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**AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF THE CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE  
INNOVATION IN PROMOTING INTRAPRENEURSHIP IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
PUBLIC SERVICE**

By

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## DEDICATION

This study is firstly dedicated to my late great-grandfather, Mr Thompson Hatlani Sono. Mkhulu, I miss you so much and hope that you are proud of the woman I am becoming. Secondly, I dedicate this study to my incredible mom, Ms Vivienne Sono-Hlatshwayo. Thank you for always believing in me more than I believe in myself at times. You deserve the world and one day I will figure out how to give it to you.

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*Luke 1:45: "Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfil His promises to her!"*

I DID IT!!!

## ABSTRACT

The rising demands of citizens have led many governments to a greater focus upon innovation, in order to effectively and efficiently respond to those demands. Upon recognising that the process of innovation warrants a specific focus, the South African Government established the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) as a component of government with the mandate to entrench a culture of innovation in the public service. In this context, public servants have been identified as key sources of innovation and are increasingly called upon to generate innovative solutions to the challenges experienced within their respective public service institutions - a practice referred to as intrapreneurship. However, assertions made of a lack of an intrapreneurial spirit in the South African Public Service, coupled with Section 5.1 of the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery's (1997) description of how un conducive to intrapreneurship the public service environment is - brings into question the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. Thus, the primary objective of this study is to conduct an analysis of the role of the Centre for Public Service Innovation in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

The results presented are based upon data obtained using qualitative methods in a case study design. The research instruments used to collect this data comprised interviews with senior management of the CPSI and questionnaires distributed to some of the CPSI's staff members. In addition, questionnaires were distributed to some of the intrapreneurs in the public service. In the end, the study analysed the research results against the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) model on how public sector innovation units, such as the CPSI, can support the various stages of the innovation cycle in the broader public sector. Based upon the analysis, the study subsequently summarised the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service as: encouraging the generation of ideas, testing, piloting, replicating and scaling innovative solutions, facilitating learning and knowledge sharing, as well as research and development. However, the results also showed that the CPSI faced several obstacles in the successful execution of its role. Therefore, recommendations on how the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service can be improved were presented in the study's final chapter. This study therefore has the potential to provide insight into issues pertaining to the promotion of intrapreneurship in the



public service, as well as to contribute to the literature review's revelation of a lack of empirical data on the construct, using the CPSI as a case study.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>4<sup>th</sup> IR</b>	Fourth Industrial Revolution
<b>CPSI</b>	Centre for Public Service Innovation
<b>DPSA</b>	Department of Public Service and Administration
<b>DST</b>	Department of Science and Technology
<b>ED</b>	Executive Director
<b>HRM</b>	Human Resource Management
<b>NDP</b>	National Development Plan
<b>NPAI</b>	New Public Administrative Initiative
<b>NPC</b>	National Planning Commission
<b>NPM</b>	New Public Management
<b>NSG</b>	National School of Government
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>OGD</b>	Open Government Data
<b>OGP</b>	Open Government Partnership
<b>PCT</b>	Public Choice Theory
<b>PSC</b>	Public Service Charter
<b>S&amp;T</b>	Science and Technology
<b>SONA</b>	State of the Nation Address
<b>TSA</b>	Transportation and Security Administration
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>WPTPS</b>	White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service
<b>WPTPSD</b>	White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery

<b>DIUS</b>	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
<b>NAO</b>	National Audit Office
<b>NESTA</b>	National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts
<b>PSIL</b>	Public Services Innovation Laboratory
<b>PMA</b>	President's Management Agenda
<b>WHHI</b>	White Hall Hub for Innovation
<b>SAVE</b>	Securing Americans' Value and Efficiency
<b>APC</b>	Australian Public Service Commission
<b>DIISR</b>	Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>PSA Act</b>	Public Service Amendment Act
<b>PFMA</b>	Public Finance Management Act
<b>IDIA</b>	International Development Innovation Alliance
<b>WEF</b>	World Economic Forum
<b>NSI</b>	National System of Innovation
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>DG</b>	Director General
<b>UNPAN</b>	United Nations Public Administration Network

## CHAPTER ONE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

As a developing country, South Africa grapples with the task of providing effective and efficient public services that adequately respond to the diverse needs of its equally diverse citizens. This is evident from the socio-economic challenges that the country has encountered in the past years. For instance, in 2017, the country suffered an economic recession and a sovereign credit rating downgrade, which followed a period of negative economic growth in 2015 and 2016. It was further reported that approximately 80% of South Africans were living in a state of either permanent or intermediate poverty between 2008 and 2015 (Dessus, Goddard and Hanusch 2017: vii); and that South Africa is “one of the consistently unequal countries in the world” based upon its rating on the Gini coefficient (Bhorat 2015). These are issues that the country’s National Development Plan (NDP) (2011) seeks to address by 2030. The urgent resolution of these challenges is perhaps most important for a post-apartheid government that has arguably created high expectations with the country’s democratic dispensation. Now twenty-four years into democracy, citizens are arguably growing more impatient with government as they seek to improve their lives, and these frustrations are evident from the regular reports of service delivery protests across the country.

To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government, the NDP regards innovation as central to resolving the country’s most pressing challenges (National Planning Commission 2011). The centrality of innovation as a catalyst for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of government finds further support amongst various scholars within the discipline of Public Administration such as Osborne and Gaebler (1992), Bartlett and Dibben (2002), Albury (2005) and Bekkers, Edelenbos, and Steijn (2011). Albury (2005:51) goes as far as arguing that “it (innovation) is not an optional luxury but needs to be institutionalised as a deep value” within the public service. To achieve this innovation imperative, public servants have been indicated as the key drivers of innovation in the public service (Osborne and Gaebler 1992; Albury 2005; Osborne and Brown 2013; Chabane 2014; Ramatlhodi 2016; Muthambi 2017). Various terms are used to describe this process where the practice of innovation within an organisation is driven internally by an employee - they range from internal entrepreneurship, corporate entrepreneurship, organisational entrepreneurship,

public entrepreneurship and in more contemporary literature, the term “intrapreneurship” is used (Westrup 2013:97). Thus, in this study, the contemporary term “intrapreneurship” is used.

To respond to the urgent need for innovation in the public service, the South African government established the Centre for Public Service Innovation. Cassim (2011:61) regards the establishment of the CPSI as one of the key initiatives of government instituted to improve government effectiveness and efficiency through innovation. The CPSI was formed in 2001, by the Minister of Public Service and Administration, initially as a Section 21 company, but later re-introduced as a component of government in 2008. Its mandate has been to cultivate a culture of innovation in the public service, which the organisation aims to achieve through the outputs of its three work streams, namely Research and Development, Enabling Environment and Solution Support and Incubation (CPSI 2015a:15). Consequently, the main objective of this study is to conduct an analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

The relevance of this study is further highlighted by what is said to be the emergence of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which leaders in the South African Public Service acknowledge is set to disrupt the way in which governments approach their work (Ramaphosa 2018; Dlodlo 2018:6) and will arguably require a rethinking of the role of public servants in that context. In addition, assertions of the lack of an intrapreneurial spirit in the public service (Maseko 2016:31), coupled with reports of the uncondusive nature of public service structures and processes for intrapreneurship (White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery 1997) bring into question what the CPSI’s role is in the context of promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. This study seeks to provide an adequate response to this question, and as a start, this first chapter introduces the nature and scope of the study.

## **1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

Oliver (2012:1) regards a literature review as one of the most important parts of academic writing, as it provides the basis upon which new research can be produced. In order to provide an analysis of the role of the CPSI in the promotion of intrapreneurship within the South African Public Service, it is important that relevant publications are consulted to establish an understanding of the identified research problem and to ensure that only relevant data is collected (Brynard, Hanekom and Brynard 2014:27). To this end, the

literature review conducted in this section will begin with the definition of the concept of intrapreneurship, in order to establish a clear understanding of the concept central to this study, so as to avoid any ambiguities in what the concept means.

Thereafter, the section will explore some of the key elements that are said to be required to foster innovation in the public service. These will present key areas of consideration in the study's eventual analysis of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. Then, the section will narrow its focus down to exploring the role of innovation units, such as the CPSI, in fostering innovation within the public service, as described by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) (2017a:141) model on how innovation units can support the innovation life cycle in the broader public sector. It is believed that the model will provide insight into what the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service should ideally entail, as it is based upon best practice data collected from seventy innovation units across OECD countries (OECD 2017a:140). Lastly, the literature review concludes with a return in focus to the South African context, so as to explore the reasons why intrapreneurship is imperative for the South African Public Service.

This literature review will provide the basis for a clear understanding of some of the key sections to follow in the chapter, which include the outline of the research problem which the study seeks to address, the motivation for conducting the study, the objectives of the study, as well as the research methodology that was employed in the collection of data. It is important to note that the literature provided in this section is not exhaustive, as more literature on the construct will be presented in the next chapters.

### **1.2.1 Defining intrapreneurship**

Arnold and Magia (2013:1) state that the modern-day public service is engulfed with employees who are driven to find ways to resolve the challenges encountered within their organisations through innovation, despite the barriers presented by the bureaucratic nature of the public service. They refer to these creative and innovative employees as "intrapreneurs" (Arnold and Magia 2013:1). Gomes, Consoni and Lapolli (2015:704) explain that the term "intrapreneur" was coined in the 1980s by Gifford Pinchot, in order to describe employees who portray entrepreneurial characteristics such as innovation, goal orientation and risk-taking, in order to develop or introduce a product or service for the benefit of the

organisation in which they are employed. Gifford Pinchot (1985:xiii) himself describes intrapreneurs as “any of the dreamers who do. Those who take hands-on responsibility for creating innovation of any kind within an organisation”. Ahmad, Nasurdin and Zainal (2012:2) notably describe the practice as somewhat of an act of rebellion against the traditional practices of organisations, as they describe intrapreneurs as employees who challenge the status quo and undertake creative and innovative conquests for the benefit of their organisations, without being instructed to do so. Other scholars have similarly defined intrapreneurship as employee driven innovation with the intent to pursue new business opportunities and to improve identified issues with their organisation’s internal processes, products or services (Park, Kim and Krishna 2014:537; Baruah and Ward 2015:811-812).

There is often a link drawn between the concept of intrapreneurship and that of entrepreneurship, presumably because the two concepts notably share key behavioural characteristics and are thus ultimately differentiated by the contextual disparities within which those behavioural characteristics are portrayed. This linkage has seen some researchers defining intrapreneurship as the act of entrepreneurship by an employee within an organisational context (Antoncic and Hisrich 2001:496; de Jong, Parker, Wennekers and Wu 2011:3; Veronica, Anca and Razvan 2013:4). It is therefore perhaps important at this point to provide a juxtaposition of the two concepts to avoid confusion. This study accepts Morris and Kuratko’s (2002:87-88) differentiation of the two concepts which underscores their primary differences.

Morris and Kuratko (2002:87-88) explain that while both the entrepreneur and the intrapreneur will portray characteristics such as innovation, risk-taking, opportunity spotting and goal orientation; for the entrepreneur, this process unfolds *outside* of the organisational setting, while for the intrapreneur, the process unfolds *inside* of the organisation for which they work. Furthermore, the entrepreneur’s ultimate goal is self-enrichment, while the intrapreneur innovates for the benefit of his/her organisation and the people who benefit from the organisation’s outputs. Additionally, where the issue of risk is concerned, the entrepreneur will bear all the risk associated with his/her innovative venture, while the intrapreneur’s risk is borne by the organisation for which they work. In addition, the entrepreneur owns the intellectual property of their innovation, while the intrapreneur’s intellectual property is usually owned by their organisation.

As indicated in this chapter's introduction, there are variations of the concept "intrapreneurship" which are often found in the associated literature. In the Public Administration literature, the term "public entrepreneurship" has predominantly been used, which will be presented and discussed in the next chapter. It is said that Bartlett and Dibben's (2002) study on public sector entrepreneurship and innovation in local government formally introduced "intrapreneurship" as a more contemporary variation of the construct (Kovalainen and Sundin 2012:265). Bartlett and Dibben's (2002) contribution to the development of the construct's conceptualisation is explored further in the next chapter. Thus, it is therefore evident from the above explorations of the concept of intrapreneurship that it describes an employee driven process aimed at developing solutions to an organisation's inefficiencies and to explore opportunities for organisational growth and development. The nature of this process is described in an upcoming section of this chapter. Although most studies on intrapreneurship are said to usually be associated with the private sector, researchers argue that innovation is fast becoming common practice in the public sector and is increasingly viewed as key to improving the efficiency of the public service as a whole (Gomes et al. 2015:704). This is unsurprising as Peter Drucker (1986) historically states that "entrepreneurial management across the public service may thus be the foremost political task of this generation" (Drucker 1986:283).

Based upon this clarification of the fundamental construct in the study, the next section explores some key considerations for governments intending to foster innovation in the public service.

### **1.2.2 Fostering innovation in the public service**

The OECD published a report on "Fostering innovation in the Public Sector" (2017a) which explores key areas of consideration for governments intending to foster a culture of innovation in their public services and the broader public sector domain. The report is based upon case studies and examples from various OECD countries (OECD 2017a:4). Thus, it is important to provide a summary of some of the key factors that are indicated as enablers for innovation within the report, given that South Africa is also an OECD country and that the data provided is based upon empirical evidence. The factors discussed in this section not only provide insight into the contextual considerations that must be made when analysing

the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service, but also serve as an introduction to some of the recurring themes across the subsequent chapters of this study.

The report discusses six main factors, namely rules, procedures and regulations; human resource management; budgeting; knowledge; managing risk and uncertainty and the role of innovation units (OECD 2017a:19-21). However, this section will discuss the first five factors listed above. The sixth, which explores the role of innovation units, will be explored separately, as it directly relates to the CPSI as an innovation unit central to this study, and thus warrants a more singular focus. It must be stated that the OECD's factors are by no means intended to be prescriptive, as they merely offer governments some key areas of consideration based upon the research conducted (OECD 2017a:18).

### **i) Rules, procedures and regulations**

The OECD (2017a:19) notes that public servants often perceive the bureaucratic nature of the public service, which they characterise as having stringent rules, procedures and regulations, as an inhibitor of their innovative efforts. This is noticeably a common view across some of the literature surveyed in this study (Mabala 2012:8; Association for Public Service Excellence 2013:22; Green, Roos, Agarwal and Scott-Kemmis 2014:22). Interestingly, South Africa's White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (WTPSD) (1997:10) describes how the "plethora" of rules, procedures and legislation in the public service are constricting intrapreneurial behaviour from public servants in the country's public service. However, contrary to the sentiments shared above, the OECD (2017a:32) also notes that studies have indicated that rules, procedures and regulations do not necessarily act as a barrier to innovation, but the way in which they are interpreted is rather the problem. It is stated that organisational cultures that either explicitly or implicitly indicate a lack of value for innovation, are a part of the problem.

This could be through having no rewards for innovation or due to an emphasis on the consequences of failures from innovation, rather than rewards for innovation (OECD 2017a:32). One of the contemporary approaches introduced to mitigate this in most OECD countries is through the encouragement of stakeholder engagement to improve the support of key stakeholders for innovation efforts in the public service. Another approach mentioned is that of "targeted rule exemptions" through which government organisations can request



exemptions from legislation that they perceive to be a barrier to them being innovative (OECD 2017a:36).

## **ii) Human resource management**

Through its work with various innovation institutions, the OECD (2017a:59) has found that innovations that make the most impact in the public sector are derived from public servants across all hierarchical levels of public sector organisations. Frontline staff as well as middle managers are said to be best positioned to provide the most innovative solutions, as they have the most engagements with clients and are directly responsible for implementing government policies. Likewise, Borins' (2001:314; 2002:468) studies on innovation in the public sector also reached the same conclusion, as the studies found that the most innovative initiatives originated from staff in both middle management and at the frontlines. In this sense, the OECD recommends that human resource management (HRM) practices within organisations be designed to encourage innovation amongst all public servants (OECD 2017a:59). This includes the provision of awards as a tool to stimulate, recognise and provide exposure to innovations in the public service and the introduction of innovation networks to foster formal and informal interactions across organisations (OECD 2017a:59). Veronica et al. (2013:3-4) similarly stress the importance of creating such networks, as they allow people within and outside of organisations to form relationships that will leverage additional support for the innovative projects undertaken by either one of the parties.

Moreover, leadership is also considered another key enabler of innovation, as leaders communicate the culture of innovation and create an enabling environment for innovation within their respective public service organisations (OECD 2017a:80). This point is elucidated best by Daglio, Gerson and Kitchen (2014:19), who argue that employees are likely to rather emulate the behaviour of their leaders than carry out what is instructed in a policy. Furthermore, leaders can also ensure that the recruitment and selection practices of the organisation align with its innovation goals and objectives (OECD 2017a:81). A study conducted by Gomes, Consoni and Lapolli (2015:711) shares this view, indicating that to sustain the culture for innovation in the public service, government structures need to attract people with an intrapreneurial orientation. Chapter Two of this study expands more upon what this intrapreneurial orientation entails. Simon (2018) also adds that beyond recruitment, the promotion of intrapreneurship can be a great tool for staff retention, as employees often

leave their jobs looking for opportunities to make a more meaningful contribution to their organisations, which their current jobs could not offer.

In addition, the OECD states that performance management practices within public sector organisations need to be used as tools to encourage and motivate innovation in the public sector (OECD 2017a:82). In this context, a study by Foba and De Villiers (2007) suggests the development of a performance management model which includes the assessment of an employee's intrapreneurial contributions, and for investigations to be conducted on the weighting to be attached to the associated measures in this regard. Moreover, although the OECD (2017a:83-84) notes no conclusive evidence pointing to a direct correlation between compensation and the reinforcement of innovative behaviour, it is noted as a possible external motivator for public servants to innovate. However, Osborne and Gaebler (1992:275), whose ideas on reinventing government are said to have influenced the development of the Theory of Public Entrepreneurship (Kovalainen and Sundin 2012:265) and influenced the post-apartheid public service reforms in South Africa (Chipkin and Lipietz 2012:11), appear more certain about the correlation between compensation and intrapreneurship. They state that their research found that organisations with the most entrepreneurial outputs were those that paid their employees well (Osborne and Gaebler 1992:275).

Lastly, training and development is another HRM related area that the OECD found to be a key enabler for innovation in the public service. Continuous learning is important for public servants to remain aware of the challenges that require an innovative response, and how best to address the diverse needs of society. This learning can be structured, for example, formal courses, seminars, rotation programmes or online training; or it can be unstructured where public servants learn on the job (OECD 2017a:82).

### **iii) Budgeting**

The OECD (2017a:19) notes that budgeting for innovation is an integral facet of the innovation process, and states that because innovation is such that it is a risky process by nature, and comes with uncertainty, departmental budgeting will need to be more flexible to be able to align with the innovation mandate of government. Countries will need to consider how they can best align their budget practices to encourage and not inhibit innovation. Ahmad et al. (2012:3-7) suggest allocating funding for the development, incentivising and

implementation of innovative ideas by employees as a means to reinforce intrapreneurial behaviour. However, research consulted in this study also shows that the risky nature of investing in innovative initiatives tends to make public service leaders and managers less willing to spend the already limited public service resources on innovation, as they must account for how taxpayer funds are spent, and serious consequences tend to follow those who are considered to have misused public funds (Morris and Jones 1999:78; Borins 2001:311; Osborne and Brown 2013:32; Green et al. 2014:19). However, Malatjie, Garg and Rankhumise (2017:208) argue that this highlights the need to support intrapreneurship even more, as the practice presents an opportunity for the generation of innovative ideas on how more can be done with the little available resources.

The OECD adds that partnerships are a key area for government departments to leverage funding for innovation by forming collaborations on innovative projects undertaken. However, this practice is often challenged by the public sector's systems of financial accountability, which focus more upon how the individual department performs. This can make it difficult to account for collaborative works (OECD 2017a:20).

#### **iv) Knowledge**

The access to, and free flow of information, knowledge and data is also identified as a key enabler of innovation in the public sector. Not only does it help develop the capacities of both employees and government departments to innovate, but it is also said to be a key driver of the generation of innovative ideas that are key to resolving some of the most pressing challenges in the public service. Therefore, organisations need to ensure that the relevant data, information and knowledge needed for innovation is easily accessible to those who need it (OECD 2017a:200). This entails governments creating access to open government data (OGD) (OECD 2017a:203) which is said to also act as a mechanism for safeguarding the democratic values of transparency and accountability within the public sector (OECD 2017a:220). According to Ubaldi (2013), OGD refers to government's opening of access to its "raw" data to be freely used and distributed to those who need it.

The South African Government itself is party to, and a founding member of, the Open Government Partnership (OGP), which, amongst other factors, aims to establish more transparent governments. All countries party to this partnership openly endorse the OGP Declaration, which in the context of this study, also encourages the opening of access to

government data so that innovation within member countries and amongst member states can be cultivated (<http://www.ogp.gov.za/?q=node/17>). This closely links to another key aspect of the knowledge sharing argument, which is the creation and facilitation of knowledge networks as key platforms for people to connect and share knowledge. This also includes ensuring the ease in the transference of information between people working in different government organisations and can be driven by the organisation's HRM section, innovation units (such as the CPSI) and other government structures such as the National School of Government (NSG) (OECD 2017a:218).

#### **v) Managing risk and uncertainties**

Considering the various challenges associated with public sector innovation, most governments are advised to develop a risk management approach to monitor risks and to minimise or prevent failure (OECD 2017a:22). The OECD (2017a:171) clarifies that there is a fundamental difference between the concepts of risk and uncertainty, and although most questions around public sector innovation are associated with the concept of risk, they are actually questions of uncertainty. Risk is described as “measurable” as “the possibilities are known”, whereas uncertainty cannot be measured as “the possibilities are unknown” (OECD 2017a:173). In addition, it is further explained that the public sector is structured in a way that enables it to effectively handle risk, but such is not the case with uncertainty, as the public sector is usually unable to endorse decisions with no clear indication of the possibility of a successful outcome. The OECD adds that being unable to respond to issues of uncertainty will eventually impact upon the narrative around public sector innovation and how it is planned for. The OECD therefore proposes that governments develop risk management measures in this regard (OECD 2017a:172).

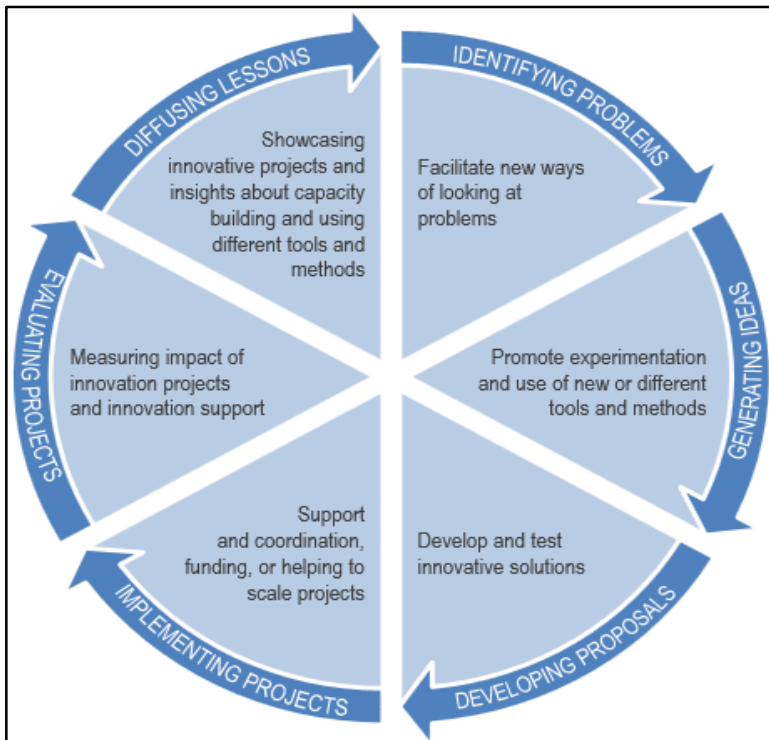
#### **1.2.3 The role of innovation units**

According to the OECD (2017a:140), modern public services are increasingly developing dedicated units to drive the culture of innovation in their public services. This is a result of a growing realisation that meeting the innovation needs of the current time may require a more specialised focus than individual institutions can provide. These units generally differ in their focus, as some focus upon developing solutions, others act as facilities for experimentation, some are funding institutions, and others mainly aid in the areas of capacity building and networking (OECD 2017a:141). Figure 1.1 below illustrates the number of ways in which

innovation units, such as the CPSI, can support innovation in the public service, based upon a study conducted on seventy public sector innovation units (OECD 2017a:140). The model below presents a valuable instrument for the evaluation of the efforts of innovation units. Thus, the analysis of this study's findings presented in Chapter Five will be conducted against this model.

What is also notably beneficial about the OECD's model below is that it contextualises the role of innovation units into the general innovation process, which not only draws attention to what activities the processes entails, but the nature of the process when led by innovation units. Based on the OECD's model, the innovation process consists of the following steps: identifying problems, generating ideas, developing proposals, implementing projects, evaluating projects and diffusing lessons. This description of the innovation process resembles those provided by other scholars such as Eggers and Singh (2009:7-8), who describe the process as the generation of ideas, followed by the selection of the appropriate idea from the ideas generated to resolve the solution, thereafter implementing the idea, and finally, the diffusion of the idea across the organisation and to the relevant stakeholders. Osborne and Brown (2011:304) also provide a similar process which they describe as entailing the generation of ideas, selecting the appropriate idea, implementing the selected idea and sharing of new practices. These processes can be linked to the definitions of intrapreneurship provided earlier, as they ultimately describe the nature of the process.

**Figure 1.1 How innovation units can support the innovation lifecycle**



Source: OECD (2017a:141)

A description of the various components of the OECD’s (2017a:141) model illustrated in Figure 1.1 above is provided below (OECD 2017a:141-142):

- i) **Identifying problems:** Innovation units can serve as a means to identify the prevalent challenges in the public service, which require an innovative response. These problems can be discovered in various ways, either through direct contact with the real-life context of the problem, or they can provide advice, tools or any other support that could assist those trying to resolve the problem to better understand its root causes and the type of response that would be most appropriate.
- ii) **Generating ideas:** Innovation units also support the generation of innovative solutions to challenges experienced in the public sector by establishing the culture of innovation in the public sector and offering a space where public servants feel free to innovate without fear. They can also share innovation methods and processes that can be used to approach problem solving, as well as building the capacity of public

servants to understand and identify the root causes of challenges and what would then qualify as an appropriate response.

- iii) **Developing proposals:** Some innovation units also facilitate the development and testing of proposals of innovative solutions which have been generated to resolve an issue. In this context, intrapreneurs may be assisted with advice on the nature of the innovation process upon which they are embarking or may be provided with lessons and recommendations on how the intrapreneur can approach the process of developing the idea and the relevant resources that can be consulted.
  
- iv) **Implementing projects:** Some innovation units are also a part of the process of implementing the innovative idea from the public servant. Although they may not directly drive the implementation of the innovation, they may aid in the form of coordinating the required resources for implementation, providing the funding required for the project or supporting the scaling up of the solution. The UNDP ([sa]) describes scaling up as a process of “expanding projects to a larger scale” as well as “strengthening of national capacities and improvements of global, national and local policies to ensure their long-term sustainability and impact”.
  
- v) **Evaluating projects:** Although this usually proves to be a challenging task for most innovation units, as the outcome of implementing an innovative solution may take several years to unfold, innovation units will usually try to discover how to measure the impact generated from implemented projects. The OECD (2017a:157) further argues that this is important, in order to uphold the democratic value of accountability, especially where taxpayers’ money is being used, and also to assess the feasibility of the unit itself.
  
- vi) **Diffusing lessons:** Innovation units also share lessons learned from previously implemented projects and lessons about the nature of the innovation process. This is done by encouraging innovation throughout government organisations, providing support for capacity building, as well as networking amongst intrapreneurs, recognising intrapreneurs, exhibiting their innovative solutions, and providing lessons

on how various instruments and approaches can be leveraged to develop innovative solutions.

It is evident from the above that innovation units bring various benefits to the public service and the broader public sector. The benefits include the mitigation of barriers to innovation in the public service, they make up for poor leadership for innovation in the public service, and they encourage the incentivising of innovation by public servants. Furthermore, they facilitate innovation knowledge sharing, foster partnerships for innovative solution finding and provide a “safe” space for “risk-taking and experimentation” OECD (2017a:140). This section has further brought to the fore some of the important aspects of promoting intrapreneurship in the public service context. These aspects will be explored further in the following chapters.

#### **1.2.4 Intrapreneurship imperative for the South African Public Service**

The Minister of Public Service and Administration, Ms Ayanda Dlodlo, regards innovation as imperative for improving service delivery, and for the resolution of the socio-economic issues that embattle the country (Dlodlo 2018:6). The role of public servants as the key drivers of innovation in the public service has been reiterated by various public service leaders. The former Minister of Public Service and Administration, Ms Faith Muthambi, implored public servants to “move out of their comfort zone” and lead innovation efforts in the public service (Muthambi 2017). Similarly, another former Minister of Public Service and Administration, Advocate Ngoako Ramatlhodi, has previously referred to public servants as the “champions” of innovation in the public service (Ramatlhodi 2016). At the highest office of authority in government, the former President, Mr Thabo Mbeki, also once implored public servants to reposition themselves as innovative change agents who challenge the status quo within their respective government departments (CPSI 2007:26).

The Deputy Chairperson of the Public Service Commission (PSC), Phelele Tengen, was quoted as arguing that public servants are the most important enablers of effective service delivery, however, their contributions are limited. Perhaps this best sums up the calls for public servants to innovate. She implores government departments to effectively harness the skills and potential of their workforce, so that they can become key contributors to the improvement of public service processes (Lotter 2013). This is an important call and task for



public servants, given the challenges of achieving an efficient and effective public service encountered by the South African government. These challenges are discussed in the next section of this chapter. Furthermore, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (WTPSD) (1997:3) adds that “...a transformed South African Public Service will be judged by one criterion above all: its effectiveness in delivering services which meet the basic needs of all South African citizens”. It goes on to implore government departments to create a conducive environment for innovation, so that the needs of the citizens are met and innovation amongst public servants is encouraged in order to improve the inefficiencies of the public service (WTPSD 1997:3).

This view is supported by the subsequent development of the National Development Plan (NDP) (2011) which considers innovation as central to improving the country. In addition, South Africa’s ten-year plan for 2008-2018, published by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), contends that innovation will enhance the country’s competitiveness in the global economy and enable the country to resolve some of its most pressing socio-economic challenges (DST 2008:25). Moreover, in South Africa’s twenty-year review document, it is stated that innovation will become more crucial for the development of society (The Presidency 2014:68). However, a noted common narrative amongst all these documents is that their description of innovation is mainly in the context of Science and Technology (S&T). Although this is arguably justified by what is said to be the emerging era of the technologically advanced Fourth Industrial Revolution, the forthcoming chapters provide evidence that innovation, particularly innovation driven by public servants, is not only limited to technological innovations. In addition, all these documents notably make no mention of the role of the CPSI, nor is the role of public servants clearly outlined. This therefore raises questions of whether the repeated encouragement of public servants to lead innovation efforts in the public service is more so in speech than in practice. The formative chapters of this study will shed more light upon this issue.

Nonetheless, government policy documents such as the Public Service Charter (PSC) (2013), the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (WTPS) (1995) and the WTPSD (1997) all make clear calls for the promotion of intrapreneurship amongst public servants, although their outline of how this can be achieved arguably lacks depth. These policies, as well as other relevant policies and legislation in this regard, are explored further in the forthcoming chapters. Thus, the next section briefly describes some of the

challenges of achieving an effective and efficient public service in South Africa, which provide motivation for the calls for intrapreneurship in the public service.

#### **1.2.4.1 Improving government efficiency and effectiveness**

The rise in discussions of intrapreneurship within the discipline of Public Administration notably emerged with the New Public Management-linked context of improving the efficiency and overall effectiveness of government, which is discussed further in the next chapter. Public service efficiency and effectiveness are arguably important values of any system of government, as they align with what can be said to the ultimate expectations that society has of the government. Peters (2003:113) adds that, when Max Weber conceived the Bureaucratic Theory, it was developed in alignment with the basic values that most citizens would expect from government, of which effectiveness and efficiency are two. This explanation of Max Weber's Bureaucratic Theory notably further refutes earlier assertions of bureaucracy being an inhibitor of innovation, as it seems that both practices are driven by the same values of achieving effectiveness and efficiency in government. Perhaps, as suggested by the OECD (2017a:32) it is the manner in which the concept of bureaucracy is interpreted in practice which presents a problem. In South Africa, the importance of government effectiveness and efficiency is entrenched in Section 195(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) (hereafter referred to as "the Constitution"), which states that "efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted".

The introduction of the *Public Finance Management Act*, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) seemingly abides by the directive provided by the Constitution, as the purpose of the Act is to maintain efficient and effective use of state resources through transforming financial management practices in the public service, as well as to improve accountability in how state resources are used (National Treasury 2000:1). The National Development Plan also asserts that improved government efficiency will lead to a reduction in government spending (National Planning Commission 2011:41). However, the reported public service practices in South Africa are arguably often not synonymous with these values of effectiveness and efficiency. A case in point is the 2016-2017 Annual Report by the Auditor General of South Africa. In the report it was revealed that the irregular expenditure by government departments amounted to R45.6 billion, which is a 55% increase from the preceding financial year (AG 2017:14). In addition, an investigation conducted by the City Press Newspaper in 2015,

found that government spending on consultants was significantly high, especially in instances where some of the outsourced work could have been done by public servants already on the government's payroll (Saba 2015:1-2).

This evidently proves counterproductive to the government's efficiency goals, especially since South Africa's public sector wage bill is said to be very high. The National Treasury's 2017 Budget Review indicates that the increase in government salaries over the years has been approximately 1.8% faster than that of inflation (National Treasury 2017a:31). The 2018 Budget Review further states that this spending on salaries, which takes 35% of government expenditure, was expected to experience an annual increase of 7.3% (National Treasury 2018:51). In addition, the OECD (2017b:24-27) states that partly due to the South African Government's high public sector wage bill, the country's public debt had increased. Given the high government spending on the remuneration of public servants, and the implications of that spending, the most logical course of action from government would be to focus upon maximising their use of the skills, knowledge and expertise of public servants. If public servants are one of government's most expensive resources, then the continued inefficient and ineffective use of their skills, knowledge and expertise contradicts the very essence of the principles of efficiency and effectiveness and ultimately deprives South Africans of their constitutional right to the "efficient, economic and effective" use of state resources, as indicated in Section 195(b) of the Constitution.

In addition, the constant service delivery protests driven by the poor quality of services afforded to the citizens demonstrate the incapacities of the state that are a barrier to its effectiveness (Sizani 2016). The WPTPSD (1997:16) asserts the importance of effectively and efficiently using the skills of public servants, as they are aware and knowledgeable of government processes and systems that are a barrier to efficient service delivery (WPTPSD 1997:16). Therefore, it is apparent that the South African Government has been neglecting a crucial opportunity to use the experience, skills and knowledge that public servants have of the public service to help government identify innovative solutions to the challenges faced within. Although the encouragement for public servants to innovate is often expressed in speeches by leaders of the public service, it is evident that government needs to act more decisively through the reform of institutional arrangements and institutional cultural practices that are presenting a barrier to innovation by public servants and are seemingly ultimately contributing to the increase in the cost structure for the economy. Maseko (2016:31)

concurr, as she argues that efforts by leaders in the public service are still required to “awaken” the intrapreneurial spirit in the public service.

#### **1.2.4.2 The Fourth Industrial Revolution and its implications for the public service**

In his State of the Nation Address (SONA), President Cyril Ramaphosa (2018) cites the emergence of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (hereafter referred to as “the 4<sup>th</sup> IR”) as another reason to accelerate the focus upon innovation in the public service. He further indicated that the government would create a Digital Industrial Revolution Commission to explore opportunities and to ensure the preparedness of the state to address any emerging issues, in the context of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR. Before the SONA, in 2017, the CPSI hosted its annual public sector innovation conference under the theme “Positioning Public Sector Innovation for the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution” (Sekwati 2018:5). Presumably following discussions at the CPSI’s conference, and the President’s evident prioritisation of the planning for the 4<sup>th</sup> IR, Parliament in March 2018 hosted a roundtable discussion on the emergence of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR and the implications thereof, for the South African Government ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=5434&v=Z3EL0m46LgA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5434&v=Z3EL0m46LgA)). Thus, the shift in focus towards preparing for the 4<sup>th</sup> IR warrants an exploration of what it is and how it fits the context of this study, which is also centered around public service innovation.

Roberge (2016:1) describes the 4<sup>th</sup> IR as “the era of artificial intelligence and robotisation of economies and everyday life”. Caetano and Charamba (2017:26) add that it is a time where the development and use of “smart machines” will be prioritised and cites the development of the self-driving cars as well as self-learning robots as examples of the type of technology that will find integration into the work and everyday lives of society in that era. From these definitions, the 4<sup>th</sup> IR can therefore be summarised as an era of highly sophisticated technological advancements in society. One of the many debates surrounding this revolution, and notably one that is most relevant to this study, is how it will impact upon human resources in organisations. Researchers such as Kaplan (2015:256) anticipate that the development of artificial intelligence and robotics will eventually replace the need for human labour in organisations. Similarly, the World Economic Forum (WEF) projects a loss of about 5.1 million jobs throughout a number of the world’s biggest economies by the year 2020 due to the 4<sup>th</sup> IR (WEF 2016:13). When the above deductions are considered in the

South African context, the loss of jobs due to the 4th IR would prove detrimental to a country with already high levels of unemployment (Statistics South Africa 2017:7-8).

Considered at face value, these issues present a conundrum for the country, because while the developments of the 4th IR are expected to result in job losses, in another instance, they are anticipated to spur economic growth by creating opportunity for the development of new and existing markets (Roberge 2016:1). The developments of the 4th IR are also anticipated to significantly improve the efficiency of public organisations through technology and in turn, vastly improve the livelihoods of millions of people (Keywell 2017). Schwab (2016) accurately describes this situation as “a time of great promise and great peril”. However, it can be argued that the 4th IR does not have to result in job losses, as central to any innovative or technological creation is the human being or team of humans who create it. To explain this point further, Caetano and Charamba (2017:27) explain that the critical skill that will set employees apart in the age of the 4th IR will be their creativity, a trait that cannot be mimicked by machines. Keywell (2017) concurs, and further suggests that what will be crucial during this era is a “shift in mindset” of how employees approach their work. He adds that if anything, what the 4th IR is indicating is that “the world will always need human brilliance, ingenuity and skills”.

