

SMART CITY STRATEGIC GROWTH MAP

# Innovation Ecosystem



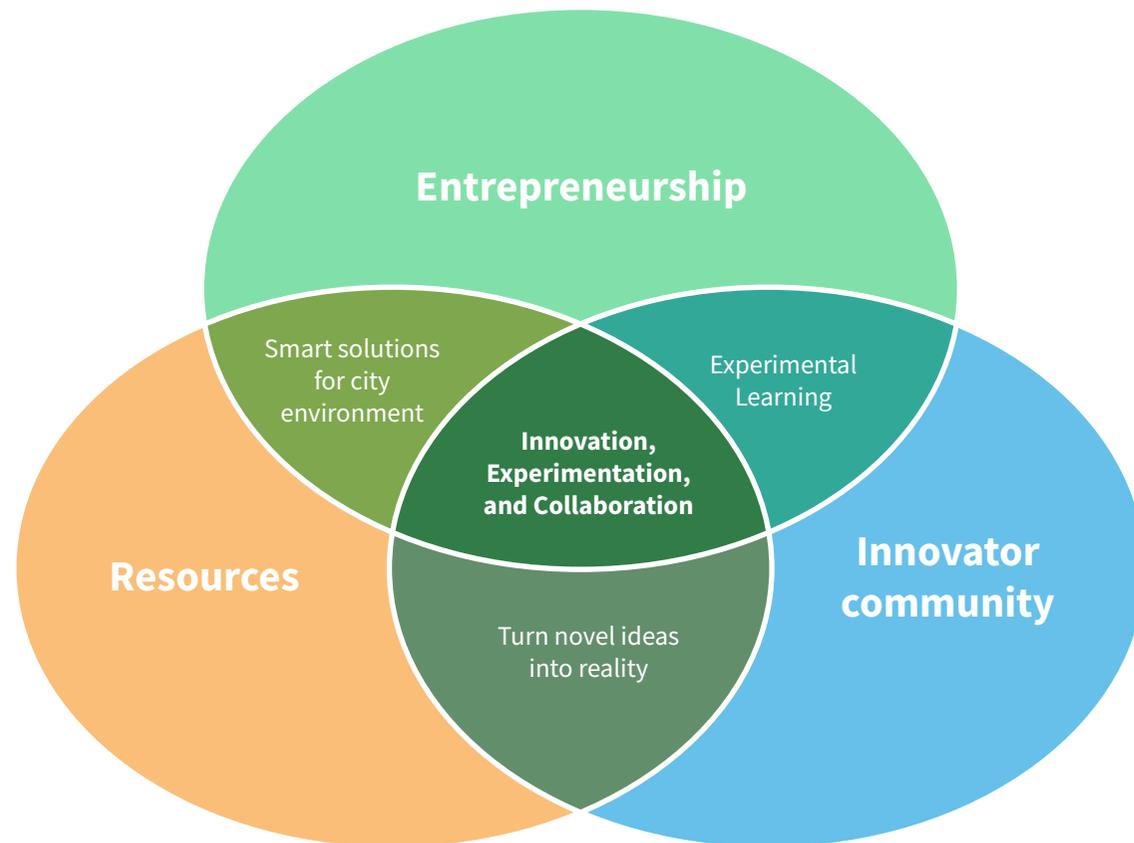
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# Innovation Ecosystem

A critical success factor for the development of a smart city is the commitment to innovation. But creating the right framework to enable an innovation ecosystem to grow is not an easy task; yet, the benefits are substantial. Any such innovation framework will need to foster collaboration between the different city stakeholders and empower entrepreneurs and private companies to invest in innovation.

Cities are known for being largely risk adverse. And rightly so, there are a number of real risk scenarios for a city that fails to achieve its set goals. In times of scarce resources, any failure can have implications for citizens and businesses. Enabling cities to take calculated risk through experiments, innovations and disruptive technologies can solve long-term issues. Using the talent and ideas of the city users is one way of overcoming these risks.

## How can an innovation environment be realised?



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For new ideas to be realized, a city needs to be willing to take calculated risks and experiment. Barriers can be overcome and opportunities harnessed through the collaboration between different departments and stakeholders from outside government.

Cities that have made their data available to the public have contributed to the creation of new business. We have already referred to the way in which data can be made available and data privacy issues can be overcome.

This ecosystem will be able to deliver solutions that neither of those city actors could have created on their own. It will be the responsibility of the local government to identify the areas of the city's environment that have the greatest potential for success but are lacking initiatives. If successful, such an ecosystem will be able to bring together parties that would usually not collaborate.

Partnerships and collaborations are being developed between vendors, academia, private industry and citizen groups that are important for, on the one hand, the deployment of smart solutions and, on the other hand, the use of emerging technologies.

## Why create an innovation hub?

The idea of an innovation hub has been used across the world as a space that embodies creative out-of-the-box thinking and connects this with real-world challenges. The hub provides a space for different stakeholders to engage, exchange ideas, and respond to the needs of the urban environment as well as to their own. This means that it is not enough to supply data alone. To grow an innovation community there needs to be support and encouragement, easy to use tools and leadership into what is achievable.

As such an innovation hub would act as an incubator space for ideas to be accelerated, supporting individuals, SMEs and corporate innovators. While pushing and rewarding entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity, an innovation hub would ultimately provide solutions that improve the liveability of the city environment. Although often “just” digital, an innovation hub could include a “makerspace”, which fosters innovative small scale design and manufacturing, and / or a repair café, which fosters a circular economy.

For more insight into how other cities embrace innovation and entrepreneurship take a look at CITIE.

