Observatory of
Public Sector Innovation

How do we Make it Happen?: Implementing Public Sector Innovation

ALPHA VERSION: FOR DISCUSSION AND COMMENT

The Observatory of Public Sector Innovation collects and analyses examples and shared experiences of public sector innovation to provide practical advice to countries on how to make innovation work.

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Executive Summary

1. When working through the phases of the innovation lifecycle, public sector innovators and innovations teams have undoubtedly put in a tremendous amount of time and energy in identifying a problem or problems that require and innovative solution, generating and filtering innovative ideas to solve the problem, and developing strong, evidence-based proposals to secure buy-in and support from leadership in order to get their proposals approved so they can act on them. As challenging as these processes have been, many of the most challenging aspects of the innovation process have not yet confronted those trying to make a difference in new ways. Taking the project from a proposal or business case, maybe even with a proof of concept or prototype, through implementation is a significant and difficult challenge. But when done properly, and with a bit of luck, implementation is where innovators can finally see the fruits of their labour and it is when others can finally begin to see the vision that the innovators who initiated the innovation process have had all along.

2. Governments have been implementing projects, including innovation projects, for centuries. Making innovation happen in the public sector was never easy, but not long ago it was more straight-forward, had fewer conceivable inputs and outcomes, and could be focused on discrete problems affecting perhaps just one organisation, policy, or service. However, the context is such project has changed dramatically over time and continues to change at an increasingly rapid rate.

3. Project implementation is the ongoing process of turning the ideas that have been generated, and successfully defended with a strong proposal and business case, into reality. The process can take weeks, months, or even years. It can start small and scale to major proportions, or it can fizzle out. In implementation, all assumptions will be put to the test with real-world uses and real-life users. There are a lot of considerations facing innovation teams as the embark on and carry out the implementation process.

4. Public sector innovators and innovations teams should not think they need to figure out every detail themselves, however. A body of knowledge, and a wealth of experiences gained by others—often the hard way—can be leveraged to take some of the edge off of implementing innovation projects. While it is impossible to condense every consideration and lesson learned to help innovators succeed, OPSI has worked through its collective experience in innovative capacities in national and city governments around the world, seeking to surface some of the most important elements of implementation, factors that enable implementation of innovation projects, contributors and channels for those who can help or hinder the success of the project, and hand-on tools and methodologies that innovations teams can leverage to avoid re-inventing the wheel and to help patch up knowledge and experience gaps.

5. Thus, this early alpha-version of a study on the implementing innovation projects phase of the lifecycle, seeks present relevant aspects of the innovation knowledgebase, as well as the experiences of the diverse OPSI team and the innovation community that we

interact with on a regular basis, to outline key considerations and strategies for innovators. In particular, OPSI seeks to:

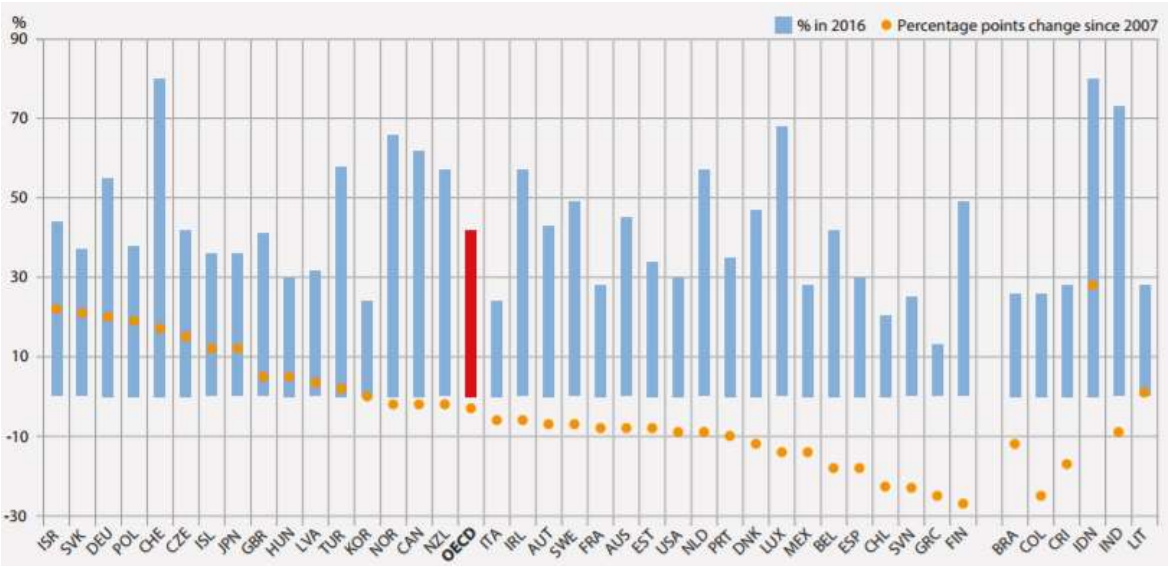
- Lay out the dynamic nature of the last several years, and the indefinite future, that makes innovation today much different than innovation in the past.
- Outline the types of situations, opportunities, and challenges that innovators may face often unexpectedly, in implementing innovation projects.
- Surface steps and contextual factors that enable, or potentially hinder, implementation efforts, as well as some potential strategies for approaching them.
- Discuss some of the various people who can be contributors to implementation, and the channels by which they may be identified and engaged, and finally,
- Provide innovators with a series of tools and methods that can support their implementation efforts.

6. While the research efforts of the OPSI team are broad, and the innovation expertise diverse, the field of public sector innovation is incredibly dynamic and context-driven. As such, this report is in presented as an "alpha" early release version, with aim of seeking input from the innovation community to ensure the subsequent final product will meet the needs of public servants and their organisations. Readers are invited to send their thoughts and comments to the OPSI team at opsi@oecd.org.

1. Introduction

7. Governments today face unprecedented challenges. Constant change, and often turmoil, results in different and increasing expectations and demands from citizens about what public services are and can be. As new possibilities are demonstrated around the world – by other governments, by industry or not-for-profits, in consumer products and in services – there is a legitimate expectation by citizens that their own governments can and will do better. If, or when, such expectations are unmet, the level of trust in public institutions and the corresponding faith in their ability to deliver will suffer. At present, an all-time low of only 43% of citizens trust their government, and this rate is dropping (see Figure 1). Regaining this trust will be an uphill battle, and the status-quo is insufficient.

Figure 1. Confidence in national government in 2016 and its change since 2007



Source: Gallup World Poll

8. Governments are also operating in a world of constraints (financial, political and legal). Rarely is it the case that governments can simply mandate for something to be or spend their way out of a problem. Governments need to become more effective and more productive, to make the most of the resources they do have. To achieve an increase in effectiveness and productivity will require changing how things are done.

9. Government also face the challenge that they cannot act alone and that many problems require the active participation of citizens if there is to be progress. So

governments need to look to new ways of thinking and doing if they are to achieve better results, and many of these new ways will involve a changed, and potentially more inclusive, relationship with citizens.

10. For these reasons and more, the public sector is faced with a need to do things differently. That means doing new things (and stopping old ones), thinking about things in new ways (and ceasing to think in old ways), and organising and working with others differently. That means innovation – the implementation of novel ideas that have an impact (OECD, 2015a).

1.1. OECD and European Commission Studies on the Innovation Lifecycle

11. The OECD is undertaking a series of studies to better understand the innovation process. This series of studies, funded under the European Commission's Horizon 2020 program,[1] aims to take stock and review what is known, identify possible gaps in that knowledge, and to provide guidance about:

- The issues faced by innovators and organisations when trying to introduce novel initiatives or ways of thinking
- What tools and methods are most appropriate at different stages of the innovation process and under what conditions
- How a stronger innovation capability may fit with existing processes and initiatives.

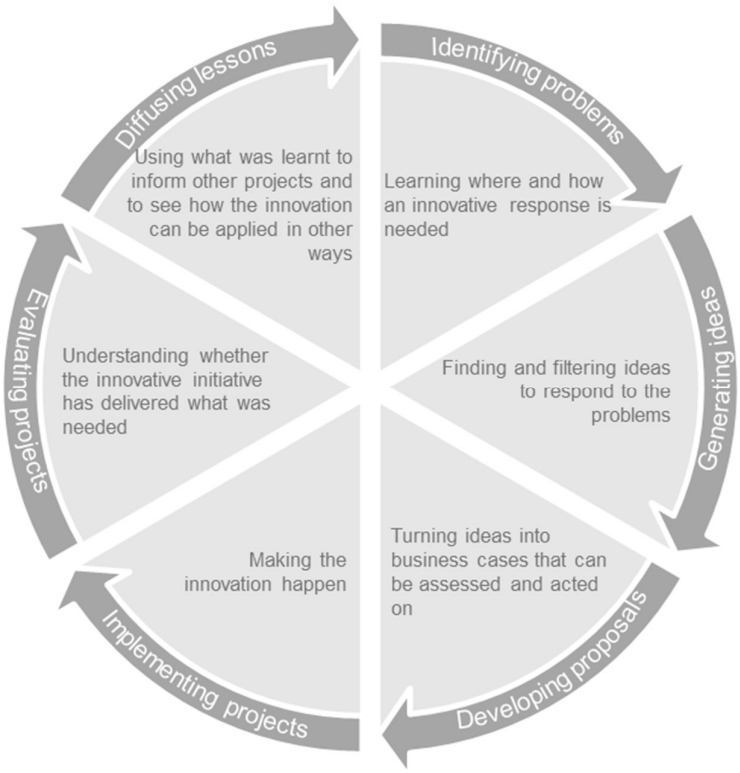
12. The studies will contribute to a better understanding of how public sector organisations can effectively use the innovation process to get better outcomes, including by:

- Identifying problems and learning where and how an innovative response is needed
- Generating and sourcing ideas to respond to those problems
- Developing proposals that turn those ideas into business cases that can be assessed and acted upon
- Implementing the innovation projects that proceed
- Evaluating (and integrating) the outcomes of those innovation projects and whether the innovative initiative has delivered what was needed
- Diffusing the lessons from those evaluations, and using those lessons to inform other projects and how other problems might be responded to.

13. The cyclical but interconnected innovation process is shown in Figure 2.

[1] See https://www.oecd.org/governance/observatory-public-sector-innovation/h2020.

Figure 2. The Innovation Lifecycle



Source: OECD

14. The first study in this series, *What's the Problem? Learning to Identify and Understand the Need for Innovation*,[2] outlined the importance of understanding the problems that require an innovative response, and how organisations can learn about them.

15. The second study, *What's Possible? Generating Innovative Ideas,*[3] discusses how to go about identifying options and considering which are likely to be the most promising, the ones that may have the best chance of becoming a reality.

16. The third study, *What's Good? Developing, Testing and Assessing Proposals* discusses how to convert these ideas into business case justifications and proposals for action.

17. These three studies have laid the foundation for this fourth study, *How do we Make it Happen? Implementing Public Sector Innovation Projects*, which covers the "Implementing projects" stage of the innovation process.

[2] See https://oecd-opsi.org/learning-for-innovation.

[3] See https://oecd-opsi.org/whats-possible-generating-innovative-ideas-2.

1.2. Implementing Projects

18. Project implementation is the ongoing process of turning the ideas that have been generated, and successfully defended with a strong proposal and business case, into reality. The process can take weeks, months, or even years. It can start small and scale to major proportions, or it can fizzle out. In implementation, all assumptions will be put to the test with real-world uses and real-life users.

