



Public Sector Innovation Course: Government Labs, Policy Pilots and GovTech

22 – 26 February 2027

Amsterdam - Zuidas business district hotel



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Introduction:

Public sector innovation, covering government labs, policy pilots and GovTech, is a 5-day course for innovation unit staff, public service owners and policy and transformation managers, ending with a government innovation pilot charter and scaling plan. Ministries and agencies often launch promising pilots that stall because risk aversion, annual budget cycles, audit concerns and rigid procurement leave no route from experiment to mainstream service. Nominees already manage services, policies or change initiatives, and the course is taught through multi-sector case studies. CoreConcept Training Center delivers this public sector innovation course.

Course Objectives:

- Diagnose the barriers and drivers that shape innovation in a ministry or agency and assess its innovation readiness
- Build an agency innovation portfolio and strategy statement using the four facets of public sector innovation
- Design the mandate, operating model, team and funding of a government innovation unit or lab
- Plan policy prototypes, controlled pilots and regulatory sandbox trials with clear hypotheses, safeguards and exit rules
- Structure GovTech challenge procurement, open data releases and citizen co-creation that bring outside ideas into public services
- Prepare a government innovation pilot charter and scaling plan with evidence standards, risk controls and audit readiness

Target Audience:

- Staff of government innovation units, labs and excellence offices who run experiments for their agency
 - Public service owners accountable for the performance and redesign of citizen or business services
 - Policy managers who test new policy options before national or agency-wide roll-out
 - Transformation and strategy managers responsible for change portfolios in ministries and agencies
 - Managers in municipal and city service departments who sponsor smart service pilots
 - Procurement and partnership managers who engage startups and technology suppliers for public bodies
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Course Outline:

Day 1: Why Innovation in Government Is Different

- Public Versus Private Sector Innovation Drivers and Constraints Compared
- OPSI Four Facets of Public Sector Innovation Explained
- Risk Aversion, Accountability and Annual Budget Cycle Barriers
- Government Innovation Readiness Self-Assessment for an Agency
- Innovation Opportunity Scan Across Citizen Services and Policies

Day 2: Innovation Strategy, Portfolio and Government Labs

- Agency Innovation Portfolio Mapped Against the Four Facets
- Innovation Strategy Statement Linked to Ministry Priorities
- Government Innovation Unit Operating Models and Mandates Compared
- Public Innovation Lab Team Roles, Skills and Funding
- Nesta Innovation Spiral From Prompts to Systemic Change

Day 3: Citizen-Centred Design, Experimentation and Co-Creation

- Citizen Journey Map for a Pain-Point Public Service
- Policy Prototyping With Low-Fidelity Mock-Ups and User Testing
- Pilot Design, Randomised Trials and Control Group Selection
- Regulatory Sandbox Entry Criteria, Safeguards and Exit Rules
- Open Data Releases and Citizen Co-Creation Challenge Prizes

Day 4: GovTech Procurement, Behavioural Insights, Risk and Scaling

- GovTech Challenge-Based Procurement and Startup Engagement Routes
- Behavioural Insights Nudge Testing for Service Uptake
- Experiment Risk Register, Audit Trail and Ethics Review
- Public Value Measures and Standards of Evidence for Pilots
- Scaling Pathways From Successful Pilot to Mainstream Service

Day 5: Case Study Work on the Pilot Charter and Scaling Plan

- Smart City Service Case From the Service Owner Perspective
 - Social Benefits Uptake Case With Behavioural and Data Pilots
 - Pilot Hypothesis, Success Metrics and Stop-Go Criteria Drafting
 - GovTech Partner Selection and Audit Readiness Review for Case
 - Government Innovation Pilot Charter and Scaling Plan Completion
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Skills You Will Gain:

- Innovation Readiness Diagnosis
- Innovation Portfolio Balancing
- Innovation Unit Design
- Policy Prototyping
- Pilot and Trial Design
- Challenge-Based Procurement
- Experiment Risk Control
- Pilot Scale-Up Planning

Why Attend This Course:

- Produce a government innovation pilot charter and scaling plan for a case service, ready for the agency innovation committee or service owner
- Decide whether an idea should run as a prototype, a controlled pilot, a sandbox trial or a GovTech challenge before money is committed
- Avoid stalled pilots, audit findings and wasted supplier spend caused by unclear hypotheses, missing safeguards and no route to scale
- Share the portfolio map, pilot design template and experiment risk register with colleagues in the innovation unit and service teams

Conclusion:

Back at work, the participant hands the pilot charter and scaling plan to the agency innovation committee or service owner, who uses it to approve the pilot, its budget, safeguards and stop-go criteria. Audit and procurement colleagues use the risk register and partner selection notes to confirm the experiment is controlled. After the first pilot review, the unit should check which hypotheses held, whether the evidence meets the agreed standard and what the scaling decision requires next.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should participants prepare before the public sector innovation course on government labs, policy pilots and GovTech?

No specialist training is needed. Participants should manage a public service, policy area or change initiative and bring one idea or problem from their agency that could be tested as a pilot, so the case work and the charter template can be applied to it.

How does this public sector innovation course differ from a general innovation management system course?

It focuses on the conditions specific to government: accountability, audit, annual budgets, procurement rules and citizen trust. Management system clauses and corporate innovation labs are touched on only briefly; the weight is on pilots, sandboxes, GovTech challenges and scaling inside ministries and agencies.

Why do government policy pilots and GovTech trials often fail to scale in public sector innovation?

Most stall because they start without a clear hypothesis, evidence standard, budget owner or exit rule. When results arrive there is no agreed decision point, no funded route into mainstream services and no procurement path for the supplier, so the pilot ends quietly.

What do participants take back from the public sector innovation course on government labs, policy pilots and GovTech?

Participants return with a government innovation pilot charter and scaling plan for a case service, plus an agency innovation portfolio map, a pilot design template, an experiment risk register and a checklist for GovTech partner selection that can be reused on the next initiative.
