IDEO U

Foundations in Design Thinking Certificate

—

Syllabus

IDEO is a global design company that has been honing the methods and mindsets of design thinking for over 40 years.

Through the *Foundations in Design Thinking* Certificate, you'll learn and apply design thinking methods and new ways of thinking.
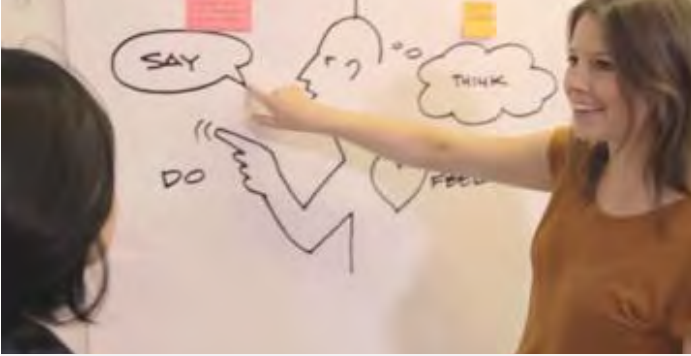
Table of Contents

The *Foundations in Design Thinking* Certificate consists of **2 online courses.**

Course

Insights for Innovation

📅 **5 WEEKS**
4 HRS PER WEEK

Generate valuable insights by applying customer research techniques like observation, interviewing, and immersive empathy, and develop ideas for innovative products and services by keeping your users' needs at the center of the development process.

⊙ **INTRODUCTION**
◎ **WEEK 1 OBSERVE**
💬 **WEEK 2 INTERVIEW**
🧠 **WEEK 3 EMPATHY**
⚛ **WEEK 4 INSIGHTS**
⚑ **WEEK 5 CONCLUSION**

We recommend you take one course at a time. Courses run on a set calendar, with fixed start and end dates. Course learning is self-paced within those dates. Need something more advanced? Check out the Advanced Design Thinking Certificate.

Course

From Ideas to Action

📅 **5 WEEKS**
4 HRS PER WEEK

Test ideas early to learn and derisk new offers, products, and services through the process of generating an abundance of ideas, making ideas tangible through prototypes, and iterating.

⊙ **WEEK 1 INTRODUCTION**
🧠 **WEEK 2 THE ART OF IDEATING**
✂ **WEEK 3 RAPID PROTOTYPING**
👐 **WEEK 4 ITERATE YOUR WAY FORWARD**
⚑ **WEEK 5 CONCLUSION**

Common roles of people who enroll :

PRODUCT MANAGERS, EDUCATORS, INNOVATION MANAGERS, CONSULTANTS, FACILITATORS, DESIGNERS, ENTREPRENEURS, HUMAN RESOURCES

Certificate Outcomes

—

Gain skills in observation and interviewing to better understand what people want and need.

Synthesize insights from user research to help your team develop products and services based on real needs.

Facilitate brainstorming sessions to generate more and better ideas.

Build prototypes to test new ideas early and launch with less risk.

Showcase your new skills through tangible, real-world projects, like an insights report and product or service prototypes.

What's Included

—

35 video lessons

10 required assignments

29 discussion questions

10 activities and frameworks

Applied learning from IDEO practitioners

Work with expert coaches

Downloadable workbook with frameworks, activities, and assignments

INSIGHTS FOR INNOVATION COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK	LESSON	DESCRIPTION	ASSIGNMENT
INTRO 4HRS / WEEK	Overview	Get a course overview, introduction to IDEO's approach to innovation, and explore the power of insights.	Choose your project challenge.
WEEK 1 4HRS / WEEK	Observation	Practice how to listen with your eyes in order to understand what people value and care about.	Start observing your target audience and their behaviors.
WEEK 2 4HRS / WEEK	Interviewing	Learn how to conduct a great interview so you can get deeper, more honest answers that inspire great insights.	Conduct an interview for your project challenge.
WEEK 3 4HRS / WEEK	Empathy	Learn how to create immersive experiences that get you beyond intellectual understanding to obtain a more visceral sense of another's perspective.	Design and conduct an immersive empathy experience for your project challenge.
WEEK 4 4HRS / WEEK	Insights	Learn how to share compelling, quality insights that will inspire and motivate others to innovate.	Final Project: Summarize and share the insights that you gathered throughout this course for your project challenge.
WEEK 5 4HRS / WEEK	Conclusion	Incorporate evidence learned while observing, interviewing, and immersing in empathy, to create an Insights Report.	

