INNOVATION NORTH

Projects with Innovation North

Frequently Asked Questions

About Innovation North

How does Innovation North differ from traditional consultants?

Innovation North is a research-practice initiative focused on tackling complex management challenges using a systems-based approach. We combine our partners' deep, context-specific expertise with our global, systems-level perspective to generate truly novel ideas. Because we work as researchers rather than consultants, we're able to think bigger—moving beyond the immediate, surface-level solutions people often gravitate toward to uncover deeper, systemic opportunities for change. This approach helps to build lasting capabilities among your team members that extend well beyond the project.

What types of projects has Innovation North worked on in the past?

We've collaborated with organizations across business, government, and the non-profit sector in industries such as insurance, finance, agriculture, and construction. The challenges we tackle are complex, interconnected, and sit at the intersection of organizational goals and broader societal impact. You can explore past projects on our website.

Our Work Together

What does your approach look like in practice, and how long does it typically take?

Our approach involves moving through each space of the Compass at least once. We begin by framing—and often reframing—the challenge to ensure we're addressing the right problem, until we arrive at a clear set of actions you can take to help tackle the problem. The full process typically unfolds over about six months, with the pace tailored to your organization's needs and rhythm of work.

How do you decide which projects to take on and who to work with?

We work with organizations eager to tackle complex challenges through a systems lens. Our partners are organizations willing to experiment, learn, and adapt. They are open to new ideas and recognize that the status quo is not good enough.

INNOVATION NORTH Powered by IVEY

What's expected from the partner organization in terms of time, resources, and data sharing?

We anticipate that the meeting frequency will be no different than with any type of client engagement. We ask that you identify a project lead and welcome additional colleagues to engage throughout the process. Having access to sensitive data and internal/draft reports is often helpful, and we are open to signing an NDA or confidentiality agreement to protect this information.

How is the project scope defined and who's involved in that process?

The project scope is discussed from our initial conversation and is eventually written into a formal contract with milestones. As the project advances, we can amend the contract or add additional phases of work. Scoping and contracting is handled by Innovation North's Operations Manager and involves the project team.

Who owns the intellectual property (IP) or data generated from the project?

Your organization will retain all IP related to the specific challenge that can be commercialized. Innovation North will retain the IP that can improve innovation and management processes for publication purposes.

Do you publish or share findings from the project?

Ideally, we could share a high-level summary of the project and our work together on our website. We may also choose to publish the innovation or management insights into academic journals, but no project, individual, or company-specific information is disclosed without your explicit approval.

Will we receive concrete deliverables or recommendations at the end?

Yes, the action plan provides concrete short-term steps and practical nudges that contribute to your organization's long-term goals. Working with us, you'll leave with clear guidance on what to do in the coming weeks and months, not just abstract ideas.

What happens after the project concludes?

We often continue to collaborate, sometimes through additional phases of work or through sharing our findings more publicly. We will also follow-up with your organization a few times throughout the year to track the impact of our proposed actions.

INNOVATION NORTH

Costing and Funding

What are the costs associated with working with Innovation North?

The cost of the project will depend on the scope and timing. The minimum cost for a project will likely be $50K. We can give you a rough estimate in our initial conversation and a full-breakdown with options to shrink or scale in a formal proposal.

Are there opportunities for joint funding or grants?

In cases where an organization is unable to fund the entire project themselves, we can recommend potential funding opportunities or grants. We can also brainstorm other ways of funding the work (e.g. finding a co-sponsor).

Ready to get started?

Reach out to our team at info@innovationnorth.ca to set-up a conversation. We're always curious to hear about the challenges you are facing and explore opportunities to tackle them together!