



# INCLUDE

## Innovera - Digital Innovation Platform

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# 1 Good practice information

## 1.1 General Information

- Title of the Good Practice: Innovera - Digital Innovation Platform
- Region / City / Municipality: Örnsköldsvik, Västernorrland
- Country: Sweden
- Contact Organisation: Örnsköldsvik Municipality
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- Date of Implementation: 2025 – ongoing

## 1.2 Summary of the Good Practice

This good practice presents the development of a digital innovation platform in Örnsköldsvik Municipality, Sweden, implemented within the INNOCAP project. The initiative responds to challenges related to low employee participation in innovation processes, difficulties turning ideas into actionable projects, and limited use of advanced digital technologies in municipal service development.

The solution consists of a web-based digital innovation platform supported by an AI agent. The platform enables municipal employees to submit ideas, collaborate across departments, receive coaching support, and track the development of innovation projects. The AI agent assists users throughout the innovation process, from idea generation to project management, while the VR component allows projects and data to be visualised in an immersive and interactive way.

The platform is built with a federated network architecture, allowing organisations to connect and form an innovation network while retaining full control over their own data. Data remains within each organisation, and administrators determine what, if anything, is shared with other nodes in the network. This design addresses key requirements around data sovereignty, copyright, and GDPR compliance.

The practice combines digital innovation with organisational capacity-building through trained innovation coaches and digital coaches. Key outcomes include improved internal collaboration, strengthened innovation culture, and increased organisational readiness for digital transformation. Although the platform is still scaling up, early results show active employee engagement, submission of concrete ideas, and recognition of the platform's value in improving the quality and efficiency of municipal work. The approach

demonstrates how advanced digital technologies can be effectively embedded in public-sector innovation processes.

## 1.3 Context and Challenges Addressed

- What territorial challenge or opportunity did the region face?

Limited participation in innovation work, difficulties moving from ideas to implementation, and a need to modernise internal municipal processes.

- Why was digital innovation relevant in this context?

Digital tools were needed to support structured idea management, collaboration, transparency, and scalability, while also addressing data security, accessibility, and efficiency.

- What specific community or stakeholder needs were identified?

Municipal employees required a supportive and user-friendly environment to contribute ideas, receive guidance, and collaborate across departments.

## 1.4 Objectives

- Increase employee engagement in innovation and service improvement
- Strengthen innovation capacity within the municipality
- Improve quality, efficiency, and sustainability of public services
- Introduce advanced digital technologies into municipal innovation processes

## 1.5 Description of the Practice

### 1.5.1 Activities Implemented

- Development of a web-based innovation platform and API
- Integration of an AI agent for coaching and idea support

- Exploration of a VR environment connected to the innovation API, with potential for hosting virtual workshops, inspiration sessions, and travel-free meetings.
- Capacity-building workshops and one-to-one coaching
- Users workshops and prototype testing with municipal staff

## 1.5.2 Stakeholders Involved

- Local/regional authorities
- Civil society organisations
- Youth organisations
- Businesses / SMEs
- Universities / research centres (University of Galway)
- Digital innovation hubs
- Other: Municipal employees and innovation coaches

## 1.5.3 Resources Used

- Human resources

Municipal staff, innovation coaches, digital coaches, technical development teams

- Technical resources

Web platform, AI services, VR environment, APIs, Azure cloud infrastructure

- Funding sources (EU, national, regional, private sector)

EU (INNOCAP project), regional and municipal resources

## 1.6 Thematic Categorisation

### A. Digital Technologies

- Digital platforms for participation
- Open data solutions
- Digital twins / GIS / mapping tools
- AI supported
- Immersive tech (VR/AR) for community engagement
- Gamification
- Other (please, name)

### B. Co Creation Methodologies

- Participatory design
- Living labs
- Citizen assemblies
- Hackathons
- Digital consultation tools
- Collaborative prototyping
- Other (please, name)

### C. Youth / Minority Groups Engagement

- Digi Tailored outreach to youth
- Inclusion of minority or marginalized communities
- Capacity-building for underrepresented groups (employees with varying digital skills)
- Mentorship or ambassador programmes
- Co creation activities specifically targeting these groups
- Other (please, name)

## 1.7 Results and Impact

### 1.7.1 Quantitative Results

- 395 registered users on the platform
- 146 innovation ideas submitted since launch
- The platform is currently undergoing migration to a new infrastructure and active development of new functionality
- Coaching and workshop activities are ongoing but are currently facilitated outside the platform, as built-in workshop support is under development

### 1.7.2 Qualitative Results

The initiative improved internal collaboration, strengthened innovation culture, and increased organisational readiness for digital transformation. Employees reported better support for idea development and clearer innovation processes.

