

ACCELERATING DIGITAL INNOVATION: WILL QUEENSLAND HARNESS THE OLYMPICS TO LEAD PUBLIC SECTOR TRANSFORMATION?

RESEARCH INNOVATION COUNCIL ANZ BRIEF | VOL.5 | GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



On 30 October, 2024, **Griffith University** in Brisbane hosted a dynamic forum bringing together government officials, academic leaders, industry representatives, and community members to explore strategies for accelerating digital transformation in the Australian public sector. The session revolved around the GX5 framework, comprising five government service initiatives designed to enhance productivity and citizen engagement.

Attending the Chatham House discussion were 13 senior public sector leaders from Queensland, representing key government agencies and departments. Among the attendees, **46% held Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and C-level roles**, such as Chief Digital Officer (CDO), Chief Economist, and Executive Director, while the remaining 54% comprised Directors managing critical portfolios. Enhancing the forum's impact, **AWS** and four industry partners (**Datacom, Freshworks, Okta, GWI Digital**) joined five leading academics, handpicked by **Griffith University** to share insights pivotal to strengthening cross-sector engagement.

These leaders oversee areas spanning digital transformation, customer experience, economic policy, information security, healthcare innovation, and infrastructure management. Collectively, they are responsible for advancing strategic priorities such as enhancing customer-focused digital services, streamlining operations through emerging technologies, fostering data-driven decision-making, and implementing secure, scalable digital solutions.

Keynote speaker, the Honorable Victor Dominello, articulated the pressing need for governments to prioritise productivity to sustain economic growth amidst demographic and workforce challenges. Queensland's unique position, exemplified by its ISO-standard digital driver's license and the momentum generated by hosting the 2032 Brisbane Olympics, emerged as a cornerstone of the discussion. Participants examined practical strategies for implementing GX5 initiatives while addressing challenges such as trust, resilience, and skills development. The session underscored the importance of robust leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and actionable solutions tailored to Queensland's specific needs.

By **Patrick Joy** | Head of Research & Analysis | [Public Sector Network](#)

READ THE WHITEPAPER
WHAT IS THE GX5?



FIVE DIGITAL INITIATIVES
TO BOOST PRODUCTIVITY

THE GX5 | RESEARCH BRIEF



KEY THEMES AND INSIGHTS

GX5 FRAMEWORK AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPERATIVES

- **Core Elements:** Victor Dominello highlighted five critical public sector priorities: digital identity, skills wallets, digital front doors, digital health records, and digital licences.
- **Productivity Focus:** Participants acknowledged digital identity as a cornerstone for improving service delivery, reducing redundancies, and fostering economic growth through better inter-agency collaboration.
- **Queensland's Advantage:** The state's ISO-standard digital driver's licence was recognised as a key enabler, positioning Queensland to pioneer further advancements in digital identity and credentialing systems.

COLLABORATION AND HARMONISATION

- **Federal, State, and Local Dynamics:** Discussions underscored the need for a federated approach to digital identity and interoperability. Participants advocated for aligning state-level initiatives with national priorities while maintaining flexibility for local implementation.
- **Public-Private-Academic Partnerships:** Attendees emphasised leveraging academia's interdisciplinary expertise and industry's technical capabilities to drive innovation. Collaborative consortia were proposed as a mechanism to synthesise research and deliver actionable solutions.

RESILIENCE AND TRUST IN DIGITAL

- **Cybersecurity and Trustworthiness:** Participants identified resilience as a foundational principle, noting the critical importance of secure systems to prevent breaches and sustain public trust.
- **Disaster Preparedness:** Unique to Queensland, disaster scenarios were discussed, highlighting the need for robust systems capable of functioning in connectivity-deprived environments. Participants proposed including disaster readiness considerations in the digital transformation roadmap.

