City Innovation Snapshot | Curridabat, Costa Rica

Overview

- Mayor: Alicia Borja Rodríguez
- Lead staff on innovation: Irene Garcia Brenes
- Population of municipality: 32,443 (2012)
- Innovation website: www.f6s.com/curridabatinnovation

Spotlight on Curridabat | Sweet City Framework

Curridabat has development vision called "Sweet City Framework" vision based on five dimensions – Biodiversity, Infrastructure, Habitat, Coexistence and Productivity. The Framework mandates the city's innovation work.

For instance, the city has implemented a successful funding initiative called "Spaces of Sweetness", which aims to redesign Curridabat's neighbourhoods to harmonise their infrastructure with biodiversity. The participatory process of the initiative resulted in a comprehensive proposal to set up collaborative workspaces and change land use as well as mobilising real estate investment through Public-Private Partnerships between the municipality, private landowners and developers.

Vision and approach to innovation capacity

The city's innovation strategy

Along with 44% of cities surveyed, Curridabat has an **explicit innovation strategy**.

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

Human-centred design | **Data analytics** | **Pollination Biodiversity**

Approaches to innovation capacity

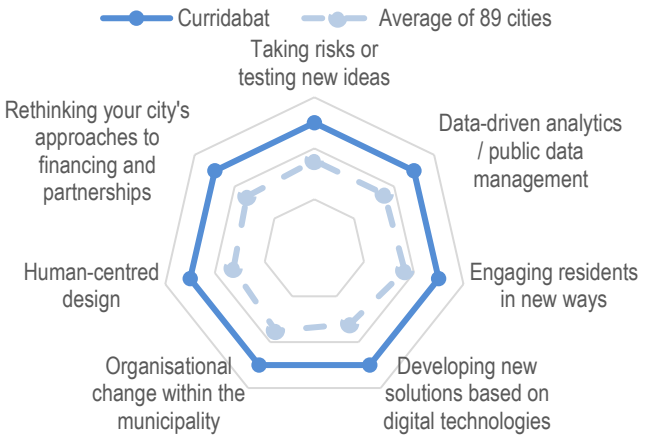
Similar to 24% of cities surveyed, Curridabat approaches innovation capacity from a **holistic/macro level**.

The **top priority policy area** for the city's innovation work includes:

Environment / climate change

Most common innovation activities

Curridabat's innovation activity includes various kinds of activities including **taking risks and testing new ideas; facilitating data-driven analytics; engaging residents in new ways; developing new solutions based on digital technologies; facilitating organisational change within the municipal administration; human-centred design;** and **rethinking the city's approach to financing and partnerships**.



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Funding for innovation capacity

Funding to support innovation capacity

Like 77% of cities surveyed, Curridabat has dedicated funding to support innovation capacity, which originates from the following sources:

- ✓ **Municipal budget** (operating budget)

Types of activities being funded

Curridabat's funding for innovation capacity is generally directed towards **launching or sustaining a project**, and **generating ideas & brainstorming**. These are the two most commonly funded activities among all cities surveyed. Curridabat also **invests in digital systems and physical infrastructure** as well as **paying for services.**

- Launching or sustaining a project
- Idea generation & brainstorming
- Investing in digital systems
- Investing in physical infrastructure
- Paying for services

Organisational structure & staffing

Situated in the Mayor's office, Curridabat's dedicated work for innovation is led by the Mayor's Office Director and biotechnology engineer.

Staff skills and profiles include:

- ✓ **Designer**
- ✓ **Engineer**
- ✓ **Sociologist**
- ✓ **Health professional**

Partnerships for innovation & data

Curridabat has developed partnerships to promote its innovation capacity with **other public agencies, private firms, not-for-profit organisations,** and **city residents/resident associations.**

To improve data use, the city has also developed **data partnerships with academia and think tanks** to collect and analyse data, as well as **with other cities.**

Measuring outcomes

Policy areas that benefit from sufficient data, or lack sufficient data, to support innovation capacity in the city:

Transport / mobility	Economic development	Housing & built environment	Policing & law enforcement	Health
Water	Waste and sewage	Labour markets & skills	Environment & climate change	Education
Culture	Social inclusion, equity	Public works	Tourism	Digital governance

NB: No response provided by the city for the policy areas in grey.

Innovation is helping the city to:

- ✓ **Anticipate and manage future challenges**
- ✓ **Service current obligations**
- ✓ **Improve service delivery**
- ✓ **Improve resident outcomes**

The most critical success factors in supporting the city's innovation work:

- ✓ **Focus on measurement**
- ✓ **Dedicated innovation team**
- ✓ **Leadership from the Mayor**
- ✓ **Engagement with partners**
- ✓ **Support from outside city administration**

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