Competency framework for innovative professionals in public administrations

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Generalitat de Catalunya
Escola d'Administració Pública de Catalunya

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1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication was drafted jointly by the Public Administration School of Catalonia (EAPC) and the Secretariat for Public Administration and Civil Service of the Generalitat of Catalonia, through Innogent. In this framework of collaboration, the team that led the project was composed of the following people:

From the Public Administration School of Catalonia:

- Eulàlia Pla Rius. Deputy Director-General for Research and Senior Management Training.
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From the Secretariat for Public Administration and Civil Service (Innogent):

- Cristina Fumadó Casals. Area for the Promotion of Innovation Culture.
- Mei Pararols Pujolràs. Area for the Promotion of Innovation Culture.

The following academic professionals also participated actively in the drafting and review of the *Competency framework for innovative professionals in public administrations* presented herein:

- Carme Rovira Riera. Head of Educational Innovation at the Service of Quality, Learning and Innovation (SQAI), TecnoCampus Mataró (an affiliated centre of Pompeu Fabra University - Barcelona).
- Alfred Batet Vilar. Lecturer of the subject ICT Tools Applied to Business in the area of digital communities, TecnoCampus Mataró (an affiliated centre of Pompeu Fabra University - Barcelona).

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2. PRESENTATION

One of the future challenges of the Public Administration School of Catalonia (EAPC) is to generate and manage knowledge and train public employees, officials and managers to meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's citizens in a society undergoing permanent, continuous and exponential transformation, driven by the changes that science and technology are bringing about in the way we understand, face and interact with the world. A society climbing to never-before-seen global population figures, with no choice but to tackle the challenges before it, such as those set out in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Against this backdrop, beset by challenges that cannot be overcome for the benefit of all without strong public leadership, our best course of action is to move towards a new social contract, as advocated by experts from numerous disciplines. In this process of construction, people employed by the public administrations will have to play an important role, and innovation will become a driving force for change, allowing us to cope with new complexities as they emerge.

Public governance can no longer focus solely on local issues. The complex nature of the problems facing us and our intertwined responsibility to tackle them call for new ways of understanding the role of governments and public administrations.

In order to keep pace with new needs and the new context, professional competencies will have to emphasise aspects that, until now, have been considered secondary, of little value or outright counterproductive.

The Public Administration School of Catalonia has partnered with the Secretariat for Public Administration and Civil Service of the Generalitat of Catalonia (Innogent) to delve into this issue. Their findings and insights have been distilled into the present text, which has been drawn up in collaboration with TecnoCampus. In it, you will find a competency framework grounded on the contributions of outstanding, innovative professionals; a group of people who have taken part collaboratively and, in some cases, co-creatively, in this participative and inclusive process. We thank them all for their committed, generous and valuable involvement.

Through exploration and systematisation, we have been able to see what people who stand out as innovators in public administrations

are like, what traits they display and how they behave. So as to effect change where necessary, we have also identified the organisational, cultural or contextual factors that can boost or, on the contrary, dampen the innovative drive shown by many people, which must certainly characterise employees who are to face and manage the future.

Our working framework should make it possible to outline strategies and ways for honing the competencies referred to in this work. We hope that it will be of help to everyone involved in designing training activities, generating and managing knowledge, promoting new ways of working and supporting people's development. We also trust that it will be a useful tool in shaping new resources that help people gain the skills they need in the world of tomorrow.

3. INTRODUCTION

We are living in a new era, an exciting time brimming with opportunities for improvement. This, however, also means that everything that once stood unyielding is starting to shift. Processes, services and technologies are becoming obsolete, as is our very industry-, field- and technology-specific knowledge. Our society is in constant transformation, marked by never-ending social, economic, technological and organisational change. And so, we must also consider how public administrations should adapt to successfully face this new scenario.

Today, finding the time and space to invest in the future, while also rendering the services that people expect and trust, is a familiar dilemma for governments around the world.

The big question is how to go beyond pilot projects and laboratories. How do we best propagate and apply attitudes and competencies with a breakthrough approach and a culture that boosts governments' ability to innovate? What will strengthen the innovative capacity of governments and ensure a better use of resources to more effectively address current and future societal challenges?

Public administrations continue to struggle to integrate innovation into their existing structures and operational processes, as part of their necessary change of culture and as a way to rethink or create new tools and strategies for a new future yet to be mapped out.

Answering these questions falls significantly within the domain of people management and has much to do with the relationship between the public workforce's skills and innovation, which will be required to work towards and come up with proactive solutions.

We see various levels of administrations increasingly using approaches of competencies and skills management to set standards for behaviour and career development, as well as to gain a competitive advantage by integrating human resource policies based on business strategies.

But beyond the broader and more established traits and behaviours for innovative work, such as motivation or openness to ideas, less is known about the unique attitudes and competencies needed to be innovative in the public sector; that is, how innovation competencies and public employees' current skills match up and how they differ.

We believe that problem-solving (challenges) centred on the user (public employees and citizens) is the core of government work and the key to bringing about both incremental and disruptive change. Herein lies the basis of the work initiated by the Public Administration School of Catalonia in collaboration with the Secretariat for Public Administration and Civil Service and TecnoCampus.

The proposal covers three key vectors that combine basic competencies with the attitudes that keep them active, leading to new behaviours in the continuous improvement of the individual, the team and, ultimately, the organisation.

The competency framework for innovative professionals presented in this document is simply an initial snapshot, intended to trigger further action on this exciting path of change in training and professional development that must be pursued. The aim is to shape a new and necessary competitive scenario that will help us to face emerging complexities, improve public management and benefit society.

4. AIMS

The aims driving this project are as follows:

- Identify and study the traits and behaviours of professionals in public administrations who stand out as innovative.

