

FRAMEWORK FOR A CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND THE BUILDING OF KNOWLEDGE SOCIETIES

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We, the participants in the international experts' symposium "A Culture of Innovation and the Building of Knowledge Societies" jointly organized by UNESCO and the Institute for Strategic Innovations have agreed that future work on A Culture of Innovation should build on the following concepts, principles, and approaches:

1. The concept of a Culture of Innovation is strongly linked to the concept of knowledge societies. Innovation essentially implies that creative people who lead economic and social development put knowledge to work. Hence, innovation is knowledge intensive.
2. In knowledge societies, there exists an inverse relationship between time and funds - in relation to basic studies, applied research, and industrial production - that would be required in underpinning the innovation process.
3. Innovation is one of the main drivers of globalisation. Technological advance, research, financial innovation, managerial and operational improvements, ("soft") social innovations, and educational skills become universalised and transform societies. Different approaches to Culture of Innovation can be systematised with a view to developing a holistic framework thriving under enabling conditions and in an atmosphere of receptivity.
4. A Culture of Innovation can be defined as a specific expression of societal dynamics, of self-reflection, and of collective aspirations. However, it should not be considered an end in itself. Each society has to define its own ethos and set of ethical and social values that underpin an innovative culture. Innovations can occur in many different constellations, ranging from deliberate innovation management to institutional and policy innovation to responses to societal crisis situations.
5. Contemporary societies strive for solid paths towards sustainable development, guided and inspired by the concept of human security, which transcend the traditional

modifications in consumption patterns, and the exploration of related behavioural patterns and cultural practices and delineate areas where innovation will need to be pursued. Society must confront an ingenuity gap as problems are produced much faster than solutions are devised.

6. A Culture of Innovation forms an integral part of the Dialogue among Civilizations in the understanding of how other cultures cope with innovation processes that are rooted in concrete expressions of human interaction, common values, tolerance, mutual respect, and cultural diversity.

7. Intercultural exchange and multicultural settings can stimulate and enrich conditions for innovations. So-called "diaspora innovators" are an emerging source for cross-boundary and cross-cultural innovation, creative learning processes, and new synergetic alliances.

8. The rapid advance and diffusion of information and communication technologies (ICTs), the global integration of product and financial markets, the increasing specialization of firms' value-adding activities, new cooperative and skill-intensive forms of organization as well as the growing differentiation of demand patterns have challenged the old economic and social institutions. Indeed, there is a need to understand better institutional change under difficult conditions and feedback loops.

9. In a rapidly changing environment, the performance of socio-economic systems is increasingly determined by their institutional adjustment capacity. To ensure a well-balanced and equitable adjustment process, and to accommodate resistance and circumvent exclusion, it is important to understand the determinants of institutional change, which is deeply embedded in cultural practices.

10. Scientific knowledge and technology can therefore never substitute for social interaction and human capacities. The abilities to learn and to foster personal experiences constitute the human side of Culture of Innovation and are key elements of knowledge societies. As a result, all innovation and knowledge policies have to be people centred.

11. Innovation and knowledge creation have long-term perspectives. Too much emphasis on short-term gains in the name of global competition and economic efficiency can lead to destabilization. A Culture of Innovation must be based on a clear and concise strategic perspective, inspired by principles of democratic governance and inclusiveness.

12. Technological innovations typically arise before most individuals and institutions are ready to adequately estimate and effectively apply them. Investment in human capital will be key in order to ensure the fertilization of the social-cultural soil of change. The innovation potential of any society, institution or domain can only be fully exploited through a genuinely pragmatic approach.

13. From an integrated innovation perspective, innovation is network oriented and involves different actors from the public and private sector, educational institutions, and civil society, ideally at local, regional, national, and supra-national level. The formation of clusters and the establishment of new partnerships can help to facilitate structural change in the economy, thus leading to overall societal change.

14. The role of knowledge in a Culture of Innovation is therefore not confined by an organization's boundaries. Instead, it evolves around networks of common practices, experiences and traditions. In most cases, innovation is the result of recursive multi-dimensional and holistic processes and does not follow linear patterns of progression.

15. Innovation and knowledge creation together with its appropriation and application are inseparably linked with education and especially worldwide efforts towards Education For All (EFA). Contemporary societies increasingly rely on education to prepare for innovation and to harness and maximise potential benefits. "Knowing how to know" becomes ever more important with education playing a major role in shaping mental frameworks and creating mental flexibility. In that context, innovation in education - and its barriers and constraints - becomes both a tool and a specific problem area for effective innovation systems and policies. The education sector has been remarkably resistant to innovations, especially those driven by new media and information and communication technologies (ICTs). Specific challenges of the education sector will be:

- 1) How to achieve more with fewer resources
- 2) How to shorten the period of initial training
- 3) How to ensure a better education, especially for individuals from Least Developed Countries (LDCs)
- 4) How to successfully fight against illiteracy
- 5) How to

include illiterates who can neither write nor read, in the educational process in order to improve their quality of life.

16. In this sense, awareness, access, and capacity are crucial determinants. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) can help make technological progress work for human development, though special attention must be paid to the impact of the digital divide. In the end, education itself becomes a field for innovation.

17. The creation of a Culture of Innovation does not allow for a standard procedure to be followed at all times and in every situation. Truly innovative outcomes can only be achieved through a case-by-case approach strongly influenced by ethical postures and views, configurations of culture, innovation, and knowledge, which are always dynamic, flexible, and contextual.

18. At the enterprise level, innovation determines competitiveness. Innovation reflects current power and institutional relationships and may sometimes increase inequality. A Culture of Innovation must be inclusive. Inclusion is only possible through the empowerment of individuals, employees, customers/clients and citizens.