INNOVATION PLAYBOOK

YOUR 3-STEP JOURNEY TO PUT THE DECLARATION ON PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION INTO PRACTICE

OECD

OPSI Observatory of Public Sector Innovation

Version 1.0

YOUR JOURNEY

INTRODUCTION

STEP 1

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES YOU WANT TO ADDRESS?

STEP 2

WHERE DO YOU STAND RIGHT NOW?

STEP 3

HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE THE SITUATION?

LET'S CONTINUE THIS JOURNEY TOGETHER!

INTRODUCTION

Since its launch in May 2019, 43 countries have adhered to the Declaration on Public Sector Innovation, a legal instruments containing five principles to inform and enhance the systemic use of innovation in the public sector to achieve policy goals. The OECD's Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI) is working with countries to understand how these high-level principles can inspire action and how public officials at different levels can better access, engage with and draw value from the Declaration.

This Playbook offers an accessible and actionable instrument to translate the Declaration into practical guidance on how its principles can be applied to solve public sector challenges. Specifically intended for top officials and middle-managers, it helps users assess and expand their awareness on innovative challenges, identify opportunities for improvement in public sector systems and translate the innovation principles and commitments into concrete action. The Playbook allows for transversal assessments and interventions across government and is usable as an encompassing approach to organisational strategies to innovation.

By displaying options for action ("plays"), tools and global examples, the Playbook nurtures and supports public sector innovation. Throughout the Playbook's journey, users are connected to existing resources, including through the OPSI Toolkit Navigator and OPSI Case Studies Database.

PLAYBOOK CO-CREATION AND EXPERIMENTATION

The Playbook embodies a set of guidelines in its design: accessible, actionable and user-centred.

The Playbook was developed through a co-creation process with a steering group of 10 countries (Australia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Sweden) and the support of Finland and Denmark as advisory countries.

To ensure the Playbook answers to contextual challenges, the steering group members organised testing sessions with public officials from their countries.

There is no magic solution or silver bullet in innovation. The Playbook doesn't provide ready-made answers to your challenges but rather starting points and options for improving your innovation capacity. For this to work, public officials have to engage critically with the ideas put forward in the Playbook and adapt them to their own daily context.
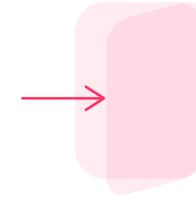
ACCESSIBLE

Uses plain language, relies on visual elements and focused on users' challenges
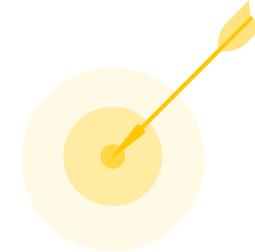
ACTIONABLE

Offers concrete advice and leverage points to take action

USER-CENTRED

Built to respond to users' needs and challenges (empathetic)

APPLY THE PLAYBOOK WITH YOUR TEAMS!

Host a collaborative workshop and apply the Playbook with your teams. Discuss your challenges and come together to find solutions. All the resources you need are freely available below.

We would love to hear from you! Let us know how you applied the Playbook and provide us with feedback to help us keep improving the experience.

Facilitation Guide and MURAL template

Tutorial video on how to apply the Playbook

Send us feedback

HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

This Playbook invites you on a three-step journey: users start by identifying the innovation principle linked to their challenges; then assess their current innovation capacities; and are finally given a range of actions or "plays" to address those the challenges.

This Playbook is not a report to be read page-by-page: start with a single challenge. You can repeat this journey for each challenge you want to solve.

STARTING POINT: WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES YOU WANT TO ADDRESS?

You can use the prompting questions to determine which principle in the Declaration best connects with your challenges.

FRAMING THE SITUATION: WHERE DO YOU STAND RIGHT NOW?

You will be introduced to the relevant principle and, using the assessment questions, can take stock of your current situation and identify the areas for intervention.

LEVERAGING CHANGE: HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE THE SITUATION?

The Playbook gives you a range of actions to adapt and adopt to address your challenge. For each major action suggested, the Playbook also provides an inspiring example of a case and a tool that you can use.

PRINCIPLES OF INNOVATION

1
EMBRACE AND ENHANCE INNOVATION WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

2
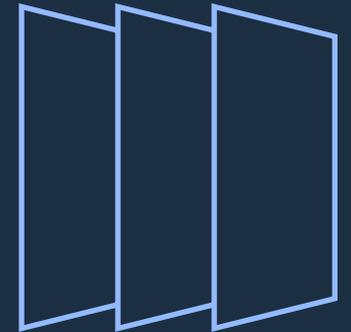ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP ALL PUBLIC SERVANTS TO INNOVATE

3
CULTIVATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND INVOLVE DIFFERENT VOICES

4
SUPPORT EXPLORATION, ITERATION AND TESTING

5
DIFFUSE LESSONS AND SHARE PRACTICES

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES YOU WANT TO ADDRESS?

The following prompting questions showcase a number of key challenges linked to each innovation principle. Use the prompting questions to help you identify the principle best suited to deal with your challenges.

How can we increase or sustain buy-in for innovation?

How can we shift our policymaking, strategies and organisations to be more innovative?

How can we foster a culture that is conducive to innovation?

How can we make the importance and value of innovation more clear?

How can we steward and sustain innovation practices from the management level ?

How can we build and support a diverse and integrated portfolio of innovation?

PRINCIPLE 1

EMBRACE AND ENHANCE INNOVATION WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Identified your challenge on this page?

Start your journey

PRINCIPLE 2

ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP ALL PUBLIC SERVANTS TO INNOVATE

Identified your challenge on this page?

Start your journey

How can we embrace experimental and risk-taking appetite and structures?

How can we embed innovative principles, practices and approaches into our everyday tasks and workflows?

How can we support attitudes, motivations and mindsets that are more favorable to experimentation?

How can we strengthen capacity and skills for a diversity of innovation practices?
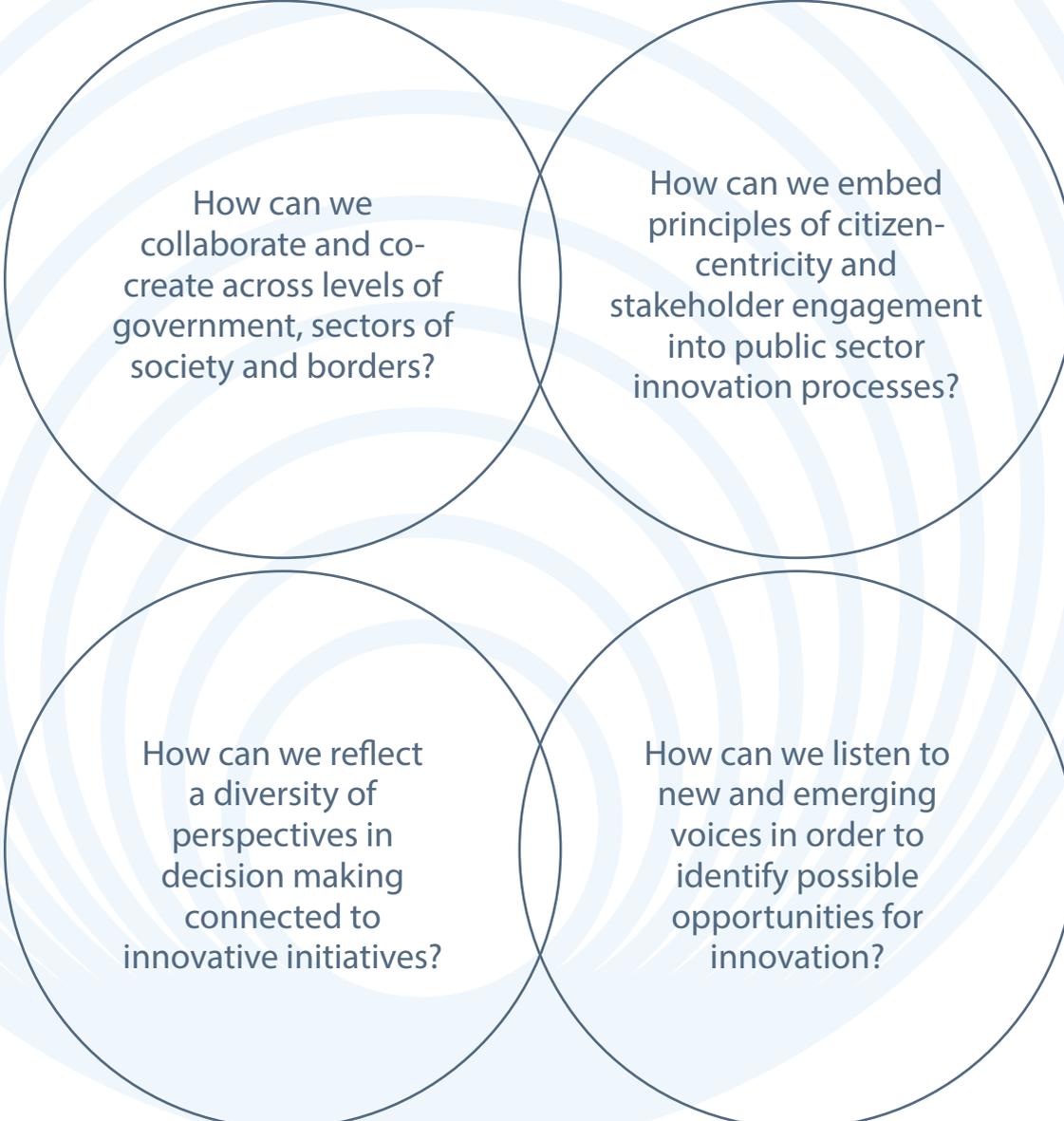
How can we collaborate and co-create across levels of government, sectors of society and borders?

