

Promotion of Fukui Policy Design (Fukui Policy Design Promotion Project)

Fukui Prefecture



Background and Reasons for this Project

In Fukui Prefecture, “Policy Open Innovation”, a new type of prefectural administration style, has been developed since 2019, aiming to thoroughly prioritise real life situations and to create open policies by the so-called “Team Fukui” in order to realise prefectural administration for residents as its main priority.

It is important to establish policies to draw the most appropriate path to reach the policy target from the users’ perspectives. Instead of the governmental perspective based on past experiences and accumulated systems, we have been transforming the way we create policies from the point of view of the people concerned: “policy design” based on design thinking is one of our ways of this transformation.

Aims of this Project

The aim is to realise high quality policy planning from the perspectives of the residents.

Project Outline

We assume various phases of policy design from the initial planning phase (conceptual organisation) to the final phase (output) as the target range. We aim to design each phase: “conceptual design” to confirm essential targets; “process design” to check whether the method is suitable for the target; and “communication design” to check whether it is expressed in a way to gain empathy.

◆ Policy design workshop

We have established a framework where the division having policy issues and policy designers in the prefecture plan policies together through a workshop. We have held dozens of workshops over a year, the policy themes of which cover a wide range such as environment, welfare, tourism and public relations.

During the workshops, opinions were openly exchanged, for example, how to gain empathy and how to encourage people to take desirable actions, from the perspectives of local residents.

◆ Policy design meeting

To introduce policy design from the initial planning phase, meetings during which the governor and designers can directly exchange opinions regarding highly important themes for the prefectural government have been set up since 2021. Since then, opinions regarding approaches to measures for health, and longevity and enhancing attraction of the Ichijodani Asakura Family Site (Fukui City) have been exchanged.



Policy design workshop



Policy design meeting

Features and Innovations

◆ Designers participate in the discussion at the initial planning stage

It is revolutionary that creators participate in the fundamental discussions to form policies, such as consideration of the necessity, objectives and direction of a project.

◆ Triangle connection between the prefecture, the private sector and support organisations

With regard to the participation of designers in policy making, the Design Center Fukui has provided skills mainly in the field of industrial design. Their network and knowledge help select appropriate designers.

The prefecture (administration), creators (from the private sector) and the Design Center Fukui (support organisation) work together to realise better policies under the idea of policy design.

◆ Promoted by the whole prefectural government

Under the leadership of the governor, Mr. SUGIMOTO Tatsuji, “promotion of policy design” was specified in the budget compilation policy, which shows that the whole prefectural government is ready to implement “policy design”.

Results of this Project

The following is a case study of a project that came from the ideas exchanged at the policy design workshops.

◆ Case study: Realising “Happy employment” for people with disabilities

At first, the subject and theme of the division in charge was “realising happy employment for people working in facilities for people with disabilities”, and

in particular, their aim was to raise the pay. The hypothesis which was set up by the division in charge was that launching an integrated brand would help develop new products and create new markets, which may result in pay rises if these new products would sell well.

During the workshop, one of the designers expressed a substantial opinion, “Branding may not work significantly, as there are various visions depending on products such as food and goods.”, “In the first place, we don’t see many people with disabilities in the towns in Fukui, which means they might avoid going out due to assumptions coming from unconscious bias from people who feel sorry for those with disabilities.” This opinion helped realise radical change in such internalised social norms.

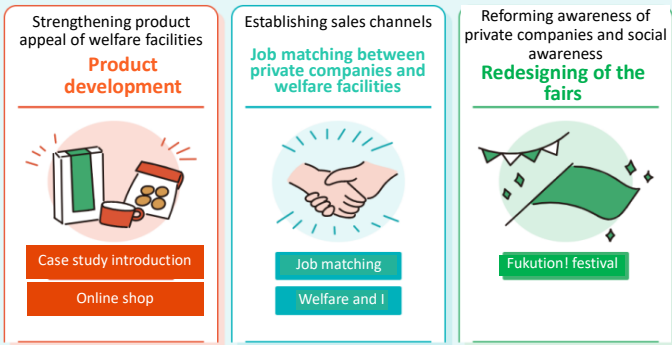
Meanwhile, government employees and designers visited a facility for people with disabilities to have a look at their work and to talk to the staff of the facility. We then learned that actual pay raises did not lead to them feeling happy. Instead, they felt happy when they knew that the products they made were sold at roadside stations and highway service areas like other products, which means that they were able to mix equally with people without disabilities.

Through the process mentioned above, instead of branding, we decided to go ahead with a project with three main components: (1) strengthening product appeal (product development with designers); (2) establishing sales channels (building a website); (3) reforming social awareness (holding festivals). The concept of this project is “Fukution!” (*Fuku* for *Fukushi* meaning welfare in Japanese and *tion* from the last part of the word “action”). Currently, projects are being carried out for each of these components.

Fukution

Action for welfare

Three actions by Fukution!



Issues, Problems and Responses

◆ Permeating this idea to government employees

The idea of policy design has not yet been understood by the government employees well enough. It is important that people in administrative positions need to change their way of thinking. We have set up a web-channel open to government employees with the aim of sharing information. We have also produced educational videos in which designers introduce example cases using policy design so that every employee can watch them any time.

◆ Digging up old cases

Despite the fact that we hold dozens of workshops a year, many of the themes did not yield a fruitful result and in some cases just only resulted in producing a logo or a video. We need to revisit suitable themes that can use policy design when fundamental issues are discussed.

Future Developments (expected effects, project vision, and issues)

The goal that we need to achieve is a firm understanding of policy design by the government employees themselves and the use of its methods to enhance the quality of policies. We prioritise planning policies from the perspectives of local residents to lead to more effective policies. Some prefectural government employees who had a look

at the policies which were created through policy design have found policy design interesting. The fundamental value of the design needs to be fun; policies need to be interesting and inspiring to be more effective. Before trying to gain empathy from local residents, the employees at the prefectural government need to create an atmosphere to enjoy policy making.

URL

Publication of Fukui Policy Design NAVI (Fukui Prefecture website):

<https://www.pref.fukui.lg.jp/doc/seiki/design/navi.html>

Fukui Policy Design, Production of the Creators' Guide (Fukui Prefecture website):

<https://www.pref.fukui.lg.jp/doc/seiki/design/creators-guide.html>

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