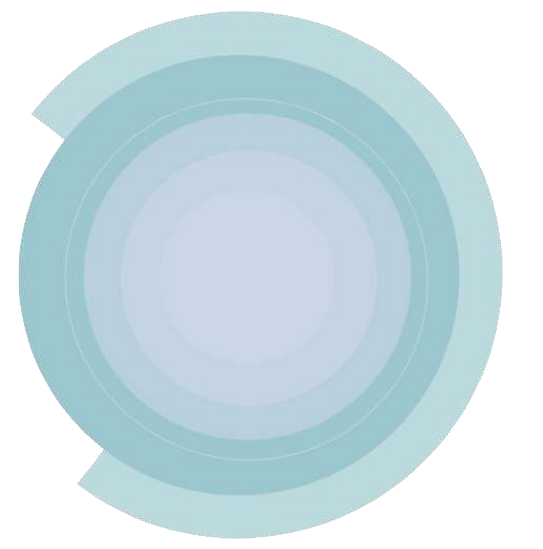


Appendix B Innovation Process

CalSAWS Innovation

Background



CalSAWS contracts include **Innovation Scope** for M&E and Infrastructure, which includes **research and review of new ideas**.

BenefitsCal will follow existing established processes.

Contract References:

The Contractor[s] will lead Innovation Initiatives and perform ongoing activities, including:

