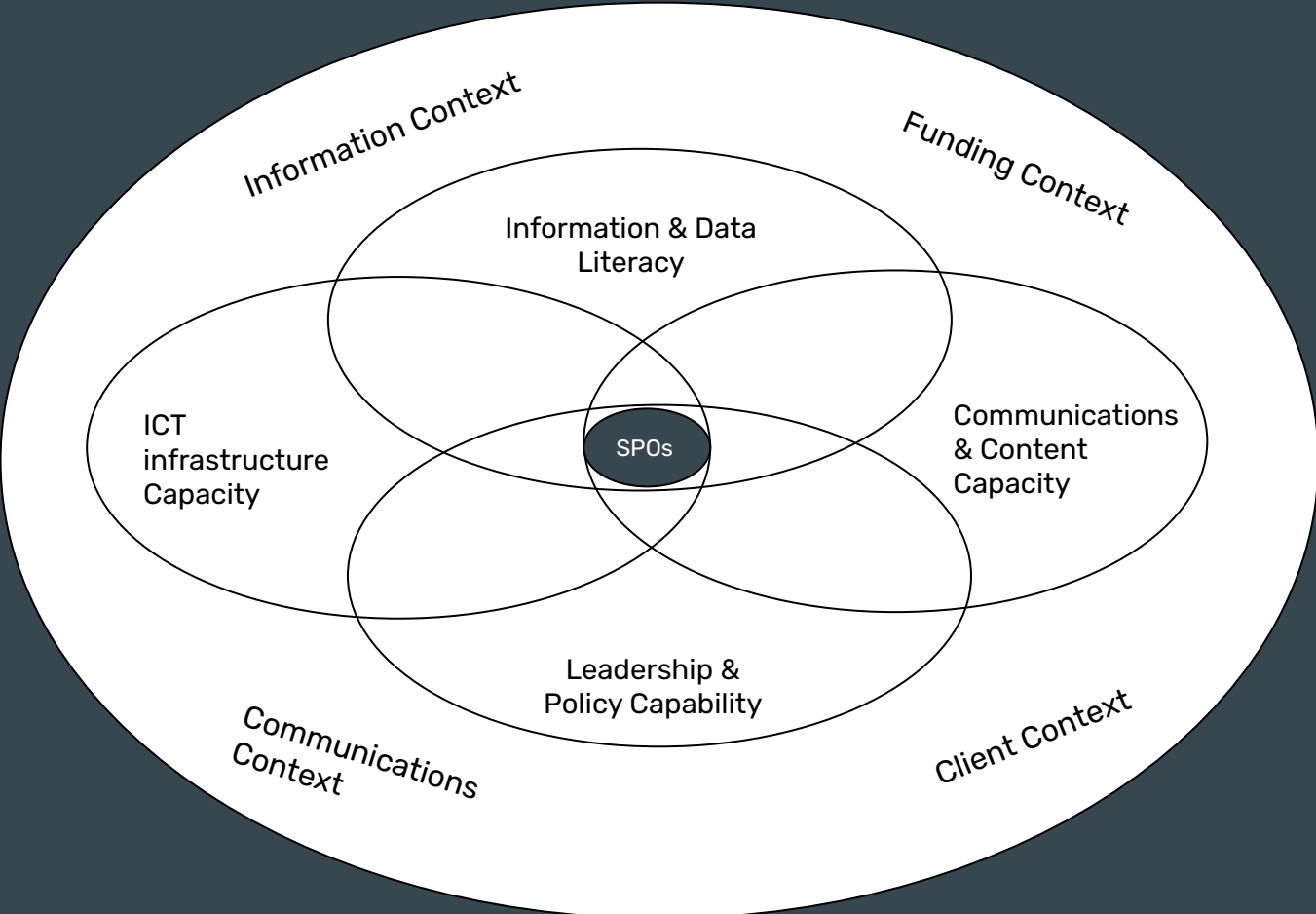


COVID & Access to Settlement Services



The impact of technology on both clients and service providers in the pandemic context