19. How does project implementation fit in the innovation process? Implementation is the most substantive phase of the innovation lifecycle (see Figure 3). In will not always be distinct from the "developing proposals", such as when conducting very early prototyping and testing proofs of concept, or from "evaluating projects", such as when teams make decisions on how to proceed based on the results of how the innovation has performed so far.

Figure 3. Implementing projects

Source: OECD

20. When thinking of some of the previous stages in the innovation lifecycle, implementation is the stage where innovation can become very difficult, perhaps

discouragingly so. It is also the stage that can lead to ground-breaking successes and transformational change, and also to failures. However, when accepted, acted upon quickly, and learned from, such failures can be a valuable source of knowledge that can result in iterating on the innovation to find alternative paths to success or identity terminal issues that cause fewer problems when caught in advance than during a large-scale rollout.

21. Even if ideas have been well gathered and filtered, and excellent business cases have been developed to justify innovation, implementing reforms to foster innovation is challenging and involves a variety of variables and factors that may not be known in previous stages. Some of the required reforms affect vested interests, such as in other parts of government or in businesses. They can cause resistance, such as by those confronted by technological or structural change. Some innovations will suffer from surprise leadership or context changes. These are just a few of the many challenges—and sometimes opportunities—that innovation teams may face.

22. In addition, often in the public sector, an innovation process will need to have regard to matters of accountability, transparency, responsiveness, and procedural fairness. Because so much time, effort, and money go into implementation, it is generally the phase that is targeted by oversight entities, external accountability groups, and the press. It is also the phase in which citizens, residents, and other users will be impacted by the innovation—either positively or negatively. Because of the importance of innovation. it is important to be able to know and show who had a hand in implementing the project, how it was carried out, how time and resources were spent, and whether goals have been achieved and proper processes followed. A deep dive into implementation can also help uncover assumptions and considerations that might otherwise remain implicit. Therefore it is valuable to focus on implementation as a separate stage to understand the intricacies of implementation.

23. Considering all of these factors, how can public sector innovators navigate uncharted waters and overcome the foreseen and unforeseen barriers to innovation?

24. This study seeks to explore the variables, challenges, and opportunities associated with implementing innovations projects, as well as some ways to build the enabling conditions for success, and tools to make innovation happen.

2. A Changing Context – From Clear(ish) to Complex

25. Governments have been implementing projects, including innovation projects, for centuries. Making innovation happen in the public sector was never easy, but not long ago it was more straight-forward, had fewer conceivable inputs and outcomes, and could be focused on discrete problems affecting perhaps just one organisation, policy, or service. However, the context is such project has changed dramatically over time and continues to change at an increasingly rapid rate.

26. The current global political and economic setting is complex and fast changing. Society is in the midst of an incredible transformation that challenges both existing systems and views about how the world works and how it should be governed. Emerging technologies, accelerating globalism, growing inequalities, shifting demographics, migration pressures, and climate change, among many others, are not only disrupting the status quo, they are altering existing preconceptions and creating a future of unknowns.

27. Governments sit at a precarious nexus of all of these issues. Given the scale of change, the magnitude of the accompanying transformation and the resulting uncertainty for the future, it is clear that there is no going backwards. Complexity is a core feature of most policy issues today; their components are interrelated in multiple, hard-to-define ways. At present, governments tend to be ill equipped to handle complex problems (OECD, 2017b). There is a strong imperative for countries and individuals to push through the status quo and implement projects that can make real change.

28. To do so, governments need to understand, test and embed new ways of doing things. Like the complexity of the issues they face, implementing innovation projects has become more complicated, with many additional considerations, actors, processes, and variables than ever before. Governments must navigate a challenging terrain to implement innovation. Although the challenges are immense, the potential for change and the significant of impact of successful innovation has never been greater.

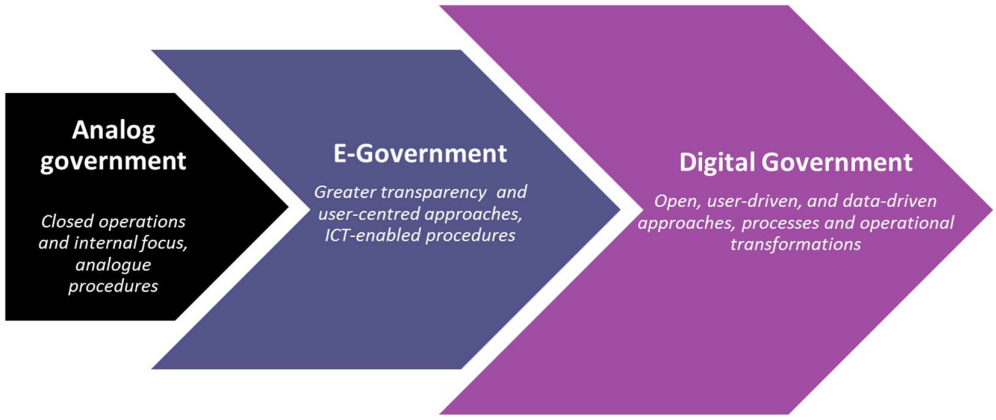
29. A number of factors contribute to the increasingly dynamic nature of implementing innovation, and the same factors are what amplify the impact of innovation in the public sector.

- **Systems versus silos –** for a long time, government operations were underpinned by a classic bureaucracy, which leads to silos and separate ministries having separate responsibilities (OECD, 2002). Such approaches were sufficient for problems of a previous era, and supported democratic values of stability, efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency (OECD, 2017). Simplified classifications of information and problems into these well-delineated silos made diagnosis of problems, identification of solutions, and taking action relatively easy (OECD, 2017b). Today, decision makers are faced with an overwhelming abundance of information and problems that do not fit neatly into bureaucratic boxes, all while needing to live up to the same values. Likewise, implementing the solutions to these problems does not fit neatly within silos, or

even within governments, and demands moving away from traditional linear actions notion of innovation as an isolated intervention. Decision makers must understand how to implement projects in contexts that traverse administrative and territorial boundaries in a joined-up and holistic way (OECD, 2017b).

- **Digital versus electronic and analogue –** the world is in the early stages of what has been called the "Fourth Industrial Revolution", where a confluence of new and often disruptive technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), blockchain technology, artificial intelligence (AI) are transforming the production and the distribution of goods and services and having significant consequences for society (OECD, 2017c), and in turn, for governments. Governments too must evolve to harness digital technologies to both respond to the impacts of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and to meet the growing expectations of the public who are becoming increasingly accustomed to the ease and convenience that new technologies have afforded them. Most governments have moved from an analogy, paper-based state though E-government initiatives, where analogue forms and processes are provided electronically. However, most are still working to transition from e-government to a fully developed open, inclusive, efficient, and responsive digital government when underlying processes have been reengineered (OECD, 2017d). This transition is a key enabler of the implementing innovation projects, and serves as a platform upon which future stages in innovation will be built.

Figure 4. Digital transformation of the public sector



Source: OECD.

- **Flux versus fixed** – complex systems, as described in the previous bullet, are constantly in flux (OECD, 2017b). Governments used to be able to rely on a fairly stable, fixed operating environment over longer periods of time. This is no longer the case. Operating environments now often change on a day-to-day basis, with the potential for previous norms being totally disrupted. Implementation needs to take these things into account, while also be flexible enough for adapt with the in-flux environment.
- **Agile versus waterfall** – an operating environment that is constantly in flux requires implementation processes and approaches that can adapt quickly to meet ever-changing expectations, demands, and forces of the various ecosystems to

which the public sector is a party. One of the greatest challenges in traditional public sector "waterfall" reform processes is the time gap between inception, implementation and impact due to long design phases where officials gather all project needs and predicts all possible outcomes in advance before implementing. Given the complex and unpredictable nature of today's complex issues, waterfall often results in services that are already obsolete by the time they have been built, potentially resulting in large, expensive, and sometimes catastrophic failures. Being agile and iterative breaks down risk into manageable chunks and allows for rapid, iterative implementation. Agile methods provide feedback early and often as to what does and does not work as implementation unfolds so government officials can quickly build upon successes and learn from small failures.

- **Partnered versus solo –** as touched on above, government officials and teams, no matter how smart and capable they may be, are not sufficient to achieve their missions in the face of increasingly complex and interconnected challenges. In implementing projects, strategic and ongoing partnerships must be forged with civil society organisations, businesses, experts and the public. Each of these has unique strengths and competencies, and innovation in government accomplishes its biggest successes when all three come together. Civil servants must therefore have the ability to balance and interpret the sometimes competing priorities of these different groups, and be empowered to make decisions on how to proceed with what they learn. Governments from other jurisdictions and countries can also serve as useful partners, as many share common challenges and may have devised solutions that can be replicated or learned from (OECD, 2017e).
- **Open versus internal –** It has long been common among governments for project decision making do be done through closed deliberative processes. If external parties were involved at all, it was through invitation-only discussions or simple public consultation exercises. Such closed-door approaches are being rejected by citizens and entities that are affected by government decision-making. Engaging with the public is a critical enabler of innovation and can improve the ability to implement projects, and for these projects to stick in the longer-term. Government decision making and actions must be done in a transparent manner that fosters trust in government programmes and civil servants. This trust will help ensure citizens become willing and interested participants and contributors in innovating government programmes, and embrace the outcomes and have confidence in their legitimacy (OECD, 2017e).
- **Evidence versus instinct –** There is growing international recognition of the necessity of using evidence to make decisions in policies and services (OECD, 2017f). Evidence has a critical role to play in improving the quality, responsiveness and accessibility of public services, and by extension, citizen trust in governments. It can play a role throughout the key stages of the policy cycle, from design and through implementation and evaluation (OECD, 2017f). Evidence-based decision making represent the strongest opportunity of designing and implementing projects that will benefit citizens. It also serves to overcome the status quote, which is often derived from decisions based on institutional bias, vested interests, or potentially misguided "gut instinct."

30. In short, there is an operating environment for implementing innovation projects in public sector organisations where:

- governments and the ecosystems in which they exist are increasingly interconnected, making it difficult to identity the cause and effect if problems and requiring considerations about how actions in one part of the system can cause unintended consequences in another
- there is a need to cope in a rapidly changing environment, and to respond just as rapidly
- there is a need to consult and partner with others, both vertically and horizontally, across and throughout organisations, governments, countries, sectors, and the public
- users expect government to act as quickly and effectively as the private sector and government can no longer implement projects in ways that are only self-serving

2.1. What This Changed Environment Mans for Implementing Projects

Table 1. Implications for Implementing Projects

Change in the operating environment	Why that is an issue for implementing projects in the public sector	Implication for implementing projects process
Increasingly complex and interconnected ecosystems	Implementing innovation in a vacuum may shift consequences from one part of the system to another, or address symptoms while ignoring causes.	Need for ways to consider how implementation can reform government at a systems-wide and holistic way and identify interconnections.
Rapidly changing environments and expectations to respond	Implementing in a way that is too measures or "waterfall" can result in innovation projects that are immediately outdated and cannot keep up with the pace of change.	Need for more agility and flexibility to allow for implementation to be easily adapted as things change.
Increase in people outside of the innovation team with relevant insights and experience (corresponding decrease in government's ability to achieve impact on its own)	At best, failing to engage others can result in missed opportunities to maximize impact, and at worst, can result in innovation projects that are rejected or sabotaged by those who were not in the loop.	Need to find ways to bring in diverse insights, expertise, and experiences from other government organisations, countries, civil society, and industry.
User expectations have grown significantly	If users are considered and involved throughout implementation, innovation project may create service that do not meet their needs and may diminish their trust in government.	Need to engage users as active partners in implementation

3. What's involved in implementing projects?

31. The traditional conception of the policy development cycle[4] involves a stage of implementation, where "The ultimate decision made earlier will be put into practice." Yet what is really involved trying to implement innovation projects?

