Building innovation ecosystems in cities or regions: people, knowledge, capital, and the local commons

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Research questions

- What are the economic, technological and societal factors driving the creation of innovative and competitive digital ecosystems in Canada?

- To what extent can policy measures succeed in transforming cities or regions into sustainable generators/magnets of human talent, capital investments and knowledge assets?

Major findings

- Innovation dynamics in cities and/or regions rely on the interactions between formal and informal actors or entities

- These interactions contribute to the creation of (local) commons from which the ecosystem derives its strength, and which include:

  - People: availability of and access to talented workforce
  - Capital: availability of and access to financial and material backing
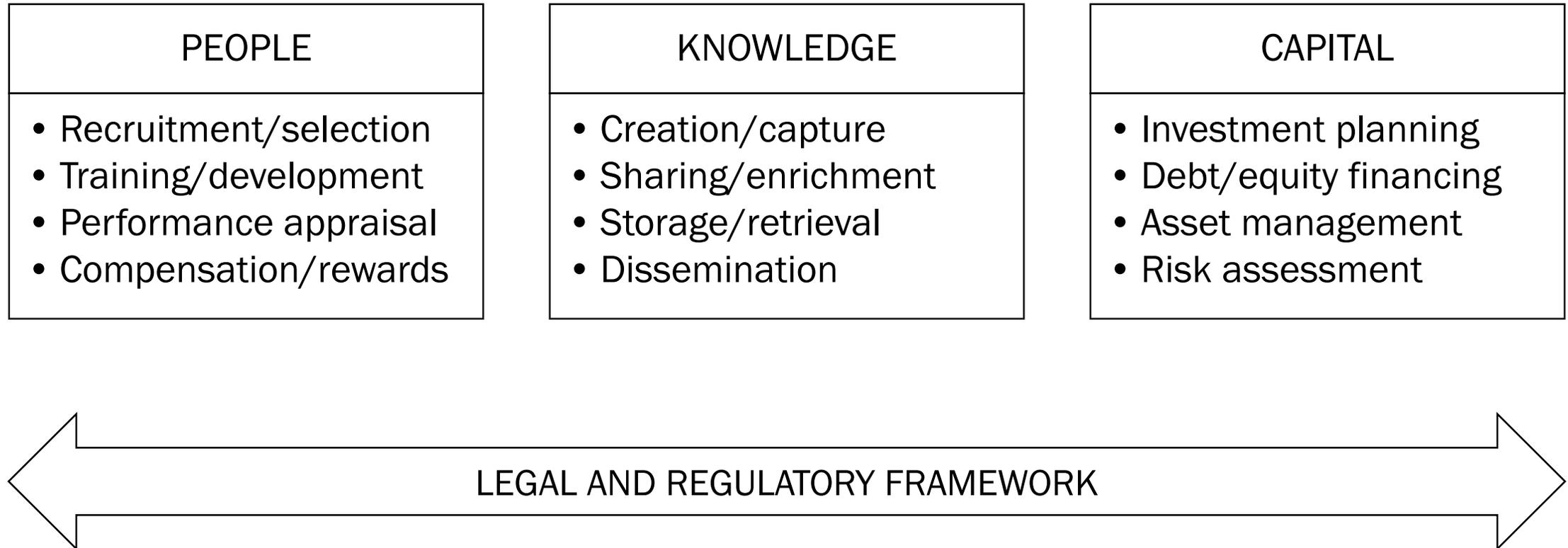 - Knowledge: availability of and access to intellectual power

Meaning of findings

- Building an ecosystem means building the commons:

  - On scale: the more actors and linkages in an ecosystem, the greater the (expected) externalities
  - On scope: the more diversified the actors and linkages of an ecosystem, the broader the (expected) externalities

→ Innovation ecosystems rely as much on the accumulation of new and existing resources or assets as they do on the combination of these resources or assets

Key policy implications

- In addition to the traditional support to both formal and informal actors (essentially aimed at fixing failures), policies should also aim at enlivening the commons:

  - By organizing places and/or spaces, where the formal and informal actors or entities can meet and interact
    - → E.g. Fab labs, living labs, open labs, maker spaces, hacker spaces, etc.

  - By supporting projects and/or events, which simultaneously involve formal and informal actors or entities
    - → E.g. Contests, tournaments, showcases, workshops, festivals, trade-shows, etc.

Toward a new policy framework

PEOPLE	KNOWLEDGE	CAPITAL
• Recruitment/selection • Training/development • Performance appraisal • Compensation/rewards	• Creation/capture • Sharing/enrichment • Storage/retrieval • Dissemination	• Investment planning • Debt/equity financing • Asset management • Risk assessment

⟵ LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK ⟶

Thank you!

Questions and/or comments?