

## Social Innovation in the Public Sector: The Case of Seoul Metropolitan Government

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**Abstract:** Innovation is being utilized as an important governance tool for improving government functions. The purpose of this research is to identify social innovation programs and initiatives in Seoul, South Korea, through a review of literature on social innovation and a case study of the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG). This research suggests that the SMG fosters social innovation through a variety of metropolitan examples and such innovation projects help to sustain metropolitan governance and develop partnership opportunities and collaboratives. This study contributes to the literature on social innovation in the public sector by looking at the motivations for innovation, the culture to facilitate innovation, collaboration as a tool for innovation, and finally how to sustain innovation. The study also emphasizes how collaboration with the civil society and the private sector helps to promote social innovation through creativity, leadership and sustainability.

**Introduction:** The concept of innovation is not new to government. Although scholars have only begun focusing on innovation in the public sector within the past few years, the examples demonstrate a way for government to become more effective and efficient by using innovation as a tool for governance.

**Keywords:** Social Innovation, Sustainable Innovation, Seoul Metropolitan Government, Partnerships for Innovation

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decade (Bartlett and Dibben, 2002; Borins, 2002; Fernandez and Rainey, 2006; Gonzalez and Healey, 2005), innovative ideas in the public sector have permeated public administration's history, from the New Public Management movement of the early 1980's to the New Public Service movement (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000). Innovation is important and an essential tool for improving public services (Albury, 2005). This study focuses on social innovation in the public sector through a case study of the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG), South Korea. Social innovation in this study is defined as the successful implementation of activities, such as ideas, practices, or objects, through new collaborations and partnerships, in ways that positively impact society by improving the delivery of public services. Social innovation in the public sector incorporates a new framework that allows for collaboration not only with other public organizations but also with its citizens (Baxter et al., 2010).

The importance of social innovation is something that should be taken advantage of in democratic nations. The opportunities that collaborations and partnerships create to share each other's resources are significant in many governments that are burdened by severe budget deficits among other resource constraints. With a lack of new revenue streams, pooling each other's assets, including human and social capital, is critical. The research looks at what is meant by social innovation in the public sector and provide examples from SMG. The purpose of the study is to identify examples of social innovation in SMG, and consider how collaborative strategies with the civil society and the private sector may promote social innovation through creativity, leadership, and sustainability. Also, factors for innovation will be examined and suggested, as well as barriers that may cause threats to discovering innovative strategies for SMG.

Technology is considered a viable resource for innovation in the public sector (Borins, 2002). Over 50% of Seoul's citizens utilize the Internet (Holzer and Kim, 2002) and innovative technology will continue to advance Seoul's civil society and public sector performance. In fact, Seoul has recognized that government service is being rapidly changed by advances in technology and has already initiated social innovation programs pertaining to technology (Kim, 2009). This study focuses on identifying a variety of social innovation strategies designed to transform public services in South Korea, as well as reviewing results of these services (Calista et al., 2010).

To get a full understanding of SMG's innovative strategies, the following research questions were examined as part of the study: What is the recent economic and political context for the social innovation of SMG, at the

national and metropolitan levels, and in terms of globalization of urban competitiveness? What are the benefits of social innovation? What is the significance of creativity (including technological innovation, entrepreneurship, and artistic/cultural forms) for urban governance, competitiveness, and development? How are social innovation programs sustained over time? What are the motivations behind social innovation in SMG? How will Seoul's citizens benefit from the innovative programs? Why should the public sector collaborate with the nonprofit and private sectors to help in social innovation?

Literature suggests that there are some governance factors that may influence the promotion of social innovation, such as leadership, partnerships/empowerment, diffusion of innovation, culture of innovation, sustainability, resources for innovation, champions of innovation and successful implementation (Abramson and Littman, 2002; Bartlett and Dibben, 2002; Borins, 2002). This study contributes to the literature on social innovation in the public sector by looking at the motivations for innovation, the culture to facilitate innovation, collaboration as a tool for innovation, and finally how to sustain innovation. Lessons learned in this study can be used in other metropolitan settings in other regions of the world.

