



BSI Standards Publication

Innovation management — Example implementations of innovation operation measurements

National foreword

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Innovation management — Example implementations of innovation operation measurements

*Management de l'innovation — Exemples de mise en œuvre de
mesures des opérations d'innovation*

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Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
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Foreword

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The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 279, *Innovation management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

0.1 Innovation, uncertainties, risks and measurements for evidence-based decisions

This document provides some illustrative examples of how organizations of different kinds, sizes and innovation objectives can apply ISO 56008, the International Standard on innovation operation measurements, to reduce uncertainties and risk. ISO 56008 provides guidance for organizations on designing and implementing appropriate measurements to make evidence-based decisions for achieving objectives effectively, efficiently, ethically and in a timely manner while minimizing waste.

Innovation involves risk-taking in a manner fundamentally different from established operational activities due to the unknown realm faced by an organization in its innovation attempts, which are generally characterized by the potential for costly errors, failure and needless waste of time, material and financial resources. Measurements, along with well-thought-out corrective actions, learning for improvement and suitable changes in behaviour, are the basis for evidence-based decision-making and planning.

The quality of decision-making depends on how well people understand the innovation uncertainties and issues they are facing, how they choose what to measure, how they implement the measuring and present the results for action, how management considers the results, and what learning is drawn from the measurement itself.

0.2 Purpose of ISO 56008:2024

ISO 56008 provides guidance to organizations on addressing the fundamental issues of an organization's innovation operations:

- Are we doing the right things? In terms of alignment with the mission, innovation strategy and objectives by addressing the most important opportunities based on necessary evidence to optimize return on investment (ROI) and reduce uncertainties and risks.
- Are we doing these things in the right way? With the necessary and sufficient leadership, resources, capabilities, effective processes and organizational structures to achieve success.
- Are we succeeding? In terms of achieving valuable results and outcomes for our organization, for our society at large and for our environment.

ISO 56008 highlights the impacts measurements have on the organization's prospects for success, its people behaviour and its culture, especially that there are no universally appropriate collections of innovation operation measurements.

No two organizations are alike in their internal or external contexts. Therefore, there cannot be a universally appropriate collection of innovation measurements. It is important that each organization considers its needs within its context, formulates its objectives, undertakes suitable innovation initiatives and measures them appropriately when needed.

[Figure 1](#) describes the fundamental ideas concerning preparation, progress and results of innovation operations together with associated measurements for making evidence-based decisions.

Organizations are required to ask critical questions about relevant aspects of their innovation operations in order to determine the right indicators for measurement. They are required to design the metrics and measurement procedures to obtain meaningfully actionable results to make the necessary decisions. All of these are described in detail in ISO 56008:2024, Clause 4.

