

# City Innovation Snapshot | Providence, United States

## Overview

- ▶ Mayor: Jorge Elorza
- ▶ Lead staff on innovation: Emmanuel Echevarria
- ▶ Population of municipality: 180,393 (2017)
- ▶ Innovation/open data website: <https://data.providenceri.gov>

## Spotlight on Providence | LEAN Training

Providence's Innovation Department holds **LEAN training** quarterly to employees throughout the City to offer professional development and spread a culture of innovation. The LEAN trainings have shown great return on investment as the cohorts have exceeded the planned estimate by 423%. The training focuses on process improvement and capacity building for metrics and data measurement, recognising that being more data-driven offers better results.

## Vision and approach to innovation capacity

### The city's innovation strategy

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

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

Data analytics

Process improvement

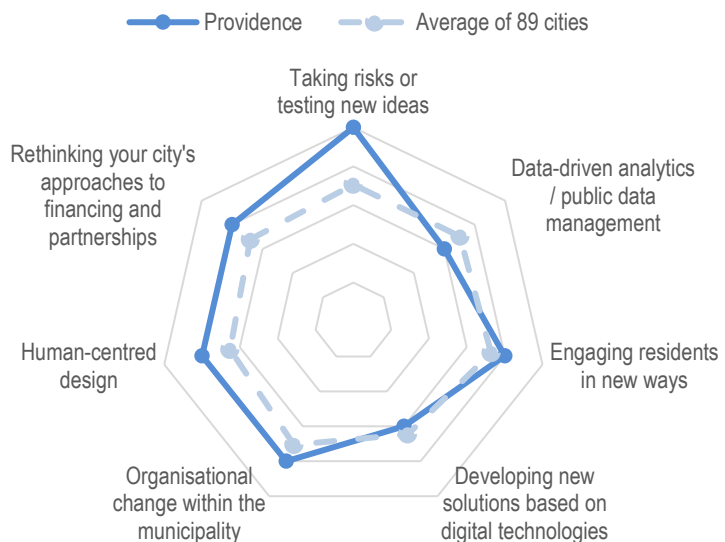
### Approaches to innovation capacity

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

The city **does not prioritise policy sectors** for its innovation work.

### Most common innovation activities

Providence's most common innovation activity is **taking risks and testing new ideas**. Its innovation activities also include **engaging residents in new ways; facilitating organisational change within the municipal administration; promoting human-centred design; and rethinking the city's approach to financing and partnerships**.



## Funding for innovation capacity

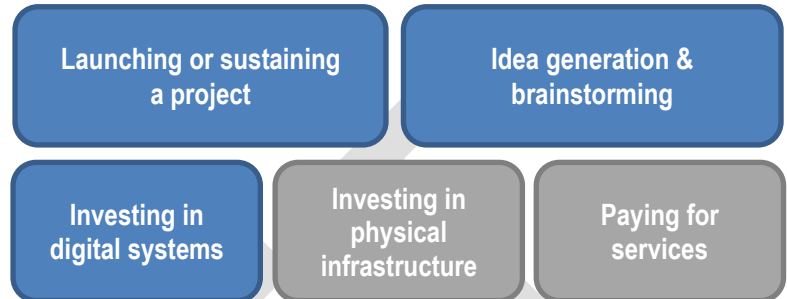
### Funding to support innovation capacity

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

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

### Types of activities being funded

Providence'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. Providence also **invests in digital systems**.



## Organisational structure & staffing



Situated in the Information Technology (IT) department, Providence's innovation work is being led by the Chief Innovation and Performance Officer, and **2 staff members**.

Staff skills and profiles include:

- ✓ **Project manager**
- ✓ **Designer**
- ✓ **Communication officer**
- ✓ **Community engagement staff**

## Partnerships for innovation & data



**Providence** 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 **partnerships with academia, think tanks, and philanthropy** 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:



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

Innovation is **helping the city** to:

- ✓ **Improve internal government operations**
- ✓ **Save costs and improve efficiency within the public sector**
- ✓ **Simplify administrative procedures for firms and residents**

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

- ✓ **Focus on measurement**
- ✓ **Human Resource support**
- ✓ **Leadership from Mayor**
- ✓ **Culture of innovation in city**
- ✓ **Support from outside city administration**