WEEK	LESSON	DESCRIPTION	ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 1 4HRS / WEEK	Overview	Get a course overview and review how insights help spark ideas that lead to action.	Choose your project challenge.
WEEK 2 4HRS / WEEK	The Art of Ideating	Go beyond brainstorming—learn techniques for coming up with an abundance of innovative ideas.	Plan and conduct an ideation session.
WEEK 3 4HRS / WEEK	Rapid Prototyping	Learn how to make your ideas tangible so you can work through issues, gather feedback, and get to better solutions faster.	Build a prototype, share it, and reflect on the feedback.
WEEK 4 4HRS / WEEK	Iterate Your Way Forward	Practice improving your ideas through multiple rounds of ideation and prototyping.	List questions that will help you iterate, prioritize those questions, ideate again, and plan for the future.
WEEK 4 4HRS / WEEK	Conclusion	Advice on pursuing your ideas, building your creative confidence, and planning for the future.	Create a pitch summarizing your key takeaways and highlighting your plans for the future.

" The course is well balanced, offering simple tools that are powerful in practice.

It has made me stronger in *understanding people* (and using this understanding to inspire action and innovation) without feeling overbearing or too prescriptive. A great course!"

— ALFRED
CABUSORA

HEAD OF
INTERNATIONAL
MARKETING, UNILAB

" After taking the courses, I started working on small scale design thinking projects in academia. I've since transitioned into the industry and I'm working as a Design Thinking consultant now! I don't think I would have been invited for the interview without the courses. They gave my CV an edge."

—KATHARINA ZEINER

DESIGN THINKING
CONSULTANT,
SIEMENS

Jessica Lura |MD, 10am | She,...

Jordan | Cali 7am (tired!) | she...

Thomas I Vancouver I 7am

Colleen | Texas | 9am | She, h...

Bre | San Diego 7AM | they/th...

Donna Teuber | 10am | Florid...

Gonzalo, Lima, 10am

Joana LIS 15.00 She-Her

Gulraiz | Karachi | 8pm | he/him

Ren Chang, Soo | Selangor | 1...

Shamir | Mumbai | 8pm
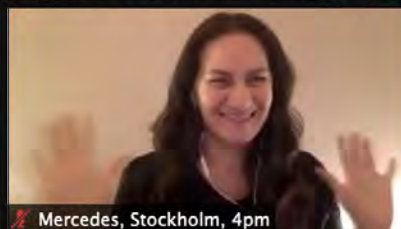
Mercedes, Stockholm, 4pm

" I am a firm believer that today's challenges require us to bring all of our creative capacity to the forefront.

IDEO U has given me the opportunity to expand my perspectives, a space to network with like-minded individuals, and the tools to navigate these uncertain times"

— SOFÍA LÓPEZ NUÑEZ

CFO FOR LATIN AMERICA, CATERPILLAR

" The process helped me understand how powerful design thinking can be to facilitate organizational change. Every leader should understand these principles and know how to apply them in their organization."

—ANDREA DE LA CERDA

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE MARKETING, SCORPION

Your Instructions

—

Learn from IDEO practitioners and business leaders who've led *thousands* of projects across industries and around the globe in areas including business, technology, education, and design.

INSIGHTS FOR INNOVATION
INSTRUCTOR

Coe Leta Stafford

PARTNER AT IDEO & EXECUTIVE DESIGN DIRECTOR OF IDEO U

Since joining IDEO in 2006, Coe has led numerous creative teams across diverse organizations including Microsoft, Target, Intel, Wells Fargo, Ford, eBay, Hasbro, Sesame Street, and Government and Healthcare groups. Known for expertise in digital design, play, and data, her work has won international awards, patents for clients, and been featured in the New York Times and Wired. Coe Leta has a Ph.D. in Education from UC Berkeley and guest lectures at Stanford University's d.School.

INSIGHTS FOR INNOVATION
INSTRUCTOR

Jane Fulton Suri

PARTNER EMERITUS AND EXECUTIVE DESIGN DIRECTOR AT IDEO

Jane founded IDEO's practice of human-centered insights, pioneering approaches that spread throughout organizations across the globe. To increase access to this approach, Jane published IDEO's Method Cards and *Thoughtless Acts? Observations on Intuitive Design*, a collection of snapshots that depict the subtle and creative ways in which people interact with the world. Jane lectures at Stanford, Harvard, and other universities internationally.