How can we embed principles of citizen-centricity and stakeholder engagement into public sector innovation processes?

How can we reflect a diversity of perspectives in decision making connected to innovative initiatives?

How can we listen to new and emerging voices in order to identify possible opportunities for innovation?

PRINCIPLE 3

CULTIVATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND INVOLVE DIFFERENT VOICES

Identified your challenge on this page?

Start your journey

PRINCIPLE 4

SUPPORT EXPLORATION, ITERATION AND TESTING

Identified your challenge on this page?

Start your journey

How can we create opportunities to test, iterate and explore new solutions and approaches?

How can we integrate and make more explicit experimentation, iteration and agility throughout government?

How can we create and benefit from safe spaces for experimentation?

How can we explore promising possibilities and anticipate upcoming challenges?

How can we better communicate the experiences and results of innovation, making those aspects visible and engaging?

How can we support continuous learning, feedback and iteration?

How can we share and diffuse lessons learned about innovation projects and initiatives across Government?

How can we create new ways for interdepartmental exchanges and transversal collaborations, connecting insights to action in Government?

How can we better understand and measure the value and impact of innovative practices, approaches and outcomes?

PRINCIPLE 5

DIFFUSE LESSONS AND SHARE PRACTICES

Identified your challenge on this page?

Start your journey

FROM CHALLENGES
TO ACTIONS

PRINCIPLE 1
EMBRACE AND ENHANCE INNOVATION WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

THE ADOPTION OF THE FIRST PRINCIPLE ENCOMPASSES FIVE KEY DIMENSIONS:

Recognise that innovation, similar to other core functions, requires investment and support to do well.

Establish or continue to provide stewardship of the innovation system, mindful of the respective responsibilities and functioning of differing levels of government, and appreciative of the differing degrees of centralisation within governments.

Embrace innovation as one of the ways that governments can achieve their goals and do better for the people they serve.

Appreciate the multifaceted nature of innovation and take a systemic portfolio approach to innovation that is tailored to the relevant needs, goals and priorities.

Draw attention to and support the innovation that is already occurring.

EMBRACE AND ENHANCE INNOVATION WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

WHY IS THE FIRST PRINCIPLE SO IMPORTANT?

The first principle – embracing and enhancing innovation in the public sector – highlights the need for leadership to publicly promote and push forward innovative approaches in government.

Innovation is most likely to flourish when explicitly supported. Leaders can encourage and recognise innovation, create appetite for innovation through strategic direction and culture and demonstrate openness to uncertainty and experimentation in the face of sectorial silos, a risk-averse culture or rigid procedures.

Public innovators need more than inspiration: they also need access to regulatory, policy and funding instruments to materialise innovation. Ambitious plans should be coupled with concrete actions to put intentions in practice. Management skills, processes and tools should also be adapted and developed to ignite and sustain innovation.

To unleash the potential of innovation, attention should be paid to the adoption of a portfolio approach. Not all innovation should address immediate needs or simply adapt existing services. Public administrations should also incorporate new ways of tackling and anticipating societal challenges and opportunities, including the use of mission-oriented and anticipatory innovation.

EMBRACE AND ENHANCE INNOVATION WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Use these questions to take stock of your current innovation capacity. As soon as you identify a gap, the Playbook guides you to the respective action you can take to improve your current situation.

Do politicians and public sector leaders explicitly endorse innovation?

We need to improve here!

Are innovation initiatives being translated into action?

We need to improve here!

Is there actual support and stewardship available to design, develop and implement innovative initiatives?

We need to improve here!

Does innovation cut across government sectors and organisations?

We need to improve here!

Are there regulatory, management and funding instruments to support innovation?

We need to improve here!

Has a portfolio approach to innovation been adopted?

We need to improve here!

< Choose another challenge

LEADERSHIP ENDORSEMENT

DO POLITICIANS AND PUBLIC SECTOR LEADERS EXPLICITLY ENDORSE INNOVATION?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O Raise awareness and support to develop a strategic direction for innovation, calling for and/or contributing to the adoption of an innovative vision and mission among leadership.

O Highlight the importance of adopting a whole-of-government strategy for innovation, ensuring innovation is endorsed transversally and synergies are explored across sectors.

O Ensure messages of support from leadership are public and clear – endorsing, communicating on about and supporting innovation within the public sector and beyond.

O Systematically address and tackle barriers to innovation by communicating with decision-makers, bringing innovation issues to the forefront.

O Advocate for the development, assessment and sustainability of innovation strategies and initiatives that can outlive political cycles and changes in leadership.

O Support leaders with evidence, international benchmarks and lessons learned to encourage support and endorsement of innovation.

O Develop strategies that balance pressing, immediate needs with an orientation towards medium- and long-term objectives.

O Promote a systemic definition of innovation – recognising the capacities, interconnections and challenges that arise at the systems' level – and demand management structures and methodologies that recognise and seek to develop innovative capacity across public sector systems.

O Open feedback channels with practitioners to share progress and lessons learned, gathering their inputs to shape and steer objectives, goals and approaches.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Innovative Capacity Framework, developed by OPSI, provides a comprehensive view of how innovation capacity can be understood across public sector systems. You can also use the Practical Guide for Leaders that provides guidelines and tips to create a culture for innovation.

CASE STUDY

The Finnish Government translated and publicly declared its engagement with the principles of the Declaration on Public Sector Innovation, providing a way for public servants and managers to apply the principles to support their daily activities.

INNOVATION INITIATIVES ARE PUT INTO ACTION

ARE INNOVATION INITIATIVES BEING TRANSLATED INTO ACTION?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Translate strategic goals and commitments around innovation into practical initiatives, providing the adequate level of detail about the ways to materialise and accomplish them.

O   Ensure that public servants and organisations have access to tools and processes to translate innovation goals into concrete actions.

O   Provide institutional and methodological support to sustain experimentation and, if potential is proven, implementation of innovation programmes and projects through action-oriented initiatives focused on concrete outcomes.

O   Provide visibility and rewards for innovative initiatives, even small-scale or incremental innovations, that have been effectively implemented.

O   Search for ways to assess and, if viable, enable or ease the replication, adaptation and/or scaling of innovative approaches and solutions that prove their potential in practice.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Design for Policy Toolkit PROMPT is targeted toward policymakers who wish to identify where design can add value to the policy cycle process by enhancing user and citizen participation.

CASE STUDY

The Irish Innovation Strategy: Making Innovation Real – Delivering Today, Shaping Tomorrow, translates the will to innovate into concrete strategic goals and actions. This strategy focuses on citizen-centric innovation, culture of innovation, scale-up innovation and transformative innovation. The strategy is accompanied by concrete supports, toolkits and guidance to assist ministries and teams to incorporate these actions into their operations and strategies.

SUPPORT AND STEWARDSHIP

IS THERE SUPPORT AND STEWARDSHIP AVAILABLE TO DESIGN AND DEVELOP INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Provide a clear mandate for public organisations, civil servants and public managers to engage in innovative approaches.

O   Provide an authorising environment and a system of incentives that enable public organisations and servants to engage, adopt and push forward innovative approaches and initiatives.

O   Consistently resource innovative initiatives including their design, implementation and management – starting with the necessary time for public officials to engage in innovative approaches to tackle their challenges.

O   Promote the strategic role of innovation in public management, ensuring that the performance, sustainability and resilience of innovative initiatives are taken in consideration as critical factors at the management level.

O   Encourage managers to actively promote, support and steer innovation in public organisations, providing access to the resources, skills and attitudes necessary to commit to the mission.

O   Devise and enact ways to steward innovation initiatives through, for instance, the creation of transversal or shared structures enabling the provision of advice, support and stewardship (ex. innovation teams, accessible repositories, data sharing platforms, communities of practice, etc.).