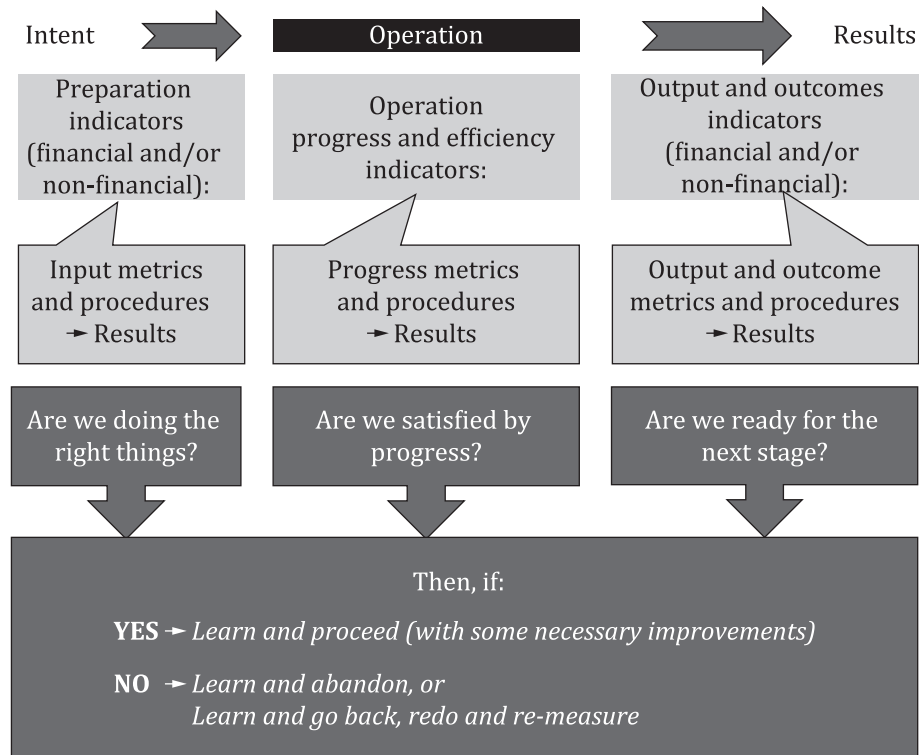


Figure 1 — Measuring and deciding on innovation operations

0.3 Structure of this document

This document contains, in addition to this introduction, scope, normative references and terms and definition clauses, six content clauses each containing a fictitious, albeit typical, illustrative example of an organization measuring some of its innovation operations (as shown in [Figure 2](#)):

- a mid-size company undertaking service innovation (see [Clause 4](#));
- a not-for-profit organization measuring social innovations (see [Clause 5](#));
- a government organization trying to develop innovative programmes (see [Clause 6](#));
- an ambitious small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) aiming for a major business model innovation (see [Clause 7](#));
- a spin-off company pursuing technology-based innovations (see [Clause 8](#));
- a large company managing its diverse portfolio of innovations (see [Clause 9](#)).

Organization	Innovation operation	ISO 56008 clause references								
		Clause 4 Fundamentals of innovation operation measurements	Clause 5 Measurements for establishing innovation operations	Opportunities identification					Clause 7 Innovation initiative measurements	Clause 8 Innovation portfolio measurements
				Identify opportunities	Create concepts	Validate concepts	Develop solutions	Deploy solutions		
Mid-size company	Service innovations	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Not-for-profit organization	Social innovations	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Government organization	Innovative programmes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
SME	Business model innovations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Spin-off company	Technology innovations	✓					✓	✓		
Large company	Innovation portfolio measurements	✓								✓

Figure 2 — Structure and innovation operation coverage of this document

The examples were created by a selected team of experts with deep experience leading, or consulting on, the innovation management issues usually encountered by these types of organizations.

Each example reflects the working style and language typical of such organizations, whether they are large or small for-profit businesses, not-for-profit organizations or governmental (public service) organizations.

In all cases, the examples follow the guidance offered by ISO 56008 in terms of understanding the situation of the organization (both internal and external context), having a forward-looking innovation strategy with appropriately realistic objectives, being cognizant of uncertainties they are facing and risks they must manage, as explained in [Figure 3](#).

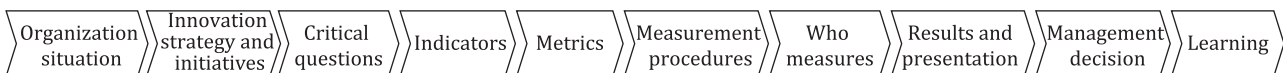


Figure 3 — Flow for illustrating how to think, design, implement and make measurement-based decisions

All the examples show how organizations can ask critical questions to determine the appropriate indicators to measure, and what kind of metrics they can choose, or design based on the guidance from ISO 56008. The examples also illustrate how the actual measurement procedure is implemented and by whom, with additional information on how the resulting data can be presented to the management team expected to make decisions. Some typical examples of decisions made are shown, together with the associated learning that can be of value to the innovation operation team and the organization at large.

Each clause stands on its own. Readers can choose to read just the example appropriate for their specific interests, although reading the other examples can also be beneficial.

Innovation management — Example implementations of innovation operation measurements

1 Scope

This document provides illustrative examples of how organizations of different kinds, sizes and innovation objectives can implement innovation operation measurements by using ISO 56008.

This document is applicable to:

- organizations that are seeking to define and implement an innovations operations measurement approach;
- organizations and interested parties seeking to improve the areas of accountability, transparency and evidence-based assessment of innovation operations;
- providers of training in innovation operations and measurements, including assessment of and consultancy for achieving results;
- experts in innovation operations evaluation and impact assessment, favouring the use of a harmonized guidance International Standard.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

No terms and definitions are listed in this document.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

4 Mid-size company: Service innovation operation measurements example

4.1 EduTrain

4.1.1 General

EduTrain is a medium-size skills development and training organization based in the small country of Serenia. The company has a client list of over 1 500 loyal customers. Today, offerings include skills consultancy, short online training courses and learning programmes to suit specific educational needs.