Similar points were raised at the aforementioned round table discussion in Parliament, as it was stated that the 4<sup>th</sup> IR will require a whole new way of doing jobs. One of the participants indicated that studies show that 65% of children currently in primary school will be working in jobs that do not yet exist ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=5434&v=Z3EL0m46LgA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5434&v=Z3EL0m46LgA)). Therefore, it can be argued that instead of losing their jobs, new job markets will emerge for employees to move into and as a result, government will arguably need to align its capacity building efforts for public servants with the relevant needs of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR. Similar sentiments were shared by the Minister of Higher Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, at Parliament’s round table discussion on the 4<sup>th</sup> IR. She argued that public service leaders would need to be innovative with regard to their application of human labour, and universities would need to provide research in this instance ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=5434&v=Z3EL0m46LgA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5434&v=Z3EL0m46LgA)). This will presumably also impact upon the graduate skills that universities must then develop for students who will one day enter the employ of the public service.

Other key recommendations from Parliament's round table discussion were for government to align its budgetary processes with the contemporary innovation needs of the country. Additionally, it was recommended that that legislation be re-aligned with the requirements of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR and perhaps also introduce more relevant policies in this regard ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=5434&v=Z3EL0m46LgA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5434&v=Z3EL0m46LgA)). However, given the struggles faced within the South African economy described in this chapter, and the arguably high costs of developing the kind of technology required for the 4<sup>th</sup> IR, it can be argued that the emergence of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR is more of a pressing area of consideration for first world countries than it is for a developing country like South Africa, which is still grappling with the Third Industrial Revolution. An example that can be used as evidence of this point are the reports that the country is still behind in its digital migration efforts (arguably a by-product of the Third Industrial Revolution) even though the international deadline for this was set for 2015 (Ngubane 2018). Nevertheless, given that globalisation has connected countries, developments in the developed world will surely have an impact upon developing countries which makes it important for the South African Government to consider how best to position itself for the 4<sup>th</sup> IR. Keywell (2017) and Radebe (2018:11) concur, as they maintain that the developments and the impact of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR will be unavoidable.

Therefore, the imperative for a focus upon promoting intrapreneurship in the public service is seemingly finding more validation with time, thus making this study's analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service even more relevant.

### **1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH**

The motivation to conduct this study is based upon the identification of public servants as the key sources of innovation in the public service, which creates a need for additional studies on the capacity of the public service to innovate, and how the intrapreneurial process is administered in a dynamic and volatile context such as the public service. Furthermore, the complexity of diffusing a culture of innovation (a process synonymous with risk) amongst public servants, warrants much study on how this can be successfully achieved in an environment that is particularly known to be cautious of risky investments, as public funds are being spent (Morris and Jones 1999:78). Cassim (2011:61) adds to this point, stating that although there are many studies on intrapreneurship in the private sector context, most literature in this regard is still in its developmental stage. Moreover, studies on

intrapreneurship in the South African context, and contemporary government policies on public service innovation in South Africa, notably lack a contextualisation of the role of the CPSI in the country's innovation agenda.

Therefore, given that the CPSI has been established to develop a strategic approach to facilitate and advocate for innovation in the public service for, it is imperative to establish a clear comprehension of the role it plays in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. This study therefore has the potential to provide insight into issues relating to the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service, as well as to contribute to what is said to be a lack of empirical data on the construct, using the CPSI as a case study.

#### **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

As stated in the previous sections, the importance of innovation as a catalyst for achieving an effective and efficient public service has been widely reiterated across the public service, with public servants being identified as the key drivers of public service innovation. However, assertions made at the CPSI's 2016 Annual Conference of a lack of an intrapreneurial spirit in the public service, and that efforts by leaders in the public service are still required to "awaken" the intrapreneurial spirit in the public service (Maseko 2016:31), indicate a need for the institutionalisation of the culture and practice of intrapreneurship amongst public servants. These assertions are perhaps further highlighted by the persistent calls by public service leaders for public servants to reposition themselves as innovative agents of change in order to improve government efficiency and ultimately to secure the achievement of the National Development Plan's objectives (Muthambi 2017; Ramatlhodi 2016; Sisulu 2013; Chabane 2014).

In addition, Section 5.1 of the WPTPSD (1997:16) also describes the discontent experienced by public servants, especially those at the frontlines, with the public service's structure and procedures that inhibit them from innovatively contributing to the improvement of public service processes. This is a problem as literature surveyed in this chapter provides evidence that amongst the key sources of innovation in the public service are public servants in the front lines (Borins 2001:314; Borins 2002:468; OECD 2017a:59). It is therefore stated that for the public service to effectively serve its citizens, the skills of public servants need to be optimally used and an enabling environment for them to innovate needs to be created (WPTPSD 1997:16). The above sentiments also embody the call made by President Cyril

Ramaphosa in his 2018 SONA, for all citizens to play an active role in resolving the country's issues (Ramaphosa 2018). This therefore brings into question the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service, given that the CPSI has been established as a component of government with the mandate to entrench the culture and practice of innovation across the public service. Thus, an analysis of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service is warranted in order to establish its role in addressing the problem of the presumed lack of an intrapreneurial spirit in the public service and the associated issues of the inhibiting structures and processes in the public service, which are inconsistent with the practice of intrapreneurship.

## **1.5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

Kumar (2011:397) describes research objectives as a specific statement of goals that one sets out to achieve at the end of a research journey, which also enable the researcher to have a holistic overview of the study through the consideration of the various facets of the study. This study's primary objective is to analyse the role of the CPSI in the promotion of intrapreneurship within the South African Public Service. To ensure the fulfilment of the study's primary objective, the secondary objectives listed below were formulated:

- i) To provide a conceptualisation of intrapreneurship within the discipline of Public Administration.
- ii) To explore examples of international best practice related to the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service context.
- iii) To describe the mandate of the CPSI and how it is carried out.
- iv) To recommend effective ways in which to improve the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service.

The above-mentioned objectives allowed the researcher to gain significant insight in addressing the research problem and informed the selection of the study's research methodology, which is described in the following section.



## **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The use of the appropriate research method is an important element of any research study. Khan (2011:2) explains that the application of the correct research methodology will yield relevant, reliable and unbiased information that answers the problem that the study seeks to address. Riccucci (2008:9) adds that the approaches used to conduct research in the discipline of Public Administration vary, a stance historically shared by Dwight Waldo (1948:177-178) who contended that the method of inquiry in Public Administration research is not confined to a single approach. Therefore, this section of the chapter will describe and outline the study's research methodology, which was informed by the research objectives stated in the previous section.

### **1.6.1 Research approach**

Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:6) state that research is generally based upon two primary approaches: the positivist and the anti-positivist approaches. The positivist approach applies scientific methods to acquiring knowledge, as this approach infers that for research to be considered valid, it must be observable and be subject to an objective form of measurement. The positivist approach is also known as the quantitative approach to research because the research findings are usually quantifiable (Welman et al. 2005:6). In contrast, the anti-positivist approach, which is also referred to as the qualitative research approach, opposes the practice of obtaining and understanding knowledge through "strict natural scientific methods" (Welman et al. 2005:6), as is the case in the quantitative approach. Qualitative research focuses upon the determination of society's perception of reality and to bring focus to the nature of the engagement between the researcher and the object under study (Welman et al. 2005:8).

Qualitative research is exploratory and descriptive in nature, which proved useful in the study's intent to determine the nature of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship within the public service, prior to the analysis of the established role. Thus, based upon the above contrasting differentiations of the qualitative and quantitative approaches to research, this study employed a qualitative research approach. It was believed that by employing the qualitative research approach and by using the chosen qualitative research instruments, the approach would yield first hand insight into the nature of the CPSI's work and how that work contributes to the promotion of intrapreneurship within the public service. In addition, unlike

with the quantitative research approach, qualitative research resolves to understand the various processes and contexts which determine patterns of behaviour and places significance upon the depth of the information provided by respondents, rather than the quantity of the information (Niewenhuis 2007a:51). This point further strengthened the selection of the qualitative approach for this study because the study consisted of a small sample which was more suited to a qualitative form of inquiry, as it made provision for rich, in-depth information to be collected from the respondents.

Utilising the above-mentioned qualitative approach ensured that an in-depth examination of the CPSI's role in the public service was conducted by allowing the researcher to delve into issues in a manner that is not possible through quantitative research (Kumar 2011:8). Furthermore, because the process of inquiry in qualitative research is open-ended in nature, participants in the study were able to freely express their opinions about various matters of importance to them, which contributed to the richness of the data gathered. Moreover, the qualitative research design employed within this study was a case study design. According to Niewenhuis (2007a:75), case study research is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context". The concept itself denotes a focus upon a specific number of "units of analysis", usually limited to one, which can vary in focus from individuals, groups of people or, as in the case of this study, a specific institution (Welman et al. 2005:193). In this research design, comprehensive data on the CPSI was collected using various data gathering instruments, which will be outlined in the next section. Some of the benefits of a case study design are that it provides the researcher with an opportunity to analyse multiple perspectives by obtaining views from the various groups relevant to the study (Niewenhuis 2007a:75). In addition, using the CPSI as a case study allowed the study to establish the nature of intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service context, its process and key role players within that process.

One of the noted drawbacks of the qualitative approach to research in general is that it usually entails a very time-consuming process, as large amounts of data are collected and will need to be analysed. Additionally, key issues relating to the study could be missed as the interpretations of researchers can often be limited to what the researcher deems relevant for the study (Choy 2014:102). In this study, the consistency between the research objectives and the identified qualitative approach was maintained. Therefore, the above-mentioned disadvantages did not affect this study, as proper planning preceded the study.

### 1.6.2 Instruments of data collection

Data used in a study can either be classified as primary or secondary data. Brynard et al. (2014:38) distinguish the two by stating that when a researcher collects his or her own data, it is referred to as primary data. Once data from other researchers is collected and used in relation to the research problem, it is referred to as secondary data (Brynard et al. 2014:38). Both primary and secondary data were employed in this study. In addition, the study acknowledged the researcher as the primary research instrument, indicated as such by Welman et al. (2005:8), as well as Leedy and Ormrod (2013:139). The secondary instruments of data collection used for this study included document analysis, interviews and questionnaires, the nature of which correlated with the selected qualitative research approach used in the study.

The questions for the interviews and questionnaires were based upon two OECD reports, the first on “The Innovative imperative in the Public Sector - Setting and Agenda for action” (OECD 2015), which is succeeded by the “Fostering Innovation in the Public Sector” (OECD 2017a) report. The basis for using the reports is that they provided a conceptual framework for innovation in the public sector. The latter report “builds upon the initial framework” developed by the former (OECD 2017a:4). The use of the latter report also ensured consistency between the questions posed to respondents and the tool of analysis for the research results. This is because the OECD’s (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units can support innovation in the public service, presented in an earlier section of this chapter, and derived from the same OECD (2017a) report as some of the questions posed in the interviews and questionnaires, was subsequently used to analyse the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. The application of the model and the approach employed in data analysis is explained in Chapter Five. More interview questions were derived from the OECD’s survey on public sector innovation enablers, adapted from the above-mentioned OECD reports (OECD [Sa]). Additional questions for the questionnaire that was distributed to the public service intrapreneurs were adapted from the Enclaria Leadership Employee Innovation Survey in which the questions are intended to establish how employee innovation in organisations can be increased (Stagl 2008).

The use of the chosen instruments of data collection ensured sufficient exploration and description of the subject matter to effectively address the research problem. Furthermore,

the integrated use of the selected data collection instruments, which resulted in data gathered from multiple sources, enabled the study to present a holistic perspective of the research findings. Moreover, it is important to state that the study observed and maintained the required ethical standards in accordance with the two main ethical considerations of honesty and confidentiality, as stated by Brynard et al. (2014:6). Prior to the commencement of the study, the researcher sought permission to collect data from the CPSI. The permission was subsequently granted by the CPSI. In addition, ethical clearance to conduct the study was granted by the University of Pretoria's Ethics Committees, and all of the participants received a letter of informed consent (Annexures A and B) to explain the nature and purpose of the study and their rights as respondents. The following sections will therefore briefly outline the data collection instruments that were used in the study.

### **1.6.2.1 Documents**

Brynard et al. (2014:40) state that the success of a research project is highly dependent upon the prior conducting of a comprehensive and carefully considered review of literature that aligns with the study. They add that in the field of Public Management, which is the sub-field of Public Administration under which this study falls (to be discussed further in the next chapter), the researcher should survey both disciplinary and any official government documents related to the study. This will enhance the richness of the data on the subject matter and allow the researcher to provide a true reflection of the issue under study. For this study, relevant academic literature such as textbooks, journal articles, published and unpublished dissertations relating to public service innovation and intrapreneurship were consulted and scrutinised, in order to gain additional insight into the subject matter. In addition, relevant reports by some intergovernmental organisations were also surveyed. Furthermore, the relevant official government documents were used in the study to gain additional insight on the subject matter.

A noted benefit of surveying the abovementioned documents in the study was that the process provided the researcher with easy access to some of the study's required data, as most of the data was obtainable online. However, the disadvantage of document analysis is that it can be a time-consuming process and may in some cases not provide a full reflection of the problem under study, as the data from a literature review is considered secondary data (Brynard et al. 2014:41). Thus, as previously mentioned, the commencement of the

study was preceded by careful planning. The accuracy of the data used in the document analysis was verified against the interviews that were conducted and the questionnaires that were distributed. Furthermore, the knowledge obtained from the literature also provided valuable insight into the tools that could be used as the basis for the analysis of the CPSI's role in the intrapreneurship process and led to the discovery of the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public service innovation units can support innovation in the public service. This model was used in Chapter Five's analysis of the research results, as previously indicated.

### **1.6.2.2 Face-to-face interviews**

In line with the study's qualitative research approach, qualitative interviews were conducted. Gomes et al. (2015:705) describe these types of interviews as flexible and "non-directive," and are a source of valuable and descriptive information that offer insight into the individual's knowledge and reality. In this study, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with the acting Executive Director (ED) of the CPSI, as well as the senior managers of each of the CPSI's three work streams that drive the organisation's innovation mandate, mentioned earlier as the Enabling Environment, Research and Development and the Solution Support and Incubation work streams. Niewenhuis (2007a:87) describes semi-structured interviews as interviews in which a series of open-ended questions which cover various topics deemed relevant by the researcher are asked. Although predetermined questions are asked, semi-structured interviews still provide an opportunity for the interviewer and respondent to discuss some of the questions and emerging issues in greater detail. The purpose of conducting the interviews in this study was so that in-depth knowledge of the CPSI's outputs from its most senior staff members could be obtained. It must be clarified that one of the senior managers interviewed was at the time also the acting ED, thus the respondent was interviewed in two capacities. As a result, a total of three interviews were conducted.

Annexure C attached indicates the interview schedule used to conduct the interviews, and in line with the qualitative approach employed in the study, the questions were open-ended in nature. Aberbach and Rockman (2002) as well as Liu (2018) state that this process of interviewing individuals who are in senior positions of an organisation is referred to as elite interviewing. The study's use of open-ended questions for the interviews found further

support from Aberbach and Rockman (2002:674), whose research of elite interviewing indicates that senior officials preferred open-ended questions due to their non-restrictive nature, which allows them the freedom to explain their perceptions. This approach also notably aligned with the exploratory aspect of this study and allowed for the researcher to probe the respondents, so as to gather in-depth data on the subject matter.

According to Niewenhuis (2007a:87), one of the drawbacks of interviews however, is that some officials may not feel comfortable being critical of their organisations which can limit the flow of information from the respondents. Therefore, the purpose and objective of the study was reiterated to respondents and caution was taken to ensure that the study was not side-tracked by unrelated issues. Furthermore, the interviews were arranged according to the schedules of the respondents and conducted at their offices, in order to make the process most convenient for the respondents. Lastly, the questions asked from the interview schedule did not follow a specific order and were largely influenced by the flow of the discussions. This approach was inspired by Dowling and Brown's (2012:68) suggestion that in some instances, interview questions do not have to follow a specific sequence, because insisting on this can have adverse effects upon the kind of responses received. The results of these interviews are presented in Chapter Five.

### **1.6.2.3 Questionnaires**

Kumar (2011:145) describes questionnaires as lists containing questions formulated by the researcher, which will be distributed to respondents from whom responses to the questions are derived. As with the interviews, the purpose of the questionnaires distributed in this study was to obtain a response to the study's objectives that were listed earlier. Self-administered online questionnaires were distributed to employees occupying various positions within the CPSI's three work streams that drive the organisation's mandate. In addition, online questionnaires were also sent to some of the intrapreneurs in the public service. The Survey Monkey tool was used to design the questionnaires and a link to the online questionnaires was emailed to both sets of respondents after the email addresses of both sets of respondents were obtained from the CPSI. The examples of the questionnaires distributed are attached as Annexures D and E. Both sets of questionnaires comprised a combination of closed ended and open-ended questions. The open-ended questions allowed respondents the freedom to articulate their views more freely (Maree and Pietersen

2007:161). The closed ended questions provided respondents with a few possible answers to select for each question, which makes answering the questionnaire less time consuming for the respondent (Welman et al. 2005:175).

The questionnaires distributed to the CPSI's officials (Annexure D) aimed to provide insight into how the CPSI fulfils its mandate and to establish a clearer understanding of the role of each of the CPSI's three work streams. Each respondent provided a response based upon their role in one of the work streams. A total of seven out of a possible twelve responses were received from the staff members in the CPSI's three work streams. The challenges with regard to obtaining a 100% response rate are discussed in a later section of this chapter. In addition, the questionnaires distributed to the public service intrapreneurs (Annexure E) aimed to obtain insight into the first-hand experiences of intrapreneurs in the public service and to establish an understanding of the role which the CPSI played in their intrapreneurial journeys, as described by the intrapreneurs themselves. A total of ten responses from the intrapreneurs were received. Although the contact list for the intrapreneurs obtained from the CPSI consisted of a list of forty-two contact people from their 2015-2017 awards participants, there were issues with a large number of the email addresses, therefore it is difficult to confirm the exact number of intrapreneurs that actually received the questionnaire. Nevertheless, the ten respondents provided ample, rich data for the study.

The disadvantages of using questionnaires in this study were that the researcher was not present to explain any uncertainties that the respondents may have had, which could have resulted in distorted or biased responses being provided (Brynard et al. 2014:48). To prevent any uncertainties or confusion, the questionnaires consisted of clear and detailed questions. In addition, the lay-out of the questionnaire was designed to be easy to read and the sequence of the questions was easy to follow, as recommended by Kumar (2011:145). Furthermore, the amount of data provided in the answers to the open-ended questions varied, which is a common disadvantage of questionnaires, as noted by Kumar (2011:149). A few closed ended questions were included to mitigate this risk, so that general impressions on the subject matter were obtained, in case the responses provided in the open-ended questions were limited. In addition, the questionnaires were structured in such a way that the respondents were unable to submit the questionnaire without providing a response to all the questions.

### 1.6.3 Research population and sampling

Kumar (2011:398) describes the research population as the wider group whom the researcher wishes to investigate through the study, namely the group which possesses the characteristics which are relevant to the study. Since it is not always possible or necessary to study every member of the research population, a sample from the population is usually selected in order to form the study's units of analysis (Northrop and Arsneault 2008:214). The research sample is therefore a portion of the entire research population (Welman et al. 2005:53). Thus, as stated in previous sections, this study's research population consisted of senior management of the CPSI, staff members of the CPSI's three work streams and some of the intrapreneurs in the public service. Furthermore, Leedy and Ormrod (2013:152) state that qualitative research generally employs non-probability sampling techniques, as individuals selected to participate in the study are purposefully chosen, based upon a view that they will provide the most valuable information regarding the topic under study.

As a result, the purposive sampling technique was employed in this study. Kumar (2011:389) states that the primary consideration in purposive sampling is the researcher's perception about who can provide the most suitable information, in order for the study's research objectives to be achieved. Niewenhuis (2007a:79) concurs, as he describes purposive sampling as a sampling approach where participants are chosen based upon certain features that make them key sources of data required for the study. In the case of the respondents from the CPSI, as explained in Chapter Four, the CPSI has a total of thirty-three staff members who are spread out between the CPSI's two main programmes: the Administration and the Innovation Programmes. The latter programme focuses solely upon activities related to the execution of the innovation mandate of the CPSI and is divided into the three work streams already mentioned as the drivers of the CPSI's mandate (CPSI 2017a:33). The sample from the CPSI in this study therefore only focused upon employees working under the Innovation Programme's three work streams, as that is where activities related to the study's research objectives are carried out.

The specific purposive sampling technique used to select the questionnaire respondents from the CPSI can be described as criterion sampling, in which the selection of the respondents is based upon some pre-determined criteria (Niewenhuis 2007a:79). The criteria used were that the respondents had to work under the CPSI's Innovation Programme



and in one of the three work streams. The three interviews conducted with the CPSI's senior management were informed by a perception of their expert knowledge of each one of the CPSI's three work streams, as well as what the CPSI is mandated to achieve, which presumably qualified them to lead the three work streams, and in the case of the acting ED, to lead the organisation as a whole. Kumar (2011:207) describes this purposive selection of individuals based upon their expertise in the area relating to one's study as "expert sampling", which is associated with the qualitative research approach.

In addition, the purposive sampling technique used to select the intrapreneurs can be described as judgement sampling or reputation sampling. With this type of sampling technique, respondents are selected "based upon their reputation for success or failure" in a specific matter (Northrop and Arsneault 2008:225). This correlates with the selection of the intrapreneurs, as only those previously shortlisted for the CPSI Awards formed part of the study's sample. Their specific selection and inclusion in the study is based upon the view that their shortlisting for the CPSI Awards not only highlights them as noteworthy intrapreneurs, but also indicates that they have had some engagement with the CPSI. As a result, they will most likely be able to provide insight regarding how the CPSI engages public servants and supports intrapreneurs throughout the intrapreneurship process.

In total, the research population consisted of twenty respondents. The data collected from the study's participants ultimately contributed to the attainment of the study's research objectives.

## **1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS AND TERMS**

Brynard et al. (2014:30) state that it is important to clarify the main terms and concepts used in a study, so as to prevent any uncertainty with regard to what the study's key terms mean. To ensure that a uniform understanding of the study is formed, this section clarifies a few of the key concepts and terms used in the study.

### **1.7.1 Public Administration and public administration**

Public Administration (capital letters) refers to the academic discipline in which public administration (lower case) as a government activity is studied. It is a scientific discipline with a focus upon the implementation of government policies. Public Administration is also

referred to as a university subject where the activities of government are studied (Botes, Brynard, Fourie and Roux 1992:257). In this study, it refers to the field of study in which intrapreneurship within the public service context will be conceptualised and the academic discipline in which prominent theories of Public Administration that promote intrapreneurship, such as the New Public Management doctrine and the Public Entrepreneurship Theory, originate. This concept is expanded upon further in Chapter Two.

Public administration (lower case) refers to the process of managing government affairs across all spheres of government. It is an activity of government, by public servants working cooperatively in public institutions, in order to achieve a common objective in the interest of the public. It is the “non-political bureaucratic machinery of the government for implementing its laws and policies in action” (Basu 2004:3). In this study, this concept refers to the sphere of government activity in which intrapreneurship by public servants is expected to take place and be promoted by the CPSI in accordance with its mandate.

### **1.7.2 Public service**

The public service is described as the area of government in which government activities are carried out. It consists of a body of government departments in the executive arm of the government tasked with the execution of the policies of the government. Individuals who work in the public service are referred to as public servants (Lane 2000: vii). Section 197 of the Constitution states that there is a South African Public Service which is mandated to function and also be structured in accordance with the laws of the country, bearing the task of executing government policies. The public service therefore refers to the area of government in which the role of the CPSI in the promotion of intrapreneurship is analysed.

### **1.7.3 Public sector**

According to Venter and Landsberg (2011:83), the South African Public Sector considers the sphere of government activity in much broader terms than is described in the concept of the public service above. It is inclusive of the public service; the National Botanical Institute; parastatals; state owned enterprises and local government. The importance of defining this concept is that some of the literature surveyed in relation to the subject matter refers to the public sector, although this study focuses upon the public service component of the public sector.

#### **1.7.4 New Public Management**

The New Public Management is used to describe a combination of ideas and practices that encourage the use of private sector linked approaches in the public sector as a result of the 1980s “normative” idea that “private is better than public” (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000:550). As intrapreneurship in the public service is promoted by the New Public Management, it will be used as a theoretical basis for the conceptualisation of intrapreneurship within the discipline of Public Administration.

#### **1.7.5 Intrapreneurship**

Gomes et al. (2015:704) describe intrapreneurship as an action by employees who portray entrepreneurial characteristics such as goal orientation, risk-taking and innovation within an organisational context. They invent new programmes and provide creative and innovative solutions to challenges identified within their organisations. In the context of the public service, these individuals are usually passionate about driving constructive change within their organisations and society. In this study, intrapreneurship therefore refers to the desired behaviour by public servants, which the CPSI’s role in its promotion within the public service will be analysed.

#### **1.7.6 Innovation**

According to the White Paper on Science and Technology (WPST) (1996), innovation refers to “the application and practice of creative new ideas, which involves the introduction of inventions into the market place”. The CPSI adds that it refers to “applied creativity” that must align with the specific area of government for which the idea is meant (CPSI 2010:17). The concept of innovation is notably a twin concept of intrapreneurship, where the concept of “innovation” describes a practice and that of “intrapreneurship” is specific about who is driving the practice. The clarification of this concept is important, as some of the literature surveyed in the subsequent chapters makes interchangeable use of the two concepts.

### **1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Vithal and Jansen (2010:35) argue that it is important to acknowledge a study’s limitations as a vital tool of empowerment. Although careful planning preceded the commencement of

the study and the objectives of the study were ultimately achieved, the study did experience a few shortcomings which are discussed below.

### **1.8.1 Scope of the study**

Although it is acknowledged in the study, particularly in Chapter Four, that South Africa has other institutions that contribute to the country's innovation mandate such as the Innovation Hub, the Technological Innovation Agency and the National Advisory Council on Innovation - the scope of this study was limited to the CPSI's contributions. This was due to the fact that the CPSI's mandate specifically focuses upon the public service environment, while the mandates of the other institutions mentioned are much broader.

### **1.8.2 Sample size**

The study could have benefited from obtaining responses from all of the CPSI's staff members in the three work streams. Despite the numerous efforts made to encourage responses to the online questionnaire from all twelve of the CPSI's staff across the three work streams, responses were obtained from only seven staff members, although the Survey Monkey tool revealed that eleven out of the twelve opened the questionnaire. To try and obtain a 100% response rate, respondents were sent regular reminders to complete the questionnaire. In addition, several extensions to the deadline were provided. Furthermore, the senior managers interviewed were requested to encourage the staff in their teams to respond to the questionnaire, which they all did. As a last effort, the CPSI's acting ED was requested to intervene, and an email requesting all staff members to participate in the study was subsequently sent by one of the acting ED's staff members to the relevant staff. After exhausting all options, and understanding that ethically, respondents cannot be compelled to participate in a study, the data from the seven respondents was used. However, the qualitative approach of the study ensured that enough data was collected from the respondents, which was supplemented with the interviews conducted with their senior managers and the information on the CPSI presented in Chapter Four.

### **1.8.3 Lack of prior research on the topic**

Although some research on the topic in various other contexts was available, this study found very little prior research that made mention of the CPSI's role in the public service.

Even in the studies that investigated the promotion of intrapreneurship in various government institutions in South Africa, there was no mention of the CPSI and the role it played in those contexts.

## **1.9. FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH**

This study comprises six chapters that align with the research objectives stated in an earlier section of this chapter. In this chapter, Chapter One, the nature and scope of the study is introduced. The chapter includes a literature review that provides a background to the study and in the process, introduces some of the prevalent themes found in the next chapters, such as the issue of risk, creating cultures and structures for intrapreneurship and the varying degrees of support needed to drive the practice of intrapreneurship in the public service. The chapter also provides justification for conducting the study and outlines the research methodology employed in the study. Chapter One therefore provides the foundational basis for the overall study and the subsequent chapters of the study.

Chapter Two provides a conceptualisation of intrapreneurship within the discipline of Public Administration, with the purpose of creating an understanding of how intrapreneurship as a construct fits into the broader discipline of Public Administration. The chapter therefore establishes the theoretical framework for the study. In Chapter Three, examples of international best practice in the promotion of intrapreneurship are provided from a variety of examples in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Australia and the United Arab Emirates. It is believed that the best practice examples will provide a more holistic picture of how the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service takes place and will afford an indication of what the scope of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service could entail.

Chapter Four highlights the CPSI as the organisation central to this study. The purpose of the chapter is to establish a clear understanding of the CPSI's mandate in the public service and how that mandate is realised. The information in Chapter Four provides additional material for the analysis of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. Chapter Five presents the results from the data collected from the study's research population and presents the analysis of the findings applying the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units can support the various stages of the innovation life cycle. This aligns with the primary objective of this study, which is to conduct an analysis of

the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service. Finally, Chapter Six draws the study to a close by providing a summary of the contents of the previous chapters, as well as a summary of the key findings of the study. The chapter also makes recommendations on how the CPSI can overcome its challenges and maximise its impact in the public service, as well as suggestions for future research.

## **1.10 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has shown that the challenges of achieving effectiveness and efficiency in the way in which the public service carries out its work have negatively affected the South African Government's ability to meet the needs of its citizens. As a result, innovation has become a national priority, as the government seeks creative and innovative solutions to recurring socio-economic problems. Moreover, the identification of public servants as the key drivers of that innovation in the public service, through a practice referred to as "intrapreneurship" in the contemporary world, warrants an investigation of how the South African Public Service is ensuring that public servants are engaged as key agents of change and innovation in the public service. The process of innovation and intrapreneurship in the public service is however seemingly a complex one, characterised by a need to coordinate various resources, so as to reform traditional cultures and structures of the public service, coupled with the challenge of having to address concepts that were previously considered inconsistent with the nature of the public service, such as risk and uncertainty. This clearly demonstrates the comprehensive nature of the intrapreneurship process, which will require a very coordinated approach in its institution.

It is upon this background that the following chapter will aim to provide additional insight into the subject matter through the conceptualising of intrapreneurship within the discipline of public administration. This exercise will essentially establish a theoretical and contextual basis upon which the CPSI's role in the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service can be analysed, in accordance with the study's primary objective outlined in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUALISATION OF INTRAPRENEURSHIP WITHIN THE DISCIPLINE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Various scholars within the discipline of Public Administration have long viewed intrapreneurship as key to improving public service processes. Although the increase in the discussion of intrapreneurship in the public service can be linked to the development of the New Public Management (NPM) doctrine, said to have emerged in the 1980s, evidence of calls for governments to become more innovative within the discipline of Public Administration date back to the 1960s and 1970s, when scholars such as Bennis (1969) and Thayer (1973) made arguments in favour of flexible hierarchical structures, in order for innovation in public service institutions to develop. Contemporary studies on intrapreneurship share these sentiments, as the concept of bureaucracy, commonly used as a label for public administration as a sphere of activity, is perceived as a source of waste, red tape and a barrier to innovation in the public service, as stated in the previous chapter (Venter and Landsberg 2011:84; Kovalainen and Sundin 2012:257).

Researchers have therefore identified a need for more contemporary studies that describe, conceptualise and contextualise intrapreneurship within the field of Public Administration (Lewis, Considine and Alexander 2011:107), a gap in literature which this study seeks to fill. To this end, this chapter seeks to conceptualise and contextualise the practice of intrapreneurship in the disciplinary field of Public Administration. Through the exploration of public administration as a discipline and a sphere of government activity, and how then intrapreneurship in the broader sense and in the South African context links to both contexts; the chapter will ultimately demonstrate that the imperative for an intrapreneurial discourse in the public service can be simply understood as a way to connect government and society, in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government. The various sections in this chapter will add more insight on the nature of the construct that the CPSI has been mandated to promote in the South African Public Service and create a further understanding of the sort of role that the CPSI may be intended to fulfil.

## 2.2 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

White (1955:1-3) describes administration as a process synonymous with all activities performed by a group of people. The process can manifest in various contexts such as the academic, private and public sector environments. Administration is considered a “social phenomenon” that is characterised by the exertion of “mental effort” and the execution of activities that relate to a specific context to achieve specified objectives (Cloete 1986:2). Therefore, public administration describes the various administrative activities executed by public institutions in order to resolve societal needs (Cloete 1986:4; MacRae and Pitt 1980:16). This definition of public administration encompasses the multitude of the conceptualisations of the study of Public Administration as a disciplinary field, which also illustrates the scope of the discipline.

Woodrow Wilson (1887) is said to have developed the foundational basis of Public Administration as a discipline in its own right, through his article on “The Study of Administration” which formally established Public Administration as an exclusive discipline instead of a sub-discipline of Political Science, as was the case previously. Wilson (1887) considered public administrators accountable to political leaders and that the discipline should be focused on the function of government and the most efficient way in which government could fulfil its purpose. Goodnow (1900), also considered as one of the founders of the discipline, provided a similar view to Wilson’s (1887) as he regarded the discipline as being concerned with the execution of political will through the implementation of policies set by politicians. Wilson and Goodnow’s ideas are seemingly expanded in Gullick and Urwick’s (1977) conceptualisation of the study, as they outline a number of functions that characterise the nature of the work carried out to fulfil the mandate of government. The functions are noted as: planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting, thus essentially regarding the discipline as a study of how best government should be organised (Gullick and Urwick 1977:13).

The above descriptions of Public Administration as an academic discipline point to public administration, the domain of government activity, as a system characterised by the performance of administrative activities such as staffing, controlling, financing, structuring and administering of the policy process, in order to fulfil government’s mandate as the custodian of society (Thornhill 2012:119). Moreover, MacRae and Pitt (1980:19) state that



the nature of a democratic state is such that it requires the activities of public administration to be conducted within specified limitations, which are determined by a country's constitution. This stance is supported by Cloete's (1986:8) view that public administration as a "distinctive field of work" requires public administrators to adhere to specific rules and regulations that dictate the manner in which they operate. The Constitution therefore determines the rules, values and roles of the various stakeholders in public administration and provides a clear delegation of authority. The basic principles that govern public administration in South Africa are outlined in Section 195(1) of the Constitution. The principles therein indicate the nature of public administration as being concerned with ensuring that the needs of all the country's citizens are met and the standards that must be adhered to in the process of fulfilling those needs (MacRae and Pitt 1980:7).

However, since the early 1980s, the discipline is said to have undergone a refocus from Public Administration to Public Management, said to be in correspondence with the emergence of the New Public Management (NPM) doctrine (Hood 1996:268). Thornhill (2012:118) describes NPM as an array of perceptions that promote the adoption of private sector linked management principles in the public sector, so that government can be run more efficiently. He further notes that some people have stated their views of a need for Public Administration to be substituted with Public Management, both as a discipline and as an activity of government (Thornhill 2012:118). Contrary to those views, Lynn (1996:39) regards Public Management as an extension of the broader discipline of Public Administration and should therefore not be regarded as a replacement of Public Administration, as suggested by the views noted by Thornhill (2012:118). Thus, Public Management as an area of study focuses on management functions such as planning, motivating, budgeting, leading, disciplining, checking and supervising, which are conducted in order to meet the objectives of government (Ott, Hyde and Shafritz 1991:1; Thornhill 2012:119).

Bozeman (1979:vi), who is said to have developed the first textbook with an exclusive focus upon Public Management (Lynn 1996:41), postulates that the function of the public manager in the study of Public Management is to conceive creative and logical solutions to administrative challenges by applying their knowledge of public service processes. Cohen (1988:6) notably summarises Bozeman's sentiments above by stating that to achieve success in government, public managers need to be entrepreneurial and that creativity,

innovation and risk-taking are some of the key characteristics of an effective public manager. Thus, Bozeman (1979:vi) and Cohen's (1988:6) assertions notably validate Antoncic and Hisrich's (2003:7) assertion that the concept of intrapreneurship bears its origins from the management related literature. It was however notably not until the emergence of the reinventing government movement, a manifestation of the NPM doctrine, said to be popularised by Osborne and Gaebler (1992), that the ideas of scholars such as Bozeman (1979) and Cohen (1988) gained traction within the broader discipline of Public Administration.

Therefore, the following sections will explore the development of the concept of intrapreneurship from the NPM doctrine that provides the theoretical background for the shift in focus to innovation and intrapreneurship in the public service.

## **2.3 THE NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT**

The introduction of the New Public Management (NPM) is a result of continuous discussions in both the academic and political spheres, on the various ineffective and inefficient aspects of public administration as a sphere of activity (Bekkers, Edelenbos and Steijn 2011:10). Thus, NPM has for the most part been regarded as a driving force for the various organisational reforms implemented in the public service since its emergence in the 1980s, as it introduced what was deemed a contemporary approach to coordinating the way public services are administered to the public (Osborne and Brown 2013:16). NPM encouraged the initiation and adoption of practices that were associated with the private sector, in the public sector, as a means to improve the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of government, which was linked to the bureaucratic nature of the public service (Andrews and van de Walle 2012:3).

Although the various proponents of NPM emphasise different aspects of the doctrine, Hood (1991:4-5) manages to provide a succinct list of the "seven overlapping precepts" of NPM, which he lists as: "a hands on professional management in the public sector, explicit standards and measures of performance, greater emphasis upon output controls, shifts to disaggregation of units in the public sector, shifts to greater competition in the public sector, stress upon private sector styles of management practice and stress upon greater discipline and parsimony in the resource use". What the above-mentioned precepts evidently encapsulate is a reform approach that ultimately seeks to ensure that the government can

efficiently meet the needs of the citizens, is able to “empower” its customers and is entrepreneurial (Hall and Holt 2008:22). Osborne and Brown (2005:5) add that what Hood’s precepts further underline is a need for what they call “discontinuous change” towards a new focus upon public service innovation. This has arguably manifested into the implicit and explicit calls for public servants to be entrepreneurial and innovative in their work (Drucker 1986; Osborne and Gaebler 1992; Bartlett and Dibben 2002).

