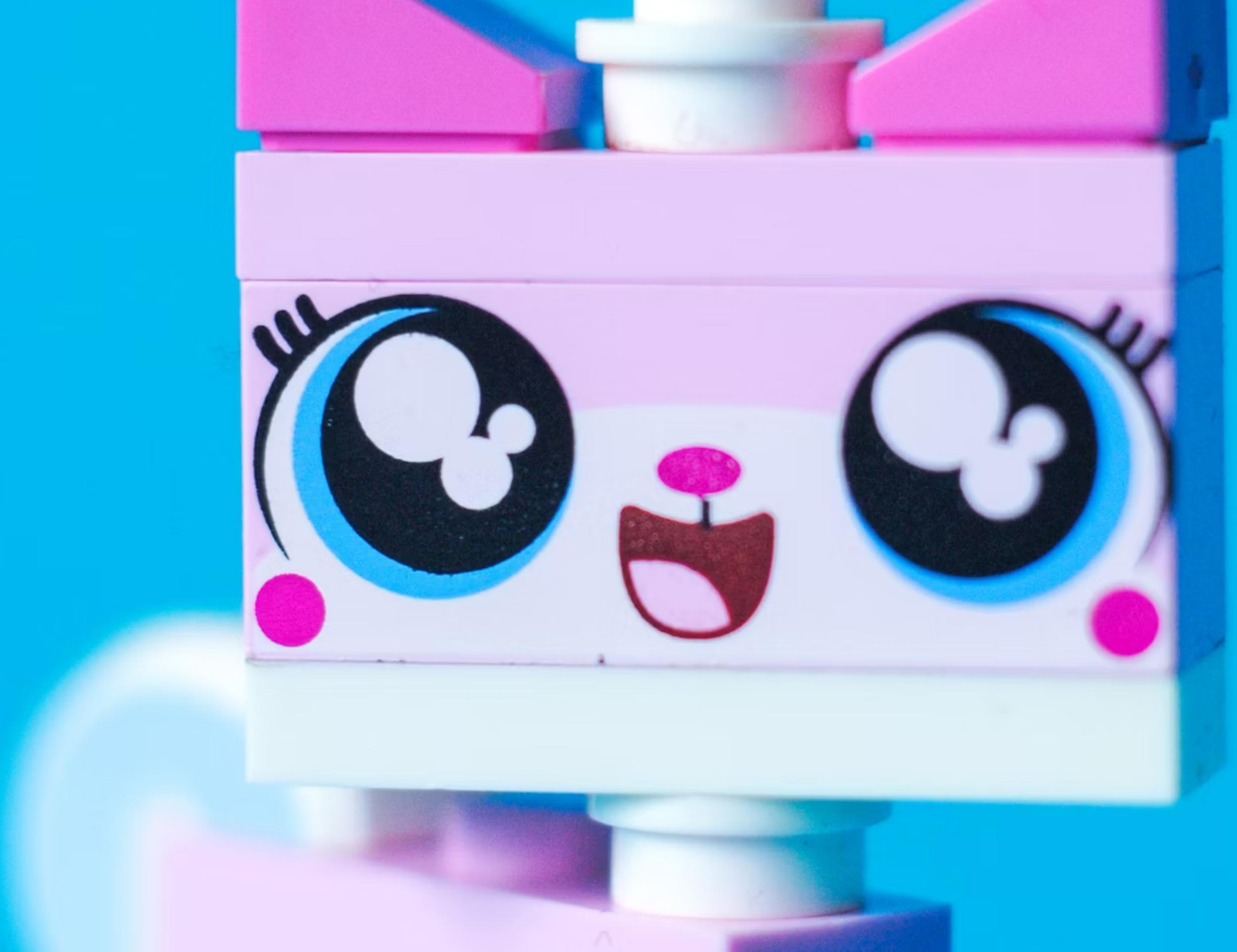
# GUIDING GUARDIAN

# Gatekeeper → Guiding Guardian

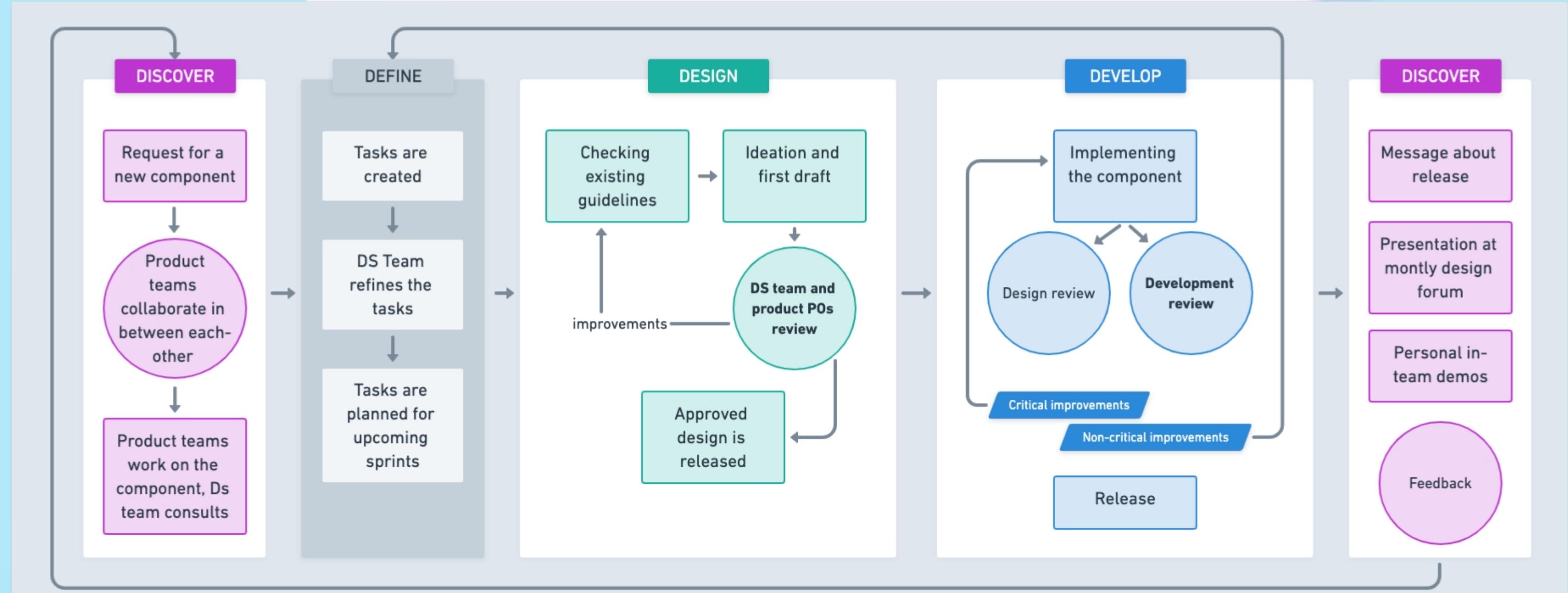


# Gatekeeper → Guiding Guardian

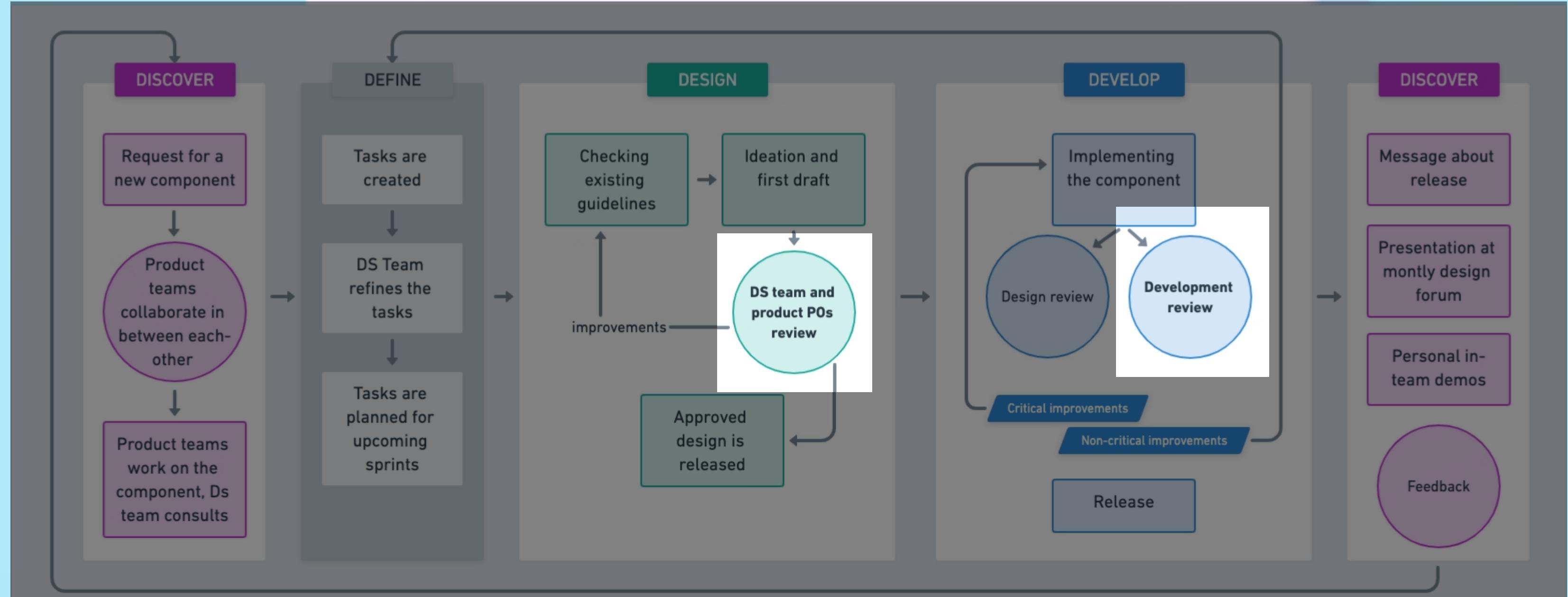




