

# City Innovation Snapshot | Seattle, United States

## Overview

- ▶ Mayor: Jenny Durkan
- ▶ Lead staff on innovation: Tina Walha
- ▶ Population of municipality: 730,400 estimated (2018)
- ▶ Innovation/open data website: [www.seattle.gov/innovation-performance](http://www.seattle.gov/innovation-performance)

## Spotlight on Seattle | Spreading innovation capacity

The City of Seattle is championing the widespread use of innovation approaches such as design thinking, human-centred design, and data-driven management beyond the innovation team, and promoting them as tools for general use throughout departments within the city.

## Vision and approach to innovation capacity

### The city's innovation strategy

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

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

Technological innovation

Big picture re-thinking

### Approaches to innovation capacity

Similar to over **34%** of cities surveyed, Seattle approaches innovation capacity from **specific policy areas**.

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

Transport / mobility

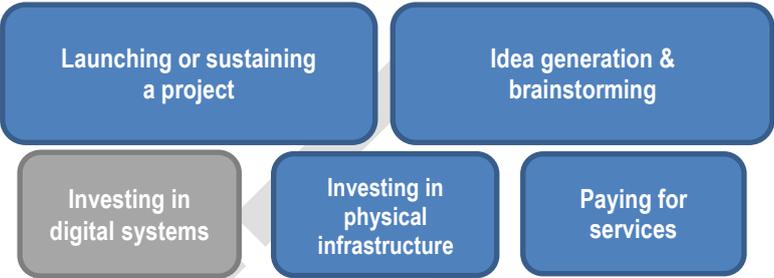
Housing

### Most common innovation activities

Seattle's most common innovation activity includes **data-driven analytics/public data management; engaging residents in new ways; facilitating organisational change within the municipal administration; and human-centred design**.



## Funding for innovation capacity

<h3>Funding to support innovation capacity</h3> <p>Like <b>77%</b> of cities surveyed, Seattle has dedicated funding to support innovation capacity, which originates from the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Municipal budget</b> (city council approved funds)</li> <li>✓ <b>External funding</b> (philanthropy/non-profit)</li> </ul>	<h3>Types of activities being funded</h3> <p>Seattle's funding for innovation capacity is generally directed towards <b>launching or sustaining a project</b>, and <b>generating ideas &amp; brainstorming</b>. These are the two most commonly funded activities all cities surveyed. Seattle is also <b>investing in physical infrastructure</b> and <b>paying for services</b>.</p> 
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<h3>Organisational structure &amp; staffing</h3>  <p>Situated in the Mayor's office, Seattle's dedicated team for innovation was created by a grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies, and consists of <b>8 staff</b>.</p> <p>Staff skills and profiles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Protect manager</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Data/Computer scientist</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Designer</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Sociologist</b></li> </ul>	<h3>Partnerships for innovation &amp; data</h3>  <p><b>Seattle</b> has developed partnerships to promote innovation capacity with <b>departments throughout the city's administration, other levels of government, private firms, non-profit and philanthropic sector, academia/think tanks, city residents/resident associations and other cities.</b></p> <p>Members of Seattle's Innovation &amp; Performance unit attend Stanford's Design School's Designing for Social Systems training program focused on social impact.</p>
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<h2>Measuring outcomes</h2>																				
<p>Policy areas that <b>benefit from sufficient data</b>, or <b>lack sufficient data</b>, to support innovation capacity in the city:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="159 1579 997 1944"> <tr> <td>Transport / mobility</td> <td>Economic development</td> <td>Housing &amp; built environment</td> <td>Policing &amp; law enforcement</td> <td>Health</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water</td> <td>Waste and sewage</td> <td>Labour markets &amp; skills</td> <td>Environment &amp; climate change</td> <td>Education</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Culture</td> <td>*Social inclusion, equity</td> <td>Public works</td> <td>Tourism</td> <td>Digital governance</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>NB: No response provided by the city for the policy areas in grey. *survey results listed as sufficient and insufficient.</i></p>					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	<p>Innovation is <b>helping the city</b> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Improve resident outcomes</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Improve internal operations</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Simplify administrative procedures</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> </ul>
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