- Outline strategies that will make it possible in the future to develop training and support tools and resources for improving these competencies.

- Establish a systematic understanding of innovators' competencies, so that their development can be measured for the purpose of professional recognition.

5. METHODOLOGY

The process we followed to build our competency framework is described below:

First, we searched for projects related to change and innovation in public administrations from around the world, seeking examples of innovation in public administrations, the state of the art, etc. This allowed us to determine the main dynamics presently in motion, where and when they are being implemented, and what impact they have achieved. We also analysed the risk or failure factors of these programmes.

In parallel, these experiences were cross-referenced with the knowledge and experience of our team members, who have multidisciplinary backgrounds, and the points of interest or greatest impact were singled out, taking into account the current situation of the Catalan administration and its context. This gave rise to a process, a specific methodology for the creation of this framework. What stands out from this phase of our work is the affirmation that the context can enhance the competencies we are identifying.

Second, we conducted a series of interviews with individuals put forward by the public administration itself. As key public figures from a range of ministries and spheres of action, they were able to share multifaceted insights, experiences and future objectives.

This allowed us to ground the initial hypotheses we had formulated through our theoretical exploration and research, and to isolate points of friction, obstacles that may hinder the programme's implementation, and the conditioning factors for adoption in the current context.

Thanks to this process, we were able to put together a prospective list of key competencies for the final framework.

Third, based on this list, we carried out an activity with several internal collaborators of the administration to ensure that the list's scope of representation was impactful, critical, relevant and useful, with a view to closing the circle of outstanding competencies and attitudes to be included in our tentative list.

Fourth, we consolidated the competencies, attitudes and context-driven success factors identified up to that point by conducting a much broader survey in terms of sample size and diversity, definitively closing the 360° circle. By including participants from a more

diverse range of backgrounds — e.g. public administration workers, businesspeople, educators and everyday citizens —, we sought to achieve two goals. Firstly, we hoped to validate that the contextual conditioning factors that had been identified corresponded to our Catalan context. Secondly, we wanted to know which of the competencies identified by administration workers were considered a priority and which were not given much thought, so as to further refine our list. The competencies that ultimately made the cut came from agents of the administration and were confirmed with the feedback of other stakeholders, which provided invaluable added value.

Fifth, we developed the framework of key competencies as our main working tool. We then wrote a description of each competency, with a view to facilitating its implementation both in individuals and groups.

From an operational, action-oriented standpoint, the framework was also developed to fit nicely into the current and future processes of the organisation.

6. COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOCUSED ON INDIVIDUALS

Individuals rely on competencies that allow them to engage with the world, overcome complex issues and create bridges of interdependence. These competencies must be appropriate for a world where:

- Technology is rapidly and continuously changing, and one must stay on top of it in order to work with it.

- Changing societies are more diverse and fragmented, and interpersonal relationships require greater contact with people who are different from oneself.

- Globalisation is creating new forms of interdependence, and actions are subject to both influences and consequences that go beyond the individual's local or national community.

Teams are fundamental to successful problem-solving in this context of change, but their smallest component is the individual.

For this reason, we set the individual as our minimum unit of action. Subsequently, this unit of action will be our high-performance teams, and, ultimately, the entire organisation.

However, the framework presents a diverse palette of competencies and attitudes that are rarely found in a single individual, but need to be present within the broader innovation team. The challenge (and opportunity) is to combine these competencies and attitudes in a way that makes the team greater than the sum of its individual members.

7. THE FRAMEWORK

With these principles in mind, we have endeavoured to describe key attitudes and competencies that together provide an overview of what is needed to establish and execute exploratory innovation processes, while creating an enabling environment for innovation in an administrative and political context.

The framework describes three basic vectors that, according to our findings, are essential building blocks of action-oriented innovation.

These three vectors are:

- the individual,
- the team, and
- the organisation.

The individual

This refers to individual people and is oriented towards action and excellence. We delve into the individual's process of improvement, personal growth and professional development. It is about accelerating self-learning, exploration, prototyping and experimentation, so we identify gaps in knowledge, curiosity and enthusiasm that boost creativity in one's longstanding routines or fresh approaches. Likewise, it is about striving to create new understanding, empower the critical spirit and orient it towards self-management and self-learning.

The team

This refers to individuals and their relationship with other people, both internally and externally (suppliers, citizens, etc.). It is about empathy and engagement with citizens and stakeholders to ensure co-creation and collaborative ownership, partnership building, networking and communication. It is about tolerance and acquiring new points of view, new ways of coming up with solutions and driving initiatives to make improvements and pursue opportunities, all based on teamwork.

The organisation

This refers to individuals and their place in a broader context (the institution). At this level, we need to encourage and facilitate change, as well as be open-minded, adaptive and resilient. It is about creating room for innovation, spotting trends and learning to navigate this landscape of continuous change to generate opportunities to continually improve the organisation, while also assuming and managing risks. It is about inspiring action and ensuring strategic results.

We understand the relationship between these three vectors as a living combination of their elements, i.e., as a beneficial relationship for innovative professionals to identify themselves and find new ways to improve.

This framework is meant to serve as a guide, allowing us to identify the competencies we have – we view competencies as the skills and attitudes displayed by the members of a team (we think in terms of individual background, teamwork and organisational setting) – in relation to the competencies we need to pull off innovative projects. These projects, equipped with these skills and attitudes, will be able to innovate and, in turn, drive change.

Competency framework for innovative professionals in public administrations

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

ACTION-ORIENTED INDIVIDUAL

CO-OPERATIVE TEAM

SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

KEY COMPETENCIES — Communication, Teamwork, Creativity, Empathy, Tolerance, Networking

KEY ATTITUDES — Curiosity, Citizen-oriented approach, Enthusiasm, Courage, Independent learning, Assertiveness, Critical thinking, Self-organisation

ACTION

Open-mindedness, Resilience, Adaptability, Trendspotting, Risk assumption and management

INDIVIDUAL   CONTEXT

The competency framework is to be understood as a system of interrelated elements. In order to interpret it, we must bear in mind certain contextual factors, which are described below.