## **Literature Review and Background**

Ample literature of the past decade has given a renewed focus on innovation in the public sector (Bartlett and Dibben, 2002; Borins, 2002; Fernandez and Rainey, 2006; Goldsmith, 2010; Gonzalez and Healey, 2005). This section begins with discussing the motivations for innovation in the public sector, specifically addressing SMG, South Korea. Following is a section addressing the need for a culture of innovation, including how to foster innovation and what the barriers to innovation may be. Next is a section on collaboration, and includes the importance of collaboration with a focus on public-private collaborations in SMG, South Korea. Finally, sustaining innovation is addressed, and will include policies and procedures for innovation as well as funding for research and innovation.

Innovation is a deliberate act spurred by public interest and put into action by the public sector, the private sector, and non-profit organizations. The concepts of social innovation have been implemented in numerous countries around the world and continue to evolve over the years (Goldenberg et al., 2009). When considering innovation, the idea can be applied across industries and has recently been embraced by the public and private sector alike (Lichenthaler, 2011). The idea of innovation

involves the use of “purposive inflows and outflows of knowledge to accelerate internal innovation, and expand the markets for external use of innovation, respectively” (Lichenthaler, 2011, p. 76). Research conducted on the impact of innovation in industry has highlighted the importance of innovation and strengthened awareness (Lichenthaler, 2011).

### *Motivations for Innovation*

As private sector companies strive to increase profits in the face of mounting challenges, they have turned to innovation as a means to confront the challenges and attain a positive outcome (Hippel, 1988). For example, the multi-billion dollar company Proctor and Gamble was able to utilize innovation to implement a new design effort for potato chips. When the initial new design effort was being considered, the costs and timeframe to implement the new design were high, so the company utilized innovation to search for additional resources (Hudson and Sakkab, 2006). Utilizing innovation, Proctor and Gamble was able to partner with another company to implement the new design and eventually made their North American Pringle’s business record double-digit growth within two years. The strategies pertaining to open innovation as utilized by Proctor and Gamble have resulted in billions of dollars in revenue (Hudson and Sakkab, 2006).

The growth of social innovation has resulted in the concept being considered a legitimate public policy affecting public policy on social and economic issues. Social innovation is embraced by the United States government and the Canadian government to address emerging social challenges (Goldenberg et al., 2009). While the idea of social innovation sounds progressive, there are facts behind the motivations of government to actually consider, plan, and implement a social innovation program. The successes in other countries and the obstacles encountered may help shape motivational forces involved with implementing social innovation in Seoul, South Korea.

As governments throughout the world have initiated major reforms due to the call for reductions in the work force, reduction of state influence through organization, and the reform of public enterprises, Seoul has followed along the same path. This path came to light after the 1997 economic crisis in Korea, which resulted in leaving the governments within Korea to deal with severe financial burden. The reforms in Korea have been primarily aimed at addressing main weaknesses of the Korean government including centralization, lack of transparency, rigidity and low competitiveness. Korean President Dae Jung Kim set the following

objectives for carrying out their restructuring program: build a small but efficient government, create a highly competitive government, and create a customer-oriented government (Kim, 2000).

### *Culture of Innovation*

Innovation is not an option for governments today that in the current economy have been forced to downsize, privatize, reengineer, and improve customer service (Kim, 2000). This means that adapting to a culture of innovation is essential. The degree to which organizations function and have the ability to reform is vastly dependent upon the organization's culture (Raadschelders, 2009). Research has identified several different organizational functions that may foster innovation, as well as functions that may serve as barriers to innovation.

Organizational aspects like leadership, openness, trust, and access foster a culture of innovation (Ahmed, 1998). Leadership paradoxically requires flexibility, empowerment, control, and efficiency (Khazanchi et al., 2007), making it difficult to establish the boundaries of a good innovative culture. Through empowerment, however, managers can help their subordinates develop new skills, foster trust, and reduce potential resistance to innovation (Khazanchi et al., 2007).

