

# Designing for Dignity

Co-creating culturally safe digital health tools about drinking with  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

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# The Framework: Designing for Dignity

Developed at TechLab, this framework transforms dignity from an abstract value into concrete, measurable design principles that guide every decision.

## Accessibility

Provide multiple, customizable ways for users of different abilities to complete tasks



## Transparency

Clear communication about data use and system purpose



## User-centered testing

Test iteratively with diverse users to ensure designs fit real-world experiences.



## Empowerment

Give users transparent control of their data and consent-based engagement



## Inclusive design

Integrate accessibility and adaptive flows for cognitive and physical diversity



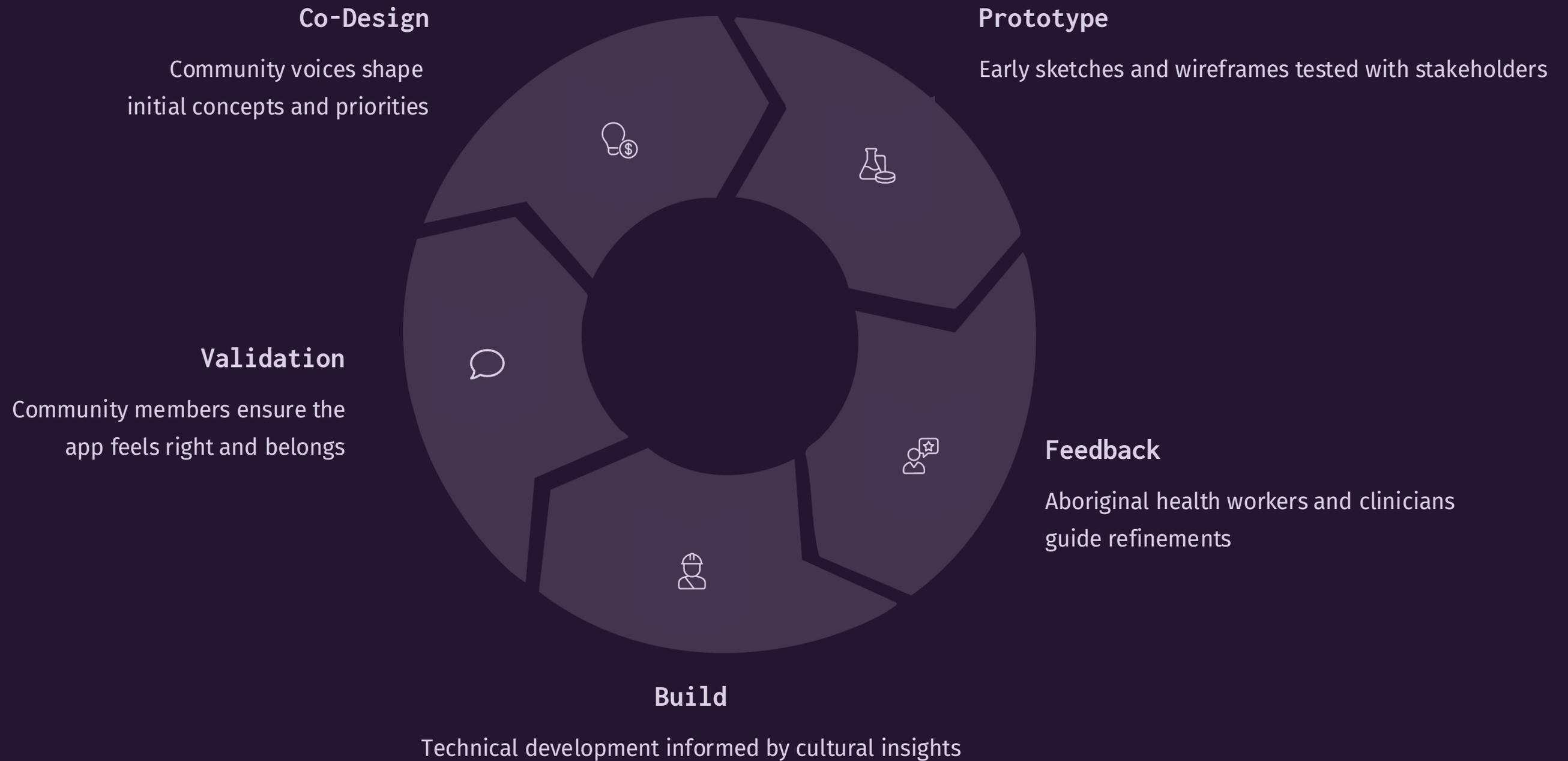
## Respect

Honouring cultural values, individual experiences and



This is human-centered design elevated to **dignity-centered design** — where every pillar acts as a checkpoint, ensuring technology respects and serves the people who use it.

# Applying the Framework in Practice



# Co-Design in Action



Community members guided every aspect of the app's development, from tone and language to visual design and interaction patterns.

## Key co-design outcomes:

- Rewording screening questions to be conversational rather than clinical
- Eliminating judgmental language that could trigger shame
- Choosing approachable colors and icons over medical imagery
- Designing for privacy to reduce disclosure anxiety
- Building trust through transparency about data use

This slower, more deliberate process built genuine trust and produced a tool that *feels like it belongs* to the community it serves — not imposed from outside.

# How the Grog App Embeds Dignity

Each design decision translates dignity principles into concrete features that respect users throughout their experience.



## Plain Language

Neutral wording that avoids clinical jargon and judgement



## Private Self-Reporting

Allows people to respond as they want to, before discussion



## Utilising Soft-landings

Asking users easier answers then to harder ones.



## Clear Purpose

Intro screens explain why data are collected and how they're used



## Accessible Design

Larger text, intuitive navigation and, Progress indicators support all users

# Inclusive design is not just about usability – it's about dignity.

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When we embed dignity in every design decision, we build trust, strengthen care, and support healing. Technology becomes more than functional – it becomes relational, creating space for conversations that honor the whole person.

## Design with Community

Co-creation ensures tools belong to those they serve

## Centre Dignity

Make respect measurable through concrete design principles

## Iterate with Care

Slower, deliberate processes build trust and better outcomes

**Thank you.** I'll now hand over to the next presenters, who'll share how this approach came to life within community and clinical settings.