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Improved Innovation Decision Making Toolset was designed as a guide for organisations and individuals seeking to build the capacity of problem solvers to innovate and collaborate more effectively.

CASE STUDY

The NIDO Innovation Lab in Belgium, stimulates and supports public sector innovation by providing guidance and practical expertise to help public servants experiment, address challenges and find innovative and sustainable solutions. NIDO helps to create a space for innovation by providing resources for innovative approaches and connecting innovators through storytelling and networks.

INNOVATION CUTS ACROSS GOVERNMENT SECTORS AND ORGANISATIONS

DOES INNOVATION CUT ACROSS GOVERNMENT SECTORS AND ORGANISATIONS?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Advocate for a common definition and adoption of innovative practices and commitments across government.

O   Ensure alignment, collaboration and/or complementarity across government agendas and innovation strategies.

O   Develop mechanisms and promote tools to ensure alignment among organisations and departments, explore synergies and transfers in knowledge and resources to disseminate and spread innovation across sectors .

O   Promote collaboration across government departments, sectors and silos to work around common challenges and goals.

O   Position innovative teams with transversal and operational roles (ex. acting as pioneers and/or connectors across the government).

O   Prevent innovation from becoming a silo on its own – its responsibility and initiative being insulated or contained into specialised, isolated teams, departments or organisations.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

You can learn about Platform Governance in this short introduction about its ways of working, principles and examples. The Danish Design Center offers an Ecosystem Mapping tool to help you get an overview of the actors and potential participants in such a platform.

CASE STUDY

The Victorian Government in Australia created an online platform to connect public servants around key thematic areas. Public servants can collaborate across departmental and policy silos through networks devoted to five public sector reform priorities in order to learn and improve outcomes. Similarly, Sweden has launched the Samverket Public Sector Innovation Hub, a co-working and co-creation hub breaking boundaries between public institution and co-creating solutions for a sustainable future.

REGULATORY, MANAGEMENT AND FUNDING INSTRUMENTS SUPPORT INNOVATION

ARE THERE REGULATORY, POLICY AND FUNDING INSTRUMENTS TO SUPPORT INNOVATION?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Ensure that management instruments and processes are not preventing, blocking or disregarding the benefits of innovative approaches that proved beneficial.

O   Develop ways to identify and cut red tape where the existing legal infrastructure and normative regulations seem to dissuade or prevent innovation.

O   Promote the adoption of, and sustain the case for policy, administrative and management processes that are flexible, agile and based on distributed processes of decision making – as opposed to solely relying on waterfall, centralised, and top-down management models.

O   Push for the development and application of legal instruments and regulatory mechanisms that allow and incentivise the continuation of innovation initiatives, in order to use the existing political endorsement and dedicated resources to the full potential.

O   As a way to unlock experimental processes, use alternatives approaches to regulatory, policy or funding instruments (ex. using innovative procurement practices or devoting specific budgets for experimentation).

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The EU Quality of Public Administration Toolbox provides resources to improve the quality of public administration, aiming at prosperous, fair and resilient societies. You can also use the Agile Governance Tools that the World Economic Forum offers together with useful information and resources.

CASE STUDY

The French Government Funds for Public Sector Transformation supports projects that improve the quality, efficiency and innovative nature of the public sector. The initiative aims to better equip and support transformation and innovation in government.

PORTFOLIO APPROACH TO INNOVATION

HAS A PORTFOLIO APPROACH TO INNOVATION BEEN ADOPTED?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Support a diversity of innovative approaches in your strategies, ensuring a distribution of resources across the distinct innovation facets.

O   Ensure that innovation is leveraged to work towards complex missions and to anticipate and prepare for future challenges, while enhancing and adapting current solutions.

O   Assess the possibility of adopting, relying on and benefiting from a portfolio of innovation through the combined capacities of public organisations instead of trying to concentrate or acquire all those features in a single organisation.

O   Balance and distribute attention and resources throughout all stages of the innovation life-cycle.

Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Innovation Cookbook, designed by Future by Lund, provides a framework for innovation built on OPSI's Innovation Facet Model.

OPSI   CASE STUDY

Try out OPSI's Portfolio Exploration Tool (PET). This tool provides a snapshot of your organisation's capability to adopt different innovation types. To learn more about innovation portfolios, check out OPSI's innovation brief.

PRINCIPLE 2
ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP ALL PUBLIC SERVANTS TO INNOVATE

THE ADOPTION OF THE SECOND PRINCIPLE ENCOMPASSES FIVE KEY DIMENSIONS:

Ensure support structures, processes and working conditions that more easily allow public servants to innovate, and continuously reassess established routines that may be unnecessarily hindering innovation.

Recognise that innovation requires and involves a diverse range of skills, capabilities and motivation.

Acknowledge the advantages that a culture of openness, of learning from errors and of collaboration across silos and sectors offers to the practice of innovation.

Provide clarity about responsibilities for innovation, so that everyone knows how they can participate or contribute.

Give permission to public sector organisations and public servants to take appropriate risks and to explore and engage with new ideas, technology and ways of working as part of their core business.

ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP ALL PUBLIC SERVANTS TO INNOVATE

WHY IS THE SECOND PRINCIPLE SO IMPORTANT?

Societies are facing complex challenges that require new ways of thinking and working. Innovation offers public servants and managers the possibility to address these complex challenges in new ways. Without innovation, a gap between public administration capabilities and the pressing needs of society is likely to appear. The second principle of the Declaration points to the importance of encouraging innovation and equipping all public servants with the tools, capacities and contexts for innovation.

Encouraging and supporting innovation across all levels of government and engaging public servants and managers in these processes comes with substantial opportunities. For example, to counter risk-aversion and fear of failure, safe spaces to experiment and an authorising environment for innovation can be developed and sustained. The creation of incentives and stimuli for innovation at the systems, organisational and individual levels are not only important for opening paths to action, but also to reward those public officials and teams who push forward innovative approaches.
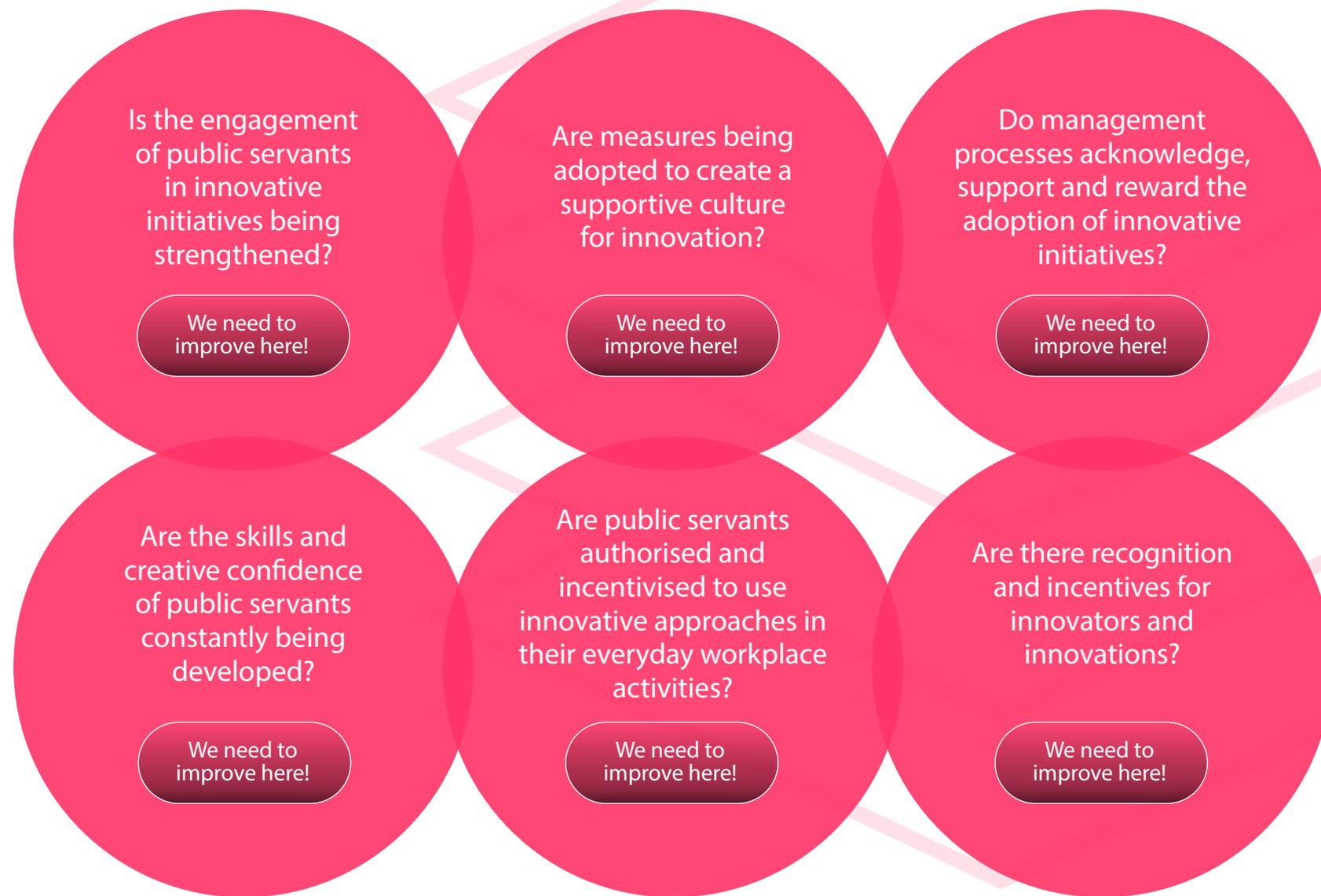
Support needs to go beyond merely creating permission and purpose for innovation: individuals and organisations must be empowered with the time, capacity and skills needed to support support citizen-centred and innovative public governance.