7.1 Contextual factors

We have identified fourteen elements that are attributed to the context, and this is what will allow to nurture competencies and reinforce attitudes that boost innovativeness. They are as follows:

1. Commitment is shown to citizens and other stakeholders.

2. All perspectives are considered and multiple options are put up for discussion.

3. Interaction is promoted to reach a common vision and create shared ownership.

4. Mediation is used to balance interests and reduce friction between stakeholders.

5. Political dynamics and bureaucratic procedures are known, thus ensuring the strategic support of those involved.

6. There is an understanding of how to mobilise and use financial resources for innovation.

7. An entrepreneurial approach is used to create opportunities.

8. New approaches and solutions for decision-making are appraised.

9. Storytelling and media are used to relay goals and information in a compelling way.

10. Long-term and short-term goals are connected to accomplish tasks.

11. Ideas are vetted to ensure constant improvement.

12. Different types of data are used efficiently to streamline problem-solving.

13. Macro and micro perspectives are merged to gain insight into the complexity of emerging issues.

14. Technological developments are tracked and their potential is harnessed.

We enquired about these contextual factors in our survey with public administration staff and external agents, in order to confirm their relevance in the current Catalan landscape. We therefore take them as a point of reference, determining our competency framework and helping it work properly.

However, if we cross these contextual factors with the key competencies we are highlighting as necessary for innovative professionals, we obtain the following results:

	Self-organisation	Independent learning	Creativity	Communication	Teamwork	Networking	Trendspotting	Risk assumption and management	
1				X			X		2
2		X	X		X	X	X	X	6
3				X	X	X	X	X	5
4					X			X	2
5				X	X				2
6								X	1
7			X	X		X	X	X	5
8		X	X	X		X	X	X	6
9			X	X					2
10	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	7
11	X	X	X		X	X		X	6
12		X	X	X	X			X	5
13	X	X							2
14		X					X	X	3
	3	7	7	8	7	5	7	10	

The table shows the correlation between the competencies and the contextual factors, i.e., which conditioning factors favour the development of a competency. The bottom row and outermost column display the total number of times the factors and competencies correlate.

7.2 Keywords

Taking our pursuit one step further, below we flesh out the definition of each innovation competency, under the arch of its corresponding vector. In addition, we include the keywords that identify the competency, as well as the attitudes that underpin it. For the sake of our project, we use keywords to bring the competency definitions down to a more personal level.

Action-oriented individual	Self-organisation	Working independently to find the strategies, time and tools required to tailor a project's targets and actions to its intended purpose	#time, #objectives, #action, #purpose, #priority	Curiosity Enthusiasm Citizen-oriented approach Assertiveness Critical thinking Courage
	Independent learning	Actively seeking out, with interest and curiosity, new learning opportunities that allow us to answer new questions	#interest, #improvement, #mode, #answers, #methodology, #personalise, #plan, #apply	
	Creativity	Brainstorming, relating and merging ideas to come up with solutions	#curiosity, #connection, #opportunity, #action, #references, #questions	
Co-operative team	Communication	Conveying and receiving information in a clear and timely manner, using the appropriate means	#receiver, #research, #media, #sources, #content, #message, #listen, #storytelling, #action	Empathy Tolerance
	Teamwork	Co-operatively working towards a shared goal, while recognising and elevating the competencies of every team member	#co-operative, #commitment, #communicate, #individual, #purpose	
	Networking	Identifying and liaising with key players to carry out actions with clear benefits for all those involved	#others, #opportunity, #engagement, #connections, #purpose	

Sustainable organisation	Trendspotting	Turning trends into opportunities for the organisation's improvement	#curiosity, #organisation, #understand, #situation, #conditioning factors, #improvement, #strategy	Open-mindedness
	Risk assumption and management	Remaining aware of the ever-changing context and looking for strategies to manage risks and opportunities	#change, #time, #strategy, #risks, #staff sustainability, #economic sustainability, #context-based sustainability	Resilience Adaptation

Based on this description, we go back to the initial framework and we consider it as a system of interrelated elements. Next, we outline the value of the three vectors, as well as our understanding of the competencies and their associated attitudes, all in connection with the contextual elements and the keywords detailed above.

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK
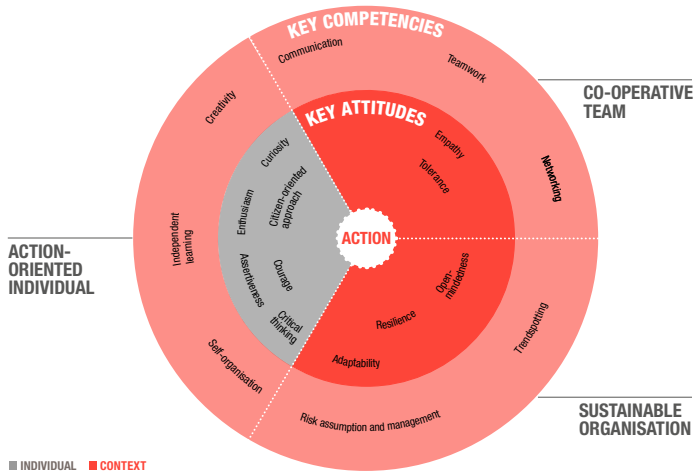
This framework is intended to serve as a guide, steering users on the right path towards their goals. Our aim, therefore, is to identify the competencies displayed by innovative professionals and, at the same time, to determine what degree of competency is required, depending on a project's needs and the professional profile of those involved. We present a breakdown of each competency, allowing users to:

- Identify the competency
- Differentiate three levels of competency achievement:
  - Base level
  - Consolidated level
  - Advanced level

The three levels are defined as follows:

Level 1: base. Innovators at this level are looking to improve a given competency, i.e. they take stock of their current performance and seek out new ways to boost their efficiency.