FROM IDEAS TO ACTION
INSTRUCTOR

Brenden Boyle

PARTNER AT IDEO & FOUNDER OF IDEO PLAY LAB

Under Brendan's leadership, the Play Lab, IDEO's toy-invention studio exploring kid-centered solutions to the challenge of boredom, has invented and licensed hundreds of consumer products. Brendan also consults with companies about redesigning their organizational behavior to include space for play, wrote the course *From Play to Innovation* offered at Stanford's d.School, and co-authored the award-winning encyclopedia of never-before-seen inventions, *The Klutz Book of Inventions*.

Expert Facilitators
—

Receive coaching from a team of design thinking practitioners with teaching and facilitation expertise who will guide discussions, foster peer connection, and provide feedback on your assignments.

Course Community
—
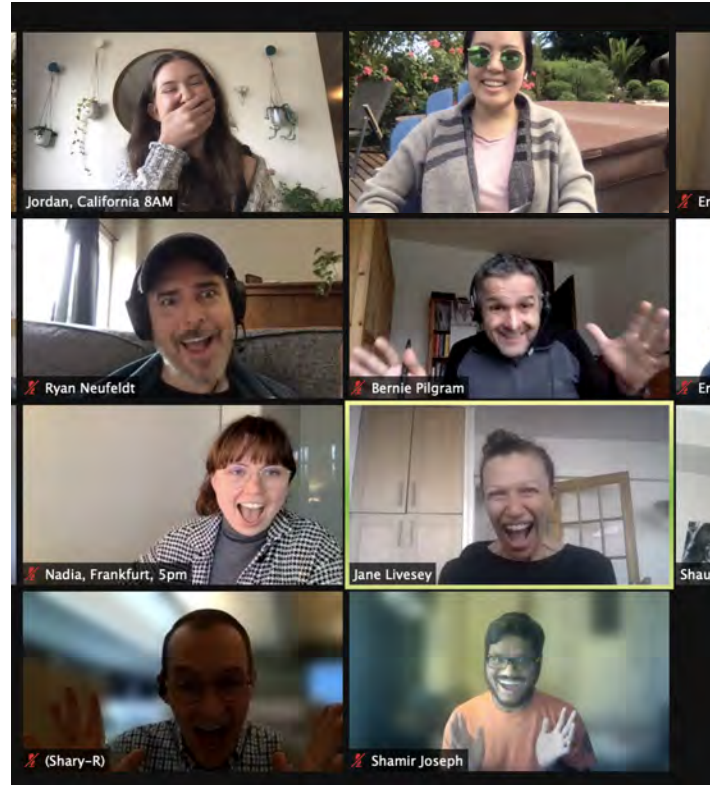
Learn alongside a cohort of hundreds of like-minded innovation professionals from around the world. Build your *professional network* by making valuable connections in each course.