Sector Digital & Informational Context & Capabilities



What we know

- March 2020 - everyone and everything went online
- Agencies adapted, and were creative with how they reached and served newcomers
- The switch was difficult for many Settlement practitioners and clients
- However, early on it was working: 'Almost two-thirds of front-line practitioners have been able to make the switch successfully to remote work. Almost 25% even found themselves surprised to be enjoying this way of working. However, almost one-third found themselves struggling. Among leadership an almost equal number were making the switch to remote work successfully, with 52% finding it challenging but that they have been able to adapt. However, almost one-third found it a big shift, with 21% working longer hours.'

What we know

- The digital divide is real for newcomers. There is no one persona, digital inclusion and equity are complex.
- However, many newcomers are able to access services. Some prefer online/remote. Some do not.
- The digital divide is real for the sector as well.
- We developed a comprehensive understanding of digital equity in our sector.
- Digital transformation is complex. The sector is unsure of the “right way” to deliver digital/remote services.

Current research - common themes

- There are unique needs and challenges for different regions
- The sector is keen to work together toward more innovative and collaborative practices
- The pandemic should be viewed as an enabling condition for innovation and collaboration: it necessitated two-way dialogue between funders and SPOs, leading to adaptive responses to uncertain situations
- Investing time and resources into increasing digital literacy and capacity across the sector - including newcomers and SPOs - is essential to holistic service delivery moving forward
- Expand service eligibility to allow SPOs to formally serve clients including foreign students and TFWs

Current research - common themes

- Build and implement more innovation-focused, flexible funding arrangements to allow for hypothesis testing and responsive/adaptive programming
- Invest in knowledge mobilization and professional development resources for sector service providers
- Empower newcomers to be agents of innovative practices and drivers of their own settlement journeys
- The sector and newcomers are resilient, innovative, and forward looking.
- Digital/remote service delivery can work for many, but not all, newcomers

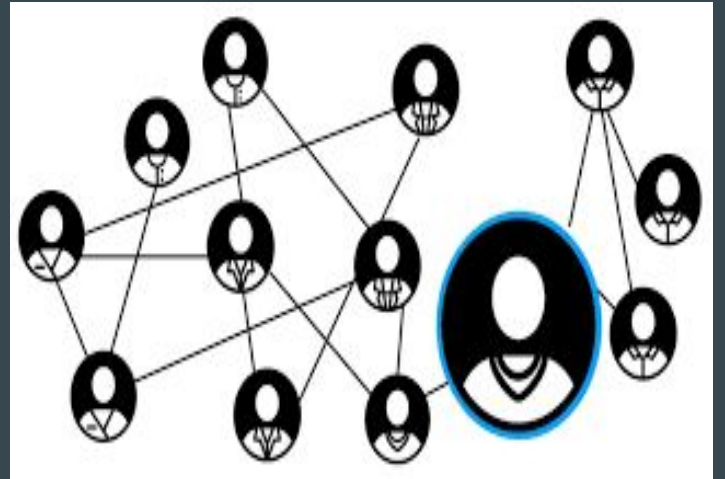
What we learned

- A lot of research, surveys, and consultations looking at the digital shift, client access, etc., have happened over the past 2 years.
- The core conclusions are similar - it's been difficult, but service has continued, and we've learned what's possible in a remote/digital service system. Service and information access has increased in many cases.
- Some newcomers are waiting/have waited for in-person service to resume. Some staff can't wait to go back into the office.
- But, we're not going back to business as usual.