Level 2: consolidated. Innovators at this level use the given competency to bring about incremental innovations, i.e. they take stock of their performance and instigate changes that go beyond specific improvements.

Level 3: advanced. Innovators at this level use the given competency to unleash disruptive innovations, i.e. they explore options that differ from their current approach, so triggering radical change that may have an impact on other competencies, and they are aware of this fact.

Bringing all these pieces (contextual factors, keywords, levels of achievement) together, we offer a comprehensive breakdown of each competency, allowing users to:

- Identify an individual's or group's competency level and consider ways for them to level up.
- Determine the competency level required in those involved in a project or specific action, so enabling them to identify training needs and search for the best solutions to these needs.

It is important to tie this in with the idea of the framework as a system of interrelated elements. It is possible to be at one level in

a certain competency and at a different level in another; however, improving one competency favours and conditions the improvement of others. For instance, if I hone my ability to work in a team, I am also becoming a better communicator, whether directly or indirectly.

Here is an example of a competency breakdown, with added descriptions to clarify what we will see in each one below:

Vector situating the competency within the framework

Description of the competency

Keywords related to the competency, laying the foundation for the actions that characterise each level

From the vector Action-oriented individual, attitudes to be considered in recruitment and training processes are listed

Context-driven factors favouring the development of this competency

ACTION-ORIENTED INDIVIDUAL

Competency: **SELF-ORGANISATION**

Working independently to find the strategies, time, and online and offline tools required to tailor the objectives and actions of an activity or project according to the intended purpose

KEYWORDS

#time, #objectives, #action, #purpose, #priority

ATTITUDES THAT UNDERPIN THIS COMPETENCY	
Curiosity	Assertiveness
Enthusiasm	Critical thinking
Citizen-oriented approach	Courage

CONTEXT-DRIVEN FACTORS ENHANCING THIS COMPETENCY	F10: Long-term and short-term goals are connected to accomplish tasks.
	F11: Ideas are vetted to ensure constant improvement.
	F13: Macro and micro perspectives are merged to gain insight into the complexity of emerging issues..

LEVEL 1: BASE (complex actions involving remembering and understanding). The innovator reflects on the actions performed and is able to find room for improvement.	
Recognises the intended objectives and purpose of ongoing actions and projects..	#objectives #action #purpose
Correctly identifies the time available to achieve an action's objectives.	#time #objectives
Recognises the work strategy to be used to achieve an action's objectives.	#action #purpose #priority

Levels of competency achievement: level 1 (base), level 2 (consolidated) and level 3 (advanced

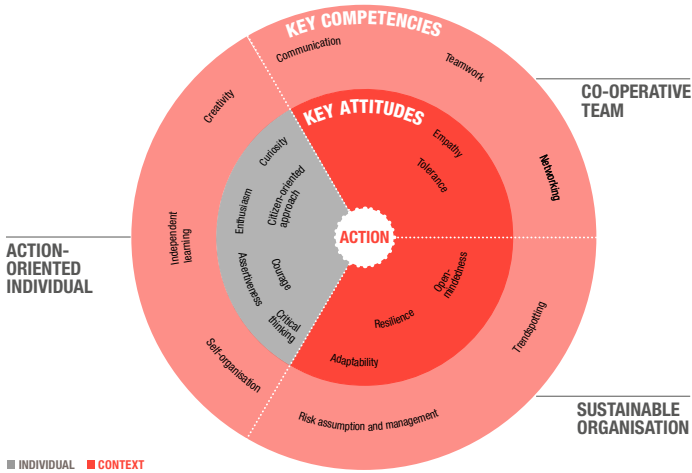The competency's keywords are matched up with the actions of each level

7.3 Competencies in the vector *Action-oriented individual*

Self-organisation

Independent learning

Creativity

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

KEY COMPETENCIES

KEY ATTITUDES

Communication

Teamwork

Creativity

Empathy

Curiosity

Tolerance

Citizen-oriented approach

Enthusiasm

Independent learning

ACTION

Networking

Assertiveness

Courage

Open-mindedness

Critical thinking

Resilience

Self-organisation

Adaptability

Trendspotting

Risk assumption and management

CO-OPERATIVE TEAM

ACTION-ORIENTED INDIVIDUAL

SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

■ INDIVIDUAL ■ CONTEXT

ACTION-ORIENTED INDIVIDUAL

Competency: **SELF-ORGANISATION**

Working independently to find the strategies, time, and online and offline tools required to tailor the objectives and actions of an activity or project according to the intended purpose

KEYWORDS

#time, #objectives, #action, #purpose, #priority

ATTITUDES THAT UNDERPIN THIS COMPETENCY	
Curiosity	Assertiveness
Enthusiasm	Critical thinking
Citizen-oriented approach	Courage

CONTEXT-DRIVEN FACTORS ENHANCING THIS COMPETENCY	
	F10: Long-term and short-term goals are connected to accomplish tasks.
	F11: Ideas are vetted to ensure constant improvement.
	F13: Macro and micro perspectives are merged to gain insight into the complexity of emerging issues..