- Evaluating emerging technologies for opportunities to increase benefits to the Consortium.
- Engaging and preparing the Consortium Innovation Teams for Innovation activities.
- Managing Proof of Concepts (POCs) and Initiative Pilots.

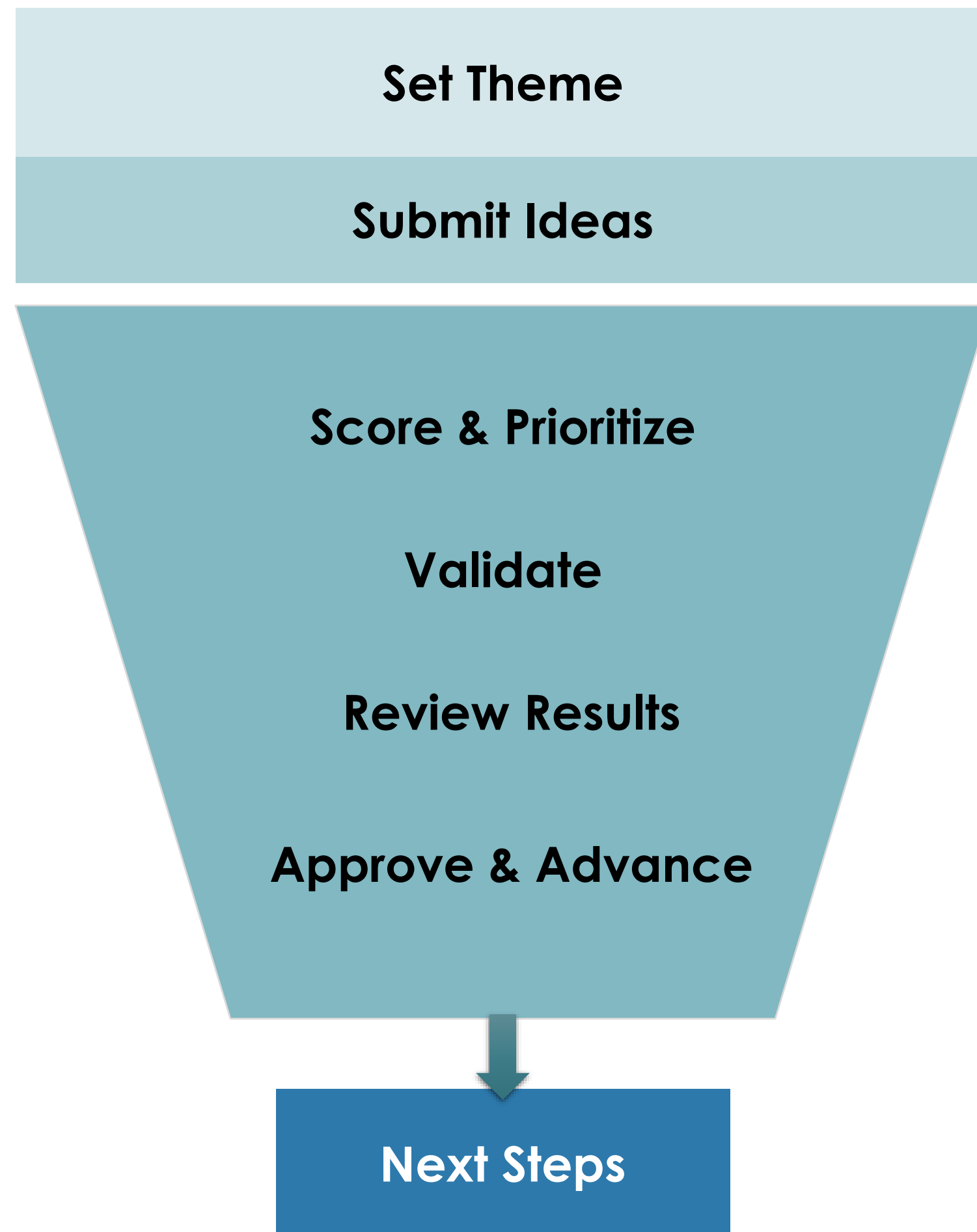
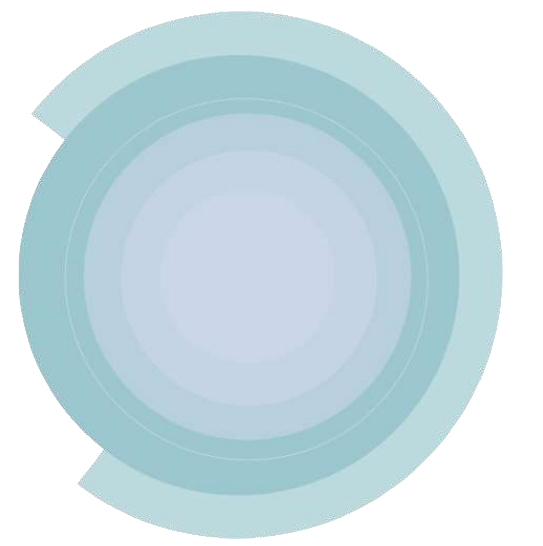
The Contractor[s] will also support the Consortium and [Other CalSAWS] Contractor[s] in the evaluation of [various] Innovation initiatives.

