

**DEMOS  
HELSINKI**

# Experimentation is the new planning

## How to mainstream it in government?

---

**Mikko Annala**

Head of Governance Innovation

Demos Helsinki

[mikko.annala@demoshelsinki.fi](mailto:mikko.annala@demoshelsinki.fi)

[@mikkoannala](https://twitter.com/mikkoannala)

**DEMOS  
HELSINKI**

# The Story of Demos Helsinki

**Demos Helsinki** is a Nordic think tank established in 2005. We specialise in strategic experiments, co-creation, and foresight. Demos is a non-profit project-funded organisation with no political affiliations.

- Demos Helsinki's work serves two clients: the society and our project clients.
- We have successfully served hundreds of ministries, universities, companies, and NGOs in creating a better future.

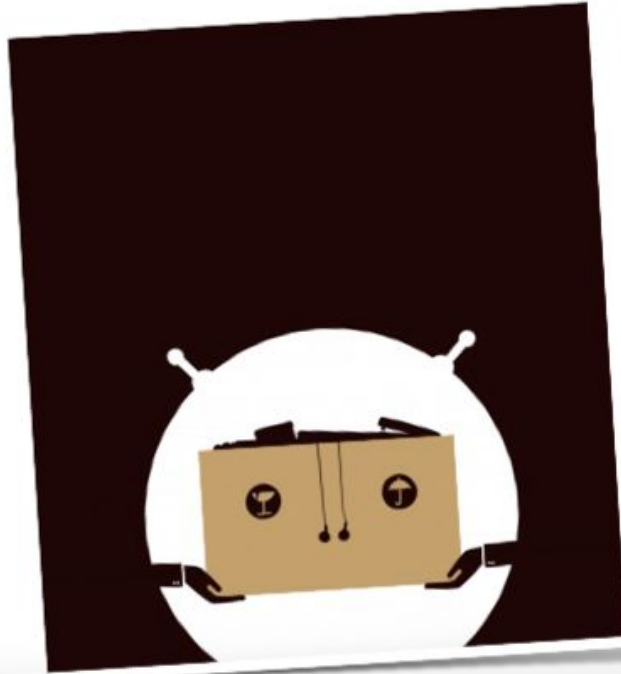




**Business**

# How Technology Is Destroying Jobs

Automation is reducing the need for people in many jobs. Are we facing a future of stagnant income and



Obama [told Bloomberg Businessweek](#) that the US would **need to redesign the social compact** as AI plays a larger role in the economy.

"The notion of a 40-hour workweek, a minimum wage, child labor laws, etc. — those will have to be updated for these new realities," he said.

(...) “universal basic income will be harder to ignore in the coming decades.”



Finland to give every person  
£576 a month in bid to cut ALL  
benefits in the country

## Finland Plans to Give All Its Citizens \$875 a Month, Should Other Countries Follow Suit?

By Sirin Kale

December 8, 2015



This site uses cookies. By continuing, your consent is assumed. [Learn more](#)

# METRO

NEWS... BUT NOT AS YOU  
80.9M SHARES

HOME NEWS SPORT ENTERTAINMENT LIFESTYLE MORE

UK WORLD WEIRD TECH

## Finland's giving everyone £580 a month so let's all pack up and move there



Ashitha Nagesh for Metro.co.uk Sunday 6 Dec 2015 10:44 am



DEMOS  
HELSINKI

# IT'S AN EXPERIMENT

Finland to give every person  
2576 a month in bid to cut ALL  
benefits in the country

## Finland Plans to Give All Its Citizens \$875 a Month, Should Other Countries Follow Suit?

By Sirin Kale  
December 8, 2015



This site uses cookies. By continuing, you consent to assumed. [Learn more](#)