LEVEL 1: BASE (complex actions involving remembering and understanding). The innovator reflects on the actions performed and is able to find room for improvement.	
Recognises the intended objectives and purpose of ongoing actions and projects..	#objectives #action #purpose
Correctly identifies the time available to achieve an action's objectives.	#time #objectives
Recognises the work strategy to be used to achieve an action's objectives.	#action #purpose #priority

LEVEL 2: CONSOLIDATED (complex actions involving applying and analysing). The innovator makes incremental improvements and adjustments to work processes or actions.	
Maps out work processes and identifies the objectives and purpose of actions and projects.	#objectives #action #purpose
Optimises time to achieve an action's objectives.	#time #objectives
Optimally deploys time management strategies to accomplish all proposed actions.	#time #action #purpose #priority

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED (complex actions involving assessing and creating). The innovator drives disruptive change to achieve more efficient and effective processes.	
Weighs the pros and cons of action and project planning strategies.	#purpose #priority
Reviews time allocation and finds ways to optimise it.	#time
Designs the objectives and specifies the purpose of actions and projects.	#objectives #purpose
Carries out actions and projects, striving for maximum efficiency from end to end.	#objectives #action #purpose

ACTION-ORIENTED INDIVIDUAL

Competency: **INDEPENDENT LEARNING**

Actively seeking out new learning opportunities, as well as showing interest and curiosity, in order to deal with unanswered questions.

KEYWORDS

#interest, #improvement, #mode, #answers, #methodology, #personalise, #plan, #apply

ATTITUDES THAT UNDERPIN THIS COMPETENCY	
Curiosity	Assertiveness
Enthusiasm	Critical thinking
Citizen-oriented approach	Courage

CONTEXT-DRIVEN FACTORS ENHANCING THIS COMPETENCY	
	F2: All perspectives are considered and multiple options are put up for discussion.
	F8: New approaches and solutions for decision-making are appraised.
	F10: Long-term and short-term goals are connected to accomplish tasks.
	F11: Ideas are vetted to ensure constant improvement.
	F12: Different types of data are used efficiently to streamline problem-solving.
	F13: Macro and micro perspectives are merged to gain insight into the complexity of emerging issues.
	F14: Technological developments are tracked and their potential is harnessed.

LEVEL 1: BASE (complex actions involving remembering and understanding). The innovator reflects on the actions performed and is able to find room for improvement.	
Expresses training needs, in the pursuit to find solutions to current and future situations or projects.	#improvement #answers
Undertakes training in any mode (face-to-face, blended or online), so long as it is the most fitting way to deal with the questions at hand.	#mode #plan
Identifies formal training courses that are relevant and fit the learning pathway.	#personalise
Considers learning outcomes that result from everyday situations.	#improvement #answers #personalise #apply
Explores the opportunities that independent learning can offer.	#answers

LEVEL 2: CONSOLIDATED (complex actions involving applying and analysing). The innovator makes incremental improvements and adjustments to work processes or actions.	
Maps out a personal training strategy that may involve different activities (formal and informal).	#improvement #plan
Looks into different learning modes and proposals to find those which fit the target objectives.	#modes #personalise
Integrates learning into daily work, so raising new questions.	#modes #personalise #answers #apply

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED (complex actions involving assessing and creating). The innovator drives disruptive change to achieve more efficient and effective processes.	
Organises an array of training proposals and finds the thread that ties them together.	#modes #personalise
Plots new job opportunities based on learning outcomes.	#improvement #apply #answers
Builds learning strategies around various activities with different approaches (formal, non-formal and invisible training).	#personalise #improvement

ACTION-ORIENTED INDIVIDUAL

Competency: **CREATIVITY**

Brainstorming, relating and merging ideas to come up with solutions.

KEYWORDS

#curiosity, #questions, #connection, #opportunity, #action, #references

ATTITUDES THAT UNDERPIN THIS COMPETENCY	
Curiosity	Assertiveness
Enthusiasm	Critical thinking
Citizen-oriented approach	Courage

CONTEXT-DRIVEN FACTORS ENHANCING THIS COMPETENCY	
	F2: All perspectives are considered and multiple options are put up for discussion.
	F7: An entrepreneurial approach is used to create opportunities.
	F8: New approaches and solutions for decision-making are appraised.
	F9: Storytelling and media are used to relay goals and information in a compelling way.
	F10: Long-term and short-term goals are connected to accomplish tasks.
	F11: Ideas are vetted to ensure constant improvement.
	F12: Different types of data are used efficiently to streamline problem-solving.

LEVEL 1: BASE (complex actions involving remembering and understanding). The innovator reflects on the actions performed and is able to find room for improvement.	
Acknowledges doubts arising from real problems or situations.	#questions
Identifies opportunities for improvement to be explored.	#opportunity
Recognises the relationships between various ideas or projects.	#connection #opportunity #references

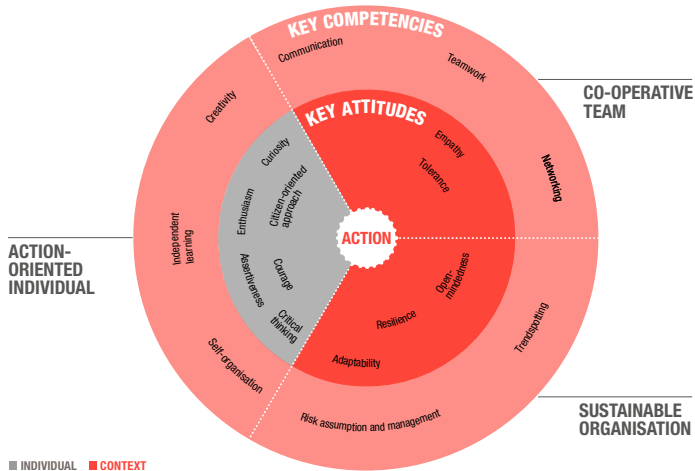| LEVEL 2: CONSOLIDATED (complex actions involving applying and analysing). The innovator makes incremental improvements and adjustments to work processes or actions.	
Ascribes possible questions to doubts about problems or situations that need solving or handling.	#questions #connection
Examines projects and actions that have been carried out to pursue previously identified opportunities for improvement.	#references #opportunity #action
Integrates an action-oriented approach as a natural way of working.	#action
Makes relating ideas and projects a part of the work approach.	#references #opportunity