4.1.2 Innovation mission and objectives

EduTrain wanted to create lasting value that can help students of all walks of life build and enhance skills. The main objective was to use evidence-based decision-making to support innovation operations measurement activities and to ensure that investment in innovation activities lead to the desired results.

For this reason, the organization's leadership decided to apply the guidance innovation management standard, ISO 56008. This is part of their story on how they practically applied the guidance standard to their mid-size service organization.

4.1.3 Innovation focus

The organization needed to innovate its service offering. Solutions had to consider the current business environment and the recent explosion of online and remote offerings.

EduTrain recently appointed Melanie as Innovation Manager at the organization to ensure that concepts are more effectively managed towards implementation and delivery. Supported by the organization's leadership and her innovation team, Melanie decided to create an innovation programme to find new opportunities in the education industry and bring them to market for EduTrain.

This resulted in the launch of an innovation programme that was managed as a project, so that outputs could be tracked regularly.

Melanie focused the programme by defining the strategy and intent upfront. She then very clearly communicated the type of innovation and outcomes the company wanted to achieve. Her strategy and focus for the organization's innovation programme are described in more detail below, including examples on some of the innovation operation measures as applied by the innovation team.

Following research efforts, consultation with leadership and other interested parties, the main strategic priority areas identified were the development of:

- a new learning and skills development model;
- novel innovative activities in the learning process.

Considering EduTrain's overall strategy, Melanie and her team worked at including process, service and product innovations. The company then framed the question as a challenge that asked for ideas from all staff on "what a new, more effective and engaging learning model could look like".

To make sure that the programme was focused, and the desired results achieved through evidence-based decision-making, the innovation team understood that measurement at every stage of the innovation process was of the utmost importance. It was therefore decided to consider preparation, activities and results in the measurement process, as suggested by ISO 56008:2024, 6.1.

NOTE The full innovation operation process is not covered in this example. Only the identifying of innovation opportunities and developing innovation solutions stages are discussed.

4.2 Measurements for identifying innovation opportunities

One month into the innovation programme led by Melanie, the innovation team realized that the process was not working smoothly. It seemed that bottlenecks were forming at the evaluation stages where ideas were evaluated, as not enough innovation facilitators were available and several people did not evaluate and progress ideas adequately.

After investigating, it was determined the ideas submitted by employees got stuck in the process and that this was happening due to a lack of knowledge and know-how by the people who evaluated the ideas and moved the process forward. The innovation team subsequently arranged a training session to ensure that all innovation facilitators and subject-matter experts were briefed and trained adequately to perform this important task. A clear evaluation manual was provided, and each person involved in the process was briefed and trained beforehand so that they understood what was required. This action resulted in more resources allocated to represent each department. Following this first stage, idea evaluation improved by 40 % and bottlenecks reduced by 75 %.

Once the innovation process was streamlined better, Melanie and her team realized that a number of ideas submitted by staff did not provide concrete ideas to help EduTrain find better learning and skills development models. They then started to provide more background on the type of ideas wanted and arranged sessions with departmental heads to communicate the process and objectives in more detail to staff. This ensured

that the innovation process and type of ideas required were sufficiently explained to all and resulted in the idea submission increasing by 40 %. This time around the ideas were of much better quality.

To demonstrate the approach adopted above, and to focus on the effectiveness of the innovation process during the preparation phase, the measurements given in [Table 1](#) were considered, and other learnings were captured.

Table 1

Decision on measurement			Implementation of measurement		
Question	Indicator(s)	Metric(s)	How (procedures)	How/when/where/duration	Type of data/quality/size
Do we have enough resources available to perform the task?	Resources for opportunity identification.	Number of employees available for opportunity identification.	Count the numbers of innovation facilitators and determine availability and understanding of the task.	Project leader/innovation ambassador in organization. As soon as possible.	Five innovation facilitators or evaluators for every stage, representing each department. Only two innovation facilitators participated and understood the brief.
Is the innovation process effective?	Process and tools for opportunity identification.	Number of issues identified concerning process of opportunity identification.	List the number of issues raised regarding innovation opportunity identification.	Innovation system manager. Number of ideas logged.	Number of aligned ideas received.

At this stage, the programme started to yield interesting ideas and some of the shortlisted opportunities were developed into preliminary concepts.

To focus on the effectiveness of innovation activities during the preparation phase, the metrics illustrated in [Table 2](#) were considered, and other learnings were captured.

At this stage of the process, eight new concepts were finalized and the innovation team, together with the idea originators, presented these shortlisted concepts to the innovation committee. A transparent process was supported by strong evaluation criteria and three shortlisted concepts were chosen for further investigation and development by the committee.