# METRO

NEWS... BUT NOT AS YOU  
80.9M SHARES

HOME NEWS SPORT ENTERTAINMENT LIFESTYLE MORE

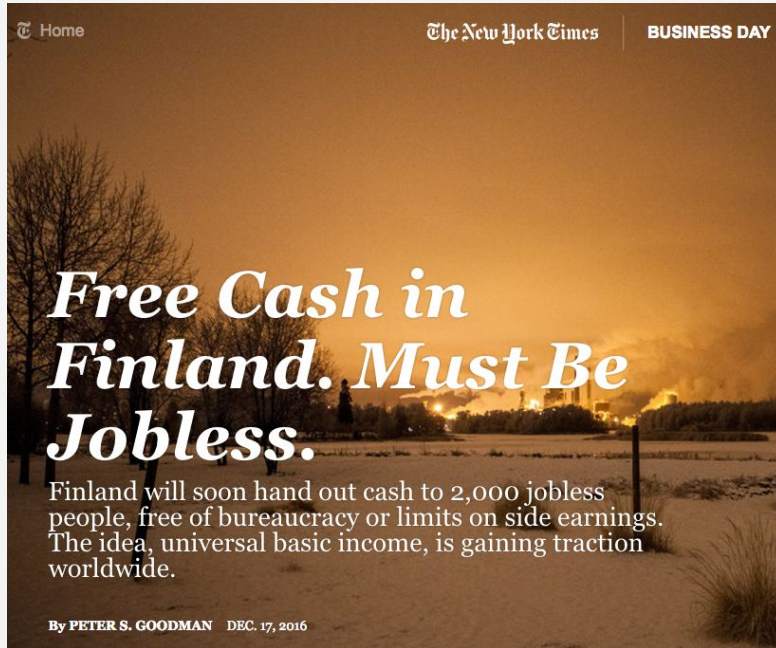
UK WORLD WEIRD TECH

## Finland's giving everyone £580 a month so let's all pack up and move there

Ashitha Nagesh for Metro.co.uk Sunday 6 Dec 2015 10:44 am

f t g+ ✉ 4.6k

# Experimentation enables the government to explore the unknown



Finland's experiment in a nutshell:

- Duration 2 years
- Nationwide pilot
- Started on January 1, 2017.
- Covers 2,000 unemployed Finns
- Age between 25 and 58
- Guaranteed sum of 560€ / month, which equals average monthly unemployment benefits in Finland.
- Unemployment benefits were replaced
- Payments take place even if the recipient works or has other income.

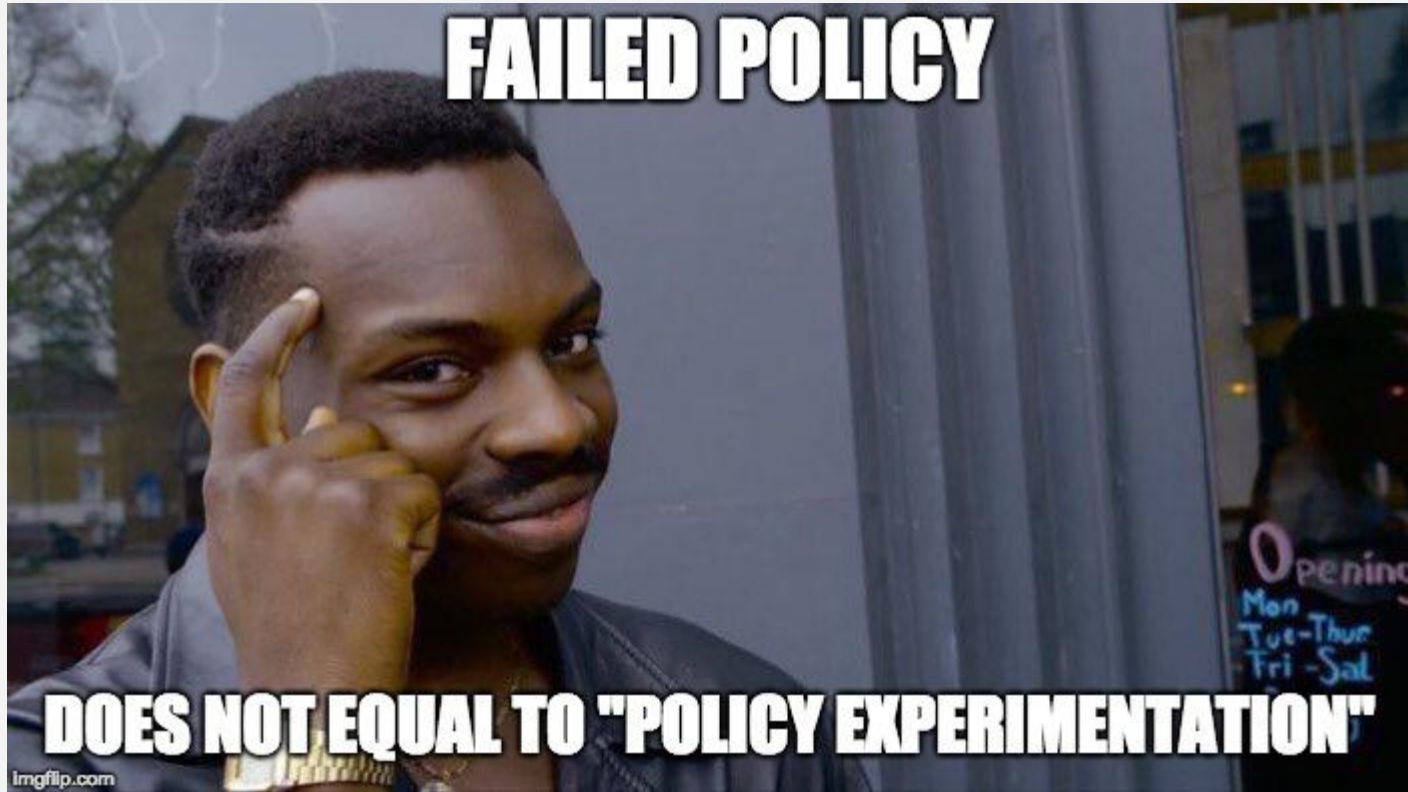
[Short video by YLE](#)