Other factors of organizational and societal cultures may also foster innovation. Cultures that have champions for innovation may sometimes have a culture that encourages innovation. One study, however, found that there might be some type of interactions among the type of champion and specific cultural factors (Bartlett and Dibben, 2002). For example, Bartlett and Dibben (2002) found that "a champion working without a sponsor and doing so in a culture which focuses more on creativity than implementation is less likely to see innovations through to successful implementation" (p. 114). Champions may work with different organizational areas, such as promoting e-government. In fact, the ability of an organization to develop IT capacity, including IT resources, financial resources, and e-government resource knowledge has been shown to support e-government innovation (Kim, 2009).

One of the strongest indications of innovations is the availability of resources (Kim, 2009). Both the organizational culture and the culture of SMG that has resources at its disposal may be more apt to embracing attitudes of innovation. The culture that is most accepting of innovation is one that adopts the attitude of "we can innovate" rather than "we do not have the means to innovate." This idea can be seen in Bartlett and

Dibben's (2002) literature on the ideas of including a champion and sponsor as a means to public entrepreneurship.

There are instances in which organizations or certain organizational cultures may limit the opportunity for innovation. These barriers to social innovation include short term budgets and planning, poor risk/change management skills, few rewards or incentives to innovate, technologies constraining organizational arrangements, overly relying on certain sources of innovation, reluctance to close failing programs, culture of risk aversion, and pressures and administrative burdens (Albury, 2005).

Some research has identified ways to combat these barriers. A culture that is open to new ideas, allows and empowers communities, citizens, and staff, and fosters learning can increase the likelihood of having a culture of innovation. In addition, organizations that are forward looking and proactive, and try to enable risk taking may also increase the likelihood of an innovative culture. Other ways to combat barriers include good management practices, clear communication, sound implementation processes, clear drivers, strong incentives, and the involvement of the private and/or nonprofit sector through collaborations (Baxter et al., 2010).

### *Collaboration for Innovation*

Partnerships are used in the public sector to enhance their administration as well as create good governance. Forming successful partnerships is considered a characteristic of good governance. Before collaborations encompassed South Korea's public sector, SMG made a difficult but needed transition from centralization to decentralization in the mid 1980's. After this hurdle was crossed, plans to partner with nonprofit organizations were SMG's next movement (Holzer and Kim, 2002).

Collaboration in South Korea enables their public sector to foster other organizations' innovative ideas and apply it to their own administration (Baxter, 2012). Seoul Metropolitan Government's goals are to increase public engagement by partnering with NGOs and NPOs, and maximize networks with public and private partnerships to improve Seoul's environment. This study will look at innovative examples of how Seoul developed successful partnerships with nonprofit organizations as well as other private and public organizations.

Civic engagement is a prominent influence of South Korea values. SMG are continually searching for new ways to educate citizens and increase their participation. One of their methods of doing so is collaborating with NGOs, NPO, and public-interest organizations to develop new ways engage citizens. Studies suggest that NGO's and NPOs address more prevalent issues, such social support for the poor, than government agencies (Lowry, 2008). In fact, civil society organizations seem to steer public servants in the right direction when it comes to participation. For example, when the democratic evolution began in the mid 1980's, effective public interest groups were formed by the younger generation to close the gap between citizens' uncertainty in participation and education. Their mission was to empower citizens to participate in public debate and decision-making, defend human rights, and protect public use (Kim, 2011).