## 1.8 Innovation and Added Value

- What is innovative about the approach or technology?

The integration of an AI-supported innovation platform with a VR environment is highly innovative in a municipal context. The approach goes beyond traditional idea management by offering coaching, immersive data visualisation, and structured organisational support.

The federated network architecture is a key innovation: organisations can join an innovation network while retaining full control of their own data. Administrators govern visibility across nodes, making this approach particularly suitable for public sector contexts where data sovereignty, copyright, and GDPR compliance are critical requirements.

- How does it differ from traditional community engagement?

It differs from traditional community (or organisational) engagement in several key ways:

- **From one-off consultations to continuous engagement:** Instead of relying on occasional workshops, surveys, or meetings, the platform

enables ongoing participation where ideas can be submitted, discussed, refined, and followed up over time.

- **Digitally enabled and scalable:** Traditional engagement is often limited by time, location, and resources. This approach uses a digital platform, AI support, and dashboards, allowing broad participation across departments and making engagement easier to scale.
- **Active support rather than passive feedback:** Rather than only collecting opinions, the platform actively supports users through AI-assisted coaching, innovation coaches, and structured processes that help turn ideas into concrete projects.
- **Data-driven and transparent:** Participants can track the status and progress of ideas and projects, increasing transparency and trust—something rarely achieved through traditional consultation methods.
- **Innovative interaction modes:** The use of immersive technologies such as VR allows users to explore and understand projects and data visually, going beyond text-based or meeting-based engagement.

Overall, the approach shifts engagement from a reactive, consultation-focused model to a proactive, collaborative, and supported innovation process embedded in everyday municipal work.

- What elements could inspire replication by other EU regions?

The practice includes several elements that could inspire replication by other EU regions:

- **Modular digital innovation platform:** A web-based platform with APIs and a modular architecture allows regions to adapt, extend, or simplify the solution according to their size, capacity, and policy priorities.
- **Integration of AI for innovation support:** The use of an AI agent to support idea generation, coaching, and project follow-up demonstrates how AI can move beyond automation and actively support public sector innovation processes.
- **Combination of technology and organisational capacity-building:** Pairing digital tools with trained innovation coaches and internal support roles ensures that technology adoption is meaningful and embedded in everyday work practices.
- **Co-creation and user-centred design:** Continuous involvement of municipal employees through workshops, prototype testing, and feedback loops ensures relevance and usability, and this methodology can be easily replicated across different administrative contexts.
- **Phased implementation and scalability:** The step-by-step rollout—from discovery and design to pilot testing and full deployment—offers a realistic and low-risk pathway for adoption in other regions.
- **Strong focus on public-sector requirements:** Built-in considerations for GDPR compliance, accessibility, bilingual use, and data security make

the approach particularly suitable for replication across EU public administrations.

Together, these elements provide a practical, adaptable, and policy-aligned model that other EU regions can reuse to strengthen innovation capacity and digital transformation in the public sector.

## 1.9 Lessons Learned

- What worked well?

- Strong capacity-building and coaching are essential alongside technology
- Early and continuous users involvement improves relevance and adoption
- A phased and modular approach helps manage complexity

- What would you do differently?

Workshop and coaching support should be integrated into the platform from an early stage. Currently, coaches facilitate activities outside the system, highlighting the need for built-in facilitation and session management tools to connect coaching activities directly to the innovation process.

## 1.10 Transferability and Scalability

- Which aspects can be replicated elsewhere?

The practice is transferable to other municipalities and public organisations with leadership support, internal capacity-building, and attention to data security, accessibility, and usability. The modular design supports scalability.

The federated network architecture allows other municipalities or public organisations to join an existing innovation network without giving up control of their own data. This makes the model particularly replicable across the EU public sector, where data security and institutional autonomy are key concerns.

- What conditions (resources, policy environment, partnerships) are needed for transfer?

Key conditions include local relevance, institutional buy-in, and a coordinated communication strategy.

## 1.11 Links and Supporting Materials

- Video: <https://www.interreg-npa.eu/projects/innocap/home/resources/>