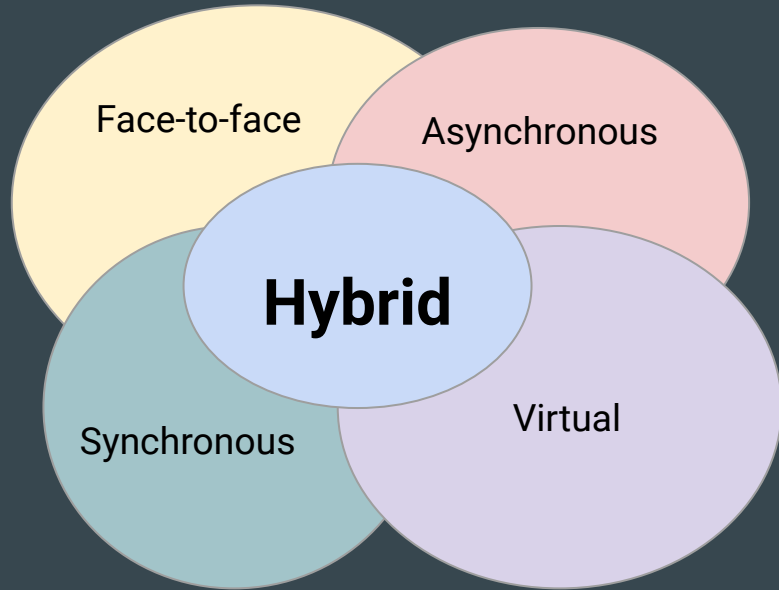
Where we're going - Hybrid Service Delivery

Blended learning/teaching requires

- Thoughtful planning
- New approaches to service design
- Pedagogical shifts and skills



What's next - hybrid/blended



“a combination of face-to-face in classroom and technology-mediated learning using devices such as computers, smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices with an internet connection. These devices may be provided by programs, or learners may be free to bring their own device. Our position is that blended learning in adult education **is not only about the use of tools and resources.** Instead, it is **a way to think about program and curriculum development, including learning design and delivery.**” (Adult Literacy Education Organization)

Baselines in hybrid service delivery

- Baselineing: frameworks for reference of quality digital service delivery
- Competencies – technologies, infrastructure, digital literacies, digital capacity that all agencies need to have



The future of your job

Your job is not at risk. It will change, but your role is more important than ever before (personalization, misinformation, disinformation, curation, incorporating data into your work, systems/community/tech navigation, etc.)

What does that job look like? It's up to us. Define and educate our funders.

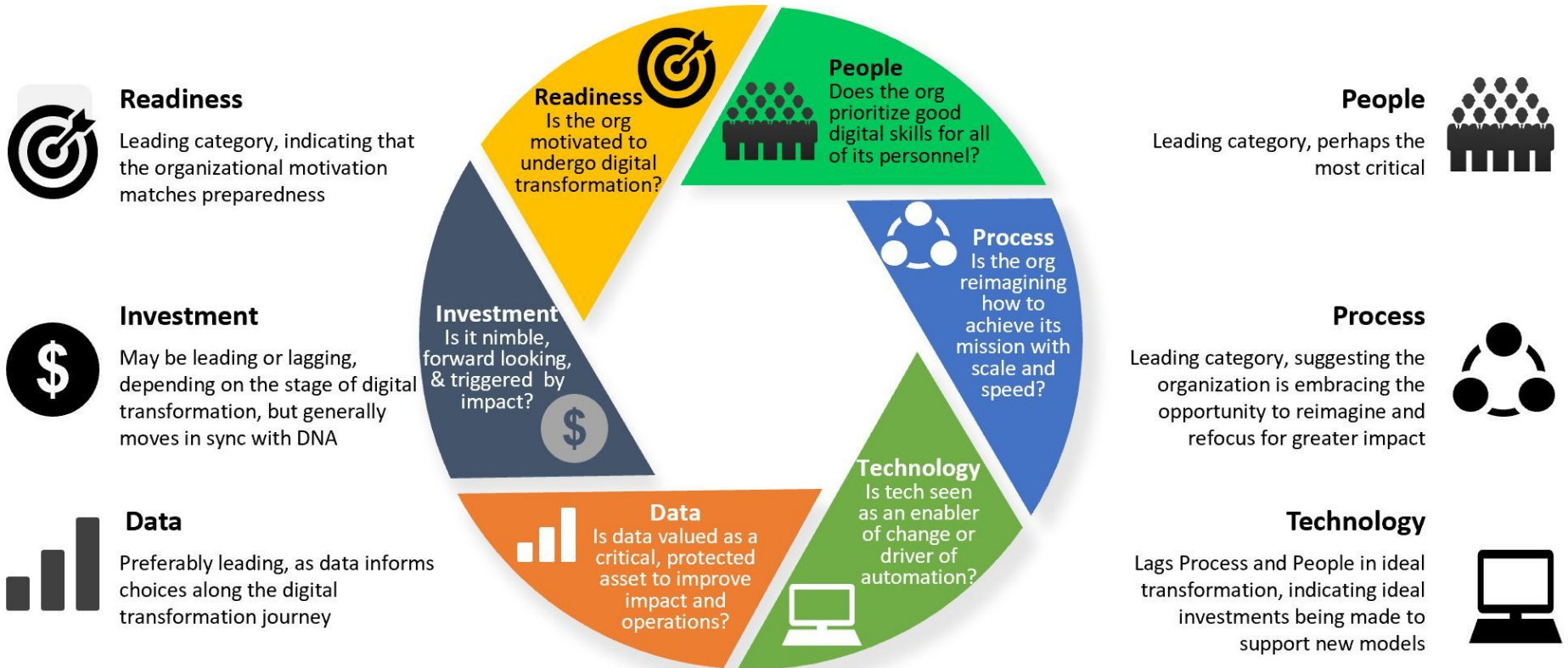
New Professional Roles in Settlement Service Delivery