Table 2

Decision on measurement			Implementation of measurement		
Question	Indicator(s)	Metric(s)	How (procedures)	How/when/where/duration	Type of data/quality/size
Do we have adequate intellectual property (IP) management approaches in place for solution development?	IP management.	Percentage of solutions requiring acquisition/licensing of external IPs.	Identify potential solutions to be developed that can lead to the creation of new IP for the organization. Assistance with research on identified concepts by innovation facilitators/evaluators/subject matter experts.	The organization's internal or contracted IP law specialist. Before concepts are being earmarked for development.	Number of new concepts to be developed. Data from research, validated by IP and subject matter experts.
Are the developed solutions ready for deployment?	Solution deployment readiness.	Percentage of developed solutions not ready for immediate deployment.	Develop a solution readiness measurement checklist and apply to developed solutions.	Project lead and subject matter specialists. Final approval meeting.	Data on concept (e.g. market data, concept functionality, lean principles, minimum viable product (MVP) characteristics).

4.3 Measurements in developing innovation solutions

As potential new IP projects were being planned for the organization, questions were asked around what could be licensed from the projects in development. Upon investigation serious issues arose as development of some of the shortlisted solutions would result in copyright infringements. These issues were originally flagged by external advisors involved in the solution-development phase.

This risk was identified as a potential showstopper for two of the concepts identified for development. Melanie gathered all information through the project teams and arranged a presentation to the Executive Team to provide feedback.

Alarmed by the results and evidence presented to them, the Executive Team halted the two projects. It was not a great outcome for the organization as the most radical and exciting ideas were affected by this decision, but the innovation team was praised for their diligence.

The main learning for the innovation team was to investigate all new concepts and perform due diligence on IP before concept creation. This saved the organization unnecessary expenditure in both concept creation and potential IP infringement costs. To focus on the effectiveness of innovation activities and the results during the activity and results phases, the metrics in [Table 3](#) were considered.

Table 3

Decision on measurement			Implementation of measurement		
Question	Indicator(s)	Metric(s)	How (procedures)	How/when/where/duration	Type of data/quality/size
Do we have adequate IP management approaches in place for solution development?	IP management.	Percentage of solutions requiring acquisition/licensing of external IPs.	Identify potential solutions to be developed that could lead to the creation of new IP for the organization. Assistance with research on identified concepts by innovation facilitators/evaluators/subject-matter experts.	The organization's internal or contracted IP law specialist. Before concepts are being earmarked for development.	Number of new concepts to be developed. Data from research, validated by IP and subject matter experts.
Are the developed solutions ready for deployment?	Solution deployment readiness.	Percentage of developed solutions not ready for immediate deployment.	Develop a solution readiness measurement checklist and apply to developed solutions.	Project lead and subject-matter experts. Final approval meeting.	Data on concept (e.g. market data, concept functionality, lean principles, MVP characteristics).

4.4 General issues encountered during measurements

In general, the innovation team encountered the following issues in executing their measurement ambitions:

- designing a measurement plan that had a balanced approach in terms of what and how to measure progress (the team decided to keep the approach as simple and focused on the project vision as possible);
- identifying and skilling the resources involved in doing the measurements;
- allocating sufficient time and ensuring that measurement happened in regular intervals;
- identifying the platforms and approaches for obtaining the measurement data.

The innovation team identified their internal innovation management platform (technology used) as the main source for reporting and pulled regular reports from this system. Reports obtained from the marketing team on communication effectiveness and feedback from customer surveys, stakeholders and interested parties were also carefully monitored and integrated into the measurement results. The team also deliberately decided to do measurements more often, especially in the beginning, and from there did monthly interventions to ensure that potential problems were identified early.

4.5 Conclusions and positive/negative lessons

4.5.1 General

Various positive and negative lessons were learned throughout this process, all of them valuable for improving future innovation programmes. Some of the important lessons captured by the innovation team and communicated to the organization are described in [4.5.2](#) and [4.5.3](#).

4.5.2 Measurement lessons

The measurement lessons are as follows:

- Decide on the main focus areas of measurement, ensure that it is aligned with the strategy and then determine the best metrics for the main activities.
- Measure often and communicate the results to all interested parties as regularly as possible.
- Document outputs, issues and main challenges.