RFP Excerpt:

Innovation is one of the key precepts associated with assuring the future viability of and extending the overall System life. The Consortium expects Contractor(s) to apply a structured approach for continually improving the Infrastructure, the CalSAWS applications and supporting processes through innovative technologies and methods.

CalSAWS Innovation

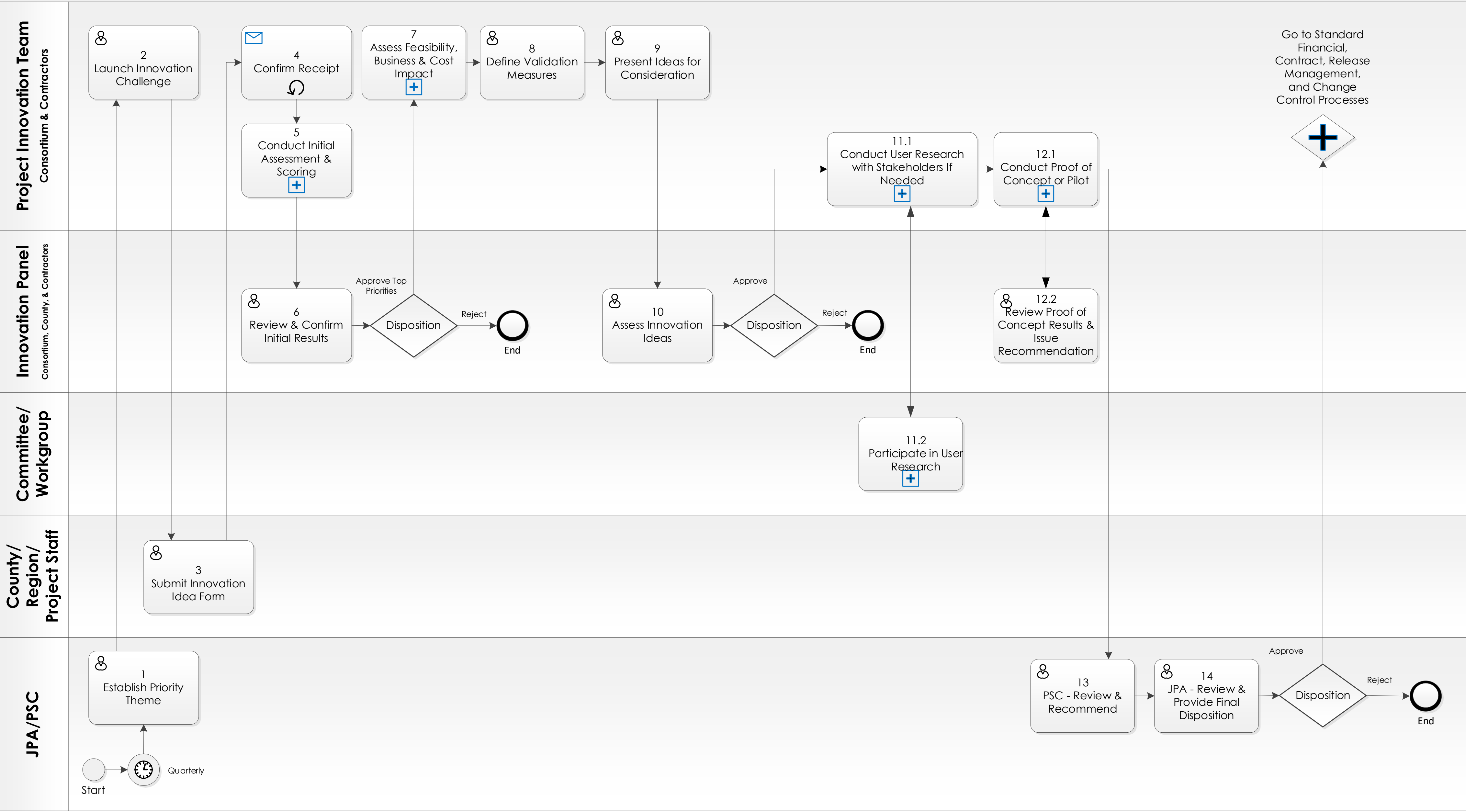
Approach



- Provide a structured, transparent mechanism for collecting and evaluating innovation ideas.
- Verify that ideas are refined, prioritized, and aligned with CalSAWS' objectives and principles before committing resources.
- Produce a scored, panel-recommended proposal as the output for the next stage.
- Validate promising ideas through a right-sized PoC or Pilot and advance only what evidence supports.