THE SKILLS AGENDA

- **Skills Wallets:** The concept of a skills wallet was explored as a means to improve labour market mobility and efficiency. Participants recommended prioritising pre-qualification credentials and integrating soft skills alongside hard credentials.
- **Continuous Learning:** Emphasis was placed on fostering life-long learning partnerships between universities and the public sector to address evolving workforce needs and emerging technologies.

OLYMPICS 2032 AS A BURNING PLATFORM

- **Strategic Opportunity:** The 2032 Olympics was identified as a catalyst for reimagining government services and ensuring long-term value for citizens and visitors alike.
- **Avoiding "Digital White Elephants":** Participants stressed the importance of designing solutions that are scalable and sustainable beyond the Olympics, with a focus on citizen-centric digital services.

CASE STUDY: DIGITAL IDENTITY IN QUEENSLAND

Queensland's rollout of **ISO-compliant digital driver's licence** was highlighted as a significant achievement, not only enhancing identity verification but also serving as a foundational architecture for broader digital capabilities. Participants discussed leveraging this infrastructure to create a unified digital front door for services, enabling streamlined access to government offerings such as tourism initiatives, especially in preparation for the 2032 Olympics.

The Olympics were seen as a unique opportunity to **showcase Queensland's digital maturity** by integrating services like public transport, accommodation, and event coordination into a **single, user-friendly platform as a government front door**. Furthermore, the digital driver's licence architecture was identified as a blueprint for scaling verifiable credentials across industries, supporting workforce mobility, and aligning with federal and international digital standards to ensure interoperability and trust.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ADVANCE DIGITAL IDENTITY

- Leverage Queensland's ISO-standard digital licences to pioneer a federated identity framework and facilitate interoperability across states and sectors.

BUILD COLLABORATION MECHANISMS

- Establish consortia involving government, academia, and industry to align efforts and synthesise solutions tailored to Queensland's context.

ENHANCE RESILIENCE

- Establish Queensland as a leader in digital governance by creating a unified, citizen-centric platform that integrates key GX5 pillars.

FOCUS ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- Launch a skills wallet pilot program, starting with pre-qualification credentials, and partner with universities for life-long learning initiatives.

LEVERAGE THE OLYMPICS

- Use the 2032 Olympics as a transformational platform to deliver scalable, citizen-centric digital services that endure beyond the event.

CONCLUSION

The GX5 framework presents a strategic opportunity for Queensland to lead Australia's digital transformation. By addressing productivity constraints through targeted initiatives like Digital Identity and the Skills Wallet, the state can enhance citizen services, stimulate economic growth, and build a more inclusive society. Leveraging unique opportunities, such as the Brisbane Olympics, alongside robust leadership and collaboration, will be critical to achieving these goals. Transparency, trust, and resilience remain foundational to this vision, ensuring long-term success and public confidence.

FUTURE FOCUS AREAS

- **Hosting capability and skills development sessions on digital literacy and digital skills for public sector employees.** The discussion highlighted the need for continuous learning and upskilling to keep up with the rapid pace of digital transformation.
- **Organizing themed roundtables on digital identity and credentialing.** There was a lot of discussion around the potential for a national skills wallet and the need for interoperability and harmonization of digital credentials across different jurisdictions.
- **Facilitating collaboration between academia, government, and industry to tackle complex digital transformation challenges.** The discussion emphasized the value of interdisciplinary approaches and bringing together diverse expertise.
- **Exploring research into responsible and ethical AI development,** as this was mentioned as an important consideration as AI becomes more pervasive in government services.
- **Investigating ways to improve digital service delivery and the citizen/customer experience,** potentially looking at models like the "consumer standard" discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Public Sector Network thank all participants, with special recognition to the Hon. Victor Dominello, Ember Advisors, AWS and partners, and the host universities for their invaluable contributions. The insights shared at these events will guide the next chapter of digital transformation in Australia and New Zealand.