# What is public sector experimentation?

- ✓ Tied to policy aims
- ✓ There is uncertainty of the outcome
- ✓ Temporary activity
- ✓ Limited scope
- ✓ Possibility to evaluate successes and failures

**#itapa2018**





imgflip.com

# From Planning to Experimenting

- ✘ Long-lasting planning → ✔ Rapid iterations
- ✘ Avoiding failures → ✔ Taking use of failures
- ✘ Trying to reach certainty → ✔ Dialogue with uncertainty
- ✘ Working inside sectors → ✔ Working in open ecosystems
- ✘ Evaluating after scaling → ✔ Learning throughout process

# New wave of experimentation emerged

Institutions such as the **OECD**, **European Commission**, and **White House** have recommended their member states to utilise experimental methods and behavioural insights in their policy making processes.

## Without experimentation:

1. Potential, but too risky, radical or just different initiatives are left unexplored
2. Failing policies and services live too long
3. Lot of time is spent for planning for perfect future solutions – which will never happen

# Limitations of planning? Finnish government fixing the big machine.

Sat, 10 Jan, 2015 03:01:42 AM

## OHRA proposes new govt policy approach

FTimes Report, Jan 10



The final report of the OHRA Project was handed over to Prime Minister Alexander Stubb by State Secretary Olli-Pekka Heinonen of the Prime Minister's Office and State Secretary Martti Hetemäki of the Ministry of Finance on Friday. Photo Lehtikuva.

The government consistently draws secure resources a change.

The government's major issues that would focus on, a joint project OHR. Finance and the P the potential of d framework.

A key proposal d project is a new ty pursued by the go Communications D

Released on Frida Project was han Alexander Stubb Heinonen of the P Secretary Martti He

## Need to move from...

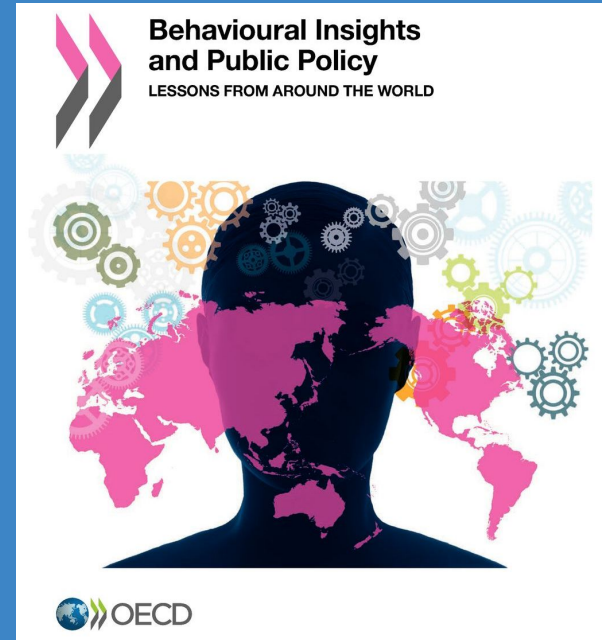
- detailed plans to strategic objectives
- top-down approach to ecosystems approach
- post-evaluations to continuous learning

# OECD: Experimentation has not reached its full potential

“Behavioural insights are still mostly applied to the areas where they were first introduced, namely consumer protection and choice in diverse areas. There is great potential for applying behavioral insights more broadly.”