- **Burden of clarity and unequal expectations:** Innovation projects are inherently uncertain. One cannot predict how they will play out. Ironically, because of this, innovation projects often held to a higher burden than standard projects are. Because the risks and uncertainties are new, decision makers are likely to be more uncomfortable about them, and thus often demand higher levels of clarity than they would for a standard project where there is a default setting of thinking it will be okay. This can force those involved with an innovation project to either provide false levels of certainty, to downplay risks, to overpromise, or to hide/downplay the innovative elements of their project, or even try to fly under the radar with the entire project.
- **Emergent practice:** Innovation projects can be hard to codify and to explicitly plan and document. They rely on high degrees of judgement and contextual and situational awareness, and adaptation and responsiveness to changing conditions. Sometimes, there may be nothing to base decisions on besides gut-feeling. This can sit uncomfortably with structured processes, defined roles and responsibilities, and resource planning.
- **Lack of awareness of what actually committed to**: Because an innovative project is new, it may not be well understood by decision-makers, so they may not fully realise what they have committed to. This might be because of technical unfamiliarity, they had no pre-existing frame of expectations about the project, the underlying innovation may be experiential and the realisation only comes from the experience, or the decision-maker has mistakenly treated an innovation project as a standard project and may be unprepared for what eventuates in terms of additional decision-making, oversight, resources, flexibility, etc.
- **Micro-management or neglect by decision makers:** Where risk and uncertainty is high, there can be a tendency to get wrapped-up in the minutia, as those are controllable, manageable, and understandable. However, the bigger and more strategic elements of the innovation project are more important and require greater flexibility. Alternatively, another practice may be neglect. There may be an unwillingness to understand and appreciate the innovative element, so insufficient attention is paid, leaving project vulnerable to either going too fast (insufficient oversight/caution), or missing the mark (unaligned with priorities), or being ignored. Neglect can come from a number of motives, including feeling ill equipped to get involved, or simply wanting the innovation to go away.

[4] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Policy#Policy_cycle.

- **Skill and resource imbalances**: as an innovation project plays out, you might realise the skills available are not the right ones, so may need to outsource piece, bring in new talent, or even pivot the project to better match the availability of skills. If nothing works, it could even mean abandoning the project. The same analogy could be made for financial resources, infrastructure, oversight, partnerships, etc. Innovative projects involve being able to navigate surprises and having the support to do so, or the ability to kill a project quickly when an imbalance equates to untenable parameter shifts.
- **Surprise leadership change**: Leadership changes occur fairly frequently in the public sector, especially at senior levels. An innovation team may lose senior sponsorship midway through project, bringing into doubt the fundamentals of the project—why are we doing this? What is it for? Why are we using our resources in this way? This may require ensuring other sponsors are on tap, doubling down and hoping the sponsor stays, pivoting to the interests of a new sponsor, or abandoning the project.
- **Encountering unknown stakeholders:** Because innovation projects involve doing something new, teams may not necessarily know all people interested, some may only self-identify as interested when the project starts to be implemented, or even later in the implementation phase when the project shows signs that it may touch on another domain. These stakeholders can serve as amplifiers and promoters, or as antibodies that need to be addressed, as discussed below.
- **Pressure to deliver:** There can often be pressure for innovation projects to provide quick wins on difficult deadlines, given the uncertainty involved and the desire to show something quickly to convince internal or external stakeholders and detractors. This can be a good thing, as it can help build momentum for the project, help demonstrate value, or speed up learning from the project. It can also be negative, such as by prematurely hardening expectations, causing the loss of ability to fail or do things differently.
- **Dealing with perfectionism:** There can be a tendency for many professionals to think they have to get everything right before acting, which can delay or hinder the project because it slows down momentum, learning and opportunities for others to contribute
- **"That's not my job":** An innovation project may run into issues of challenging people's self-identity and their beliefs about how things work. Public servants may have internalised a particular world view or way of how things should be done, and an innovation can challenge that. This can generate conflict, competition, fears of being replaced, or a general unwillingness of others to support. This can also be a result of territorialism, where innovation projects may brush up against others within organisation or system who view this new approach/project/intervention as treading on their territory.
- **"It's new, so who cares":** There may be a tendency to be lackadaisical about what is involved, viewing it as new so standards are lower. This may hurt the project by not ensuring sufficient rigour or use of necessary standards and considerations that might still apply. In turn this can damage the opportunity space for future projects.

- **Friction with existing processes and beliefs:** Doing new things inevitably result in coming up against standards, barriers, and process issues that are not expected until they arise. There is a high potential of a 'default-to-no' response by process owners ("no, that's not how we do things").
- **Maintaining momentum:** With innovation project, there can be a lot of reasonable requests to slow down, but there is a real risk that slowing down or waiting can take away from the enthusiasm, passion, and feeling of autonomy and empowerment that are often necessary for those doing an innovation project.
- **Surprise context change**: While a leadership change may be challenging, a dramatic changing of the context where an innovation exists may even more disruptive. A surprise election result bring in a new administration, the restructuring of an organisation, a sudden crisis that in the context of an innovation project or distracts from it, among many others, are example of such context changes. Innovation teams may need to navigate such challenges. Sometimes, these changes can be opportunities to that can be seized to raise the profile of the innovation
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- **Surprise unintended consequences**: Because of the previously discussed uncertainty, sometimes innovation projects can have unintended consequences. Every now and then, these can be positive. The ones more-often remembered are ones that that result in panic moments where quick action is needed.
- **Putting out fires:** An innovation team's days can be often interrupted by small distractions and mini-crises ("fires") than can seemingly arise out of nowhere and distract from the core work. They may be related to the surprises and elements above, or could be something entirely new. Those implementing innovation projects will need to devise strategies for putting out fires when they come up, while also moving the project forward.
- **Celebrating victories:** Innovations project move quickly, are under pressure, and are often worked on by civil servants dedicated to achieving the end goals they have envisioned. Often times, the team can have a significant victory, such as reaching a major milestone, and immediately shift to thinking about the next goal. It is important for team motivation to celebrate these victories.

32. An appreciation of these aspects of the project implementation process may help organisations and individuals better move forward and navigate some of the challenges that innovation teams will invariably face. The rest of this report seeks to

4. Enabling Effective Implementation

33. Implementing projects is perhaps the most important stage in the innovation lifecycle. Many players are involved, many decisions need to be made, and many unknowns and risks exist. What is involved in enabling effective project implementation in the public sector to maximise the chances of success and to learn from failure?

34. The following actions have been identified as helping provide an environment and context conducive to effective project implementation.

- Leveraging political leadership – do senior leaders signal the importance of innovation and provide "top cover" for innovators? If so, do innovators take hold of this guidance and use it as a call to action?
- Assigning a leader – is there a single product owner in place that has the authority to make decisions and is accountable for the success of the innovation?
- Identifying rules and flexibilities – has the leader and/or team explored any applicable hiring, mobility, budgeting and other flexibilities to overcome barriers?
- Ensuring the right people are in place – is there an experienced, talented, and diverse team in place to bring the innovation to life and navigate processes and relationships?
- Understanding what is needed – has the team consulted a broad spectrum of those who may interact with or be impacted by the innovation in order to determine real needs?
- Determining what success looks like and setting goals and measures– has the team identified a vision for what success looks like in order to determine whether future states are a success or a failure? Based on the vision for success, has the team identified goals and measures to ensure they are moving in the right direction?
- Involving and connecting stakeholders – does the team regularly involve relevant stakeholders—promoters, detractors, users, and leaders?
- Overcoming antibodies – does the team have a strategy for overcoming foreseen objections and dealing with *antibodies*—individuals or groups that seek to block innovation and perpetuate the status-quo?
- Partnering and collaborating with others – has the team explored opportunities to partner with other parts or levels of the public sector, civil society, or industry to leverage the relative strengths of each and to gain access to different insights and expertise?

- Failing fast, and learning – would the team know when it has failed? Are their plans for facing failure through cancelling the innovation or iterating on it based on lessons learned?
- Prototyping solutions and using agile and iterative approaches – did the team rapidly develop and test one or more prototypes for innovation concepts and idea? Does the team continuously create, test, and iterate on the innovation based on feedback?
- Working in the open – does the team work in an open manner, allowing others to observe progress, contribute idea, or replicate concepts?
- Updating, promoting, and storytelling – has the team learned the importance of providing regular updates to stakeholders and the art of self-promotion to maintain momentum?
- Preparing for oversight – innovation initiatives can make waves that catch the attention of oversight entities, and may sometimes receive extra scrutiny because of their deviation from the norm. Is the team documenting decisions and rationale to prepare for oversight?

4.1. Leveraging political leadership

35. Willingness and capacity at all levels to innovative is critical to implementing innovation projects. Political leaders and others at the top have the power to set a strategic direction that can ripple through each level below. This level of commitment can make or break innovative potential by framing the culture of government at large (OECD, 2016a). Strong political leadership and efforts to develop a clear understanding by the various stakeholders of the problems and the solutions — including the costs they involve — can all help to communicate the need for reform and facilitate acceptance (OECD, 2007).

36. Innovation is unlikely to take root in government unless senior leaders communicate that it is an important priority. This includes acknowledgement that sometimes failure is an acceptable outcome. Countries that have excelled in innovation have continuously emphasised the importance of innovation from the highest levels of government. In the absence of such supportive environments, the risk-averse tendencies of government can discourage employees from experimenting (OECD, 2017e).

37. Although political signalling is important, leaderships at other levels (e.g., deputies, middle managers, team leaders) can be supportive in cascading the promotion of innovative ideas and actions. In some cases, such leaders can foster an environment and signal the importance of innovation even if the political leadership is lacking in this area.

38. This acknowledgement from leaders empowers civil servants and gives them the "top cover" to try new approaches and take calculated risks (OECD, 2017e; Grady and Chi, 1994). To the extent that it exists, innovators and innovation teams, should leverage this top cover and use it as call to action to try new things and as a tool for overcoming blockers and objections.

4.2. Assigning a leader

39. Whereas the previous section focused on the importance of political leadership, it is also important that every innovation project be assigned one leader, and that this leader be empowered to make important decisions for the project and be accountable for the

success or failure of the project. This person should also be given the authority to assemble a team and assign the relevant tasks necessary for making the innovation project happen. Such a principle is an important artefact of several digital service playbooks, such as those provided by the United States Digital Service (USDS)[5] and New York City.[6]

4.3. Identifying rules and flexibilities

40. Innovation without the right resources is unsustainable. This means hiring the right skills for each role. It also means funding innovation initiatives appropriately and through the right mechanisms in order to help the project thrive (2017a).

41. It is important for public sector innovators to understand the legal and policy contexts for the projects they are implementing. One of the most important aspects of getting an innovation project off the ground is an understanding of the rules around obtaining resources for the innovation, especially:

- Obtaining funding, and
- Onboarding talented staff

42. While rules establish set forth what can and cannot be done, there are sometimes flexibilities carved into the rules that innovators can take advantage of to strengthen their chances for success.

43. In addition, innovators should investigate the rules and flexibilities independently, as the common interpretations can sometimes be misleading or altogether inaccurate. Often, it is not the formal regulations that provide obstacles, but instead people's interpretation of them (OECD, 2017a; Kruiter et al., 2008; de Jong and Zuurmond, 2010).

4.3.1. Obtaining funding

44. If an innovation project has made it through the previous stages of the innovation lifecycle, it is likely that some level of funding has already been set aside for it. However, if it has not been, or perhaps additional funding will be needed later to scale up, the project leader should become familiar with the funding rules and opportunities in his or her government context.

