

Term UROP is offered: Fall 2021
UROP Department, Lab or Center: D-Lab
Direct Supervisor: Kendra Leith
MIT Faculty Supervisor Name: Kendra Leith

Project Title: Factors that contribute to or hinder effective co-design

About D-Lab: MIT D-Lab works with people around the world to develop and advance collaborative approaches and practical solutions to global poverty challenges. The mission is pursued through our [academics](#) program of more than 15 MIT classes and student research and fieldwork opportunities; our [research groups](#) spanning a variety of sectors and approaches; and a group of participatory innovation programs we call [innovation practice](#). D-Lab applies a [variety of participatory design approaches](#) to develop solutions including user-centered design, co-design, and user generated design.

Project Description: Over the past two years, D-Lab has been developing a co-creation toolkit that students and humanitarian staff can apply in humanitarian settings. The toolkit includes activities on bias, power dynamics, participation and inclusion, mindsets, systems thinking, and sketch modeling to help prepare students and practitioners to lead a co-creation process. The toolkit also includes an evaluation framework that measures the student learning outcomes and how they are applying key insights to aspects of their lives.

As part of evaluation research on co-creation, the team has been identifying factors that contribute to or hinder effective co-creation through a review of literature. In the fall semester, the UROP will build on the existing research and complete a literature review on the factors that influence effective co-creation. The UROP will also support the team in conducting a survey and interviews with members of the D-Lab community, who have implemented co-creation, to identify factors that affect co-creation processes. If time allows, the student may also help the team analyze and present the data. This research will help inform the field on which factors affect co-creation, so that co-creation activities can be more effective and impactful.

Key Research Questions

- What factors contribute to effective co-creation? Why?
- What factors hinder effective co-creation? Why?

Prerequisites: Applicants should have an interest in international development or humanitarian work and participatory design. Students should have a background in social science research and experience conducting literature reviews as well as experience and/or training in conducting interviews. Students who have had any experience in participatory design would be particularly welcome to apply.

Application: Interested candidates should email Kendra Leith (kleith@mit.edu) with a resume and brief explanation of why they are interested in this project and describe any relevant previous experience.

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