

# City Innovation Snapshot | Toronto, Canada

## Overview

- ▶ Mayor: John Tory
- ▶ Lead staff on innovation: Paula Kwan
- ▶ Population of municipality: 2.8 million (2014)
- ▶ Innovation/open data website: <https://portal0.cf.opendata.inter.sandbox-toronto.ca/>

## Spotlight on Toronto | Toronto i-team

Toronto was the first city in Canada to have a team dedicated to innovation efforts called **i-team**, funded by the Bloomberg Philanthropies. The team is focused on tackling ambitious projects that influence the lives of residents. The team has a unique office space on the main floor of City Hall that embodies transparency, accessibility and open government.

## Vision and approach to innovation capacity

### The city's innovation strategy

Along with 44% of cities surveyed, Toronto has an **explicit innovation strategy** – [Excellence Toronto Initiative](#)

The city most closely associates innovation capacity with the following terms:

Human-centred design

Experimentation

### Approaches to innovation capacity

Similar to over one-third of cities surveyed, Toronto approaches innovation capacity in **specific policy areas**.

The **top two priority policy areas** for the city's innovation work include:

Social inclusion and equity

Transport / mobility

### Most common innovation activities

Toronto's most common innovation activities are **taking risks and testing new ideas; data-driven analytics; developing new solutions based on digital technologies; facilitating organisational change within the municipal administration; and rethinking the city's approach to financing and partnerships.**



Funding for innovation capacity	
<p><b>Funding to support innovation capacity</b></p> <p>Like 77% of cities surveyed, Toronto has dedicated funding to support innovation capacity, which originates from the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>External funding</b> (Philanthropic/non-profit)</li> <li>✓ <b>Non-financial resources</b> (e.g. staff on loan)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Types of activities being funded</b></p> <p>Among all cities surveyed, <b>launching or sustaining a project</b>, and <b>generating ideas &amp; brainstorming</b> are the two most commonly funded activities.</p> <p>Toronto's funding for innovation capacity is generally directed to operate the innovation office.</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; width: 45%; text-align: center;"> <p>Launching or sustaining a project</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; width: 45%; text-align: center;"> <p>Idea generation &amp; brainstorming</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <p>Investing in digital systems</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <p>Investing in physical infrastructure</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; width: 30%; text-align: center;"> <p>Paying for services</p> </div> </div>

Organisational structure & staffing	Partnerships for innovation & data
 <p>Situated in the City Manager's office, Toronto's dedicated team for innovation – Toronto i-team – consists of <b>2 staff</b>. In addition, the Transformation Office is also working on innovation and modernising government.</p> <p>Staff skills and profiles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Project manager</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Data scientist</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Open data advisor</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Designer</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Community engagement staff</b></li> </ul>	 <p><b>Toronto</b> has developed partnerships to promote its innovation capacity with other <b>public agencies, private firms, not-for-profit organisations, and city residents/resident associations.</b></p> <p>To improve data use, the city has also developed <b>data partnerships with civic tech community and other cities</b> collect and analyse data.</p>

Measuring outcomes	
<p>Policy areas that <b>benefit from sufficient data</b>, or <b>lack sufficient data</b>, to support innovation capacity in the city:</p> <div style="display: grid; grid-template-columns: repeat(5, 1fr); gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #90EE90;">Transport / mobility</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #90EE90;">Economic development</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #90EE90;">Housing &amp; built environment</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #90EE90;">Policing &amp; law enforcement</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #90EE90;">Health</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #90EE90;">Water</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #D3D3D3;">Waste and sewage</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #D3D3D3;">Labour markets &amp; skills</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #D3D3D3;">Environment &amp; climate change</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #D3D3D3;">Education</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #D3D3D3;">Culture</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #90EE90;">Social inclusion, equity</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #D3D3D3;">Public works</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #D3D3D3;">Tourism</div> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; background-color: #90EE90;">Digital governance</div> </div> <p><i>NB: No response provided by the city for the policy areas in grey.</i></p>	<p>Innovation is <b>helping the city</b> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Improve service delivery</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Improve resident outcomes</b></li> </ul> <p>The most <b>critical success factors</b> in supporting the city's innovation work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Dedicated funding</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Focus on measurement</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Dedicated innovation team</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Human resource support</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Leadership from Mayor</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Culture of innovation in city</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Engagement with partners</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Support from outside city administration</b></li> </ul>