

## Research Article

## Public Sector Innovation Awards in Indonesia

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## Abstract.

Innovation awards have garnered interest among practitioners in local and central governments, international organizations, and academics in both national and international publications. However, only a limited number of local government agencies in Indonesia have successfully introduced innovations and received public service innovation awards. This study, therefore, seeks to address the following research question: Which governmental organizations were responsible for granting public sector innovation awards to Indonesian local government institutions in 2021? The objective of this research was to determine the outcomes of public sector innovation awards in Indonesia in 2021, with a focus on local government institutions. A qualitative descriptive method was employed, utilizing library research to gather data and examine local governments that successfully implemented public service innovations. Findings indicate that the Indonesian government, through various ministries and the National Institute of Public Administration, awarded the 2021 Innovation Government Award to local governments—including provinces, regencies, and cities—that effectively implemented regional innovations. Moreover, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of adopting e-government principles has become increasingly critical for ensuring the continuity of public services.

**Keywords:** innovation awards, public service innovation, regional government

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Over a century ago, Schumpeter in 1912 defined innovation as the process through which new products and techniques are introduced into the economic system [1]. Today, innovation has become a focal point for world organizations such as the World Bank (WB), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), each of which compiles annual reports on innovation progress across countries. The World Bank highlights five key success factors for enhancing public sector performance through innovation: incentives, institutional capacity building, political leadership, technology, and transparency [2]. For example, incentives can be applied both at the institutional level and among civil servants through mechanisms such as performance targets and reward systems,

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including awards for public service innovations. The WB also shares case studies relevant to innovation in Indonesia, including themes like civil service management (e.g., modernizing civil service recruitment through computerized exams) and public financial management (e.g., implementing an online financial management information system for improved oversight). This underscores that innovation is an essential tool for advancing public sector performance in any country. Many nations may need an agenda that enables the private sector to compete with the government in generating innovations [3].

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Bank has projected that approximately 100 million more people could fall into extreme poverty. In light of this, the WB has launched efforts to support countries in addressing the health, social, and economic impacts of COVID-19 while remaining focused on their long-term development goals. These efforts are guided by principles of respect, impact, integrity, teamwork, and innovation [4]. According to the OECD, innovation is essential for achieving sustainable social and economic development, as it serves as a key driver for economic growth [5]. Innovation not only fosters growth but also addresses critical social issues, such as inequality and global climate challenges [6]. Similarly, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) tracks global innovation trends through its Global Innovation Index (GII), covering 132 countries [7].

Many local governments worldwide prioritize innovation by holding annual public sector innovation competitions, where winners receive innovation awards recognizing top and best practice innovations. In Indonesia, the national government—through various ministries and agencies—awards local, provincial, district, and city governments for their achievements in public service innovation.

Given this context, it is imperative to investigate the following research questions: (1) Which government agencies are responsible for awarding public sector innovation awards in Indonesia in 2021? and (2) Which local government agencies received these awards in 2021? The objective of this research is to examine the outcomes of public sector innovation awards in Indonesia in 2021, focusing on local government institutions. This research provides insight into provincial, regency, and city governments that have succeeded in public service innovation based on government regulations and specific regional needs. Local governments that have yet to succeed in public service innovation can benefit from comparative studies with regions demonstrating best practices in this area.

## 2. THEORETICAL STUDY

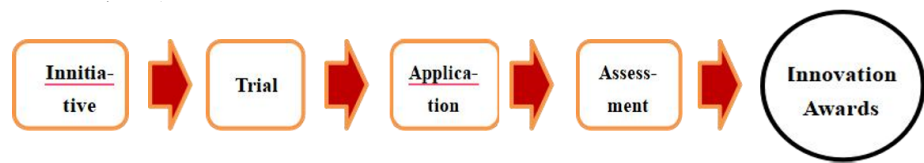
A review of international journals on innovation reveals that global research on this topic primarily aims to enhance socioeconomic welfare and support governmental development. Between 2000 and 2010, discussions in national and international journals on public sector innovation identified five major research gaps: barriers and drivers of innovation in the public sector, the characteristics of leadership that facilitate innovation, factors contributing to dissemination, processes, and impacts [8]. Further discussions in international journals from 2006 to 2010 presented innovation as an interactive process inherent to public administration, contrasting it with approaches that view innovation as a top-down mandate [9].