SMG has taken the initiative of maximizing private and commercial partnerships to provide a safer environment for citizens. Since Seoul's population has increased vastly over the years, their environmental needs continue to affect citizens' quality of life (Cohen, 2009). The challenges of urban renewal developments were reasons SMG formed public and private partnerships to ameliorate Seoul's environment. For example, to restore Seoul's attractiveness, SMG collaborated with Fraunhofer, Europe's largest research and development institute, to discover the Cheonggyecheon Restoration project. During the First World War, Cheonggyecheon's area functioned as a sewer waste for local neighborhoods. Soon enough, the roads in the Cheonggyecheon roads were covered by rivers, which damaged small businesses in surrounding areas and housing units for the lower class. However, in 2002, SMG decided to restore the Cheonggyecheon area by dismantling the roads and recovering what was lost. Overall, partnering with Fraunhofer's researchers was an effective project that both SMG and citizens can benefit from.

Lastly, forming collaborations with public organizations is another example used for innovation. Consider the housing concerns for lower class citizens in South Korea. SMG formed joint development projects with public organizations to assist in developing concrete ideas that may advance housing opportunities for the lower class. In the late 1980s', five year housing plans were created in urban areas to make up for the massive housing destructions for the less fortunate. In 1983, South Korea adopted the innovative idea of launching joint-development plans for lower and middle class citizens. For instance, SMG developed housing renewal projects for various income groups through collaboration with

homeowners' associations and construction companies. Popular construction companies handled housing expenses and homeowners were responsible for the area developments (Ha, 2003). In order for SMG to remain effective in building successful collaborations, sustainable concepts must be addressed.

### *Sustainability of Innovation in Public Sector*

The concept of sustainability relies on the policies to be able to sustain its positive benefits over a long period of time without burdening future generations. In order for the public sector to successfully implement innovative policies, it must have policies in place that can allow for such innovation to take place for those areas. If social innovation is not supplemented by policies that allow for its continued successes, then its citizens will only enjoy its benefits in the short term rather than the long term. Currently, scientific research is geared towards traditional areas such as science and technology but fail to recognize the need for supportive policies in social areas such as education, health, and social welfare (Baxter et al., 2010).

These areas also require funding sources to be readily available. However, the recent economy does not allow the government this luxury. This is where collaborating with the private and nonprofit sectors would benefit the public sector in making up the differences in terms of monetary resources by joining together the power of the public sector's human capital. Healthy Outlook is an example of the partnership between the public and private sectors in order to realize a common goal of mitigating the health risks of the chronically ill. By joining forces with the already existing data sets of the public sector with the existing skills of the private firm, Medixine, this goal was met (Baxter et al., 2010). Solutions to complicated social issues involve an integrated approach, which involves more collaboration between policy areas. Again, this includes the public sector working with the private sector who can supply the revenue sources or already existing technologies that the public sector may not have access. Accessible funding sources allow for the public sector to sustain innovation over a greater period of time.

Governance capacity is the ability to build relationships with different sectors within government and nontraditional partners in order to work more effectively towards a common goal. Effective governance capacity is necessary in order to build long lasting relationships to ensure that innovative practices are continued. In addition, mutual understanding of what each party's responsibilities is important as well. The most

