Tool – Importance/Difficulty Matrix
This LUMA design thinking method is a 2x2 quad chart for plotting items by relative priority. The importance is on the x-axis and the difficulty is on the y-axis.

Objective: To collaboratively use design-thinking methods to gather information and make decisions about action plans.

Tasks and Techniques for Importance/Difficulty Matrix:
Use the design-thinking method importance/difficulty matrix to determine the likely impact of each solution or task from a brainstorming session or from the Rose Bud Thorn activity. Plot the solution idea or task horizontally by relative importance to the challenge you are working on. Plot vertically by difficulty, which can include stakeholder agreement, cost, technical feasibility, etc.

After all are plotted on the matrix, select one action from the list that can make the greatest impact going forward. Articulate why the action was chosen.

Template for Importance/Difficulty Matrix:
This is the template for capturing the discussion when using virtual breakout groups. In face-to-face session the Importance/Difficulty Matrix activity would generally use sticky notes on a poster. Apps such as MURAL or Jamboard can also be used if available.

Tips for Importance/Difficulty Matrix:
- Listen to all points of view on the item prior to placement
- Do not view this as a Cost/Benefit study, but as a way to use criteria to set priorities

Takeaways for Importance/Difficulty Matrix
- The importance/Difficulty Matrix facilitates quick prioritization
- It can help resolve different options
- Enables the development of an action plan

References for this activity:
LUMA, *Innovating for People: Handbook of Human-Centered Design Methods*, 2012

Rose Bud Thorn:
https://designsprintkit.withgoogle.com/methodology/phase1-understand/rose-thorn-bud

Importance/Difficulty Matrix:
https://designsprintkit.withgoogle.com/methodology/phase1-understand/importancedifficulty-matrix

MURAL:
https://www.mural.co/

Google Jamboard:
https://jamboard.google.com/