PRINCIPLE 2
ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP ALL PUBLIC SERVANTS TO INNOVATE

Use these questions to take stock of your current innovation capacity. As soon as you identify a gap, the Playbook guides you to the respective action you can take to improve your current situation.

Is the engagement of public servants in innovative initiatives being strengthened?

We need to improve here!

Are measures being adopted to create a supportive culture for innovation?

We need to improve here!

Do management processes acknowledge, support and reward the adoption of innovative initiatives?

We need to improve here!

Are the skills and creative confidence of public servants constantly being developed?

We need to improve here!

Are public servants authorised and incentivised to use innovative approaches in their everyday workplace activities?

We need to improve here!

Are there recognition and incentives for innovators and innovations?

We need to improve here!

< Choose another challenge

STRENGTHENING ENGAGEMENT AMONG PUBLIC OFFICIALS

IS THE ENGAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SERVANTS IN INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES BEING STRENGTHENED?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O Value the participation and responsibility of public servants in the definition of challenges, development of processes and assessment of outcomes from innovative initiatives.

O Encourage public servants to be part of the innovation process – to share ideas, participate and take ownership of innovation and change.

O Promote the adoption of guidelines, methodologies and techniques that support the engagement and collaboration of public servants in innovative initiatives.

O Harvest and address the needs and concerns of all public servants – not only already committed "innovators" – about their engagement in innovative initiatives.

O Encourage peer-exchange between public servants and managers presently participating in innovative initiatives and those who are new or curious about innovation.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The toolkit Liberating Structures is intended to complement conventional practices for organisational design and strategy design. These tools are designed to be used in an inclusive collaborative setting.

CASE STUDY

The Central Government Innovation Community (RIC) in the Netherlands works to share knowledge and best practices of using innovation within the national government. The community, which has grown from two to twelve ministries, distributes knowledge and provides a platform for sharing and facilitating engagement.

STIMULATE A SUPPORTIVE CULTURE OF INNOVATION

ARE MEASURES BEING ADOPTED TO CREATE A SUPPORTIVE CULTURE OF INNOVATION?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Proactively and explicitly prioritise cultural transformation at a strategic and practical level across public sector systems, organisations and teams.

O   Push for a public sector culture that not only tolerates, but also actively encourages public servants to develop and implement innovative approaches – proactively endorsing innovation as a fundamental value of the public service.

O   Sustain and encourage the sharing of lessons learned from positive and negative innovation experiences as a way to support replication, re-use good practices and avoid repeating errors.

O   Allow and value public servants that take on the role of innovation enthusiasts, influencers and practitioners.

O   Tolerate and openly discuss the need for risk taking and open mind-sets among public servants.

O   Highlight the importance of learning from initiatives that do not go as planned; embedding and sharing those lessons learned rather than seeing them simply as failures.

O   Encourage mutual support among public organisations to exchange experiences and resources and circulate models and tools around the development of innovative initiatives, their journeys, difficulties and outcomes.

O   Promote an organisational culture that cares about the human experience of public managers and servants.

> <   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

Culture Map is a tool that organisations can use to assess, map and transform their organisational culture. This tool is intended as a group activity to guide conversations around outcomes, behaviors and enablers/blockers to the promotion of an innovation culture.

CASE STUDY

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) introduced "Fail Fridays" where teams not only share their successes, but also embrace their failures and doubts. Beyond knowledge sharing and learning, these simple activities "institutionalise risk-taking" and help to encourage innovative skills and attitudes among public servants. In the Netherlands, the Institute for Brilliant Failures (IvBM) highlights the importance of learning from failure, embracing risk-taking activities and showcasing those experiences to other public servants.

EMBED INNOVATIVE APPROACHES INTO MANAGEMENT

DO MANAGEMENT PROCESSES ACKNOWLEDGE, SUPPORT AND REWARD THE ADOPTION OF INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Develop processes and methodologies that are supportive of innovation at the management level, namely in planning, budgeting and/or human resources management.

O   Protect, nurture and reward innovative activities among public servants and managers, including in the definition of goals and the assessment and evaluation of activities.

O   Ensure that management instruments and processes are not preventing, blocking or disregarding the benefits of innovative approaches. Highlight administrative bottlenecks and red tape in your organisations and encourage change.

O   Enable alternative ways of exploring and working in the public sector, including promoting agile, distributed and flexible arrangements in administrative processes and management methods.

O   Ensure that innovation projects can leverage administrative processes and management models that support experimental and collaborative approaches, avoiding the centralised, top-down and pre-built processes that may inhibit or contradict their development.

O   Ensure that there are professional development opportunities for public servants to develop the skills, knowledge and capacity to design and implement innovative approaches.

<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Board of Innovation – Innovation Tools was developed by transforming leading innovation management theory into hands-on, easy-to-use, actionable innovation tools.

CASE STUDY

The Government of Canada's Experimentation Direction recommends that senior managers (deputy heads) dedicate a percentage of their funds to experimentation. Through this initative, organisational expectations are created and, when tied to reporting requirements, foster a culture of continual experimentation and innovation to develop new approaches.

HOW TO IMPROVE

SKILLS AND CREATIVE CONFIDENCE

ARE THE SKILLS AND CREATIVE CONFIDENCE OF PUBLIC SERVANTS CONSTANTLY BEING DEVELOPED?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Value innovative skills while recruiting, retaining and promoting talent in public organisations and workplaces.

O   Ensure that public servants have the opportunity to get information and practically engage with the knowledge, skills and training required to experiment, innovate and test new approaches.

O   Design training curriculums and pedagogical approaches that take into consideration the skills necessary to ignite and sustain innovation.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Playbook for Innovation Learning supports innovation practitioners who want to spread innovation skills, methods and tools or build their innovation capacity.

OPSI   CASE STUDY

For public sector innovation to be unlocked at scale, the skills and attitudes of public servants have to be nurtured and built. OPSI has developed the Innovation Skills Model, highlighting six core skills for public sector innovation: iteration, data literacy, user centricity, curiosity, storytelling and insurgency. Adapted to meet today's public policy challenges, this model can be used to gain awareness of the situation and increase the public sector capacity levels.

HOW TO IMPROVE
INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN PUBLIC SECTOR WORKPLACES

ARE PUBLIC SERVANTS AUTHORISED AND INCENTIVISED TO USE INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN THEIR EVERYDAY WORKPLACE ACTIVITIES?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Ensure that innovative approaches, methods and tools are embedded as part of the regular workplace dynamics and processes rather than being the exception.

O   Acknowledge that out-of-the-box initiatives need time to not only be conceived, but also to be implemented and produce results.

O   Explore and promote innovative ways to sustain team autonomy, individual responsibilities and distributed leadership in workplaces beyond command and centralised control.

O   Promote an organisational culture that cares about the human experience of public managers and servants, valuing the personal and collective experiences and mindsets beyond pure expertise and outputs.

O   Ensure that innovative initiatives have adequate resources and flexibility to allow for experimentation, implementation and learning.

O   Provide visibility and access to a range of methods and tools, together with guidance and a mandate, to pursue innovative initiatives.

O   Identify cases that adopt innovative approaches to workplace arrangements and cultures that are suitable to be replicated and adapted in other organisational contexts.

[<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself]

TOOLKIT

Hyper Island Toolbox is a collection of methods and activities for creative collaboration and realising the potential of teams or organisations.