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED (complex actions involving assessing and creating). The innovator drives disruptive change to achieve more efficient and effective processes.	
Asks questions about problems or situations that need to be solved.	#curiosity #questions
Comes up with new opportunities for improvement.	#action #connection #opportunity
Builds a map of complex relationships that enhances current pursuits and endeavours.	#connection #references #opportunity
Makes improvements to previously drafted action plans to strengthen their roll-out.	#action #opportunity

7.4 Competencies in the vector *Co-operative team*

Communication

Teamwork

Networking

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

KEY COMPETENCIES

Communication

Teamwork

Creativity

KEY ATTITUDES

Empathy

Tolerance

Curiosity

Citizen-oriented approach

Enthusiasm

Independent learning

ACTION

Assertiveness

Courage

Open-mindedness

Critical thinking

Resilience

Self-organisation

Adaptability

Networking

Trendspotting

Risk assumption and management

CO-OPERATIVE TEAM

ACTION-ORIENTED INDIVIDUAL

SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

■ INDIVIDUAL ■ CONTEXT

CO-OPERATIVE TEAM

Competency: **COMMUNICATION**

Conveying and receiving information in a clear and timely manner, using the appropriate means.

KEYWORDS

#receiver, #research, #media, #sources, #content, #listen, #storytelling, #action, #message

ATTITUDES THAT UNDERPIN THIS COMPETENCY

Empathy	Tolerance

CONTEXT-DRIVEN FACTORS ENHANCING THIS COMPETENCY	F1: Commitment is shown to citizens and other stake-holders.
	F3: Interaction is promoted to reach a common vision and create shared ownership.
	F5: Political dynamics and bureaucratic procedures are known, thus ensuring the strategic support of those involved.
	F7: An entrepreneurial approach is used to create opportunities.
	F8: New approaches and solutions for decision-making are appraised.
	F9: Storytelling and media are used to relay goals and information in a compelling way.
	F10: Long-term and short-term goals are connected to accomplish tasks.
	F12: Different types of data are used efficiently to streamline problem-solving.

LEVEL 1: BASE (complex actions involving remembering and understanding). The innovator reflects on the actions performed and is able to find room for improvement.	
Starts asking what, when, why, how and for whom when drawing up a message.	#listen #receiver
Locates key information sources, both from within the organisation and elsewhere, to offer the team a comprehensive briefing.	#sources #research
Includes core content to convey ideas.	#content #receiver

LEVEL 2: CONSOLIDATED (complex actions involving applying and analysing). The innovator makes incremental improvements and adjustments to work processes or actions.	
Organises and composes messages around key questions: what, when, why, how and for whom.	#listen #receiver #action
Naturally integrates key information sources, both from within the organisation and elsewhere, according to the project's level of progression.	#sources #research
Includes the right content to convey ideas.	#content #receivers

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED (complex actions involving assessing and creating). The innovator drives disruptive change to achieve more efficient and effective processes.	
Integrates messages according to key questions: what, when, why, how and for whom.	#listen #message #receiver
Devises a line of content to convey ideas.	#message #storytelling
Efficiently uses a range of media to suit the message's purpose and intended receiver.	#receiver #media
Communicates taking into account the receiver, the possibilities offered by different media, the content and the storyline that ties these elements together.	#receiver #media #storytelling #action

CO-OPERATIVE TEAM

Competency: TEAMWORK

Co-operatively working towards a shared goal, while recognising and elevating the competencies of every team member.

KEYWORDS

#co-operative, #commitment, #communicate, #individual, #purpose

ATTITUDES THAT UNDERPIN THIS COMPETENCY

Empathy	Tolerance

CONTEXT-DRIVEN FACTORS ENHANCING THIS COMPETENCY	F2: All perspectives are considered and multiple options are put up for discussion.
	F3: Interaction is promoted to reach a common vision and create shared ownership.
	F4: Mediation is used to balance interests and reduce friction between stakeholders.
	F5: Political dynamics and bureaucratic procedures are known, thus ensuring the strategic support of those involved.
	F10: Long-term and short-term goals are connected to accomplish tasks.
	F11: Ideas are vetted to ensure constant improvement.
	F12: Different types of data are used efficiently to streamline problem-solving.

LEVEL 1: BASE (complex actions involving remembering and understanding). The innovator reflects on the actions performed and is able to find room for improvement.	
Identifies the purpose of the team's undertakings.	#purpose
Becomes an asset to the team as the project progresses.	#individual #purpose
Is able to explain the development of the team's activities.	#communicate #purpose

LEVEL 2: CONSOLIDATED (complex actions involving applying and analysing). The innovator makes incremental improvements and adjustments to work processes or actions.	
Structures the team's co-operative development.	#co-operative #purpose
Organises their own work within the team.	#individual #co-operative
Recognises the value that every team member brings to the project.	#individual #co-operative #purpose

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED (complex actions involving assessing and creating). The innovator drives disruptive change to achieve more efficient and effective processes.	
Maps out the development of the team's activities.	#co-operative #purpose
Assigns tasks to the team members.	#individual #commitment
Harnesses the value that every team member brings to the project's design and development.	#individual #co-operative #communicate
Helps to consolidate teamwork as a co-operative structure in which people, tasks and schedules come together in the best possible way.	#co-operative #commitment #communication #purpose

CO-OPERATIVE TEAM

Competency: **NETWORKING**

Identifying and liaising with key players to carry out actions with clear benefits for all those involved.

