City Innovation Snapshot | Chicago, United States

Overview

- Mayor: Rahm Emanuel
- Lead staff on innovation: Chris Wheat
- Population of municipality: 2.7 million (2016)
- Innovation/open data website: https://data.cityofchicago.org/ https://techplan.cityofchicago.org/

Spotlight on Chicago | Diverse platforms and initiatives

In Chicago, there are various platforms available to promote innovation:

- **Tech Plan** has helped **to build strong partnerships across sectors to drive innovation**.
- **Chicago Design System** has been developed **to embed design methods and increase interactions with users** throughout the development of a new product or service.
- **Chideas.org enables to elicit new ideas** from outside the City.
- **WindyGrid system** in the municipality brings together siloed information **to aid in coordination across departments and support data analysis**.

Vision and approach to innovation capacity

The city's innovation strategy

Along with 56% of cities surveyed, Chicago does not have an **explicit innovation strategy**.

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

Technological innovation

Behavioural economics

Approaches to innovation capacity

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

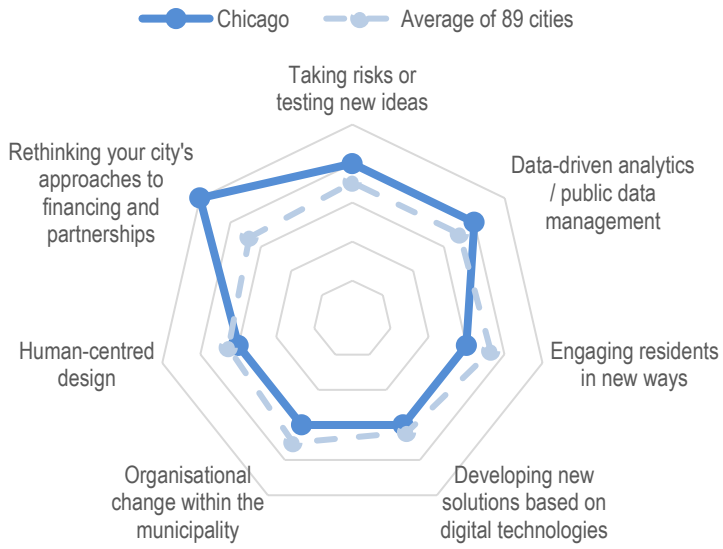
The **top two priority policy areas** for the city's innovation work include:

Digital governance

Policing and law enforcement

Most common innovation activities

Chicago's most common innovation activity is **rethinking the city's approach to financing and partnerships**. Its innovation activities also include **taking risks and testing new ideas**; and **promoting data-driven analytics.**



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OECD BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

OECD CHAMPION MAYORS for Inclusive Growth

Bloomberg Philanthropies

Funding for innovation capacity

Funding to support innovation capacity

Like 23% of cities surveyed, Chicago does not have dedicated funding to support innovation capacity.

Types of activities being funded

Among all cities surveyed, l**aunching or sustaining a project**, and **generating ideas & brainstorming** are the two most commonly funded activities.

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

Organisational structure & staffing

Chicago does not have dedicated team for innovation. The City previously managed many of their innovation projects and initiatives through the Innovation Delivery Team, funded by the Bloomberg Philanthropies and housed in the Mayor's Office. **Those duties are spread between the Mayor's Office, the Department of Innovation and Technology, and other entities.**

Partnerships for innovation & data

Chicago 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 the private sector, academia, 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:

- ✓ **Improve service delivery**
- ✓ **Simplify administrative procedures for firms and residents**
- ✓ **Improve internal government operations**

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

- ✓ **Leadership from Mayor**
- ✓ **Culture of innovation in city**

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