This week the IDEO team arrived in snowy Ithaca to learn what makes ILR such an extraordinary place. Despite a wintry snowscape, they encountered a community united by fiery passions—for worker well-being, for social justice, and for the brilliant students who come here.

The team sat down with six members of faculty and staff for in-depth conversations. This marked the beginning of their “Looking In” research, a critical part of IDEO’s process of practicing human-centered design.

They also took a campus tour and sat in on Louis Hyman’s lecture on the rise of the five and dime, a.k.a. the “poor man’s department store.”