KEYWORDS

#others, #opportunity, #engagement, #connections, #purpose

ATTITUDES THAT UNDERPIN THIS COMPETENCY

Empathy	Tolerance

CONTEXT-DRIVEN FACTORS ENHANCING THIS COMPETENCY	F2: All perspectives are considered and multiple options are put up for discussion
	F3: Interaction is promoted to reach a common vision and create shared ownership.
	F7: An entrepreneurial approach is used to create opportunities.
	F8: New approaches and solutions for decision-making are appraised.
	F11: Ideas are vetted to ensure constant improvement

LEVEL 1: BASE (complex actions involving remembering and understanding). The innovator reflects on the actions performed and is able to find room for improvement.	
Makes connections with people who add value to an idea or project.	#connections #others
Determines their own engagement in collaborative networks.	#engagement #purpose
Understands their role within networks.	#opportunity

LEVEL 2: CONSOLIDATED (complex actions involving applying and analysing). The innovator makes incremental improvements and adjustments to work processes or actions.	
Harnesses the value that other people bring to the improvement of ideas and projects.	#connections #others
Looks for value that other people, or networks, can bring to proposed actions.	#opportunity #connections
Integrates engagement in collaborative networks into the day-to-day work.	#engagement #opportunity #others

| LEVEL 3: ADVANCED (complex actions involving assessing and creating). The innovator drives disruptive change to achieve more efficient and effective processes.	
Assesses the impact and opportunities of networking as regards ongoing or intended actions	#others #connections
Builds a collaborative network around ongoing or intended actions.	#engagement #purpose
Envisions the medium- and long-term opportunities of participating in a network.	#opportunity #connections #others

7.5. Competencies in the vector *Sustainable organisation*

Trendspotting

Risk assumption and management

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK
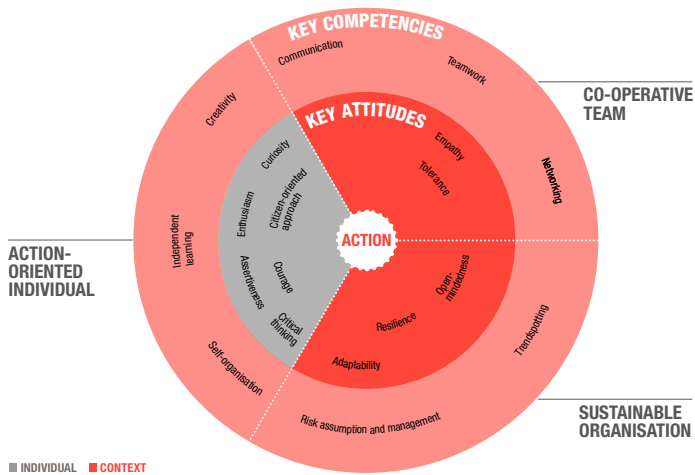
SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

Competency: **TRENDSPOTTING**

Turning trends into opportunities for the organisation's improvement.

KEYWORDS
#curiosity, #organisation, #understand, #situation, #conditioning factors, #improvement, #strategy

ATTITUDES THAT UNDERPIN THIS COMPETENCY		
Open-mindedness	Resilience	Adaptation

CONTEXT-DRIVEN FACTORS ENHANCING THIS COMPETENCY	F1: Commitment is shown to citizens and other stake-holders.
	F2: All perspectives are considered and multiple options are put up for discussion.
	F3: Interaction is promoted to reach a common vision and create shared ownership.
	F7: An entrepreneurial approach is used to create op-portunities.
	F8: New approaches and solutions for decision-making are appraised.
	F10: Long-term and short-term goals are connected to accomplish tasks.
	F14: Technological developments are tracked and their potential is harnessed.

LEVEL 1: BASE (complex actions involving remembering and understanding). The innovator reflects on the actions performed and is able to find room for improvement.	
Detects opportunities for improvement within the organisation through observation and study.	#situation #improvement
Shows curiosity, comparing the organisation's actions to other developments in order to find new avenues for change and improvement.	#curiosity #understand
Observes other people, teams or organisations to spot new ways of improving the organisation.	#organisation #improvement
Recognises the organisation's improvement strategy.	#strategy
Identifies the conditioning factors that set two contexts apart.	#conditioning factors

LEVEL 2: CONSOLIDATED (complex actions involving applying and analysing). The innovator makes incremental improvements and adjustments to work processes or actions.	
Uses ideas gathered from observation and study as opportunities to improve the organisation.	#curiosity #improvement
Conducts studies, engages in conversations and asks questions in order to find out how actions are performed elsewhere and, in turn, make changes and improvements that befit the organisation's current situation.	#curiosity #organisation #situation
Works in line with the organisation's improvement strategy.	#strategy #conditioning factors

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED (complex actions involving assessing and creating). The innovator drives disruptive change to achieve more efficient and effective processes.	
Plays off the organisation's strategic milestones to structure future changes.	#situation #strategy #conditioning factors
Designs improvement processes based on the observation and study of opportunities in different sectors and situations.	#curiosity #improvement #strategy
Introduces change after assessing numerous approaches taken in different scenarios.	#organisation #situation #conditioning factors

SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

Competency: RISK ASSUMPTION AND MANAGEMENT

Remaining aware of the ever-changing context and looking for strategies to manage risks and opportunities.