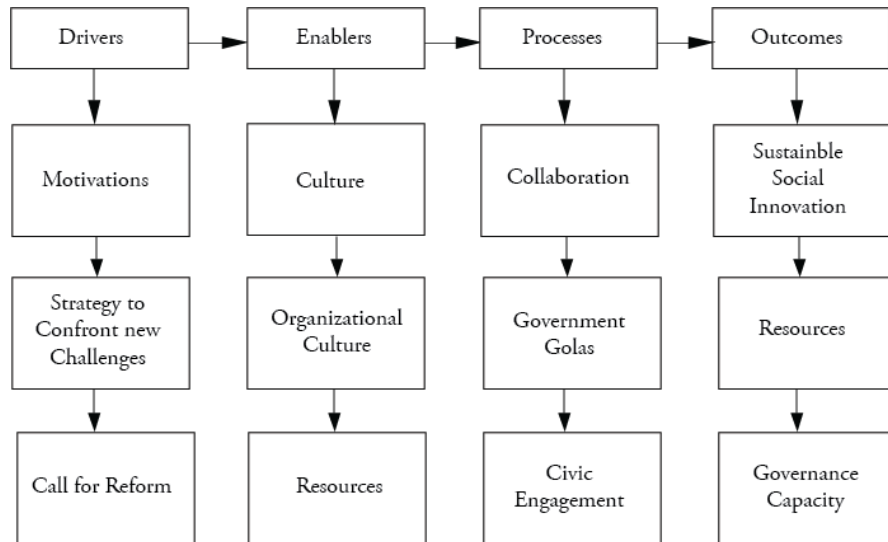


sustainable way is to formally create rules that define the roles. The Ouseburn Trust in Great Britain is an example of the government opening the opportunity for the public, specifically to “change agendas and practices such as the decisions over planning permission in the valley” (Gonzalez and Healy, 2005, p. 2062). It does this by allowing the trust to sit on the Advisory Committee that makes these decisions, equaling its members to the number of elected city officials. Though the Trust’s powers are limited, it does allow the opportunity for the government to encourage new ideas from a sector of society that traditionally does not have a direct role in making decisions. It is also the recognition that government may not have all the answers and should build its capacity of finding all possibilities to a solution.

Public participation is another important tool for social innovation that can lead to sustainability. Citizens are more likely to be involved in their government if they feel they can have a direct impact on its creation, especially in terms of policy. The fostering of this sense of responsibility and pride can lead to societal stability as civil unrest decreases. Porto Alegre, Brazil institutionalized participatory budgeting after the poor districts revolted against the government for being underrepresented. After allowing these districts to be involved in the allocation of monetary resources, renovations in public schools and roads were underway in the poor districts as this was ranked as top priorities (Novy and Leubolt, 2005). The idea that citizens are allowed to have a direct say in resource allocation so that government is meeting the needs of those that are traditionally underrepresented is a huge step in creating trust between civil society and government.

Rather than exploring the adoption of social innovation in governance as a whole, this study seeks to utilize different dimensions that have been shown through the literature to enhance innovations in focusing on why the SMG is seen as an innovative government. Each dimension discussed, obtaining motivations for innovation, adopting a culture of innovation, collaborating to innovate, and working to sustain innovation may lead to the outcome of sustainable social innovation is seen in Figure 1, the conceptual framework to this study. The conceptual framework is based on previously literature, suggesting what leads to increased social innovation. Based on the conceptual framework, the research explores how and why SMG innovates and works to sustain innovation in their government structure.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for Social Innovation



### Context of the Study

The South Korean government is a republic with shared powers among the president, legislature, and courts, and has three different branches of government: the executive, judicial, and legislative. The economy has seen a fairly remarkable growth in the past decades. In 2010, the GDP was approximately \$1.459 trillion. In addition, South Korea oversees around \$270 billion in annual expenditures. This growth has helped the country move past the Korean War and into the Organization for Cooperation and Development (OECD). Now, South Korea is the seventh largest trading partner to the United States and holds the 15<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world. South Korea is known for electronics manufacturing, telecommunications, automobile productions, chemicals, shipbuilding, steel, and overall innovations.

South Korea has nine provinces, seven of which are administratively separate cities. As the capital, Seoul is the largest city with around 10.5 million people. Seoul makes up the SMG, and is known to have several innovative urban governance strategies, such as their bus system (Kim and Dickey, 2005). The bus system reform of 2004 serves as only one

example that researchers in this study draw their conclusions on for SMG's social innovations. Other examples include: SMART Seoul, Han River, Seoul International Business Advisory Council, the 2013 pilot project, and the SIBAC meeting.

Like the US, the Korean administrative values are typically viewed as Weberian and bureaucratic top-down systems (Raadschelders, 2009). The Korean government has followed the traditions of NPM and been faced with demands for the government to operate more like a business (Kim, 2000). An example of this may be often seen in the negative public opinion of bureaucracy and civil servants, which stands out over good public service (Goodsell, 2004). The negative public opinion of these views, though administration has progressed over the years, may limit the culture and opportunity for innovation among public organizations. Korean and US governments alike must find ways to improve public opinion in order to create an increased culture of innovation. One way that has been shown to create public value is to develop ways to put together resources to support e-government development strategies (Kim, 2009).