- A digital coordinator could wear multiple hats and functioned in different roles.
- A digital lead could identify digital service delivery needs amongst staff and clients. This role should also develop ways to support staff to be engaged in virtual spaces.
- Digital navigators and specialists could offer customized digital training for both clients and staff.

It is important that settlement workers learn to be substantially knowledgeable about digital devices and platforms and prepare for digital transformation readiness.

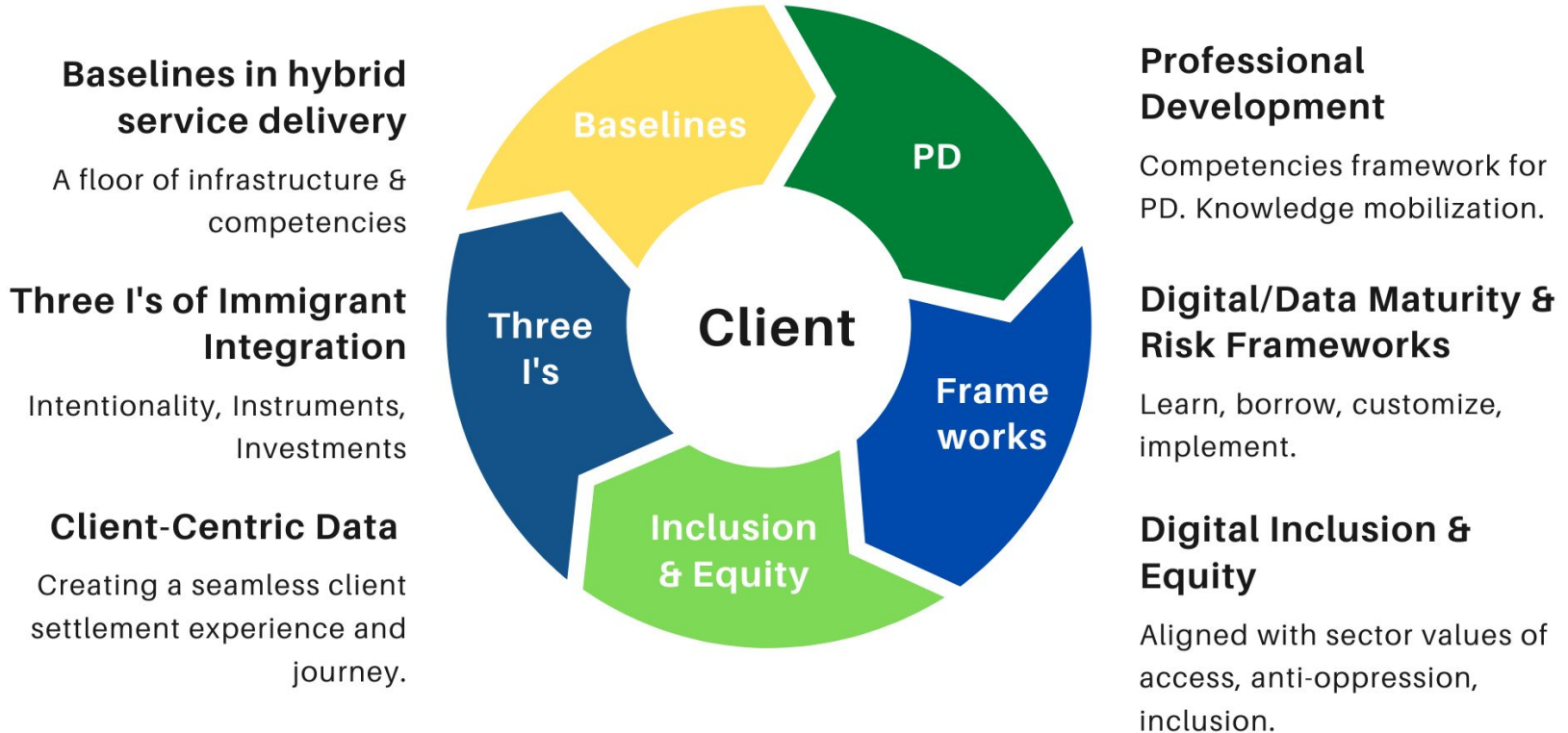
What does a digitally mature sector
look like?