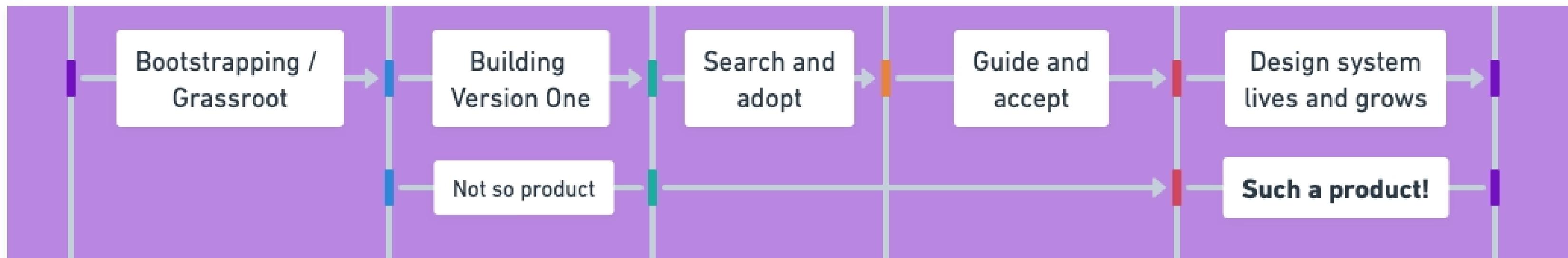
# Perfect Contribution



# Perfect Contribution



# Maturity levels: jump, jump, jump





collaborate vertically



collaborate horizontally



enhance the process

A big, big thank you to our research  
participants!

And our (ex-)colleagues, with whom we learned a lot  
together

Recap & Questions? Let's keep talking.

# Bridge-the-Gap.dev



Varya



Irina



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