

URBAN IMAGINARIES *Inspiration* SESSIONS



Human Learning Systems Summary Note

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This inspiration session introduces participants to a new method of public management - Human Learning Systems - a new approach to public service that embraces complexity, human relationship and continuous learning. Building on the work currently being done by CPI and delivered within the Urban Imaginaries program, this session uses case studies and real-life examples to show how this approach is currently being piloted across different contexts globally, including city-level, country-level as well as in international organisations. Using these examples, the session also illustrates the limitations of a traditional 'scaling' approach often adopted by governments, and instead advocates for scaling of experimentation and the capacity to learn within government. This session builds on the recently released report 'Human Learning Systems: A practical guide for the curious.'



SPEAKER PROFILE

The session will be delivered by Toby Lowe, Visiting Professor in Public Management at CPI, who also authored the report 'Human Learning Systems: A practical guide for the curious.' Toby has spent 15 years working across the public and voluntary sectors in the United Kingdom, across policy and delivery roles. Currently, he is on secondment to CPI from Newcastle Business School, where he has been working alongside public and voluntary sector organisations to develop an alternative paradigm for public management, one which enables public service to work more effectively in complex and dynamic environments.

RESOURCES (click to access)

[PRESENTATION](#)

[CPI REPORT](#)

Human Learning Systems: A practical guide for the curious

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR CITIES

Standard models of social innovation

The purpose of public service is to help people to create good outcomes in their lives, and the standard model of social innovation moves from first identifying a problem to prototyping or piloting a solution and eventually scaling it widely intending to create positive impact at scale.

However, this approach ignores the various contexts which come into play when solutions are implemented and scaled.

Instead, what can be scaled is the capacity of people to experiment and learn together, which is the foundation of the Human Learning Systems approach.

What does HLS look like in reality?

Human Learning Systems is increasingly being tested and adopted by organisations ranging from **Local Authorities** and civil **society organisations** in the UK, through to national Governments, and transnational organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme.

You can see over 50 case study examples of HLS in action [here](#).

Understanding HLS

Human Learning Systems is a new way of doing public management: the task of understanding and organising public service.

HLS helps create better outcomes for less money, by bringing together all the elements of the interconnected relationships and causal factors (**systems**) by which outcomes are made. It is **public service for the real world**.

These are the core principles of Human Learning Systems:

Human: The purpose of public service is to support human freedom and flourishing. To respond to each person's unique and inter-dependent life context, public service is bespoke by design: built on strong relationships and trust.

Learning: Public service should be a process of ongoing exploration and learning: workers and residents exploring and learning together, responding to people's unique lives and the ever-changing world. **Learning is the management strategy** - the primary task of managers and leaders is to create effective learning environments which enable this adaptation.

Systems: Outcomes cannot be "delivered" by public service - they are created by whole systems: all the relationships and factors in someone's life. Positive outcomes are made by healthy systems - systems in which all the people involved can collaborate and learn together.



URBAN IMAGINARIES

The Urban Imaginaries Programme is part of the joint EU and UNDP Mayors for Economic Growth Facility (M4EG) that promotes inclusive economic growth and innovation in the Eastern Partnership Countries. The Urban Imaginaries (UI) Programme is supporting cities across Georgia, Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine and Azerbaijan in 2022 to develop solutions to their most pressing urban and local challenges. The programme is designed to strengthen the innovation capabilities of mayors and city leaders in 18 cities across these five countries, equipping them with the skills needed to develop initiatives that reimagine or reinvent key aspects of local living. The UI Programme is being jointly implemented by the Centre for Public Impact and UNDP.

[KNOW MORE](#) →



Centre for
Public Impact
A BCG FOUNDATION

Centre for Public Impact (CPI) is a charity that works with government, civil society and public sector organisations across the globe to help them reimagine and re-design systems, work and cultures. Its mission is to support the people within and across these organisations to bring about a paradigm shift towards a more human centred and relational approach to public management, that embraces complexity and places learning at the heart. CPI acts as a Learning Partner to organisations, supporting them in building the capacity and structure to listen, learn, and adapt on an ongoing basis.

[KNOW MORE](#) →