Learning Experience
—
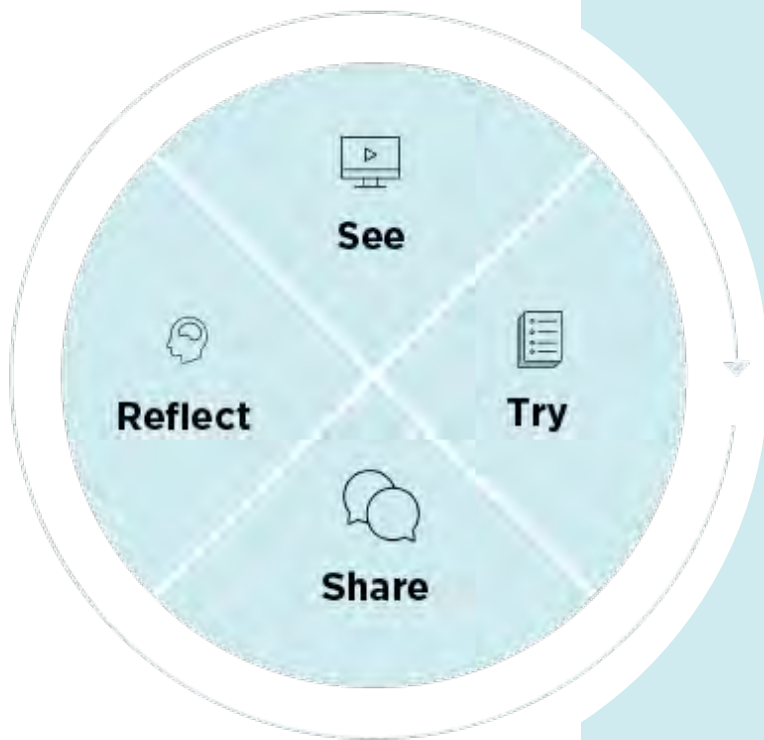
See

Each lesson has a series of 3-5 minute videos where instructors explain the why, what, and how of a specific topic and bring to life case studies from around the globe.

Try

Our courses provide assignments and final projects to help you try out new behaviors online and through real-world projects.

Share

Share and discuss what you're learning with the teaching team and a global peer network to build greater understanding through virtual video calls and written discussion.

Reflect

We've designed a variety of reflective activities into our experiences to help you make the connections from our online content to your specific work challenges.

Course

Insights for Innovation
Outcomes & Lesson Plan

Generate valuable insights by applying customer research techniques like observation, interviewing, and immersive empathy, and develop ideas for innovative products and services by keeping your users' needs at the center of the development process.

5 WEEKS
4 HRS PER WEEK

VIEW COURSE

Insights For Innovation
After this course, you'll be able to...

Better understand the needs of your users.

Plan and conduct great user interviews to uncover deeper insights.

Use observation techniques that will help you understand user behavior.

Synthesize your research into actionable insights.

Develop ideas for innovative products and services by keeping your user's needs at the center of the development process.

INTRO
Overview

Get a brief overview of the course, an introduction to IDEO's approach to innovation, explore the power of insights, and choose your project challenge.

4 VIDEOS

Insights Fuel Innovation

Why seeing with new eyes matters

Introducing the Project Challenge

Learning by doing through a project

Assessing Your Progress

How creatively confident are you?

About Your Instructors

Coe Leta Stafford & Jane Fulton Suri

1 ASSIGNMENT

Choose Your Challenge — We've crafted a series of project challenges for you to choose from, all designed to be the right size and scope for this course. You'll practice your selected challenge during the course and later you can bring your learning into your own work.

2 DISCUSSIONS

How might seeing with fresh eyes help shape the way you, your team, and organization works?

Everyone's creative journey is different. How do you rate your own creative confidence?

JOIN A COHORT GROUP

In-course cohort groups known as *Learning Circles* are peer-led and provide an opportunity to discuss assignments, gain inspiration, and dive deeper into course content.

2 PEER FEEDBACK MOMENTS

Provide feedback on the work of at least two of your peers' assignments for each lesson.

Observe

Practice how to listen with your eyes in order to understand what people value and care about.

---

6 VIDEOS

Practice Observing

Explore what it means to "listen with your eyes" and get an overview of the activities and mindset of this first lesson.

Getting Curious

Take a peek inside the walls of IDEO. What do these IDEO designers carry with them every day?

Practice Interpreting

In this classic IDEO activity, you'll look at four photos from someone's life. What can you learn about this person through observation?

See What an Expert Sees

Continue to practice observing. As you watch, make note of the what, why, and how of observation.

Compare an Observation to an Interview

Compare what you learn about someone when you observe them vs. when you meet them in real life.

6 Tips for Observing

What to look for in the real world — It's almost time to get out in the world and start observing. What helps you get into a curious and non-judgmental mindset?

---

1 ASSIGNMENT

Practice Observing—Get out in the world and start observing your target audience and their behaviors.

---

4 DISCUSSIONS

What helps you get into a curious and non-judgmental mindset?

Did you make assumptions or judgments about someone's (or a group's) character?

What were you curious about and how did these moments help you get to deeper places?

What do you personally find most challenging about listening with your eyes?

Interview

Activities and tools to help you hone your skills at both asking the right kinds of questions and setting the stage.

4HRS

---

2 VIDEOS

An Interview Gone Wrong and How to Make it Right

Take a look at an interview gone wrong. Sometimes seeing something done wrong can help you get it right.

