Innovation Life Cycle

When looking to create a new or significantly improved product and/or service it is important that users recognise the importance of understanding the problem they are trying to solve before implementing a solution.

The Innovation Life Cycle model is based on the Scottish Approach to Service Design and the methodology of the British Design Council Double Diamond.



The above diagram shows

Open or close

the three stages of the innovation life cycle model of problem, solution and then transformed services.

Problem is the first stage where you start by looking at the issues through a definition and discovery phase. Then you define the area to focus on.

Stage two is Solution. Here you look to develop potential solutions, then deliver working solutions.

At the third stage of transformed services you adopt the solution in the organisation or sector and realise the benefits. Ultimately you will decommission the innovation at its end of life.

During the definition and discovery phase of the innovation cycle, innovation work will typically use challenges or outcome-based specifications. This is often referred to as “Open Innovation”.

Open innovation is where an organisation does not rely on just its own internal knowledge, sources and resources (such as their own staff or R&D) but uses multiple external sources such as private or third sector suppliers to drive innovation.

When looking to procure innovative goods or services, it is vital that you understand that the goods and services may not exist in the market yet, or may require work to adapt them for a specific application in the public sector.

Understanding both what the market can deliver and what work/effort may be required is crucial, particularly before making a decision on whether to pursue innovation activity. This includes what type of procurement process may be applicable.

Public sector buyers should work together with other stakeholders to define the problems (engaging fully with users) before moving to create solutions.

Innovation notices have been added to Public Contracts Scotland (PCS). You can find out more at Preliminary Market Consultation Notice and Pre Commercial Procurement Notice and Award.