- Take corrective actions as and when necessary; sooner rather than later is better.
- Less is more. Especially in the beginning of the innovation measurement journey. Melanie and her team focused on the most important measures for project success and in line with her strategic focus areas. This helped them to identify risk early. More complex approaches can be integrated over time as the organization's innovation capability matures.

4.5.3 General lessons

The general lessons are as follows:

- Collaboration is crucial, but not easy to achieve effectively. Engagement plans, effective and constant communication, responsibility allocation and, in some instances, formal contracting and secondment are required.
- Not all ideas are implementable. Regulation or other market forces can influence outcomes to such an extent that implementation is not always feasible. Technology and maturity play a big part in solution enablement and staying on top of industry trends in this regard is important.
- Motivated, informed and well-supported teams can be the greatest differentiator in an organization's innovation efforts, success or failure.
- Software in support of innovation processes can increase participation, linking to similar ideas, enabling rewards, empowering teams and impacting on skill development.
- Financial support, collaboration and clear communication is crucial, especially in the concept creation phase.
- Innovation operation measurements assist in keeping the innovation life cycle transparent, and this impacts on the organization's reputation internally as well as externally with regards to innovation management.

5 Not-for-profit organization: Social innovation operation measurements example

5.1 Donatelt4: Business model and innovation objectives

Donatelt4 is a Southern European organization started by woman entrepreneurs. The initiative began in 2019 with a mission to support socially oriented companies by enhancing their capabilities to provide social and environmental services to their customers working from diversity and gender equality promotion.

The Donatelt4 initiative aligns with the European Green Deal and the European Union's "United in Diversity" campaign, focusing on combating climate change and promoting gender equality. The organization provides a social platform that connects donors, who contribute useful products, with buyers, who purchase these items. The fees collected from these transactions are then allocated as funding to "beneficiaries", i.e. not-for-profit companies that provide socially oriented services. Other key stakeholders include government agencies, civil society organizations and technology partners.

Initially, Donatelt4 aimed at creating a local marketplace platform, emphasizing technology, process and service innovations. However, the organization faced challenges such as a lack of donors, unattractive items and scattered buyers, which resulted in insufficient income. Considering these obstacles, which were further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization recognized the need to modify its approach.

Consequently, Donatelt4 shifted to a digital model, leading to service improvements. It also adopted a systematic innovation management process involving early-stage measurements to understand stakeholder needs better and manage resources effectively. The leadership appointed a Chief Innovation Officer (CINO), Andrew, and additional team members to oversee innovation management. This strategic pivot enabled Donatelt4 to enhance its operations and better meet stakeholder expectations.

5.2 Assessing present situation (early measurements) for a revamped innovation programme

The key areas to consider were related to measurements for better understanding the context to establish innovation initiatives that fit the needs and value expectations of interested parties for enabling DonateIt4 to achieve its value creation objectives. The measurements given in [Table 4](#) were considered.

Table 4

Indicator	Metric	Measurement procedure	Who, when, where	Resulting data	Decision	Learning
Main interested parties.	Number, location and type of donors. Number location and type of buyers. Number location and type of beneficiaries.	The team performed a segmentation exercise analysing the database and classifying the interested parties by location and type in the three main clusters: donors, buyers and beneficiaries.	CINO (Andrew) and measurement expert (Zack).	Pie chart to summarize the classification of interested parties (numbers) by cluster type and location. The measurements highlighted the clusters unbalance: a) mostly large organization donors concentrated in big cities; b) a few buyers interested in acquiring the products offered in their specific geographical location; c) a large number of beneficiaries dispersed in rural areas.	The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Executive Team decided to revamp the service and enlarge the platform, to solve the geographical gap and better fit the offer and demand.	The leadership at DonateIt4 recognized the lack of a proper analysis of interested parties and as a consequence significant weakness in the innovation effort performance. They understood the need to implement a structured measurement process to identify and lead the innovation initiatives from an adequate context understanding.
Value expectation	Number of value potentials detected. Degree of alignment of portfolio of products/ services with the expected value.	The team selected a representative sample of the cluster database to conduct a series of structured interviews to identify value expectations by clusters coupled with a gap analysis of the current portfolio of products to identify areas of improvement.	CINO (Andrew) and measurement expert (Zack).	The conclusion of the research and the gap analysis was highlighted in a vertical bar chart and a complementary report with the qualitative findings, and concrete recommendation of improvements by cluster.	DonateIt4 adopted a strategic approach to market insight by enhancing their internal data resources and allocating sufficient resources to those projects with higher potential of value creation for interested parties.	DonateIt4 realized that the current lack of market and interested parties' value expectations and the need for early operational measurements structured to help identify the need for timely fundamental changes in its business plan and effective management of innovation projects.