45. Detailed financial rules and controls may impede the investments needed to bring a project to scale (OECD, 2017a). However, a growing number of governments have started setting aside special funding for innovation activities that can be tapped, or competed for, by innovation teams. Such budgeting can stimulate innovation through financial incentives, promoting greater flexibility, and help to scale up innovation and diffuse its benefits through the system. Such funding most often comes from inside government. However, funds can also come from outside government to catalyse public sector ideas. For example, the Bloomberg Mayors Challenge holds competitions for innovation project funding at the local government level.[7]

[5] https://playbook.cio.gov/

[6] https://playbook.cityofnewyork.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/NYCDigital_PrinciplesStrategies.pdf

[7] https://mayorschallenge.bloomberg.org

46. Besides innovation funds, some innovation teams work on a fee-for-service basis. These teams provide a product or service for which other parts of government can contract. This type of funding structure has two key benefits. First, it allows both the innovation team and the contracting organisation to derive value from an innovative product or service. Second, it helps to demonstrate the value of an innovation in that it demonstrates (or does not demonstrate) that there is a market and appetite for the product or service in government. An example of this model is 18F, an inside-of-government digital service consultancy in the United States (OECD, 2017e).

47. If needed, innovation project leaders should explore and seek potential funding opportunities, such as those provided through innovation funds or by provide products and services on a cost recoverable basis to others in government.

4.3.2. Onboarding talented staff

48. Innovation leaders should always be considering hiring new talent, even if they cannot act on it right away. Bringing talented and interdisciplinary staff onto an innovation team can be a long, burdensome process. However, a number of governments have implemented streamlined hiring processes for certain types of staff (including innovation specialists), or have brought about new type of intra-government programs that enhance mobility and flexibility for working on innovative projects.

49. Governments may sometimes be able to hire staff for shorter period of time more quickly and easily than they may hire permanent staff. This type of non-permanent hiring may be a good fit for innovation projects, where such arrangements can allow for a regularly-refreshing pool of talent with modern knowledge and abilities. The U.S. government, as an example, has leveraged these flexibilities to come up with the concept of "tour of duty hiring" (US Government, 2018). According to the U.S. Innovation Playbook, "By leveraging temporary tour-of-duty employment opportunities (also known as details), federal agencies can tap into new talent willing to serve their country. Using flexible hiring authorities allows agencies to recruit executives, entrepreneurs, technologists, and other innovators willing to enter government service for a short period." The playbook also outlines several potential models and checklists for project leaders to consider.

50. Not all talent comes from outside the government, of course. Governments are increasingly using mobility programs to give civil servants opportunities to work outside of their home organisation in order to develop new insights and build new skills by giving the individual a more horizontal understanding of policy issues and allowing them to look at things from outside their narrow sector perspective (OECD, 2017a). Such programs can help project leader to recruit and put in place the right people (see next section) more quickly and easily than they could using traditional mechanisms. An example of a successful mobility program can be seen in the Government of Canada's Free Agents and Talent Cloud initiatives.[8]

51. While the flexibilities and examples discussed may not be applicable to every country, such opportunities and ones like them are growing and should be explored by project leaders to determine whether they exist and are worth pursuing.

[8] See http://www.oecd.org/gov/innovative-government/embracing-innovation-in-government-2018.pdf p. 71).

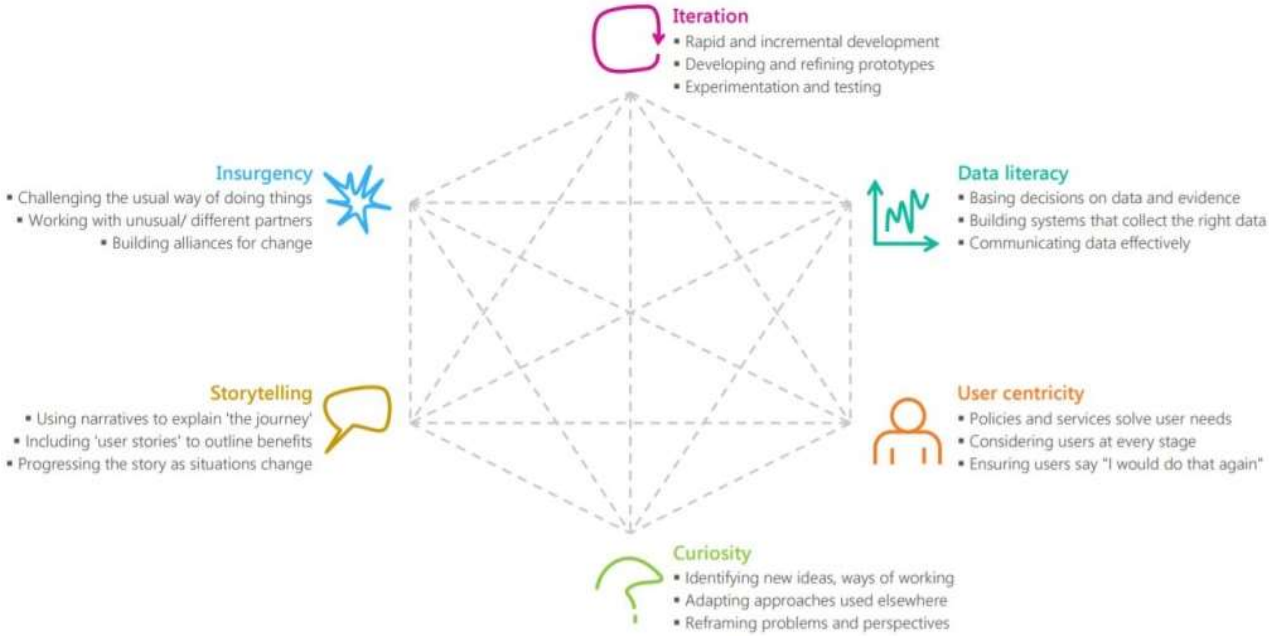
4.4. Ensuring the right people are in place

52. For the most part, the public sector is resourced to administer, not to innovate (OECD, 2017a). Once any applicable hiring flexibilities are identified (or not), building a diverse, interdisciplinary, and experienced team is a foundational step in implementing an innovation project. A productive team will collectively have the ability to work in partnerships, communicate, negotiate, network and collaborate within and across organisational boundaries. Depending on the nature of the innovation project, some members of the team may need specific technical expertise. Project leadership must work to draw out the right skills in the team, either through identification and recruitment of individuals well suited to these tasks, or through coaching and training.

53. Some individuals and skillsets may be more suited for innovation project teams than others, and the project leader should take these skills into account when building a team. OPSI has worked with public managers and innovators across the world to gain insights and better understand innovation in a wide variety of contexts. Based on its observations, OPSI has developed a skills model that highlights six fundamental skills categories for innovation in the public sector. The skills model is based around six "core" skills areas. Not all public servants will need to make use of or apply these skills in their day-to-day job. However, all officials working in a modern twenty-first century public service need to be at least aware of these core skills, in order to support increased levels of innovation in the public sector: As identified in Figure 5, these skills are:

- **Iteration**: incrementally and experimentally developing policies, products and services.
- **Data literacy**: ensuring decisions are data-driven and that data are not an afterthought.
- **User centricity**: ensuring that public services are focused on solving and servicing user needs.
- **Curiosity**: seeking out and trying new ideas or ways of working.
- **Storytelling**: explaining change in a way that builds support.
- **Insurgency**: challenging the status quo and working with unusual partners

Figure 5. Six core skills for public sector innovation



Source:https://www.oecd.org/media/oecdorg/satellitesites/opsi/contents/files/OECD_OPSI-core_skills_for_public_sector_innovation-201704.pdf

54. Each project and context is unique, however, and the potential exists for other skills to be necessary for some team members, even if they are not as strong in song of the skills from OPSI's identified Core Skills for Public Sector Innovation. Other assets may include strong situational awareness of the processes and players that will interact with the project or key technical skills.

55. As a note of caution, innovation project leaders should be cautious to avoid the common pitfall of thinking that only external innovators have the potential to transform the public sector. One of the dangers of establishing innovation teams is the signal it sends to the rest of the organisation that "you are not innovative". If poorly implemented, innovation teams can actually become an impediment to innovation, rather than an enabler. The risk of an "us and them" divide can be mitigated by building highly integrated teams: hire half of the talent from outside the public sector, bringing in the new skills needed, and half from within the public sector, bringing in the system intelligence needed (OECD, 2017a). This style of assembling effective teams has a much stronger chance to "infect" the culture of an organisation and overcome the institutional "antibodies" the often arise, seemingly out of nowhere, and the status quo is threatened.

4.5. Determining what success looks like and setting goals and measures

56. Although evaluating projects is, on paper, a later phase of the lifecycle, it is much more likely to be a successful and worthwhile stage if considered in the implementing project stage, especially during design.

57. One critical but often overlooked step in implementing innovation projects is to envision and document what success will look like, and how to measure whether it has been reached. Down the road, when reflecting on an evaluating the project, how would one know whether it is having its intended effect if that effect has never been articulated? Recent research (Schoop et al, 2018) indicates that innovation teams should identify success metrics that answer three key questions (see Box 1).

Box 1. Measures of success

Measures should answer three main questions:

Is the innovation having the desired impact?

- Measures that are often linked to organisations mission, have time restrictions, and are used to development of criteria for success by which the project will be judged to determine whether it has been successful in eyes of all stakeholders.
- "By comparing the realized impact to what was determined to be the baseline measures for success, impact measures can be key in making go/no-go decisions related to investing in scaling an innovation more broadly."
- For example, reduction in time to approve an application when compared to the normal service.

Is the solution fully developed, or in need of further iteration?"

- Measures that identify whether the innovation performed as expected and intended.
- For example, conducting A/B testing to determine whether a change in a process has resulted in an intended change.

How will we know when the innovation is ready to be deployed to a new site or population?

- Measures that are useful in determine whether to scale up,
- Specific measures often look at saturation of an innovation at its current location.
- For example, "80 percent of non-profits providing services to the food-insecure population are accessible via the mobile application".

Source: https://www2.deloitte.com/insights/us/en/industry/public-sector/innovation-in-government-organizations.html

58. Once articulated, these measures can be tracked over time to help determine whether an innovation should be cancelled, iterated, or scale. Without defining these up-front, innovation teams may be somewhat aimless with project implementation and either continues to support innovations that are not working in their current state or miss opportunities to have a greater impact through scaling or replication.

4.6. Involving and connecting stakeholders

59. An important step in implementing projects is to ensure all relevant stakeholders are involved from the beginning. "Stakeholders" here is used in a broad sense and includes leaders who oversee the innovation team, those outside the core team but nonetheless responsible for implementing the innovation, individuals in and outside the organisation with work portfolios that are related to or touch on the innovation project, and members of the public who may be affected by the innovation, among others. Not everyone needs the same level of engagement, however, and the innovation team should develop a stakeholder engagement strategy early on.

60. There is a wide variety of approaches to involving and connecting stakeholders, and timing for engagement can result in different benefits. For example, consultations with stakeholders (e.g. through advisory groups or consultation committees) in the early stages of implementation can surface issues and identify factors that could serve as barriers to innovation (OECD, 2017a).

61. Some stakeholders to keep in mind include:

- High-level leadership and sponsors
- Holders of institutional knowledge
- Those who will play an part in implementing the innovation
- Those who will be impacted by the innovation
- Influencers who are likely to be interested
- Influencers who are likely to be doubters
- Those who have a vested interest in the status-quo or who support entities that could end up the "losers"
- Businesses and civil society organisations in the topic area
- The public in general

62. Experiences from Bloomberg Philanthropies' Innovation Teams program have surfaced a set of key questions and insights that public sector innovators should consider as they work to involve stakeholders (see Box 2).

