

# The role of experimental governance in regional innovation policy

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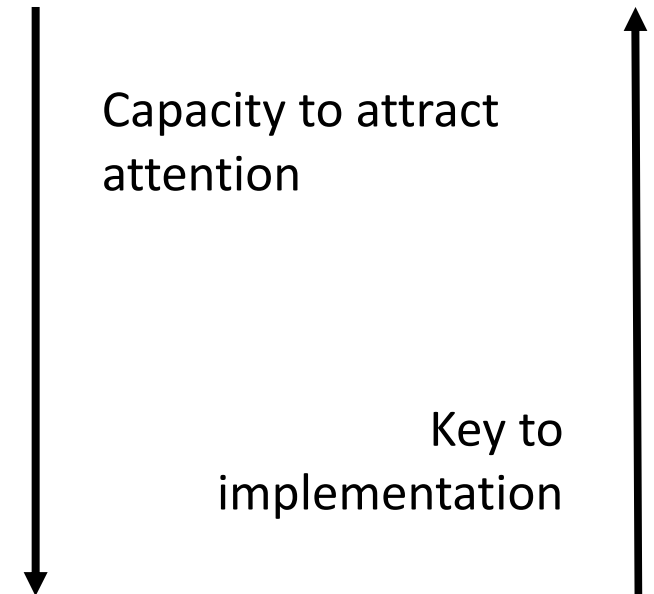
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# What is experimental governance

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3 dimensions to this concept:

1. Policy that is experimental
  - Novel and ambitious
2. Policy that is collaborative
  - Across sectors and levels of governance
3. Policy that includes learning mechanisms
  - Monitoring and learning



# Monitoring and learning (M&L)

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## How to do it?

- Worst case scenario: meet requirements
- Good case scenario: a team is dedicated to M&L
- Ideal case scenario: decentralised M&L

## Opportunities

- Learning and adaptation
- Accountability
- Coordination

## Challenges

- Lack of resources
- Typical implementation issues
- Knowledge is power

# Collaborative policy

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## How to do it?

- Wide stakeholder consultation
- Inclusive governance arrangements
- Feedback mechanisms

## Opportunities

- Knowledge of the system and its components
- Mobilise stakeholders
- Maintain commitments through implementation

## Challenges

- Stakeholders may not want innovation policy
- Stakeholders may lack capabilities
- Broad consultation challenges entrenched elites

# Experimental policy

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## How to do it?

- Focus on societal challenges
- Accept and manage risk
- Be realistic; be ambitious

## Opportunities

- Influence directionality of innovation
- Achieve significant change
- Wider benefits

## Challenges

- Policy continuity is the norm
- Innovation challenges status quo
- Reinforce existing inequalities

# Good enough (experimental) governance

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## Good Enough Governance: Poverty Reduction and Reform in Developing Countries<sup>1</sup>

MERILEE S. GRINDLE\*

*The good governance agenda is unrealistically long and growing longer over time. Among the multitude of governance reforms that “must be done” to encourage development and reduce poverty, there is little guidance about what’s essential and what’s not, what should come first and what should follow, what can be achieved in the short term and what can only be achieved over the longer term, what is feasible and what is not. If more attention is given to sorting out these questions, “good enough governance” may become a more realistic goal for many countries faced with the goal of reducing poverty. Working toward good enough*

*governance means accepting the evolution of institutions and trade-offs and priorities in a world in which all good things cannot be pursued at once; learning about what’s working rather than focusing solely on governance gaps; taking action seriously; and grounding action in the contextual realities of each country*

### Good Enough Governance Revisited

Merilee S. Grindle\*

*The concept of good enough governance provides a platform for questioning the long menu of institutional changes and capacity-building initiatives currently deemed important (or essential) for development. Nevertheless, it falls short of being a tool to explore what, specifically, needs to be done in any real world context. Thus, as argued by the author in 2004, given the limited resources of money, time, knowledge, and human and organisational capacities, practitioners are correct in searching for the best ways to move towards better governance in a particular country context. This article suggests that the feasibility of particular interventions can be assessed by analysing the context for change and the implications of the content of the intervention being considered.*

**Key words:** Governance, institutions, institutional assessment, reform process, room for manoeuvre

- *Accepting a more nuanced understanding of the evolution of institutions and government capabilities*
- *Being explicit about trade-offs and priorities in a world in which all good things cannot be pursued at once*
- *Learning about what’s working rather than focusing solely on governance gaps*
- *Taking the role of government in poverty alleviation (innovation policy?) seriously*
- *And grounding action in the contextual realities of each country*

Thank you for listening