## **Method**

A literature review was conducted using scholarly books and journal articles, and materials obtained from the SMG field study, including briefings, field visits, focus groups, and interviews with members of SMG. The field visit afforded researchers first-hand experience communicating and interacting with government members, and includes SMG discussions on innovations that are a valuable part of this research. Specifically, the key issues addressed in the literature review were studied throughout the fieldwork of lectures, site visits, observations, and interactions and interviews with key SMG officials. Keywords used in the literature review search included: social innovation, metropolitan governance, sustainable innovation, Seoul metropolitan government, leadership, and partnership for innovation.

## **Results and Discussions**

Based on a field visit to the SMG, researchers have explored data collected on SMG from researchers, policy makers, and government staff through information sessions, as well as first hand conversations with these individuals, and through field visits throughout Seoul. Findings indicate several instances of social innovation throughout the SMG, which are discussed in four sections below: motivation, culture, collaboration, and

sustainability. Examples seen in the field study of how Seoul is socially innovative are presented in Table 1 and discussed in the following sections.

Table 1. SMG Innovations

<b>Seoul Innovations</b>	<b>Descriptions</b>
SIBAC Meeting	Culture of leadership
2013 pilot project	Culture of creativity and increased citizen participation
Han River	Governance sustainability
Seoul International Business Advisory Council (SIBAC)	Building governance capacity
SMART Seoul	Technology Innovation

### *Motivation*

The motivations for SMG to implement social innovation are numerous, but they ultimately rest with becoming a more competitive global city and raising the quality of life levels for current residents of Seoul. The previous research endeavors completed by other countries such as Canada and by private companies like Proctor and Gamble provide motivation to implement social innovation projects because positive results have been attained in the past. Seoul's strong desire to improve the quality of life for their citizens and to increase their competitiveness as a global city have led to the implantation of social innovation programs. The culture of Korea and the cohesiveness of the Korean population and specifically the population in Seoul also highlight the region's strong beliefs towards working for the good of all people, which is a key aspect of social innovation.

Motivation to engage in social innovation was observed first-hand at the annual SIBAC conference hosted in Seoul in October of 2012. SIBAC, which had 21 members in 2011, focuses on presenting economic policy issues to the Seoul mayor and an effort to make Seoul a more competitive global city. Seoul Metropolitan Government was motivated to engage in innovation and formed SIBAC in 2001 to further their plan to bring

international business leaders to the table to exchange ideas and offer different perspectives to improve Seoul. SMG has also implemented the Seoul Global Resource center, which is a center dedicated to assisting the growing foreigner population in Seoul. The implementation of such a resource for foreigners highlights SMG's quest to innovate by bringing in members from the international community to help make Seoul a more competitive global city.

### *Culture of Innovation*

As seen in the literature review, a culture that fosters leadership helps create and maintain innovation (Ahmed, 1998; Albury, 2005). Researchers witnessed a number of examples of such actions of leaders taking initiative to innovate within SMG. One prime example is the way that Park Won-soon, Mayor of Seoul, pushed innovation through his leadership in the SIBAC meeting. The formation of SIBAC was made possible by the support of Korean culture, which facilitated the leadership and motivation to engage in social innovation.

One way that Seoul creates an innovative culture is by creating a culture of creativity within the city itself. A lack of creativity hinders the full use of technology and resources that are needed to become innovative. A goal of Seoul is to be a "cultural city being created together with citizens." In the global era of Seoul, the creative culture is made up of city management, citizen's life, and activities. The city management is focused on life with human dignity, and the urban economy is based on creativity, and other capabilities. According to materials gathered in Seoul, the long-term vision is to supplement, fulfill, and develop jointly with its citizens. This is accomplished in Seoul by considering both people-oriented humanism and communication. This means that people are placed before other values, and they are the highest standard for human measurement. In addition, communication means moving from a closed system with its citizens, to that of an open communication net.