Box 2. Key questions and insights from Bloomberg

Key questions:

- Who gets the credit?
- Who bears the responsibility for past and future failures?
- What other stakeholders can provide you with leverage?
- What do you want to get through the process?
- What kind of goodwill can you buy?
- How do you celebrate successes (for both team and stakeholders)?
- How do we make sure we can tell our story?
- If not every stakeholder has experience, how can you coach that?

Innovator insights:

- Speak the same language – when speaking to stakeholder(s), use their terminology.
- Get other stakeholders involved – if encountering resistance, try to get back from those who are respected by those who are resistant.
- Maintain connections – keep allies in the loop and engaged in the work to support continuous buy-in.
- Act as a third-party convener – overcome fragmentation of potential stakeholder groups by taking action to bring everyone together.
- Show people their impact and what they can accomplish – inspire people by showing them the real-life impact their action, power, and/or influence can have.
- Connect and work with end-users (aka "people") – involve those who will be impacted at every stage of the work.
- Take the head off of partners – try to give other, such as civil servants in implementation roles, top cover by leveraging the leeway often given to innovation teams but not always to others.
- Try things out, test your theories – use small test projects to showcase work and its potential.
- Take advantage of your authority – leverage whatever authority the team has (e.g., approval of senior leaders, recognition from a powerful sponsor or foundation, or even pressure from the press to push forward.

Source: https://www.livingcities.org/blog/1066-how-innovation-teams-approach-stakeholder-management

63. In addition to keeping the relevant stakeholders involved, it is important for those stakeholders who are key to carrying out implementation are all connected and able to communicate to work towards common goals. As innovation projects prove themselves and scale and cross traditional bureaucratic silos, coordination challenges can arise unless implementers are able to transcend the silos to connect, collaborate, and build upon what each other learn.

64. Some tools that can assist in involving and connecting stakeholders are discussed in the Tools section of this paper.

4.7. Overcoming antibodies

65. In many cases, government innovators will initially believe that the logic and ingenuity of their ideas when compared to the status-quo will be sufficient to propel the innovation forward and overcome any potential obstacles. It is not long before they realize that this usually is not the case, and opposition will seem to appear out of thin air the moment that the innovative initiative starts to show real promise of gain traction. This opposition and the individuals associated with it are sometimes referred to as innovation "antibodies", a reference to how the human body develops antibodies to stop intruders. The antibodies are often from parts of government or potentially even from businesses who see new ideas as a risk to their operations, and in some cases, to their survival. It has been observed that the strength and veracity of these antibodies is proportionate to the novelty and potential impact of the innovation (Ryan and Koh, 2018).

66. These antibodies can make innovation difficult, and can be discouraging to innovators trying to affect change. However, there are methods to help overcome them. Like many factors that contribute to a culture of innovation, a push from the top is important. If senior leadership make innovation a high-profile priority and empowers line staff to propose new ideas, the power and influence of the antibodies is diminished. One example cited in literature is the senior sponsorship of an innovation office and innovation contests where *every person* is expected to contribute in some way, such as generating ideas (even the would-be antibodies) (Best, 2012; Evans, 2017).

67. In addition, tailored and proactive outreach to likely antibodies can help. As mentioned in the literature, "It wasn't hard to identify the most powerful corporate antibodies. They were the people whose job it is to worry about risks to the on-going organization — legal, risk management, finance, IT, and the brand team." Their concerns can be eased, and perhaps they can even be converted to allies, by finding ways to include them *and their particular expertise* in planning out design and implementation of the initiative to help make the innovation even better (Best, 2012).

Box 3. Detecting antibodies

Some phrases than can help identify potential antibodies:

- "We already tried that and couldn't make it work."
- "What we're doing has worked fine for years; there is no need to change."
- "Our current product is still profitable; I don't see why we need to spend money on something new that might not even work out."
- "We already explored that idea years ago but decided against it."
- "If that were a good idea, we'd already have thought of it. After all, we are the experts on this."
- "Let me just play devil's advocate here…."
- "Of course, I support innovation, but I just don't think this is the right time to make a big change. The market isn't ready."

Source: http://www.innovationmanagement.se/2016/10/13/defeating-the-corporate-antibodies/

68. Other potential antibodies, such as middle managers, can be overcome by explaining how the innovation would not negatively affect or distract from their work and performance results, and optimally, by demonstrating how the measures they are accountable for can be improved by the innovation. Asking middle managers to assign a point of contact or even a champion from within their team for the innovation can help them to feel like an important piece of the initiative and generate more interest and desire for success (Best, 2012).

69. While some antibodies may never come around, getting some of them on the side of innovation can reduce some of the pressures of innovation and allow more time to focus on success and less time fighting off naysayers.

4.8. Partnering and collaborating with others

70. Governments most effective at innovation often recognise that they may lack the necessary knowledge and skills (this is okay!), and that engaging with those that do increases the capacity to innovative and the chances of success. In an increasingly complex and connected world, the public sector cannot maximize public value on its own. Strategic and ongoing partnerships must be forged with civil society organisations, businesses, experts and the public. Each of these has unique strengths and competencies, and innovation in government accomplishes its biggest successes when all three come together. For instance, citizens often place more trust in non-profit and civil society organisations than in their government and are more willing to interact with them, making them key allies in helping to ensure government policies and services meet the needs of the people. In addition, companies often build on latest technologies developed by the private sector to create customized solution, among other benefits of working with

companies. These partnerships for innovation can result in greater impacts than government acting alone.

71. In addition to partnering across sectors, innovation teams should consider the different parts and teams within the public sector that can be partners in implementing innovation projects. Governments often encompass complementary functions spread throughout departments and organisations. The partnering of these entities allows innovation to flourish (OECD, 2017e). Governments from other jurisdictions and countries can also serve as useful partners, as many share common challenges and may have devised solutions that can be replicated or learned from (OECD, 2017e)

72. Perhaps the most foundational and important step in moving more towards partnership-driven innovation is to open the channels of communication across sectors and silos. Research has shown that as the field of innovation evolves beyond just efficiency gains, civil servants will need to help discussions with potential industry partners early on (Baxter et al., 2018), These potential partners must be able to contribute ideas for consideration by the innovation team (i.e., dialogue is a two-way street).

73. To achieve this, innovation teams should conduct partner identification exercises early on in design and implementation in order to seek out where partner contributions can "complement the unique expertise and assets of the public sector." (Baxter et al., 2018) Given the growing importance and necessity of partnerships, innovation teams should develop a strategy to balance and interpret the sometimes-competing priorities of these different groups. Leader should empower the teams to make decisions on how to proceed with what they learn.

74. In engaging in such partnerships, especially with members of the public, innovation teams must be active and responsive partners themselves. It is important to act on what is learned in a visible manner, to help ensure the value of collaboration is clear and that partners will want to maintain the practice (OECD, 2017e). In addition, as indicated by research on the topic, "Making such partnerships work will require trust on both sides and sharing of the value generated from the innovation developed." All partners must feel like

4.9. Failing fast and learning

75. Innovation is new, unknown and risky; by contrast governments have a statutory duty, democratic responsibility and political mandate to deliver public services in consistent and equal ways. Managing these tensions can be complicated for governments, where the risk of innovating appears far greater than the risk of maintaining the status quo (OECD, 2017a).

76. As touched on earlier in this paper, a major part of innovation is managing risk. No matter how well implemented an innovation project is, there is still a chance that it will fail. By being prepared for and expecting potential failures, and by handing these failures appropriately, risk can be minimized and the innovation project at hand may have a chance to iterate based on lessons learned from the failure and continue on.

77. An optimal approach to managing this risk and maximizing what can be learned from failures can be to "fail fast" (Kittle, 2017). Failing fast involves prototyping (see below) and piloting ideas with a smaller scope and fewer participants than a full rollout would involve. This allows the innovation team to try out ideas and see what works and

what does not (often based on the outcomes of success and performance measures, as discussed above). In some (perhaps many) cases, the innovation will fail in implementation. Because the project was piloted at a small scale, signs of failure can be detected more quickly and fewer people are affected. In addition, because there are fewer sunk costs, there will be less temptation to push on with an innovation that clearly is not working These aspects can help prevent what otherwise could have been a much more damaging failure if the project had been more significantly rolled out.

78. Regardless of whether the project failed or succeeded, there is always an opportunity to learn from it. With successes, lessons learned can be used to iterate on the project to even further enhance its potential and impact. With failures, innovation teams can evaluate what contributed to the failure. In some cases, these challenges can be overcome with a new version of the project. In other cases, the team may simply now know that a concept simply does not work and terminate the project.

79. One tool for learning from failure is the "blameless retrospective", which is discussed in the Tools section of this paper.

4.10. Prototyping and using agile and iterative approaches

80. Being "agile" is following a set of project management methodologies commonly used by innovative organizations because its practice emphasizes simplicity, quick iteration, and close customer collaboration. Agile is both a philosophy and an umbrella term for a collection of methodologies or approaches that share certain common characteristics. Agile methods, such as developing early prototypes and testing them with users (OECD, 2017a), enables a regular feedback loop and continuous improvements. Such methods are most often described in the areas of contracting, project management, design discovery, and software development. However, practically all government policies and services could benefit from an agile approach (US Government, 2018). Being agile and iterative breaks down risk into manageable chunks and provides early feedback as to what does and does not work.

81. In general, the agile philosophy is embedded in 12 principles, as laid out in the "agile manifesto" (see Box 4). Although these principles mention "software", public sector innovators are encouraged the think of the principles more broadly, and consider how they relate to their current and future innovation projects.

82. As can be seen in the core values and principles, agile is an iterative approach that uses highly collaborative approaches—both among team members and the team in collaboration with potential users or those impacted by a policy or service—designed so teams meet regularly to discuss progress, and that this progress is shown to users regularly for the purpose of obtaining feedback. The innovation team is then expected to prioritise and incorporate this feedback into the next iteration of the policy or service.

Box 4. Agile core values and principles

Core values:

• Individuals and interactions rather than processes and tools

• Operational functionality rather than exhaustive documentation

• Collaboration with the client rather than a contractual relationship

• Acceptance of change rather than compliance with plans

Principles:

• Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software.

• Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes harness change for the customer's competitive advantage.

• Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.

• Business people and developers must work together daily throughout the project.

• Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done.

• The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is face-to-face conversation.

• Working software is the primary measure of progress.

• Agile processes promote sustainable development. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to maintain a constant pace indefinitely.

• Continuous attention to technical excellence and good design enhances agility.

• Simplicity--the art of maximizing the amount of work not done--is essential.

• The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from self-organizing teams.

• At regular intervals, the team reflects on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behaviour accordingly.

Source: http://agilemanifesto.org/principles.html

83. Some examples of agile methods and tools are discussed in the Tools section of this paper. Compared with other approaches—such as “waterfall” approaches focused on developing a 100% solution up front—agile approaches allow version of policies and services to be launched earlier while mitigating the problems of being obsolete by the time they are released and unable to keep up with user needs.

4.11. Working in the open

84. As touched on in previous lifecycle reports, openness is an important component of innovation, and it is embedded in the OECD's definition of open government, "a culture of governance based on innovative and sustainable public policies and practices inspired by the principles of transparency, accountability, and participation that fosters democracy and inclusive growth." (OECD, 2016b)

85. Working in the open and innovation are intrinsically connected. Public sector innovation is both: 1) an enabler of openness; and 2) an output of openness.

