



Design for Social Innovation

Spring 2026
AI for Impact

A project-based course aimed at solving social problems through design.

Overview

Are you interested in tackling complex global problems through tech-enabled solutions?

Design For Social Innovation (DFSI) is a semester-long course taught by Prof. [Sarah Holloway](#) (SIPA Faculty) and [Adam Royalty](#) (Founding Director Columbia Design Studio), offered in collaboration between the Columbia Entrepreneurship Design Studio, the Columbia Data Science Institute (DSI), and the Columbia School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA).

This experiential course is open to students from across Columbia's 20 undergraduate and graduate schools. Working in interdisciplinary teams, students will support real clients to address complex global problems through human centered design. Past clients include Warby Parker, NYC Department of Education, Sesame Workshop, Apple, UNDP, and others.

In Spring 2026, the course will focus on **AI for Impact**, partnering with NYC-based nonprofit and public-sector organizations to explore how artificial intelligence can amplify their mission and impact.

Course Details

- This 3.0 credit course will take place in-person on **Wednesdays from 1:10pm - 3:00pm** at the Columbia Entrepreneurship Design Studio (meeting all but three Wednesdays when teams are "out of the building" interviewing, workshoping and with teaching team in office hours)
- In addition to class time, there will be one **mandatory Design Sprint on Friday, January 30**. Please do not apply for the course unless you believe you can attend the Friday session.
- Students conduct stakeholder research and interviews, develop insights through human-centered design, iterate ideas, and create working prototypes and implementation blueprints for their clients.
- The application-only course will accept a **total of 30 students** for the Spring 2026 term.

Application Instructions

To apply for the course, please complete the application form and include a 1-minute video. Detailed instructions can be found in the form. If selected, you will be placed on a team based on your background and interest.



Applications are now **LIVE** and will be reviewed on a rolling basis. [APPLY HERE!](#)