

Proposal to Develop an Education Innovation Team

We propose the establishment of an Educational Innovation Team for a period of two years commencing in January 2009 and running through to the end of 2010.

- The first task of this team will be to bring together effective innovative educational networks within South Africa
- The team will also work to develop innovative educational networks within the global village
- The team will seek to be a creative forum that will serve as a collecting node for good working ideas and models.
- The team will serve as a conduit to ensure that these ideas are shared and fed into the national education framework

EIT Networks and Innovation

These networks will support educational innovation by:

- Providing a focal point for the dissemination of good practice
- Keeping the focus on the core purposes of schooling in particular creating and sustaining a discourse on teaching and learning
- Building capacity for continuous improvement at the local level
- Acting as a link between centralised and decentralised policy initiatives and ensuring that systems of pressure and support are integrated, not segmented

Innovation defined: innovation is...

- A process not an event
- About diversity and unpredictability
- A social not a management process
- About creating a market for ideas through smart experimentation
- Recombination rather than invention
- About moving from good practice, to best practice, replication and scale up

Five things an Innovation Unit can do to help make Transition to the Next Phase of Reform

1. Enhance and legitimise innovative ways of working and classroom practice throughout the school system
2. Foster partnerships between Schools and Government to develop creative responses to key challenges currently facing the system - the use of 'smart experimentation'
3. Create innovative ways of disseminating good practice throughout the system and of moving best practice to scale

Five things an Innovation Unit can do to help make Transition to the Next Phase of Reform

4. Engage with School led networks in order to enhance capacity throughout the system
5. Assist the DoE to engage in 'blue skies' thinking and to 'join-up' policy initiatives in order to focus unrelentingly on school improvement

Key Functions of the Innovation Team

STRATEGIC THINKING

- Map current knowledge, evidence, research base on innovative activity
- Models of knowledge creation & diffusion
- National & International experience & perspectives
- Exploring future scenarios
- Identifying gaps

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- Identification & application of knowledge creation
- Dissemination & communication
- Moving best practice to scale

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- Knowledge creation and innovative thinking
- Recognising, enabling, enhancing innovation
- Initiating & leading on the design/innovation process
- Facilitate/broker projects/trials & design competitions

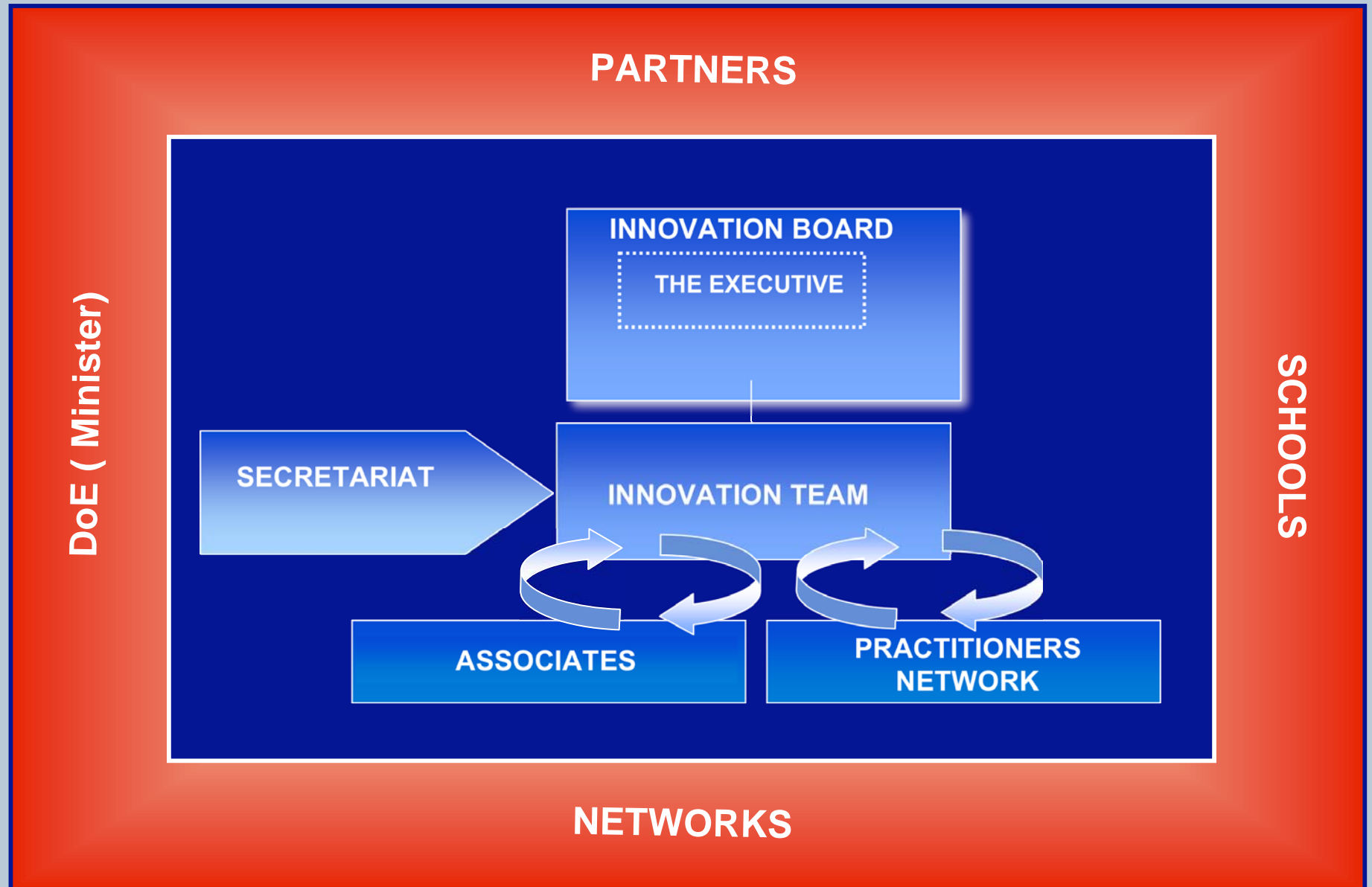
KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION

- Gathering and managing system innovation intelligence (DoE)
- Strengthening coherence and alignment in strategy, using the department's research capacity
- Innovation reviews (QA)

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Individual leadership & capacity
- Professional learning communities (school level)
- Intermediate & local capacity (Provincial, Networks, clusters)
- System & organisation capacity (DoE)

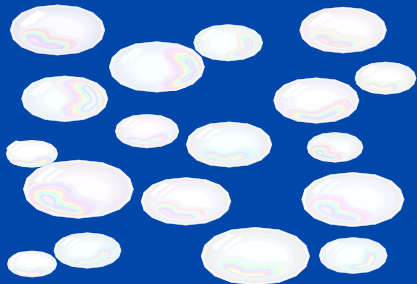
Conceptual / Organisational Overview of the “Innovation Unit”



Types of Innovative Practice

'BUBBLING UP'

- Spontaneous ideas from the profession – often locally based, small-scale ideas, probably about incremental change in the context of an individual school
- Encouraging this type of activity will support capacity building in schools
- Funding requirements are likely to be relatively modest – Unit will need to make decisions about how many projects it could afford to support



DESIGN-LED

- Unit will want to support 'smart experimentation' designed to address specific priorities
- Schools and other organisations and groups will be invited to take part in design competitions



'BIG TICKET'

- DoE is also likely to seek the Unit's expertise and involvement in developing policies which address large scale problems



Immediate innovative focal points:

- Technological solutions - “Hey Maths” – a significant beginning
- ICT implementation strategies - Edunova
- Dinaledi Schools differentiation - proposal available
- Growing the teacher base - Teach South Africa
- Enabling teacher personal transformation - ca’Dabra
- Third tier creation
 - HSRP - encouraging educational social entrepreneurship
- Business / leadership mentoring programmes
[Dinaledi focus – Dave Foord; African Leadership Academy]

Immediate innovative focal points:

- Establish curriculum phase teams - best practice
Shuttleworth Foundation Open-Source; Teach With Africa
- Publishers / Education forum creation - OUP
- Create database of working intervention models and social entrepreneurs
- Education – developing social movement momentum
use of media
- Foundations For Learning – social movement action
use of media, ISASA
- Developing effective models of Health Promoting Schools
UWC and UCT
- Sustainable living and social justice - Teach With Africa

We are ready to begin