The above-mentioned view finds further support in the work of Denhardt and Denhardt (2000:550), who describe how NPM encourages managers in the public service to “steer not row” the institutions in which they serve, which they argue indicates a challenge for public managers to become innovative, in order to achieve their institutional goals and objectives. Moore (1995:17) shares a similar view stating that the role of managers in modern governments requires them to be more than administrators, but rather agents of change. Interestingly, Kesti, Leinonen and Kesti’s (2017:255) findings on leadership in local government seemingly share Moore’s sentiments, as they reveal a need for the development of an intrapreneurial mindset amongst public managers, and for them to be effective change agents in their work environments. Perhaps as a consequence of the above views on the NPM and the innovation interface, public entrepreneurship as a theory and concept became viewed as an aspect of NPM (Edwards, Jones, Lawton and Llewellyn 2002:1542). This was specifically evident through the theory’s encouragement of the adoption of a private sector approach to managing public service institutions as a remedy for what was considered inflexible public service rules and processes and the need to promote innovation and risk-tasking in the public service (Edwards et al. 2002:1542-1551).

It is therefore evident that the NPM era propelled the perception and conception of the public service and public servants (more so public managers) as having the potential to be entrepreneurial. Critics of NPM in the context of its promotion of an entrepreneurial government have denounced the doctrine’s stringent focus upon efficiency. Bekkers et al. (2011:198) argue that simply relating the need for innovation to efficiency gains neglects the fact that the reasons for engaging in innovation in the public service differ, as do the nature of the problems which are intended to be resolved through innovation, which are not always issues of efficiency. Bekkers et al. arguably make a valid point, as such a narrow focus of innovation can limit and hamper the effective conceptualisation of the real issues facing society that need to be resolved through innovation. However, the extent of this argument’s

validity will also need to be tested against the country context in which it is applied. For instance, a country such as South Africa, a third world country, with a rapidly growing population and a documented large inequality gap as mentioned in the previous chapter, would arguably be justified in prioritising efficiency. This study will therefore shed light upon the values that direct the CPSI's promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service, in order to indicate whether the NPM's focus on efficiency is upheld by the CPSI, given that South Africa's post-apartheid reforms in the public service were inspired by the NPM doctrine, as will be pointed out later in this chapter.

Another area of criticism levelled by Bekkers et al. (2011:204) at NPM is that the doctrine defines public innovation from a "government centric" perspective which fails to highlight the importance of consultations and interactions with members of society when developing innovative solutions. Although caution must be taken to avoid this, this argument neglects the fact that public servants are also members of society themselves. Through their innovative efforts, they aim to resolve the needs of the communities they form part of and perhaps are also driven by their own lived experiences of the challenges faced in the communities in which they reside. This point is reminiscent of the call made by President Cyril Ramaphosa in his SONA mentioned in Chapter One, where he calls upon all the citizens of the country to actively participate in helping the government to find solutions to some of the public service's most pressing challenges (Ramaphosa 2018). In this sense, intrapreneurship can in fact be considered an embodiment of the practice of active citizenship, especially because the definitions of the concept of intrapreneurship provided in the previous chapter indicate that the concept describes employees who go beyond the call of duty to improve their organisations.

Another noted challenge is that NPM's promotion of innovation amongst public servants seems to be centred around public managers as the sources of innovation in the public service, which is an arguably narrow perspective of public service innovation, considering the revelation in the previous chapter's literature review that modern studies indicate that innovation occurs across all levels of the organisation (Borins 2001:314; Borins 2002:468; OECD 2017a:59). Thus, the clearly outdated perspective of intrapreneurship in the public service as more of a management practice also notably conflicts with the modern era of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR, discussed in the previous chapter, which will require all those employed in the public service to cement their positions by being innovative. The arguments above do not however

invalidate the relevance of the NPM doctrine in the modern world, but rather indicates a need for NPM as a concept and theory developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to perhaps be redefined to better reflect the circumstances in which 21<sup>st</sup> Century governments operate. Perhaps this process is already underway, as Fuglsang and Pedersen (2011:60) describe a “reformulation” of NPM ideologies, which includes the realisation that public servants at all levels are key sources of innovation. They add that, “perhaps it is better to say that NPM is an ongoing phenomenon that is defined and redefined several times” (Fuglsang and Pedersen 2011:48).

Having established the NPM doctrine as the origin of the conceptualisation of public servants as being intrapreneurial, the next section will further explore the theoretical background of the intrapreneurship construct, notably located in the public entrepreneurship literature briefly mentioned earlier in this section and in the previous chapter. The section will expand upon the definition of the construct provided in the previous chapter, however drawing attention to the unique characteristics and motivations of intrapreneurs in the public service context.

## **2.4 PUBLIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Public entrepreneurship as a concept and theory has gained increasing popularity in Public Administration over the years (Osborne and Brown 2013:1; Morris and Kuratko 2002:305-306). It is ultimately regarded as an alternative measure to ensuring government’s effective response to the volatile public service environment (Morris and Kuratko 2002:305). According to Morris and Kuratko (2002:306), literature from scholars who promote risk-taking in the public service, such as Ramamurti (1986), Doig and Hargrove (1987) and Bellone and Goerle (1992), contributed to the development of the concept of the public entrepreneur. One of the more popular research areas in the subject is situated in the reinventing government literature associated with Osborne and Gaebler (1992) (Kovalainen and Sundin 2012:265; Bartlett and Dibben 2002:109).

A clear manifestation of NPM, Osborne and Gaebler’s (1992) ideas suggest a focus upon ten themes that they believe will ensure the reinvention of government, namely: competition, citizen empowerment, focus upon outcomes, mission over rules and regulations, customer orientation, proactiveness, earning over spending, decentralisation, partnerships over adversarial relationships and other market mechanisms (Morris, Kuratko and Covin

2008:127). Inspired by Drucker's (1986) ideas on the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship in spurring the socio-economic development of a country, Osborne and Gaebler (1992:20) explain that their conception of an entrepreneurial government promotes a renewed outlook of the role of the public manager, to one who can operate with independence and is empowered with decision-making autonomy. Contrary to the OECD's (2017a:19) assertions of having found no conclusive evidence of bureaucracy being an inhibitor of intrapreneurship, Osborne and Gaebler (1992:xviii) regard bureaucracy as an "an archaic system that frustrates their (employees) creativity and saps their energy". Thus, they call for a change in the way in which the public service operates, in order to make the best use of the public servant's creative and innovative capabilities for improved efficiency in the public service (Osborne and Gaebler 1992: xviii).

It is also important to note Bartlett and Dibben's (2002) conceptualisation of the public entrepreneur and public entrepreneurship in general, as their studies on innovation in the local government environment are said to have introduced the use of the "intrapreneurship" variation of the public entrepreneurship concept within the discipline of Public Administration (Kovalainen and Sundin 2012:265). Bartlett and Dibben's study (2002) finds two distinct types of entrepreneurs in government (Bartlett and Dibben 2002:112). The first type described as the "public champion" is defined as a manager whose entrepreneurial efforts are directed by the ideas derived from citizens on how best their needs can be satisfied (Bartlett and Dibben 2002:112). It evidently correlates with one of Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) themes for reinventing government described as the "customer driven" approach, where the focus is upon how best the needs of the citizens, instead of the bureaucracy, can be satisfied (Osborne and Gaebler 1992:166). Interestingly, these results oppose the point discussed in the previous section that NPM's promotion of innovation has a "government centric" focus as Bartlett and Dibben's (2002) "public champion" prioritises consultations with the public as the basis for his/her innovative ideas. In contrast, the "empowered champions" are motivated by the challenge that comes with being entrepreneurial which enables them to set themselves apart in their work environment (Bartlett and Dibben 2002:112).

This arguably translates into them (the empowered champions) being competitive in the manner in which they work, which provides insight into the manifestation of Osborne and Gaebler's promotion of competition amongst public servants (Osborne 1993:351). This

approach to public entrepreneurship, where the entrepreneurial public servants are driven by the fulfilment of their personal desires to stand out in their work environments, notably links to the Public Choice Theory (PCT), said to be one of the theories that underpin NPM (Hall and Holt 2008:23). Central to the theory is a belief that all stakeholders in the political environment are ultimately driven by self-interest (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000:551; Hall and Holt 2008:23). The description of the public entrepreneur as someone driven by self-interest can be considered problematic when the perception of the role of the public servant is that of a custodian of society and not of self (Cohen, Eimicke and Heikkila's 2013:183; Osborne and Gaebler 1992:20). These issues therefore raise questions about what the motivations of public servants to intrapreneur are, and whether those matter as much as the outcome or benefits of the innovative solutions produced by public servants.

In addition to Bartlett and Dibben's description of the public and empowered champions, Roberts (1992) also describes four types of entrepreneurs in the public service, which are briefly explored to add conceptual clarity. The first is the political entrepreneur who would be an elected government official. The second is the executive entrepreneur who is a public entrepreneur who has been appointed to a position of leadership in government and is not elected. The third type, a bureaucratic entrepreneur, would be any public servant who is not in a management role and lastly, the policy entrepreneur would be an individual working on the outside of government, but who forms part of the policy decision-makers, and aims to create innovative policies. Roberts (1992:66) explains that the focus of political entrepreneurs is upon increasing their support from the electorate and would thus aim to garner as much publicity for their entrepreneurial initiatives as possible.

The bureaucratic entrepreneurs in contrast would be more concerned with observing organisational rules, in order to garner the support of their managers for their innovative initiatives, so that the relevant resources are allocated to develop their ideas. They may also avoid disruptive innovations, for fear that their failure would result in their loss of jobs (Roberts 1992:66). The same can be said for executive entrepreneurs, who would need to account to their political principals. However, executive entrepreneurs arguably still yield enough authority and power in government departments to authorise the use of resources in favour of their innovations. Roberts (1992:66) further notes that policy entrepreneurs will be more supportive of innovative initiatives that disrupt the usual way of approaching work in government in favour of more contemporary, innovative approaches. Therefore these

dynamics present very important considerations for institutions such as the CPSI, when considering how they will ensure that an enabling environment for intrapreneurship across all hierarchical levels in public service institutions is created, regardless of rank.

Lastly, Morris and Jones (1999) also provide a summary of the various conceptualisations of the public entrepreneur worth mentioning, that they argue are found within most Public Administration literature (Morris and Jones 1999:72-73). One description of the public entrepreneur is that of an inventor, whose primary focus is upon developing new innovations in order to improve public service efficiency. This characterisation of the public entrepreneur describes a public servant driven by a sense of duty to the citizens. This also resonates with the contributions of scholars whose research on the subject focuses upon recognising individuals who have spurred meaningful transformations within their respective public service organisations. This research stream conceptualises the public entrepreneur as a visionary who is different from “ordinary” managers in the public service and politicians, due to their innovative use of government resources (Morris and Kuratko 2002:306).

Another conceptualisation of public entrepreneurship focuses upon the importance of leadership as a catalyst for effective change in the public service. Scholars in this perspective argue that public managers are key to resolving public service “failures” by displaying strategic leadership (Behn 1998; Morris and Kuratko 2002:306-307). Interestingly, leadership is also one of the key factors that the OECD (2017a:81) noted as a key component for fostering innovation in public services. Behn (1998:210) however acknowledges concerns that the extension of the authority to make decisions to public managers may encroach upon the decision-making powers traditionally reserved for politicians. It is believed that, given too much discretionary power, public managers may take initiatives in directions that do not reflect the interests of the collective, given the flawed nature of existing systems of checks and balances (Behn 1998:211). Perhaps a reiteration of the public service’s values and ethical code and standards is required in such an instance. This suggestion is supported by Cohen and Eimicke’s (2008:21) assertion that most public service employees are not skilled in determining the ethical risks that may accompany certain policy innovation and therefore require training.



### 2.4.1 Challenges of public entrepreneurship

A few key challenges in relation to the conceptualisations of public entrepreneurship provided in the previous section have been identified. Firstly, it seems most descriptions of the public entrepreneur are made with reference to public managers as the public entrepreneurs, which seems to be the general narrative in the NPM school of thought (Kovalainen and Sundin 2012:271). To perhaps provide the rationale for this approach, Borins (2001:312) explains that innovation has previously been considered a management activity, as this ensured a direct line of accountability between politicians and public managers through which politicians can easily hold managers accountable for any failed innovative initiatives. However, Borins' (2002:468) and the OECD (2017a:59) findings that most innovative activity originates from staff working in the frontlines as well as middle managers, mentioned in Chapter One, necessitates the promotion of intrapreneurship to employees across all levels of the organisation.

Furthermore, Lewis' (1980:233) assertion that the distinct ability of the public entrepreneur to devise creative ways to efficiently utilise scarce government resources distinguishes them from "ordinary managers and politicians" illustrates Metcalfe's (2009:80) argument that "management is everything entrepreneurship is not". Metcalfe (2009:80-83) explains that while management is usually concerned with managing risk and uncertainty, public entrepreneurs are risk-takers. In addition, managers are concerned with implementing political directives, while public entrepreneurs are more focused upon discovering new ways to do things. Therefore, based upon these assertions, it can be argued that confining the practice of public entrepreneurship to public managers will significantly limit the entrepreneurial output of the public service. This is not to say that managers cannot be entrepreneurial, as Robert's (1992) descriptions of the different public entrepreneurs found in the public service presented in the previous section, include public managers. However, because studies also indicate that most innovations emanate from middle and frontline managers (Borins 2002:468; OECD 2017a:59), their exclusion would be to the detriment of any government's goal to create an intrapreneurial public service.

It is also evident from the descriptions shared in the previous section that the political sphere impacts upon the innovation mandate of the public service, particularly with public managers having to be accountable to their political principals. However, the views of the scholars in

the previous section envision a public service which provides public servants with the institutional platform to freely innovate in order to ensure that the needs of society are met, relatively free from the restrictions created by political interferences. However, when consideration is given to the view of political behaviour as being driven by self-interest (Hatemi and McDermott 2011:13-14), the freedom extended to public servants to innovate will likely be very limited, as political actors will ultimately aim to maintain political support, especially as administrative failures are at times regarded as political failures (Borins 2001:311). As a result, it can be argued that political actors will likely limit the bureaucracy's innovative freedom to those initiatives that serve their political interests. This then in the context of this study brings into question the nature of the impact that the political sphere of government has upon the CPSI's promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service.

Another area of complexity with public entrepreneurship is presented in arguments by scholars who are of the opinion that the disregard of bureaucracy in public entrepreneurship theories, coupled with the extreme focus upon "self-promotion, rule-breaking, power politics, risk-taking and radical change" oppose the fundamental value of democracy (Diver 1982; Bellone and Goerle 1992; Behn 1998). According to Diver (1982:404), the actions of public managers are legitimised by the Constitution as well as by the citizens whom they serve. He argues therefore that public entrepreneurship contravenes this principle, as it allows public servants the opportunity to misuse the authority entrusted to them for their own personal benefit, which cannot be allowed in the public service, no matter how virtuous the intentions are (Diver 1982:404). This view is however debatable, as firstly, it can be argued that democracy is about inclusivity and the right for all citizens to equally participate in the affairs of the state. This chapter has shown how public entrepreneurship gives public servants an opportunity to actively participate in the affairs of the state, which is democracy in action. Applying this line of thought, public entrepreneurship can therefore be regarded as a promoter of democracy and not an inhibitor.

Furthermore, the allusion of the impact of the Public Choice Theory in politics and public administration indicates that the promotion of self-interest is not a by-product of innovation, but one of the nature of the political and administrative environment of government. Perhaps Mill's Utilitarian Theory of ethics can be of relevance in this instance. The premise of the theory is that any act, good or bad, that yields a positive outcome is good (Cloete, De Coning, Wissink and Rabie 2018:84). Therefore, though it has been contended in parts of

this chapter that public servants should essentially not be driven by self-interest, Denhardt and Denhardt (2000:551), as well as Hall and Holt (2008:23), indicate that the focus upon personal interest is part of the inherent nature of the public administration/political context. Thus perhaps, as propagated by Mill's theory, the motivation behind why public servants innovate should not be as important, if the outcome is positive. Nevertheless, this study's research findings presented in Chapter 5 may provide insight on what the general motivation for public servants in the South African Public Service to innovate is and if those have influenced perceptions of intrapreneurship in the public service.

It is therefore evident that public entrepreneurship is a multifaceted concept with various views on how it can be approached. However, what the various scholars seem to be in agreement about is the need for intrapreneurs in the public service. Kesti et al. (2017:255) earlier assertion regarding a need for the development of an intrapreneurial mindset in the public service indicates a need for clarity on the behavioural characteristics and attitudes which describe this mindset. Thus, the next section will explore the key characteristics of the intrapreneur found in the literature.

## **2.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE ENTREPRENEUR**

A study conducted at two public service institutions in Brazil on the perception public managers have of intrapreneurship found that all the managers interviewed had no knowledge of the term "intrapreneur", although they were aware of the concept of the "entrepreneur" but regarded it as a private sector construct. As a result, when asked of the existence of an intrapreneurial competence in the public service, some stated that the construct was difficult to identify (Gomes et al. 2015:709). It is therefore important to formulate a behavioural description of the characteristics that distinguish the intrapreneur for the purpose of establishing a uniform understanding of what constitutes intrapreneurial behaviour in the public service. In contrast, Manimala, Jose and Thomas (2006:51) argue against the importance of this exercise, as they believe that intrapreneurial behaviour can be taught, and instead suggest a focus upon the facilitation of intrapreneurship as more paramount.

However, it can be argued that the basis upon which the facilitation of intrapreneurship is conducted is an understanding of the construct itself, as this also expands the understanding of the nature of intrapreneurship in the public service. Therefore, the following sections will

describe the key characteristics of the public entrepreneur as identified by Windrum (2008:12).

### **2.5.1 Change agent**

Windrum (2008:12) describes public entrepreneurs in as change driven individuals. They evidently embrace the conception of their roles in the public service as custodians of society, tasked with fulfilling the needs of the citizenry (Cohen et al. 2013:183). This notably links to Bartlett and Dibben's (2002:112) conceptualisation of the public entrepreneur as a "public champion", who is driven by how best to serve the needs of the public. This also highlights Moore's (1995:17) arguments of a need for public servants to change their perceptions of their purpose and role in the public service, as the continued perception of their roles as purely administrative and standardised will arguably prevent them from being and acting like change agents. This further indicates the importance of embedding innovation within the overall public service culture and structure, so that it is perceived as an inherent requirement of a public servant's role.

### **2.5.2 Risk-takers**

Windrum (2008:12) regards entrepreneurial public servants as individuals who are unafraid to take calculated risks. Borins (2001:311) acknowledges the high risks and consequences that can ensue due to unsuccessful innovations. Entrepreneurial employees ultimately risk reputational damage or losing their jobs in the event of their innovations being unsuccessful (Green et al. 2014:19). This can result in a culture of risk aversion amongst public servants, who may perceive innovation as a risk not worth taking. This consequently indicates the importance of political and managerial support for intrapreneurship, in order to encourage employees to take creative risks which, if successful, will improve administrative processes in the public service which arguably benefits both political and managerial agendas (OECD 2015:23).

### **2.5.3 Creative and innovative**

Windrum (2008:12) describes the public entrepreneur as an individual who can generate innovative and creative solutions that will challenge existing methods and processes. Bekkers et al. (2011:15-16) further explain that innovation by employees is not limited to

technological innovations, which is described as the invention of technologies, but can be classified under various other categories such as: service innovation, which entails the introduction of new services, and organisational innovation, which produces “new organisational forms, management methods and techniques and new working methods” (Bekkers et al. 2011:16). They also describe process innovation, which is innovation aimed at improving internal work processes, and conceptual innovation, which introduces new concepts and paradigms that provide a new perspective for approaching challenges and identifying solutions (Bekkers et al. 2011:16).

#### **2.5.4 Connected**

Windrum (2008:12) argues that entrepreneurs in the public service are individuals who can develop a connection of networks with stakeholders who will provide the social and financial support for the implementation of their innovative ideas. Being able to build such relationships can be considered crucial, as no individual public servant will possess all the resources and skills required to formulate and implement an idea by themselves. This support can also be considered to include political support, as assertions by the various scholars have indicated that the nature of public administration is such that it requires public servants to be accountable to politicians, as their role is to ultimately implement political will (Wilson 1887; Goodnow 1900; Borins 2001:312). This also highlights the importance of the establishment of institutions such as the CPSI, as it can fulfil a crucial function in facilitating this process on behalf of intrapreneurs, particularly to ensure that connections formed uphold the values of the public service.

The above characteristics especially envision a public service that is flexible, has found a way to control bureaucratic inertia and has successfully transformed the mindset of public servants in terms of how they perceive their roles in the public service. However, this is a rather idealistic view of the public service, as Green et al. (2014:21-25) express a lack of a correlation between the above characteristics and the nature of the public service, which they maintain is characterised by bureaucratic organisational cultures and structures which inadvertently create a barrier to innovative behaviour. As the South African Government works to achieve the National Development Plan’s (2011) objectives, it is evident that the mandate to promote intrapreneurship in the public service, although primarily entrusted to

the CPSI, will require a collaborative effort between institutional and political leaders, as well as all other relevant stakeholders.

## **2.6 ROLE OF THE SPONSOR**

As stated in the previous section, there are various stakeholders involved in the process of promoting intrapreneurship within the public service. Pinchot and Pellman (1999:15) state that one of the key roles within the intrapreneurship process is that of “the sponsor”, who creates an enabling environment for intrapreneurial activity in organisations. This stance is reiterated by Netshifefhe’s (2008) study on the promotion of intrapreneurship within South Africa’s Ekurhuleni Municipality, which finds that sponsors are integral actors in facilitating and ensuring the success of intrapreneurial initiatives in the public service (Netshifefhe 2008:102). Thus Pinchot and Pellman (1999:19) describe five key roles of an effective sponsor, which resemble the brief description of the CPSI’s mandate in the previous chapter. Therefore, as a prelude to Chapter Four, which conducts an in-depth exploration of the CPSI’s mandate, an exploration of the key roles of a sponsor as outlined by Pinchot and Pellman (1999:19) is warranted, to perhaps also contribute to the study’s subsequent analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service.

### **2.6.1 Creating a vision for innovation**

According to Pinchot and Pellman (1999:19), a sponsor ensures the development of a good innovation vision. This creates an enabling environment for innovation to take place, as it encourages those with innovative ideas to be confident enough to express their intrapreneurial ideas, regardless of their rank. Morris and Jones (1999:86) regard the creation of a vision for innovation as a responsibility of senior management in the public service, as they communicate acceptable practices within their institutions. To this end, for example, the CPSI recommends that every government department in the South African Public Service establishes an innovation manifesto which will serve as a blueprint which guides and outlines an organisation’s intent to institutionalise a culture of intrapreneurship (CPSI 2007:37-38).

### **2.6.2 Supporting the individual, not just the idea**

Good sponsors can identify employees who present the behavioural competencies of an intrapreneur and effectively harness those skills and attitudes to expose intrapreneurial behaviour (Pinchot and Pellman 1999:19). This validates the importance of creating an understanding of the characteristics of the intrapreneur across the organisation, in order to create a clear and uniform understanding of the kind of behaviour that is to be reinforced. This role of the sponsor aligns with the recommendations from a study on innovation in the Australian Public Sector, which encourages organisations to conduct internal skills audits to effectively identify opportunities for capacity development in the area of innovation, so that the capacity of a public servant to innovate is continuously reinforced (Green et al. 2014:6).

### **2.6.3 Coaching intrapreneurs**

Pinchot and Pellman (1999:19) explain that the effective sponsor provides guidance to innovative employees, so as to ensure that their ideas are developed and implemented effectively. This seemingly describes the support function provided by public managers, according to a study by Marc Zegans (1992) entitled “Innovation in the well-functioning Public Agency”, in which a sample of public managers is utilised. In the study, the senior public managers state that their role as managers includes encouraging employees to take creative risks, to implore employees to develop “a problem-solving attitude” and to improve the self-confidence of employees by re-affirming their capabilities to effectively make meaningful contributions within the organisations (Zegans 1992:151). On the contrary, an OECD (2012:43-44) report describes public managers in the contemporary public service as lacking the required managerial skills to provide coaching to public servants, and as a result recommends that future reforms in public management focus upon improving this inefficiency. It would therefore be interesting to discover whether the CPSI, in its mandate to promote innovation amongst public servants, also supports the development of the public manager’s capacity to facilitate innovation within its ranks.

### **2.6.4 Anticipating and mitigating opposition**

The sponsor is required to act as an advocate for the intrapreneur’s ideas and protect the intrapreneur from potential opposition, which can be a barrier to innovation (Pinchot and Pellman 1999:19). In Zegans’ (1992) study, when asked how politicians usually react to

innovative behaviour by bureaucrats, all the managers were in agreement that politicians were not keen on supporting innovations that could cause reputational damage and therefore appeared inclined to support initiatives with the lowest risk profile or ones that serve their personal interests (Zegans 1992:147). In order to manage political opposition, Zegans (1992:147) suggests consultations with political stakeholders on any innovation early on in the innovation process, in order to manage the risk of opposition. This approach may arguably cause a lot of red tape when every innovative idea has to be approved by political stakeholders who may not even have the capacity to manage this process. A more viable solution would perhaps be for political stakeholders to clearly indicate the parameters within which innovative behaviour can be practised through the formulation of policies to that effect, and through the support of institutions such as the CPSI.

Another source of opposition originates from public managers. Besides the possible risk to their reputations and jobs, should the intrapreneurial ideas of their subordinates result in a waste of public resources (Green et al. 2014:21), Kelly, Medina and Cameron (2014:6) describe how in some organisational settings, managers discourage innovation by their subordinates, as they view it as an indication of their own incompetence. Furthermore, a study on the perception of intrapreneurship by public managers from two public service institutions in Brazil found an “anti-entrepreneur prejudice” within some teams, due to the manager’s perception of intrapreneurship as a private sector construct (Gomes et al. 2015:709). This reiterates the OECD’s (2015:7-8) assertion of a need to ensure that the quality of management in the public service is improved. It also highlights the importance of the development of institutions such as the CPSI that act as an independent party which can, through exercising its mandate, manage both political and organisational barriers to innovation.

### **2.6.5 Providing and garnering support for the intrapreneur’s idea**

Sponsors play a vital role in providing and garnering support for intrapreneurs, by either providing the required resources for the development of the intrapreneurs’ ideas themselves and/or connecting intrapreneurs to those who possess the required resources (Pinchot and Pellman 1999:19). This highlights the importance of network connections in innovation, as collaborations are key to achieving organisational goals (Daglio et al. 2014:30), as discussed in the previous section and in the previous chapter.



The presentation of the study's findings in the forthcoming chapter will offer clarity upon the various topics explored in this section, and whether the CPSI can thus be considered a "sponsor" for intrapreneurship. This section however seems to echo the benefits of innovation units as described by the OECD (2017a:140), such as that they mitigate barriers to innovation in the public service, they make up for poor leadership for innovation in the public service, they facilitate innovation knowledge sharing and foster partnerships for innovative solution finding- all of which also seem to be the benefits of a sponsor for innovation in the public service. It is at this point important to shift focus to contextualising the construct within the South African context, as it is this study's contextual basis.

## **2.7 NPM AND PUBLIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE**

As mentioned in Chapter One, the South African Government's goal to establish a public service that is more effective and efficient forms part of the government's key priorities. Within the context of this chapter, this is evident from the influence of the NPM in South Africa's post-apartheid reforms and the subsequent calls for the reinvention of government with regard to innovation. This section will therefore shed more light on these issues.

### **2.7.1 An overview of the New Public Management in South Africa**

As the end of the apartheid regime became imminent, various government stakeholders in South Africa questioned the general state of public administration as a discipline and a sphere of activity. Questions emerged around how best to define public administration as a discipline and as a sphere of activity in a post-apartheid South Africa (Chipkin and Lipietz 2012:5; Schwella 1988:27). These issues were subsequently central to the discussions at the Mount Grace Conference held in 1991, in which various government stakeholders such as academic institutions, non-governmental organisations, public servants and academics gathered under the New Public Administration Initiative (NPAI) banner (Picard 2005:202; Cloete 2008:27), to discuss, debate and provide resolutions to these questions (Cameron 2013:570). The conference drew a consensus that public administration, both the discipline and sphere of activity, needed to be reformed, so as to reflect the country's new democratic values and desire to develop an efficient state (Cameron 2013:571).

To achieve this, some of the contributions made at the conference suggested a move towards a “public management approach” which, according to Cameron (2008:47-48), saw the discipline deviate from its social sciences roots to a more “management and business-type approach” associated with the New Public Management doctrine. The first Mount Grace Conference was subsequently succeeded by the Mount Grace II Conference, which took place in 1999, with the aim of evaluating the progress made towards providing equal service delivery for all (Theron and Schwella 2000:193; Cameron and Milne 2009:388). Kravchuk’s (2008:172) assertion that the influence of NPM spanned further than the British Commonwealth countries where it was initially introduced, can be seen as an indication that perhaps the adoption of the NPM was also considered an international best practice and a viable approach to public administration.

Levin (2004:12-13) and Venter and Landsberg (2011:168) specifically identify the decentralisation of management and finances as one of the post-apartheid strategies shaped by NPM. In addition to the decentralisation strategy, Cameron (2015:135) also adds the prioritisation of performance management and corporatisation of public services as two other main components of NPM in South Africa. These strategies notably embody the essence of Osborne and Gaebler’s (1992) 10 themes for reinventing government, which, as stated in an earlier section of this chapter, influenced the growth of entrepreneurship in the public service context. The same conclusion is drawn by Chipkin and Lipietz (2012:11), who note that Osborne and Gabler’s (1992) ideas on reinventing government “became a reference point in the South African context”. It is therefore arguably in the NPM context of reinventing government and improving government efficiency that calls for public servants to be intrapreneurial have been made in South Africa. This point is supported by the former Minister for Public Service and Administration, Ngoako Ramatlhodi, who in a speech referred to the practice of innovation in the South African Public Service as part of “reinventing government” (Ramatlhodi 2016).

Although Cameron (2009:915) notes a shift from the pro-NPM approach in favour of a more anti-NPM approach between 2003-2006, with the changes in leadership at the Department for Public Service and Administration (DPSA), a government department critical for, “establishing the norms and standards” of the public service (<http://www.dpsa.gov.za/about.php>); it is evident through the clear calls for public servants to innovate described in the previous chapter, that the influence of NPM in South Africa has

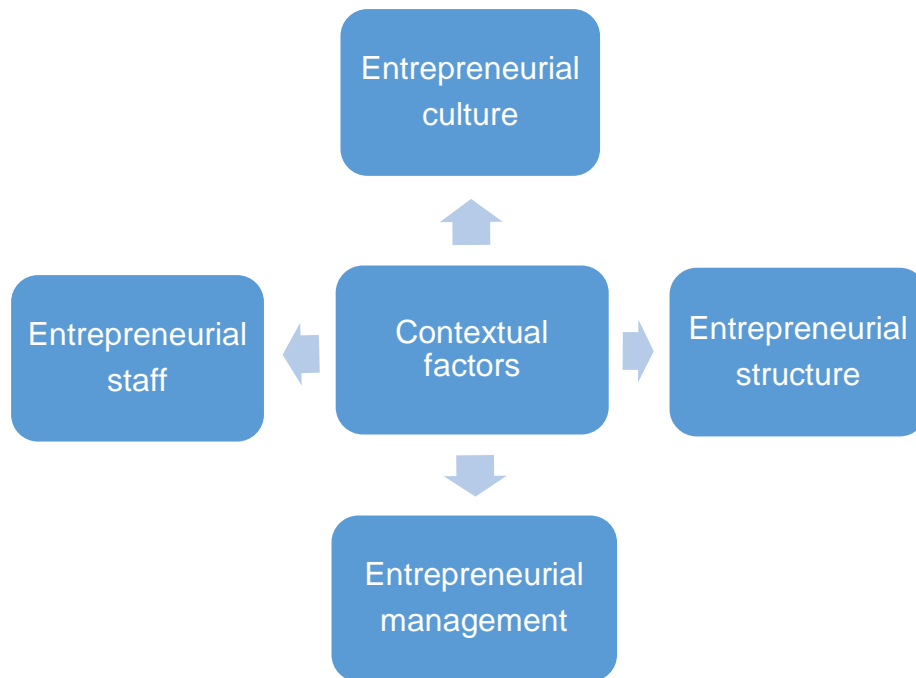
resurfaced, if it ever truly receded. In addition, the relatively recent nature of the former minister's association of the country's current innovation mandate with "reinventing government", as mentioned, indicates the continued influence of the NPM doctrine and its associated theories in the contemporary South African Public Service. Perhaps this signals an implied acknowledgement by public service leaders that to reach the developmental state envisioned by the NDP (2011), the country will need to institutionalise approaches and patterns of thinking that align with the NPM and its related theories.

Thus, the following section will discuss the contextual factors that are said to be required to nurture and promote intrapreneurial behaviour in the public service, as explained by Cassim (2011:63).

### **2.7.2 Reinventing the South African Public Service through public entrepreneurship**

As part of reinventing the South African Public Service, Cassim (2011:61) regards the promotion of "the spirit of entrepreneurship" as a key tool to achieving an effective and efficient public service. Cassim (2011:61) also notes that the South African Government's quest to improve the way in which it provides services to the public has resulted in the establishment of various initiatives, one of which is the CPSI, as a result of innovation being identified as a possible means to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of government. A core aspect of this focus upon innovation is also a focus upon public entrepreneurship, both of which are influencing the way in which service delivery is approached (Cassim 2011:62). For public entrepreneurship in the South African Public Service to thrive, Cassim (2011:63) lists four main conditions that nurture and promote this practice in the public service, as illustrated in Figure 2.1 below. Thus, the following section will explore and discuss these conditions further within the South African Public Service context, to contextualise the reinforcement of public entrepreneurship in the public service, as well as to create an understanding of the nature of the environment in which the CPSI's mandate is exercised.

**Figure 2.1: Conditions for public entrepreneurship**



Source: Adapted from Cassim (2011:63)

### **i) Entrepreneurial culture**

To advance entrepreneurial behaviour within the public service, Cassim (2011:63) asserts the need for the inclusion of innovation in an organisation's set of values. The communication of an entrepreneurial culture can be in the form of implicit or explicit rules regarding the expected attitudes by employees (Daglio et al. 2014:19). To effectively create a commitment to the innovative culture of the organisation, Daglio et al. (2014:19) view the role of leadership as vital in communicating what behaviour is considered acceptable amongst their staff. The scope of this responsibility is not limited to managers within public service institutions but is extended to political office bearers whose policies determine public service priorities (Venter and Landsberg 2011:9). However, a study on the nature and role of public entrepreneurship in the South African Public Service revealed a perception by public managers across all three spheres of government of a lack of an entrepreneurial culture in the public service (Morris and Jones 1999:84).

Moreover, the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (WPTPS) (1995:11) also describes a limited institutional culture of innovation in the public service, which is

attributed to the existing “rule-bound” culture in the public service (WPTPS 1995:37). This view is reflected in Netshifefhe’s (2008) study on intrapreneurship within the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. The study finds that the municipality suffers from bureaucratic inertia, which limits the culture of innovative and creative freedom from employees. These assertions of a poor culture for public entrepreneurship as a result of the bureaucratic culture in the public service indicate a need for a cultural transformation within the public service, and warrant discussions amongst public service leaders about why bureaucracy is creating a barrier to innovation, as Chapter One’s literature review revealed that the manner in which public service rules are applied and interpreted is the problem. Thus, this is essentially a leadership issue.

Nonetheless, the introduction of various initiatives directed at improving public service delivery can be regarded as an indication of the steps taken to create a culture that fosters innovation in the public service. One such initiative is the introduction of Batho Pele (which means “people first” in Sesotho), which is outlined in the WPTPSD (1997). Batho Pele encourages the prioritisation of the needs of the citizens and outlines the various ways in which this can be achieved. Another such measure cited in the WPTPSD (1997:16) is the promotion of innovation amongst public servants, in order to effectively use their skills and expertise to improve government processes. In addition, the Public Service Charter (PSC), described as a “social contract” between public servants and the state, makes a similar call (PSC 2013:3). Article 6 of the PSC states that employers must commit to creating an enabling environment for public servants to successfully fulfil the roles expected of them (PSC 2013:5). This is succeeded by Article 7, which outlines the implicit commitment made by public servants, one of which is to seek innovative solutions to problems to improve government effectiveness and efficiency (PSC 2013:5). Article 7 indicates an expectation for public servants to innovate, which in reference to Article 6, must be supported by an enabling environment, which can be considered as a call for public service institutions to establish a culture that supports innovation by public servants.

Although the existence of an intrapreneurial culture is seemingly articulated through policies developed at a national government level, it is unclear whether this culture has been successfully institutionalised across all institutions of the South African Public Service. This study’s findings will provide clarity upon this issue.

## ii) Entrepreneurial structure

Cassim (2011:63) describes how entrepreneurial organisations are decentralised in nature and are characterised by a flexible environment in which innovation is not restricted by internal policies and regulations. This notably correlates with the decentralisation strategy instituted as part of the post-apartheid NPM reforms in South Africa. However, studies on intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service institutions indicate a lack of sufficient structural reforms to support intrapreneurial behaviour in the public service. Letsie's (2013) study on intrapreneurship in three public hospitals in the Free State Province found that some managers perceived intrapreneurship as a process that opposes the "normal structure" of their organisations and were thus less inclined to reform existing structures to enable intrapreneurship to take place (Letsie 2013:132). Netshifefhe's (2008) study also found evidence of top-down, vertical structures in the South African Public Service, which are considered to be a barrier to innovation by employees.

The findings of these studies seemingly point to a challenge in reforming the traditional structures of public service institutions to foster innovation. This is alluded to in the WPTPS (1995:9) in which the structure of the public service is described as top-down in nature, resulting in a public service where there is a perceived limited motivation by public servants to innovate in response to the needs of the electorate. An evident obstacle to innovation resulting from the WPTPS's description of the organisational structures in the public service being top-down in nature, is that the ability to exercise initiative is seemingly concentrated at top-management level, which notably perpetuates the traditional perception of public entrepreneurship as a management practice. Various sections of this chapter have argued against this approach.

Although Borins' (2001:312) assertions, noted earlier, in which he explains the limitation of the freedom to innovate at top management level, as a means for political office bearers to easily hold someone accountable for failed innovations, can be regarded as a somewhat valid justification for that approach, it is still inconsistent with research findings that most innovative staff are middle managers and frontline staff members (OECD 2017a:59). This also brings into question how well the decentralisation post-apartheid reform was implemented in South Africa, considering that the decentralisation strategy was broadly understood as the transfer or the delegation of decision-making authority in the public

service (Cameron 2009:915). If this is the case, the freedom to exercise initiative and to innovate should not be concentrated at top management level alone. Levin (2004:82) however argues that the poor coordination and planning of the decentralisation reform hampered human resource development in the public service. Other arguments state that managers at lower levels were provided with a limited scope in which their delegated authority can be exercised, whereas in some cases there was an observed reluctance from public servants to take initiative, as they fear the responsibility that comes with making difficult decisions (Cameron 2009:918). It is therefore evident that organisational structures in the South African Public Service need to increase their flexibility, so that innovative behaviour across all levels of public service institutions can thrive.