CASE STUDY

The Government of Portugal's "right to challenge" allows public servants or managers that have identified a gap or problem in public administration to promote the establishment of an experimental project to develop an innovative solution. The "right to challenge" mechanism is the temporary suspension of existing legal regimes using a specific legal instrument for this purpose for the duration of the project. This option ensures that public servants have the space to act and develop innovative approaches to solve the procedural, service and policy barriers they encounter.

RECOGNITION AND INCENTIVES

ARE THERE RECOGNITION AND INCENTIVES FOR INNOVATORS AND INNOVATIONS?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Acknowledge that innovative initiatives – and innovators themselves – can generate positive impact and drive innovation.

O   Ensure that innovative attitudes, practices and skills are taken into consideration in evaluations and performance frameworks at the individual and organisational level.

O   Provide visibility to innovative solutions and innovators to help legitimise, disseminate and potentially scale such interventions.

O   Acknowledge the adoption of and participation in innovative initiatives as a dimension of public service functions, integrating innovation in the critical values, principles and skills of government officials.

<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

Explore the adoption of gamification – e.g. "serious games" – to provide rewards and recognition to public servants and teams regarding innovation in public organisations.

OPSI   CASE STUDY

Awards, a popular way to celebrate innovation, can provide well-deserved recognition for innovative teams and projects: they're great for surfacing examples and inspiring others. However, an award alone is not enough. OPSI outlined existing initiatives and discussed the hype around awards for public sector innovation – pointing both to opportunities and fragilities.

CULTIVATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND INVOLVE DIFFERENT VOICES

THE ADOPTION OF THE THIRD PRINCIPLE ENCOMPASSES FIVE KEY DIMENSIONS:

Listen for new and emerging voices to help notice weak signals that things might be changing, which can help identify an emerging need or opportunity for innovation.

Look for opportunities to partner with other countries on cross-border challenges requiring innovative approaches.

Connect different actors (public, private, not-for-profit, and individual) in ways that allow public sector organisations to partner, collaborate and co-create new approaches or solutions to problems.

Develop a spectrum of engagement and co-creation practices, and use different forms of it, to ensure that innovation efforts are informed by lived experience and relevant expertise.

Create partnerships and link into existing networks of exchange in, out and across the innovation system to increase the capacity to innovate.

CULTIVATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND INVOLVE DIFFERENT VOICES

WHY IS THE THIRD PRINCIPLE SO IMPORTANT?

Achieving better public outcomes through innovation can be seriously compromised when governments are insulated from larger innovation ecosystems and when they try to address complex challenges alone. The third principle highlights the importance of involving diverse partnerships and voices in public governance.

For innovation to bring about public value, it must be centered on the needs and expectations of citizens, companies and other users. The adoption of this user-centered, outside-in perspective is important when defining priorities, designing processes and assessing the impact of public innovation. This emphasis on public value should be complemented by an understanding of political priorities, leadership and strategic directions that influence innovative practice. For challenges that transcend national boundaries, cross-border partnerships and collaborations are critical, including searching for new ways to engage and build shared initiatives among countries.

Collaboration across public sector boundaries and encompassing relevant stakeholders from civil society, communities of entrepreneurs, scientific systems, and other domains, can assume plenty of formats that promote co-creation and sustainable innovation. Transparency and accountability, the presentation of tangible results and a responsive follow-up on initiatives are important for creating sustainability and building trust among partners.

Special attention should be paid to emerging voices and perspectives that are often under-represented, ensuring that signals from these communities can be taken into consideration in policy and service design. With that in mind, public administration should explicitly lower the barriers to engaging with these perspectives as a way to improve the design, development and use of both policies and services.

CULTIVATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND INVOLVE DIFFERENT VOICES

Use these questions to take stock of your current innovation capacity. As soon as you identify a gap, the Playbook guides you to the respective action you can take to improve your current situation.

Are relevant stakeholders of innovative initiatives on board?

We need to improve here!

Are transparent partnerships with actors outside Government being adopted and supported?

We need to improve here!

Are multiple perspectives and different knowledge domains being acknowledged?

We need to improve here!

Are common understandings being built and nurtured among partners?

We need to improve here!

Are innovation ecosystems being supported, consulted and involved?

We need to improve here!

Are diverse and emergent voices being heard?

We need to improve here!

Are innovative initiatives being developed not just for the users, but also with the users?

We need to improve here!

< Choose another challenge

RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS ARE ON BOARD

ARE RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS OF INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES ON BOARD?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Ensure that relevant stakeholders from government departments and/or across sectors and society are engaged in the process of innovation.

O   Seek to understand the diversity of viewpoints around an issue and ensure engagement around innovative initiatives is accessible to all participants.

O   Pay attention to, participate in and support networks, partnerships and communities involving relevant stakeholders around concrete goals to gather and share inputs, ideas and understand the value of new approaches.

O   Ensure that collaborations among stakeholders are open (including in terms of information sharing), have a clear purpose, converge to generate outcomes and are able to follow-up on progress.

O   Showcase and provide access to stakeholder participation methods and techniques, expanding the range of choice on the ways engagement can be adapted and adopted in different organisational contexts and depending on the existing purposes.

<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Partnerships Analysis Tool is designed to help organisations develop a clearer understanding of the range of purposes of collaborations, reflecting on existing partnerships and focusing on ways to strengthen new partnerships.

CASE STUDY

The Government of Slovenia developed the Policy Jam to ensure that the perspectives of diverse stakeholders are incorporated in the design of public services and policies. Using interactive workshops with a comprehensive approach to engaging stakeholders on a given issue, Policy Jams establish a multi-stakeholder platform to develop better policies and solutions.

HOW TO IMPROVE
TRANSPARENT PARTNERSHIPS

ARE TRANSPARENT PARTNERSHIPS ADOPTED AND SUPPORTED?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Support the exploration and adoption of transparent and reliable approaches to procurement, tendering, ecosystem development and partnership building to address societal challenges involving private sector partners and partners outside of government.

O   Adopt guidelines that explicitly address the need for openness, integrity, transparency and accountability in relationships.

O   Build awareness around conflicting interests and ensure public discussions are held to address this subject.

O   Ensure that the signals, expectations and proposals that emerge are acknowledged and discussed in a transparent and open manner while designing and developing partnership regulation and supports.

O   Develop and adopt frameworks, guidelines and checklists which deal with relationships with partners outside of government, providing clarity, credibility and opportunities for public managers and servants to create and sustain partnerships.

TOOLKIT

The P.ACT: Partnership Co-Design Toolkit is targeted at entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs, brokers, facilitators and accelerators. who are initiating value chain partnerships and partnerships where organisations seek to integrate existing or create new value chains.

CASE STUDY

Accelerate Estonia is a testbed to find solutions to complex problems through collaboration between start-ups and public organisations. By bringing together entrepreneurs and public sector managers, these pilot projects can be used to test radical solutions and gather learnings to solve society's challenges.

ACKNOWLEDGE MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES AND DIFFERENT KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS

ARE MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES AND DIFFERENT KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS BEING ACKNOWLEDGED?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Actively listen to citizens with different profiles relevant to your innovation projects in order to understand their needs and expectations, pushing for high-levels of citizen-centricity and citizen feedback loops.

O   Back and contribute to events, processes and forums that rely on openness and co-creation to engage multiple actors and acknowledge their public sector innovation perspectives.

O   Acknowledge the expertise and perspective of public servants from different levels and integrate their knowledge and commitment into the development of innovations.

O   Appeal to and integrate perspectives and inputs from professionals, experts and scientists from different domains into the development of innovative initiatives.

O   Ensure that innovative initiatives and projects gather an adequate and balanced combination of expertise and perspectives, ideally embedding the diversity of administrative and knowledge domains from the start.

O   Engage across generations, including with youth, and explore intergenerational impacts to ensure the views and implications on the future are considered.

TOOLKIT

The SISCODE Toolbox for Co-creation Journeys improves the co-creation processes that involves multiple actors and stakeholders in the ideation, implementation and assessment of product services, policies and systems.

CASE STUDY

USE-IT! is a whole of neighborhood approach to addressing urban poverty in West Birmingham and Smethwick, United Kingdom. The initiative actively incorporates the opinions of community partners and builds bridges between the public sector, private sector and civil society in order to unlock local assets and produce change.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

BUILDING COMMON UNDERSTANDINGS

ARE COMMON UNDERSTANDINGS BEING BUILT AND NURTURED AMONG PARTNERS?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Develop and sustain spaces to build a common understanding among stakeholders around challenges, key goals, and the development and implementation of innovations by using suitable tools and platforms.

O   Support collaboration on the go by providing occasions to align expectations and ambitions amongst stakeholders during a project or initiative, avoiding unilateral locking-in to predefined goals.

