# Best Design Beavers

De-invisibilizing and designing for the experiences of underrepresented users.

The Need for Good Design

Poor user interfaces and design choices in applications lead to frustrated users, lost revenue, and a smaller user base. In some cases, it can cost companies their reputation and leave users unable to accomplish tasks with the application. User Interface and User Experience Design (UI/UX) focus on enhancing an application through improvements to its interface, functionality, and its underlying structure to allow users to more efficiently navigate and use the product.

Best Design Beavers (BDB) has identified a shortcoming in the UX field that has left the experiences of minoritized and underserved communities sidelined or invisibilized. BDB hopes to address this issue by implementing an inclusive design framework as a foundation for the UX process. This framework emphasizes centering and researching underrepresented populations to practice effective human-centered design (HCD) techniques. BDB's goal is to practice an inclusive approach to UX design that will provide equitable user experiences for underrepresented users.
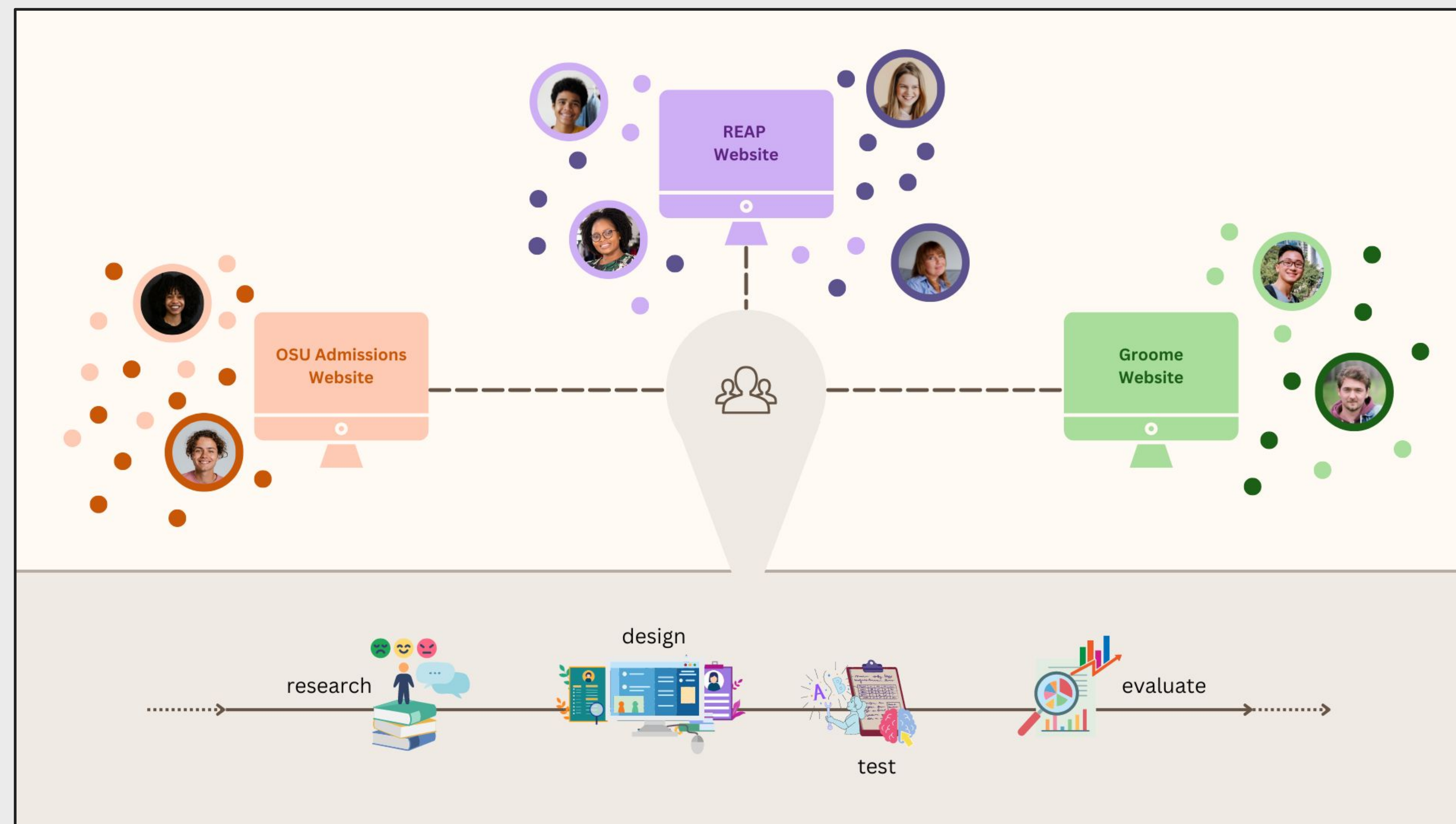
Creating an Inclusive Experience

BDB centers our practice on creating a shared seamless experience for both mainstream AND underserved users. In doing so, we work to decenter the mainstreamer to redefine the site user experience as multifaceted.

We use a human-centered design approach to ground our work in the lived experiences of our underrepresented users. To develop an understanding of these users, we leverage multiple data collection strategies, including literature reviews, user testing, user interviews, and surveys. We then apply analytic techniques to define facets that are important to our underserved user's experience.

Through this process, we produce research-backed user personas as a way for evaluating a site experience for our underserved user to inform design decisions so that we can create or re-create a more inclusive user experience.

Centering Underserved Users

Groome's website allows users to book shuttles from several large cities to the Portland International Airport. It is a particularly useful service for international students, who often need to fly to get home. Our focus was on improving the shuttle booking process for these students.

For the **OSU website**, our focus was on improving pages related to undergraduate admissions. In this project we researched prospective first-generation college students to decide how to best support these students on this section of the website.

REAP Inc. is a non-profit organization that serves underserved youth in grades K-12 in the Portland area with a mission to promote leadership. One population they specifically aim to support are students of color, especially Black and Brown youth. Our work reevaluates and redesigns their website to optimize it for students of color.

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BDB

We're Just Dam Good

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