### **iii) Entrepreneurial management**

Cassim (2011:63) describes the role of management as crucial to reinforcing entrepreneurial behaviour in the public service through the employment of measures and initiatives that effectively manage and nurture this behaviour. The provision of rewards for intrapreneurial behaviour is regarded as one of the most effective approaches to reinforcing intrapreneurship in the public service. This is indicated by the explicit encouragement of public service institutions to incentivise innovative behaviour in policy documents such as the WPTPSD (1997:16), the NDP (2011:80) and the PSC (2013:5), as a means of ensuring that the knowledge, skills and expertise of public servants are optimally used. Furthermore, award programmes like the CPSI Awards (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/awards/>) and the Batho Pele Excellence Awards (<http://www.dpsa.gov.za/bpawards.php>) play an important role in acknowledging and reinforcing the desired behaviour from public servants. Borins' (2001) study on innovation in the public sector reiterates the importance of award ceremonies, as the study identifies awards as the key driver of innovative behaviour in public institutions. However, it must be noted that not all the innovative efforts of public servants will be recognised on such platforms, which illustrates the need for the exploration of other methods of incentivising innovative behaviour.

The point above is highlighted by assertions of the absence of incentives for innovation by public servants as an inhibitor of transformation in the public service (Pandor 2016:13). This stance is reiterated by the views shared by South African public managers, captured in Morris and Jones' study (1999:85), of a need for improved mechanisms which recognise

and reward public entrepreneurship, in order to encourage public servants to innovate. In response to such assertions, the former Director General (DG) of the DPSA, Mr Mashwahle Diphofa, cites Chapter One (Part G) of the Public Service Regulations as evidence of a clear policy that outlines the available reward structure for public servants who provide valuable suggestions on how public service processes can be improved (Diphofa 2016:34). He attributes perceptions of the lack of incentives for innovations by public servants to their unfamiliarity with government policies and regulations (Diphofa 2016:34). However, the former DG's explanation seemingly provides a limited view of the scope of the issue, as the perceptions of a lack of incentives can be driven by various factors such as the poor implementation of the cited policy across the public service. Thus, any inferences of a lack of incentives for innovation in the public service arguably warrant an investigation of the reasons for such perceptions, especially when the incentivisation of innovation has been accounted for in policy. This will allow the relevant people to effectively address the core issues at play so as to limit any potential barriers to innovation by public servants.

Another management practice for reinforcing intrapreneurial behaviour, according to the WPTPSD (1997:16), is through performance management. Performance management is another evident feature of NPM that was implemented as a reform strategy in South Africa. The approach requires organisations to be results orientated and stresses the importance of ensuring that individuals within departments perform optimally in order to achieve the organisation's goals (Cameron 2009:929-930). Section 5.2 of the WPTPSD (1997:16) states that performance management practices need to include the assessment of creative and innovative contributions made by public servants, so as to effectively improve public service processes. Osborne and Gaebler (1992:146) concur, as they assert that the explicit measurement of innovation reinforces it. The former Minister of Science and Technology, Ms Naledi Pandor, makes a similar call as she advocates for the inclusion of an assessment of innovation in performance appraisals of all public service employees so as to foster innovative behaviour (Pandor 2016).

The importance of this call is further highlighted by findings from studies that indicate that the inclusion of innovation as an area of assessment within performance appraisals can provide another source of motivation for public servants who perceive their career progression as a result of positive performance appraisal results as being linked to a better quality of life (Manimala et al. 2006:49-60). Other methods of intrapreneurial management



occur through the provision of training programmes which can be used to clarify the purpose of intrapreneurship in the public service environment and to provide support in the conception of ideas, how to identify opportunities for innovation, as well as managing risks and forming innovation networks (Morris and Jones 1999:87). In addition, it is also evident that managers will themselves need to develop their intrapreneurial competency to effectively manage innovations, as well as to drive cultural and structural reforms within their units.

#### **iv) Entrepreneurial staff**

The last key driver of public entrepreneurship in the public service are the many innovative individuals who work in the various public service institutions. According to Cassim (2011:63), entrepreneurial employees integrate innovation into their organisational value system, they are comfortable with risk-taking and are unafraid to proactively challenge the status quo within their institutions, in order to fulfil institutional goals that will ultimately improve the lives of the citizens. In summary, intrapreneurial employees embody the characteristics of the intrapreneur that have been outlined in this chapter. Furthermore, literature on innovation in the public service indicates that innovating is the responsibility of all employees within an organisation and is not limited to top managers and should thus be promoted accordingly (Morris and Jones 1999:83; Borins 2001:312). This perhaps also indicates that although the existence of an entrepreneurial culture, structure and management within public service organisations is arguably to a large extent beyond the control of most employees, the willingness of public servants to innovate and make a meaningful contribution to improving the public service is a key part of the innovation process, and is a factor that they have complete control over.

Nonetheless, although policy documents such as the WPTPS (1995), the WPTPSD (1997) and the PSC (2013) play an important role in highlighting the need for intrapreneurship in the public service, the existence of the previously discussed conditions that promote public entrepreneurship, namely an entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial structure and entrepreneurial management, will have a significant influence on the development of an entrepreneurial staff. This is most important because policy documents such as the WPTPS (1995) and the WPTPSD (1997) indicate a desire by public servants to innovate, which is seemingly restricted by what is said to be the existence of rigid structures and a bureaucratic

culture that engulf public service institutions. What the South African Public Service clearly requires is the effective promotion of the construct which will result in the establishment of a conducive environment for public servants to make meaningful contributions to the attainment of the public service's goals.

## **2.8 CONCLUSION**

The intent of this chapter was to conceptualise and also contextualise the study and practice of intrapreneurship within the discipline of Public Administration. The chapter built upon the literature surveyed in the previous chapter and found evidence within the disciplinary literature of the relevance of intrapreneurship in the public service context. This was a particularly important task, as intrapreneurship was said to be a construct usually associated with the private sector. However, although contemporary events such as the said emergence of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR and the general challenges of effectiveness and efficiency in the public service have made discussions of intrapreneurship and innovation a priority item on government's agenda; the literature surveyed in the chapter revealed that scholars have long viewed intrapreneurship as key to improving public service processes. To provide a holistic account of the narrative around the construct within the Public Administration context, some concerns around the suitability of the construct for the public service context as well as the way in which it was conceptualised by some scholars as a management practice, were also noted and engaged within this chapter. This was particularly important to also establish some key areas of consideration for the study's subsequent analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service.

This chapter further echoed the sentiments of the first chapter that intrapreneurship in the public service context is a rather complex process, which requires coordination and many resources and support. It can perhaps be said that just as the key government stakeholders came together at the Mount Grace conferences to discuss the state of public administration, the growing importance of innovation and intrapreneurship in the public service will arguably require the same prioritisation in dialogue and involvement from all the relevant government stakeholders. Nevertheless, the chapter demonstrated that the investment in such a process and practice was not only worthwhile for improving government effectiveness and efficiency, but also imperative in order to allow public servants to be valuable agents of change. This chapter's description of the construct and its nature in the public service context therefore



provides the theoretical basis upon which the CPSI's role in the promotion of intrapreneurship within the public service can be analysed. Following on this, the next chapter will seek to provide a practical understanding of the various ways in which intrapreneurship can be promoted in the public service, by exploring best practice examples of countries that have achieved some success in this area. This information will serve as support for the analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

## **CHAPTER THREE: INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE FOR PROMOTING INTRAPRENEURSHIP IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous two chapters not only provided a contextual and conceptual background of intrapreneurship in the public service, but also indicated the comprehensive and complex nature of the construct in practice. The OECD (2017a:3) states that in order for governments to achieve innovative public service institutions that are responsive to societal needs, governments need to foster conditions that are conducive for innovation across the public service. In response to this, governments across the world have instituted various actions such as the development of innovation strategies, the allocation of large funds to support innovation, and the establishment of various types of units which drive innovation in their public services (OECD 2012:181). These actions have provided much needed clarity regarding how intrapreneurial activity manifests in practice, as well as how it is coordinated and managed in the public service (Morris and Jones 1999:87). Thus, this chapter intends to provide a variety of examples of how various countries have effectively promoted and institutionalised intrapreneurship within their respective public services. This chapter aligns with one of the study's objectives, which is to explore examples of international best practice related to the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service context.

The chapter will explore some of the normative approaches to intrapreneurship in various public service contexts with a predominant focus on the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA). This focus is informed by Miller's (2005:70) contention that the NPM post-apartheid administrative reforms instituted in South Africa derived inspiration from those implemented in the USA and the UK. Thus, given that the previous chapter indicated the still prevalent influence of the NPM doctrine in South Africa, specifically with regard to reinventing government through innovation, this chapter's in-depth exploration of some of the efforts of the UK and USA is justified. To increase the comprehensiveness of this chapter, some noteworthy examples of the efforts instituted to promote a culture of intrapreneurship in three other countries, namely Denmark, Australia and the United Arab Emirates, were explored. The selection of all the countries surveyed in this chapter was also informed by their higher ranking, compared to South Africa, on the Global Innovation Index

(2018), which measures how well countries have performed in the area of innovation, based on their outputs in that context (Dutta, Lanvin and Wunsch-Vincent 2018: v).

The evidence from this chapter will provide valuable insight for this study's intended analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship within the South African Public Service. The best practice examples can present a holistic outlook on the promotion of the construct within the public service and an awareness of the extent of the scope of the role of institutions such as the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurial activity in the public service.

### **3.2 PROMOTION OF INTRAPRENEURSHIP IN THE UNITED KINGDOM**

The UK is said to be at the forefront of the modern focus upon innovation as a catalyst for change in the global public service arena (Brown and Waterhouse 2013:114). This is not only evident from the country's public service reforms which include a firm focus on innovation, but also in the various research publications and support structures that have been established to support and create a public service that nurtures intrapreneurship across all levels of government in the UK. The first indication of an acknowledgement of innovation as a key transformative tool in the UK Public Service was indicated through the release of the Modernizing Government White Paper in 1999 (Cabinet Office 1999). It is described by Chapman (1999:1) as a "radical programme of public service reform for a generation". According to Robinson and Schroeder (2005:19), one of the main principles of the White Paper is a plan to encourage public servants to be more innovative, driven by a call for government departments to introduce structures to reward intrapreneurial efforts from public servants.

The release of the Modernizing Government White Paper notably coincides with the peak of the NPM era, in which the empowerment of public servants to become more innovative is encouraged, a view supported by Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2012:155). The White Paper however seemingly only introduces the idea of developing an intrapreneurial workforce in the UK, an idea that is expanded upon by the UK's release of the Innovation Nation White Paper by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) in 2008.

### 3.2.1 The Innovation Nation White Paper

In 2007 the creation of the DIUS (later integrated into the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) which is a central government ministry responsible for stimulating innovation in both private and public spheres, is said to have elevated the status of innovation in the UK (Napier 2009:23). One of the department's objectives was to establish an "innovation nation" in which innovation is encouraged across all economic sectors. To achieve this, an Innovation Nation White Paper was published in 2008, which outlines the UK Government's plans to foster innovation across all economic sectors (Napier 2009:22). Chapter 8 of the White Paper provides a specific focus and outline of the UK's plans to foster innovation in the public service environment (DIUS 2008:70-76). The White Paper generally asserts the importance of innovation as key to the UK Public Service's intent to effectively resolve the myriad of social and economic issues that plague many 21st Century governments globally (DIUS 2008:8-9).

To achieve a more innovative public service in the UK, the White Paper lists the creation of an enabling environment for public servants to innovate as paramount. The said enabling environment is characterised by effective leadership, improved resource allocation, the creation of incentive structures and capacity building programmes that promote innovation within government departments (DIUS 2008:70-71). In addition, changes in perceptions towards risk-taking, budgeting processes, and the measuring of performance on an individual and an institutional level are regarded as key considerations required to effectively institutionalise an intrapreneurial culture in the UK Public Service (DIUS 2008:70). The White Paper further outlines some of the planned transformative measures instituted to encourage and support intrapreneurial behaviour in the public service, such as large budget allocations. An example is the £2.5 billion allocated to public service innovation projects in the 2008-2011 financial period (DIUS 2008:72-73).

In addition, the DIUS, in collaboration with the Better Regulation Executive, which is a part of the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, leads continuous dialogue with key stakeholders on the impact of over-regulating the public service environment on the innovation agenda of the UK Government. Moreover, the UK Government will also continue to fund higher education, sector skills councils and national skills academies as partners that can help to develop the intrapreneurial mind-set for people

working in the public service, and in the case of higher education, for those who may enter the employ of the public service upon graduation (DIUS 2008:21). Furthermore, the White Paper also lists a number of support structures and bodies that have been founded with the aim of propelling and supporting the culture of innovation in the UK Public Service. It is important to briefly describe a few of these structures in order to understand some of the roles fulfilled by institutions that are involved in a country's public service innovation system, in order to promote an intrapreneurial culture in a public service context. These organisations include:

### **i) The National Audit Office**

The National Audit Office (NAO) was established with the mandate to investigate government spending. In addition to this function, the NAO conducts research studies that support parliamentary and governmental activities. The findings and recommendations made in the studies are widely used to improve processes in the public service (<https://www.nao.org.uk/about-us/>). With regard to the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service, the studies conducted by the NAO are said to have been a key source of information and advice for the UK Government on the nature of intrapreneurship in the public service, the barriers to intrapreneurial behaviour amongst public servants and how encouraging intrapreneurial behaviour from public servants can ultimately aid government institutions in improving public service processes (NAO 2006:9). An example of a report produced by the NAO is the "Achieving Innovation in Central Government Organisations" Report (2006), which not only describes the nature of innovation in central government, but also highlights some of the key barriers to intrapreneurial behaviour in the public service, while also providing remedial options for the identified challenges.

Some of the findings of the report revealed that the UK's central government still had a top-down innovation process, which confines the freedom to innovate to public managers, thereby limiting innovation by staff at lower levels. There was also an identified lack of an intrapreneurial culture in local government, as well as a call for better communication to staff on the need for them to be innovative and the kinds of innovations that are accepted. A follow up report conducted in 2009 noted an improvement in the emphasis upon the importance of intrapreneurial behaviour by all employees in central government (NAO 2009:45). The reports by the NAO clearly indicate the value of information gathered by such

institutions and the important supportive role they play in government's overall innovation agenda.

## **ii) The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts**

The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) is described as an "innovation foundation" which promotes and supports creative ideas and solutions across the UK's various sectors ([www.nesta.org.uk/about-us](http://www.nesta.org.uk/about-us)). This is achieved through collaborations with various stakeholders in the UK's national and international systems of innovation. NESTA believes that creating a culture of innovation in different organisational contexts will empower individuals to resolve some of the social and economic issues that plague the UK. One of the ways in which NESTA fulfils this role is through the encouragement of the public sector as a whole to make "smarter" use of the skills of their employees by allowing them to innovate (<https://www.nesta.org.uk/areas-work/government-innovation>). An example of one of NESTA's initiatives to promote intrapreneurship in the UK Public Service is the Public Services Innovation Laboratory (PSIL), which has been established by NESTA in collaboration with the DIUS. The PSIL tests new approaches to discovering, promoting, coordinating and assessing innovative projects in the public service (DIUS 2008:74-75).

It also serves as a knowledge centre for the collection and dissemination of international best practice knowledge on public sector innovation. The information exchange function is achieved through collaborative work with global structures such as the OECD and the International Social Innovation Exchange. The knowledge gained is further used to develop an innovation curriculum for the public service, and to support the intrapreneurial efforts of public servants (DIUS 2008:75). In addition, NESTA's mandate is notably similar to that of South Africa's Innovation Hub, which has been established to champion innovation and entrepreneurship in order to advance the socio-economic development of the Gauteng Province (<http://www.theinnovationhub.com/about-us>). Although the Innovation Hub's mandate does not primarily focus upon fostering innovation in the public service, given the supportive role fulfilled by the NESTA in advancing the UK Public Service's innovation agenda, it would be interesting to discover whether the CPSI engages with such institutions in the fulfilment of its mandate and how these partnerships enhance the quality of the service it provides in the public service.



### **iii) White Hall Hub for Innovation**

The Innovation Nation White Paper also notes the establishment of the White Hall Hub for Innovation (WHHI) by the DIUS, whose main purpose is to collect, store and share lessons on innovation in the public service across central government (DIUS 2008:70). It is important to clarify that the term “White Hall” is used as a synonym to describe the administrative centre of the UK (Diamond 2014:126). To achieve its mandate, the WHHI works collaboratively with key stakeholders in the UK’s national system of innovation, such as the Public Services Innovation Laboratory, the Better Regulation Executive and the Risk and Regulation Advisory Council. Furthermore, the WHHI plays a vital role in disseminating information on the noted barriers to innovation by public servants and advises on the appropriate incentives and rewards to encourage intrapreneurship from employees on the front line (DIUS 2008:74; Maddock 2012:2).

In addition, the DIUS has assembled a system of Whitehall innovators which comprise senior staff in the UK Public Service. They promote the UK’s innovation agenda across the public service, inspire a culture of intrapreneurship in public service institutions and serve as an advisory group for public servants who would like to contribute innovative ideas for the improvement of public service processes.

#### **3.2.2 Intrapreneurship in the United Kingdom’s local government**

Improving the capacity of local government agencies to innovate is also a key feature of the UK’s public service innovation agenda. The Innovation Nation White Paper describes local government as a particularly rich source of innovation in the UK and highlights the importance of creating strategies to enable local government structures to innovate as key to its ability to satisfy the needs of those it serves (DIUS 2008:71). Local government structures across the UK have evidently made significant efforts towards promoting an intrapreneurial culture within their structures. This is apparent from a report by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) on innovation by front-line employees, which provides several examples of the efforts made towards achieving the UK’s intrapreneurship goals at the local government level (APSE 2013). The South Lanarkshire Council, for example, is considered to be one of the most innovative local government units in the UK. It encourages public servants to be intrapreneurial through a variety of methods,

such as the inclusion of a requirement for innovation as part of the employee’s performance appraisal, which notably makes intrapreneurship an inherent requirement of their jobs (APSE 2013:24).

The council also provides its employees with a number of capacity building programmes in order to develop the intrapreneurial characteristics discussed in the preceding chapter. In addition, the council runs an Employee Suggestion Scheme which allows employees with innovative ideas on how to improve the efficiency of internal processes to submit their suggestions for consideration and implementation, if deemed viable. The suggestions provided by employees count towards their performance appraisals and they will also be rewarded in relation to the rewards system of the council. The suggestions are judged by a panel which utilises a matrix, depicted in Table 3.1 below, which outlines a variety of key components against which the ideas are assessed. It includes a points system that assesses the overall value of the idea and also determines the type of reward that the innovation receives.

**Table 3.1: SLC scoring matrix**

Section	Scores				
	1	2	3	4	5
Grade banding	Senior management	Principal officer	Team leader and supervisor. OTO & CTO	Administration, trades	Clerical, modern apprentices
Customer impact benefits	Limited employees	All employees	Limited tenants	All tenants	All SLC council-tax payers
Financial savings (approx. )	Up to £1,000	Between £1K and £5K	>£5K	>£10K	<£20K
Costs to implement suggestion	> £10K	>£5K	>£1K	Up to £1,000	No cost
Efficiency/ productivity impact	No impact	Streamline admin process	Admin process and man-hour benefits	Man-hour savings	Overall impact on establishment efficiency
Impact of suggestion	Team or section only	Service	Resource	More than one resource	Council-wide impact

Source: APSE (2013:25)

In addition, the matrix provides higher points to innovative ideas from employees at lower salary levels, in an effort to increase their participation (APSE 2013:24). This matrix would arguably serve as a useful framework for the South African Public Service's development of its own tool in this context, in order to assess innovation by public servants within government departments, in response to calls for the inclusion of innovation as a key performance area in performance appraisals, as mentioned in the preceding chapter (<http://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/innovation-needed-deliver-services>). Furthermore, the practice of allocating higher scores to staff at lower levels, so as to increase their participation resonates with the South African Government's value of inclusivity and diversity in the workplace, as evidenced by the introduction of the Affirmative Action Policy, described in the country's Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998). Perhaps elements of such practices could be incorporated into such a matrix, when considered for the South African context.

In another municipality, London's Enfield Council began promoting innovation within the council's environmental services section following a survey which revealed that residents of the municipality considered the upkeep of their local municipal areas as important. Senior managers at the local municipalities embarked on a process of collecting innovative ideas from their cleaning staff on what could be done to improve the upkeep of the problem areas. Once the ideas from the cleaning staff had been collected, management consolidated them into formal proposals which were presented to political stakeholders for comments, testing and implementation, if deemed viable (APSE 2013:27). In the Monmouthshire County Council, there has been an establishment of an "Intrapreneurship School" which provides training to the county's employees and encourages them to be problem solvers (APSE 2013:29).

The school provides a platform that challenges the county's employees to consider how they can innovatively add value within their work areas. The school enlists knowledgeable practitioners to provide workshops around the various issues that relate to innovation and intrapreneurship in the public service (APSE 2013:29). The council was also said to be producing an "Intrapreneurship Cookbook" which is a compilation of the various innovative ideas collected from the county's staff. The book is meant to be used as a guideline for staff and practitioners outside of the council on how to innovate successfully. The council has

acknowledged that providing public servants with the opportunity to innovate enables employers to maximise the capacity of public servants (APSE 2013:29).

To conclude this section on the efforts of the UK, it is evident that the UK perceives innovation as key to overcoming challenges facing government. There is an unmistakable desire to find innovative solutions across all levels of government and a clear acknowledgement of public servants as an important source of innovation in the public service. The UK's extensive planning and coordination of different institutions, stakeholders and resources notably provides a practical view of the assertion made in the previous chapter's conclusion that the seemingly comprehensive nature of creating a culture of innovation in the public service requires a coordinated approach. The examples provided above therefore afford many valuable lessons to countries in pursuit of a more intrapreneurial public service.

### **3.3 PROMOTION OF INTRAPRENEURSHIP IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

The prioritisation of intrapreneurship as key to administrative reform in the USA has found greater emphasis within the country's public service institutions. This narrative is said to emanate from the USA's 1980s administrative reforms, which were influenced by the reinventing government movement, mentioned in the previous chapter, as well as the President's Management Agenda (PMA), both of which coincided with the emergence of the NPM doctrine (Fernandez and Pitts 2011:202). The PMA was introduced in the USA as one of former President George W. Bush's three management reform initiatives. It outlines a number of priorities for all levels of government, one of which is the strategic management of human resources (Breul 2007:22). At the core of this focal area is a highlighted need for the public service to employ and develop "imaginative people", a call which can be interpreted as a need for intrapreneurial activity in the USA's Public Service (Bush 2002:11).

Furthermore, the social and economic challenges encountered by the USA, such as obesity, crime, the increase in citizen demands for efficient administrative processes within government institutions and the financial pressures for government to achieve more with constrained budgets, notably a result of the 2008 global economic crisis, necessitate the diffusion of a culture of innovation within the USA's public service institutions (Kohli and Mulgan 2010:1). To achieve this transformation, public servants, especially those serving at the frontlines, are identified as one of the most vital sources of innovative and creative ideas

for the improvement of public service processes in the American Public Service. This has resulted in the encouragement of government practices which reinforce intrapreneurial behaviour amongst American public servants (Kohli and Mulgan 2010:9). Given the established importance of intrapreneurship within the USA's Public Service, the country's modern government instituted some initiatives which indicate the commitment to diffusing a culture of intrapreneurship within the American Public Service. These initiatives include award programmes, the development of government strategies for innovation and the development of a White House Office of American Innovation (Bason 2010:5). The next section will explore a few of the stated initiatives.

### **3.3.1 Rewarding innovation**

Fernandez and Pitts (2011:205) consider the practice of rewarding innovative behaviour by public servants in the USA's Public Service as vital for reinforcing the culture of intrapreneurship within public service institutions, a view shared by Kohli and Mulgan (2010:2). Borins (2001:313) singles out the introduction of prominent awards as the driving force behind the increase in the focus upon innovation in the USA's Public Service. He argues that these awards have been a key element in ensuring that the USA effectively promotes the advancement and diffusion of innovation amongst public servants within the public service environment and have also transformed the negative perceptions from politicians of innovation in the USA Public Sector (Borins 2001:313). The awards include:

#### **i) The Ford Foundation Innovations in American Government Award Programme**

This award programme, established in 1985 and administrated by the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, promotes innovation within the American Public Service by providing recognition and publicising innovative initiatives by public servants (Borins 2001:310). The winners of the award are provided with funding for their projects, their achievements receive media coverage and their ideas are further used as best practice examples which can be simulated in different contexts and used as part of the teaching curriculum at Harvard University, as well as other universities across the USA. The awards further play an important role in transforming the public's perception of government institutions as inefficient by providing a more positive portrayal of the public service, and as having the potential to generate innovative and creative ways to meet the needs of citizens

(<https://www.innovations.harvard.edu/Awards-programs/innovations-america/government>).

## ii) Securing Americans' Value and Efficiency Award

The Securing Americans' Value and Efficiency (SAVE) award programme was launched in 2009 by the USA's former President, Barack Obama, based upon his belief that the most innovative and creative activity emanates from frontline staff. The core purpose of the SAVE Award is to encourage a culture of innovation amongst public servants, in order to improve the overall efficiency of government departments. Since the establishment of the awards, many of the submitted ideas have been used as a basis for some of the cost-saving measures outlined in the President's budget (<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/save-award>).

### 3.3.2 The Strategy for American Innovation

The Strategy for American Innovation was released in 2009 and revised in 2015 by the White House under the Obama Administration. As the country's first strategy focusing solely upon innovation, the document aimed to provide a summary of the various efforts that have been, and will be, employed by the American Government as a means to reiterate the country's commitment to innovation as key to economic development in the country. Although the strategy's focus is not limited to public sector innovation, a section of the strategy recognises the importance of creating an enabling environment for innovation and creative thinking by all public servants. Furthermore, the section of the strategy provides a number of initiatives through which the government aims to diffuse a culture of intrapreneurship within the American Public Service (The White House 2015:2-3). The initiatives include:

- i) Developing a rewards and incentives structure as a means of encouraging innovative behaviour within public service institutions (The White House 2015:110).
- ii) Creating platforms for innovative exchanges and collaboration on innovative initiatives across all sectors (The White House 2015:110).
- iii) Developing innovation labs that will create and establish the culture and practice of innovation within federal agencies by providing support to those with viable ideas. The USA Department of Health and Human Services Idea Lab has, for

example, created a culture of innovation within the department by providing training, mentorship and funding to employees who have ideas that are deemed promising (The White House 2015: 111-112).

### **3.3.3 White House Office of American Innovation**

The Trump Administration has established the White House Office of American Innovation in an effort to decrease bureaucratic inertia in the American Government and to maintain the American Government's status as one of the world leaders in innovation. The aim of the office is to promote innovation and consolidate innovative ideas emanating from the USA's various economic sectors, as well as from all other relevant stakeholders. This is done in order to identify and pursue opportunities for the growth of the American economy, as well as to resolve the country's most difficult problems and to prepare solutions for anticipated future challenges. The office also studies innovation best practice from the private sector, which is used to inform the President's policy decisions in areas such as the promotion of innovation in the public sector to improve the citizen's overall quality of life. Furthermore, the office is tasked with initiating projects that develop the innovation capabilities of the American Government, as well as coordinating the implementation of the developed projects (The White House 2017).

### **3.3.4 A decentralised mandate for intrapreneurship in the USA**

While the previous section explored the various approaches in place for promoting a culture of innovation at a national level, there are a number of examples that attest to the effective institutionalisation and decentralisation of the national directive for innovation across the various structures of the USA's Public Service. This section will briefly explore a few examples in that regard.

#### **3.3.4.1 The Transportation and Security Administration's idea-factory**

A popular example of an initiative which has effectively promoted intrapreneurial behaviour in what is said to be one of the USA's largest government departments is the Transportation and Security Administration's (TSA) idea factory initiative (Kohli and Mulgan 2010:9). This initiative provides an online platform that facilitates the exchange of ideas between the organisation's 60 000 geographically dispersed employees on how the department can be

improved (Desouza and Smith 2014). It essentially creates a virtual community of intrapreneurs through which the department's employees can contribute innovative ideas on how to improve internal processes, which receive feedback and suggestions on areas of development from the department's network of employees. Moreover, the site has a voting component where the ideas that receive the highest votes are considered for testing and incubation by management (Hawley and Means 2012:247).

In addition, the department has developed and implemented many of the ideas posted on the website such as the "self-select lanes" at airports, which is an initiative to improve the efficiency of the administrative processes at airports (Kohli and Mulgan 2010:9). The initiative created three "self-select" lanes at airports coloured green, blue and black. The green lanes are reserved for those travelling as a family, as well as those that need some assistance from airport staff. The blue lanes are reserved for those who are knowledgeable of airport processes but have many luggage pieces. Finally, the black lane is reserved for experienced travellers with few luggage items (Elias 2009:19). The TSA's implementation of ideas by its employees, especially at a high security environment such as an airport, can be regarded as evidence of the invaluable assets that public servants are within the American Public Service, and of the importance of creating an enabling environment for public servants to seek innovative solutions to problems.

#### **3.3.4.2 The Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement**

The USA's Department of Education established an office dedicated to promoting a culture of innovation within the department (Kohli and Mulgan 2010:13). The office comprises a small team which is knowledgeable about innovation in the education sector and employs a variety of approaches through which the department can maximise the use of the skills of its employees, in order to empower them to be innovative in their work. The office achieves this in a number of ways, such as soliciting creative ideas from teachers of public schools in the USA to assist with the development of education policies that will enhance the quality of education provided within the public school system. The office also produces guides on the practice of innovation in education which contain a variety of innovations implemented within American public schools and the positive impact of those innovations, with the aim of inspiring more of such innovative initiatives across the American public school system (Kohli and Mulgan 2010:13). The department has also established a fund to promote and support



innovative initiatives by employees, known as the i3 Fund. The establishment of the i3 Fund has been vital in the promotion of an intrapreneurial culture within the department, as it provides for the development and implementation of intrapreneurial initiatives by public servants across the Department of Education (Kohli and Mulgan 2010:16).

In summary, the initiatives presented throughout this section indicate the USA's on-going commitment to embedding a culture of innovation within the public service. It is evident that the importance of innovation for the American Public Service is not only acknowledged at a national level of government but is practiced across the various structures of the USA Public Service, which is an arguably noteworthy approach for any country intending to improving its intrapreneurship output in the public service context.

### **3.4 HIGHLIGHTS FROM A GLOBAL MOVEMENT**

This section will explore other noteworthy examples of best practice cases in the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public services of other countries that have instituted measures to foster intrapreneurship in their government institutions. The evidence from the additional countries is presented to broaden the scope of the chapter through the illustration of other efforts instituted globally.

#### **3.4.1 The MindLab in Denmark**

The MindLab in Denmark is amongst the oldest and most celebrated organisations within the global public sector innovation context (OECD 2017:151) and is described by Kohli and Mulgan (2010:13) as a “forward thinking innovation unit”. The MindLab is essentially an innovation agency which has been established through a partnership of three government departments and a municipality, namely the Ministry of Economic and Business Affairs, the Ministry of Taxation, the Ministry of Employment and the Odense Municipality. The MindLab works collaboratively with citizens, government departments and the private sector, in order to generate innovative ideas to resolve challenges that affect the public service, as well as creating a platform for the prototyping of solutions ([mind-lab.dk/en/om-MindLab/](http://mind-lab.dk/en/om-MindLab/)). The core objectives of the MindLab are to create a culture of innovation within the public service, coupled with the provision of support for innovators and to improve the competency of the public service in developing creative techniques to resolve existing problems. Furthermore, the MindLab also ensures that the innovation agenda for the public service receives

publicity, so that the high regard of its importance by public service leaders is communicated and highlighted effectively (OECD 2017a:147).

Carstensen and Bason (2012:7) regard the establishment of the MindLab as an indication of the prioritisation of innovation within the broader Danish public policy agenda. This is supported by the willingness to institute the required structural reforms in public service organisations, evident from the MindLab's founding members' description of the MindLab's establishment as "the equivalent of throwing a hand grenade at bureaucracy" (Carstensen and Bason 2012:7). This view extends to the MindLab's perceived importance of promoting intrapreneurship within the Danish Public Service, as public servants, especially those who make direct contact with citizens, are considered the most important source of innovative ideas for the improvement of public service processes.

This is because the MindLab believes that its direct contact with citizens strategically positions it to obtain valuable insight into the actual instead of the perceived needs of the citizens, which is crucial for identifying the issues at the core of public service challenges that need to be resolved (OECD 2017:185). To increase the capacity of public servants to innovate, the MindLab conducts a number of workshops to educate public servants on how they can generate innovative ideas in their areas of work (Carstensen and Bason 2012:8). Furthermore, public servants from any of the founding departments of the MindLab are able to obtain assistance from the MindLab's team of experts on the development of their ideas ([mind-lab.dk/en/samarbejd-med-os/strategisk-raadgivning/](http://mind-lab.dk/en/samarbejd-med-os/strategisk-raadgivning/)).

In 2009, the Ministry of Taxation, one of the founding institutions of the MindLab, established its own internal innovation unit to better institutionalise an intrapreneurial culture within the department. The unit consists of a small team of diverse individuals with varying academic backgrounds, all tasked with increasing the department's capacity for innovation by encouraging all those who work in it to innovate. The unit works collaboratively with the MindLab, with some of the unit's leaders being a part of the MindLab's Secretariat (Carstensen and Bason 2012:16). Carstensen and Bason (2012:6) ultimately regard the establishment of labs such as the MindLab as a vital component to a government's pursuit of a more innovative workforce within the public service as they:

- i) Promote an intrapreneurial culture within public service institutions.

- ii) Create a platform for the involvement of key stakeholders such as the citizens and private sector members whose opinions can help direct innovative efforts.
- iii) Generate models on best practice that can be replicated across the public service.
- iv) Assist in the acceptance and institutionalisation of innovative solutions by public servants for the public service institutions in which they work.

To conclude this section on the MindLab, it can be said that the structure and composition of Denmark's MindLab presents some noteworthy considerations about how innovation units can entrench and drive a culture of innovation in the public service. For one, the fact that the MindLab is a product of a collaboration between government structures at different spheres of government perhaps indicates the importance of a collaborative approach to promoting innovation in the public service that will ensure the inclusion and engagement of the different spheres of government in the country's innovation mandate. Such an inclusive approach may perhaps help to increase support for innovation across government. Therefore, the results of this study can perhaps explain how the CPSI collaborates with other public service institutions, across the various levels of government, in order to promote intrapreneurship in the public service.

An additional point of interest observed from the MindLab's experience is the Ministry of Taxation's establishment of its own internal innovation unit, so that it can institutionalise the culture of innovation better. This evidently shows that in as much as innovation units such as the CPSI are available to promote a culture of innovation in the public service, public service institutions will also need to play their part by establishing practices that will institutionalise the culture of innovation in their organisations. Perhaps this study can shed light upon some of the efforts, if any, that government institutions have made in this instance, and the nature of support provided by the CPSI in those instances.

### **3.4.2 Australia**

The Australian Public Service Commission's (APSC) State of the Service Reports have continuously asserted the eagerness of public servants in the Australian Public Service to contribute innovatively to the problem-solving capacity of the organisations in which they serve (APSC 2010:vi). This enthusiasm by public servants to innovate notably correlates with the Australian Government's perception of public servants, especially those who work

in the frontlines, as key sources of innovation due to their extensive knowledge and first-hand experience of the public service and its processes (APSC 2010:vii). To ensure that the innovation capacity of public servants in the Australian Public Service is optimally utilised, the Australian Government has developed a variety of measures to create a conducive environment for innovation to take place within the Australian Public Service. Bason (2010:5) notes the development of the Australian Public Service Innovation Action Plan by the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) as one of the most prominent highlights of Australia's pursuit of a more innovative public service.

The Action Plan provides a blueprint for the development of a culture of innovation within the Australian Public Service, in order to ensure that the Australian Government is responsive to the needs of the citizens (DIISR 2011:4-5). To achieve this, the Action Plan focuses upon the development of the Australian Public Service's innovative capacity in four key areas:

- i) The creation of a “consciousness” for innovation within the Australian Public Service:** This segment of the Action Plan focuses upon creating a shared conception of innovation and its necessity within the Australian Public Service. This is achieved through the establishment of innovation networks which consist of public servants, academics and practitioners who share a common interest for innovation in the public service and can use the network to share and develop each other's ideas. The network is managed and coordinated by the Department of Innovation, Industry and Science. A public sector innovation blog has also been created as a platform to share examples of innovations by public servants and new knowledge on the construct. Furthermore, public sector innovation events such as the Australia Day Awards, which recognise innovative public servants, and innovation themed conferences are used to disseminate a common understanding of innovation in the public service. Moreover, government departments are also encouraged to include innovation as part of their strategic plans, in order to institutionalise a culture that supports innovation by public servants (DIISR 2011:12-13).
  
- ii) Developing an innovation capacity:** This part of the Action Plan seeks to develop the capacity of the Australian Public Service to innovate through a variety of measures such as the Innovation Toolkit, which contains a package of information on

innovation in the public service that can be used by government departments to establish an internal culture of innovation. Public servants in the Australian Public Service are also provided with an opportunity to go on secondments within the public service, in order to expose them to different environments that can spur new ideas and learning from the experiences of public servants who are innovators within other government departments. The Australian Public Sector Innovation Indicators Project also provides government departments with indicators for them to use for the effective measurement of innovation within their institutions (DIISR 2011:13-14).

**iii) Co-creation:** This section of the Action Plan highlights the importance of government departments collaborating with other stakeholders in the innovation process, in order to assist with the design and experimentation of innovative ideas and projects by public servants. To achieve this, an Australian Public Service Design Centre has been established to provide support with the development and testing of new ideas, assisting government departments in collaborating with relevant stakeholders, as well as collecting, consolidating and sharing knowledge on innovation best practice. The Department of Finance and Deregulation also collects suggestions from public servants across the Australian Public Service on how the productivity and efficiency of the Australian Government can be improved, information which is subsequently disseminated throughout the public service to be used as a form of reference (DIISR 2011:14-15).