Other ways to create an innovative culture is by creating a culture that fosters growth. Seoul has a creative cultural industry, and prides itself on their job creation culture. In addition, Seoul establishes a foundation for local community activities by increasing residents' cultural space for communication and operations. Currently, Seoul is working to increase and expand the village space for cultural activity use in the community and working to support citizens' participation in community media. Some of the ways they are planning to do this are through opening town art workshops and book cafes, operating village cultural classrooms, as well

as building and supporting a media center pilot project that will begin in 2013.

### *Collaboration for Innovation*

Some challenges Seoul faces are the innovative use of information technology (IT) required responding to emerging urban issues, such as citizen participation, housing, and low economic growth. The use of IT is an evident factor that is used to transform Seoul into a world-class city. Seoul proposed SMART SEOUL 2015 to improve the competitiveness in civic engagement and crisis interventions. According to Lee Changhee, Manager of Information Planning, Seoul Metropolitan Government introduced four strategic imperatives designed to enhance Seoul's technology and improve the access of technology throughout Seoul. First, SMG's vision is to become recognized as a city that utilizes technology. Some of the interesting gestures SMG considered are to offer one million citizens hands-on training by 2015, and free Wi-Fi around the city to make Internet access easily accessible. Second, on and off-line interactions with the help of Internet Addiction Prevention Education, which focuses on students, teachers, and parents, is another vision SMG believes will empower citizens to engage more with their fellow citizens, especially educators.

Additional strategies Changhee mentioned were to advance living infrastructure through CCTV, which are innovative camera systems that monitors traffic and public safety. The use of CCTV is expected to reduce crime rates by ten percent by 2015. In addition, living structures are anticipated to increase through the use of Love PC campaign, which targets low-income families and social welfare facilities. Lastly, Smart Seoul 2015's aim is to make Seoul an innovative economic and global culture hub through open governance, which provides citizens with comprehensive open data regarding living concerns or issues, such as air or water quality.

### *Sustainable Innovation*

One of Seoul's most important resources is the Hangang (or Han) River, which flows through the center of the City and was named as the most important landmark of Seoul in a 2011 survey. It is a remarkable what Seoul has done in such a short time as the city's needs have evolved. During the 1900s-1950s, the main purpose for the river was for transportation needs and its water supply. From 1968-1979, Seoul turned Han River into a development project to allow citizens to reside near the

river and also started restoring the purity of the water. After the City received its bid to host the 1988 Olympics, 9 parks were created along the River. As a result, 8 ecological parks remain. Recognizing that the Han River's purpose changes as the city itself evolves and new policies are created around this need is an example of sustainability. Policies should be dynamic since the progression of a city does not remain static.

Seoul has continued plans for Han River to restore it to its original appearance. Part of this vision is to incorporate eco-friendly management practices to reduce the barriers preventing access to its environment. In addition, along with the theme of the new government under Mayor Won Soon, Seoul wants to promote its city's rich culture using the Han River by creating culture programs and leisure activities. Encouraging the public to participate in these types of activities fosters national pride and a sense of unity. Knowing that the government is center to enhancing quality of life by creating parks and programs for its citizens to enjoy creates good will towards the government from its citizens. This adds to the social stability of the city.

Finally, the SIBAC 2012 is an example of SMG building its governance capacity by inviting prominent international business leaders to Seoul to share with the Mayor ideas on how he can further develop his city economically. This year's theme was entitled "Seoul as a Role Model in Triple Partnership: Business, Government, Citizens." The title in itself is a testament to SMG's interest in building its governance capacity by being open to hearing advice from the private sector but also keeping its citizens actively engaged. The private sector can lend innovative ideas, as well as funding sources, to SMG while SMG must ensure that its citizens' needs are being met and that there is public support for these projects.

