

Media Release



GOVTECH ACCELERATOR SET TO ADVANCE PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION

Digital innovators, budding entrepreneurs and public sector agencies in Wellington are encouraged to get involved in a three-month business acceleration programme aimed at creating digital solutions for ‘better, faster and stronger’ government.

The new programme, Lightning Lab GovTech, is part of Creative HQ’s successful Lightning Lab business accelerator programmes, and has been established in partnership with Victoria Business School at Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency, Wellington City Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council.

Applications open next month for the intensive programme, which starts in August, and will see participants design, develop, test and validate new approaches and technologies to improve local and central government in New Zealand and abroad.

They will work alongside top entrepreneurs, mentors, academics and students to help turn their ideas into projects and then ‘market-ready’ products and services.

Teams will work on carefully selected government projects that are being sponsored by a parent government agency, so that the work done in Lightning Lab GovTech has the potential to make real, impactful change.

Victoria Business School Entrepreneurship Programmes director Professor Stephen Cummings says Lightning Lab GovTech will draw on the Business School’s research capabilities around innovation, entrepreneurship and government.

“We are excited to be part of Lightning Lab GovTech, particularly as it ties in with our research strengths and our position at the heart of the capital city. This is one of the first entrepreneurial accelerators applied specifically to civic or government enterprise, so it’s great to be at the forefront of this world-leading venture with Creative HQ.

“The programme will contribute to upskilling, training and educating local entrepreneurial talent as well as providing researchers with the opportunity to contribute to international scholarship in this under-researched area.”

Creative HQ head of acceleration Brett Holland agrees that the Lightning Lab GovTech has the potential to have an impact that extends beyond our shores.

“Governments around the world are struggling to keep up with the day-to-day challenges of digital transformation, citizen-centric government and participatory democracy. Lightning Lab GovTech will facilitate the rapid innovation needed in the public sector to help overcome some of those challenges.

“We see these innovations being beneficial to similar programmes and government agencies overseas, which in turn will allow Wellington, and by extension New Zealand, to become a global hub of government innovation.”

Visit the Lightning Lab GovTech website to register interest and find out more.

For more information contact Professor Stephen Cummings on 04 463-6931 or stephen.cummings@vuw.ac.nz.