

Enabling Social Innovation in French Polynesia

Country Snapshot

Social innovation: "the processes and outcomes of developing novel approaches to address societal challenges facing people and planet." ¹

This snapshot represents a descriptive, non-exhaustive overview of key highlights from French Polynesia's social innovation ecosystem.

 Direct focus on social innovation  Connected but indirect focus on social innovation  No focus on social innovation

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Official Definition of Social Innovation



While no territory-specific legal definition of "social innovation" was identified, government-facing public materials increasingly frame enabling action through Économie Sociale et Solidaire (ESS), including preparatory work towards a dedicated ESS law. ²
As a reference point, France's 2014 ESS law defines "innovation sociale", and French Polynesia's ESS bill is communicated as inspired by that framework. ^{2,3}

Government Body for Social Innovation



Public sources reviewed did not identify a dedicated social innovation ministry; enabling responsibilities appear concentrated in economic development and digital transformation bodies. Agence de Développement Économique supports economic development and competitiveness and is tasked with structuring ESS (including preparatory work towards an ESS bill). ^{2,4}
Direction générale de l'économie numérique runs digital funding and inclusion schemes (e.g., grants for start-ups and digital transition; support for inclusion through digital skills and equipment). ^{5,6}

Government Strategy for Social Innovation



While no standalone "social innovation strategy" was identified, relevant priorities appear in broader territorial strategies:

- **Innovation Strategy 2030 ("Polynésie, Océan d'Innovation")** sets an enabling frame for innovative projects and skills aligned with sustainable and inclusive development, and is reported as adopted in October 2022. ⁷
- Implementation of Innovation Strategy 2030 is publicly described as structured around a **40-action plan** and cross-stakeholder workshops (institutional, academic, economic and societal actors). ⁸
- The economic development strategy **Cap 2033 (2023–2033)** is presented as targeting a more diversified, resilient and equitable economy, with monitoring led by a team within ADE. ⁹
- The **PCPF 2030 Plan d'action (2024–2030)** embeds principles linked to environmental protection and solidarity, which can provide a policy backdrop for mission-oriented innovation. ¹⁰

Policies, Laws & Regulations



While no social innovation-specific law was identified, adjacent enabling frameworks are publicly evidenced:

- ESS bill under preparation: government communication indicates that a local ESS legal framework is being prepared, inspired by France's 2014 ESS law. ⁴
- Public procurement: the Polynesian Public Procurement Code provides for a negotiated procedure in limited cases including contracts concluded solely for research, testing, experimentation or development. ¹¹
- Investment incentives: a Chamber of Accounts report describes the "Code des investissements" as structuring local tax incentive/defiscalisation mechanisms aimed at supporting investment aligned with public policy and job creation. ¹²

Official Statistics



While official statistics specifically labelled “social innovation” were not identified, public evidence exists for ESS measurement and standard enterprise statistics:

- ADE’s ESS diagnostic reports metrics on employer establishments, employment and wage mass.²
- Institut de la statistique de la Polynésie française publishes enterprise demography and methodological notes using the territorial enterprise register.¹³

Government Programs



Publicly documented government-backed programmes that can enable social innovation include:

- **ESS structuring pathway:** ADE reports an ESS diagnostic and describes work towards an ESS law and related support tools.²
- **France 2030 regionalised (innovation funding):** an official call supports innovation projects aligned with territorial priorities, including Innovation Strategy 2030 and Cap 2033.¹⁴
- **Digital grants (DGEN):** the Dispositif d’Aide au Digital provides grant ceilings up to 2,000,000 F CFP for early-stage start-ups and up to 4,000,000 F CFP for start-up development or digital transformation (with co-financing rates specified).⁵
- **Digital inclusion:** a documented example includes 368,750 F CFP to equip and train 200 workers with disabilities (digital inclusion and professional insertion training).⁶
- **Youth innovation skills:** the “PACIFIC GENIUS” programme offers selection-based sessions combining immersion, expert talks and hackathons.¹⁵
- **Entrepreneurship finance intermediation:** public support is reported for Initiative Polynésie française, including an operating subsidy of 37.15 million F CFP to support access to “prêts d’honneur” and accompagnement pathways (including women’s entrepreneurship and innovation pathways).¹⁶

ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholders



Key ecosystem actors mentioned in government or government-adjacent sources include:

- **Initiative Polynésie française:** A non-profit network actor providing “prêts d’honneur” and tailored accompagnement for project holders, positioned as widening access to entrepreneurship finance.¹⁶
- **Adie:** Referenced through government communications as supporting inclusive entrepreneurship and self-employment pathways for people excluded from traditional banking.¹⁷
- **Sofidep:** A development finance vehicle describing loans and participatory tools aimed at strengthening enterprise financing capacity, including products for new business creation.¹⁸
- **Innovation Outre-Mer:** Referenced by ADE in ecosystem-linking activities connecting overseas innovators with investors and major firms (including an annual event at Station F).¹⁹

Support Initiatives



Rather than a large portfolio of social innovation-specific incubators evidenced in public sources, support initiatives appear anchored in broader innovation and entrepreneurship mechanisms:

- **Forum Prospective – Jeunes Entrepreneurs (ADE):** an annual-style event positioning itself as a bridge between project holders, financiers, institutions and support structures.²⁰
- DGEN’s grant schemes (DAD; digital inclusion; and proposed aid to digital creation) directly support digital capability building, which can enable mission-driven or inclusive solutions.^{5 6 21}

Collaboration



Collaboration is evidenced through cross-sector strategy processes and thematic collective programmes:

- Innovation Strategy 2030 implementation is described as mobilising a wide set of actors through collective intelligence workshops.⁸
- **Convention des Entreprises pour le Climat – CEC Pacifique:** a public communiqué indicates participation of 27 enterprises alongside public administration services in a ~10-month support programme to create a shared “roadmap” towards more environmentally respectful models.²²
- ESS structuring is framed as occurring through an alliance including **Agence Française de Développement** support for an ESS diagnostic/structuring mission.

FINANCE

Financing Schemes

A mix of territorial instruments and France-linked mechanisms can support innovation with social or environmental outcomes:

- **France 2030 regionalised:** State contribution for French Polynesia’s innovation strategy is reported as **€1.68 million**, plus **€300,000** for territorial engineering support for project holders, with programme operators referenced as Banque des Territoires and Bpifrance. ²³
- **Public investment incentives:** tax incentive/defiscalisation mechanisms for investment are described by the Chamber of Accounts as a key policy tool (with public policy alignment and job creation objectives). ¹²
- **Credit guarantees:** AFD’s SOGEFOM guarantee fund is described as typically covering 50–70% of loan amounts (and up to 80% for creation of a new micro-enterprise), supporting access to bank loans. ²⁴
- **Local entrepreneurship finance:** Sofidep’s PACE product indicates financing for small enterprise creation up to 5 million F CFP. ¹⁸
- **Blended support with accompagnement:** Initiative Polynésie française combines “prêts d’honneur” with coaching, supported by public operating subsidies, which can be relevant for early-stage mission-driven entrepreneurs. ¹⁶

Financing Inclusivity

Targeting of underrepresented groups is evidenced mainly through programme examples and thematic pathways:

- **Disability inclusion:** a documented digital inclusion grant targets workers with disabilities through equipment and training. ⁶
- **Women entrepreneurs:** Initiative Polynésie française is described as developing an “entrepreneuriat au féminin” pathway. ¹⁶
- **Youth:** PACIFIC GENIUS targets secondary school students with structured innovation skills development. ¹⁵
- **Outer islands:** Sofidep notes that its financing approach considers geographic constraints, including remote archipelagos. ¹⁸

SOCIETY

Public Awareness of Social Innovation

While “social innovation” is not consistently used as a formal label, public evidence shows increasing visibility of ESS and inclusive development narratives through council-of-ministers communications and ADE-led public updates on ESS structuring. ^{2 2}
Public-facing programmes and events also signal adjacent discourse. ^{20 22}

Research

Public evidence reviewed did not identify dedicated territory-based research centres or academic programmes explicitly labelled “social innovation.”
Innovation Strategy 2030 nonetheless frames innovation as supporting sustainable and inclusive development. ⁷

Education & Human Capital

Human capital measures relevant to innovation and inclusion are publicly evidenced through skills pipelines and vocational credentialing:

- PACIFIC GENIUS provides structured exposure to digital/innovation themes through immersion, expert events and hackathons. ¹⁵
- A council-of-ministers note reports creation of a professional title for forest restoration and regeneration agents as part of a 2023–2028 skills plan (supporting green transition capacity). ²
- Digital inclusion programmes include structured training pathways (CV support, interview preparation and office IT skills) for people with disabilities. ⁶

Entrepreneurship

Comparable international indicators generally report at **France national level** (French Polynesia is not separately ranked), but they provide a baseline reference point:



32nd
88 countries

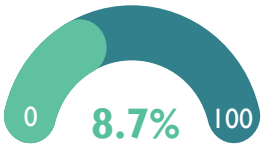
Business Environment

France was ranked 32nd in Doing Business 2020; the Doing Business project has since been discontinued, so this serves as a legacy benchmark only. ²⁷

13th
139 countries

Innovation Capacity

France ranks 13th/139 economies in the 2025 Global Innovation Index (WIPO). ²⁵



Social entrepreneurship

France's total early-stage entrepreneurial activity (TEA) is reported at 8.7% in 2024 (GEM). ²⁶

Social & Environmental Consciousness

Where territory-level benchmark indicators were not identified, national-level indicators and territorial plans provide context:



Solidarity

Territorial planning: the PCPF 2030 Plan d'action embeds pillars linked to biodiversity protection and solidarity between territories and generations, supporting an enabling policy narrative for mission-oriented innovation. ¹⁰



Political participation

30% population

Volunteering (France reference)

CAF's World Giving Index reports 30% volunteered time (past month) in France (WGI 2024). ²⁸

12th
180 countries

Sustainability

Environmental performance (France reference): France ranks 12th in the Environmental Performance Index 2024, and 11th on the Climate Change category within that index. ²⁹