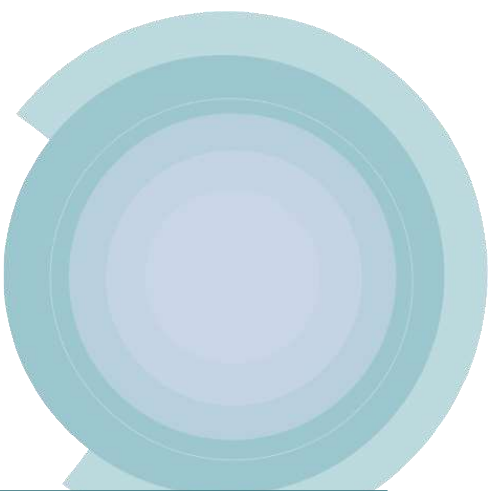
PROPOSED

CalSAWS Innovation Process



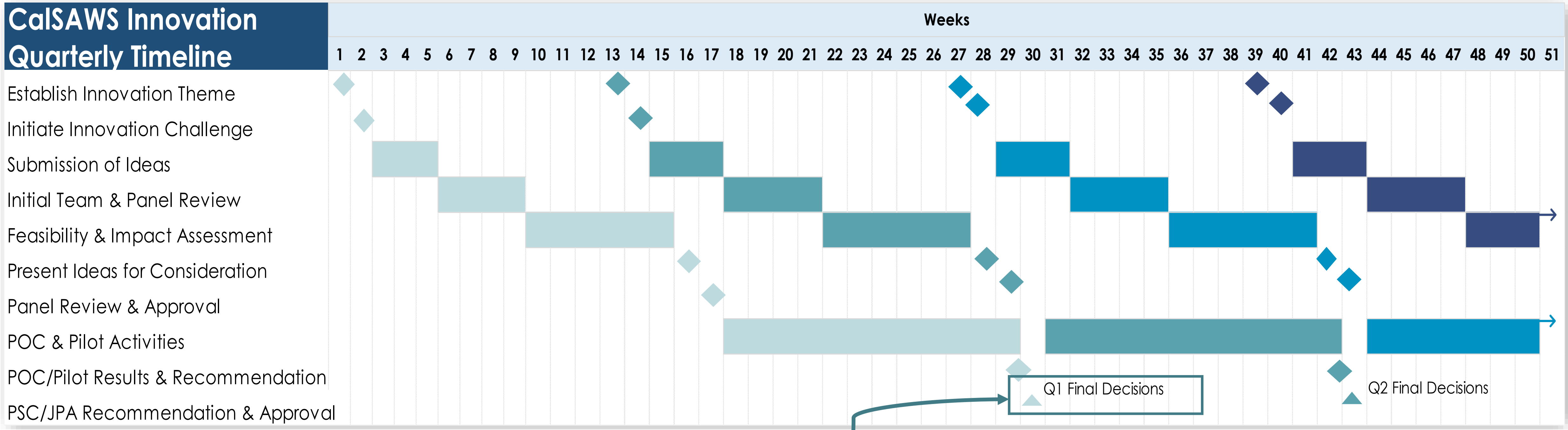
CalSAWS Innovation

Roles & Responsibilities



Project Innovation Team	Innovation Panel	Committee/ Workgroups Representatives	PSC & JPA
• Chief Technology Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, Contractor Technical Architects, Designated Functional Leads, Regional Managers, and Quality Assurance	• Three (3) to Five (5) County Directors, CalSAWS Executive Director (1), Contract Executives (3)	• Existing or New Workgroup Members	• JPA Board Members • PSC Members
• Facilitates Innovation Process • Leads Feasibility and Impact Analysis • Defines Valuation Measures • Partners with Idea Authors to Deliver Presentations to Innovation Panel	• Reviews and Confirms Top Innovation Ideas for Further Assessment • Approves Valuation Measures • Selects Ideas for Advancement to POC/Pilot • Reviews and Recommends Ideas to PSC and JPA • Project and Contractor Members serve as advisors • County Directors nominated/appointed annually from mix of Small, Medium, Large counties	• Participates in User Center Design to Support Requirements & Design • Reviews POC/Pilot Results and Provides Feedback	• Establishes Priority Themes • Receives Periodic Status Updates • Reviews POC/Pilot Results • Provides Recommendation(PSC) and Final Approval (JPA) to Advance POC/Pilot for Next Steps

CalSAWS Innovation – Quarterly Timeline



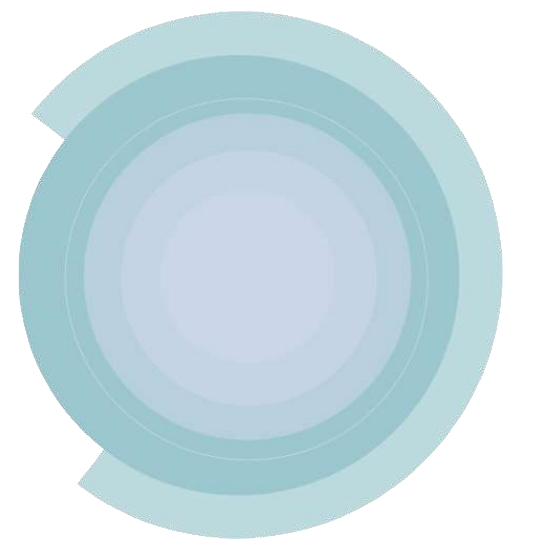
Output from the Innovation Process is the JPA final decision to advance to next steps or not. Next steps include standard processes related to funding requests, contract updates, release planning and change control.



