What the OECD Told Egypt About Innovation — And What It Means

Based on OECD Reviews of Innovation Policy: Egypt 2026

CONTEXT

Why This Matters

The OECD reviewed Egypt's entire innovation system and published a roadmap.

This deck distils the key findings into **plain language for decision-makers.**

THE BASELINE

The Good News: Egypt Spends on Research

1.02%

OF GDP SPENT ON RESEARCH

Egypt spends more on research than many peers. But the challenge is **turning that spending into real-world results.**

THE DISCONNECT

Great Research, But Where Are the Products?

Egypt publishes world-class science but struggles to turn it into products, companies, and jobs. The bridge between the lab and the market is broken.

Universities

7%

OF BUSINESSES COLLABORATE WITH UNIVERSITIES

Businesses

THE DISCONNECT

Start-ups Are Thriving — But They're an Island

The "Island"

Egypt has a vibrant, fast-growing tech start-up scene that attracts regional investment.

The "Mainland"

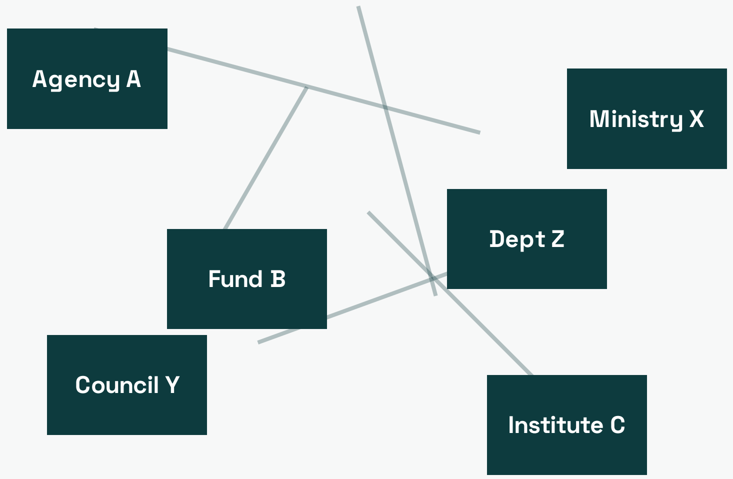
The broader business sector — traditional SMEs and large firms — barely innovates.

The OECD says: the whole economy needs to join in, not just tech start-ups.

Who's in Charge? (Nobody Knows)

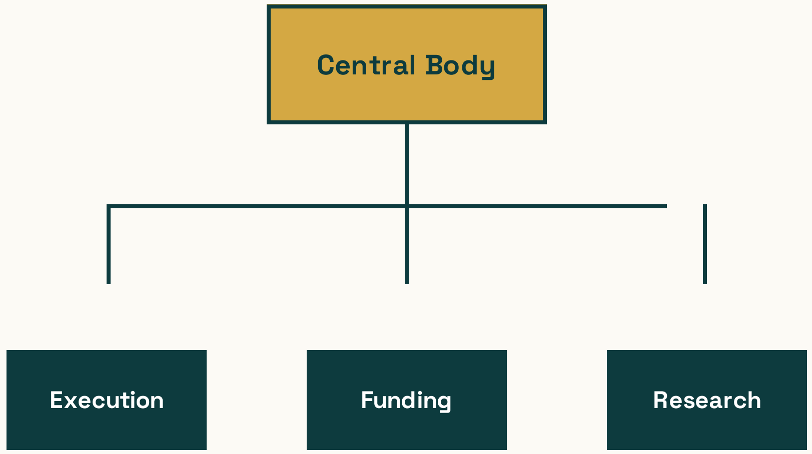
The Problem

Too many agencies, overlapping mandates, and no single owner.



The Solution

The OECD suggests creating one clear coordination body.



Six Things the OECD Says Egypt Could Do

Governance

Clarify who is in charge of innovation policy.

Data

Measure what matters to make better decisions.

Business Innovation

Help existing companies grow and innovate.

Science-to-Market

Move ideas from the lab to the real world.

People

Invest in talent and reward real-world impact.

Global Positioning

Connect Egypt’s science to the rest of the world.

You Can't Fix What You Can't Measure

Egypt needs better data on its own innovation system. The OECD suggests:

Regular Surveys

Ask companies what they need and what's holding them back.

Transparent Budgets

Track exactly where the research money goes across the government.

Global Standards

Use international metrics so Egypt can compare itself to the world.

Make It Easier for Businesses to Innovate

Tax Credits

Reward companies that invest their own money in research and development.

Small Grants

Give SMEs "innovation vouchers" to hire university experts to solve specific problems.

Less Red Tape

Make it easier to start a business, enforce contracts, and bring in foreign talent.

SCIENCE-TO-MARKET

From the Lab to the Market

The bridge between research and business is broken. The OECD suggests:

Own It

Let universities own their inventions so they can legally sell or license them.

Build It

Remove legal barriers so researchers can start companies based on their discoveries.

Fund It

Provide grants and incubators to fund the risky middle stage before a product is ready.

Invest in People, Not Just Papers

Researchers in Business

Egypt needs more scientists working inside companies, not just in university labs.

Practical PhDs

Fund "industrial PhDs" where students split their time between academia and solving real business problems.

Reward Impact

Promote academics for starting companies and securing patents, not just for publishing papers.

GLOBAL POSITIONING

Egypt Could Be Africa's Innovation Gateway

With its location, diaspora, and diplomatic network, Egypt is positioned to bridge global science and Africa.

Global Science

EU Horizon programmes, patents, and the diaspora.

Egypt

The gateway for technology transfer and adaptation.

African Continent

Deploying adapted tech across emerging markets in Africa.

TIMELINE

The Next Four Years Are Decisive

2026
Set up governance

2026–2027
Pass key laws

2027–2029
Roll out programmes

2029–2030
Measure results and plan ahead

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