

Financing public sector innovation

Summary

In the face of increasing societal complexities and uncertainties, the need for public sector innovations is larger than ever. In order to promote innovation, public sector organizations must have high-level financing and investment capabilities, the development of which can pose considerable challenges for the existing traditional, control-oriented budget processes. The goal of this PhD project is to examine the possibilities for developing high-level budgetary and financing capabilities for promoting public sector innovation.

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| Research field: | Public policy and innovation |
| Supervisors: | Prof. Dr. Ringa Raudla Prof. Dr. Veiko Lember |
| Availability: | This position is available. |
| Offered by: | School of Business and Governance Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance |
| Application deadline: | Applications are accepted between September 01, 2020 00:00 and October 02, 2020 23:59 (Europe/Zurich) |

Description

In the face of increasing societal complexities and uncertainties, the need for public sector innovations is larger than ever. Not surprisingly, governments around the globe have recently come up with ever more sophisticated innovation plans and strategies. However, what sets the innovation intentions apart from the actual capabilities to innovate is funding. Yet, the need to promote innovation in the public sector can pose considerable challenges for the existing traditional, control-oriented budget processes. The goal of this PhD project is to examine the possibilities for using budgetary instruments and developing high-level financing capabilities for promoting public sector innovation. The specific research questions addressed in the project include, for example, the following: 1) What kinds of features should budget processes and instruments have to best provide organizations with ability, motivation and opportunity for public sector innovation?; 2) How can we address the trade-offs between flexibility and accountability in the budget process to public sector innovation?; 3) How can the central budget agencies act as innovation-promoters? 4) To what extent do existing instruments and practices like innovation funds, public procurement of innovation, social innovation bonds, strategic outcome goals, spending reviews, block budgets, and performance management actually encourage innovation in public agencies? 5) How resilient have the existing practices proven in the context of a crisis? 6) To what extent can the successful budgeting and funding approaches of the private sector in promoting innovation be emulated in the public sector context?

Responsibilities and tasks

During the PhD research, the student should:

1. Compile an analytical framework for examining the financing of public sector innovations;
2. Map possible budgeting and funding practices and instruments that can be used to promote innovation in the public sector;
3. Conduct an empirical study of different public sector organizations' or countries' experiences with the practices and instruments;
4. Develop reform proposals for practice.

During the project, the PhD candidate will have the opportunity to expand on these tasks.

Qualifications

A successful PhD candidate should preferably have:

- a master's degree in social sciences (preferably in public administration, political science or economics);
- a clear interest in the topic of the position;
- excellent command of English;
- strong and demonstrable writing and analytical skills;
- capacity to work both as an independent researcher and as part of an international team;

- capacity and willingness to provide assistance in organizational tasks relevant to the project.

The candidate should also submit a research plan for the topic, including the overall research and data collection strategy. The candidate can expand on the listed research questions and tasks.

We offer:

- 4-year PhD position in one of the largest, most internationalized and leading social science research centers in Estonia with a large portfolio of ongoing pan- European and national public administration, digital governance and innovation studies projects;
- The chance to do high-level research in one of the most dynamic digital government contexts globally;
- Opportunities for conference visits, research stays and networking with globally leading universities and research centers in the fields of public administration, innovation studies and digital government.

About the organization

The Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance (RND) is an interdisciplinary research center of Tallinn University of Technology that focuses on socially relevant and future-oriented research and teaching issues:

- models and practices of governance and public administration globally;
- fiscal governance and fiscal bureaucracies;
- e-governance and digital transformation of societies: datafication, public services and state-citizen relations in the digital era, smart cities and digital public services and cross-border collaboration;
- P2P technologies, its' governance and potential new production models;
- science and innovation policies and its' management;
- philosophy and ethics of science and technology.

RND is a highly internationalised department and engages some of the top international thinkers and researchers in its research fields. Next to a fully English taught PhD degree it offers a MA degree in Technology Governance and Digital Transformations, and a unique Erasmus Mundus joint MSc programme in Public Sector Innovation and e-Governance in cooperation with KU Leuven (Belgium) and University of Münster (Germany). RND and its staff have coordinated or been involved in a multitude of international research projects with the EU (INTERREG, COST, FP7, H2020), UN (UNDP), OECD (SIGMA), INET, and have participated in various European Commission working groups (the EU's Lisbon Agenda Group, Expert Group on Managing Risks in Public Technology Procurement, Expert Group on Public Sector Innovation). Recently RND initiated a major, 32 MEUR international R&D project on Smart Cities (FinestTwins). RND is also engaged in several international associations, such as the European Master in Public Administration program (EMPA), European Inter-University Association on Society, Science and Technology (ESST), and the European Group for Public Administration (EGPA) where RND coordinates the Permanent Study Group on Public Administration, Technology and Innovation.

Additional information

For further information, please contact Prof Ringa Raudla ringa.raudla@taltech.ee and Dr Veiko Lember veiko.lember@taltech.ee or visit <http://ttu.ee/nurkse>



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