Digital maturity



Digital maturity

Digital Settlement Agency

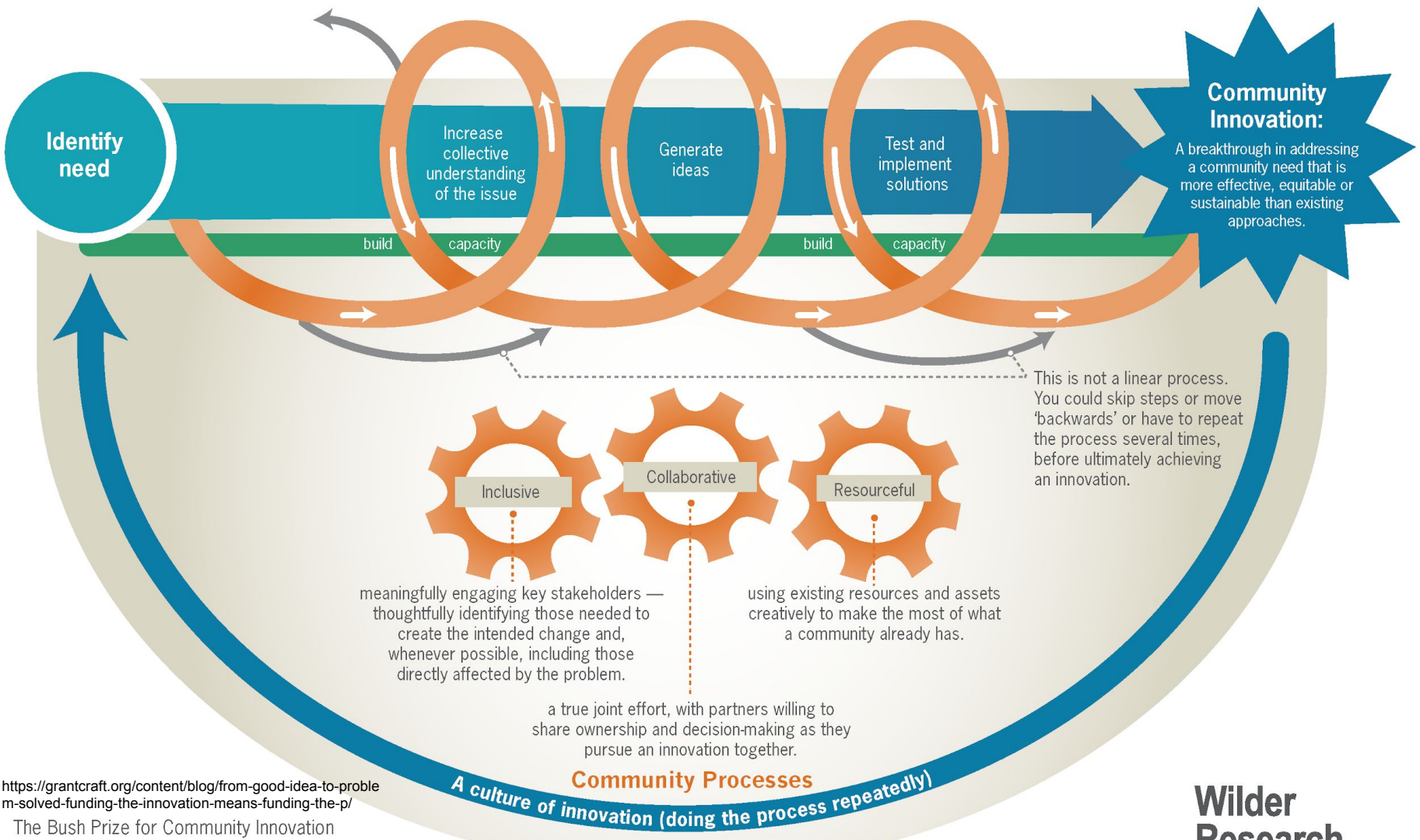


Digital Inclusion – addressing digital equity and the digital divide

- Complex social challenge that require well-planned interventions in hybrid service delivery
- Digital divide for clients: (1) limited access to digital devices and platforms, (2) low literacy in English or in their own languages, and (3) digital equity also intersects with other equity and social justice issues
- 5 A's of technology access: availability, affordability, awareness, ability, agency

Digital Inclusion - addressing digital equity and the digital divide

- We have come to a better understanding of the multi-dimensions of digital inequality
- Digital inclusion needs to consider different social and situational contexts
- Digital inequality also happens to settlement workers themselves
- You cannot do this alone.



Innovations and promising practices

Innovation: the **digital** and **non-digital** practices and approaches that foster the adaptability and agility needed to enable the settlement sector to stay ahead of the curve in a rapidly changing migration and settlement landscape, with the goal of better serving newcomers to Canada. We note a distinction between **innovation**: a process of developing something genuinely new; and **iteration**: a process of refining what is already working to make it even better.

Centring newcomers & communities

There is a myth that SPOs do not centre clients in your work.

Of course, we can always do better, and more.

In a hybrid service delivery model, there is no wrong door for clients to access services. Accessibility, flexibility, and choice are key.

Funders and the future

They're trying to figure this out too.

They're working on the future of their services too.

Don't wait for them to lead. But work with them.

Federal Government digital priorities for the next 3 years (2021–2024)

- **Modernize legacy IT systems** (Provide modern, reliable and secure networks and infrastructure)
- **Improve services** (Improve the service experience of all clients, Maximize public value of data and information, Build and use secure common solutions for digital service delivery)
- **Implement enterprise** (no silos, Manage and use data and information as strategic assets, Plan and govern for the sustainable and integrated management of service, information, data, IT and cybersecurity, Deploy modern and accessible workplace tools and devices)
- **Transform the institution** (Support fully digital delivery by managing a government-wide culture shift, Build a workforce for digital first delivery)

Three I's of Immigrant Integration:



INTENTIONALITY



INSTRUMENTS



INVESTMENTS