

Collaboration Exercises

Biomimicry is an interdisciplinary endeavor. Therefore, the ability to collaborate across disciplines is critical to doing biomimicry well. The following exercises will aid you in establishing effective ways of communicating and collaborating in a multidisciplinary work environment.

Glossary Exploration

Understanding each other's terms, definitions, and jargon is important when starting to work in interdisciplinary teams. Failing to recognize these differences in terminology can lead to frustrating miscommunication.

As a team, talk about the following terms from the Biomimicry Toolbox glossary and discuss how the meaning might be different among your various disciplines. Pay attention to these differences and watch for them and other terms with different meanings that come up in discussions within and outside of the team.

Challenge	Function	Strategy
Context	Niche	Sustainability
Design / Designer	Optimize	
Emulate	Resilient	

Discipline Tour

Take a tour of each team member's workspace. This could be a personal workspace or a lab or classroom where others in the same discipline work. Look at the materials, tools, books or internet resources, and software they use in their discipline. Ask lots of questions and gain an understanding of the basic process each person uses in his or her studies, work, or research.

If you don't have a very diverse team, consider approaching others outside of your team in order to gain a broader understanding of what various disciplines could contribute to your biomimetic design process.