86. As an enabler of openness, innovation projects often result in new tools, methodologies, and practices (e.g. crowdsourcing, user-centred design and prototyping) that can help government become more transparent and facilitate public engagement . In turn, once the public is are engaged, they can contribute their insights and perspectives that can lead to new and innovative products, services, and ways of working and thinking. For example, innovations in service delivery have targeted efforts to increase the access, quality and transparency of services, and to strengthen new forms of collaboration with actors from across society in the co design and co-creation of innovative solutions.

87. Openness also helps to bring down the silos that exist within governments to allow for cross-government linkages and synergies that may not have been possible before, thus helping to overcome one of the biggest challenges to innovation in government (OECD, 2016b).

88. In addition, working in the open builds trust with partners, the public, and leadership because progress is communicated every step of the way (18F, 2018b). Openness also helps to ensure successful innovation projects stick and, in optimal cases, can be replicated by others.

4.12. Updating, promoting, and storytelling

89. In the field of innovation, it is important to make the benefits of innovation real and palpable early on. Without this, it can often be difficult to find supporters to help implement and rally behind the implementation of good ideas. Similar to what happens in the product and service world, solutions are easy to adopt when they are tangible, visible and come with a clear value proposition. Strong communication and narratives can help overcome resistance by communicating this value to stakeholders and the public (OECD, 2017a).

90. Innovation teams can undertake a number of activities to communicate problems, innovative solutions, and progress in implementing projects. As a given, they should be regularly providing updates to all of the relevant stakeholders that are key to the project. However, more broad-based comms can help in generating excitement and maintaining momentum for the project. One of the most common and most effective method is to maintain a blog with regular updates about project implementation, and the challenges encountered, lessons learned, and perhaps lives impacted along the way.[9] A regular newsletter is another common and easy approach.[10] Innovation teams should also explore leveraging social media networks like Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook to further amplify

[9] For example, see OPSI's blog at https://oecd-opsi.org/blog.

[10] For example, see OPSI's newsletter at http://tiny.cc/opsinewsletter.

their efforts. Although government innovators are often of the modest type, it is important that some of these communications by the innovation team be self-promotional to garner interest.

91. Many of these external communications pieces will likely be about major project milestones and idea exploration. However, innovation teams should also use storytelling as a powerful form of communication. Stories have been a part of human culture since the dawn of language. Storytelling is about communicating in an ever-changing world, telling the "story" of change helps build support and engage people by talking about the past, present and possible futures can be used by leaders and others within organisations in a number of ways: to explain who you are, to teach lessons, to outline the future, and to inspire action in others. OPSI's *Core Skills for Public Sector Innovation* identifies four aspects of storytelling that improve the effectiveness of public sector innovators (See Box 5).

Box 5. Key aspects for storytelling

Using narratives

Stories communicate facts, opinions, and emotions by relaying the experiences of key actors and stakeholders. This situational approach to communication can help audiences better comprehend key messages. Stories should be "living documents" that adapt to focus on an audience's priorities and as projects progress. Stories don't just have to talk about the past and the present but can be a useful way to engage people in talking about **the (possible) future.**

Telling user stories

By incorporating 'user stories' that set out the current user experience when interacting with a service and/or the future experience that users will have as a result of the changes officials can help others empathise with users and better understand user needs.

Working multiple media and methods

Stories don't just have to be verbal constructions, images and graphics can provide useful metaphors or ways to help bring key messages to life. Videos allow ways for the voices of others to be part of the story you are telling. Interactive methods can enable your audience to build their own journey through your narrative, or to contribute their own stories to it.

Teaching lessons

Sharing experience is a crucial component to public sector innovation. By telling the story of your own innovation projects you can share lesson about what you found worked and didn't work, so that others can learn from your own experience.

Source:https://www.oecd.org/media/oecdorg/satellitesites/opsi/contents/files/OECD_OPSI-core_skills_for_public_sector_innovation-201704.pdf

4.13. Preparing for oversight

92. Innovation, by definition, means doing something different than the status quo. In some cases, it means challenging or even break existing (or perceived) rules about the way things need to be done. As a result, innovation projects can often catch the eye of public sector oversight entities, such as Inspectors General, independent committees, and auditors.

93. Such entities are sometimes viewed by public servants as antagonistic or generally unsupportive of innovation. In addition, research indicates that a focus on compliance and control can result in unintended consequences of stifling innovation, distorting the behaviour of civil servants towards matching output targets in anticipation of audit (OECD, 2015b; 2012) This can dissuade them from accepting the challenges that come with innovation and stop them piloting new and potentially successful ideas. In addition, protectors of the status quo can use critical oversight findings to kill an innovation project of cast doubt on its legitimacy and impact.

94. This is not to say that innovation and oversight cannot coexist, however. Some government oversight entities, such as the Australian National Audit Office, have been proactive in enabling civil servant to try new things while also appropriately managing risk and meeting rules and accountability requirements. The office published *Innovation in the Public Sector: Enabling Better Performance, Driving New Directions*[11] as a "framework for understanding the processes that underpin innovation in the public sector and to provide practical insights and a resource for practitioners."

95. In addition government innovators can help make oversight work for them rather than against them. For instance, savvy innovators, especially those in senior leadership capacity, can use existing rules and process to great effect in supporting innovation by demonstrating how existing rules and processes lead to sub-par performance, which can help focus a light on an area where innovation is needed.

96. Not everyone is in such a position, though, leaving civil servants to either shy away from innovation or embrace innovation while bring prepared for eventual oversight. One tactic that may help with oversight is simply contacting and discussing potential implementation approaches with relevant oversight entities. OPSI has observed that the teams implementing innovative projects often try to fly below the radar of oversight entities, but this is not a long-term strategy. OPSI has also observed that oversight entities are welcome to discussing potential approaches and identifying considerations that innovators should take to help mitigate future challenges.

97. In any case, a critical step in preparing for oversight is documentation. Although one of the agile core values is to favour "operational functionality rather than exhaustive documentation", innovation teams must still carry out some level of documentation to ensure they are being accountable to the public and to help them withstand oversight. In general, such documentation should include an exploration of the legal landscape and how the innovation project and associates processes and activities fit within. It should also demonstrate that the team appropriately considered risks and opportunities and have made efforts to make decisions that take these risks into account.

98. Working in the open, as discussed above, helps to reinforce documentation needs. When activities are done in the open, innovators often feel compelled to provide background information on how the project got to where it is and to explain why decisions were made and present underlying rationale and evidence.

[11] https://marklmatthews.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/innovation_in-the_public_sector.pdf

5. The Contributors and Channels

99. Although a core team is likely to be responsible for implementing a project, the project will benefit from the contributions of many more and perhaps impact countless others, both in government and in society. These contributors and the channels by which they can contribute to implementation can be discussed as different categories. Different categories and different players will have different perspectives of the innovation project.

100. This section discusses one possible categorisation of the different contributors and the different channels, as initially posited in the lifecycle study on generating ideas (see the generating ideas lifecycle study for fuller details on each). The specifics may vary between countries and organisations, however the point is to reflect on who is likely to contribute to implementation in some way, and what, if anything, that signifies.

101. Understanding the players in the innovation ecosystem that have a hand in implementation is important. Different segments may have differing expectations associated with projects that involve them, whether they contribute directly to making the innovation happen, or if their involvement is more indirect, such as providing feedback or opting to not reject the project (e.g., members of the public who are impacted by the innovation). For instance, a politician may see an innovation project as a signature initiative or a potential legacy, whereas civil servants will think about it more in terms of how it impacts (or doesn't) their day-to-day work. Thus, different categories of contributors may need to be considered and addressed in different ways.

102. Therefore, public sector organisations may wish to consider their different contributor segments, and how these segments may be involved, whether their contributions may be significant or minor.

5.1. Who contributes to implementing innovation projects?

103. In segmenting potential contributors for implementing projects, five different groupings are proposed:

- The "community", meaning the broader society
- The political class, meaning politicians and those engaged in political processes
- Internal contributors, meaning those working within government and the public sector
- The broader government "supply chain" or "ecosystem", meaning those involved in the delivery of government mandated services or conducting research that is paid for by government
- Outsiders, those at the edge, which might not necessarily be reflected in the other segments

104. Sometimes a contributor may fit into multiple categories at once. The consistency (or otherwise) of ideas from a particular segment may give insight into how a problem is perceived and where there may be support or resistance around particular ideas.

5.1.1. Community

105. This segment of potential contributors includes those who live in communities that are affected by the problem that is to be addressed, and people who are using or impacted by the service being implemented. It might also include general citizens and businesses and other organisations.

5.1.2. Political

106. Political actors include politicians and their advisors, lobby groups, think tanks, subject or process-matter experts, activists and vested interests, those with a stake in the current state or those with a strong agenda for change. The political segment is generally one of the most significant as a contributor or as a stakeholder, as they can ultimately make or break the project being implemented.

107. Political actors will generally have a very clear sense of what they want out of a project. In fact, in some instances, they may personally associate themselves with the project and thereby take personal responsibility for its success. This can be both a positive and a negative, as the project will receive enhanced attention and likely resources, but also may face micromanagement, attacks from opposing sides, and the expectation that failure is not an acceptable outcome no matter what.

5.1.3. Internal

108. Internal contributors include public sector employees, such as colleagues within the same organisation or from within other government agencies. In implementation, these individuals will be the most important in doing the actual day-to-day work and project managing.

5.1.4. Broader Supply Chain & Ecosystem

109. Businesses and civil society and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) are frequently (and increasingly) involved in implementing public sector innovation projects. In addition, governments fund a large amount of research and development activities through universities. These entities form a broader ecosystem that contributes to project implementation.

5.1.5. Outsiders

110. Outsiders are individuals that are on the fringes or the edge of innovation. Examples include edge cases, early adopters, and disruptors (e.g., individuals or start-ups pushing emerging technologies). Outsiders can often provide a unique perspective and can help those on the inside think of their innovations in new ways.

5.2. Channels for implementation

111. There are a variety of ways these categories of people can contribute to the project. In many instances, the public sector will provide these channels, intentionally seeking to involve others in implementation. In other instances, the channels may be

initiated by external individuals or entities that are particularly interested on the topics at hand, or potentially are having problems they would like to have addressed. Some of the key channels include:

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- Formal networks
- Informal networks
- Working groups and task forces
- Feedback loops and complaint systems

5.3. Develop Strategies that consider Contributors and Channels

113. Given the variety of potential contributors, and the channels by which they can touch on an innovation project, innovation teams should conduct a strategy design session where they brainstorm all of the potential contributors and channels, prioritise their potential utility or even detrimental risk to the project, and develop engagement strategies to leverage the knowledge, skills, abilities, and positions of positive contributors, and mitigations strategies for those who may seek to negatively contribute to a project.t This should be done at the onset of the implementation process, or even earlier if possible.

Readers are encouraged to read more in-depth about the various contributors and channels in the *Generating Ideas* alpha-version lifecycle study.[12]

[12] https://oecd-opsi.org/whats-possible-generating-innovative-ideas-2.

6. Tools that can Support in Implementing Projects

114. Implementing projects in the public sector, even innovative ones, is not a new concept and there are multiple tools, methods and practices that have been developed or found to be useful in the implementation stage. In some ways this diversity is a challenge – when there are so many, it can be difficult to choose which might be most appropriate when. Following from the earlier sections, the most relevant tools are likely to be those that are good at:

- Working in a complex and rapidly changing environment and context
- Surveying the innovation landscape and understanding the factors involved in innovation
- Helping organisations to provide conditions that enable team to implement innovation projects
- Engaging with, and understanding the needs and perspectives of, stakeholders, users, and the public

115. As the previous sections have shown, there are a great many things that can have a bearing on project implementation and which ideally will be considered as part of the process, even if only in passing. But are there some core criteria for quickly identifying the respective contributions of the many different tools?