Countries concerned with fostering innovation often organize annual public sector innovation competitions, where winners receive awards recognizing top and best practice innovations [10], [11], [12]. Additionally, patents are utilized by governments as incentives for innovation [13]. In Indonesia, the government, through various ministries and agencies, awarded local, provincial, district, and city governments that successfully implemented public service innovations in 2018 [14].

To support innovation, the Indonesian government issued Government Regulation No. 38/2017 on Regional Innovation, which serves as a guideline for local governments, including provincial, regency, and city administrations, to implement regional innovations. This policy framework promotes all forms of administrative renewal at the regional level, aiming to enhance both public service delivery and overall regional government performance.

The process of regional innovation consists of four key phases: initiative, testing, implementation, and assessment. These phases are as follows: (1) Initiative: This involves proposing measures for regional innovation; (2) Testing: Regional trials of the proposed innovations are conducted by regional innovation implementer based on decisions made by regional heads; (3) Implementation: Innovations may be applied within regional administrations, either following trials or without prior testing; and (4) Assessment: The minister of home affairs, along with regional leaders, evaluates and recognizes local innovations. This assessment, based on achievement data, helps identify and reward local governments that excel in implementing regional innovations.

Figure 1 illustrates these four phases in the regional innovation creation process (PP No. 38/2017).



**Figure 1:** Regional innovation in the process. Source: Elaborated by the authors from [15].

Several ministries and the National Institute of Public Administration assess and recognize regional innovations through awards. These awards are given as follows: (1) Ministry of Home Affairs: This ministry presents the Innovation Government Awards (IGA) to local governments—provinces, regencies, and cities—that successfully implement regional innovations in line with regional innovation policies. Award categories include: (a) Top innovative province; (b) Top innovative regency; (c) Top innovative city; (d) Top innovative regency/city in underdeveloped regions; Top innovative regency/city in border areas; and (e) Top innovative regency/city in the Papua and Papua Barat provinces; (2) Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenpanRB): This ministry grants the top-99 and top-40 Public Service Innovation Awards (IPP Awards) to provincial, regency, and city governments that meet regional innovation criteria and demonstrate successful public service innovations. Finally, (3) National Institute of Public Administration: This institute awards the Inagara Awards to regional governments that improve public service performance through innovation labs using the 5D methodology—Drum-up, Diagnose, Design, Delivery, and Display. Award categories include best innovative provinces, regencies, and cities.

### 3. METHODS

This research employed a qualitative descriptive method, utilizing library research, relevant references, and webbased sources for data collection. Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative approach. Qualitative research emphasizes understanding meanings as they are perceived by individuals in real social contexts [16]. Further explain that qualitative research is descriptive, with data collected through words or images rather than numerical figures [17]. The study's findings are presented through quotes from written materials, field notes, interviews, and samples from video, audio, and electronic interactions.

Data collection and analysis were guided by a philosophical approach, characterized by selective synthesis of theoretical literature, data, and research findings from diverse

sources to support arguments and conclusions [18]. Secondary data were gathered, processed, and analyzed using policy content analysis techniques at different stages of the policy cycle: formulation, implementation, and evaluation. The study focused on local government institutions in Indonesia specifically, provincial, regency, and city governments, that have successfully implemented public service innovations. This research was conducted in 2022.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Result

As of 2020, Indonesia has a total of 548 regional governments, comprising thirty-four provinces [19], 416 regencies, and 98 cities [20]. This study's findings indicate that several regional governments have successfully implemented regional innovations in line with the steps outlined in government regulations. These governments include general local governments and those within specific categories, such as underdeveloped areas and border areas, across both provincial and regency/city levels. In 2021, the Ministries and the National Institute of Public Administration assessed and awarded the Innovation Awards to the top-performing local governments in public sector innovation. The recipients included provinces, regencies, and cities recognized for their exemplary public service innovations.

#### 4.1.1. Regional Innovation by Province Governments

Certain provincial governments have successfully implemented regional innovations following the prescribed steps and were recognized with the 2021 Innovation Awards. Data indicates that out of thirty-four provincial governments, eight provinces, or 23.53%, received innovation awards from various ministries or government institutions. The breakdown is as follows: five provinces were awarded the Innovation Government Awards (IGA), three provinces received the Public Service Innovation (IPP) Awards, and no provinces received the Inagara Awards. These details are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Provinces Receiving Innovation Awards in 2021 (IGA, IPP, INAGARA).