**iv) Building the courage for all public servants to innovate:** Despite an acknowledged existence of barriers to innovation within the Australian Public Service, as well as the acknowledgement of risk as a component of an intrapreneurial initiative, public servants are encouraged to innovate without fear. To achieve this, leaders of government institutions within the Australian Public Service are called to implement the innovation agenda of the Australian Public Service as outlined in the Australian Public Service Action Plan and other policy documents such as Australia's Global Innovation Strategy. Award ceremonies such as the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Sector Management and the Australia Day Awards are also used to encourage public servants to innovate by providing recognition for those who have shown the courage to innovate (DIISR 2011:16-17).

The information provided in this section clearly echoes Green et al.'s (2014:4) sentiments that the Australian Public Service's Action Plan ultimately reiterates the Australian Government's view of innovation as a catalyst for the country's overall economic and social development goals, and indicates its continued commitment to establishing a culture of innovation in the Australian Public Service. The development of this action plan also provides evidence of the importance of developing a strategy or plan for innovation, as a sort of blueprint for the country's innovation mandate, in order to also improve the contextualisation of innovation and intrapreneurship in the public service and as an explicit statement of the practice of innovation being a government priority. The development of some form of innovation strategy has notably been a common practice in the examples of the UK and USA as well, and so, perhaps the next chapter on the CPSI can clarify whether South Africa has developed a formal strategy for public service innovation, so as to support the calls for increased innovation in the South African Public Service.

### **3.4.3 The United Arab Emirates**

Since the establishment of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 1971, the country has been in pursuit of a more innovative public service. This is supported by assertions by the country's leaders of innovation as a driver for transformation and development across the UAE's economic sectors (Roberts 2015). This point is further highlighted in the UAE's Vision 2021 Plan, which was developed by the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs (MCA) in which innovation is regarded as one of the cornerstones of the UAE (MCA 2010:16). Furthermore, the UAE Government has developed a National Innovation Strategy in order to create a culture for innovation within government institutions and across the private sector, in order to ensure that the country is counted amongst the most innovative nations in the world (MCA 2015:6). To create an enabling environment for innovation within public service institutions, the UAE aims to develop a legislative and regulatory framework for innovation in the public service, develop the required technological infrastructure to support innovations and create a funding model for innovations emanating from public service institutions.

Furthermore, public service institutions are encouraged to develop incentive structures to reward and reinforce innovative behaviour by public servants. The UAE holds the belief that the competency to innovate should be taught at tertiary level to ensure that graduates

entering the public service have a developed capacity to innovate (MCA 2015:8). Developing an intrapreneurial mind-set at graduate level is arguably a unique approach to embedding a culture of intrapreneurship in the public service context. It would therefore be beneficial for this study to establish whether the CPSI engages with academic institutions and the extent of the engagement, if it exists. Moreover, according to Roberts (2015), the year 2015 in the UAE was declared “the year of innovation” during which all government departments were instructed to develop or revise their internal policies, so as to adequately reflect a culture of innovation amongst their staff. During that period, every government department was required to introduce a new position for a Chief Executive Officer of Innovation to champion innovation by public servants within each government department.

All Chief Executive Officers of Innovation received training in innovation from Cambridge University. This was expected to increase the UAE’s ability to achieve its Vision 2021 plan, as well as the innovation goals set in its Innovation Strategy (Nagraj 2015). Furthermore, the UAE has made a commitment to utilize 1% of the federal budget to fund the country’s innovation agenda for the public service, in order to ensure the continued dissemination of a culture of innovation in the public service environment (Roberts 2015). Moreover, the UAE has established the Mohammed Bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation (MBRCGI), which promotes innovation throughout the public sector. The main objective of the centre is to ensure that innovation is embedded as one of the cornerstones of the UAE Government, with public servants being regarded as the most critical sources of innovation (MCA 2015:10).

The MBRCGI promotes innovation amongst public servants through various means, such as the provision of seminars to develop public servants’ understanding of their role and how they can make innovative contributions in their work ([https://www.mbrcgi.gov.ae/innovation\\_seminars.aspx](https://www.mbrcgi.gov.ae/innovation_seminars.aspx)). The centre has also developed a government innovation framework which serves as a guide for public servants and public service institutions on topics related to public sector innovation, in order to achieve the UAE’s Vision 2021 (MBRCGI 2015:2). In addition, public servants are afforded the opportunity to grow their innovation skills through the provision of a course in public sector innovation, where they can earn a diploma in the subject ([https://www.mbrcgi.gov.ae/enable\\_diploma\\_v2.aspx](https://www.mbrcgi.gov.ae/enable_diploma_v2.aspx)).

The UAE can certainly be applauded for its diverse efforts to entrench a culture of innovation in the country's public service. Their efforts highlight a number of key practices that are seemingly important for fostering innovation within the public service, based upon the literature surveyed thus far. These practices include: ensuring that innovation is well budgeted for, the provision of capacity building opportunities in the area of innovation for public servants, the development of an innovation strategy as a blueprint and guide for a country's innovation efforts and ensuring that the institutionalisation of innovation is accounted for in the annual plans of government departments, thereby ensuring management's commitment to institutionalise the culture of innovation in the public service. This study's findings will presumably indicate the CPSI's efforts in some, if not all, of the above-mentioned areas that conceivably form an integral part of efforts to promote intrapreneurship and innovation in the public service.

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter outlined some of the various initiatives and efforts employed to promote a culture of intrapreneurship amongst public servants within some of the countries in the global public service domain. The country specific case studies presented in this chapter not only highlighted the diverse approaches to promoting intrapreneurship within the global public service domain, but also demonstrated the collaborative nature of the process. It is important to reiterate that the presentation of the best practice data was done with the view that the examples could present a holistic outlook on the promotion of the construct within the public service and provide an awareness of the extent of the scope of the role of institutions such as the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurial activity in the public service. The intent of the chapter was therefore not to benchmark South Africa against these countries, as the size of the economies of these countries differs significantly to that of South Africa.

However, the information presented in this chapter points to a clear opportunity for the South African Public Service to use intrapreneurship as a tool to modernise public service processes - thus ensuring the efficiency of the public service in resolving the intricate challenges that are experienced by the South African Government. Furthermore, this chapter provided insight into the various ways in which countries can promote and support intrapreneurship in the public service and will therefore provide significant support for this study's intended analysis of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the South



African Public Service. The chapter also forms a robust basis for the following chapter's overview of the CPSI, which will provide clarity on the mandate of the CPSI and its outputs in relation to that mandate. The next chapter will therefore explore the background of the CPSI's establishment, its guiding principles, its constitutional and legislative mandates, its organisational structure and the CPSI's various products and platforms used to promote intrapreneurship in the South African public service.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: AN OVERVIEW OF THE CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE INNOVATION**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter presented a variety of best practice examples from various countries whose efforts in institutionalising intrapreneurship in the public service were worth mentioning. As revealed in the previous chapter, this was important to provide a more practical clarification of what it means and entails to promote intrapreneurship in the public service and to broaden the study's perspective of the various approaches that can be employed to successfully promote intrapreneurship in the public service context. It is at this point important to redirect the focus back to the CPSI as the public service institution at the centre of this study, in order to establish a clear understanding of what it has been commissioned to achieve in the public service and how it achieves its mandate. This will allow for the formulation of a coherent preliminary understanding of the scope of the CPSI's role in the promotion of intrapreneurship in South Africa's Public Service and the nature of the documented role it plays in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service.

This chapter will then serve as a contextual background for the following chapter, which presents findings from the data collected. To this end, this chapter's purpose is to provide an overview of the CPSI, through which the institution's mandate, the nature of its operations and the variety of its programmes and platforms, are explored. The information presented in this chapter will be crucial for this study's analysis of the role of the CPSI in the promotion of intrapreneurship within the South African Public Service.

### **4.2 BACKGROUND OF THE CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE INNOVATION**

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the CPSI was established and officially introduced by the Minister for Public Service and Administration in the year 2001, following a Cabinet meeting that alluded to the need for an innovative approach to problem solving in the South African Public Service. They recognised that the process of innovation warranted a specific focus and thus sanctioned the formation of the CPSI as a means to cultivate innovative responses to the service delivery related challenges experienced within the country's public

service and to “remove that distraction from the line departments” (Van Den Heever 2015:17). The CPSI was initially established as a Section 21 Company in accordance with the *Companies Act, 1973* (Act 61 of 1973) (Van Den Heever 2015:17). For the purpose of clarity, a Section 21 Company is described by the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission ([sa]) as a registered company that renders services with the aim of promoting a cultural or social activity for the benefit of a community. Furthermore, Section 21 Companies are not profit driven and any profit accumulated is usually diverted back into the company, in order for it to achieve its goals.

In 2008 however, the CPSI was officially integrated into the South African Public Service when it was re-established as the first national government component listed under Schedule 3, Part A of the *Public Service Amendment Act, 2007* (Act 30 of 2007) (hereafter referred to as the PSA Act). It is important to clarify that a component of government is essentially a government department, however it is much smaller in size than an actual department (Radebe 2010:5). Section 7A of the PSA Act further describes the operational requirements of a government component (CPSI 2016:12). Furthermore, as of 1 April 2015, the CPSI began the 2015-2016 financial year as an autonomously accountable government component. This followed approval by the National Treasury in accordance with Section 43 of the *Public Finance Management Act, 1999* (Act 1 of 1999) (hereafter referred to as the PFMA) and Section 6.3.1 (b) of the Treasury Regulations to establish the CPSI as an independent entity apart from the DPSA. This move effectively conferred upon the CPSI the authority to determine its own internal policies and processes that would ensure the achievement of its mandate (CPSI 2016:12).

#### **4.2.1 Operational mandate**

As alluded to in the previous sections, the CPSI’s directive is to establish innovative methods, systems and processes that will assist in resolving the country’s service delivery challenges and effectively provide for the specific needs of the citizens in a manner that is sustainable. The CPSI further coordinates the uncovering, advancement and implementation of innovative ideas which are generated across the public service. Moreover, the CPSI serves as an advisory body for the Minister for Public Service and Administration on innovative service delivery practices related to the strategic objectives of government. In addition, it supports the country’s administrative reform agenda through the

formation of partnerships that will allow for the effective piloting, testing and subsequent institutionalisation of innovative ideas from public servants. In addition the CPSI provides assistance to the governing structures of the South African Public Service in creating a culture that supports innovation within their institutions (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/about-us/>).

#### **4.2.2 Constitutional and legislative mandates**

According to the CPSI's 2015-2019 Strategic Plan (2015b:11), its constitutional mandate is entrenched within Chapter 3 (Section 41 [1(h)]) of the Constitution. This section of the Constitution calls for cooperation amongst the three spheres of government and the organs of the state. Since the mandate of the CPSI spans the South African Public Service, the CPSI and all other government structures across the public service will need to work collaboratively in order to ensure that innovative service delivery solutions are implemented and replicated effectively (CPSI 2015b:11). According to Section 41(h) of the Constitution, the aforementioned stakeholders must show "good-faith" and "mutual trust" through the following actions:

- i) Ensuring that their interactions are amicable;
- ii) Providing support for each other's activities when required;
- iii) Creating open lines of communication on issues of common interest;
- iv) Establishing a synergy between their activities and the legislation applicable to each structure;
- v) Ensuring compliance with set procedures; and
- vi) Ensuring that instituting legal action against each other is averted.

Furthermore, the establishment of the CPSI as the first government component is accounted for in Schedule 3 (Part A) of the PSA Act. Section 7A of the PSA Act further outlines the conditions under which a component of government can be established, as well as the powers and duties conferred upon the head of a government component. Additionally, Section 3 of the PSA Act outlines the role of the Minister for Public Service and Administration, which is to establish the required standard for innovation as a catalyst for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the public service. This section of the Act therefore provides the basis for the CPSI's accountability to the Minister for Public Service

and Administration. Moreover, the CPSI's administrative and internal processes are extensively covered in the Government Gazette Vol 555 no 34562 (CPSI 2017b:14).

#### 4.2.3 Guiding principles and values

The work of the CPSI is driven by a set of principles and values that align with its mandate in the public service. This section therefore provides a consolidated list of the CPSI's guiding principles and values, as described on its website (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/about-us/>) and in the CPSI's 2016/17 Annual Report (CPSI 2017a:19). They are as follows:

- i) **Compassion, empathy and demand-driven:** The CPSI's focus upon generating solutions for service delivery challenges is directed by the needs and demands of the citizens. The CPSI's purpose to find innovative solutions to challenges experienced in society is driven by their value of compassion and empathy, and understanding that service delivery failures have a negative impact upon the lives of the citizens who depend on the provision of those services.
- ii) **Multi-stakeholder engagement and partnerships:** The CPSI is not a direct service provider, but coordinates partnerships throughout government and the various economic sectors, in order to promote a collaborative and comprehensive approach to achieving the South African Public Service's innovation agenda. The CPSI therefore considers its partnerships with its various cross-sectoral partners such as NGO's, private sector entities, public sector entities and the National System of Innovation (NSI) as key to achieving its mandate.
- iii) **Nurturing and replicating innovation:** The CPSI's goal is to provide support and encouragement to organisations in the broader public sector throughout the various stages of the general innovation cycle (described in Chapter One of this study). The CPSI also assists public service institutions in improving internal service delivery processes through the use of technological advancements within their administrative processes. Furthermore, the CPSI also promotes the replication of best practice innovation approaches across the public service.
- iv) **Embracing diversity:** The CPSI acknowledges that the public service environments in which innovations take place will vary. Thus in order to discover effective solutions to service delivery challenges faced by the public service, teams consisting of the

various stakeholders party to the country's NSI will need to be assembled, in order to effectively examine the challenges.

- v) **Recognition:** The CPSI wants to ensure that the contributions of innovators and the impact they are making in the public service receive adequate recognition and acknowledgement through the CPSI's Annual Awards Programme.
- vi) **Efficiency and effectiveness:** The CPSI is also driven by the need to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of government.
- vii) **Knowledge sharing:** The CPSI values continuous learning and believes that it is important for the organisation and its partners to continuously seek to learn more about new developments and practices in innovation which will aid the development and piloting of solutions that adequately address the root causes of identified issues.

#### 4.2.4 Vision

The CPSI's vision is to essentially enhance the ability of the South African Public Sector to provide sustainable solutions that will ultimately improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government through innovation (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/about-us/>).

#### 4.2.5 Mission

The CPSI's mission is to facilitate the process of uncovering, developing and implementing innovative solutions, in order to ultimately enhance the ability of the South African Public Service to operate effectively and efficiently (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/about-us/>).

### 4.3 HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

According to the CPSI's Annual Performance Plan 2017-2018, the CPSI, at the time of compiling this study, had thirty-three staff members in total, working in its single office base. As only 24 of the posts are accounted for in the CPSI's budget, the CPSI received additional financial support for the 9 other staff members who are employed on a contract basis, as the CPSI lacks the funds to employ them on a permanent basis (CPSI 2017b:15-16). Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, although the CPSI became an independently accountable entity on 1 April 2015, the organisation's budget allocation is consolidated within the DPSA's allocated budget by the National Treasury (CPSI 2017b:15; National Treasury 2017b:196). The DPSA makes transfer payments to the CPSI, as determined by

the National Treasury, and does not have the authority to make alterations to the CPSI's allocated budget.

Therefore, the DPSA merely serves as a channel through which the CPSI's funds are provided by the National Treasury (CPSI 2016:40; CPSI 2017b:15). The CPSI has indicated that the majority of its allocated budget is used to fulfil the sub-programmes that fall under its Public Sector Innovation Programme. The primary use of its funds for that specific programme is to ensure that the organisation is compliant with all the relevant public service statutes pertaining to the fulfilment of its mandate, such as the PSA Act, the PFMA and the Public Service Regulations (CPSI 2017b:15). The CPSI has also indicated that due to the large scope of the Public Sector Innovation Programme, its overall allocated budget from the National Treasury fails to cover all the other costs related to its operations. As a result, the CPSI depends significantly upon donor funding to fulfil its programme deliverables. For instance, in the 2017-2018 Annual Performance Plan (2017b:6), the CPSI reports receipt of donor funding of 6.5 million Canadian Dollars from the Canadian Government, in order to assist with the finances required for the effective replication of service delivery improvement projects across the South African Public Service.

Additionally, the CPSI has also previously received donor funding from the European Union, as well as the UK and Belgian Governments for R2.2 million and R200 000 respectively, so as to assist with the costs related to the testing of ideas, in order to assess their viability as effective solutions for the public service (CPSI 2016:14). Moreover, through the funding received from its donors, the CPSI has also been able to grow its relatively small team by establishing donor funded posts as mentioned earlier (CPSI 2017b:15). The CPSI also depends significantly upon the private sector as another source of funding for its activities (CPSI 2015b:13). Furthermore, the organisation receives financial sponsorships from its various strategic partners and stakeholders, to assist in funding some of its key programmes for promoting innovation in the public service, such as the Annual Awards Programme and workshops (CPSI 2016:91). Since the CPSI does not provide a direct service to citizens, the collection of revenue does not form part of the mandate of the CPSI (CPSI 2016:14).

Therefore, given the evident importance of funding for the CPSI's ability to support innovative initiatives in the public service, the study's findings in the next chapter will also

provide a more practical expansion of how the issue of financing for innovation impacts upon the outputs of the CPSI.

#### **4.4 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

As stated in the CPSI's guiding values and principles, the CPSI acknowledges that the depth of the service delivery challenges experienced by the South African Government require a collaborative solution finding process consisting of all the South African Government's key stakeholders (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/cpsis-annual-innovation-conference-2016/>). To effectively exercise its mandate, the CPSI places an emphasis upon the importance of its strategic partnerships which also play a significant role in advancing the CPSI's efforts to stimulate innovation within the South African Public Service and ensure that the CPSI's efforts achieve the intended impact (CPSI 2017b:15). The DPSA also reiterates the importance of the CPSI's strategic partnerships, not only to expand the quality of the solutions to service delivery problems, but to ensure that South Africa's development goals are achieved with the limited resources available (Ramathodi 2016:2). The CPSI has therefore established a network of strategic partners that have made significant contributions to its achievements in promoting a culture of innovation within the South African Public Service.

The CPSI's strategic partners include stakeholders party to South Africa's National System of Innovation (NSI). It is perhaps important to provide a brief description and discussion of the NSI, in order to establish a clear understanding of what it is and to further contextualise the role of the CPSI within the NSI. The concept of the NSI was initially presented to the country in the first White Paper on Science and Technology (WPST) (1996), which describes the NSI as a system that encourages collaborations between cross-sectoral institutions, in order to develop innovative Science and Technology (S&T) solutions to the challenges faced in the country's different economic sectors (WPST 1996:18). Mokoale (2017) summarises it succinctly, stating that "the idea is to maximise technological performance," in order to address the country's socio-economic struggles. In the context of the public service, the CPSI (2017b:15) states that the role of the parties to the NSI such as the Innovation Hub, the Technological Innovation Agency, the National Advisory Council on Innovation and knowledge institutions such as universities, is crucial in the discovery of pioneering S&T solutions for improved service delivery. In this sense, the role of the CPSI in the NSI is



described as to “bridge the gap between S&T innovations and service delivery” (CPSI 2017a:23).

The benefit of the NSI network for the CPSI is that it can leverage the expertise of its NSI partners in trying to uncover new solutions to service delivery challenges (CPSI 2017a:23). In addition, the CPSI is also able to access the knowledge platforms of the NSI actors when needed (CPSI 2017a:15). While the WPST (1996) made no mention of the CPSI, probably because the CPSI was only established in 2001, the new WPST (2017) describes the DST’s commitment to support the CPSI’s efforts to create a culture of innovation amongst public servants and to support the experimentation side of its work (WPST 2017:35). Although only briefly explored, the NSI clearly provides the CPSI with a network of cross-sectoral partners for the successful achievement of its mandate. Based on the information provided in the previous chapter, it is evident that networks are an important means for the support and development of innovations and it would thus be interesting to uncover in the research findings the nature of the support provided by some of these actors to the CPSI’s role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. In addition, it would also be interesting to uncover whether intrapreneurs in the public service form part of these networks, and if they do, what the nature of that engagement is. The study’s findings presented in the next chapter will provide clarity upon this matter.

A noteworthy concern regarding the above conceptualisation of the NSI however is that it evidently confines innovation to the S&T context, while in Chapter Two it was indicated that innovations by public servants are not just limited to technological innovations. This approach arguably disregards the value of non-technological innovations, which then also brings into question whether the CPSI’s promotion and support of intrapreneurship in the public service may focus more upon S&T innovations in practice. If this is the case, this would exclude public servants who are not technologically inclined from providing service delivery solutions that would be as impactful, even though they are not S&T based. This would notably also be inconsistent with the CPSI’s value of diversity, as stated in this chapter. If the CPSI does in fact support non-technological innovations as well, then the next point of query would be what is the nature of support that it receives for non-technological innovations from its NSI network (whose focus is on S&T innovations). Given the CPSI’s budgetary issues expressed in the previous section of this chapter, these partnerships are evidently a key enabler of the CPSI’s ability to support innovations in the public service. The

research results presented in the next chapter will offer clarity upon the above noted areas of contention.

The CPSI has also formed strong collaborative relationships with various government structures at national, provincial and local government level. These governmental partners are crucial for the successful implementation and replication of innovative initiatives, more so because the CPSI cannot impose the implementation of developed solutions within public service structures (CPSI 2017a:15). The CPSI also collaborates with citizens, community-based organisations as well as NGO's in identifying the citizens' specific service delivery needs that need to be met, as well as in developing appropriate solutions that will effectively address the identified problem areas. Moreover, as a member state of international structures such as the United Nations, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the OECD, the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management and the Africa Association for Public Administration Management, the CPSI recognises South Africa's responsibility to contribute to international development goals (CPSI 2016:32).

To this end, the CPSI has provided programmes such as workshops and forums in collaboration with international stakeholders such as SADC and the United Nations Public Administration Network, in line with the United Nations Public Administration and Innovation agenda. The CPSI also serves as the UNPAN's Southern Africa Online Regional Centre, where it is tasked with "identifying, coordinating and uploading content on behalf of the region" (CPSI 2016:32). Furthermore, the CPSI has reported that international think tanks with a primary focus upon health and urban innovation have requested the organisation to share its expertise in aid of their efforts to develop programmes to encourage and enhance innovation within the health and urban innovation environment (CPSI 2017b:16). The CPSI is of the belief that the strategic partnerships formed with its various stakeholders will not only ultimately enable it to effectively and efficiently fulfil its stipulated mandate, but will develop South Africa into one of the global leaders in public sector innovation. In addition, strategic partnerships also keep the country informed on contemporary global public sector innovation practices (CPSI 2017b:15-16).

## 4.5 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

As mentioned, the CPSI is accountable to the Minister for Public Service and Administration and is led by an Executive Director (ED). The CPSI's ED, who also serves as the institution's Accounting Officer, is governed by Section 7A of the PSA Act. In addition, according to Chapter five of the PFMA in which Sections 36-44 outline the responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, the role essentially entails the preparation and implementation of the institutional budget, subject to approval by the Minister of Public Service and Administration. The work of the CPSI is divided into two programmes: The Administration Programme and the Public Sector Innovation Programme. Both programmes consist of a number of sub-programmes which ensure that the overall objectives of the main programme are achieved. The following sub-sections will provide an exploration of the CPSI's two programmes and their sub-programmes.

### 4.5.1 Programme 1: Administration

The Administration Programme focuses upon the provision of institutional leadership for the CPSI and to coordinate the effective management of the institution (CPSI 2017:15). The objectives of this programme are outlined as follows (CPSI 2016:23):

- i) To ensure the effective consolidation and implementation of the CPSI's annual performance plans in accordance with the CPSI's strategic objectives, as outlined in the organisation's strategic plan.
- ii) To establish a regulatory framework to support the corporate resource management and organisational compliance functions, as well as to safeguard the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the CPSI.
- iii) To ensure that the CPSI's financial and supply-chain management practices are effective by establishing oversight of the CPSI's expenditure and its compliance with reporting obligations.

To achieve the objectives of this programme, the following sub-programmes are provided for:

- i) **Strategic management:** This programme provides administrative support to the Executive Director's office under the corporate management function. It compiles

feedback on the CPSI's performance and is responsible for coordinating and supporting the work of the three work streams that fall under the Public Sector Innovation Programme, by providing functions such as financial management, procurement and human resource management (CPSI 2016:23).

**ii) Corporate resource management:** This programme oversees and coordinates the provision of programme related functions such as security, the provision of office and auxiliary services and information communication and technology services (CPSI 2016:23).

**iii) Office of the Chief Financial Officer:** This office makes provision for the effective management of the CPSI's financial and supply chain management processes. Furthermore, it ensures that the CPSI is compliant with all the regulations related to the organisation's financial management, such as those of the PSA Act (CPSI 2016:23).

#### **4.5.2 Programme 2: Public Sector Innovation**

The Public Sector Innovation Programme aims to coordinate the CPSI's directive to improve service delivery through innovation in the South African Public Service. This is achieved through the work of its three work streams, namely the Enabling Environment, Research and Development and Solution Support and Incubation. The strategic objectives for this programme can be summarised as follows (CPSI 2016:28-30):

- i) To work collaboratively with relevant stakeholders in order to uncover the core service delivery related challenges that are experienced within the public service, in order to identify problem specific solutions that can be developed, tested and incubated in the public service.
- ii) To generate and disseminate case studies of innovation examples in the public sector.
- iii) To pilot, demonstrate and facilitate the replication of innovative solutions and methods that improve service delivery in the public service.
- iv) To create and promote innovation as a construct that is integral to the public sector in order to achieve improved service delivery.

The following sections will provide a description of the Public Sector Innovation Programme's three work streams through which the above-mentioned objectives are accomplished. This will provide clarity upon the nature of the work conducted in each of the three work streams, which are the source of a part of this study's research population, as described in Chapter One of this study.

#### **4.5.2.1 Enabling Environment Work Stream**

The purpose of this work stream is to develop and maintain an enabling environment for innovation across the South African Public Sector by providing platforms and products for innovation to take place. One of the aims of this work stream is to embed a culture of innovation amongst public servants, and to empower them to see themselves as more than just administrators of government processes, but rather as innovative risk-takers who are valuable agents of change within the South African Public Service (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/work-streamscomponenets/>). This is to ensure the development of public servants' capacity to innovate and to develop a class of leaders across the public service who have expert knowledge in the area of innovation in the public service (Van Wyk 2015:25). The following sub-sections will present the products and platforms driven by this work stream, as part of the CPSI's effort to promote and support innovation in the South African Public Service.

##### **4.5.2.1.1 Annual Awards Programme**

The Annual CPSI Awards Programme was instituted as a measure to recognise and incentivise public servants who have developed innovative projects that have made a positive impact upon the improvement of service delivery. This platform for recognising the innovative efforts of public servants inherently creates a culture that encourages innovation in the public service, which is one of the objectives of the Awards Programme. The awards are regarded as a demonstration of the public servants' recognition of the important role they play in ensuring that the needs of the citizens they have been employed to serve are achieved (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/awards/>). The awards also serve as a platform for the generation of a wide range of innovation best practices across the South African Public Sector and as motivation for other public servants who are not innovating to strive to contribute to the innovation agenda of the South African Public Service.

Furthermore, the Awards Programme also acts as a passage for projects to be entered into international award programmes that are hosted across the African continent, such as the All Africa Public Sector Innovation Awards, as well as the Africa Association for Public Administration Management Awards (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/awards/>). The projects entered into international awards programmes would be derived from either the shortlisted projects from the CPSI's Annual Awards or other projects identified from the public service (CPSI 2017b:68). For public servants to be considered for the CPSI Awards, they must submit an application based on their innovative project to the CPSI, which will be assessed and considered for an award by a panel of representatives from the country's various economic sectors (Van Den Heever 2015:19). According to the 2018 Awards Brochure, the awards will be presented in the following categories (CPSI 2018:1).

- i) Innovative Solutions Saving Government Money
- ii) Innovative use of ICTs for Effective Service Delivery
- iii) Innovative Service Delivery Institutions
- iv) Innovative Enhancements of Internal Systems of Government

A few noteworthy examples of some of the innovative projects recognised at the CPSI's previous Awards ceremonies include an "ATM-like machine" project submitted by one of the awards finalists, through which chronic medication is dispensed. This machine is targeted at patients living in rural areas with limited access to doctors and clinics and has been replicated across the country (Chauke 2016:51). Another example is one of a public primary school teacher's innovative project which promotes the use of Skype as a platform for educators in different geographical areas to collaborate on lessons, thus enhancing the learning experience of learners in low income areas (CPSI 2015:60). Another project worth mentioning is the "Saving blood, saving lives" Project. The idea is a simple accountability form that doctors need to fill out when requesting blood, intended to improve the efficient use of blood. In its first two years of implementation, the project is said to have saved the hospital R15.3 million and the idea is being replicated in other hospitals (Wise 2017:36-37).

#### **4.5.2.1.2 Workshops and forums**

The CPSI conducts a number of workshops and forums on innovation in the public service, some of which are conducted in collaboration with the CPSI's local and international

partners. The main purpose of the workshops and forums is to increase the public servants' familiarity with public sector innovations (CPSI 2016:31). One of the workshops provided by the CPSI for public servants is the "Leading Innovation in the Public Service" workshop which is in essence a condensed version of the Innovation Management Course provided by the National School of Government and was developed in collaboration with the CPSI (CPSI 2017b:66). The purpose of the National School of Government's Innovation Management Course is to essentially provide managers with the skills to not only be innovative and creative problem solvers, but to enable them to also promote a culture of innovation amongst the public servants in the units that they lead (National School of Government 2016:104).

In addition, through its regional workshops such as the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN), as well as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) workshops, the CPSI creates a platform for African states to collaboratively develop an innovation agenda designed specifically for the African context. The regional workshops also provide a platform for African states to share innovation related knowledge and experiences, in order to propel the development of the continent through innovation (CPSI 2017b:7). Furthermore, the CPSI hosts regional forums in partnership with bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The forums provide another platform for African states to share innovation experiences and best practice and to assist each other in innovation planning and ensuring that innovation becomes an essential component of their independent public service agendas. The hosting of workshops and forums by the CPSI has played a vital role in expanding the CPSI's innovation repository on practices and experiences taking place regionally (CPSI 2016:32).

#### **4.5.2.1.3 Annual Conference**

The Annual CPSI Conference is presented under varying themes each year, which determine the focus of the discussions by the attendants of the conference. It provides a platform for the CPSI's key stakeholders, such as public sector policy makers, the CPSI's partners in academia, the private sector (locally as well as internationally) and NGO's to engage on topics related to innovation in the public sector so as to improve the public service's ability to meet its service delivery deliverables (CPSI 2016:30). Moreover, the conference asserts the importance of innovation as central to the South African

Government's ability to effectively respond to the service delivery demands of its citizens, as well as to achieve the established priorities of the government of the day (CPSI 2015a:20). An example of the conference themes includes the 2017 conference's focus upon "Positioning Public Sector Innovation for the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution" (Sekwati 2018:5), while the theme for the 2018 conference was on "Partnering for an Agile and Renewed Public Sector through Innovation" (<http://cpsiregistrations.co.za/>).

#### **4.5.2.1.4 Public Sector Innovation Journal**

Another of the CPSI's outputs driven by the Enabling Environment Work Stream is the publication of the CPSI's journal, entitled "Ideas that work: The South African Public Sector Innovation Journal" (CPSI 2015a:21). It is regarded as a tool which provides support to the CPSI's mandate by facilitating the sharing of innovation related knowledge and case studies across the public sector. As an output of the Enabling Environment Work Stream, it is the work stream's responsibility to obtain the content for the journal and then publish the journal (CPSI 2017b:67).

All the above-mentioned products and platforms play a significant role in establishing a conducive environment for innovation in the public service, which based upon the literature surveyed in the previous chapters, is a key aspect of the innovation process. It would therefore in this instance be interesting to discover how these products and platforms have enhanced the experience of the intrapreneurs surveyed in this study - if they have accessed them. The next chapter's presentation of the research results will elucidate this matter.

#### **4.5.2.2 Research and Development Work Stream**

The purpose of this work stream is to uncover and suggest sustainable methods and processes which present innovative service delivery solutions for the public service. Central to the work of this work stream is the need to investigate and determine the root causes behind service delivery challenges, in order to provide problem specific solutions, instead of generic solutions that may not address the problem in its entirety (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/workstreamscomponenets/>). To expand upon this point, the head of the CPSI's Research and Development component explains that for example, if an identified problem is that of long queues at certain service delivery points, the first course of action is not to develop a "queue management system", but rather to begin with an investigation into



the reasons for the queue (Van Wyk 2015:21). In order to find the appropriate solutions for the challenges identified, this work stream engages its network of stakeholders and strategic partners such as government departments, research institutions, private sector organisations and civil society. These stakeholders aid the CPSI in determining what the exact service delivery challenges that need to be addressed are, as well as the possible failures of the public policy process that have contributed to the identified challenges (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/work-streamscomponenets/>).

This work stream also compiles examples of public service innovation case studies, models, discussion documents and best practice that provide guidance for innovation efforts within public service institutions. Some of the best practice cases uncovered are subsequently replicated by government departments through a process which is facilitated by the CPSI. In the event that an idea derived from international best practice presents high costs, the work stream will enlist the assistance of local experts to develop a more cost-effective solution that is appropriate for the South African context. In addition, should the study of international best practice not yield a suitable solution to a challenge encountered in the South African context, this work stream, in collaboration with the CPSI's other work streams, will contribute to the researching, developing, testing and piloting of new solutions (Van Wyk 2015:21). In addition, the CPSI has also published a Public Service Innovation Pocket Guide designed for all public servants as well as public service stakeholders to use as a guide for their innovative contributions to improve service delivery (CPSI 2010: 9-10). The Research and Development Work Stream is currently focused on developing its capacity to proactively identify service delivery challenges, in order for solutions to be developed and implemented timeously, instead of the current approach, which is more reactive (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/work-streamscomponenets/>).

As stated in the conclusion of the previous section, it would also in this case be interesting to uncover how the knowledge and support provided by the Research and Development Work Stream has enhanced the intrapreneurial outputs of the intrapreneurs surveyed in this study, which will be clarified by the next chapter's presentation of the research results.

#### **4.5.2.3 Solution Support and Incubation Work Stream**

This work stream makes provision for the testing, piloting and implementation of technological and non-technological innovations for the public service, as well as assessing

the suitability of solutions for the South African context (Van Wyk 2015:22). The work of this work stream is conducted in collaboration with the CPSI's stakeholders and strategic partners, in order to leverage their knowledge and resources to ensure that the viability of the proposed service delivery improvement solutions is accurately assessed. Furthermore, this work stream ensures that public service institutions within which the innovative solutions must be replicated and implemented agree to infuse the proposed solution within their departments (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/work-streamscomponenets/>). The work stream also ensures that solutions replicated from other contexts are suitable for the South African context by arranging for the testing of proposed solutions in the actual environment for which they are meant. This allows for the solution to be readjusted and customised in accordance with the specific environment in which it is implemented; securing its ability to effectively address the problem experienced. Once a solution has been successfully tested and piloted in one environment, the CPSI facilitates its widespread replication in the relevant institutions (Van Wyk 2015:22-23).

In order to ensure that innovative ideas are fully endorsed by the departments in which they must be implemented, the Solution Support and Incubation Work Stream conducts consultations with the relevant public service institutions. The consultations provide an outline of how the proposed solution will improve internal processes of the institution and how it is going to add value to the department's overall value proposition. Furthermore, the process also includes prompting the said departments to make provision for the implementation and mainstreaming of the solution in their internal budgeting process, as the solution becomes the department's responsibility once implemented. Moreover, because the creation of new innovations also brings into question issues related to intellectual property in some cases, this work stream facilitates consultations with the CPSI's stakeholders party to the NSI, such as the DST, the Technology Innovation Agency and the Department of Trade and Industry, in order to provide advice where it is required (Van Wyk 2015:23).

In addition, the work stream is also tasked with the management of the CPSI's Multi-Media Innovation Centre (MMIC) (CPSI 2017b:65), which is described in the next section.

#### 4.5.2.3.1 The Multi-Media Innovation Centre

The Multi-Media Innovation Centre (MMIC) was launched in the year 2010 by the Minister for Public Service and Administration, and is managed by the CPSI's Solution Support and Incubation work stream. The MMIC's establishment was driven by a vision to create a space that inspires innovation and provides public servants with an opportunity to learn about the construct in a practical manner. It also provides a platform for public servants to explore innovative solutions to challenges experienced within the government departments in which they serve (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/work-streamscomponents/>; Van Den Heever 2015:19). The centre also hosts groups from the public sector, such as public managers and their work teams, to empower managers with knowledge on how to foster a culture of innovation within their teams, while also providing inspiration for the rest of the team to develop innovative solutions to problems observed (<http://www.cpsi.co.za/innovation-centre/>). In addition, public sector organisations also host innovative project and strategic planning sessions in the MMIC, in order to create direct access to the centre's wide range of technologies that can enhance the quality of their project and planning outcomes (CPSI 2014:3).

The establishment of the MMIC is centred around a model that focuses upon two components: A multimedia component and an incubation solution component. The focus of the multimedia component is upon the generation of examples, in the form of case studies of innovation reforms that have been implemented in the South African Public Service. The incubation solution component provides platforms for public sector organisations and their employees to “conceptualise, incubate and develop” creative and innovative approaches to resolving public sector challenges (CPSI 2014:1-2). To create an interactive experience for its visitors, the MMIC incorporates contemporary technologies such as touch screens and floor projections to share learning and knowledge. It also provides technologies which public service institutions can utilise to assess the service delivery challenges which they experience and begin to develop, pilot and eventually implement viable solutions that will address the challenges which they face (CPSI 2014:2). Since its establishment, the centre is said to have attracted many visitors from within and outside the South African Public Sector. Visitors outside the public sector include delegations from the private sector and from the international environment such as the OECD, World Bank, Microsoft USA, SADC, as well as representatives from countries such as Australia, India, Brazil, Kenya and Singapore to name a few (CPSI 2014:2; Puttick, Baeck and Colligan 2014:24).

