

Spotlight on Virginia Beach | Innovation Academy

Overview

- ▶ Mayor: Robert M. "Bobby" Dyer
- ▶ Lead staff on innovation: Neva White
- ▶ Population of municipality: 450,435 (2017)
- ▶ Innovation/open data website: <https://data.vbgov.com/>

Virginia Beach's Innovation Office is in a stage of redesigning their Innovation Efforts focusing on two approaches – **Human-centred design** and **Process improvement**. The Innovation Academy aims to provide participants with **a chance to experience the two ways of approaching ideas, problems, and solutions**. The first Innovation Academy took place in **partnership with the Alliance for Innovation** and developed a pilot project for bringing ideas for innovation from throughout the municipality.

Vision and approach to innovation capacity

The city's innovation strategy

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

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

Human-centred design

Experimentation

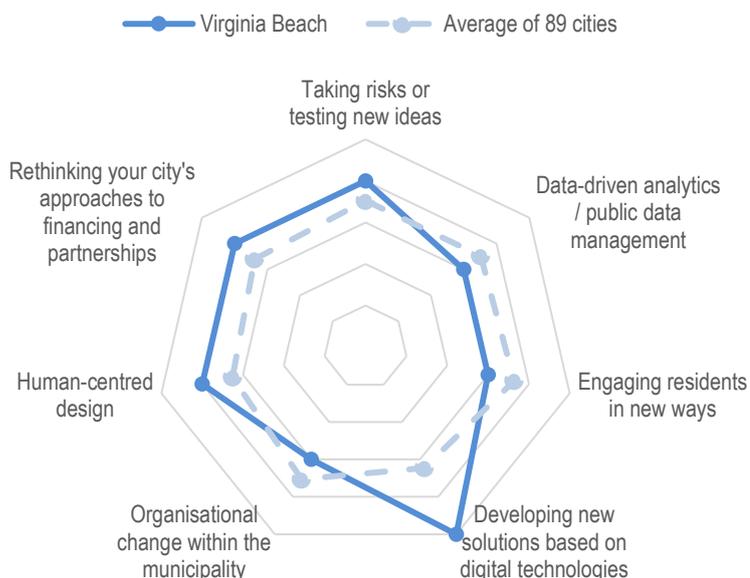
Approaches to innovation capacity

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

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

Most common innovation activities

Virginia Beach's most common innovation activity is **developing new solutions based on digital technologies**. Its innovation activities also include **taking risks and testing new ideas; facilitating human-centred design; and rethinking the city's approach to financing and partnerships**.



Funding for innovation capacity

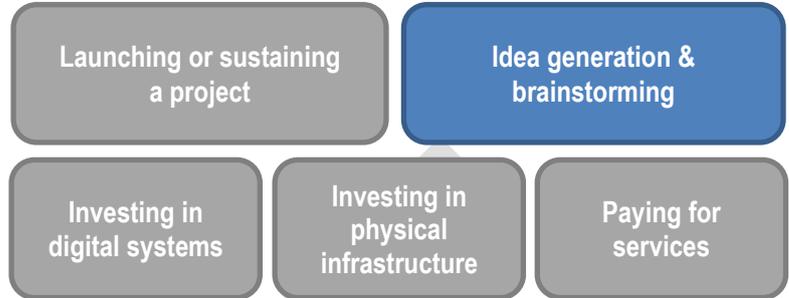
Funding to support innovation capacity

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

- ✓ **Municipal budget**
(city council approved funds/operating budget)
- ✓ **Non-financial resources**
(staff on loan)

Types of activities being funded

Virginia Beach's funding for innovation capacity is generally directed towards **generating ideas & brainstorming** which is one of the two most commonly funded activities among all cities surveyed. Virginia Beach also **provides formal innovation training** for staff.



Organisational structure & staffing



As an independent team within the Strategy, Innovation, Transparency, and Resiliency Department, Virginia Beach's innovation work is led by the **Chief Strategy Officer** and **5 staff members**.

Staff skills and profiles include:

- ✓ **Project manager**
- ✓ **Designer**
- ✓ **Community engagement staff**
- ✓ **Process improvement and organisation development staff**

Partnerships for innovation & data



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

To improve data use, the city has also developed **data partnerships with philanthropy** to collect and analyse data.

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**
- ✓ **Anticipate and manage future challenges**
- ✓ **Improve service delivery**

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

- ✓ **Focus on measurement**
- ✓ **Dedicated innovation team**
- ✓ **Culture of innovation in city**
- ✓ **Support from outside city administration**