Innovation and Risk Management – Self-assessment checklist

The prompts below suggest questions to be considered at each stage of the innovation process as part of the wider **Framework for Innovation and Risk Management** as set out in the NIAO's **Innovation and Risk Management - Good Practice Guide** published in June 2023. They are for guidance only and are not intended to be exhaustive. The potential risks and management of those risks at each stage will vary depending on the specific context and scale of the innovation.

Stages 1, 2 and 3: Understand and Define; Generate Ideas; Select, Develop and Test **Suggested questions to consider:**	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Is there authority and support from senior management for the innovation?		
Has the nature, context, and complexity of the specific issue, problem, or opportunity to be addressed been fully understood or defined? This will help mitigate the risk that the innovation addresses a symptom rather than the real issue.		

Stages 1, 2 and 3: Understand and Define; Generate Ideas; Select, Develop and Test	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Suggested questions to consider:		
Have you considered and detailed the risk of not doing something, as opposed to focusing solely on the risks associated with doing something?		
Have you clearly distinguished between risks which can be managed and uncertainty?		
Are arrangements in place to consider, manage and review risks?		

Stages 1, 2 and 3: Understand and Define; Generate Ideas; Select, Develop and Test Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Is the organisational culture supportive of change and challenge? If not, have you considered how you will manage resistance to change or challenge?		
Do you have the time, space and adequate resources?		
Are the right people with the right knowledge and skills involved from the early stages to ensure that the problem, as well as the risks, are fully understood?		

Stages 1, 2 and 3: Understand and Define; Generate Ideas; Select, Develop and Test Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Have you engaged with all stakeholders to ensure matters are considered from a sufficiently wide perspective including engaging with all the bodies in the system that are impacted by your innovation? Co-creation can ensure a wider perspective which can lead to more and potentially better ideas as well as more informed decisions and solutions that reflect the user's perspective.		
Has the user/citizen been kept at the core of the design and the decision-making processes?		
Have potential solutions been thoroughly developed and tested?		

Stages 1, 2 and 3: Understand and Define; Generate Ideas; Select, Develop and Test Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Do you have a robust evidence base to support decisions made at each stage?		
Does the innovation involve collaboration/partnership working or working across different bodies or reliance on a key external body e.g. an IT provider? If so, are you clear on your level of control over the possible solution and any associated risks?		
How well do the options address intended objectives and outcomes and how deliverable are they?		

Stages 1, 2 and 3: Understand and Define; Generate Ideas; Select, Develop and Test Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Have similar innovations been adopted elsewhere? Have they been successful, are there lessons to be learnt or good practice available? Is there the opportunity to adopt and adapt and be proud of finding elsewhere?		
Have you considered the use of experts to facilitate at each of these stages such as the Innovation Lab?		
Have you considered whether it is possible to access initiatives such as SBRI to support your innovation?		

Stage 4: Implement Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Have appropriate governance and project management arrangements been developed and put in place?		
Is there a clear project implementation plan? Is it well understood and has it been agreed before implementation commences?		
Are roles, responsibilities, and timings clearly understood?		

Stage 4: Implement Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Are the necessary skills, expertise and experience available? If you have identified any skills gaps, are you clear on how they will be addressed?		
Has sufficient attention been given to the practicalities of implementation, including a phased implementation or transition arrangements to maintain continuity of service?		
Have you taken a realistic view as to the timing of implementation?		

Stage 4: Implement Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Have you continued to engage with stakeholders, especially end users?		
Are arrangements in place to ensure any difficulties arising are promptly identified and addressed?		

Stage 4: Implement Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Are you clear on what information is needed to monitor, assess and evaluate the innovation?		
Are appropriate data collection and monitoring arrangements in place to enable effective review, evaluation and learning?		

Stage 5: Monitor, Review and Evaluate Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
How will success be defined and measured? Are you clear on how outcomes, not outputs, will be measured?		
Has an appropriate evaluation strategy been agreed?		
Do you have the necessary quality data and analytics to monitor, assess and evaluate success or otherwise on the on going appropriateness of the initiative?		

Stage 5: Monitor, Review and Evaluate Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Is your evaluation realistic and honest?		
Have you obtained early indications in terms of delivery and meeting the objectives and expectations of all stakeholders?		

Stage 5: Monitor, Review and Evaluate Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Have you considered the impact of the innovation on outcomes, service, effectiveness and efficiency measures?		
Have you re-considered the initial assumptions, aspirations and objectives? Do they remain current and relevant and does the initiative remain appropriate?		

Stage 6: Learn, Share, and Adapt Suggested questions to consider:	Yes / No	Comments / Notes
Are there processes in place to promote innovation, celebrate success and learn from all innovations – successful or otherwise – and share within your organisation and beyond?		
Are processes in place to learn from, and adapt, the project management processes or governance and oversight arrangements especially in relation to your next innovation?		
How can you use the experience gained over each stage to build in-house knowledge, understanding, capability and expertise?		