Tips for Interviewing

Great interviews take practice and a deep sense of self-awareness. Here are five tips for interviewing others.

3 DISCUSSIONS

How do you know when an interview is going poorly? How might you turn it into an insightful and meaningful conversation?

Why is it important to be in tune with your presence when interviewing? How might you enhance your own self-awareness as an interviewer?

Did you practice true curiosity? Were you able to move past pre-existing assumptions, judgement, and stereotypes about people and the problem?

1 ASSIGNMENT

Conduct an Interview—As you plan and conduct an interview, think back to our tips for interviewing and how you might use these to get to deeper, more honest answers.

WEEK 3

Empathy

Learn how to immerse yourself directly into an experience to evoke empathy.

3 VIDEOS

Why Empathy Matters

A visceral way to inspire action — Immersing in empathy allows our senses to become tools for learning and gathering insights. How does empathy spark creative problem solving?

An Exercise in Empathy

Cycling commutes around the world — Practice seeing through other people's perspectives. You'll meet three individuals from around the globe and get a first-person view of their daily bicycle commute.

4 Tips for Empathy Immersion

Ways to experience new perspectives — Take a closer look at immersive empathy. As you watch, think about how our 4 tips for empathy immersion might help you and your team uncover solutions in new ways.

4 DISCUSSIONS

Were you able to challenge some of your incoming assumptions to discover surprising needs and opportunities? If not, re-examine your experience with an increased attention to the objects, environments, and interactions you encountered.

How did each affect you?

What's challenging about walking in someone else's shoes?

What ways might you practice empathy in your daily life?

1 ASSIGNMENT

Conduct an Empathy Experience — Design and conduct an empathy experience to better understand a different perspective.

WEEK 4
Insights

Take what you've learned—through observation, interviewing, and immersing in empathy—and turn it into compelling insights that you'll share with others.

---

2 VIDEOS

The Anatomy of an Insight

At this point in the course, you've probably identified many interesting opportunities in your project challenge, but you might be asking, "Which of these are insights?" In this video, you'll learn how to define and craft compelling insights.

4 Steps for Summarizing Insights

Now it's time to narrow down your learnings.

3 DISCUSSIONS

Did you use visuals to bring your story to life? Consider how you might amplify your audience's connection with the people and the problem through thoughtful visual storytelling.

What was challenging about capturing insights?

In your own words, what makes for a compelling insight?

---

1 ASSIGNMENT

Final Project: Insights Report — Incorporate evidence learned while observing, interviewing, and immersing in empathy, to create an Insights Report that brings your insights to life through images, quotes, and stories.

WEEK 5
Conclusion

Learn how to continue to refine your skills over time and use your insights out in the world.

---

1 VIDEO

Insights Are Just the Beginning

Hear closing remarks from Jane and Coe, wrap up your final project, and learn how to refine your skills over time and use your insights out in the world.

3 DISCUSSIONS

What was the biggest challenge you faced in gathering insights? Reflect on how you overcame or might overcome this challenge.

What was the most revealing moment for you in the course?

How will you apply what you've learned to a current challenge in your life or work?

Course

From Ideas to Action
Outcomes & Lesson Plan

Test ideas early to learn and derisk new offers, products, and services through the process of generating an abundance of ideas, making ideas tangible through prototypes, and iterating.

5 WEEKS
4 HRS PER WEEK

VIEW COURSE

From Ideas to Action
After this course, you'll be able to...

Facilitate effective brainstorming and other ideation styles.

Use ideation techniques that will help you come up with new solutions.

Create rapid prototypes to test new ideas early and launch with less risk.

Uncover insight into your users' wants and needs by using rough prototypes to gather feedback.

Turn your ideas into real products and services through a repeatable process of ideation, prototyping, and iteration.

WEEK 1
Introduction

Get a brief course overview, review how insights help spark ideas that lead to action, and choose your challenge.

---

2 VIDEOS

Ideate, Prototype, and Iterate Your Way Forward

What prevents us from sharing our ideas with the world? Or, bringing them to life in droves? Is it fear of judgement or failure? Or not knowing where to start? We want to explore these questions with you in this course. To begin, let's look at three approaches that will get you from ideas to action.

Understanding the Role of Insights

If you've taken *Insights for Innovation*, this will be a review for you. A recap of the importance of insights to help better situate you in the design thinking process.