116. Five features are proposed here as criteria, acting as a distillation of what has been identified as being most relevant for an idea generation tool.

- **Help Structure and Execute Work:** Much of project implementation is about project management. Does the tool help innovation do the core task of implementation: getting the job done?
- **Support the Incorporation of Diverse Insights and Expertise:** Does the tool help to bring in thoughts, experiences, and lessons that may not have otherwise been possible with the innovation team alone?
- **Deal with Complex and Changing Contexts:** Does the tool position the innovation team to rapidly adjust or pivot in response to surprises, feedback, or learning new lessons as implementation unfolds?
- **Transcend Bureaucratic Silos:** Does the tool help innovators to reach beyond their office and organisation? Does it help ensure the innovation is not relegated to a "pocket" of innovation within government, thus stuck an unable to scale?
- **Utility for and Adoption by Users:** Does the tool help innovation teams maintain a user focus, thus facilitating adoption and preventing the innovation from fizzling out?

117. Each of these features should help innovation teams implement projects in various phases on implementation (e.g., prototyping, scaling, failing, etc.)

118. It should be noted that there may not always be a clear distinction between each of the tools listed here – some things, such as crowdsourcing and challenge prizes, might be regarded as two aspects of the same tool. Other tools, such as agile methods, may be a bundle of many subordinate tools or particular approaches that may vary on the needs and context at hand. In addition, implementing projects will likely draw on multiple tools and combine them in different ways, thereby strengthening or weakening particular features. Therefore Table 2 should be considered as a prompting guide rather than a precise map. This guide is then elaborated on with a description of each of the tools and with links to more specific guidance (where known/identified).

Table 2. Tools to assist with implementing projects

Features → Tools ↓	Help Structure and Execute Work	Support the Incorporation of Diverse Insights and Expertise	Deal with Complex and Changing Contexts	Transcend Bureaucratic Silos	Utility for and Adoption by Users
Toolkits	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓
Case studies and best practices	✓	✓✓	✓	X	X
Project management tools	✓✓	X	✓	✓	X
Crowdsourcing	X	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓
Living implementation guidance	X	✓	✓✓	✓	X
Partnerships	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	X
Networks	X	✓✓	✓	✓✓	X
Co-creation	✓	✓✓	X	✓	✓✓
Innovation labs and units	✓✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Behavioural insights	X	✓✓	✓	X	✓
Agile methods and prototypes	✓✓	✓	✓✓	X	✓
User-centred design methods	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Blameless retrospectives	✓	X	✓	X	X

Table Key:
X = unlikely to contribute much on this feature
✓ = will likely contribute somewhat on this feature
✓✓ = will likely contribute strongly on this feature

6.1. Toolkits

119. It is often the case that innovators in other organisations, agencies, or countries have already come up with solutions and repeatable processes to tacking innovation challenges. Sometimes these innovators develop toolkits, playbooks, how-to guides, and other resources to help institutionalise what they have learned so help it make it easier for people trying to achieve the same. OPSI has identified over 120 (and growing) toolkits that already exist to help public sector innovators understand these tools and to apply them in their own contexts, and it is working to develop a "Meta Toolkit" that aggregates the known universe of public sector innovation toolkits, covering dozens of topics from countries all round the world. The Meta Toolkit will help innovators navigate through these voluminous resources and help them find the tools that will be most relevant and useful for what they are trying to achieve. The categorized and searchable compendium of toolkits that will be the source of knowledge for the Meta Toolkit is publicly available. The full Meta Toolkit is expected to be launched in summer 2018 on the OPSI website.[13]

Box 6. Resource for using toolkits

"OPSI Meta-Toolkit Compendium", OECD OPSI

6.2. Case studies and best practices

120. OPSI considers something to be innovative if the idea that is being implemented is completely new, *or* if it is completely new to the context to which it is applied. Innovation is not always about re-inventing the wheel, and one goal of innovators should be to leverage as much of the insights and work that have been done by others as possible, and in turn, contribute their insights for the benefit of others.

121. One way of achieving this is to seek out case studies and best practices from other innovation teams. These often break down important details related to innovations, including its success factors, challenges, and lessons learned. In some cases, templates, tools, software code, and other materials are also provided.

122. Although it does much more today, OPSI was originally created to serve as a living repository of public sector innovation and best practices. This is still part of OPSI's mission today (see resources Box 7 below).

[13] See https://oecd-opsi.org.

Box 7. Some resources for case studies and best practices

- Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI)
- Centre for Public Impact
- Social Innovation Community Learning Repository
- Government Innovators Network, Harvard Kennedy School

6.3. Project management tools

123. There are a number of known and testing project management tools that can assist innovation teams in moving beyond proposals and into implementing projects.

Results framework

124. A results matrix can help transform the general proposal into more specific project that is widely understood by stakeholders. As stated above, an important step of implementing innovation projects is determining what success looks like and setting goals and measures.

125. As articulated by The World Bank Independent Evaluation Group (2012), who created a useful resource for implementers, a results framework is an "explicit articulation (graphic display, matrix, or summary) of the different levels, or chains, of results expected from a particular intervention—project, program, or development strategy. The results specified typically comprise the longer-term objectives (often referred to as "outcomes" or "impact") and the intermediate outcomes and outputs that precede, and lead to, those desired longer-term objectives." Such a framework can help innovation teams know when they are on track or whether they are in danger of failing.

Critical path analysis

126. Critical path analysis can help innovation teams identify the key considerations and interdependencies that factor into a project. Through identifying these aspects, it helps to identity which activities must be completed first before other can follow (OECD, n.d.).

Gantt chart

127. One the general activities become known, a Gantt chart is a type of bar charts that helps innovation teams sequence and track them. A Gantt chat shows activities (tasks or events) displayed against time. On the left of the chart is a list of the activities and along the top is a suitable time scale. Each activity is represented by a bar; the position and length of the bar reflects the start date, duration and end date of the activity. This allows you to see at a glance (OECD, n.d.):

- what the various activities are,
- when each activity begins and ends,
- how long each activity is scheduled to last,

- where activities overlap with other activities, and by how much; and,
- the start and end date of the whole project.

Kanban board

128. A tool associated with agile methods (see below), a kanban board is "a tool for workflow visualization… Originally built using a whiteboard, it is split into columns and swim lanes. Each column represents a stage of the workflow while swim lanes separate different types of activities. When a task enters your workflow, it is placed on a Kanban card that goes through each column of the board".[14]

129. Kanban board can help teams prioritize tasks and visually move them through an implementation process (e.g., requested, in progress, done).

Box 8. Some project management resources

- "Designing a Results Framework for Achieving Results: A How-To Guide", Independent Evaluation Group, The World Bank Group
- "The Ultimate Guide to the Critical Path Method", Smartsheet
- "How to Create a Gantt Chart in Excel", Smartsheet
- "How We Use Kanban on the GOV.UK Publishing Platform Team", UK Government
- "Set Up a Team Wall" (non-digital form of a Kanban board), UK Government
- "What is a Kanban Board?", Planview LeanKit
- Trello (common Kanban software)

6.4. Crowdsourcing

130. Crowdsourcing is a tool help to educate, engage, and empower the public to apply their curiosity and contribute their talents to a wide range of real-world problems. By enabling and scaling the use of open innovation methods such as crowdsourcing, the public sector can harness the public's ingenuity to accelerate innovation, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government, such as through contributing to the design and implementation of innovation projects (US Government, 2018). The value of crowdsourcing for idea generation has been explored in the previous OPSI lifecycle study on Generating Idea; however, the tool can perhaps be even more powerful in implementation.

131. Crowdsourcing allows implementation to be conducted at scales of magnitude greater than before. It involves capitalising on the Internet and large groups of people, particularly via online communities, to harvest "collective intelligence," a culmination of

[14] https://kanbanize.com/kanban-resources/getting-started/what-is-kanban-board/

the knowledge of the crowd, and accomplish tasks that might have traditionally been given to small groups. Crowdsourcing can help process data and information quickly, on unprecedented scales and with better quality control than any individual or small group can attain. Crowdsourcing therefore offers cost and speed benefits, the potential to make new discoveries in the patterns of large datasets, and the possibility of near real-time testing and application of new approaches (OECD, 2015a).

Box 9. Mexico City's Mapaton Initiative

Mexico City has one of the largest public bus systems in the world. Its buses provide over 60% of all transit in the city, with about 14 million daily riders on 29 000 buses that run more than 1 500 routes. However, in part due to its size and complexity, the city had no data on or maps of this mode of transport. As a result, no data-driven policy bus related transportation policy was possible, and citizens had no bus map to help them move about the city.

To address this, Mexico City's Laboratorio para la Ciudad, an experimental office and creative think-tank that reports to the Mayor, partnered with 12 governmental and civil society organisations to develop Mapatón CDMX: a crowdsourcing and gamification experiment to map the city's bus routes through civic collaboration and technology, using smartphones to feed GPS data to the city. The participants who mapped the most routes to earn the most points won tablets and cash prizes up to MXN 30 000 (Mexican pesos, about USD 1 700). Because smartphone users are concentrated in certain areas of the city, the city used an algorithm to assign neglected routes the most points. The algorithm constantly recalculated the point values of the routes to make sure the maximal number of routes was mapped. The citywide game attracted more than 4 000 participants who managed to accomplish the main mapping task in two weeks. The total cost of the programme was under USD 15 000. A number of other cities are considering replicating this platform in their own communities. The data generated are now available as OGD for others to use and build upon and to guide policy.

Sources: OECD (2017a), Embracing Innovation in Government: Global Trends, www.oecd.org/gov/innovative-government/embracing-innovation-in-government.pdf; Laboratorio para la Ciudad report to OPSI; Mendelson (2016), "Mapping Mexico City's vast informal transit system", www.fastcompany.com/3058475/mapping-mexico-citys-vast-informal-transit-system.

Box 100. Some resources on leveraging crowdsourcing

- "Crowdsourcing", Open Policy Making Toolkit
- "Crowdsourcing Government: Lessons from Multiple Disciplines", Helen K. Liu
- "Federal Crowdsourcing and Citizen Science Toolkit", US Government
- "Smarter Crowdsourcing for Anti-corruption: A Handbook of Innovative Legal, Technical, and Policy Proposals and a Guide to their Implementation", Noveck et al.
- "Using Collaborative Crowdsourcing to Give Voice to Diverse Communities", Campus Technology.
- "US Public Participation Playbook", US Government

6.5. Living implementation guidance

132. The traditional approach to developing government policy and its associated implementation guidance involves a team of skilled public servants drafting the policy and guidance based on their knowledge, experience, and research. It also generally involves getting input from other stakeholders in government, and maybe doing a public consultation. At the end of the process, the policy and guidance are published, typically as a PDF, and then it exists as the new rules that government agencies must follow. However, sometimes what is issued has flaws or gaps that become apparent immediately, and there is little to no ability to adjust the policy and guidance as implementation evolves and the context changes.

133. The contexts that governments exist in today are complex and changes in rapid and potentially unforeseeable ways. The traditional way of pushing out inflexible policies is increasingly no longer suitable. Some governments are moving to adopt living policies and implementation guidance that can constantly evolve, including with direct, transparent, two-way communication with the public. For example, the US's Project Open Data is a collection of code, tools, case studies and schemas to help agencies implement the policy and unlock the potential of government information. It also serves as living policy guidance that is continually refined and enhanced to assist agencies in implementation. Any public official or member of the public can open a discussion threat or propose a line edit or addition to the implementation guidance.