Provinces	IGA	IPP	INAGARA
1. Jawa Tengah	1	0	0
2. DI Yogyakarta	0	1	0
3. Jawa Timur	1	0	0
4. Sulawesi Selatan	0	1	0
5. Sumatera Selatan	1	0	0
6. Jawa Barat	1	1	0
7. Nusa Tenggara Barat	1	0	0
8. Papua Barat	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

Notes: Compiled by the author from sources [21], [22], [23].

### 4.1.2. Regional Innovation by Regency Governments

Some regencies have succeeded apply regional innovation through innovation process steps and then obtained the Innovation Awards 2021. Data showed, that from the total regencies region (416) there are 43 or 10.34% of regencies who have carried out innovation processes and then received an innovation award from the Ministry/ Government Institution. Details and several regencies that received innovation awards, as follows: 17 regencies received the IGA awards, 25 regencies received IPP Awards, and there are four regencies received the Inagara awards; including four regencies border area category and one regency underdeveloped region category, presented in Table 2.

### 4.1.3. Regional Innovation by City Governments

Several city governments have successfully implemented regional innovations in line with the prescribed steps, earning them the 2021 Innovation Awards. Data indicates that out of 98 city governments, 17 (or 17.34%) undertook innovation processes and subsequently received awards from various government ministries or institutions. The breakdown of these awards is as follows: 10 cities received Innovation Government Awards (IGA), nine cities received Public Service Innovation (IPP) Awards, and two cities received Inagara Awards. Details of these awardees are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 2: Regencies Receiving Innovation Awards in 2021 (IGA, IPP, INAGARA).

Regencies	IGA IPP		INAGARA	Regencies	IGA	IPP	INAGARA
1. Balongan	0	1	0	Next ...			
2. Banjar	0	1	0	23. Magetan	0	1	0
3. Bantul	0	1	0	24. Manggarai	0	0	1
4. Banyumas	0	1	0	25. Morotai Kep. *)	1	0	0
5. Banyuwangi	1	1	0	26. Muara Enim	1	0	0
6. Barru	0	1	0	27. Nabire*)	1	0	0
7. Bima	0	1	0	28. Ngawi	0	1	0
8. Bintan *)	1	0	0	29. Luwu Utara	0	1	0
9. Belu **)	1	0	0	30. Panndeglang	0	0	1
10. Bogor	1	0	0	31. Pekalongan	0	1	0
11. Bojonegoro	1	1	0	32. Pinrang	0	1	0
12. Buleleng	0	1	0	33. Sambas*)	1	0	0
13. Hulusungai Tengah	0	1	0	34. Seluma	0	0	1
14. Mamuju Tengah	0	0	1	35. Solok	0	1	0
15. Dharmasraya	0	1	0	36. Hulusungai Sel.	1	1	0
16. Jawa Timur	1	0	0	37. Tabalong	1	1	0
17. Sumba Timur	1	0	0	38. Tangerang	0	0	1
18. Gresik	0	1	0	39. Tanggamus	1	0	0
19. Indragiri Hilir	1	0	0	40. Tegal	1	0	0
20. Kendal	0	1	0	41. Trenggalek	0	1	0
21. Kubu Raya	0	1	0	42. Kutai Barat	0	1	0
22. Kulonprogo	0	1	0	43. Wonogiri	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>					<b>17</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>4</b>

Notes: Compiled by the author from sources [21], [22], [23]  
 \*) Category border areas and \*\*) Category underdeveloped regions.

### 4.2. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the Government of Indonesia, through various ministries and the National Institute of Public Administration, awarded the 2021 Innovation Government Awards to local governments: provinces, regencies, and cities, that successfully implemented regional innovation policies. The proportion of local

TABLE 3: Cities Receiving Innovation Awards in 2021 (IGA, IPP, INAGARA).

Cities	IGA	IPP	INAGARA
1. Balikpapan	0	1	0
2. Batam	0	1	0
3. Cimahi	1	0	0
4. Denpasar	0	1	0
5. Makassar	1	1	0
6. Malang	0	1	0
7. Mojokerto	1	0	0
8. Probolinggo	1	1	0
9. Pariaman	1	0	0
10. Padang Panjang	1	0	1
11. Semarang	0	1	0
12. Singkawang	1	0	0
13. South Tangerang	0	0	1
14. Surabaya	1	0	0
15. Tangerang	1	0	0
16. Tegal	0	1	0
17. Yogyakarta	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>