- **OECD, 2017**

**Same goes with experimentation in general:** it has proven to be a useful tool for enforcing service delivery and implementation. But rarely it has gone beyond that.



# From puzzles to paintings



# Finnish approach: experimentation framework instead of single experiments

- National Ethical Code of Conduct
- Digital platform for encouraging citizen-led experiments
- Legislative guidelines
- Forerunner networks
- Experimentation Labs
- Media effort for encouraging experimentation culture
- Guidelines and playbooks

## Autonomous buses take to the busy streets of Helsinki

Devin Coldewey @techcrunch / Aug 18, 2016

Comment

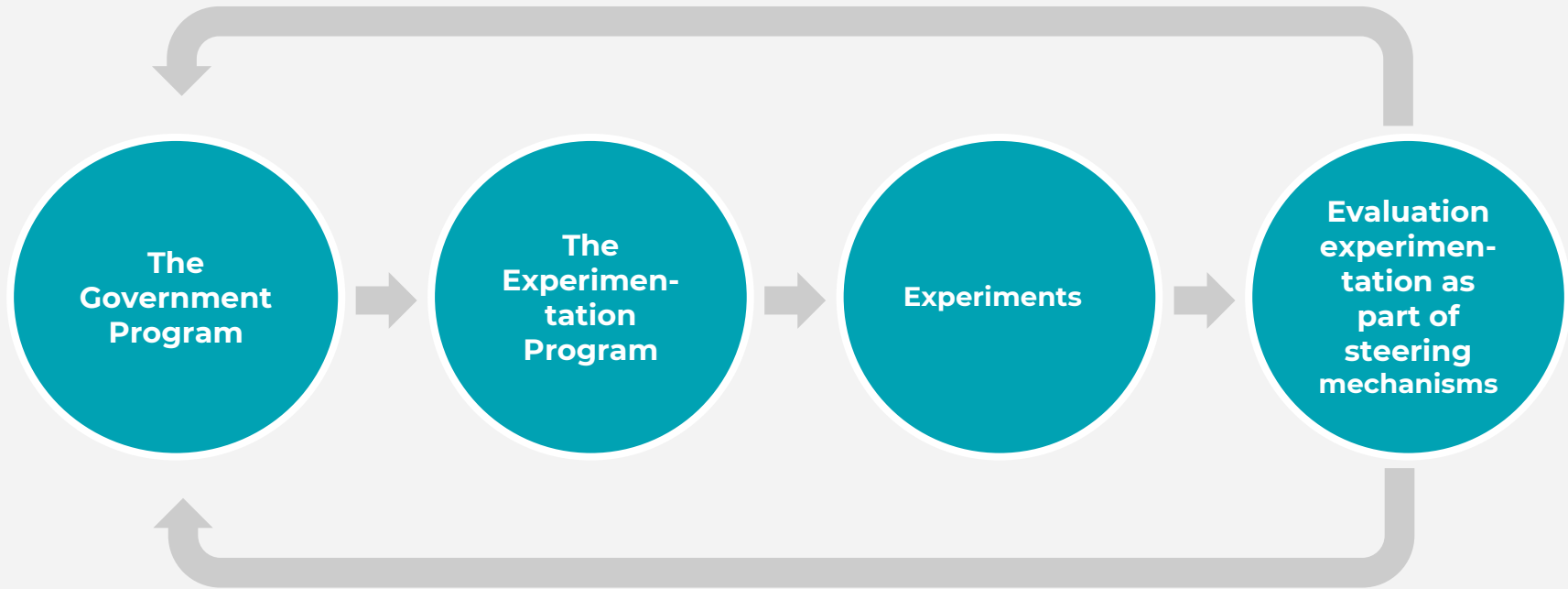


KEY PROJECT 4: A CULTURE OF EXPERIMENTATION WILL BE INTRODUCED

Minister of Local Government and Public Reforms Anu Vehviläinen



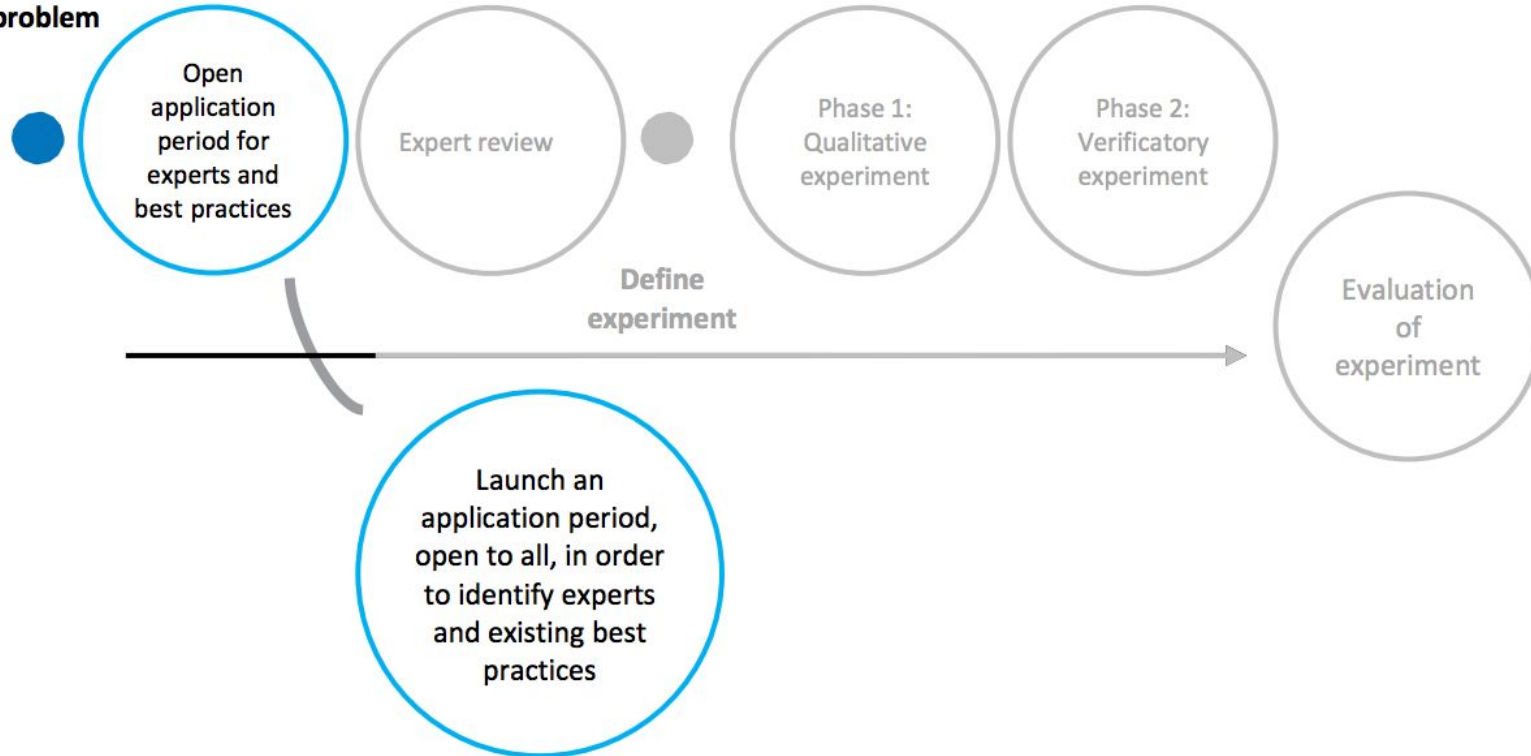
# The Case of Finland: Linking Experimentation to the Government Program