O   Share information, ensure transparency and accountability and enable cooperation among stakeholders in the design, implementation and assessment of innovations.

⟨   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Collective Intelligence Design Playbook introduces activities to orchestrate collaborations with diverse groups of people and helps users leverage data and technology to achieve their goals.

CASE STUDY

Etorkizuna Eraikiz, or Building the Future, is an inequality reducing project of the Gipuzkoa Regional Government, Spain. Through anticipatory innovation governance approaches, the strategy aims to build collaborative governance models, including networks and partnerships to commonly define problems and develop solutions.

WORK TOGETHER WITH THE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

ARE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS BEING SUPPORTED, CONSULTED AND INVOLVED?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Participate and, if necessary, create channels and platforms with innovation ecosystem stakeholders (civil society, community of entrepreneurs and scientific community etc.) to share insights and discuss societal challenges.

O   Support and promote initiatives that gather innovation ecosystem partners to define concrete commitments and pursue common engagements for the improvement of public policies and services.

O   Expand your sensitivity and responsiveness to the needs, expectations and claims – including obstacles to be removed, opportunities to be explored and the role of governments in cultivating innovation – that originate from innovation ecosystems by using tools and opening channels to receive signals and messages.

O   Enable the definition and execution of missions to tackle society's grand challenges based on the aspirations, contributions and commitments from innovation ecosystems partners.

O   Ensure the continuous reinforcement of trust among partners, giving visibility to collaborations, ensuring adequate information flows and proving follow-up to all partners involved.

<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

Platform Design Toolkit aims to help users build transformative, ecosystem based, platform models instead of a traditional product or service design approaches.

CASE STUDY

The Korean Public Procurement Service designed Venture Nara to enable start-ups and ventures – that have hitherto struggled to meet the requirements to participate in procurement systems – to have access to a platform to promote their products to public organisations. This helps build inroads into the procurement market and display their contribution to addressing challenges and procurement needs.

DIVERSE AND EMERGENT VOICES ARE HEARD

ARE DIVERSE AND EMERGENT VOICES BEING HEARD?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O Adopt concrete measures and explicit messages to ensure that diverse and emergent voices are taken into account in policy and service design and implementation.

O Pay attention to tools, frameworks and practices that can improve the diversity, inclusion and accessibility among the public sector innovation initiatives you are conducting.

O Acknowledge bottom-up processes that stakeholders promote around policies and services and view these as opportunities to engage with diverse points of view and gather learnings on innovation processes.

O Explore ways to counteract the exclusive adoption of rigid arrangements, overly formalised requirements and hierarchical and centralised decision-making processes – which could dissuade or prevent diverse and emergent voices from being articulated and included in innovation processes.

O Adopt methods, tools and techniques that are sensitive to multiple standpoints, empathetic to possible doubts and biases and aware of the contrasting consequences a given innovation may have – including actors that do not benefit from the innovation.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

For an inclusive design of initiatives, attention should be paid to the full range of human diversity in terms of ability, language, income, culture, gender, age and other characteristics. The Inclusive Design Cards provide basic tools for that purpose. You can also use the APS Framework for Engagement and Participation to ignite and promote these processes.

CASE STUDY

Mexico City collaboratively developed a constitution through a crowdsourcing exercise. The democratic experiment engaged citizens, built trust and included diverse perspectives throughout the entire constitutional development process. This exercise resulted in a forward-thinking constitution with progressive social policy and human rights at its centre.

NOT JUST FOR THE USERS, BUT WITH THE USERS

ARE INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES BEING DEVELOPED NOT JUST FOR THE USERS, BUT ALSO WITH THE USERS?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Ensure that your processes of change are centered around users, giving them opportunities to share their needs and expectations about innovation priorities related to policies and services.

O   Engage citizens and other users, including public servants, throughout the entire policy or service design and implementation process and provide them with timely feedback.

O   Support and adopt alternative engagement formats to ensure users are invited to join, participate inclusively and remain informed of decisions and results.

O   Use the contributions and participation of users to shape decision-making – not just to gather evidence and discuss.

O   Acknowledge contributions and provide feedback to users and stakeholders involved in the innovation processes, including experiments, testbeds and pilots.

O   Share consolidated examples, tools and standardised guidelines for user engagement to be adopted by public organisations.

TOOLKIT

The IDEO Design Kit Field Guide to Human-Centered Design is a downloadable resource and online guidance tool to help users navigate the different phases of a human-centered design process.

CASE STUDY

The National Department of Planning in Colombia, developed a Plain Language (Lenguaje Claro) programme to more simply and straightforwardly communicate services, rules and procedures to citizens. The programme adopted a methodology that brings together public servants and citizens to improve the communication of public information. solutions and gather learnings to solve society's challenges.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

SUPPORT EXPLORATION, ITERATION AND TESTING

THE ADOPTION OF THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE ENCOMPASSES FOUR KEY DIMENSIONS:

Support innovation that is about clear and known priorities and problems, and allow for exploratory innovation where it may not be clear what the end result will be.

Ensure exploration, iteration and testing across a portfolio, at both the level of the public sector as a whole, and at the level of individual ministries and organisations.

Recognise and capture the learning that comes from exploration, and appreciate that often experimenting and innovating may not only be about fixing, but also learning.

Recognise the benefits that can come from enabling experimentation in core systems (such as the use of digital technologies, budgeting, risk management and reporting) and explore whether and how they can be achieved.

PRINCIPLE 4
SUPPORT EXPLORATION, ITERATION AND TESTING

WHY IS THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE SO IMPORTANT?

Evidence-based decision-making processes acknowledge that governments should make decisions that are mindful of, and act upon the complexity and change that characterises our societies. A responsive public administration uses that knowledge to ensure constant improvements in its processes and services, especially when ready-made solutions are limited or not available or when facing unknown risks, emerging challenges and uncertainties about the future. For that reason, the fourth principle highlights the need for governments to commit to support exploration, iteration and testing.

Experimentation plays a major role in ensuring governments are anticipating and responding to citizens needs and improving public responses to current and future societal demands. By leveraging experimentation, governments can obtain evidence about the potential of new solutions before scaling them in real-world contexts.

However, for experimentation to be embedded in public organisations and effectively practiced, a tolerant environment that incentivises experimentation as well as favourable regulatory and policy frameworks to address emerging and complex issues need to be in place. Moreover, governments should explicitly promote experiments that bring in diverse perspectives including those of citizens, civil society and other relevant ecosystem partners, thus ensuring that open, collaborative and sustainable solutions are built and adopted.

SUPPORT EXPLORATION, ITERATION AND TESTING

Use these questions to take stock of your current innovation capacity. As soon as you identify a gap, the Playbook guides you to the respective action you can take to improve your current situation.

Are sandboxes and testbeds being used to unlock innovative initiatives?

We need to improve here!

Are safe spaces being used to test, learn and share lessons from experimentation?

We need to improve here!

Are experimentation, testing and iteration being leveraged in innovative initiatives?

We need to improve here!

Does the public service leverage future-fit methodologies?

We need to improve here!

< Choose another challenge

HOW TO IMPROVE
SANDBOXES AND TESTBEDS

ARE SANDBOXES AND TESTBEDS BEING USED TO UNLOCK INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Put in place initiatives – such as sandboxes and testbeds – that allow for safer testing environments.

O   Highlight the benefits of sandboxes and testbeds in terms of exploring potential gains under controlled environment (and costs), updating the design and performance of public services and policies and reducing the development and implementation risks of innovative solutions.

O   When the existing solutions seem to dissuade or prevent the experimentation, use alternative ways to cut through red tape, including adopting innovative procurement practices and budgets specifically for experimentation purposes.

O   Adopt sandboxes and testbeds to test innovative approaches, using positive results to make the case for their adoption and profiting from lessons learned to improve next attempts.

<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Service Sandbox is a visual, playful, co-creation tool that allows individuals to explore digital services in a tangible and interactive way. Therein, a sandbox can be used to test an existing service or create new ones.

CASE STUDY

The European Commission's Interoperability Test Bed provides a space to test digital services provided to citizens, businesses and public administrations. By ensuring that such services are interoperable, the test bed accelerates the promotion of standards in information flows through open, shareable and adaptable experimentation tools with a cross-border nature. The test bed is also featured in the "Achieving Cross Border Government Innovation" report, developed by the OECD, OPSI and the Mohamed Bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation (MBRCGI).

SAFE SPACES FOR EXPERIMENTATION

ARE SAFE SPACES BEING USED TO TEST, LEARN AND SHARE LESSONS FROM EXPERIMENTATION?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Create and support innovation labs, units, teams and/or programmes that can act as a safe space for risk-taking, testing and learning from experiments, even when they do not go as planned.