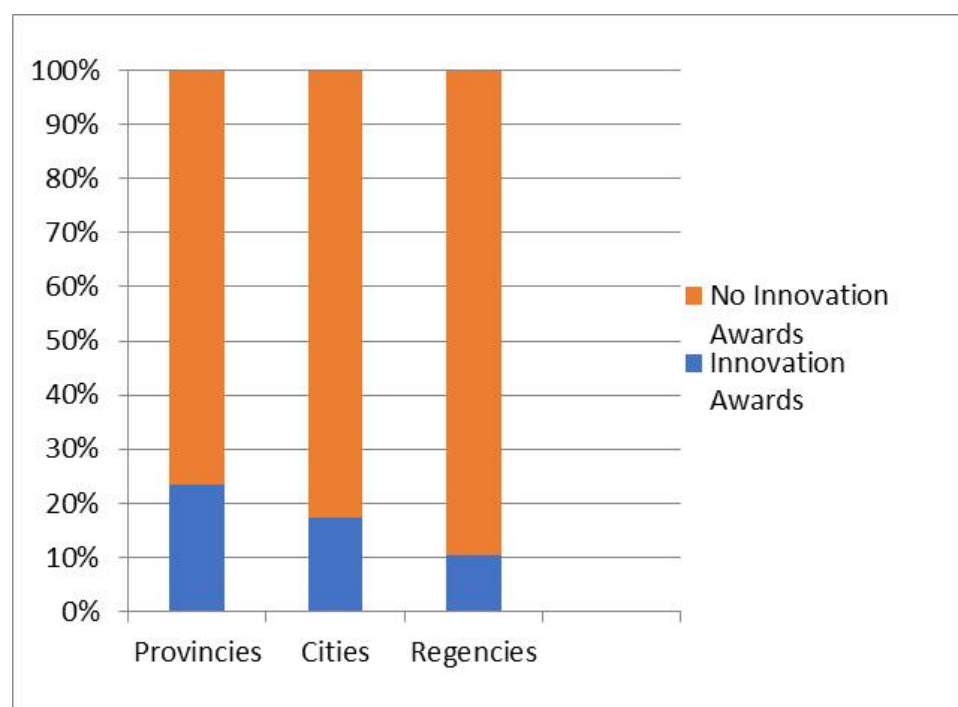
Notes: Compiled by the author from sources [21], [22], and [23].

governments that completed innovation processes and received awards in 2021 is as follows: 23.53% at the provincial level, 17.34% at the city level, and 10.34% at the regency level. This suggests that higher levels of government institutions are more likely to receive innovation awards as they adopt and implement innovations. Figure 2 presents the percentage of provinces, regencies, and cities that received innovation awards in 2021.

The awarding of innovation by ministries and the National Institute of Public Administration in Indonesia is similar to practices in other countries. For example, Brazil awarded the Innovation Award in Federal Public Administration between 1995 and 2011 [24]. Canada recognized public sector innovation through the Innovative Management Award by the Institute of Public Administration of Canada [25], and India granted the Presidential National Innovation Award [26].

Innovation awards are designed to continuously enhance both the quality and quantity of innovations, which, in turn, helps improve a country's ranking in the Global





**Figure 2:** Percentage of Provinces, Regencies, and Cities Received Innovation Awards 2021.  
Notes: Compiled by the author from sources [21], [22], [23].

Innovation Index (GII). According to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Indonesia's GII rankings were as follows: 85th in 2018, 85th in 2019 [27], 85th in 2020, and 87th in 2021 out of 132 countries surveyed [7]. This data shows that Indonesia maintained a GII rank of 85 from 2018 to 2020, followed by a two-point drop in 2021, likely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic affecting countries worldwide, including Indonesia. To improve Indonesia's GII ranking, it is essential to address these challenges through robust innovation policies. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Indonesia introduced innovative approaches to population administration services [28]. Additionally, post-pandemic innovations in the public sector are crucial to ensuring continuity in public services, particularly by advancing e-government initiatives.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The Indonesian government, through various ministries and the National Institute of Public Administration, presented Public Sector Innovation Awards to local governments: provinces, regencies, and cities, that successfully implemented regional innovation policies. The data suggests that the higher the level of government institutions innovating, the greater the likelihood of receiving an innovation award. Continuing innovation efforts

in the post-COVID-19 era are essential to ensure public services operate effectively, particularly through the advancement of e-government policies.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Wisber Wiryanto, as the main author, contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, data analysis, and review of the final manuscript of the research. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3408-0021>. Muhammad Ma'ruf Afif, as a co-author, contributed by collecting data through online library research.

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