To achieve this, Andrew proposed to use the guidance of ISO 56008 and the approaches of ISO 56008:2024, Clause 4, 5.2 and 5.3, which highlight the need for measurements to better understand the context for setting up appropriate innovation initiatives. Therefore, he undertook measurements to answer these key questions:

- Do we know who are the most impacting interested parties?
- Do we understand the needs and value expectations of our interested parties?

Andrew did this in order to determine the most innovation-relevant stakeholders and other interested parties and to estimate the needs and value expectations of those interested parties.

The measurements were done by the innovation team and the results were shown to the CEO and the Executive Team, who realized that there were few private citizens donating stuff of interest and that many companies (some of which were not local) were simply interested in getting rid of their obsolete products. This led to the decision to adopt a dual growth path that required a renewed innovation portfolio aimed at:

- a) changing the donor focus;
- b) expanding the platform internationally;
- c) updating the donor-buyer intermediation process with monitorization;
- d) selecting a competitive beneficiary cluster and having a timely monitoring process.

5.3 Innovation concept creation and validation

5.3.1 Concept creation measurements

To ensure that the innovation concept creation process ran smoothly with the right participants, the innovation team took the following steps:

- Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of team members, and ensuring that they understand how their contributions support the innovation goals.
- Providing training and resources to equip teams with the skills needed to contribute effectively to the innovation process.

In addition, Andrew and the innovation team pursued critical measurements to ensure that the concept creation process was enabled to attain better results, while staying in line with the strategic goals of the project as per the guidance of ISO 56008:2024, Clause 4 and 6.3. The measurements given in [Table 5](#) were considered.

Table 5

Indicator	Metric	Measurement procedure	Who, when, where	Resulting data	Decision	Learning
Alignment with objectives.	Degree of new process match with initial objectives.	Innovation team analysis of process for accepting donors, buyers and beneficiaries.	CINO (Andrew) and measurement expert (Zack).	Examination of the process of identifying reused, recycled, and non-recycled items revealed an 80 % consistency.	The Donate-It4 Executive Team decided to collaborate with an experienced technology partner in order to create a robust donor-buyer-beneficiary selection process.	A key learning concerned the importance of selecting appropriate donors and buyers interested in long-term participation.
Required participants.	Minimum number of participants for viability.	Innovation team analysis.	Zack's survey and analysis.	The analysis showed that a minimum of 1 000 donors and a minimum of 200 buyers were necessary to run the project successfully.	DonateIt4 decided to put more resources towards enticing suitable donors in sufficiently large numbers.	Regularly assessing the requirements of teams is essential in enhancing their ability to generate innovative ideas.

5.3.2 Concept validation measurements

By following the guidance of ISO 56008:2024, Clause 4 and 6.4, the innovation team recognized the importance of assessing the quality of the concept validation process and its ability to transfer only worthwhile concepts into the innovation development process. By carefully evaluating the concept validation process, they can determine the feasibility of the concepts, reduce risks, and make well-informed, data-driven decisions about developing and deploying the right innovative solutions. The measurements given in [Table 6](#) were considered.

Table 6

Indicator	Metric	Measurement procedure	Who, when, where	Resulting data	Decision	Learning
Quality of validation process.	Validation actors (participants).	Analysis of number, type, region and needs of participants in validation exercise.	Zack's survey and analysis.	Pie diagrams showing degree of satisfactory validation by each type of participant.	Andrew decided to insist on a minimum of 80 % satisfactory validation. Measures were taken to select impactful hypotheses and validation criteria for a streamlined process.	Quality validation is a critical aspect of ensuring the success of any business.
Feasibility of innovation concepts.	Threshold for sufficient donors and buyers to ensure concept viability.	Innovation team analysis.	Innovation team design thinking session.	Five-year plan of minimum number of participants (by type and region) required for sustainable business.	Andrew requested a quarterly review of the plan with up-to-date requirements for successful implementation.	It is essential to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the viability of an innovation prior to progressing with its development and implementation.

5.4 Innovation solution development measurements

Concerned with the potentials for budget overruns and delays in the development of the new platform, Andrew insisted on having regular measurements for determining the progress in development. Special attention was placed on meticulous planning, the early identification of major obstacles, the compliance with regulations and the timely availability of sufficient pilot (beta) customers. The measurements given in [Table 7](#) were considered.