O   Provide visibility and incentivise the use of safe spaces among public organisations and servants

O   Use innovation labs, units and teams to sustain agile and tangible ways to ignite public sector interest for experimentation, risk-taking and innovative solutions at a controlled scale.

O   Use innovation labs, units or teams as platforms to showcase how experimentation works in practice and obtain concrete examples to highlight.

O   Ensure that the methodologies and solutions, developed and tested in safe spaces and through experimental projects, can be learned from, shared and replicated in other public sector contexts.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Validation Guide contains guidance and tools, including an Assumption Mapper and Experimentation Execution Card for designing and establishing experiments to test ideas and products in iterative ways.

CASE STUDY

The Danish Frikommuneforsøg, or Free Municipality Experiments, exempts selected municipalities from state regulations, allowing them the opportunity to freely experiment, test new solutions and implement new approaches. Learn more about it in the Public Sector Innovation Scan of Denmark.

HOW TO IMPROVE
EXPERIMENT, TEST AND ITERATE

ARE EXPERIMENTATION, TESTING AND ITERATION BEING LEVERAGED IN INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Sustain the adoption of experimentation, using sandboxes and testbeds, as a means to navigate new, complex and uncertain circumstances – especially when the existing regulatory mechanisms, administrative guidelines or development processes are unable to provide clear instructions or definitive answers.

O   Prioritise and support the adoption of experimentation of innovative projects, including opportunities to conduct research on users' needs and developing prototypes and/or pilots.

O   Gather and provide access to tools and techniques that allow public organisations and servants to adopt experimental approaches and adapt or replicate those experiments.

O   Test and gather inputs before implementing solutions, policies or services as a way to understand value, learn from errors and demonstrate results.

O   Ensure that lessons learned, results and solutions originating from experiments are retained, curated and made accessible to the public sector – enabling them to improve, iterate and scale.

O   Demonstrate the contributions of experiments to support a risk-taking culture, improve user-centricity and enhance efficiency of innovations being tested.

TOOLKIT

The Design Method Toolkit is a collection of cards describing methods for planning and executing design research, ideation, experimentation and creation within short iterations (i.e. sprints).

CASE STUDY

Iceland's Digital Agency experiments, tests and iterates the production of digital services with institutions and users. The process values user experience and applies agile work phases and iteration to work towards the best possible results.

<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

FIT FOR THE FUTURE

DOES THE PUBLIC SERVICE LEVERAGE FUTURE-PROOFING METHODOLOGIES?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Promote and adopt approaches that ensure the resilience, proactiveness and prospective of public organisations.

O   Leverage anticipatory innovation, strategic foresight and other future-oriented methodologies to build a future-fit public administration.

O   Disseminate the skills and tools required for public organisations and servants to monitor weak signals, identify trends and adopt anticipatory approaches towards the future.

O   Highlight the importance for public servants and managers to be advocates of responsible and sustainable approaches to innovation.

<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

Living Futures: Scenario Kit is a design tool for understanding, discussing and shaping the future. To ignite first contact with this approach, you can also use the Anticipatory Innovation Starter Kit, developed by LabX through the OPSI incubator programme. The Colombian Department of Public Function also offers a toolkit to promote futures thinking to public servants.

CASE STUDY

Anticipatory Innovation Governance (AIG) enables governments to actively explore possibilities, experiment and continuously learn as part of a broader governance system. By leveraging approaches such as strategic foresight, AIG can help governments create evidence about the future to make decisions in the present. Check out recent examples from Slovenia: Scenarios for Talent Management and Ireland: Towards a Strategic Foresight System.

DIFFUSE LESSONS AND SHARE PRACTICES

THE ADOPTION OF THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE ENCOMPASSES FOUR KEY DIMENSIONS:

Establish good evaluation practices in order to learn, to steer the innovation process and to assess the value of the innovation that occurs.

Systematically share learning arising from innovation activities (even if the innovation "failed to deliver as expected").

Develop and sustain feedback loops that capture feedback from citizens and frontline staff to aid continuous learning.

Foster networking and peer learning to help public servants learn and borrow from each other.

DIFFUSE LESSONS AND SHARE PRACTICES

WHY IS THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE SO IMPORTANT?

The fifth principle highlights the importance of diffusing lessons and sharing practices. While governments already share knowledge, innovation requires a more systematic approach, not just sporadic occasions of communication. Sharing and diffusing should cover more than just communicating "best practices" and include innovations that didn't meet initial expectations or were dropped.

Fostering networking among public servants ensures the dissemination of learnings at larger scale, ideally in real-time. Besides the circulation of knowledge, networks can promote horizontal relationships and dialogue among peers, both of which are essential to create a community built on trust. Opening these grassroots connections helps to create a favourable environment for innovation which generates spillovers and provides a platform for scaling successful solutions.

The adoption of measurement and evaluation methods and procedures can help to assess and improve innovations. Besides supporting a more robust assessment of the performance of services and policies, these processes are suited to capture the feedback of users and staff alike, thus enabling continuous learning and defining sustainable improvements for the solutions at hand. Especially when these processes are designed and suited to specific contexts, they can help to improve innovative practices and devise better ways to achieve positive impact in the public sector and on society.

DIFFUSE LESSONS AND SHARE PRACTICES

Use these questions to take stock of your current innovation capacity. As soon as you identify a gap, the Playbook guides you to the respective action you can take to improve your current situation.

Are stories about innovations being told?

We need to improve here!

Is interdepartmental collaboration and are transversal assignments being supported?

We need to improve here!

Is there institutional memory for learnings and failures?

We need to improve here!

Are the benefits of innovation being demonstrated?

We need to improve here!

Are there networks for innovation in the public sector?

We need to improve here!

Are the benefits of innovation being demonstrated and learnings being shared?

We need to improve here!

Are evaluation and measurement embedded from the start?

We need to improve here!

< Choose another challenge

STORYTELLING AND TAILORED COMMUNICATION ABOUT INNOVATION

ARE STORIES ABOUT INNOVATIONS BEING TOLD?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O Understand the results and value innovation can bring to users, beneficiaries and/or stakeholders.

O Make the experiences, results and value brought by innovation visible to citizens and public officials.

O Share clear messages about innovative practices and commitments, openly communicating with relevant audiences about activities and results.

O Tell stories about innovation in an understandable way, using alternative storytelling, data visualisation and creative communication approaches.

O Organise events and initiatives to openly discuss experiences, celebrate accomplishments and reach new audiences.

O Focus on key lessons learned and value created – bearing in mind that to communicate effectively means avoiding information overload.

O Pay attention to the "little stories" of innovation – not just the "star innovators" or known heroes – and provide palpable examples and acknowledge the everyday innovative efforts of public servants.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The User Experience Design Services – Scenes provides a tool and method for efficiently, collaboratively and iteratively creating visual stories about products and services.

CASE STUDY

The United Nations Public Service Innovation Hub provides an online platform to share stories about innovation projects around the world. In particular, the platform highlights projects of public service award winners, including projects from Thailand, Chad, Ghana and beyond. By sharing and disseminating ideas to global audiences, the platform makes the possibilities and potential of innovation projects visible.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION AND TRANSVERSAL ASSIGNMENTS

IS INTERDEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION AND ARE TRANSVERSAL ASSIGNMENTS BEING SUPPORTED?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Support interdepartmental collaboration and mutual trust among sectors and departments to encourage knowledge, talent and resource sharing.

O   Make the mandate, vision and legitimacy of collaborations explicit, including issuing clear messages and establishing the required legal and managerial arrangements.

O   Use flexible workgroups to tackle transversal challenges and wicked problems or provide additional or specialised support on existing projects and teams, while staying aware that new ways to work together require commonly defined purposes, commitments, distribution of work and sharing of knowledge and resources.

O   Develop transversal assignments or missions that bring together distinct departments and areas, keeping in mind that such initiatives should move beyond friendly conversations and work towards practical outcomes.

O   Explore and develop channels, platforms and regulations that enable knowledge sharing and pooling resources amongst departments, ensuring that sustainability remains a priority and the conditions of access are clarified.

<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

Mission-oriented innovation sustain transversal assignments that bring together distinct departments and areas to tackle society's grand challenges. The OECD's Mission Action Lab advances knowledge, practice and experience on mission-oriented innovation and strengthen cross-sectoral and cross-disciplinary collaboration in countries. To learn how to launch and drive missions, check out the Mission Playbook.

CASE STUDY

As a way to advance high priority political projects, the German Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs created the Flexi-Team, a support team for all divisions of the Ministry currently undergoing staff shortages. In doing so, the Flexi-Team is able to rapidly respond to human resource needs, support the handover of tasks and jobs, accompany knowledge transfer and serve as a role model for future-oriented working environments based on flexible and agile procedures.

