Policy Labs: What is the future of design for policy-making?

BEDA Insight Forum
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.40</td>
<td>Welcome by BEDA President</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>Dr Anne Stenros, City of Helsinki</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.20</td>
<td>Alessandro Rancati, EU Policy Lab</td>
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<td>15.40</td>
<td>Vera Winthagen, City of Eindhoven</td>
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<td>16.00</td>
<td>Malcolm Beattie, Northern Ireland Innovation Lab</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.20</td>
<td>Roundtable discussion, facilitated by Dr Anna Whicher, PDR</td>
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<td>17.00</td>
<td>Networking drinks</td>
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Trends in Policy Labs and design for policy.

Lessons from evaluating the Northern Ireland Innovation Lab.
What are Policy Labs?
Policy Labs are multidisciplinary government teams developing public policies and public services using innovation methods to engage citizens at multiple stages of the development process.
“Let’s forget the McDonald’s’s vision for Labs. They are all different depending on the local culture. There is no blueprint.”

Stephane Vincent, Director, 27e
Between 2012 and 2017, Design Action Plans have been adopted by governments in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Latvian and by the European Commission.
## Table 1. Operating models for Lab and Innovation centres across Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Lab</th>
<th>Sponsorship</th>
<th>Commercial</th>
<th>Collaborative Funding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MindLab (2002)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Lab (2014)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDR UCD Lab (2010)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid Model (Hypothetical)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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## Table 2. Strengths and weaknesses of operating models for policy labs and innovation centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td>Clear mandate to service government departments.</td>
<td>Reliant on stable and continuous source of funding within a shifting political environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost-Recovery</td>
<td>Flexibility to service a range of clients.</td>
<td>Requires expertise across business development, marketing and finance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Flexibility to service a range of clients.</td>
<td>Requires leadership and expertise across business development, bid writing, marketing and finance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid</td>
<td>Risk spread among multiple income sources.</td>
<td>Requires leadership and expertise across business development, bid writing, marketing and finance.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Policy Labs use a range of methods, including but not limited to:

- Design (Service Design, Policy Design, User-centred Design, Design Thinking, etc)
- Behavioural insights/economics
- Randomised control trials
- Data science (Big data, Dynamic systems modelling)
- Digital R&D
- Co-production (Co-creation, Co-design)
- Ethnography
- Nudge/Lean

The three dominant approaches are:
- Design, Data, Digital
What is design for policy?
Public policy – is applied problem-solving formulated in the name of public demand.

Policy design is applied, creative problem-solving engaging users and stakeholders at multiple stages of the policy process.
Public services – are transactions (healthcare, transport, waste removal) provided by the government to benefit society.

Service design is a set of interactions (service components, infrastructure, communication) developed to improve experiences between the service provider and user.
What is the difference between a traditional policy process and a design-led policy process
Treasury ROAMEF

- RATIONALE
- OBJECTIVES
- EVALUATION
- APPRAISAL
- IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING
- FEEDBACK
What is the policy design process?
Policy Design Process

1. User Needs Analysis
Policy Design Process

1. USER NEEDS ANALYSIS
2. PROBLEM DEFINITION
Policy Design Process

1. User Needs Analysis
2. Problem Definition
3. Idea Generation
Policy Design Process

1. User Needs Analysis
2. Problem Definition
3. Idea Generation
4. Testing
Policy Design Process

1. USER NEEDS ANALYSIS
2. PROBLEM DEFINITION
3. IDEA GENERATION
4. TESTING
5. IMPLEMENTATION
Policy Design Process

1. User Needs Analysis
2. Problem Definition
3. Idea Generation
4. Testing
5. Implementation
6. Evaluation
What are the determinants of successful design projects in Policy Labs?

What are the challenges and unintended consequences?
Lessons for Labs

1: Ensure clarity of language and process.
2: Develop selection criteria for projects.
3: Build evaluation in from the outset.
4: Promote good practices and create a community.
5: Secure support from senior decision-makers.
6: Practice what you preach.
1. Scope Project Topic
2. Sign Memorandum of Understanding
3. User Needs Analysis
4. Problem Definition
5. Idea Generation
6. Review & Refinement
7. Prototyping, Testing & Review
8. Upscaling
9. Implementation
10. Evaluation
Selection criteria

Is the project of strategic importance?

Is the project consistent with the priorities of the Policy Lab?

Does the Sponsor have the necessary commitment and authority?

Does the Sponsor have resources for prototyping, testing and upscaling?

Is there a reputational risk for the Policy Lab?

Is the Sponsor prepared to make the results public?
Perform Evaluation

Evaluation of the Northern Ireland Public Sector Innovation Lab

Spring 2017

Department of Finance
An Roinn Altraeadaí
www.finance-ni.gov.uk

Innovation Lab

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Promote good practices
Senior decision-maker support
Challenges

1. Mismatch in timescales between policy and implementation
2. Perception of high profile policy
3. Hierarchy, lack of shared vocabulary
4. Silos, evidence, awareness, change aversion
5. Raising stakeholder expectations
What does a traditional policy process look like?
What does a design-led policy process look like?