Box 11. Some resources on having open consultations and living policy

"Project Open Data", (example of living policy) US Government

6.6. Partnerships

134. As discussed, each sector (public, non-profit and civil society, and industry) has unique strengths and competencies, and innovation in government accomplishes its biggest successes when all three come together. This can take shape as formal Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), or through more informal agreements and collaborations.

135. Partnerships within and across sectors "work best when all partners benefit, and incentive structures and expectations are set from an early stage." (US Government, 2018)

136. Although partnering outside of government can be challenging especially when getting started, however the long-term benefits can be significant.

137. While linking up with companies and other organisations is what is often discussed when talking about partnerships, intra-government partnerships where multiple offices or agencies come together can also result in innovation impacts that one group working alone could not achieve.

Box 12. Some resources for building partnerships

- "Business Model Canvas", (broader business model design tool, but can also help identify key and strategic partners) Srategyzer
- "Platform Design Toolkit", (toolkit is broader than partnerships but help identify ways to map out ecosystems and user types, which can help in identifying partners) Boundaryless SR

6.7. Networks

138. Countries are increasingly setting up effective yet relatively simple digital networks and Communities of Practice to help innovators transcend bureaucratic silos and fragmented government structures to help push implementation forward in a consistent and unified way. In fact, a fairly recent OECD (2016c) survey found that that 63% of OECD countries (22 out of 35) have innovation networks across the civil service. In the implementation phase, such networks are especially important when scaling the project from a small pilot for a broader implementation.

139. A number of countries have set up effective yet relatively simple digital networks and Communities of Practice to help innovators transcend bureaucratic silos and fragmented government structures to help push implementation forward in a consistent and unified way. This is especially important when scaling the project from a small pilot for a broader implementation. Some examples of these networks include:

- **UK Communities**: a series of communities hosted on Google Groups on a wide variety of topics, such as accessibility, agile delivery, and performance analysis, among others.
- **Canada's GCconnex and GCcollab**: internal and external social media and collaboration tools and communities built with free and open source software (FOSS).

- **US Communities of Practice**: Nineteen communities where people in government can come together to learn, share and collaborate. Each community generally includes a "listserv",[15] list of resources, and regular meetings.

140. A number of other governments are also leveraging third-party collaboration and network building tools that require very little start-up efforts on the part of government. For example:

- **UK Communities** is series of communities hosted on Google Groups on a wide variety of topics, such as accessibility, agile delivery, and performance analysis, among others.
- the UK's Government Digital Service (GDS) has a channel on Slack that is open to anyone in the central government and hosts a discussion on a variety of topics.[16]

141. As such networks now exist in most OECD countries, innovation teams should seek to leverage them to help advance implementation and to seek additional allies and collaborators.

6.8. Co-creation

142. While co-design is a valuable tool in the Generating Ideas phase, co-creation through co-production and co-delivery can assist innovation teams in implementing projects that meet users' needs and make them feel a part of the result. Engaging many users in creating these solutions helps to create ownership, ensures better results, and helps in securing greater tolerance for potential failures (OECD, 2017a).

Box 13. Some resources on how to co-create

- "Co-production Toolkit", Social Innovation Exchange (SIX)
- "The Challenge of Co-Production", NESTA
- "Danish Design Centre's Tools", (see tools tagged with "Co-create") Danish Design Centre
- "Participation and Co-creation Toolkit: From Usual Suspects to Business as Usual", Open Government Partnership (OGP)
- "A Toolkit for Co-production", EQUIL – Equality in Learning

[15] A listserv is an application that distributes messages to subscribers on an electronic mailing list wherein any approved member of a list can send an email that goes to every other member of the list

[16] Slack (slack.com) is a digital collaborative workspace. A Slack channel is a conversation space where discussions can be organised around any topic.

6.9. Innovation labs and units

143. As discussed in the Generating Ideas lifecycle study, innovation labs and units vary greatly in nature, but are generally a dedicated space and/or process for engaging with innovation within an organisation. They increasingly involve a dedicated core team that facilitates a project-based approach to innovation. They may use a range of disciplines and tools, though many have a basis in some form of design thinking or human centred design.

144. In implementing projects, innovation labs and units can overcome some of the barriers to public sector innovation, providing "room" to develop new ways of doing things. They are a structural response to the cross-cutting and interdisciplinary nature of innovation projects, and to the tension between continuing business-as-usual while introducing new approaches (OECD, 2017a). Because of the special status and mandate they are given by leadership, they may have an enhanced ability to overcome antibodies and bureaucratic inertia. However, unless they have the ability to integrate well with other parts of the organisation, this same special status may lead to resentment among other staff and can make it more difficult for their innovations to last long-term because of their outsider status.

Box 14. Some resources on innovation labs and units

- "A Guide for Making Innovation Offices Work", IBM Center for The Business of Government
- "Innovation Teams and Labs: A Practice Guide", NESTA
- "Innovation.gov Toolkit: Innovation Labs", US Government
- "Innovation Labs: 10 Defining Features", Stanford Social Innovation Review
- "Innovation Labs: A Do-it-Yourself Guide", Unicef

6.10. Behavioural insights

145. The OECD defines behavioural insights as, "an inductive approach to policy making that combines insights from psychology, cognitive science, and social science with empirically-tested results to discover how humans actually make choices."

146. Whereas other tools help innovators take an *iterative* approach to design and implementation, behavioural insights help them to take an *inductive* approach, where experiments replace and challenge established assumptions based on what is thought to be the rational behaviour of people and business. In this way, behavioural insights inform decision makers with evidence of "actual" behaviours for policy making and implementation (OECD, 2017g). The study of behaviours helps to examine the complexities and contradictions of human actions and allow the use of behavioural insight initiatives to nudge behaviour. This can help innovation teams design and implement projects in ways that maximize value.

147. Approximately 200 institutions around the world are applying behavioural insights for public policy,[17] including the design and implementation of innovation projects. The UK's Behavioural Insights Team, for example, has developed a tool called Predictiv to help governments and other clients run behavioural insights experiments on a pool of online volunteers (see Box 15).

Box 115. Predictiv behavioural experiments platform

Predictiv is an online platform for running behavioural experiments. It enables governments to run randomised controlled trials (RCTs) with an online population of participants, and to test whether new policies and interventions work before they are deployed in the real world. After a short design phase, the tests take one to two weeks to complete, enabling policy makers to obtain responses to questions that would otherwise have taken many months (or years) to answer. As such, it has the potential to profoundly change governments' working methods. While time constraints and political realities sometimes make it hard to run "field trials" on live policy, Predictiv makes experimental methods more accessible.

Sources: http://www.oecd.org/gov/innovative-government/embracing-innovation-in-government-2018.pdf, www.predictiv.co.uk.

148. There are a number of other tools available to help innovators explore this topic (see Box 16).

[17] http://www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/behavioural-insights.htm

Box 116. Some resources on using behavioural insights

- "A/B Testing Tool", ideas42
- "Behavioural Insights Toolkit", UK Department of Transportation
- "Behavioural Insights Toolkit", US Internal Revenue Service
- "Behavioural Insights and Public Policy: Lessons from Around the World", (includes dozens of case studies), OECD
- "Beta Guide to Developing Behavioural Interventions for Randomised Controlled Trials", Australian Government
- "Brains, Behavior, & Design Toolkit", Brains, Behavior & Design Group
- "Designing for Behaviour Change Toolkit", bridgeable
- The European Nudging Network (TEN)
- "Four Simple Ways to Apply Behavioural Insights", The Behavioural Insights Team
- Journal of Behavioural Public Administration (JBPA)
- "MINDSPACE", The Behavioural Insights Team

6.11. Agile methods and prototypes

149. As discussed above, being agile and iterative can break down risk into reasonable pieces and promote the delivery of service functionality early and often, always evolving with the changing needs of users. A number of tools and methods are available to help innovation teams implement their projects in an agile way (e.g., Kanban boards, team walls). Such tools range from project management software to different types of meetings and implementation schedules (e.g., daily stand-up meetings, work sprints, and retrospectives). Testing prototypes early and often with users to develop continuous feedback loops is also an important component.

Box 17. Some resources on how to use agile methods

- "Innovation.gov Toolkit: Agile", US Government
- "From Waterfall to Agile: How a Public Sector Agency Successfully Changed its System-Development Approach to become Digital", McKinsey
- "GOV.UK Service Manual: Agile Delivery", UK Government
- "GOV.UK Service Manual: Agile Delivery Tools and Techniques", UK Government
- "Paper Prototyping: A Guide For Surfacing Innovative Ideas More Quickly", Rockefeller Foundation
- "Strategy Sprints – A DIY Guide", Innovation Excellence
- "Scenes: Every great experience starts with a great story", SAP

6.12. User-centred design methods

150. User-centred design—often also called human-centred design or design thinking—helps government official to think about how people interact with systems and processes, which, when put into practice in implementing innovation projects, can result in government services that not only solve the needs of the users but are also enjoyable to use. User-centred services help governments to view citizens holistically, and recognise that each individual has specific wants and needs. Most-often discussed in context of the technology industry, user-centred methods are increasingly being applied to public service delivery (OECD, 2017e).

Box 18. Human-centred design principles

User-centred design is a development method that helps to ensure a service will be easy to use. The principles that support user-centred design are:

1. The design is based upon an explicit understanding of users, tasks and environments.
2. Users are involved throughout design and development.
3. The design is driven and refined by user-centred evaluation.
4. The process is iterative.
5. The design addresses the whole user experience.
6. The design team includes multidisciplinary skills and perspectives

Source: www.userfocus.co.uk.

151. User-centred design is not simply one tool, but rather is a bundle of methods that can be applied to a number of phases of the innovation lifecycle, including implementing projects. Each of the methods has a core guiding requirement: talking with and observing real users to understand their needs, context, and challenges in order to come up with design concepts that might address these challenges, and then test them with real users (18F, 2018). Examples of these methods can be seen in the resources below, including in the United States government's 18F Methods Cards.[18] Released under a Creative Commons 0 license, any organisation is free to leverage and adapt the cards to meet their own organisation needs.

Box 19. Some resources on how to use user-centred design methods

- "18F Method Cards", 18F
- "Design Project Guide", Stanford University
- "IDEO Design Kit", IDEO
- "Inclusion Toolkit: Designing a User-Centred Living Lab from the Ground Up", Danish Design Centre
- "Innovation.gov Toolkit: Human-Centred Design", US Government
- "Open Innovation Toolkit", Mozilla Foundation
- "Service Design Playbook", Government of British Columbia
- "User Centred Design Toolkit", Government of South Australia

6.13. Blameless retrospectives

152. Blameless retrospectives, also known as postmortems, is a meeting in which all members of a team come together to reflect on a project and have an open and honest conversation about what has worked well and what has not worked well. The "prime directive" is a blameless retrospective is the believe that, "regardless of what we discover, we understand and truly believe that everyone did the best job they could, given what they knew at the time, their skills and abilities, the resources available, and the situation at hand". (Kerth, 2001). This approach fosters trust among team members and helps them to move forward. They can be particularly important to identify the factors that led to failure.

[18] https://methods.18f.gov/about/

Box 20. Some resources on how to hold blameless retrospectives

- "Blameless PostMortems and a Just Culture", John Allspaw, Code as Craft
- "Etsy's Debriefing Facilitation Guide for Blameless Postmortems", John Allspaw, Code as Craft
- "The Human Side of Postmortems", David Zwieback, O'Reilly Media
- "Project Retrospectives: A Handbook for Team Reviews", Normal Kerth

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