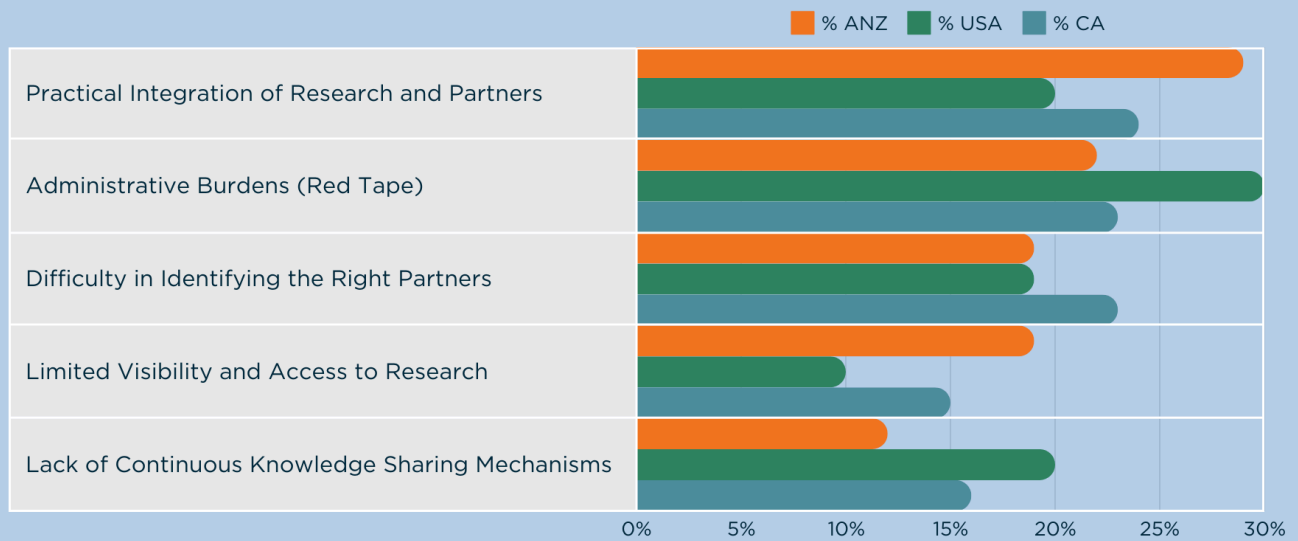
ABOUT THE RESEARCH INNOVATION COUNCIL

Connecting government, industry and academia: we've been able to engineer a new program antithetical to the classical red tape, administration, and risk-aversion that impedes innovation.

Our program offers senior executives a unique opportunity to gather monthly for PSN-facilitated roundtable sessions with colleagues, academics, and technologists. We run the program at no cost to government executives or academics, and provide attendees a private online group on our global insights exchange platform, access to research briefs, and expert engagement with PSN analysts and facilitators.



Greatest challenge partnering with Academia or Industry



Source: PSN Research Innovation Council Survey 2024. Total Sample Size: 188 ANZ/ 83 USA/ 80 CA Gov Executives

ABOUT PUBLIC SECTOR NETWORK

Public Sector Network is a research company that represents public sector professionals across Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA. It develops roundtables, seminars, and conferences to suit current areas of interest to government agencies and their suppliers.

PSN's growing community spans across federal, state, and local government departments, healthcare, and education, allowing members to share information, access the latest in government innovation, and engage with other like-minded individuals on a secure and closed-door network.

AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND

P +61 2 9057 9070

E INFO@PUBLICSECTORNETWORK.COM.AU

USA

P +1 (647) 969 4509

E HELLO@PUBLICSECTORNETWORK.COM

CANADA

P +1 (647) 459 8904

E CONTACT@PUBLICSECTORNETWORK.CO

Public Sector Network (Australia) Pty Ltd

ABN - 46 617 870 872 20-40

Meagher Street, Chippendale, Sydney NSW 2008, Australia



ServiceGen