EXERCISE THE INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

IS THERE INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY FOR LEARNINGS AND FAILURES?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Document your innovative initiatives to inform future projects, avoid repeating or multiplying previous issues and build on lessons learned.

O   Leverage the information and knowledge available – while embarking on innovation initiatives – and learn from other public organisations and teams who have dealt with similar challenges.

O   Establish platforms and repositories for public organisations and public officials to gather and share experiences and lessons in an easily accessible format for users.

O   Promote and value a culture of generating, curating and sharing lessons learned among public servants and managers.

O   Use meetings and events as opportunities to build or activate institutional memory, engage large audiences and share experiences, information and knowledge.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

Take a look on the Creative Bureaucracy Content Library, which provides a comprehensive collection of videos, sharing examples and curates lessons learned to inspire change in multiple public sector areas, ranging from technology and data to organisational culture.

CASE STUDY

South Africa's Center for Public Sector Innovation builds institutional memory around public sector innovation projects through the Public Sector Awards programme. Beyond recognition, the programme shares the selected projects on multiple platforms (annual conference, webinars, workshops, or the Ideas that Work journal). A number of projects are selected for potential replication and are examined to better understand impact, cost-benefits and unintended consequences.

DEMONSTRATE THE BENEFITS OF INNOVATION

ARE THE BENEFITS OF INNOVATION BEING DEMONSTRATED AND LEARNINGS BEING SHARED?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O Promote the sharing of successful approaches and solutions across public organisations, teams and servants as ways to materialise and scale innovation.

O Legitimise and incentivise the openness and debate around good and bad innovation experiences and outcomes as means to overcome the fear of failure.

O Encourage the exchange of relevant data, procedures and tools between teams and organisations and across sectors.

O Develop platforms and/or repositories to share data, information and knowledge among public organisations, ensuring easy access and continuous updating and improvement.

O Provide structured occasions for public servants and teams to share and reflect on experiences, establish learnings and define opportunities for future improvement.

O Create opportunities to demonstrate results to target audiences from the moment you started your innovation initiative, ensuring you have the resources and approaches to communicate with clarity.

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The OPSI Case Study Platform showcases public sector innovation projects across the globe. Browse cases, gather lessons learned and add your own country cases to enlarge the database.

OPSI   CASE STUDY

OPSI develop an interactive map to provide access to behavioral insights (BI) projects around the globe. The map features on-going and completed BI projects applied across all policy areas using a variety of BI tools and experimental methodologies to solve public policy challenges.

HOW TO IMPROVE
NETWORKS FOR INNOVATION

ARE THERE NETWORKS FOR INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Develop and support networks to engage communities and create opportunities for joint endeavours and practical collaborations around common needs and challenges.

O   Use networks to nurture a culture of trust, willingness to change and experiment among public servants, sharing not just "good practices" but also lessons learned on aspects that went wrong or could be enhanced in future initiatives.

O   Use networks to share and scale innovation initiatives, skills and knowledge – building synergies and momentum across the entire public sector.

O   Collectively set clear and concrete network priorities and goals.

O   Ensure supports and resources are in place to manage and sustain networks beyond their creation.

O   Explore ways to ensure that networks are not locked-into their own specialisations, namely considering intersections and opportunities to partner collaboratively across thematic or focus areas.

O   Discuss the level of informality that best suits your mission among network members, including its activities and goals: consider the whole range of options available from informal gatherings and open participation to regulated membership and exclusive access to accepted subscribers.

O   Use public sector networks to probe and build cases for alternative ways of working based on collaboration and interconnectedness around common challenges and learnings.

⟨   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Collective Action Toolkit is a set of activities and methods that enable geographically dispersed groups of people to organise, collaborate and create solutions to problems affecting their community.

CASE STUDY

The Network of Innovators, promoted and managed by the Laboratorio de Gobierno in Chile, has over 19,000 members, including public servants and managers. The network enables public officials to connect and collaborate, learning about methods and tools, and shares experiences and solutions in order to avoid duplication and replication efforts.

SHARE LEARNINGS OF INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES

ARE THE BENEFITS OF INNOVATION BEING DEMONSTRATED AND LEARNINGS BEING SHARED?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O   Protect and promote the sharing of lessons learned (good and bad) among public servants and organisations as part of the innovation journey.

O   Share lessons, experiences and results from innovative initiatives across departments and/or by using public sector networks.

O   Encourage the exchange of data, procedures and tools between teams, organisations and across sectors.

O   Legitimise openness and discussion in safe spaces as a means to overcome the fear of failure.

O   Adopt and promote the skills and attitudes that contribute to a culture of sharing lessons learned among public servants and managers.

O   Open feedback channels for capturing user contributions, ensuring that public organisations have a direct and constant connection to capture their inputs and insights – and can use them to identify emerging challenges and continuously improve service delivery and efficiency.

<   Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) created the Share, Learn, Innovate! toolkit to accessibly present methods and tools to enhance knowledge sharing and can be adapted to disseminate lessons learned in innovative initiatives.

CASE STUDY

Since 2018, the Sao Paulo Municipality has been using the "Copicola" programme to gather learnings across all departments. This knowledge management platform enable users to share and rely on existing examples to save time and resources in order to replicate successful interventions and learn from previous attempts.

EMBED EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT FROM THE START

ARE EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT EMBEDDED FROM THE START?

HAVE YOU TRIED TO …

O Support evidence-based decisions about innovation by build awareness about the importance of assessing results and impacts stemming from innovative initiatives and projects.

O Promote data literacy and skills development that enable public organisation and servants to evaluate and measure innovation.

O Clearly define the goals and focus of evaluation and measurement initiatives, prioritising the use of relevant and usable data over the indiscriminate collection of data and using existing data whenever possible.

O Define realistic expectations around evaluation and measurement that are feasible while enabling public servants to understand the impact of initiatives, including the need for flexible and evolving targets and indicators.

O Avoid too many preconditions and requirements in evaluation and measurement

initiatives, which may inhibit the materialization of these processes and limit the access and understanding to restricted, specialized groups.

O Explore diverse methods for evaluation and measurement that account for the manifold impacts of innovation, including both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of public service performance and experience.

O Provide results and feedback on evaluation and measurement initiatives to the public organisations and servants and all partners that contributed with data and time to those initiatives.

O Use evaluation and measurement as a way to identify and sustain opportunities for continuous improvement, providing robust and useful evidence for decision-making and strategic steering and move beyond the use of data to control and sanction "errors" and "failures".

< Go back to the Questions to Ask Yourself

TOOLKIT

The Evaluating Innovation Toolkit is a series of tools to help clarify, plan, collect and use data, information and evidence to evaluate innovations as well as spread learnings and results.

CASE STUDY

The Copenhagen Manual, which originated from an international co-creation exercise involving 20 countries, helps countries collect and analyse public sector innovation data. This mirrors the spread of initiatives across the world focused on developing innovation assessment, measurement and evaluation approaches adapted to specific public sector contexts (Austria, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain (Aragon), Sweden, Switzerland, among others).

LET'S CONTINUE THIS JOURNEY TOGETHER!

This Playbook was designed based on an extensive co-creation process which gathered contributions from public officials and experts from around the world. Moving forward, we hope that you can join us on this journey to enhance public sector innovation:

APPLY THE PLAYBOOK IN YOUR OWN CONTEXTS

As with any playbook deserving of its name, this Playbook is meant to be applied on the ground. Targeted at top-officials and middle managers, the Playbook helps to identify concrete actions to public sector challenges.

We encourage you to use our templates to apply the Playbook in collaborative sessions and engage your teams directly: Facilitation Guide + MURAL.

PROVIDE US WITH FEEDBACK

The Playbook is also an experiment, open to inputs from its application on the ground. We welcome any ideas, doubts or questions you may have. Your feedback will be invaluable for our continuous improvement and learning.

Share your experience with us via the feedback form.
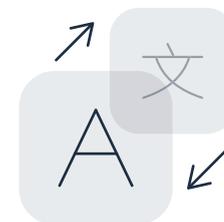
TRANSLATE THE PLAYBOOK

Help us increase the accessibility and reach of the Playbook by translating it into your own language! The Declaration is already available in French, Czech, Greek, Latvian, Spanish, Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese.

We are excited to hear about your plans for translating the Playbook in your language.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Observatory of Public Sector Innovation is part of the Open and Innovative Government Division in the Public Governance Directorate of the OECD. We support OECD member governments in taking a more deliberate, systemic and consistent approach to innovation, through learning from each other and exploring new governance approaches.

OECD OPSI have been working to support governments in the areas of anticipatory innovation governance, systemic capacity for innovation, behavioural insights, innovation portfolio management and cross-border innovation.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.