Governments around the world are seeking more effective approaches to fostering innovation (R&D-driven and business-led innovation). Ensuring innovation policymakers have the right skills and networks to help design and improve innovation policies is essential if these policies are to have the desired impacts on economic growth and social challenges.

The Global Innovation Policy Accelerator is an 8 month executive development programme for innovation policy leaders (i.e. public officials) from Newton partner countries. It is delivered by a consortium of organisations working within UK and partner countries’ innovation ecosystems, and led by Nesta, the UK’s innovation foundation: https://www.nesta.org.uk/project/global-innovation-policy-accelerator/

The programme brings together small, national cohorts of senior policymakers from the countries’ main innovation institutions, to strengthen the implementation capabilities of their teams. It is being delivered through a combination of learning methods both in the UK and in country with policy project being at the core. It is deliberately called an ‘accelerator’ because it is modelled on start-up accelerator process and participants thus receive intensive coaching and mentoring in support of their projects.

During 2016-17, Nesta ran a pilot of the Policy Accelerator with the Pacific Alliance group of countries with Chile, Colombia, Peru and Mexico, producing successful projects including standardising evaluation of university-industry collaboration programmes in Peru, helping the high-value manufacturing sector in Mexico, improving white meat processing in Colombia and aiming to produce graduates who are more likely to become innovators in Chile.

In 2018, further Policy Accelerator programmes were delivered with cohorts from Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines, and in India and Brazil in 2018/19. In 2019/20, the final iteration of the programme will run in Egypt, Jordan, Kenya, South Africa and Turkey.

“The Policy Accelerator programme was instrumental not just in convening different departments together but more importantly making us think and work together and collectively agree on our common problems, solutions to address them and the different steps to achieve our desired goal.”

Innovation Agency Director, Government of the Philippines