It is therefore evident that the work of the Solution Support and Incubation work stream plays an important role in demonstrating exactly what is meant by public service innovation. The use of the MMIC also provides a new way of informal learning through resources and technologies that would presumably make innovation more attractive. Given that the testing and piloting of innovations, as well as developing and maintaining such a facility as the MMIC, would arguably prove cost intensive, it would be interesting to discover whether this work stream's offerings have had the desired impact, based upon the research results.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

The intention of this chapter was to form a clear understanding of how the CPSI as a champion for innovation in the South African Public Service operates, in order to establish a uniform understanding of the mandate of the institution central to this study. The chapter revealed that through its strategic positioning as a component of government, the CPSI serves as the key facilitator for “cross-sectoral and inter-sphere collaboration and co-innovation” within the public service space (CPSI 2015a:6). Furthermore, through its wide range of innovative programmes and platforms for promoting innovation in the public service, the CPSI clearly encourages the adoption of innovative practices across the public service, while also validating the importance of innovation for the resolution of the public service's most pressing challenges. The chapter also revealed that contrary to the common narrative in some comparative Public Administration studies, namely that developing countries are reliant upon their developed counterparts for solutions and learning, the CPSI's development of the MMIC refutes that line of thought. The MMIC's attraction of visitors on a global scale, such as delegates from countries like Australia, which has a much higher ranking than South Africa on the Global Innovation Index, as noted in the previous chapter, indicates the potential for impact that the CPSI holds.

The chapter also provided some other noteworthy observations. Firstly, it became evident in the chapter that although the name of the CPSI creates the impression that the CPSI's mandate is limited to the public service, the official documents consulted showed that the CPSI's mandate seemingly extends into the broader public sector domain. A second observation from the CPSI's guiding principles and values, is that the CPSI also to an extent shares the NPM's conceptualisation on innovation as a means for efficiency gains, contrary to the arguments presented against that approach in Chapter Two, namely that such an

approach would limit the scope for innovation. However, the CPSI does evidently recognise that public service issues are not just issues of efficiency, and perhaps that is most evident by the institution's said value of compassion and empathy. Lastly, the size of the CPSI relative to its mandate raises questions about the level of impact the CPSI is truly making in the public service, with only thirty-three staff members, and only fifteen of those driving the innovation mandate (as indicated in Chapter One), coupled with the said financial challenges it has.

Nonetheless, the purpose of this chapter was not to interrogate the programmes of the CPSI, but merely to present what the CPSI offers the public service, according to official documents and other sources consulted. This information will therefore be verified against the research results that will be presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter aimed to establish a clear understanding of what the CPSI has been commissioned to achieve in the public service and how it achieves its mandate, based upon official documents and other relevant supporting literature. This chapter will play a significant role in understanding some of the pertinent issues that arise from the responses obtained from the research population presented in this chapter. It will indicate whether a consistency exists between the execution of the CPSI's mandate, as described in official documents, and how it is executed in practice. Chapters One to Three not only introduced the concept of intrapreneurship, its origins and how some countries promote it in their public services, but most importantly spoke to the growing status of the construct in the contemporary public service. In response to the growing need for innovation in the public service, the South African Government, as explained in Chapter Four, established the CPSI with the intent to entrench a culture of innovation in the public service. Given the growing need for intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service, as established in Chapter One and Chapter Two of this study, this warranted an analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service.

Consequently, the purpose of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, the chapter presents the results from the data collected from the study's research population. As outlined in Chapter One, the results presented are based upon data obtained using qualitative methods in a case study design. The research instruments used to collect this data comprised interviews with senior management of the CPSI and questionnaires distributed to staff members of the CPSI's three work streams through which the CPSI's mandate is achieved, as described in Chapter Four. In addition, questionnaires were also distributed to some of the intrapreneurs in the public service. Consequently, the study utilised a purposeful sampling strategy in order to select participants, materials and platforms to collect data. Secondly, the chapter provides an analysis of the findings, applying the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units can generally support the various stages of the innovation life cycle, described in Chapter One. This will ensure the achievement of the primary objective of this study, which is to provide an analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

## **5.2 PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS AND STUDY FINDINGS**

According to Niewenhuis (2007b:99), the process of data analysis in qualitative research can be achieved through the employment of a variety of strategies through which the researcher intends to establish the meaning that participants give to a specific phenomenon. He adds that the primary purpose of qualitative data analysis is for the researcher to create a summary of the data collected in the form of themes, patterns, trends or relationships that can be helpful to the researcher's interpretation of the data gathered (Ritchie and Spencer 1994:173; Mouton 2001:108). Thus, this study employed a thematic analysis approach for the analysis of the data collected from the study's research population, as the nature of the approach aligns with the qualitative research method of the study (Ibrahim 2012:40). Braun and Clarke (2006:79) describe thematic analysis as "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data". Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017:2) add that thematic analysis allows the researcher to thoroughly engage and analyse the different accounts provided by the study's respondents, in order to explore any emerging themes, differences, similarities and any unexpected revelations.

Namey, Guest, Thairu and Johnson (2008:138) provide a concise summary of the above points stating that "thematic analysis moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses upon describing implicit and explicit ideas...themes are then linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis...". Thus, in line with the chosen thematic analysis approach employed in the study, the following sections of the chapter provide the research findings from the data collected for this study, using the data collection instruments attached as Annexures C, D and E. The findings are presented according to the prevalent themes which emerged from the questions posed to the respondents. The chapter will then draw focus to the OECD's (2017a:14) model on how innovation units can support innovation in the public service, as outlined in Chapter One, against which the research results will be analysed in order to achieve the primary objective of the study, which is to analyse the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship within the South African Public Service.

## **5.3 PRESENTING DATA FROM THE INTRAPRENEURS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

In this section, data collected from public service intrapreneurs identified from the finalists of the CPSI Awards is presented. As stated in Chapter One, their inclusion in the study is informed by their shortlisting for the CPSI Awards, which not only highlights them as

noteworthy intrapreneurs who have developed and implemented intrapreneurial projects within their respective government institutions, but have also had some engagement with the CPSI and can thus provide valuable insight on the role that the CPSI has played in promoting intrapreneurship amongst public servants. The questions asked in the online questionnaire sent to the intrapreneurs (Annexure E) were grouped under three themes: demographic information, organisational creativity and personal journey. To maintain the consistency between the structure of the questionnaire distributed and the presentation of the findings for this segment of the research population, the findings are presented under those same themes.

### **5.3.1 Demographic information of respondents**

Under this theme, the aim of the questions posed was to uncover the demographic outline of the respondents. The responses from questions on the job position, age, gender and level of education of the respondents, showed that most of the respondents were in middle management, with the second highest number of respondents being top managers. The lowest number of respondents was the core staff and there were notably no respondents at the administrative and lower levels. In terms of the age variances, many of the respondents fell within the 26-38 age group, with a few more being between the ages of 39-45. The least number of respondents were aged 46 and over. With regard to gender, most respondents were male compared to a small female demographic. All the respondents also indicated that they had acquired a graduate qualification, with the majority holding a postgraduate university qualification ranging from a post-graduate diploma to a PhD, while only two of the respondents had acquired a diploma and a bachelor's degree respectively.

### **5.3.2 Organisational creativity**

This category of questions aimed to uncover whether the public service environment, at the institutional level, was conducive for intrapreneurship to take place. Thus, the respondents in this case had to provide responses based upon their experiences and understanding of their respective organisation's practices in the context of providing a conducive environment for them to be creative and innovative. The responses collected from the respondents revealed a variety of issues, as indicated in the following paragraphs.



### **i) Existence of an innovation manifesto**

When asked whether their organisations had developed an innovation manifesto, or any kind of formal document that outlined its innovation goals and intrapreneurial expectations from employees, most respondents indicated that there was no innovation manifesto or any formal document in that respect. Fewer respondents affirmed the existence of such a document in their organisations, while only one respondent indicated that their organisation had “*somewhat*” of an innovation manifesto.

### **ii) Encouraging innovation and risk taking**

The respondents were also asked whether their organisations encouraged innovation and creative risk-taking. Most of the respondents were of the view that their organisations did in some way encourage innovation and risk-taking amongst their staff. However, this view did not represent an overwhelming majority of the respondents, as just under half of the respondents indicated that their organisations did not encourage a culture of innovation and risk-taking at all. Most of the respondents also indicated that they were generally able to approach their managers to discuss any new ideas they had, while others stated that this was somewhat true. There was however a small number of respondents who were of the view that approaching their managers to discuss a new idea was not easy. With regard to the incentivising and rewarding of their intrapreneurial efforts, although some respondents mentioned receiving no incentives or rewards for their innovations, the majority had received a reward or incentive for their innovative ideas. However, of those who indicated receiving awards for their innovations, only one had notably received an award from the actual government department for which they worked, all the other awards were from various government linked structures, such as the CPSI. Interestingly, one respondent stated that “*the reward (of innovating) in the public sector is the contribution that the project is making in society at large and the satisfaction thereof*”, revealing that for some, the motivation to be intrapreneurial may be a desire to make a positive impact in society.

A follow up question, which is also pertinent to innovation, was whether the practice of innovation in their organisations was a team effort. In this regard, a large portion of the respondents indicated that their organisations, to a large extent, perceived innovation as something that should be a team effort, while there was a smaller number of respondents that stated that intrapreneurship in their organisation was more of an individual practice. On

the human resource management (HRM) related issues of performance management and training, questions were posed around whether their intrapreneurial contributions were accounted for in their performance appraisals and whether training in innovation or creative thinking was provided. Those who stated that innovation was accounted for in their performance appraisals were mostly top managers, and those who indicated that it was somewhat accounted for were mostly the middle managers and core staff members. However, there were some respondents in top management and middle management who indicated that their contributions were not at all accounted for in their performance appraisal. Moreover, almost all the respondents reported that their organisation did not provide them with any formal training in innovation or creative thinking.

In terms of the barriers to innovation in their organisations, an overwhelming majority of the respondents identified the bureaucratic nature of their institutions as a significant barrier. In this context, when asked whether their organisations supported the avoidance of unnecessary rules and procedures that restrict and delay innovation by employees, most of the respondents indicated that no such support was shown. It is perhaps worth mentioning that of the very few respondents that responded to the contrary, the majority were in top management.

### **iii) Resources for solution development and implementation**

The respondents were asked whether their organisations provided all the necessary resources required for the implementation of their solutions. The responses indicated varied experiences, as some responded in the affirmative, while others were unsure, indicating that resources were “*somewhat*” provided, and another group clearly felt that they were not provided with any necessary resources to aid in their implementation of their innovative projects. A follow up question on whether they had found the information resources which they needed to develop their ideas easily accessible was posed. In response, the majority seemed to agree, but mostly to a certain extent. A few of the respondents stated that they had found accessing the information that they needed to develop their innovations difficult.

### 5.3.3 Personal journey

Questions in this category aimed at establishing a deeper understanding of the personal experiences of the respondents as intrapreneurs in the public service, linked to their interactions with the CPSI.

#### i) Intrapreneurial motivation

When asked what motivated them to become intrapreneurs in the public service, the general response described a desire to improve government efficiency and to make a difference. Some of the responses provided were:

*“I am a nurse and there was a necessity to find a better option for children, taking into account their rights and the Primary Health Care approach”.*

*“I wanted to help solve problems”.*

*“I always want effective and efficient ways of providing services in a working environment with limited resources”.*

Thus, the above responses create the impression that public servants are generally motivated to innovate by the potential for change their projects can bring to the public service and the citizens, rather than any form of self-interest.

#### ii) Knowledge of the CPSI

In response to a question about how they had heard about the CPSI, the respondents indicated that they had heard about the CPSI from various sources such as their line managers, the Office of the Premier, the internet and non-governmental organisations (NGO's). However, one respondent noted that *“very little is known about the CPSI in the public sector at ground level”*. Similarly, another respondent indicated that the CPSI needed to increase its visibility in the public service. Additionally, when asked whether they were aware of any other programmes offered by the CPSI that support public servants in their intrapreneurship endeavours, excluding the Awards Programme, only two of the ten respondents indicated having knowledge of other programmes. These were the *“training programme on innovation”* and the CPSI's Conference.

### **iii) Support received from the CPSI**

A question on what kind of support they had received from the CPSI indicated that while a few had stated receiving no support from the CPSI leading up to the awards, others said that they had received support in the form of financial provision, the Innovation Training Programme, and the CPSI's recognition and exposure of their projects through the Awards Programme. Another respondent indicated that through the CPSI, he was invited to the 2018 Budget Vote Speech where his innovative efforts were acknowledged. Responses to a follow up question on the additional support they would have liked to have received from the CPSI, ranged from a need for the CPSI to create platforms for like-minded intrapreneurs across the public service and beyond to connect and exchange ideas and techniques to use to improve their organisations; and a need for more innovation centred training programmes and workshops, some of which could be provided online. There was also an identified need for specialised innovation training for disciplines such as IT. Other areas of improvement included: increased funding, more platforms for exposure, more knowledge sharing platforms and improved communication from the CPSI, so that they could be effectively assisted remotely.

The respondents were also asked to describe the nature of interaction they have had with the CPSI since participating in the awards programme. The responses ranged from “*very little*”, “*minimal*”, “*none*” and that the only interaction they had had was an email alerting them to the awards. However, some, although a very small number of the respondents, noted a “*good*” level of interaction, with one respondent stating that, “*I liaise with them regularly as we try to roll out the innovation to other parts of the country*”. Another indicated that they had been contacted regarding training programmes and other award programmes into which their innovations could be entered.

### **iv) Challenges encountered as intrapreneurs**

The respondents noted several critical challenges that they had encountered in their journeys as intrapreneurs in the public service. Bureaucracy was identified as one, as many of the respondents reported there being a lot of red tape in gaining access to the information they needed from their organisations to develop their innovative ideas. In addition, too many stakeholders, poor change management, the large workload that comes with implementing an innovation, and a lack of funds for the implementation of innovations were added as

additional issues. Another respondent noted that he could only use internal resources to develop a project as there were no additional resources offered. Yet another stated that *“Lack of support! Also, no one in higher management seems to take these projects seriously, despite the evidence that they work”*. A respondent at top management level noted that “systems” were often developed with minimum consultation with the user departments. The respondent however provided no clarification as to which systems the remark was in reference to. It was also indicated that there was a need to see quick results from the innovations, which was an unrealistic expectation as allowing the development of innovations over time, specifically a few years, was necessary to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of solutions.

Another respondent provided a very detailed response that is worth noting. He stated that *“The major challenges were the fact that many government information technology projects never work and require trial and error, therefore getting buy-in and approvals from the seniors requires a lot of hard work and convincing.”* With regard to the consequences for failure, he added that *“generally the government environment does not support innovation. There is absolutely no incentive for innovation, only punishment for failures. The punishment can be quite harsh (i.e. risk of losing a job, losing your assets and the possibility of going to jail). This always keeps the project manager awake at night.”*

However, despite all the above challenges, when asked if they would continue to develop innovative solutions to challenges in the public service, all the respondents indicated that they would, as the outcome was personally rewarding and essential for the growth of public institutions.

#### **5.4 PRESENTING DATA FROM THE CPSI'S STAFF MEMBERS**

As discussed in Chapter One, data was also collected from the staff at the CPSI. The sample comprised the CPSI's senior management, namely the acting Executive Director (ED) of the CPSI and the senior managers of the CPSI's Enabling Environment (EE), Research and Development (R&D) and Solution Support and Incubation (SSI) work streams described in Chapter Four. Additionally, questionnaires were distributed to the staff members working in those work streams. This section will therefore present a summary of the results obtained from each of the work streams, based upon the prevalent themes that emerged from both the interviews conducted and the data collected from the questionnaires. The results are

presented per work stream, based upon the realisation that while the senior managers provided a more high-level overview of the work of their work streams, their respective team members delved into the specific outputs of the work streams. Therefore, to provide a more holistic and concise illustration of the outputs of each work stream, the data collected per work stream, across all levels, is presented as such. The results from the interview conducted with the acting Executive Director (ED) are presented separately, to highlight the perception of the CPSI's role at the highest level of executive authority at the CPSI.

#### **5.4.1 Results from the Acting Executive Director of the CPSI**

As previously mentioned, an interview was also conducted with the acting ED of the CPSI to obtain an overall perspective of the role which the CPSI plays in promoting intrapreneurship, as well as how that role is executed, according to the highest executive authority at the CPSI. The interview schedule used for data collection is attached as Annexure C.

##### **i) Mandate of the CPSI**

To begin, the question 'Please describe the mandate of the CPSI?' was posed, and in response, the respondent stated that the overall mandate of the CPSI is to change the culture of innovation in the public service towards a more distinct focus upon knowledge sharing and transforming the cultural attributes and behaviours in the public service, which the CPSI seeks to make more solution focused. In addition, although the PSA Act narrowly defines the CPSI's mandate in terms of the public service, the CPSI works in the broader public sector domain. The CPSI's mandate also aligns with the national government's mandate that extends beyond South Africa to the SADC region and Africa as a whole. With regard to its organisational status, the CPSI is a component of government which the respondent described as "*a lean government department*" because in terms of the two major pieces of legislation in the public service, the PSA Act and the PFMA, the definition of a government department includes a component of government.

##### **ii) An overview of the CPSI's work**

Regarding the role/responsibility of the CPSI, the respondent indicated that the mandate of the CPSI comprises three work streams that drive the innovation programme: the Enabling

Environment, Research and Development and the Solution Support and Incubation work streams, also described in Chapter Four. Through the work streams the CPSI produces a range of knowledge products and platforms to connect public servants and the rest of the public sector to its mandate. These include: the CPSI's Innovation Journal, the CPSI's Annual Conference, the CPSI's Annual Awards Programme, the Multi Media Innovation Centre, social media, workshops and their website. These platforms have been instrumental in the CPSI's intent to entrench a culture of innovation in the public service because the CPSI does not have the authority to instruct government departments to adopt the service delivery solutions that public servants produce through the assistance of the CPSI. They must often convince them that it is in their best interest and indicate how the project aligns with the priorities of government. Their knowledge platforms also keep public servants engaged with the current trends and discussions in public sector innovation.

In addition, another part of the CPSI's work is to conduct the initial testing, piloting and scaling up of innovative ideas by intrapreneurs, as well as providing input on how those projects can be replicated. This generally helps ease the culture of risk aversion in the public service, as the chief financial officers in government departments are generally risk averse to innovation, as they will be held accountable for anything that may be considered fruitless and wasteful expenditure. The CPSI also conducts research to establish the root causes of service delivery challenges, so as to unearth problem specific solutions. The CPSI has recently introduced a Trailblazer's category to their awards programme, aimed at recognising young developers in government who are developing in-house systems that are saving governments money. The current focus of the CPSI is trying to prepare to meet the future expectations of the CPSI.

### **iii) How intrapreneurs can access the services of the CPSI**

A follow up question regarding access to the services of the CPSI was posed and the respondent explained there was no formal process for public servants to access the services of the CPSI. They could simply contact the CPSI and an official from the CPSI would engage them on their idea. In cases where public servants come with an undeveloped idea, the CPSI would refer them to the Innovation Hub to help with the development of the idea, because they have the experience, funding and overall capacity to provide that service. In

this instance, the CPSI would then facilitate the testing and piloting of the developed idea in the government department for which it is meant.

However, due to its limited resources, the CPSI can only work on a small number of projects from public servants a year. Therefore, if they come across a good idea but have no resources to support its development, they would have to shelve it until they have the capacity to develop and implement the idea or advise the intrapreneur on other avenues to explore in order to implement their idea. The respondent however stated that the CPSI generally tries to look beyond the innovation and focus more upon the person behind the idea because, *“even if the idea is shoddy, their heart and thinking is in the right place”*. In such an instance, the CPSI would ideally like to help prospective intrapreneurs get to the right idea, however their lack of resources has limited their capacity to do this.

#### **iv) How the impact of the CPSI’s work measured**

When asked how the general impact of the CPSI’s work is measured, the respondent stated that although the CPSI is cognisant of the fact that their work needs to make an impact, they try not to focus too much upon measuring the impact of their work because sometimes the impact is only felt years later. The challenge however is that the CPSI is accountable to its political principals and donors who want to report on impact. Thus, before they start a project, they try to measure the project baseline, which is not a perfect science, because sometimes unintended consequences occur. It is also difficult for them to determine whether their efforts or other factors playing out in the same environment are the reason behind their progress.

#### **v) Challenges encountered**

When asked what some of the obstacles experienced by the CPSI in trying to achieve its mandate are, the respondent mentioned a few. The most predominant ones were firstly, the size of the CPSI relative to its mandate. The CPSI has just over 30 staff members in total, of which only a fraction are doing the actual work innovation wise, for a public service with approximately 1.3 million public servants, and 1.5 million including the entire public sector. The CPSI is also poorly funded which limits the number of projects from public servants that can be accommodated. They are however currently working on a proposal for a more suitable funding model. Furthermore, the CPSI has no authority to instruct government departments to implement projects from public servants, even if it is a much needed idea.



The unstable political environment has also posed a challenge for the CPSI. The CPSI reports its progress to the Minister and the Portfolio Committee on a quarterly basis. They also need to produce an annual report which is tabled in Parliament. This has been difficult for the CPSI because in ten years, the organisation has had eight ministers, and with every new minister and new portfolio committee, they had to re-convince them of their mandate and justify their projects and approach. This takes away focus from the actual work that should be done.

#### **vi) Opportunities for development**

The respondent also indicated a few areas and opportunities for the CPSI's development. Firstly, the respondent was of the view that the CPSI's model, which was initially very progressive, was getting old, and as a result, the CPSI had fallen behind in comparison to other countries in the public service innovation space. Furthermore, greater political buy-in was still needed. In this sense, the respondent suggested that projects from the CPSI could be handed over by their minister, to the minister of the government department for which the solution is meant, who would then instruct administrative leadership in that department to implement the idea. The CPSI would also like to see government departments establishing their own innovation units, which the CPSI could then work closely with.

#### **5.4.2 Results from the Enabling Environment (EE) Work Stream**

Responses from this work stream were collected from the interview conducted with a senior manager from of the Enabling Environment Work Stream, as well as questionnaire responses from three staff members of the team. The instruments of data collection used in this regard are attached as Annexures C and D. The results indicated the following:

##### **i) Contextualising the role of the EE Work Stream within the CPSI's mandate**

The results from the interview conducted with the respondent showed that the overall mandate of the CPSI is to inculcate a culture of innovation in the public service. The questionnaire respondents added that this mandate is carried out through the help of partnerships with government, academia, the private sector and civil society. In this context, the senior manager described the EE work stream's role as to reach out to members of the public service to encourage them to innovatively contribute to resolving the prevalent issues

in the public service. This is done through the various products and platforms offered by the work stream, which are described in the next section.

## **ii) Products and platforms driven by the EE Work Stream to support intrapreneurship**

In both the interview and questionnaires, a question was asked regarding a description of the outputs of the EE work stream. The CPSI's Annual Awards Programme was one of the commonly discussed platforms amongst all respondents from this work stream. The senior manager indicated that the Awards Programme was not only a key form of incentivising, rewarding and recognising innovations, but also served as a platform to share innovations uncovered in the public service. The Awards Programme is also used to attract innovators and unearth ideas from all over the country. One of the questionnaire respondents noted that the awards had increased the CPSI's visibility in the public service, which resulted in an increased participation in the CPSI's other programmes. In addition, the CPSI had also recently introduced a "Trailblazers" category to the awards, in order to recognise young systems developers revolutionising public service processes through technology. Some of the projects from the awards are also entered in international awards programmes, which provides more platforms for recognition. When asked whether the CPSI maintained contact with the participants after the awards, it was stated that they do and that they used those individuals to form a community of practice.

Another output of the EE work stream is the CPSI's Public Sector Innovation Journal. According to all the respondents of this work stream, the journal is an important means for sharing knowledge about innovation. The senior manager added that "*knowledge management and innovation are like twins, once we find it, we need to share it*". In this context, it was also stated that the journal provided the CPSI with a platform to publish case studies of public service innovations that have improved the public service, while also profiling successful intrapreneurs, providing material for learning about innovation in the public service and "*servicing as a compendium or archive for future references*". The provision of workshops to public servants was also mentioned as another output of the work stream. The workshops are conducted on an ad-hoc basis and the CPSI contracts facilitators to conduct them in the various provinces.

The Annual CPSI Conference is another platform driven by the EE work stream. The conference plays a significant role in teaching government more about innovation and the

CPSI's programmes. It also showcases innovations that received an award from the CPSI's Award ceremony and offers a variety of presentations on issues relating to public sector innovation. It is also a platform for discussions, learning and knowledge sharing amongst public servants and the CPSI's stakeholders. In addition, in some instances public managers may also identify solutions presented by intrapreneurs at the conference that they would like to adopt within their organisations, and in such cases, the CPSI would assist with the replication of the project.

### iii) Challenges

All the respondents in the EE work stream noted a few challenges that hindered the progress of their work stream and the CPSI at large. The most popularly mentioned challenge was the size of the CPSI. To explain this, the respondent from senior management stated that *"the CPSI has about 32 staff members including the CEO and cleaners, of which only around 9 or 10 are actual knowledge workers who have to reach the whole public service"*. Another prevalent issue was poor funding from government, which limited the CPSI's outputs and has led to plans from the CPSI to possibly host a round table discussion in Parliament on a more effective innovation funding model. The culture and bureaucratic structure of the public service was another challenge identified. However, in another question on whether they believed the existence of the CPSI had improved the culture of intrapreneurship in the public service, all the questionnaire respondents agreed, but all contended that there were still many public servants who were still relatively unaware of the existence of the CPSI.

Some of the respondents indicated that leadership support, both from a political and administrative level, was also lacking in some instances. One of the responses provided in this regard indicated that the problem was a lack of *"openness to change and assistance. Bureaucracy in government hinders any intervention we may be offering..."*. On the contrary, another respondent indicated that the most important buy-in was from senior managers, which the respondent believes the CPSI has. Additionally, one of the respondents provided a personal view that political will seemed to be improving, although the constantly changing political leadership and DG's in the past years meant that the continuity of innovations was often disrupted by constantly changing priorities with each new leadership. It was also mentioned that government departments were seemingly not incentivising intrapreneurship as much, even though there is a provision for this in the Public Sector Regulations. The

recruitment practices of the public service were also identified as another challenge, as some people employed in the public service, including at managerial level, did not possess an intrapreneurial competency. Thus, in response to a question on what the key enablers of intrapreneurship in the public service are, a respondent listed: supportive leadership, incentives for innovation and adequate funding as key.

#### **iv) Further areas of improvement**

The respondents outlined various areas that the EE work stream and the CPSI in general could still improve so as to provide a better service. The suggestions were:

- the CPSI needs to build the incentivising of innovation into government policies;
- a greater focus is required on getting the youth engaged in the CPSI's mandate, perhaps through the government internship programmes;
- the CPSI should encourage the DPSA to permanently include innovation as one of the key deliverables against which senior managers are evaluated annually;
- the CPSI should work closely with government to “ease” the over-regulated, highly bureaucratic public service environment;
- the CPSI should try to find alternative sources of funding to grow their budget;
- the CPSI should run more campaigns to create awareness about the CPSI and its products;
- the CPSI should provide more workshops.

However, all of the questionnaire respondents stated that the CPSI had inspired and encouraged them to approach their work innovatively, with some indicating that they had even undertaken some innovative initiatives, although a description of the actual initiatives was not provided.

#### **5.4.3 Results from the Research and Development (R&D) Work stream**

Responses from this work stream were collected from the interview conducted with a senior manager of the R&D work stream at the CPSI, as well as questionnaire responses from two staff members in the R&D work stream. The instruments of data collection used in this regard are attached as Annexures C and D. The results are presented below.

### **i) Contextualising the role of the R&D Work Stream within the CPSI's mandate**

As with the responses provided by the previous group of respondents, the respondents in this work stream indicated that the role of the CPSI is to promote a culture of innovation in the public service. This is achieved by assisting public servants in finding innovative solutions to service delivery challenges and encouraging public servants to innovate by rewarding their innovations. In this context, the overall role of the R&D work stream was described as to primarily establish an understanding of what some of the root causes of some of the service delivery issues experienced in the public service are, and to investigate why existing solutions are not working, so as to determine whether they need to update solutions or if innovation is necessary. They also demonstrate to the public service how various issues can be addressed by sharing case studies of successful innovations. To achieve this, they work closely with the parties to the NSI to find solutions; they engage with their knowledge partners for research; they collaborate internationally to become informed about current trends in public sector innovation; and they engage with intrapreneurs and all other relevant parties to assist with the implementation of their projects

### **ii) Description of the general activities conducted in the R&D Work Stream**

The respondents in this group were also asked to describe the outputs of their work stream. The responses indicated that, as already mentioned, the work stream conducts research on the root causes of service delivery challenges, in order to inform the innovative service delivery solutions needed. One of the respondents added that in this context, public servants would, in addition to the CPSI's own research, also identify challenges experienced in their respective departments and the R&D work stream would assist them in identifying the root causes of those challenges, so that they could develop the appropriate solution. The R&D work stream also investigates emerging trends in terms of issues in the public service. In response to a follow up question on the type of research conducted, the senior manager respondent clarified that their research was very basic and described it as *"mostly pragmatic, grass-roots based action research"*.

Furthermore, it was revealed that the work stream consolidates their own basic research with empirical research, usually from universities, to make deductions regarding the core issues at play in a situation being investigated. The work stream also facilitates the writing up of case studies, which is another way of engaging public servants and sharing lessons

on innovations with them, from actual projects that are being implemented. These case studies are usually shared in the CPSI's Innovation Journal. When asked whether the journal was the primary method of sharing information, the respondent from senior management agreed. In addition, other research would be shared as an article or an opinion piece. In the context of information sharing, one of the questions that came up with the senior manager respondent was whether the work stream taught public servants how to conduct research to accurately identify the root causes of the problems they wanted to resolve. The respondent indicated that the CPSI Pocket Guide served that purpose. However, it was acknowledged that the Pocket Guide was outdated and on their work stream's agenda for the current financial year was to produce an updated version thereof. The respondent however stressed that the Pocket Guide was just a guide, as the practice of innovation generally varies in context. In addition, the management of pilot projects, the development of innovation tool-kits and knowledge management were listed as other work done by the R&D work stream by the respondents.

### **iii) Challenges encountered by the R&D Work Stream**

The respondents in this work stream outlined a few challenges experienced. At a high level, the first challenge noted is trying to manage the expectations of donors and political leaders. The senior manager respondent explained that *"Donors want a clearly laid out path that you are following and against which you are reporting"* and this approach does not work in the innovation context, because no experience is ever the same. Likewise, portfolio committees also expect quick results. However, the respondent further explained that the CPSI cannot have a standard project management approach because the nature of innovation is that it is highly risky and unpredictable. Therefore, in the respondent's opinion, what would be the appropriate expectation of the CPSI as an innovation institution is that it should rather be expected to have an 80% failure rate and a 20% success rate, due to the risky and unpredictable nature of their work. However, it is currently the other way around, in the respondent's view. The respondent further explained that the danger with this is that the CPSI as a result has to reduce its risk appetite and can only take on very few projects.

Similar to the responses provided in the previous sections, the issue of funding was once again raised. It was mentioned that the CPSI must convince people at both the highest and lowest levels of government that a project is necessary and must then begin the struggle to

acquire funding for it. One of the respondents added that as a result, they relied heavily upon sponsorships and donors to implement some of the projects from public servants. Another recurring challenge is that of management support. An example of a response explaining this issue in this context stated that *“Most of the challenges in the departments are identified by middle management and they come to us seeking solutions. When it is time to engage their senior managers on the proposed projects, the reception is not always positive. Resources are rarely allocated to such initiatives”*.

Access to more *“transversal research”* was another noted challenge. One of the respondents explained that their research was more of a snapshot of the problem. However, with access to information that indicates the trends in that department over a longer period, they would be able to conduct a more thorough analysis of the situation to uncover the true issues and appropriate solutions. The respondent added that most public sector innovation spaces globally usually have different players focusing upon various aspects of public sector innovation such as funding, incubation, thought leadership, R&D and rewarding innovation. However, in South Africa, these are all done by the CPSI, with very limited resources. The OECD has, as a result, recognised the CPSI as one of the more comprehensive facilities in the world.

#### **iv) Opportunities for development**

The respondents in this work stream also indicated some general areas in which the work stream and the CPSI in general could still develop. It was indicated that with more funding, a lot more could still be done. In addition, all the respondents were of the view that their media engagement could be improved - for instance, social media engagement, blogging, marketing their services on television and radio. They also indicated that they could increase the number of projects they take on and improve their reach across the country's nine provinces. The senior manager respondent added a need for more thought leadership engagement on key issues of governance. In a question posed to the questionnaire respondents on whether they believed public servants were sufficiently aware of the existence of the CPSI, the response was a resounding no. A respondent added, *“I am not sure about sufficient because you still have public servants who don't understand the mandate of the Public Service Commission”*. However, the respondents indicated that the seemingly increasing engagement in the CPSI's other programmes could improve this.

#### **5.4.4 Results from the Solution Support and Incubation (SSI) Work Stream**

Responses from this work stream were collected from the interview conducted with a senior manager of the SSI work stream at the CPSI, as well as questionnaire responses from two staff members of the work stream. The instruments of data collection used in this regard are attached as Annexures C and D. The findings are as follows:

##### **i) Contextualising the role of the SSI Work Stream within the CPSI's mandate**

The respondents were asked what the mandate of the CPSI is in the context of promoting intrapreneurship in the public service, as well as how the SSI work stream fits into that mandate. The respondents, consistent with the responses provided in the previous sections, stated that the CPSI's role was to entrench and drive a culture of innovation in the public service. It provides a platform for the intrapreneurial initiatives of public servants to be supported. In this context, the senior manager respondent described the SSI work stream as more of a project unit, where ideas from public servants and other sources of innovation are tested and piloted in the real-life context for which they have been developed, to see if they work and to establish what needs to be improved before the solution can be handed over to the user department for implementation.

##### **ii) Description of the general activities conducted by the SSI Work Stream**

Additional questions posed to the respondents were in relation to the nature of the work stream's outputs. The senior manager respondent explained that because public sector innovation is often seen as a difficult concept, the CPSI felt the need to demonstrate to the public service what it meant by public sector innovation. This is achieved through the testing and piloting of innovative solutions with the intention to replicate them in the public service context, so as to demonstrate that innovations from public servants and various other sources can improve the public service. The respondents further indicated that the work stream incubates ideas from public servants in order to ensure that proposed solutions not only align with the identified need in the public service, but also with the priorities of government. When asked what types of solutions are tested and piloted, the respondent from senior management explained that the CPSI's focus is ultimately to improve service delivery through both S&T and non-S&T innovative solutions.



Although the question on the role of partnerships for the successful execution of the work stream's activities was directly posed to the respondent from senior management, all the respondents in this work stream acknowledged their reliance upon partnerships to successfully test and pilot solutions due to the lack of funds available for this process. In addition, it was clarified that the CPSI cannot test and pilot a project without confirmation of interest from the user department. If the department indicates an unwillingness to adopt the solution in the end, the project would most likely be shelved until there is a need for it. It was also noted that once the solution has been successfully implemented and replicated, the CPSI still maintained contact with the intrapreneur to provide feedback on the progress of their innovation and to invite them to other CPSI events. In addition, in some cases, public servants approach the CPSI with ideas that are already implemented and working. In this instance, the role of the SSI Work Stream would be to scale up the project and if needed, facilitate its replication across the public service. A respondent added that another area of work for the SSI work stream is the development and maintenance of the CPSI's Multi Media Innovation Centre. This includes managing exhibitions and handling all the CPSI's multimedia projects and products.

### **iii) Challenges**

Once again, the main challenge noted by all the respondents was the poor funding allocation for the CPSI's programmes. In this regard, one of the respondents argued that, *"this is not just a CPSI issue, but a country issue. South Africa in general does not have a dedicated budget for public sector innovation"*. The respondent added that this then also impacts upon the buy-in from the service delivery departments, because the system of government works on a twelve month and three year cycle. Therefore, when they approach top managers with solutions that they would like to test and pilot, they would already have their budget set for those periods. The respondent added that the CPSI did not have the same level of authority as National Treasury or the Presidency for example, to command the attention of public managers, so to speak. They cannot instruct managers to adopt the innovative projects uncovered by the CPSI, even if they are sure a project would resolve a department's service delivery issue. In addition, their accountability to National Treasury is another challenge, because every year they must explain to National Treasury how their budget was spent, and stating that they lost millions testing a project is not an acceptable explanation. Other challenges listed by the respondents were:

*“The lack of political buy-in once innovations have been identified”.*

*“The inability to embrace and scale up innovations within departments”.*

*“The CPSI’s lack of resources”.*

*“Bureaucracy”.*

As a result of the identification of the above-mentioned challenges, the respondents also proposed a number of ways in which some of the challenges mentioned can be mitigated, along with other general proposals of how the CPSI can improve upon the delivery of its mandate. The responses in that regard are presented in the next section.

#### **iv) Areas for improvement**

At a high level, the respondent in senior management suggests the development of a strategy on how quickly a solution can be infused into the public service system, without having to struggle to get buy-in from top managers whose budgets are set. A system or strategy on procuring innovation is also needed. This should factor in how the procurement of non-technological innovations would take place, the high failure rate of innovation and how then the CPSI can manage risk in such a context. The respondent also added that each government department should aim to establish innovation units within their departments, so that they can localise the challenges and solution finding. The respondents indicated that a bigger marketing budget for the CPSI to market itself better was required.

The CPSI could also develop their own ideation platform, as they mostly relied on the Innovation Hub’s Open IX platform where the CPSI posts issues experienced in the public service and then allows people to generate innovative ideas in order to resolve the problem. It was noted that an attempt to acquire their own system to manage ideation was made, but this proved too expensive. Another area of improvement was that there was generally still insufficient awareness by public servants of the existence of the CPSI, thus more awareness is essential. One respondent stated that, *“the strengthening of our working relationships with educational and other research institutions and the Innovation Hub could once again assist in the driving of innovative initiatives”.*

This section concludes the presentation of the data collected from the research population. As stated in the introductory section of this chapter, the purpose of the chapter was twofold. The first, which was to present the data collected from the study's research population, as described in Chapter One's description of the study's research methodology, has been achieved. The second, which was to conduct an analysis of the findings, will be achieved in the next section.

## **5.5 ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS**

As mentioned in the preceding section, this section offers an analysis of the research results presented in the previous sections of this chapter, applying the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units, such as the CPSI, can generally support the various stages of the innovation life cycle. This model was presented and described in Chapter One of this study. This proved to be the most relevant tool for analysis, as the literature surveyed, and the findings of the study indicated that in most countries, public service innovation would be driven by various units focusing on various aspects of innovation in the public service such as developing solutions, experimentation, funding, capacity building and networking (OECD 2017a:141). However, in the case of the CPSI, the findings, as well as the discussion of the NSI in Chapter Four, indicate that the CPSI is the only institution currently mandated to specifically support and promote a culture of innovation in the public service. Thus, the OECD (2017a) provides a more generic model that considers the general role played by the various types of innovation units in the broader public sector domain.

