

## Overview of the Lab

The OECD Mission Action Lab – a joint initiative of the Directorate for Science, Innovation and Technology, the Observatory of Public Sector Innovation, and the Development Co-Operation Directorate – advises public sector organisations in defining, setting up and governing missions. We take an action-oriented research approach by working alongside partner organisations to develop dedicated tools and methods that are most appropriate to their country- and mission-specific contexts.

## How the Lab work

The OECD Mission Action Lab **works directly with policymakers and practitioners** at any stage of their mission to overcome challenges that prevent them from getting started or meaningfully staying on course with their missions. In turn, the Lab seeks to leverage this project work to build the broader evidence base and develop guidance on how governments can best implement mission-oriented approaches to public policy to address complex and systemic challenges.

National and regional partners working with the Lab can expect practical advice in the areas of **building, experimenting with, and using tools and methods that support the mission-oriented approach**. The advice provided by the Lab focuses on supporting mission design, governance, implementation (including portfolio management), and monitoring and evaluation.

## What the Lab delivers

The Mission Action Lab has developed various support tools through close interactions with mission managers, experts, and academics.

### ***The mission theory of change***

The Lab developed a mission theory of change (ToC) to track the key processes that lie at the heart of the mission-oriented approach, and assess whether these policies unfold as expected and produce their 'systemic effects'.

As part of the *Mission-oriented innovation policy (MOIP) for net-zero* report, the ToC tool was used to analyse a database of nearly 100 net-zero missions and 17 in-depth MOIP case studies.

The mission theory of change can be applied to various mission context to make explicit the expectations from the different partners regarding the

The analysis shows that most net-zero missions produce many of the effects presented in the mission theory of change. While many of these policies are relatively new, they already represent a marked improvement over traditional STI policy mixes. However, their achievements so far will not be sufficient to

scale up and deploy these innovations on a massive scale unless more work is done to support stronger engagement of sectoral actors, policies and resources.

### ***Mission evaluation and governance frameworks***

The Lab has developed a mission monitoring and evaluation framework that can be used to define the standards and benchmark by which missions' accomplishments or suitability characteristics should be assessed. It also developed a governance framework that can be used to reflect on and assess whether a particular mission's governance is fit-for-purpose to enable the mission accomplishment.

These frameworks were presented as part of a European Commissions' Directorate-General for Research and Innovation commissioned study to enhance the evidence-base on national mission initiatives and provide practical inputs for effective mission implementation. It culminated in a knowledge transfer exercise with the European Commission and a series of recommendations.

### ***Mission self-assessment tool***

The mission monitoring tool consists of a self-assessment tool that builds upon the OECD 'MOIP design principles'. These principles define an ideal-type of MOIP while leaving sufficient flexibility for accommodating the institutional specificities and strategic vision of each country or community.

The Mission Action Lab worked in close cooperation with the relevant Austrian authorities and stakeholders to apply the self-assessment tool to benchmark their mission design and implementation 'journey' for one of their mission-oriented programs. The Lab then worked with the Austrian government to develop a compass to show the way forward – a consensus around selected options for future action to improve the mission initiative.

### ***Creating new networks of mission practitioners***

The Mission Action Labs' Mission Community of Practice is designed for policymakers and practitioners actively involved in mission and mission-oriented policy to connect with other mission practitioners, discuss tools and themes for future exploration within the community, gain insights into the latest OECD mission work, and contribute to shaping the research direction of the Lab.

## **Tools under development**

The Lab is finalising work on two new tools:

1. The mission litmus test to help countries determine whether a given challenge is appropriate for a mission-oriented approach.
2. The mission readiness assessment to help determine whether there is sufficient capacity – within government, the business community, research community, and society at large – for a mission-oriented approach.

## **Contact us**

For further information, please contact: [missionlab@oecd.org](mailto:missionlab@oecd.org)