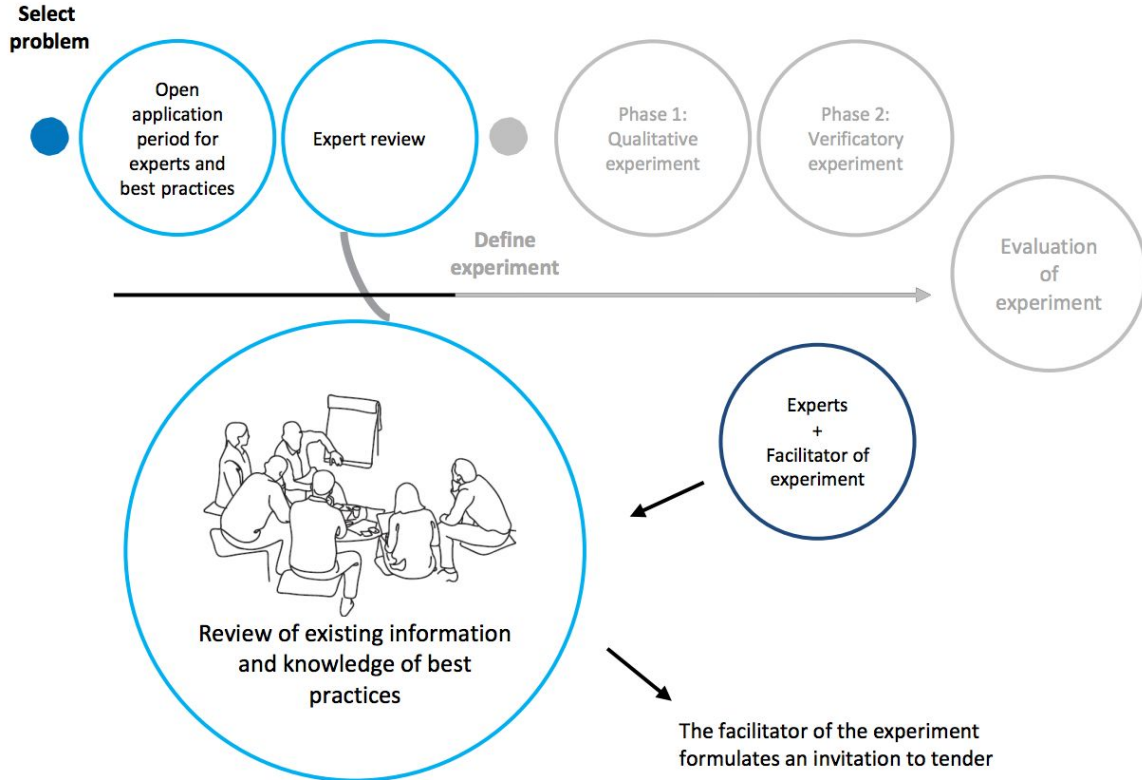


# Identify best practices and engage with stakeholders

Select problem

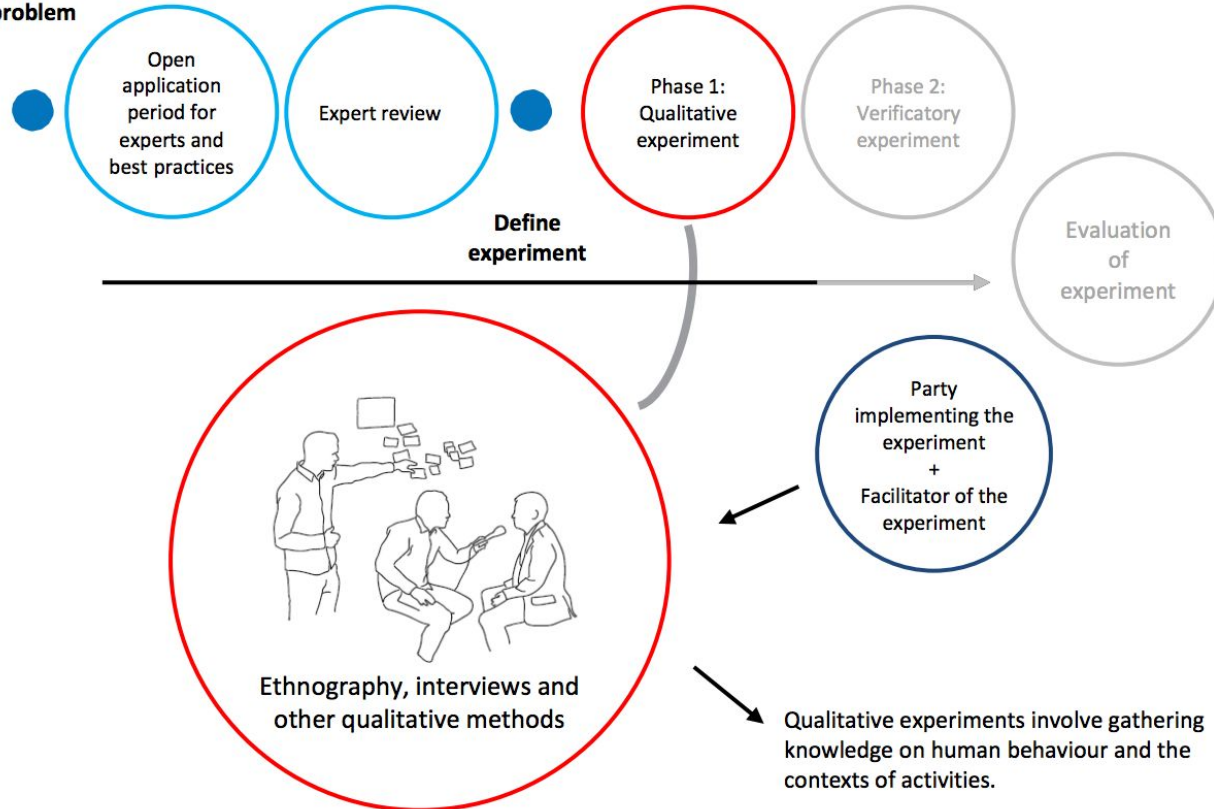


# Utilise science and expert knowledge

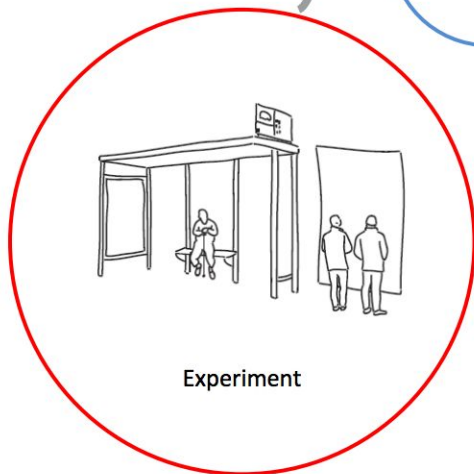
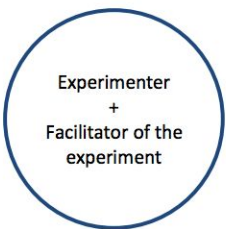
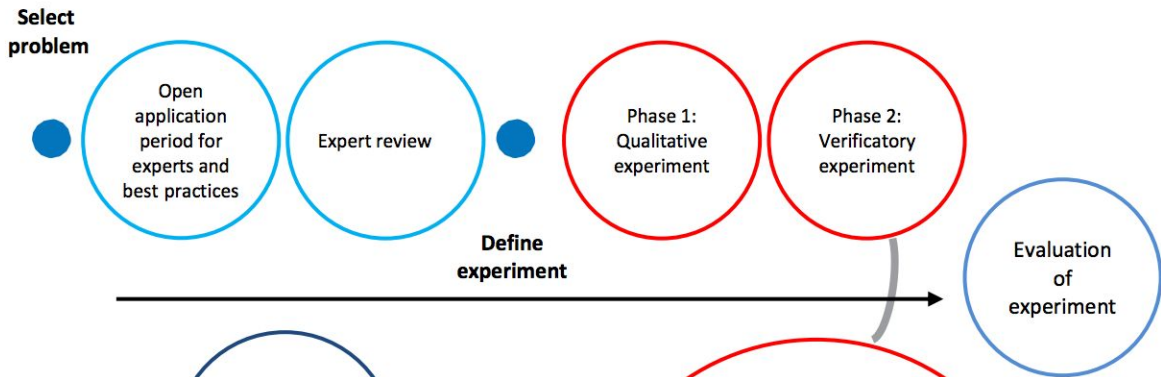


# Learn fast, evaluate as you go

Select problem



# Be patient and wait for reliable results



A validating experiment tests information obtained during the earlier phase in the environment in which the steering mechanisms will be applied. On the basis of the results, better conclusions can be drawn on causal connections and/or wider application, and the understanding gained of the impacts of the measures involved.

# Now experimenting with: education, mobility, employment, arts and health...

27 policy experiments are approaching their end stretch.

Ministers giving policy recommendations in 2019.



# Important steps in mainstreaming public sector experimentation

- 1. Move from single experiments towards connecting experimentation to the core activities of government:** policy design, legislation, service production, public project management.
- 2. Forget the forerunners.** Concentrate on moving the middle.
- 3. Don't see end-users as participants, but as co-designers of experiments.** *Utilize experts, don't follow them.*

# Thank you!

**Mikko Annala,  
Head of Governance Innovation**

**[www.demoshelsinki.fi/en](http://www.demoshelsinki.fi/en)  
[mikko.annala@demoshelsinki.fi](mailto:mikko.annala@demoshelsinki.fi)**

**@mikkoannala**