The aim therefore is to analyse the findings against the data provided by the model. This will ensure the achievement of the study's primary research objective, which is to analyse the role of the CPSI in the promotion of intrapreneurship within the South African Public Service, as stated in Chapter One.

### **5.5.1 The role of the CPSI in identifying issues for intrapreneurship**

The OECD (2017a:141) explains that innovation units play an important role in identifying and drawing attention to the key issues that require an intrapreneurial response. The CPSI clearly fulfils this role through their identification of the root causes of service delivery challenges and sharing those with public servants through their various knowledge platforms. This is arguably the most important step of the entire intrapreneurship process,

because, as indicated in the definitions of the construct provided in Chapter One's literature review, and the conceptualisation of the construct within the discipline of Public Administration in Chapter Two, intrapreneurship is an active response to an identified problem. Thus, without knowledge of what the actual problem is, sustainable solutions cannot be developed. Given that some of the results from the intrapreneurs indicate a difficulty in accessing information required for their intended projects, the CPSI's information on what the root causes of the identified issues are becomes more vital in guiding the efforts of intrapreneurs. However, the adequacy of the CPSI's efforts in this regard requires further analysis as a few areas of contention have been identified, based upon the results obtained.

Firstly, the findings indicate that the information and data collected by the CPSI in order to identify the root causes of issues are mostly from basic research that is limited in scope by the CPSI's own limited access to data from government departments. This brings into question the CPSI's ability to adequately diagnose the root causes of public service challenges to inform the development of sustainable solutions, when they cannot access all the data required. There was an indication in the research findings of the supplementation of the CPSI's information with the empirical research conducted in academia and the CPSI's other knowledge partners. However, academic research, and any other research conducted by parties outside of the actual government institution under study, is also notably limited to the information to which the institution is willing to grant access.

In that sense, although academia's large research output may be helpful, it does not entirely resolve the issue of access to the needed data. While the respondents from the CPSI recommended an increased research output from academia as a solution, which notably also mirrors sentiments shared about the important role of academic institutions in supporting the country's innovation mandate at Parliament's round table discussion on the 4<sup>th</sup> IR (discussed in Chapter One), this view is debatable. Although it is justified to regard academia as a key source of information, which it arguably is, the issue at hand in this context is access to the required data within government. Academic institutions, or any of the CPSI's other knowledge partners, by order of their mandates and positioning as part of government's external environmental actors, do not have control over the access to the data required. The key role players that should particularly be targeted and engaged by the CPSI in this instance are the political role players, particularly the departmental political principals, who have the authority to ensure access to information across the public service, in line with

government's commitment to creating an open government, as indicated in Chapter One's literature review. This will likely be helpful, given that the CPSI also does not have the authority to instruct government departments to grant them access to their data.

Another area of contention with regard to the CPSI's role in identifying issues that require innovation, is that the CPSI's Pocket Guide (described in Chapter Four), a document revealed to be outdated in the research findings, has been used as the primary tool for guiding public servants on how to perform the function of identifying the root causes of the challenges they would like to resolve through innovation. Such a guide is particularly important for an innovation unit such as the CPSI, as it serves as a learning tool to those who do not have direct access to the services of the CPSI, especially given that the CPSI does not have other offices across the country. The importance of this is corroborated by the UK's experience described in Chapter Three of this study, where one of the country's municipalities was said to be developing their own innovation guide to enable public servants to learn about the intrapreneurship process. However, if the CPSI Pocket Guide, published in 2010, has not been updated since, not only does this indicate how outdated the information being provided is, but brings into question its adequacy as a learning tool to guide public servants on how issues can be identified. Although the findings also indicated plans by the CPSI to update the Pocket Guide, it currently still is being featured as one of the organisation's knowledge and learning tools.

It could be argued that the CPSI has other knowledge platforms such as the CPSI Journal, the MMIC, the Annual Conference and their workshops, which, based upon their descriptions in the previous chapter, notably present additional avenues for publicising issues that require innovation and perhaps even lessons on how public servants themselves can identify key areas that require innovation in the public service. However, the impact made by these platforms in this regard arguably correlates with how accessible they are. The indication from the data collected from the intrapreneurs of their very limited knowledge of the various platforms offered by the CPSI is problematic, given that these are public servants that are already engaged in the country's innovation mandate, and have interacted with the CPSI through the awards programme - yet they have a very limited awareness of the wide range of the invaluable platforms the CPSI has to offer to them as innovators. What then of others who have yet to innovate? This question is highlighted by some of the study's results that show that the CPSI staff themselves shared the perception that the CPSI was

still generally unknown amongst public servants. This could indicate that even if the information on what the core issues that require innovation are was adequately provided on the platforms mentioned above, it is likely that it does not reach its target audience.

In addition, the structure of the CPSI notably works against it in the above-mentioned context of the accessibility of its resources. The results indicated that the CPSI, positioned in central government and with no branches across the country, inadvertently has no foot-print across the country, which is markedly inconsistent with the decentralisation approach that the South African Government instituted with the introduction of the NPM reform in the 1990s, as discussed in Chapter Two. The literature presented in Chapter Two further highlighted the centrality of the decentralisation approach to the achievement of public entrepreneurship, particularly according to Osborne and Gaebler (1992), whose 10 themes for reinventing government, “became a reference point in the South African context”, as stated by Chipkin and Lipietz (2012:11), cited in Chapter Two of this study. Decentralised structures of government arguably result in decentralised service delivery that can best address the demands of the citizens. However, the CPSI’s services are highly centralised into one office base, said to have around thirty-three staff members in total, of which only around fifteen are serving a public sector of an estimated 1.5 million people. This arguably impacts the reach of the CPSI and the accessibility of some of its products and services.

The research results also revealed that the CPSI uses the Innovation Hub’s Open IX platform to at times post issues that need an innovative response. The question of accessibility needs to be reiterated. Given that the research results indicate that some public servants are unaware of some of the CPSI’s own platforms, this questions the likelihood of their awareness of the Open IX system as a platform where they can be informed about public service issues that require intrapreneurship. In addition, the Innovation Hub is described on its website as “the innovation agency of the Gauteng Province” and has a vision “to be a model science park and the innovation agency of choice for fostering economic development and competitiveness in Gauteng” (<http://www.theinnovationhub.com/about-us>). This raises more questions about the platform’s accessibility for public servants outside of the Gauteng Province. Furthermore, the description of the Innovation Hub’s vision is also not clear on whether non-S&T solutions are prioritised as examples of successful innovations presented in Chapter Four, such as the Saving Blood, Saving Lives Project which is non-S&T, indicate the impact that non-S&T

solutions can make in the public service. This is evidence that limiting innovation to S&T based solutions is limiting the public service's innovation and intrapreneurship output.

Despite the areas of contention noted, the CPSI does seem to ultimately play a role in the identification of issues that require an intrapreneurial response, and perhaps a focus upon addressing some of the issues noted above, will improve its impact in this regard.

### **5.5.2 The role of the CPSI in facilitating the generation of ideas**

Facilitating the generation of ideas which can be developed into innovative solutions through the establishment of a culture of innovation in the public sector and enabling public servants to innovate without fear, is another role of innovation units as identified by the OECD (2017a:141). This is important, as it is mentioned in Chapter Two that one of the characteristics of intrapreneurs noted by various scholars is the ability to take risks, as intrapreneurial employees ultimately risk reputational damage or losing their jobs in the event of their innovations being unsuccessful. This point is corroborated by this study's results where some of the intrapreneur respondents indicated that punishment for failed intrapreneurial ventures in the public service was severe. Therefore, it is crucial that public servants are able to innovate without fear. This perhaps elucidates the point made in Chapter One's literature review that it is sometimes the practice of punishing intrapreneurs for failed innovations rather than the rewarding of successful ones, that makes the public service appear inhospitable to intrapreneurship, as indicated by some of the responses provided.

The study's results however indicate a perception of the CPSI as being identified as a safe space for public servants to share and generate innovative ideas, consistent with the OECD's (2017a:141) description of the innovation unit's role in this regard. What is arguably praiseworthy about the CPSI's approach, according to the responses provided by the CPSI's staff, is that their focus in terms of supporting the generation of ideas by public servants, is not so much upon the idea itself, but the person behind the idea. This approach will arguably sustain the practice of intrapreneurship in the public service because the potential of all innovative public servants to make a meaningful contribution is recognised and affirmed. This is notably one of the roles of a sponsor for intrapreneurship described in Chapter Two. In this regard, Pinchot and Pellman (1999:19) state that good sponsors can identify employees who present the behavioural competencies of an intrapreneur and effectively

harness those skills and attitudes to expose intrapreneurial behaviour. The CPSI seemingly achieves one end of this description, however their ability to further develop the missing intrapreneurial competencies in those public servants that show the potential to be intrapreneurs, as revealed in the results, is limited by their poor funding, which makes it difficult for them to provide capacity building initiatives in this context.

This is an issue that needs to be addressed, presumably, again, at a political level where the allocation of funds to the CPSI is facilitated, as poor funding is evidently hindering the CPSI's ability to achieve its mandate. Put in the country context described in Chapter One, the fact that South Africa is said to have a high public sector wage bill, certainly necessitates the optimal use of the skills of one of the public service's most expensive resources. Furthermore, given that the literature reviewed in Chapter One also indicates that the 4<sup>th</sup> IR will require more innovative public servants, the CPSI in the context of driving the generation of ideas is positioned to build the capacity of public servants to think innovatively and generate ideas that are relevant to the contemporary needs of government. Moreover, the previous chapters also highlight the importance of incentivising intrapreneurship, in order to encourage the generation of ideas. In Chapter Two, the WPTPSD (1997:16), the NDP (2011:80) and the PSC (2013:5) are noted as policy documents that explicitly encourage the incentivising of intrapreneurial behaviour in the public service. The explicit statement of the need for incentivising innovation in national policy documents, can thus be considered an indication that the policy environment is somewhat enabling of intrapreneurship in South Africa.

In this context, awards programmes are identified as key platforms for incentivising intrapreneurship. For instance, in Chapter Three, Borins (2001:313) singles out the introduction of prominent awards as the driving force behind the increase in the focus upon innovation in the USA's public service. This seems to be true in the case of South Africa as well, as the results reveal a perception by respondents of how the CPSI's Awards Programme has increased the culture of innovation in the public service. In addition, the CPSI also enters some of the projects into international awards programmes, some of which were mentioned in Chapter Four of this study, and has facilitated the recognition of some intrapreneurs in Parliament. These platforms are particularly important, as Chapter Two also indicates perceptions of how the poor culture of incentivising intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service is inhibiting the generation of innovative ideas from public servants,



even though there are policies that encourage the incentivising of intrapreneurship in the public service, as mentioned earlier. However, in Chapter Two, arguments by the former DG of the DPSA to the contrary were presented, as he stated that these perceptions are a result of a poor awareness of public service regulations that encourage the incentivising of intrapreneurship (Diphofa 2016:34).

Given that the DPSA is said to be responsible for establishing the norms and standards of the public service, as indicated in Chapter Two, the former DG's statement is puzzling as his department should then have been driving the improvement of the awareness of such regulations. Furthermore, it is also clear from the previous chapters that the incentivising of intrapreneurship in the public service should not be regarded as the exclusive mandate of the CPSI alone. Individual government departments must play their part in including the incentivising of innovation in their strategic plans and HRM policies. The CPSI however does well in supplementing the said poor incentivising of intrapreneurship within individual government departments noted in the literature surveyed, as well as some of the results presented in this chapter. Interestingly, the results indicated that most intrapreneurs were more motivated by intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards. Perhaps this is a point the CPSI can draw to the attention of government officials in the updated version of the CPSI Pocket Guide.

The OECD (2017a:141) also states the importance of providing tools to support the generation of ideas. The CPSI could seemingly benefit from the development of a kind of ideation platform such as the TSA's idea factory platform described in Chapter Three. The platform basically facilitates the exchange of innovative ideas between public servants on how to improve internal processes. However, the findings of this study indicate that the CPSI tried to develop something similar, but this proved to be too expensive. As a result, they currently use the Innovation Hub's Open IX platform. The reservations around using this platform have been previously shared, although the platform admittedly enables the CPSI to leverage off its partners resources so as to effectively meet its mandate due to its limited resources. Additionally, a closer look at the description of the Open IX platform indicates that "through our extensive relationships with both the growing African innovation community and global S&T partners" they are able to source ideas from "recognised experts" (<http://www.theinnovationhub.com/innovation-programmes/openix-5>). Based upon this description, it does not appear that this platform prioritises the encouragement of public

servants to innovate, even though the literature surveyed in this study has reiterated their importance as the key sources of innovation in the public service. In addition, a plausible question could also be what would qualify one as a “recognised expert”? Would a cleaner’s input, as someone who can arguably be regarded an expert of their area of work, be regarded as an expert opinion, as was the case in the UK’s Enfield Council described in Chapter Three, where municipal managers approached the municipality’s cleaning staff for innovative ideas on how the upkeep of municipal spaces could be improved?

These are questions that the CPSI needs to consider when engaging partnerships, especially because inclusivity is not only important as a democratic value but because, as shown in the various chapters of this study, the contemporary need for intrapreneurship cuts across all hierarchical levels of the public service. In addition, given that the need for intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service is communicated in Chapter One as a necessary response to the diverse needs of the citizens, it necessitates an equally diverse response. This is particularly a key area of improvement for the CPSI, as some of its staff members indicated that the engagement of the youth in the CPSI’s mandate was lacking. Furthermore, an analysis of the demographic outline of the intrapreneurs surveyed indicates poor representation of women, the youth, staff at administrative level and lower, those with no graduate qualification and public servants above the age of 46. Given that all of these groups mentioned are presumably represented in the public service, the CPSI needs to focus more effort upon ensuring diversity of the sources of ideas generated, and that their platforms do not only cater to a specific demographic. This is more so important when the segregational history of the country is considered which warranted the introduction of policies that promote inclusivity such as the Affirmative Action policy.

Lastly, the OECD (2017a:141) also identifies the creation of a culture for innovation as another way in which innovation units can support idea generation. The literature from the previous chapters also indicates how the creation of a culture for innovation in the public service is key for achieving an intrapreneurial output from public servants. This requirement notably links to the general descriptions of the CPSI’s mandate provided. However, the CPSI’s role in the context of creating a culture of innovation in the public service can arguably be described as suggestive, in that through their platforms they indicate how things can/should be done, but do not have the authority to institutionalise that culture of innovation across the public service. This point is evidenced by the fact that from the intrapreneurs

surveyed, a number of them indicated that their organisations did not have an innovation manifesto, mentioned in Chapter Two's description of the role of the sponsor for innovation, even though the CPSI Pocket Guide provides a template and indicates its importance (CPSI 2010:59-60). It is however worth noting that Chapter Two's description of the role of the sponsor for innovation includes the provision of a vision for innovation which the CPSI clearly tries to encourage individual government departments to achieve with their provision of the template on how an innovation manifesto can be drawn up.

Perhaps the key drivers of this culture, as indicated in the previous chapters, are the political and bureaucratic leaders whose behaviour, whether implicitly or explicitly stated, communicates whether innovation is welcome. As stated by the OECD (2017a:32) in Chapter One's literature review, contrary to the results of this study in this instance, there is no evidence to suggest that bureaucracy is a barrier to intrapreneurship. Peters (2003:113) explains in Chapter One's literature review, that the concept and theory of bureaucracy itself is modelled around the values of efficiency which is notably consistent with public service values and the values that underpin the NPM doctrine. What is identified as a problem are the people who are misinterpreting and misrepresenting public service regulations in their interpretation and implementation of those policies. This is validated by the fact that Chapter Two indicates various public service policies in South Africa that are pro-intrapreneurship.

The political and bureaucratic leaders must therefore uphold these regulations in the way that they encourage intrapreneurial behaviour, in order to ensure increased idea generation. This point finds further support in Daglio et al.'s (2014:19) assertion in Chapter Two's exploration of the requirements of an "entrepreneurial culture" in the public service, wherein they state that political and bureaucratic leadership plays a vital role in communicating what behaviour is considered acceptable amongst public servants.

### **5.5.3 The role of the CPSI in the development of proposals**

Once ideas have been generated, innovation units develop and test the proposed solution (OECD 2017a:141). As mentioned in the research results, and in the previous chapter, the CPSI starts off by consulting the public service institution for which the idea is meant, in order to determine whether they are interested in a proposed solution. If not, they would not proceed with the development of the solution. This however appears inconsistent with a response provided by one of the intrapreneurs, who indicated that new innovative systems

were often developed with minimum consultation with the user department. It is not clear whether this is an isolated incident, however given the resource intensive nature of the process of testing and piloting solutions, it would be an unusual and highly risky approach from the CPSI to work on a solution without the buy-in from the user department. Nonetheless, even with the indication of interest from the user department, the CPSI still runs the risk of the user department not successfully implementing the solution. In addition, given the CPSI's lack of authority in the public service, they cannot force the implementation of their unearthed solutions.

The evidently high-risk nature of this process is primarily why the CPSI generally relies upon donor funding to drive this process, as money spent on failed innovations could result in budget cuts from the National Treasury. As a result, the study's findings reveal that the CPSI is forced to take on less risky projects. In this regard, the more radical innovations are likely to be side-lined in favour of the lower risk innovative solutions. However, this then effectively appears to side-line the "radical" type of intrapreneur as well. This is arguably counterproductive in the age of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR in which innovations are described as disruptive in nature and will thus align more with the more radical types of intrapreneurs whose innovations push boundaries. Therefore engagement with key stakeholders on these issues will need to be initiated by the CPSI, in order to align the expectations of government with the current innovation needs. This aligns with a recommendation made by the OECD (2017a:36) noted in Chapter One that stakeholder engagement is a key approach to mitigating barriers to innovation.

On the other side of the matter, the benefit of the CPSI testing and piloting innovations by public servants on behalf of their departments is notably that the risk of failure is borne by the CPSI. This may prove beneficial for the culture of innovation in the public service, as the findings from the intrapreneurs indicate that in some cases the difficulty in convincing their managers to implement their innovative solutions is that they are not willing to spend money developing and testing projects with high levels of risk and uncertainty. What is even more helpful for public servants about this process driven by the CPSI, is that before the CPSI tests and pilots the ideas by public servants, they incubate the ideas. This means that they work with the intrapreneur to develop the idea further by providing the necessary support to ensure that it will work successfully in the context for which it is meant. However, the

evidence thus far indicates that for the CPSI to be successful in this role, the following factors need to be addressed:

- i) **Departmental management support:** In this context, management support of the testing and piloting of innovative projects from public servants is vital in securing the adoption of those ideas by public servants, once they have been tested and piloted by the CPSI. There is however notably too much power at management level to control the diffusion of a culture of innovation in the public service which is inconsistent with the democratic values of the country. In addition, the irony of the said lack of management support is that one of the criticisms posed in Chapter Two regarding the framing of the intrapreneurship concept under the NPM doctrine and in the Theory of Public Entrepreneurship, is that it was described more as a management practice. In the contemporary age, however, the managers are seemingly the barriers to intrapreneurship. Perhaps this is telling of the execution of the decentralisation strategy that came about with the NPM reform in South Africa, as it seems managers are reluctant to sign off on innovations in fear of being punished for fruitless expenditure. This possibly points to a validation of the assertions made in the findings by one of the intrapreneurs, as well as by Green et al. (2014:21) in Chapter Two, that public managers also risk losing their jobs as a result of failed innovations.

This therefore brings into question the level and nature of authority that has in fact been delegated to public managers. This links with a point by Metcalfe (2009:80-83) cited in Chapter Two, in which he argues that the way in which the role of a public manager is defined, i.e. their focus upon reducing risk and making their political principal's happy, makes managers averse to innovation. Thus, this also brings into question the nature of the impact that the workshop on leading innovation in the public service offered by the CPSI, as well as the innovation management course provided by the NSG (developed in collaboration with the CPSI) which are both described in the previous chapter, are making in the public service. As both are aimed at building the capacity of public managers to innovative, as well as to manage and lead innovation within their units, the prevailing issues of poor management support for intrapreneurship may signal a need to perhaps expand the scope and/or reach of these programmes in the public service. Moreover, an additional question that arises

in this context is also how then the role of public managers can be redefined so that their duty to account for their use of state resources does not clash with the execution of the country's innovation mandate, which requires managers who are actively engaged in the country's innovation mandate and are supportive of intrapreneurship? Perhaps the CPSI can highlight this as an issue which requires high level clarification and engagement.

- ii) Policy and political support:** Bekkers, Edelenbos and Steijn (2011:217) state that to effectively manage the diffusion of intrapreneurship, the support of policy and politics are paramount. It was mentioned in the analysis of the previous sections of this chapter that the policy environment was 'somewhat' enabling. This is because the policy environment seems contradictory. In the one instance, the policies cited in Chapter Two indicate a clear policy mandate for the support of intrapreneurship, however, the results indicate that other government laws and regulations such as the PFMA and Treasury Regulations are perceived as being risk averse, resulting in the CPSI being unable to support some innovations. This indicates a clear misalignment between some of government's policies and the innovation context of the country. Therefore, there is clearly no conclusive evidence that the verbal calls and support for intrapreneurship made by political leaders cited in Chapter One have translated into their creation of a conducive environment for innovation in the public service. The importance of political support means that the CPSI will need to engage with political leaders on this, because as Drucker (1986:283) states, "entrepreneurial management across the public service may thus be the foremost *political* task of this generation".
- iii) A better funding model:** The issue of funding has been reiterated at every stage of the innovation life cycle thus far, and in this context of testing and piloting innovations, has limited the capability of the CPSI to support more projects for testing and piloting. This problem indicates a poor understanding by public service leaders about how innovation really works and how resource intensive the process is. As indicated in Parliament's round table discussion on the South African government's readiness for the 4<sup>th</sup> IR mentioned in Chapter One, the country needs to significantly improve its innovation funding model. Similarly, in the UK for example, they regard changes in the way the budget process is approached as a key consideration for instituting a

culture of intraprenurship in the public service. Ahmad et al. (2012:3-5) in Chapter One of this study, also suggest that funding for innovation be set aside for the development of innovative ideas by employees. Morris and Jones (1992:78) were however noted in the Chapter Two as describing the challenge that innovation presents for budgetary processes in the public service as investing the tax payer's money in projects that may not even work may prove to be too big a risk, as public funds cannot be misused.

However, this study's argument in this context is that the world is moving into a time where risk-taking will be a central determinant of a country's competitive edge, particularly in the era of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR. Thus, conversations around funding and budgeting in this context, arguably need to be centered around how traditional practices in this context can be reformed or aligned with the modern reality that to remain competitive on a global scale, and to effectively improve the plight of citizens, countries need to invest in innovation. Once again, this is an issue that arguably requires high level stakeholder engagement in order to not only discuss why funding for innovation is essential but to also address some of the issues that are a barrier to the access of funds for the support and development of innovative ideas by public servants. The CPSI, based on the descriptions of its mandate in this chapter and the previous chapter, is therefore best positioned to lead these conversations. This is also evident in their indicated plans noted in the findings, to develop and present a proposal for a more effective innovation funding model for the public service, which should arguably include the issues highlighted in this section.

#### **5.5.4 The role of the CPSI in implementing projects**

The OECD (2017a:142) notes that some innovation units are also involved in the implementation of innovative projects from public servants. In this context, the CPSI offers advice to intrapreneurs on how they can implement their solutions and offers advice to government departments on how they can manage risk when implementing projects. The CPSI also coordinates resources in the form of funding to assist the implementation of projects from public servants and in other cases, the scaling up of the project. As explained in Chapter One's literature review, the UNDP ([sa]) describes "scaling up" as a process of "expanding projects to a larger scale" as well as "strengthening of national capacities and

improvements of global, national and local policies to ensure their long-term sustainability and impact”. This description of scaling up also indicates that the CPSI should be playing a role in aligning government policies with the innovation mandate of the country, mainly to ensure that the policy environment is conducive enough to ensure the sustainability and impact of the implemented projects.

The importance of the point above is also evidenced by the research results presented in this chapter, wherein the inability to scale up and embrace innovations within user departments is identified as a problem. This implies that once the tested and piloted solution is handed over to the user department, there may be a struggle in driving its sustainable implementation from within. What is causing this issue has not been made clear in the research results and will arguably require further investigation, however, a favourable policy climate in this context may prove helpful in identifying the various potential issues in this regard, and ways to mitigate those challenges. The CPSI will need to consider how they can effectively influence the policy-making arena, as the research findings provide the impression that the CPSI’s influence so far is minimal in that space. Perhaps this also signals a lack of “policy entrepreneurs” in the public service, as described by Roberts (1992:66) in Chapter Two of this study, which the CPSI could be developing so that public service policy makers are also innovative in the way in which they approach policy making. In addition, since it has also been stated that the CPSI’s mandate extends into the rest of the African continent, the CPSI should also consider the impact it is currently making in the continental policy-making arena in the context of public service innovation, and should investigate how that impact can be expanded and capitalised upon, especially because Chapter Four indicates how the CPSI’s platforms and expertise attract international attention.

Furthermore, another issue in the context of aiding the implementation of solutions is that the CPSI’s mandate lacks authority, as the CPSI cannot force the implementation of solutions tested and piloted. This could arguably discourage intrapreneurship, if intrapreneurs perceive their efforts as pointless due to their solutions not being implemented. In addition, the fact that the CPSI can usually only take on two projects in the entire public service, due to its funding issues, can be discouraging to intrapreneurs, because the CPSI as a result lacks the financial and staff capacity to implement more projects. Thus, as previously mentioned, the issue of funding needs urgent attention. Moreover, it was indicated in the research results that due to this dilemma, the CPSI relies upon its NSI



partners, partners in the various sectors and donors, in order to assist government departments with the implementation of intrapreneurial solutions. However, because the priorities of these stakeholders are primarily driven by their own self-interest in the partnerships, it is not clear whether the continued empowerment of the intrapreneur is prioritised throughout the implementation process.

The above is an issue highlighted in Chapter Two's description of the Public Choice Theory (PCT). It was explained in the chapter that central to the theory is a belief that all stakeholders in the political environment are ultimately driven by self-interest (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000:551; Hall and Holt 2008:23). This view can however be problematic, as the public administration context by nature is such that the needs of the citizens must be the main priority, as argued in Chapter Two's detraction of the PCT. Therefore, this certainly becomes a complex issue when a reliance upon stakeholders or partners that may not operate with the same values is created. Granted that the benefits of these partnerships may extend beyond monetary gains, however the control that can be exerted by those who hold the resources needed by another party cannot be denied. Thus, caution must be taken by the CPSI in this regard.

However, the CPSI's efforts to notably include the intrapreneur in the process of implementing and replicating their idea, a point which was corroborated by one of the intrapreneurs surveyed, is commendable. This is because part of the complexity of intrapreneurship in the public service is seemingly that the intrapreneur innovates solely for the benefit of the public service and thus cannot expect to hold claim to the solution once it is implemented. This notably differs from the case of private sector intrapreneurs, who, as in the case of the highly publicised Vodacom employee seeking billions of Rands in compensation for the "Please Call Me" innovation he came up with for Vodacom while he was still in the employ of the company (My Broadband 2018), can seemingly hold claim to the innovative ideas they provide to their organisations. However, it is still important that an effort is made to encourage public servants to continuously innovate, and that public servants are able to see their projects through to the end. The CPSI does well in trying to ensure this.

### 5.5.5 The role of the CPSI in evaluating projects

Although this usually proves to be a challenging task, innovation units will generally try to find ways in which to measure the impact of the projects implemented (OECD 2017a:142). Based upon the research findings, the CPSI also acknowledges the difficulty in measuring the impact of their projects, although they are aware of the importance of this process. This is because most of the impact from innovations is only felt after several years, and so the assessment of the impact may only be possible later. However, their challenge in this regard is notably that they operate within a context that requires them to report on impact annually, through their annual reports tabled in Parliament, as well as reporting on a quarterly basis to the Minister of Public Service and Administration and the portfolio committees. In addition, donors who have funded projects also want to report on impact. This clearly indicates the prevalence of the self-interest element of the PCT discussed in Chapter Two and the previous section of this chapter.

For politicians, maintaining voter support is of primary importance because, as also mentioned in Chapter Two, bureaucratic failures may be deemed political failures. From a political perspective, this is justifiable, but it is inconsistent with the context of public administration where, as stated in Chapter Two, public servants serve for the benefit of society and not their own agendas. This perhaps clearly elucidates Woodrow Wilson's (1887) argued need to separate Politics and Administration as two different disciplines (Chapter Two), and in the context of innovation, clearly requires a better coordination of the two contexts. Similarly, the expectation from donors to quickly see a return on their investment indicates a poor understanding of the nature of innovation by the very same people who are meant to support it. This brings into question how enabling of innovation such parties are in practice.

The results also presented a view from senior management at the CPSI that, as an innovation unit, the CPSI should realistically be expected to have a higher failure rate than a high success rate, because innovation by nature is an uncertain and risky practice. This notably conflicts with the driving forces of the political sphere and donors, as previously mentioned. This is an issue which clearly requires more dialogue, particularly around how the values and objectives of the various actors in the public service innovation system can be better coordinated, so as to achieve realistic expectations. Nonetheless, the CPSI

indicated that what it does try to do before the start of a project is to measure the project baseline, which can be described as a method “used to measure how performance deviates from the plan. Your performance measurement would only be meaningful if you had an accurate baseline.” (<https://project-management.com/the-project-baseline-a-project-management-definition/>).

The CPSI also noted that this is not a perfect science, because there are some unintended consequences that may occur during the project that they could not have anticipated. It is also difficult for them to determine whether any positive results from the project are a result of their input or of other factors at play in the project’s context. More high-level engagements as well as research are necessary, in order to facilitate the eventual development of a more conducive impact evaluation model for the CPSI.

#### **5.5.6 The role of the CPSI in diffusing lessons**

Lastly, innovation units play a role in the sharing of lessons learnt about innovation from innovation projects and intrapreneurs (OECD 2017a: 141-142). The results from the CPSI indicate that the CPSI views knowledge sharing as an integral part of the innovation process. The CPSI facilitates its diffusion of lessons through its various knowledge platforms such as their journal, the Awards Ceremony, the MMIC and other publications from the CPSI such as their Pocket Guide. In addition, the CPSI’s workshops and the annual conference also provide additional platforms for the diffusion of innovation knowledge. The previous sections have revealed the importance of maintaining the relevance of the content provided by these platforms, so as to ensure that they make the desired impact.

This is more the case for the Pocket Guide which is outdated, although the CPSI has indicated plans to update the Pocket Guide. In addition, the indication from the intrapreneurs of having received no innovation related training within their organisations highlights a greater need for the CPSI’s workshops. However, the research results also revealed that the number of workshops being provided by the CPSI were currently not sufficient. The CPSI thus needs to consider how they can include innovation learning in the capacity building programmes offered within government departments and the public service. This process will be likely to require much stakeholder engagement, however, given the poor human and financial resources of the CPSI, it is imperative that they find ways in which to leverage existing government platforms and resources in order to achieve their mandate.

The above is also true for how knowledge is disseminated. Although the CPSI has a range of knowledge platforms, the results from the intrapreneurs indicate that public servants are generally unaware of the platforms offered by the CPSI. It was also mentioned that public servants at the grass-roots level had no knowledge of the CPSI. These are issues which require urgent attention, because if the information disseminated by the CPSI through its various platforms is not reaching the targeted audience, then the impact of the information shared will not be felt. The most obvious suggestion would be to increase the marketing of platforms offered by the CPSI, however the CPSI lacks a marketing budget, as stated in the research results. The CPSI should perhaps consider low cost options to market their services. A good start would be more frequent use of their social media platforms, which was noted as an area of improvement in the responses provided by the CPSI's staff.

In addition, the CPSI needs to also consider how the internal information and knowledge management systems of government departments can be leveraged, as another form of communication. The diverse nature of the South African Public Service workforce also needs to be considered when diffusing learning, because an impression that innovation is only for a certain group of people cannot be created. This is even more relevant, as the abovementioned comment that public servants at grass-roots level are not aware of the CPSI's existence, corroborated by the lack of lower level staff respondents amongst the intrapreneurs surveyed, indicates that some groups may currently be marginalised. Moreover, the CPSI's difficulty in accessing information within government departments is also an issue of concern. This however cannot be pinned on the CPSI, because they do not have the authority to force government departments to grant them access to their data, and this thus highlights the point made earlier about the need for political support. Another aspect of knowledge sharing in innovation is the facilitation of opportunities and platforms for the relevant stakeholders to connect and share knowledge, which is also covered in Chapters One and Two.

Whether the CPSI has created these knowledge networks is unclear, because although the CPSI states that they have, most of the intrapreneurs surveyed stated not having much contact with the CPSI since participating in the Awards Programme. The countries surveyed in Chapter Three indicate the importance of these networks, as vital platforms for sharing knowledge, exchanging ideas and facilitating collaborations on new projects. Furthermore, whereas the CPSI's intended approach to facilitating collaborations amongst intrapreneurs

in the public service seemingly focuses more upon connecting innovators in the same line of work, the examples from the countries surveyed in Chapter Three indicate a comparably broader approach with the inclusion of stakeholders in academia, private sector partners and practitioners in these networks. Perhaps, as suggested in Chapter One, the CPSI can investigate how these networks can be supported by HRM sections of departments, the National School of Government and the NSI actors.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter examined the overall views of the key parties involved in the CPSI's mandate to promote a culture of intrapreneurship in the public service, namely the CPSI's staff members driving the innovation programme described in Chapter Four, as well as some of the public service intrapreneurs, identified from the CPSI's awards finalists. Although the results revealed that the views shared by the different segments of the research population were not always consistent, these notably enriched the analysis of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. As stated in the introduction, the significance of this chapter is that it addressed the primary objective of this study, which is to analyse the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. This was realised through the analysis of the CPSI's outputs as revealed in the results, against the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units can generally support the various stages of the innovation life cycle, which was presented in Chapter One's literature review. Based upon the research results provided, the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service can best be summarised as: encouraging the generation of ideas, testing, piloting, replicating and scaling innovative solutions, facilitating learning and knowledge sharing, as well as research and development.

The CPSI however faces several obstacles in the successful execution of its mandate, such as poor funding, and in some cases, a lack of policy and leadership support and the small size of the institution in comparison to the approximately said 1.5 million people (public servants) it must impact upon. However, despite these challenges, the CPSI is evidently still making an impact in the public service. There is however still more that the CPSI can do in order to maximise the impact of its outputs. Therefore, the conclusion and recommendations in this regard are presented in the next and final chapter of this study.

## CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

When the CPSI was established, the intention as stated in Chapter Four, was to cultivate the culture and practice of innovation in the public service, upon realising that the process of innovation required a specific focus. This, as communicated in Chapter One, was to ensure that the diverse needs of the citizens are met, bearing in mind the various socio-economic challenges which plague the country. Innovation became central to the resolution of these issues, with public servants being identified as the key sources of innovative solutions in the public service. However, the prevailing challenges facing the public service, framed around issues of efficiency and effectiveness, the emergence of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR and assertions of a lack of an intrapreneurial spirit in the public service, all pointed to a need to understand the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. Thus, the primary objective of this study was to conduct an analysis of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service.

The previous chapter predominantly aimed to address the above-mentioned primary objective of the study through the presentation of the research results from the interviews conducted and the questionnaires distributed. An analysis of the results was subsequently conducted using the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how innovation units can support the innovation life cycle in the public service. The chapter concluded that the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service can best be summarised as follows: encouraging the generation of ideas, research and development, testing, piloting, replicating and scaling of innovative solutions and facilitating learning and knowledge sharing. However, the analysis of this role revealed some obstacles encountered by the CPSI in its efforts to successfully execute its mandate. These obstacles included poor funding, inconsistent leadership support and the small size of the CPSI, in comparison to its mandate that extends into the public sector and the African continent.

As a result, this chapter provides detailed recommendations on how the obstacles can be addressed, in order to ultimately improve the CPSI's impact in the public service, in the context of promoting intrapreneurship. However, prior to this, the chapter begins with a reminder of the contents of the previous chapters, by providing a summary of the chapters, as well as a summary of the study's key findings. This will set the context for the

recommendations that will be provided. As a final focus of this chapter and study, suggestions of possible areas for future research within the context of this study will be made. This forms an acknowledgement of this study's view that although some conclusions on the CPSI's role in the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service have been drawn, these are by no means exhaustive, and further research in this context is required.

## **6.2 SUMMARY OF THE PRECEDING CHAPTERS**

The study consisted of six chapters in total, all of which aligned with the study's research objectives. Chapter One introduced the study by exploring the various aspects surrounding the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service context. The concept of intrapreneurship was described using the definitions provided by various scholars, so as to provide a clear understanding of the construct from the onset. It became evident from the definitions provided that the consensus amongst scholars is that intrapreneurship is an employee driven construct, in which the employee innovatively contributes to the resolution of challenges within their organisation that impact upon the effectiveness and efficiency of their service delivery. The chapter also extensively explored the OECD's perspective on how governments can foster innovation in the public service, which was based upon best practice data collected by the OECD. The chapter further explored key issues that later emerged as key themes in the subsequent chapters - for example, the impact of government rules and regulations, the role of HRM and budgeting processes in the intrapreneurship process, the importance of knowledge management and issues around risk and uncertainty in the intrapreneurship process.

The role of innovation units in the above-mentioned context was also explored, focusing upon the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units can contribute to the innovation process. This model was subsequently used in the analysis of the research results. In addition, Chapter One's literature review also explored the need for intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service, which ranged from a need to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government, to the emergence of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR. The literature review ultimately showed that the process and practice of intrapreneurship in the public service is quite complex and thus requires a coordinated approach. Lastly, the chapter detailed the study's research design as well as the research methodology employed, in order to gather the data presented and analysed in a chapter that followed later. The chapter

thoroughly described the research population and provided justification for the purposive sampling technique employed to select the participants. The chapter also outlined the motivation for the study, the research problem, the limitations of the study, and it described some of the key concepts found in the study. Thus, the chapter provided the foundational background for the overall study.

In Chapter Two, the conceptualisation of intrapreneurship within the discipline of Public Administration was provided. To achieve this, the chapter began with a brief description of the historical origins of the study of Public Administration, and how that extended into the Public Management dichotomy, which notably provided the foundational basis for the emergence of the New Public Management as a reform approach. The New Public Management, with its focus upon employing private sector practices in the public sector, provided the theoretical framework of the study, which also then notably influenced the development of the Theory of Public Entrepreneurship within the discipline of Public Administration. The discussions of the theory explored the ideas of various scholars and conceptualisations of the practice, with Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) views on reinventing government being regarded as the most influential ideas in this context.