Briefly mentioned by several presenters, most notable Mr. Sang oh Shim (Deputy Director of Low-income and Homeless Assistance), there seems to be a gap of services to elderly citizens. Traditionally, their children took care of their parents when they became old and moved them into their own place of residence. However, culture is changing where this is no longer taking place and SMG officials have recognized a need to address this issue. Researchers see this is an opportunity to create innovative strategies to provide for one of their most vulnerable citizens, the elderly. Based on the success of SIBAC, a similar conference regarding the rapidly aging population may be beneficial to not only Seoul but also to other governments across the globe, that are facing similar issues.

## **Conclusion**

This research contributes to previous research by providing an understanding of the social innovation initiatives in Seoul, South Korea, and how social innovation projects in SMG have led to or are leading to sustainable metropolitan governance. In addition, considering social innovation techniques in other governments may have practical applications in other nations with similar resources or similar capabilities and access to innovation.

The various facets of social innovation implemented by SMG including Han River sustainability, formation of SIBAC, 2013 Pilot Project, and SMART Seoul all touch on Seoul's quickly evolving economic and political status. As far as significance for creativity for urban governance, competitiveness, and development, this can be seen in the innovative, creative culture of the SMG. Seoul is consistently looking at ways to build and increase community cultural space, as well as space that can be used for arts and even citizen participation in community media. The pilot project in 2013 for constructing and supporting media centers throughout Seoul for citizen participation is just one example of the creativity for urban governance, competitiveness, and development. Social innovation programs are sustained over time by not only meeting short-term needs but also recognizing that long-term needs also need to be incorporated into any plans. The motivations behind social innovation in SMG rest on previous successes by other organizations with innovation programs, increasing global competitiveness, and increasing the quality of life for Seoul residents. It is clear the benefits that Seoul's citizens receive from numerous programs and initiatives that have been discussed throughout this paper. One example is the cultural space and access to citizen participation initiatives that the government is working on with the pilot project. Another example is the access and convenience of several of these initiatives for citizens, which can be increased by collaboration between public and nonprofit sectors.

Collaborating with public and private organizations is needed to transform Seoul into a competitive city. Seoul's Mayor recognizes that there is a dire need for SMG to become receptive to hearing how global competitive organizations enhance their services that both citizens and administration will benefit from. SMG held the SIBAC meeting to gain insight of the outcomes of forming successful collaborations with the private and public sector. One of the keynote speakers, Nicholas Walsh, Vice Chairman of Chart, emphasized that partnering with both sectors are more capable of diminishing social challenges. Although Seoul is



progressing, they continue to face hurdles in affordable housing for lower class, public education, and their environment. However, with the help of global competitive organizations and their ideas, Seoul will prevail and become a world-class city, where both Seoul's administration and citizens can benefit from (SIBAC, 2012).

The benefits seen in SMG from social innovation include benefits for the governance structure, the citizens, and the networks in which Seoul is involved. Continuing to utilize innovation as a tool for governance within Seoul has made the city more competitive, and contributed to it being among the seventh largest trading partner to the US and hold the 15<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world. South Korea is also known for its overall innovations. The considerations of the SMG throughout this paper have demonstrated a prime example of why the city has helped the nation to be considered innovative.

Certainly this research is not without its limitations. Researchers did not have limitless information to the governance projects and initiatives presented throughout this paper. In addition, many research presentations were transcribed to English from Korean, which presented a language gap in communicating with governance officials and presentations of information. We are not attempting to argue that Seoul is the number one metropolitan government that other governance structures should be modeled after. Instead, researchers are suggesting that there are several innovations within the SMG that other metropolitan governments may consider when pursuing social innovations as a governance tool. Moving forward, researchers suggest that Seoul continue to motivate for innovation, continue to create a culture of innovation, and continue to partner and collaborate among their own sector and across sectors. Sustaining innovation among the SMG will be done through each of these, as well as through policies and procedures for sustainability and governance capacity to foster new ideas.

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