



Governance and Evaluation & Public Sector Innovation

The Need for Innovation

Governments operate in an environment of increasing change. This requires moving innovation from being a sporadic activity to a systemic one. Innovation needs to be a resource that governments can reliably and consistently draw on. The following are some of the key drivers for change.

01

CHANGING FUNCTIONS

In an environment of change, governments must also change how they operate

02

RUNNING TO STAY IN PLACE

In an evolving economy, governments have to change policy settings just in order to maintain the same outcomes

03

NO ROOM FOR SPECTATORS

In order to remain effective decision-makers, governments have to have experiential knowledge of innovation; they cannot wait for the answers to be given to them

04

WE WANT MORE

Many politicians, citizens and public servants want and expect things to change

05

RISK OF A MISMATCH

A government that does not innovate is one that is at risk of always being behind, always reacting yet forever disappointing

06

INNOVATION AS A CORE COMPETENCY

The need for innovation can strike anywhere, therefore everyone must be ready to play a part

Public Sector Innovation is Complex and Difficult

Public sector innovation is fundamentally difficult. It is not an easy thing to command, to manage, or to measure.

01

DIFFICULT TO DEFINE

Innovation is hard to define because it is inherently contextual. To know what is innovative, you need to know the context.

02

VARIED FORMS AND DEGREES

Public sector innovation comes in different forms (e.g. service and policy) and degrees (e.g. incremental and radical)

03

DIFFERENT TO PRIVATE SECTOR

Public sector innovation occurs in a political context, which often makes it much more complex and uncertain than in the private sector.

04

THE ROLE OF TIME

What is innovative, and how successful it is, can often only really be judged with the passing of time, yet there is the pressure to prove results quickly.

05

TOP-DOWN VS BOTTOM-UP

Public sector innovation can be both directed and emergent.

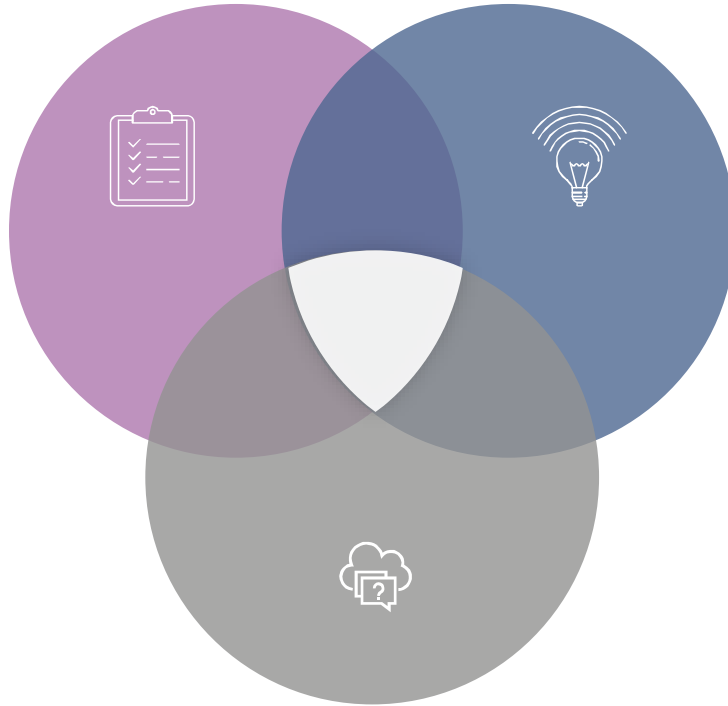
06

DIFFERENT PURPOSES

Public sector innovation can occur for many different reasons. The different reasons require differing forms of innovation and support.

3 Facets of Innovation to Consider

Delivering on today – mission-oriented public sector innovation. This facet is about ensuring that innovation is occurring in order to meet current burning priorities; that government has the ability to innovate in order to reach its goals. It is likely that this innovation will usually be more incremental in nature, exploiting the knowledge resources of today.



Delivering on tomorrow – anticipatory innovation. This facet is about ensuring that there is exploration and engagement with the emergent issues that will shape future priorities and future commitments. It is likely that this innovation will be more radical in nature, and will be harder to embed in existing structures.

Ensuring innovation readiness – ensuring the necessary absorptive capacity across the Public Service for engaging with new ideas, new methods and new ways of working and delivering. Innovation is not a capability or capacity that can be turned on and off at will, it needs to be nurtured in order to be drawn upon when needed, and to allow for the unexpected to emerge.

What level of analysis?

SYSTEM

ORGANISATION

INDIVIDUAL

AN EMERGENT FRAMEWORK FOR PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION

DELIVERING ON **TODAY**:
MISSION ORIENTED PUBLIC
SECTOR INNOVATION

DELIVERING FOR
TOMORROW:
ANTICIPATORY
INNOVATION

ENSURING INNOVATION
READINESS: ABSORPTIVE
CAPACITY

- Reason for: What is driving the intent to innovate?
- Possibility of: What affects the likelihood of innovation being attempted?
- Capability for: What is needed in order to carry out the attempt at innovation?
- Experience of: What affects whether innovation continues?

<p>What level of analysis is the focus?</p> <p>Core determinants of innovation</p>	<p>Individual (Individual Effort)</p>	<p>Organisation (Collective/ Shared Effort)</p>	<p>System (Intersection and Aggregate of Multiple Efforts)</p>
<p>Reason for: What is driving the intent to innovate?</p>	<p>Motivation to Innovate</p>	<p>Problem Identification/Ideas Generated</p>	<p>Clarity about Innovation</p>
<p>Possibility of: What affects the likelihood of innovation being attempted?</p>	<p>Opportunity to Innovate</p>	<p>Ideas Generated/Proposals Developed</p>	<p>Parity of Innovation</p>
<p>Capability for: What is needed in order to carry out the attempt at innovation?</p>	<p>Ability to Innovate</p>	<p>Project Implementation</p>	<p>Suitability for Innovation</p>
<p>Experience of: What affects whether innovation continues?</p>	<p>Learning from Innovation</p>	<p>Evaluation/Lessons Diffused</p>	<p>Normality around Innovation</p>

Implications

For governance and policy evaluation.

GOVERNANCE

- Need for system-wide view and stewardship
- Need for a portfolio approach to decrease risk / improve ability to respond to challenges
- Need to empower actors: cannot know centrally all the innovation that is needed
- Need for better cross-government accountabilities

POLICY EVALUATION


- Need for clearly defined purposes to aid evaluation of inherently uncertain and unpredictable activities
- Need for better anticipation of impact / system perspective to enable assessment against 'right now' *and* the longer term



Observatory of
Public Sector Innovation

 [oe.cd/opsi](https://www.oecd.org/opsi)

 [@OPSIgov](https://twitter.com/OPSIgov)

 opsi@oecd.org