Osborne and Gaebler's (1992) ideas on reinventing government were also noted to have influenced the NPM reforms in South Africa, which were linked to the promotion of an intrapreneurial approach in the public service. The promotion of intrapreneurship in this context was discussed under Cassim's (2011:63) four main conditions that nurture and promote intrapreneurial behavior in the public service, namely entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial structure, entrepreneurial management and entrepreneurial staff. Other key topics explored were the characteristics of the intrapreneur and the role of the sponsor, both of which expanded more upon the subject. The chapter's description of the construct and its nature in the public service therefore provided a theoretical and contextual basis upon which the CPSI's role in the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service could be analysed.

Furthermore, the purpose of Chapter Three of this study was to provide a variety of best practice examples of how different countries have effectively promoted and institutionalised intrapreneurship within their respective public services, which aligned with one of the study's research objectives, namely to explore examples of international best practice related to the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service context. Examples from the UK, the USA,



Denmark, Australia and the UAE were presented. The selection of these countries, as mentioned in Chapter Three's introduction, was informed by their higher ranking on the Global Innovation Index (2018). There was however a more predominant focus upon the country experiences of the USA and the UK, which was primarily influenced by Miller's (2005:70) assertion that the post-apartheid administrative reforms instituted in South Africa derived inspiration from those implemented in the USA and the UK, thus resulting in the presumption that the South African experience may likely refer to these countries for inspiration. The information in Chapter Three subsequently provided insight into what the role of the CPSI could be and formed a basis for Chapter Four's overview of the CPSI.

The objective of Chapter Four was to establish a clear understanding of what the CPSI is about and to clearly describe its mandate in the public service. This would provide the contextual background for the chapter on the analysis of the research results. Chapter Four explored the background of the CPSI's establishment, its guiding principles, its constitutional and legislative mandates, its organisational structure and the CPSI's various products and platforms. It was evident from the official documents surveyed in the chapter that through its strategic positioning as a component of government, the CPSI serves as a key facilitator for innovation in the public service. This chapter provided a backdrop for the next chapter, through which the CPSI's contribution, as described in the official documents in Chapter Four, could be compared to how the mandate is exercised in practice.

Chapter Five presented the research results from the data collected during the interviews conducted with the CPSI's senior managers, and the questionnaires distributed to the CPSI's staff in the three work streams, as well as to some of the intrapreneurs in the public service. As stated in the chapter's introduction, the aim of the chapter was twofold. Firstly, the chapter presented the results from the data collected from the study's research population, and secondly, an analysis of the findings applying the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units can generally support the various stages of the innovation life cycle, as described in Chapter One, was conducted. This was to ensure the achievement of the primary objective of the study, which was to provide an analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service. Moreover, the chapter explained the methodology followed for analysing data, while providing justification for the thematic analysis approach undertaken. The chapter concluded that the CPSI's role in the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service, based upon the

research results, can best be summarised as: encouraging the generation of ideas, testing, piloting, replicating and scaling innovative solutions, facilitating learning and knowledge sharing, as well as research and development. However, the CPSI seemingly faced some challenges that hampered the successful execution of its mandate, thus the chapter concluded that more could still be done to maximise the impact of the CPSI's outputs.

To this end, this chapter will provide recommendations on how the CPSI can overcome its challenges and maximise its impact in the public service. This is because it is evident that the CPSI plays a pivotal role in driving intrapreneurship in the public service. Therefore, ensuring that it functions optimally is not just important for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the public service's service delivery mandate, but it is most relevant in the age of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR, where the CPSI will certainly play a crucial role in engaging public servants in intrapreneurship. In the end, the chapter will indicate the possible areas of research that can be explored in the context of this study, before providing the studies concluding statement.

### **6.3 SUMMARY OF THE KEY FINDINGS**

As previously mentioned, this study made use of the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units can support the innovation life cycle in the public sector. The six variables covered by the model, namely: identifying problems, generating ideas, developing proposals, implementing projects, evaluating projects and diffusing lessons, were key in unearthing and analysing the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. It emerged at the end of Chapter Five that the CPSI *facilitates* the culture and practice of innovation in the public service. The word "facilitates" is stressed because it became evident that the CPSI merely provides the platforms and products to support and drive the culture and practice of innovation in the public service, but does not have the authority to instruct public service organisations to actively engage in its mandate or adopt the intrapreneurial solutions unearthed by the CPSI.

The findings of the study also revealed some unexpected aspects. For instance, the results showed that the official documents consulted in Chapter Four were to an extent limited in conveying the complexities around the execution of the listed products and platforms that the CPSI uses to achieve its innovation mandate. In addition, there were some inconsistent views in the accounts from the CPSI's staff and those from the intrapreneurs about some of

the CPSI's outputs. Therefore, this further justified the research population selected as the study was able to acquire a more holistic perspective of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service. Thus, it is against this background of the findings collected that the following summary of the key findings of the study is provided.

- i) Intrapreneurs in the public service are motivated by intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards to innovate.
- ii) The CPSI assists public servants with the identification of issues that require innovation by conducting research to identify the root causes of the identified challenges. However, this role is limited by their lack of access to departmental data, which is important for the CPSI to accurately identify the root causes of the public service issues identified.
- iii) Funding is an integral part of the intrapreneurship process, however it proves to be one of the CPSI's most predominant challenges, as it was revealed that they are poorly funded. As a result, the CPSI can only support a small number of intrapreneurial initiatives from public servants. In addition, the impact of their platforms such as the workshops are limited by the inability to fund them, and they are also unable to adequately market their products and platforms.
- iv) The CPSI's knowledge platforms and products, namely the Awards Programme, the Annual Conference, the CPSI Journal, the MMIC and workshops are key platforms used to drive idea generation, knowledge sharing and lessons and rewarding innovative behavior in the case of the awards. However, there remain questions around the accessibility of these platforms for all public servants. In addition, other concerns with regard to these platforms relate to the lack of enough workshops and a poor knowledge of the existence of the platforms by public servants.
- v) The size of the CPSI emerged as one of the predominant challenges to the CPSI's success. The CPSI does not have the capacity to meet the needs of 1.3 million public servants and 1.5 million people in total including the public sector, as it only has one central office to service the entire public service.
- vi) The mandate of the CPSI is not authoritative. Although the CPSI may encourage public servants to be intrapreneurial, and also indicate the relevance and need for a solution produced by an intrapreneur, as well as provide support for the development of the solution, they cannot force government departments to adopt solutions.

- vii) Treasury Regulations and legislation such as the PFMA were noted as being risk averse and therefore constricting of the practice of innovation in the public service.
- viii) The CPSI finds it difficult to evaluate the impact of their projects because the impact is usually not immediate but may take years to determine. However, the CPSI is required to report on impact on a quarterly and annual basis. As a result, they try to measure the project baseline, but this is not a perfect science.
- ix) Leadership support from both a bureaucratic and political perspective is identified as a key enabler of intrapreneurship in the public service, but the CPSI, to an extent, is still struggling to secure on-going consistent support from these parties.
- x) The CPSI relies upon partnerships to successfully execute its mandate, due to its limited resources.

As stated in Chapter One, the primary objective of this study was to conduct an analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service, so that in the end, recommendations on how this role can be enhanced can be provided. The next section will therefore serve that objective.

## **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Against the background provided the preceding sections of this chapter, this section provides a number of recommendations on how the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service can be improved. This aligns with the final objective of this study, which is listed in Chapter One as “to recommend effective ways in which to improve the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service”.

### **6.4.1 Integrating intrapreneurship into the HRM policies of government departments**

The research results, as well as the literature surveyed in the study, indicate the importance of integrating the practice of intrapreneurship within the HRM practices of an organisation, because HRM plays an important role in modelling the required behaviour of public servants. This study therefore recommends the integration of intrapreneurship into the HRM policies of public service organisations. The CPSI, through its Research and Development work stream, can assist with this process by leveraging their knowledge networks and partnerships that conduct research on such issues, to be able to provide advice on how this can be done effectively. HRM policies must align practices such as recruitment, retention,

performance management, compensation, rewarding and incentivising innovation and capacity building programmes with the country's innovation mandate, as outlined in the National Development Plan (2011).

A further recommendation, particularly around performance management, is the inclusion of a matrix such as the SLC scoring matrix described in Table 3.1 of Chapter Three, which evaluates the intrapreneurial contributions of public servants. The main benefit of this matrix is notably that intrapreneurial contributions from employees at the lower staff levels are assigned more points, a practice intended to increase their participation. This could benefit the South African Public Service, as the demographic outline of the intrapreneur respondents described in Chapter Five indicated a lack of representation from lower level staff members. Perhaps, to contextualise the model into the South African context, it could be linked with the Affirmative Action Policy of the country so that intrapreneurial employees from previously disadvantaged groups may earn more points to aid in their career progression. It is recommended that this be presented as a recommendation by the CPSI to the Minister for Public Service and Administration, because the DPSA, as a key department in establishing the norms and standards of the public service, can ensure that this is actioned across all public service institutions. In addition, in its 2013-2015 strategic plan, the DPSA makes a commitment to work jointly with the CPSI to, "support the institutionalisation of innovation" in the public service (DPSA 2013:10)

This will help to create an enabling environment for intrapreneurship within public service institutions, which is what the CPSI seemingly struggles to achieve from the outside, with no authority to instruct departments on how to structure institutional arrangements and practices. This will notably ensure an alignment of the internal organisational practices of the public service with the mandate of the CPSI.

#### **6.4.2 Enhancing partnerships**

The research results indicated that the CPSI relied on partnerships for the successful execution of its mandate, particularly due to their constrained resources. It is therefore recommended that the CPSI investigates how existing partnerships can be further expanded, so as to cater to some of their other needs. For instance, the study recommends that the CPSI investigate how they can work with their partners in academia in order to integrate innovation into the higher education curriculum, which has been done in the USA,

the UAE and the UK examples in Chapter Three. This could present a mutually beneficial opportunity for both parties, as one of the challenges to the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service identified in the research results was that people coming into the employ of the public service, even at management level, did not possess an intrapreneurial mindset. This is an area with which the Higher Education (HE) institutions could assist. The benefits of integrating innovation into the HE curricula for academia is best explained by Jackson (2010:29), who states that “graduates are now considered sources of innovation by organisations”. However, higher education institutions are said to be failing to produce graduates that possess the “soft-skills” required for them to make innovative contributions in their workplaces (Jackson 2010:29). Therefore, it would be mutually beneficial for both parties to collaboratively discuss how innovation can be included in the curricula.

In addition, the CPSI can also leverage the platforms of their other partners and stakeholders, such as trade unions, in order to market the CPSI and its platforms to improve their reach of public servants. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) for example, is said to have around 1.7 million members (Umraw 2018). Although not all its members are public servants, it can be presumed that it represents many public service employees. The CPSI can also explore the development of more innovation related courses with the NSG, which caters for the various groups of public servants in the public service, as the results indicated a need for more such learning platforms. The CPSI should also consider how oversight bodies such as the Office of the Public Protector and the Auditor General can serve as sources of information and data that the CPSI struggles to get access to when trying to identify the root causes of service delivery challenges in the public service.

#### **6.4.3 Developing a national public service innovation strategy**

One of the deductions that can be made from the research results against the backdrop of the literature review, is that reforms instituted are not well infused into the existing traditional practices of the public service. The practice of public service innovation must be made to fit the broader context of the public service, which this study has shown consists of various actors, structures and processes. It is therefore recommended against the findings of this study of a lack of an innovation strategy for the public service as a whole, that such a strategy or framework is developed for the public service. This is also notably in line with international best practice, as shown in the examples of the UK, Australia, the USA and the UAE country

examples in Chapter Three. The strategy would serve as a blueprint for the practice of innovation within the public service.

This study suggests that the strategy covers some of the following prevalent areas of concern noted across the study such as:

- i) The high failure rate of innovations and how risk management should be approached in that context;
- ii) an explanation of how innovation and intrapreneurship align with the objectives of government;
- iii) the financing and incentivising of innovation;
- iv) how the procurement of non-technological innovation should take place;
- v) the role of leadership in the public service;
- vi) how quickly a solution can be infused into the public service without having to struggle to get buy-in from top managers whose budgets are already set for three years;
- vii) establishing access to information in line with the government's commitment to the open government partnership mentioned in Chapter One.

This will better integrate the CPSI into the public service and better contextualise its mandate, so that it is able to obtain the support it requires in order to meet its mandate. Furthermore, as the CPSI is currently developing a proposal for a more effective funding model to be presented to Parliament, it is recommended that they draft a proposal of this suggested strategy to present to Parliament as well.

#### **6.4.4 Measuring impact**

As indicated in Chapter One's description of the role of innovation units, as well as the research results, innovation units must be able to show the impact derived from their implemented projects. It however emerged from the research results that the CPSI found it difficult to measure the impact of their implemented solutions, because the rewards often took a long time to materialise. Nonetheless, it was evident that measuring impact was a necessary practice for the CPSI, so as to ensure the continued support of their political principals and donors, to whom they must account and whose support is paramount for the CPSI to achieve its mandate. The study, in this context, recommends the adoption of an

impact measurement tool such as the one developed by the International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA), depicted in Table 6.1 below. The IDIA is described as “an informal platform for knowledge exchange and collaboration around development innovation” (IDIA 2017:6). The model was developed to assist innovation funding bodies and other organisations undertaking innovative solutions in measuring the impact of the solutions implemented in their respective environments (IDIA 2017:6).

**Table 6.1: A high level architecture for measuring the impact of innovation**

LEADING INDICATORS	OUTCOME INDICATORS
<p><b>DOMAIN: Impact on Beneficiaries</b> Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Expected lives saved &amp; improved</li> <li>■ Projected lives saved &amp; improved</li> <li>■ Available evidence supporting effectiveness</li> <li>■ Potential to impact the most vulnerable / in need and target equity / gender groups</li> <li>■ Adherence to 'Do No Harm' principle</li> </ul>	<p><b>DOMAIN: Impact on Beneficiaries</b> Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Actual lives saved &amp; improved</li> <li>■ Projected lives saved &amp; improved</li> <li>■ Direct measurement, 'use of evidence-based interventions' and new knowledge gained</li> <li>■ Equity measures and disaggregated data by gender and vulnerable / high-need target populations impacted</li> <li>■ Externalities and unintended effects</li> </ul>
<p><b>DOMAIN: Scale</b> Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Viable Business model (including IP if applicable)</li> <li>■ Expected demand / market readiness</li> </ul>	<p><b>DOMAIN: Scale</b> Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Replication of business model in different geographies</li> <li>■ Actual and projected market demand</li> </ul>
<p><b>DOMAIN: Sustainability</b> Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Smart partners (especially from country governments and companies/investors) willing to co-fund</li> <li>■ Expected revenue generated</li> <li>■ Potential to influence policy / systems change</li> <li>■ Proven entrepreneurial success of the team</li> </ul>	<p><b>DOMAIN: Sustainability</b> Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ External funding or support attracted (especially from country governments and companies/investors)</li> <li>■ Actual and projected revenue generated</li> <li>■ Policy / systems change</li> <li>■ Improvements in innovator capacity</li> </ul>

Source: IDIA (2017:7)

The model describes the main domains of impact that need to be considered when measuring the impact of innovation, namely: impact upon beneficiaries, scale and sustainability. The domains consist of descriptions of the success indicators under each domain. The table is divided into two parts, i.e. the leading indicators and the outcome indicators, both of which consist of the same domains, but have different indicators under each domain. This is because the leading indicators are used to measure the projected impact of undertaking an innovative solution. On the opposite side are the outcome indicators, which would then be used to evaluate the actual impact achieved from



implementing the solution. It is further stated that the “lives saved and improved” is highlighted in red on both sides of the table, because that should be considered the main indicator of success for all innovative solutions implemented (IDIA 2017:6).

Given that this study, in various sections, has discussed the importance of contextualising an adopted practice, it is advised that the CPSI amend the contents of the proposed approach to fit their contextual circumstances. It can be further noted that the fact that the model considers the importance of the impact upon the lives of citizens as the most important indicator of success, strengthens its relevance for the South African context. This is because it noticeably aligns with the basic principles of public administration in South Africa summarised in Chapter Two, as outlined in Section 195 (1) of the Constitution, which in summary are to ensure that the needs of all the country’s citizens are met.

#### **6.4.5 Increasing funding for innovation**

The study’s research results show that the process of innovation is one that requires significant funding. The results further indicated that the CPSI was not well funded, hence it faced limitations regarding the level of support it could provide to intrapreneurs in the public service. Some of the limitations were as follows: inability to adequately market their products and platforms, the compromised quantity of their outputs such as workshops, and the inability to increase the staff capacity to better cater for the large numbers of public servants who need support. Since the results stated that, at the time of compiling this study, the CPSI was in the process of developing a proposal for a more effective funding model for innovation in the public service, the study recommends the following funding approaches that can be explored to better fund the CPSI’s activities:

- i) Government departments should allocate funding from their annual budgets for the development and implementation of intrapreneurial solutions from their employees. To ensure compliance, this should be included in the Treasury Regulations with which government departments should comply. This is similar to the i3 Fund established in the Department of Education in the USA (Chapter Three), which is a fund specifically for the support of intrapreneurship amongst staff members within the department.
- ii) A percentage of the national budget should be allocated to public service innovation. In the example of the UAE in Chapter Three, 1% of the country’s federal budget is allocated to fund public service innovation.

- iii) The CPSI should consider how it can commercialise some of its outputs as an alternative revenue stream. This is especially important, since the research results indicate that the CPSI's mandate extends into Africa and some of its offerings, such as the MMIC, are said to attract international visitors.

#### **6.4.6 Improving leadership support for intrapreneurship**

The research results have also indicated the importance of leadership support from both bureaucratic and political leaders. However, the CPSI does not always receive adequate leadership support, which hinders its ability to adequately promote intrapreneurship in the public service. As leadership support is required in the various stages of the innovation life-cycle, as stated in the previous chapter, this study recommends the following steps to be taken to improve leadership support for intrapreneurship and innovation in the public service:

- i) Leaders at both bureaucratic and political levels should receive compulsory training on innovation management in the public service. In the event of changes in leadership, the new leaders should undergo the same training.
- ii) The promotion of intrapreneurship within their government departments should be included as a key performance area on the performance appraisals of both bureaucratic and political heads of government departments.
- iii) The leadership instability characterised by constant changes in leadership should be better managed. It is recommended that leaders be encouraged to facilitate handovers of the intrapreneurial projects in progress, for continuity purposes, and for regulations that prevent them from disrupting ongoing projects to be set, as these disruptions may also have cost implications.
- iv) In its promotion of innovation amongst public servants, the CPSI should also focus upon promoting more types of intrapreneurship, as described by Roberts (1992:66) in Chapter Two, specifically the political and policy types of intrapreneurship. These could improve political support for intrapreneurship and promote the development of policies aligned with the country's contemporary innovation needs.
- v) More diversity in the leadership ranks, in terms of age, is required, as studies show that older leaders are more risk averse and inclined to vote against intrapreneurial initiatives than their younger counterparts (Gomes et al. 2015:709).

- vi) All government departments should be required to develop an innovation manifesto, of which the CPSI's Pocket Guide provides a suitable example.
- vii) Regulatory institutions such as the National Treasury and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) should relax regulations and create more flexible policies conducive to innovation. An option that can be explored further for the CPSI are targeted rule exemptions mentioned in Chapter One, through which government organisations can request exemptions from regulations that they perceive as a barrier to them achieving their mandates.

To address some of these recommendations, high level intervention from public service regulatory structures will be required, however, the CPSI can assist by highlighting the above recommendations as areas in which leadership support can be improved in the public service.

#### **6.4.7 Improving the delivery of programme outputs**

The delivery of the CPSI's knowledge platforms and products requires some improvements. It was revealed in the research results that some public servants, even those that had engaged with the CPSI, were unaware of some of its various offerings. The study therefore recommends the improvement in the marketing of these products and platforms. Given the CPSI's budget constraints, it is recommended that the CPSI explores innovative ways in which they can market their offerings, and perhaps pose it as a challenge for their own employees to generate innovative ideas in this regard. It is also recommended that more innovation related workshops be provided, as the research results indicated that the quantity of workshops provided was currently not sufficient. The CPSI should further explore how some of these workshops can be facilitated online, so that they are able to reach more public servants.

The structure and facilitation of knowledge networks must also be improved. The study recommends that these networks be inclusive of various actors and stakeholders from sectors such as academia, private sector partners and practitioners, and include the connection of public service organisations to share experiences on adopting and implementing intrapreneurial initiatives. As suggested in Chapter One, the CPSI can investigate how these networks can also be supported by the HRM sections of departments,

the National School of Government and the NSI actors. An exploration of online platforms that can be leveraged to facilitate these connections should be conducted. Furthermore, the CPSI should develop its own ideation platform where public servants can generate and share their innovative ideas, as well as receive support in developing those ideas. As indicated in Chapter Five, the CPSI were using the Innovation Hub's Open IX platform for ideation, as they were unable to develop their own platform due to cost constraints. Therefore, it is recommended that the CPSI revisits its attempt to create their own ideation platform. This could follow the format of the TSA's idea factory platform described in Chapter Three, which essentially provides an online platform that facilitates the exchange of ideas between public servants on how to improve internal processes, which then receives feedback and suggestions from the network of public servants on areas of development.

To address the issue of the high costs of developing such as platform, it is recommended that the CPSI elicit the assistance of their network of systems developers, through their "Trailblazers" awards recipients. As described in the previous chapter, Trailblazers are young developers in government who are developing in-house systems that are saving governments money. Therefore, since these public servants have managed to develop government systems with very limited resources, they could assist the CPSI in developing its own ideation platform.

## **6.5 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this chapter was to draw the study to conclusion. To achieve this, the chapter provided a summary of the previous chapters and key findings, outlined the study's recommendations in relation to the findings and suggested areas for future research. This task aligned with the main purpose of the study, which was to analyse the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship within the public service. As previously mentioned, the study employed the use of the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units can support the innovation life cycle, in order to conduct the said analysis. As outlined in Chapter One, the primary objective of the study was to analyse the role of the CPSI in the promotion of intrapreneurship within the South African Public Service. In addition, the study was guided by the following secondary objectives: to provide a conceptualisation of intrapreneurship within the discipline of Public Administration; to explore the programmes and processes employed by the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship within the public

service; to explore examples of international best practice related to the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service context and to recommend effective ways in which to improve the promotion of intrapreneurship in the public service. As stated in Chapter One, these objectives would allow the researcher to gain significant insight into addressing the research problem.

The various chapters of the study provided evidence of the important role of public servants as the identified key drivers of innovation in the public service. The study's problem statement however drew attention to the perception of a lack of an intrapreneurial spirit in the South African Public Service, and a need to "awaken" that spirit (Maseko 2016:31). This was coupled with the clear calls for innovation to engulf the South African Public Service contained in national policy documents such as the National Development Plan (2011), the Public Service Charter (2013) and Section 5 of the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997) for improved government effectiveness and efficiency. These calls were exacerbated by the emergence of events such as the 4th IR, and provided the research motivation for this study's analysis of the role of the CPSI as a public service innovation unit, in promoting intrapreneurship within the public service. In this context, the study discovered that innovation units such as the CPSI play a vital role in facilitating and coordinating the evidently complex process of intrapreneurship in the public service, as was evidenced by the research results presented in Chapter Five.

It emerged from the research results that the CPSI plays an important role in providing a safe space for public servants to innovate and supports the intrapreneurial process through the programme outputs of their three work streams, namely the Enabling Environment, Research and Development and Solution Support and Incubation work streams. However, there remained various areas for improvement in the CPSI's execution of its mandate in this context, thus this chapter provided recommendations to this effect. Chapters One to Three of the study showed that intrapreneurship is not only an interdisciplinary practice, but also one that requires much coordination of resources and participation from various public service stakeholders. This was further elucidated in Chapters Four and Five, where a juxtaposition of the information in the two chapters indicates that the description of the CPSI's outputs on paper, described in Chapter Four's survey of official documents, differs significantly to how it occurs in practice, as indicated in Chapter Five's presentation of the research findings.

The consideration of the recommendations made in this chapter will not only serve to increase the intrapreneurial output of the South African Public Service, but will also improve the CPSI's capacity to support this practice. This will ultimately contribute to the achievement of Vision 2030, as described by South Africa's NDP (2011) and create a more effective and efficient public service that is responsive to the needs of the country's citizens.

## **6.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Although this study has provided an analysis of the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service by applying the OECD's (2017a:141) model on how public sector innovation units can best support the innovation life cycle, there remain more areas of exploration in this regard. Given that this study employed a qualitative research approach, the research population consisted of a small number of respondents. Further research assessing the CPSI's impact in the public service can be conducted, using a quantitative approach to survey a much larger pool of respondents, specifically in the case of the intrapreneurs, to obtain a much broader view of the country's intrapreneurial landscape. This is also important because given the ever-changing nature of innovation, especially in the era of the 4<sup>th</sup> IR, where the technology is said to be disruptive in nature (WEF 2016), continuous studies to assess the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship in the public service are required.

Further research is also required to support some of the recommendations made in the previous section, such as the employment of targeted rule exemptions through which the CPSI can request exemptions from legislation that they perceive as a barrier to them achieving their mandates; as well as the proposed funding mechanisms. These recommendations will notably need to be empirically tested, in order to establish their feasibility and viability. In addition, research that contextualises the practice of intrapreneurship into the Leadership Theory is necessary, as the results of this study indicated the centrality of leadership support in enabling intrapreneurship in the public service. Moreover, another area of possible research, as suggested by the OECD (2017a:162), is how innovation units can function in a way that ensures that innovation becomes a sustained activity in the public sector, rather than it being perceived as a once-off activity confined to an innovation unit. Lastly, additional research on how the CPSI, with



a mandate that is not authoritative, can be better positioned or structured to be more influential in the public service would be beneficial.

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## ANNEXURE A: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Economic and  
Management Sciences

### School of Public Management and Administration

#### An analysis of the role of the Centre for Public Service Innovation in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

Research conducted by:

Miss. P.L.N. Sono (11180359)  
Cell: 072 680 5031

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Pinky Sono, Masters student from the School of Public Management and Administration at the University of Pretoria.

The purpose of the study is to conduct an analysis of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service. In this context, intrapreneurship can be defined as a process through which public servants provide innovative solutions aimed at improving identified issues with their organisation's internal processes, products or services.

Please note the following:

- The answers you give will be treated as strictly confidential as this is an anonymous study interview.
- Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.
- The interview should not take more than 30 minutes of your time.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.
- Please contact my study leader, Professor Lianne Malan, on 012 420 2063 or Lianne.Malan@up.ac.za if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- You have read and understand the information provided above.
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.

---

Participant's signature

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Date

## ANNEXURE B: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Economic and  
Management Sciences

### School of Public Management and Administration

#### An analysis of the role of the Centre for Public Service Innovation in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

Research conducted by:

Miss. P.L.N. Sono (11180359)

Cell: 072 680 5031

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Pinky Sono, Masters student from the School of Public Management and Administration at the University of Pretoria.

The purpose of the study is to conduct an analysis of the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service. In this context, intrapreneurship can be defined as a process through which public servants provide innovative solutions aimed at improving identified issues with their organisation's internal processes, products or services.

Please note the following:

- The answers you give will be treated as strictly confidential as this is an anonymous study questionnaire.
- Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.
- The questionnaire should not take more than 15-20 minutes of your time.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may be published in an academic journal. We will provide you with a summary of our findings on request.
- Please contact my study leader, Professor Lianne Malan, on 012 420 2063 or Lianne.Malan@up.ac.za if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- You have read and understand the information provided above.
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.

---

Participant's signature

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Date

## **ANNEXURE C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES**

### **Interview schedule for the Executive Director of the CPSI**

**Research title:** An analysis of the role of the Centre for Public Service Innovation in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

**Interviewer:** Miss Pinky Sono

**Date of interview:** dd/mm/year

**Approximate duration of interview:** 30 minutes

1. Please describe the mandate of the CPSI?
2. What is the organisational status of the CPSI (e.g. an autonomous unit/part of an individual ministry/part of a directorate or unit)?
3. Are there government policies or legislation to support the CPSI's mandate? If yes, please mention them.
4. How would you generally describe the CPSI's role in promoting intrapreneurship in the Public Service?
5. Which Public Service employees are your programmes aimed at (e.g. top management, middle management, administrative staff)?
6. How do public servants access the services offered by the CPSI?
7. How does the work of the CPSI complement the action of other enablers of innovation within Public Service institutions such as Human Resource Management, Financial and Information management?
8. Who are the CPSI's strategic partners and how do these partnerships support the CPSI's mandate?
9. In what way do political office bearers support the mandate of the CPSI?
10. How has the CPSI addressed the issue of risk as a component of innovation in the public service?
11. What are some of the most significant obstacles in the CPSI's intent to encourage innovation amongst public servants?
12. How is the overall impact of the CPSI's work measured?
13. In your opinion, what makes the CPSI model (i.e the establishment of an innovation unit for the Public Service) more effective at promoting intrapreneurship amongst



public servants than the promotion of intrapreneurship being the sole mandate of individual government departments?

14. In your view, what other opportunities can the CPSI explore to increase intrapreneurship amongst public servants in the South African Public Service?

### **Interview schedule for the senior manager: Research and Development Work Stream**

**Research title:** An analysis of the role of the Centre for Public Service innovation in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

**Interviewer:** Miss Pinky Sono

**Date of interview:** dd/mm/year

**Approximate duration of interview:** 30 minutes

1. Please describe the overall nature of the work done by the Research and Development (R&D) Work Stream?
2. What role does R&D play in sustaining a culture of innovation in the public service?
3. What is the nature of the research conducted by the CPSI and who are your primary sources of information/data?
4. Are research findings shared with public servants or are they for the exclusive use of the CPSI? Please explain.
5. Are government departments or public servants equipped to perform this function (R&D) themselves or are they reliant on the CPSI for any R&D related needs for their innovations?
6. How does the CPSI use existing information management systems in individual government departments to promote innovation amongst public servants?
7. In the case of R&D, how are collaborations and partnerships enablers of the CPSI's encouragement of intrapreneurship in the public service?
8. What are some of the challenges encountered by the R&D Work Stream in its effort to effectively carry out its mandate?
9. How is the impact of the R&D Work Stream's outputs measured?
10. What assessment tool is used by the CPSI to assess the innovation outputs of individual government departments?

11. In your view, what other opportunities can the R&D Work Stream explore to better support the CPSI's intent to entrench a culture of innovation amongst public servants?

**Interview schedule for the senior manager: Enabling Environment Work Stream**

**Research title:** An analysis of the role of the centre for public service innovation in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

**Interviewer:** Miss Pinky Sono

**Date of interview:** dd/mm/year

**Approximate duration of interview:** 30 minutes

1. Please describe the purpose of the Enabling Environment Work Stream?
2. Based on your experience, what are the most critical enablers of innovation in the South African public service?
3. Please describe all efforts/programmes driven by your work stream to create an enabling environment for public servants to innovate in the Public Service? How is the impact of these efforts measured?
4. What role does the CPSI play in encouraging Public Service institutions to create internal cultures and structures for intrapreneurship to take place?
5. What innovation capacity building programmes does the CPSI provide for public servants in the Public Service? Please name and provide a brief description of the programmes.
6. In what way does the CPSI build leadership capacity for effective innovation management within Public Service institutions?
7. In what way does the CPSI use/consider diversity to inspire innovation amongst public servants?
8. What role does the CPSI play in equipping Public Service institutions to manage risk, as a component of intrapreneurship in the Public Service?
9. Does the CPSI facilitate opportunities for collaborations between intrapreneurs across the Public Service? If yes, please explain.
10. What role does the CPSI play in the rewarding/incentivising of innovative behaviour by public servants?

11. In your opinion, what are some of the key challenges encountered by the CPSI in its effort to create an enabling environment for intrapreneurship in the Public Service? Comment on how these challenges can be or are being addressed.
12. In your view, what other opportunities can the CPSI explore to increase the level of engagement by public servants in its services and programmes?

**Interview schedule for the senior manager: Solution Support and Incubation Work Stream**

**Research title:** An analysis of the role of the centre for public service innovation in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

**Interviewer:** Miss Pinky Sono

**Date of interview:** dd/mm/year

**Approximate duration of interview:** 30 minutes

1. Please describe the purpose and nature of the work performed by the CPSI's Solution Support and Incubation Work Stream?
2. Please describe the nature of support this work stream provides to public servants undertaking innovative projects?
3. Does the CPSI provide ideation (the formation of ideas) support to public servants who are interested in innovating? Please elaborate.
4. What types of innovations by public servants are supported by the CPSI?
5. How are non-technological innovations such as process innovation incubated?
6. Is the "Solution Support and Incubation" of innovative ideas by public servants performed exclusively by the CPSI for the Public Service? Please explain.
7. Who are the stakeholders involved in the "solution's support and incubation" process and what are their roles?
8. How long does the incubation process take?
9. Are the innovators behind the solution directly involved in the incubation process of the solution? Please explain.
10. Once an innovative solution by a public servant has been tested and implemented, what relationship does the CPSI maintain with the innovator?
11. Please briefly discuss some of the challenges encountered by the Solution Support and Incubation Work Stream in exercising its mandate?



12. In your view, what other opportunities can the CPSI explore to increase the level of engagement by public servants with its services and programmes?

## ANNEXURE D: SELF-ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CPSI EMPLOYEES

**RESEARCH TITLE:** An analysis of the role of the Centre for Public Service Innovation in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Your contribution will assist in the compiling of findings and recommendations in relation to the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship (innovation by public servants) in the South African Public Service.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Please answer all the questions. You will not be able to submit the questionnaire if there are unanswered questions.
- Estimated duration: 20-30 minutes

### PLEASE TICK THE FOLLOWING BOX IF YOU CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE:

- I hereby consent to participate in the study and understand that my participation is voluntary and anonymous and that the information will be kept strictly confidential.

### QUESTIONS:

1. Please describe your role at the CPSI? Indicate which one of the CPSI's three work streams your role falls under.

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2. a) Please describe the projects or programme outputs in your area of work.

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- b) In what way do the projects/programmes mentioned above contribute to the promotion of innovation amongst public servants?



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c) How are the achievements of the abovementioned projects/programmes measured?

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3. a) Briefly describe some of the internal challenges (those emanating from the CPSI) that present a barrier to the successful execution of the projects/programmes described in response to question 2?

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b) Briefly describe some of the external challenges (those emanating from outside of the CPSI) that present a barrier to the successful execution of the initiatives described in response to question 2?

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4) What is your understanding of the CPSI's overall role in promoting innovation amongst public servants?

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5) In your view, has the establishment of the CPSI improved the culture of innovation amongst public servants?

a) Yes
b) No

Please explain your answer:

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6) In your opinion, is there sufficient awareness amongst public servants regarding the CPSI's existence, mandate and how its services can be accessed?

Yes
No

Please explain your answer:

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7) In your view, what other opportunities can the CPSI explore to increase the level of engagement of public servants in its services and programmes?

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8) Have you participated in any training or capacity building initiatives related to your role since joining the CPSI?

a) Yes
b) No

9) If answered “Yes” in the previous question, please describe the training you have received.

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10) In what way has the CPSI encouraged you to be innovative?

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11) Have you produced any innovative ideas towards improving the Public Service or the CPSI?

a) Yes I have
b) Not yet, but I am keen
c) I do not consider myself innovative

12) If answered “a” to question 11, were the CPSI’s resources available for you to explore your innovative idea?

a) Yes
b) No
c) Not applicable

13) If answered “b” to question 11, are you aware of any CPSI programmes that could help you generate ideas?

a) Yes
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b) No
c) Not applicable

If yes, please state the programme:

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14) Additional comments:

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

**ANNEXURE E: SELF-ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE INTRAPRENEURS**

**RESEARCH TITLE:** An analysis of the role of the Centre for Public Service Innovation in promoting intrapreneurship in the South African Public Service.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Your contribution will assist in the compiling of findings and recommendations in relation to the role of the CPSI in promoting intrapreneurship (innovation by public servants) in the South African Public Service.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Please answer all the questions. You will not be able to submit the questionnaire if there are unanswered questions.
- Estimated duration: 20-30 minutes

**PLEASE TICK THE FOLLOWING BOX IF YOU CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE:**

- I hereby consent to participate in the study and understand that my participation is voluntary and anonymous and that the information will be kept strictly confidential.

**1. PERSONAL DETAILS**

**A. JOB POSITION**

Top management
Middle management
Core staff
Admin
Other:

**B. AGE**

18-25
26-38
39-45
46-53
54-60
60+

### C. GENDER

Male
Female

### D. LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Primary School
High School
Diploma
Bachelor's degree
Honours degree
Masters degree
PHD
Other:

## 2. ORGANISATIONAL CREATIVITY

	INSTRUCTIONS: Please read the following statements and indicate whether you agree, somewhat agree, disagree or somewhat disagree with each of the statements.	Agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree
	<b>STATEMENTS:</b>				
1	My organisation has an innovation manifesto /a formal document outlining its innovation goals				
2	My organisation encourages innovation and creative risk taking from employees				
3	My organisation provides all necessary resources to its employees for solution implementation.				
4	My organisation supports avoidance of unnecessary rules and procedures that restrict and delay innovation by employees				
5	Innovation in my organisation is a team effort				

6	The information I need to develop my innovative ideas is easily accessible				
7	My innovative contribution is accounted for in my performance appraisal				
8	My organisation has provided me with formal training in the area of innovation or creative thinking				
9	I can easily approach my manager to discuss any new idea				
10	I am rewarded by my organisation for my innovative ideas that are implemented				

### 3. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

3.1 What motivated you to become an intrapreneur?

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3.2 What incentives/rewards (if any) have you received for your innovations?

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3.3 How did you hear about the CPSI and what prompted you to enter the CPSI awards?

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3.4 Are you aware of any programmes offered by the CPSI that support innovation by public servants? List all known programmes and indicate which ones you have participated in.

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3.5 What kind of support have you received from the CPSI on your journey as an innovator?

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3.6 What additional support would you have liked to receive from the CPSI?

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3.7 Since participating in the awards programme, what has been the nature of your interaction, if any, with the CPSI?

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3.8 What challenges have you experienced as an innovator in the Public Service?

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3.9 Do you plan on innovating again? Please explain your answer.

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3.10 What do you think can be done to encourage more innovation by public servants?

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3.11 Additional comments:

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!**