Innovation in the public sector in Canada

Title of the governance practices: Impact Canada and Canada's Deputy Ministers Task force on Public Sector Innovation

Summary of the governance practices

Announced in Budget 2017, Impact Canada is a whole-of-government effort that helps departments to accelerate the adoption of innovative approaches to deliver meaningful results to Canadians. The initiative reflects the need for and value of innovation in achieving government priorities and improving societal outcomes for citizens. Impact Canada promotes a wide range of innovative approaches.

In November 2017, Canada also launched the Deputy Ministers Task Force on public Sector Innovation (TF-PSI). The Task Force aims to play an action-oriented role in experimenting with innovative approaches, and helping the government achieve its policy priorities

Short description of the governance practices

Impact Canada promotes a range of innovative approaches including:

- Challenge prizes, which reward the first of best solution to a specific problem, based in a set of pre-determined criteria;
- Pay-for-Results instruments, which are approaches to funding that shift the focus towards issuing payment based on the achievement of positive and measurable results;
- Behavioural insights, which is the application of findings in the fields of psychology, economics and social sciences to the work of government. Practitioners commonly test these insights using rigorous experimental methodologies to understand what works in driving better public policy outcomes for citizens.

The Task Force on Public Sector Innovation supports relevant departments along two major themes:

- Core systems transformation to address outdated systems and process, especially in the areas of grants and contributions, procurement, co-creation, and human resources;

- Disruptive policy solutions to better understand disruptive technologies and encourage their adoption, crowd-source and co-design solutions with Canadians through public engagement vehicles such as Impact Canada, and develop interdepartmental solutions.

Achievement/Outcome of the governance practices

Impact Canada has succeeded in supporting disruption or defining and pursuing strategic priorities and ambitions when there were none before. Some examples include *Crush it!* (with Natural Resources Canada), *Building Educational Savings with Online Birth Registration and Social Assistance Programs* (with Employment and Social Development Canada).

Impact Canada has also endeavoured to support transformation with initiatives such *as Drug Checking Technology Challenge* (with Health Canada), *Increasing Access to Record Suspensions for Simple Cannabis Possession* (with Public Safety Canada), and *Sky's the Limit* (with Natural Resources Canada.