KEYWORDS

#change, #time, #strategy, #risks, #staff sustainability,#economic sustainability, #context-based sustainability

ATTITUDES THAT UNDERPIN THIS COMPETENCY

Open-mindedness	Resilience	Adaptation

CONTEXT-DRIVEN FACTORS ENHANCING THIS COMPETENCY	F2: All perspectives are considered and multiple options are put up for discussion.
	F3: Interaction is promoted to reach a common vision and create shared ownership.
	F4: Mediation is used to balance interests and reduce friction between stakeholders.
	F6: There is an understanding of how to mobilise and use financial resources for innovation.
	F7: An entrepreneurial approach is used to create opportunities.
	F8: New approaches and solutions for decision-making are appraised.
	F10: Long-term and short-term goals are connected to accomplish tasks.
	F11: Ideas are vetted to ensure constant improvement.
	F12: Different types of data are used efficiently to streamline problem-solving.
	F14: Technological developments are tracked and their potential is harnessed.

LEVEL 1: BASE (complex actions involving remembering and understanding). The innovator reflects on the actions performed and is able to find room for improvement.	
Understands why changes are being made and their possible outcomes, as well as the general need to adapt and improve.	#sustainability #change
Identifies the risks and time to bear in mind when pursuing change as part of the organisation's strategy.	#risks #time #change #strategy

LEVEL 2: CONSOLIDATED (complex actions involving applying and analysing). The innovator makes incremental improvements and adjustments to work processes or actions.	
Outlines the processes involved in implementing change, in the same way that actions are usually mapped out.	#change #sustainability
Brings changes into effect with maximum consideration for their sustainability and the impact of their potential risks.	#risks #people #sustainability

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED (complex actions involving assessing and creating). The innovator drives disruptive change to achieve more efficient and effective processes.	
Remains mindful of the constantly changing environment in all endeavours.	#strategy #sustainability
Instigates significant changes, ensuring that they are sustainable according to the organisation's strategy and non-success factors.	#strategy #risks #people #sustainability

8. IMPLEMENTATION AND UPTAKE

The goal of this project was to identify and define the competencies that characterise innovative professionals. Accordingly, every phase has shown a clear desire to measure the impact and recognition of these competencies across various levels of acquisition and development.

The demand and desire to innovate can come from anywhere. Some of the people we interviewed in this project talked about driving innovation from the bottom, while others touched on how to promote innovation through leadership initiatives.

In today's world, if we are to understand innovation as a process that is to be naturally integrated into our existing workflows and approaches, it is no longer enough to simply put people and teams through innovation training. Rather, we have to find ways to create actual innovators. While introductory courses lay an excellent foundation for improving specific skills and experiencing new learning opportunities, it is essential that we take people past "basic comprehension" to environments where they can test out their new knowledge, interiorise concepts, forge bonds with other people and teams, debug, consolidate, etc. In short, they need to be able to apply the target concepts coherently and in real-life scenarios. We must therefore rethink the variety of learning experiences that we provide or that people seek out themselves. Formal training is not the only path to learn; we learn from our surroundings, from our organisation, from our teams and from our colleagues. We learn at different times and following different approaches.

In the end, the best way to achieve sustainable public value must involve the use of innovation techniques, methods and tools throughout the public sector, integrated naturally into recruitment processes, people development, training planning, project-based work and strategic plans that are designed, developed, carried out and assessed. The development of an ecosystem that favours interaction and community building is vital to nurturing this innovation process in public administrations.

When the goal is to scale up and integrate innovation competencies, we cannot rule out the fact that many public employees are already so inclined and want to learn, improve and break new ground. In fact, this is already the case, and we can detect actions of varying impact, whose common denominator is challenged-based work.

Specific, tangible and achievable challenges are therefore needed as a driving force to hone and reinforce the competencies and attitudes that make innovators tick. When this is approached with the individual-team-organisation structure in mind, it can lead to new processes, services and opportunities.

Given the above, the challenge is not a lack of drive, but rather uncertainty about where to begin. In order to deliver all the intended benefits to the organisation, our competency framework for innovators is to serve as a conceptual backbone, which has to be aligned with other systems, such as organisational and people management systems: training, recruitment, development or recognition are particularly significant examples of this.

Professionals working in the public administration need support in understanding the resources at their disposal for gaining and improving these skills. Our framework shows them the way.

9. CONCLUSIONS

The competencies included in the framework for innovative professionals are susceptible to change, given the dynamic nature of the current context. Nevertheless, they provide a solid foundation for an action framework.

Certain environments are conducive to defining and developing these competencies. Therefore, it is key that we identify this context in the various ministries and public administration bodies, so as to establish the current work and efficiency baseline on which to improve. This will allow us to determine our starting point in each specific case and help us to identify people's current standing in order to draw up personalised development curricula towards an innovative profile.

Each of the three vectors (individual, team and organisation) is defined by a series of competencies that ensure innovativeness.

These competencies are broken down into three levels. Thus, by determining where employees fall within these levels, individual improvement plans can be drawn up, ultimately leading to an impact on the ministry, unit, area or organisation.

Hybrid development strategies are advisable for acquiring and improving these competencies. These include training formats with more standard or common approaches in the public administration as well as group dynamics and challenged-based work, in which individuals are action-oriented, teams are co-operative and the organisation is understood as a sustainable system.

For this development, it is vital to make a pedagogical effort in communicating the culture and strategy of innovation, understood as a work thrust that makes use of tools, resources and processes available to public servants.

Of particular importance is the idea that there must be a certain convergence of opposing forces, in a conducive environment, in order to maximise and encourage innovation: firstly, a top-down management perspective that defines the organisation's innovation management strategy; and secondly, a bottom-up impulse, whereby individuals and teams make innovative action an essential part of their personal development, with a direct impact on the public administration.

The Public Administration School of Catalonia and Innogent will work in this direction, offering learning and creation opportunities and providing tools for enhancing public servants' innovativeness. The aim is for these people to promote new ways of working and find creative solutions to the challenges that we must overcome in order to build a 21st-century public administration, one that is agile and efficient and that supports citizens in today's complex and ever-changing world.

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