***POCs/Pilot Durations May Vary**

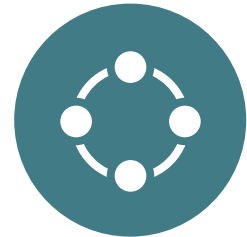
CalSAWS Innovation

Guiding Principles



START WITH A REAL PROBLEM

Bring ideas rooted in a real worker or user pain – the outcome leads, technology is just how we get there



AI ASSISTS – IT NEVER REPLACES

AI can draft, summarize, and surface information – but a person always reserves the final judgement



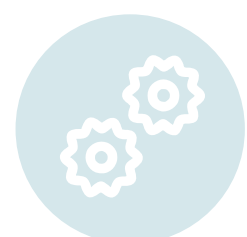
DESIGN WITH THE PEOPLE WHO USE IT

The best ideas are shaped with the counties, workers, and users who will live with them



START SMALL, PROVE IT, THEN SCALE

We test ideas as a quick proof of concept and/or pilot and let measured results earn the approval

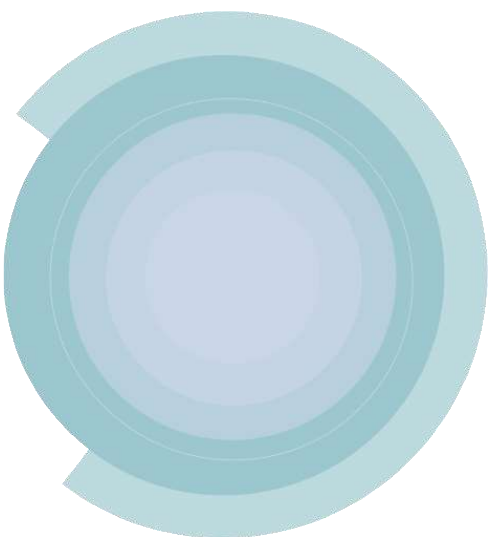


BUILD ONCE, SERVE all 58

The best ideas help every county, not just one. We prize reusable, configurable solutions over one-off fixes

CalSAWS Innovation

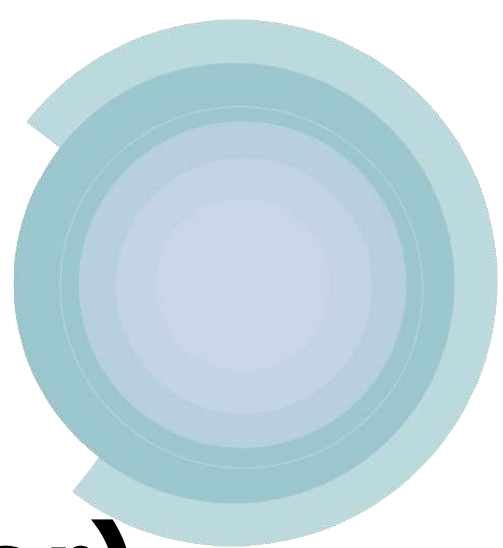
Scoring Method



BRICE Score = (**B** × **R** × **I** × **C**) ÷ **E**

A relative score used to rank ideas against one another - higher value, lower effort scores higher.

B	Business Impact 1 – 10	How strongly the idea supports key business goals or strategic objectives.
R	Reach 1 – 10	How many users or customers benefit within a given time frame.
I	Impact 1 – 10	The customer or user value created — experience, time savings, satisfaction.
C	Confidence 0 – 100%	How confident the team is in the estimates assigned to the other factors.
E	Effort 1 – 10	Total work required (person-weeks). Higher effort lowers the score.



All ideas should be customer facing (for the counties or the customer)

The DOs

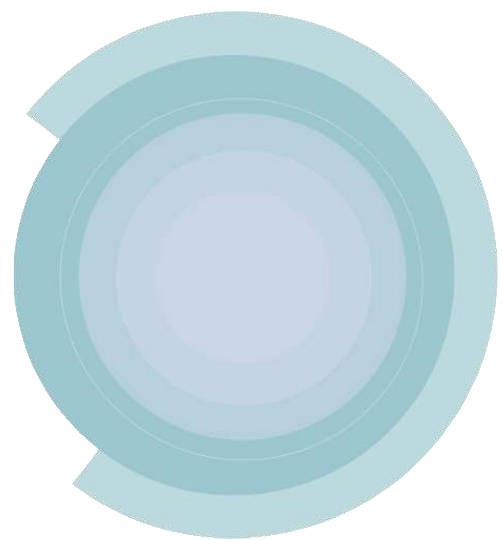
- 1 Think BIG and outside of the box - no idea is too big!
- 2 Research, understand, and define county and customer challenges
- 3 Put yourself in the customer's shoes
- 4 Describe the potential impact – customer experience, productivity, and savings
- 5 Collaborate with your teams/other counties to submit the ideas

The DON'Ts

- 1 Focus on system or process enhancements
- 2 Focus on internal / project focused initiatives
- 3 Think small
- 4 Constrain your idea to relate only to the work and the team you are involved with

CalSAWS Innovation

CER or Innovation Idea?