1 ASSIGNMENT

Choose Your Challenge — Select your challenge from a series of project challenges we've crafted to be the right size and scope for this course.

JOIN A COHORT GROUP

In-course cohort groups known as *Learning Circles* are peer-led and provide an opportunity to discuss assignments, gain inspiration, and dive deeper into course content.

---

2 PEER FEEDBACK MOMENTS

Provide feedback on the work of at least two of your peers' assignments for each lesson.

WEEK 2
The Art of Ideating

Ideation is all about exploring new possibilities and coming up with solutions to challenges by quickly generating, developing, and testing ideas.

5 VIDEOS

What is Ideation?

Getting comfortable with divergent thinking — Some of the most brilliant ideas come when you fight the urge to stop on an early solution and embrace the discomfort that comes from exploring more.

Ideation Methods

Ways to generate ideas — An introduction to some effective ideation methods that will help you generate tons of ideas.

Brainstorm Rules

Leading your own brainstorm — Hear what David Kelley, founder of IDEO, has to say about what makes for a great brainstorm.

Observe Experts Brainstorming

See an IDEO team in action — Now that you've run your own zoo ideation session, take a look at how we approached the same challenge here at IDEO.

Converging After Idea Generation

How to make choices and move forward — When and how to focus on the ideas with true potential. We'll help you get from what could be to what should be.

1 ASSIGNMENT

Plan an Ideation Session — Ideate around your project challenge with two to four people, and choose your top ideas.

WEEK 3
Rapid Prototyping

Getting tangible with your ideas is a great way to work through the kinks and get to better solutions faster.

5 VIDEOS

Why Prototype?

Make your ideas tangible and shareable.

Types of Prototypes

Anything can be prototyped.

Show Me Your Prototype

A virtual tour of IDEO to check out some early ideas.

3 Steps for Prototyping

Build, share, and reflect, we'll share a simple framework that will help you move your prototype forward.

Tinfoil Hats in Action

Let's see how a group of IDEOers approached the Tin Foil Hat Activity.

1 ASSIGNMENT

Prototype — Plan, build, and share your prototype. To get the most out of this assignment, we suggest that you involve two to four people. That means you might not complete this in one sitting.

3 DISCUSSIONS

When was a time you failed at something? Allow yourself to be vulnerable — what did you learn from your mistake?

Share your tinfoil hat prototype and comment on your fellow learner's prototypes with ideas to build on their designs.

What about prototyping felt uncomfortable? Which aspects of your prototype were people drawn to?

1 ACTIVITY

Tinfoil Hat Activity — In this activity, you're going to build to think—design and build a hat using only the materials listed.

WEEK 4

Iterate Your Way Forward

**Practice improving your ideas through
multiple rounds of ideation and prototyping.**

---

3 VIDEOS

Why we Iterate

Fail early to succeed sooner. Explore the
power of repetition.

4 Steps to Iterate

Managing risk and refining your ideas.

School Lunch Activity

A closer look at the larger scope of the
School Lunch Project.

---

1 DISCUSSION

How has your plan for future
prototyping shifted in surprising ways?
What helped you get there?

---

1 ASSIGNMENT

Iterate—Create a list of
questions that will help you
iterate, prioritize those
questions, ideate again (and
again), and plan for the future.

WEEK 5
Conclusion

Hear advice from Brendan on pursuing your ideas, building your creative confidence, and planning for the future.

---

1 VIDEO

Course Conclusion—Play, Build and Experiment

Hear closing remarks from Brendan and wrap up with a final project to create a pitch summarizing your key takeaways and highlighting your plans for the future.

---

1 ASSIGNMENT

Final Project — Create a pitch summarizing your key takeaways and highlighting your plans for the future.

1 DISCUSSION

What does creative confidence mean to you, and how might the skills and perspective from this course get you that much closer to bringing your ideas to life?

What was your creative confidence before and after the course? Really think about how or why it changed. Did your creative confidence change during the course? How and why? What was the most revealing moment for you?

"

Design thinking isn't just a method — it fundamentally changes the fabric of your organization and your business."

DAVID KELLEY

FOUNDER OF IDEO AND THE STANFORD D.SCHOOL

IDEO U

Solve Anything Creatively

For any questions, reach out to us at
hello@ideou.com.