

# The nationwide Public Sector Innovation Internship Program (PSIIP)

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**Organisation:** The National Centre for Public Sector Innovation (i.d. Center for Offentlig Innovation (COI))

**Country:** Denmark

**Level of government:** Regional/State government

**Sector:** General public services

**Type:** Communication, Human Resources, Organisational Design, Partnerships, Public Service

**Launched in:** 2015

**Overall development time:** 10 month(s)

**Link to the innovation's website**

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# Description

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The programme provides an opportunity for public sector employees (state sector, regions, and municipalities – all types of public sector workplaces) to gain new insight on a particular field, method or product and service and creates a network of contacts. The participants come from various backgrounds, levels and ranks. Among them you will find schoolteachers, nurses, engineers, senior civil servants and even politicians. You can take part for 25 days by hosting an internship for one or more interns, or by taking on an internship at another public sector workplace. All of the participants, hosts and interns, apply online by filling out a questionnaire describing who they are and what sort of match they are looking for. Applicants get matched and every bit of the matching process is conducted online. The costs for the participants, besides time and effort, are nothing.

The idea of an internship is not new, but it has never been made on a national level that goes across disciplines, sectors and geography.

There are three potentials for scaling 1. The programme can be extended to include private companies and NGOs. This can strengthen innovation made collaborated between the public and the private (in Danish: OPI). and The National Centre for Public Sector Innovation has as an experiment for the 2016 edition of the programme to explore this potential. 2. The Framework is already copied by several municipalities where they have the Innovation Internship within their own organisation. 3. The programme can be extended even further. Why not then, expand the concept beyond the Danish borders and make an OECD Innovation Internship programme.

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## Why the innovation was developed

- The programme is facilitated in order to accelerate public sector innovation. A main point from the newer research is that the spread of innovation not only happens by itself, but through real experience between people. Therefore, there is significance for carefully fostered relational processes which can support the knowledge from adaption of one context to another context. Thus making the programme a shortcut to innovation. Research shows that three out of four innovations in the public sector is completely or partially recycled from others' solutions, and four out of five innovations in cooperation with others outside own organisations. At the same time, research shows that innovations are largely spread through relationships. And The Innovation Internship creates precisely that. Therefore there is big value to be had – Whether your workplace is hosting a visit from one or more innovation interns or if you take on an internship at another public sector workplace.
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## Objectives

Enhance transparency, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve efficiency, Improve service quality

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## Main beneficiaries

Businesses, Government bodies, Government staff

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## Existing similar practices

### Innovationspraktik

In public administration of my country

The municipality Holstebro

The programme offers the same sort of internship, just only within the municipality

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# Results

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## Efficiency

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## Effectiveness

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## Other improvements

- it creates networks and diffuses public innovation which contributes to the public sector getting more effective.

# Development

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## Design

The National Centre for Public Sector Innovation generated the idea after investigating the needs to more easily access innovative practices and because we know from research that innovation is spread through personal meetings. Design time: 6 month(s)

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## Testing

- We tested the framework on ourselves (pilot testing and bodystorming) and explored other similar solutions while developing the learning framework.

Testing time: 1 month(s)

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## Implementation

### Tools used:

- The National Centre for Public Sector Innovation is working with a network of partners to ensure that the Innovation Internship has diversity and a local identity. The network has helped us with recruiting and spreading the message about the programme and helped develop the concept for the programme.

### Resources used:

Implementation time: 3 month(s)

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## Challenges and solutions

- It is a lot of work to match. The administration is great and thus we have developed a system for the second version that helps in the matchmaking. As the programme is voluntary and depended on registrations from both hosts and interns, it can be a challenge to maintain a balance between the number of hosts and interns.
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## Partnerships

### See below

Academics and Research Bodies, None, Other Public Sector

The National Centre for Public Sector Innovation is working with a network of partners to ensure that the Innovation Internship has diversity and a local identity. Our partner network consists of (in Danish): idélinikken Region Hovedstaden Region Midtjylland University College Sjælland Spinderihallerne Ph.D. Susanne Justesen, Innoversity CPH, made the theoretical learning framework

The partnerships were made to ensure that the programme has diversity and a local identity. The collaboration with Ph.D. Susanne Justesen, expert in learning theory, provided the programme with a qualified and theoretical base. It ensured that the internship not only would be a good experience, but that there would be actually valuable learning from it.

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# Lessons Learned

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## Lessons Learned

- A lesson learned was that for the internships where we made contact with potential hosts actually were the least successful ones. The important thing is therefore to stick to the voluntary nature that runs the programme.
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## Conditions for success

- We would recommend a central unit to manage the administrative load, if it is to function on a national level across sectors