Quick test: is it an improvement to how CalSAWS works today (**CER**), or a new approach we'd need to prove out first (**Innovation Idea**)? Either way, lead with the problem and outcome - not a solution.

Ask yourself...	County Enhancement Request (CER)	Innovation Idea
What kind of change is it?	An enhancement to how CalSAWS works today	A new approach or capability we haven't tried yet
Is the value already understood?	Yes - it can be scoped and reviewed as-is	Not yet - needs a PoC or pilot to prove out
Does the idea need validation to know if it works in the system ?	No – follow the normal process	Yes – needs a PoC or Pilot to prove it out

Same pain, two doors. **CER:** “Add the income total to the summary page so workers stop tallying by hand.” (known fix, existing page)
Innovation: “Cut the time workers spend gathering income across screens.” (problem stated, solution open - AI-assist, redesign or automation)

Not sure? Submit it as an Innovation Idea. If it's really a CER, we'll route it to the CER process for you. No wrong door.

CalSAWS Innovation

Idea Submission Form

Purpose. This form gives counties a way to submit innovation ideas for consideration through the CalSAWS Innovation pipeline. It captures the problem, the outcome you want, and the operational context the Innovation Team needs to evaluate and score your idea.

Before you begin — strong ideas:

- ✓ Start with a real problem — describe the current issue clearly.
- ✓ Focus on the outcome you want, not a specific technical solution.
- ✓ Say who feels it — workers, customers, or both.
- ✓ Describe the expected benefit (experience, time, accuracy, cost).
- ✓ Think big — no idea is too big; and note any current workaround.

 You don't need every field — a clear problem is enough to start. The Innovation Team will follow up.

Example of a strong idea

Instead of a solution: "Add a button to the Income page."

Problem & outcome: Eligibility staff take several manual steps to review income, adding time and error risk. We want a faster, more accurate way to surface income, so workers spend less time navigating and more time with customers.

SECTION 1 — IDEA INFORMATION

Idea title

A short, memorable name

Submission date	Region	County
-----------------	--------	--------

Submitter	Email	Phone
-----------	-------	-------

Program(s) impacted (check any that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|------------------------------------|
| ☐ Adoptive Services | ☐ ARC | ☐ CalFresh | ☐ Cal-Learn |
| ☐ CalWORKs / RCA | ☐ CAPI | ☐ Child Care | ☐ CMSP |
| ☐ Foster Care | ☐ GA / GR | ☐ WTW | ☐ GROW |
| ☐ Kin-GAP | ☐ Medi-Cal / RMA | ☐ Other – specify: | |

Area(s) impacted (check any that apply)

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| ☐ Call Center | ☐ Case Assignment | ☐ Central Print | ☐ Client Correspondence |
| ☐ Eligibility | ☐ Fiscal / Collections | ☐ Hearings | ☐ Imaging |
| ☐ Lobby Management | ☐ Reports | ☐ Resource Data Bank | ☐ Schedule Appt |
| ☐ Security | ☐ Self Service Portal | ☐ Special Investigation | ☐ Task Mgmt. |
| ☐ Time Limits | ☐ Training | ☐ Interface(s) – specify: | ☐ Other – specify: |

SECTION 2 — THE PROBLEM

Current state — what happens today?

What is the challenge? How often, and under what circumstances? Include examples.

e.g., a worker navigates three separate pages to gather what's needed to complete a case action

Who feels it?

☐ County workers ☐ Customers / clients ☐ Both

Why it matters — the business need

What operational challenge does it address? What's the impact on county operations today?

Current workaround, if any

Is there a manual process being used today? Briefly describe.

SECTION 3 — DESIRED OUTCOME

What would be different if this worked? (Focus on the outcome, not the technical solution.)

Describe the future state — what changes for workers or customers

SECTION 4 — EXPECTED BENEFITS

Describe the expected benefits

Who benefits, and how — experience, time saved, fewer errors, cost savings...

SECTION 5 — ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

County collaboration (optional)

Have other counties identified similar needs?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

If yes, please describe.

Additional considerations (optional)

Timing considerations, related initiatives, supporting examples, or other useful context.