

Electronic Data Innovation Enhances Synergy Among Surakarta's Regional Apparatus

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Abstract

This article analyzes the role of e-Tanov in fostering innovation synergy in the Surakarta City Government. In 2023, the e-Tanov application was implemented replacing the previous data collection method for innovation, which used to rely on Google Drive. With the implementation of e-Tanov, the number of innovations submitted surged significantly from 25 innovations in 2022 to 150 innovations in 2024. Not only does this platform accelerate the management and evaluation of innovations, but it also enhances communication between regional apparatus and transparency, and makes it easier for the public to participate in submitting innovative ideas. The research also identified assessment criteria for regional innovations, such as social impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness. In addition to this, the role of Badan Riset dan Inovasi Daerah (BRIDA) is essential in providing technical support and outreach to the regional apparatus, ensuring that the innovations produced are relevant to public needs. These findings suggest that e-Tanov increases not only the quantity of innovations, but also their quality, achieved through enhanced collaboration between various stakeholders. Therefore, it is expected that e-Tanov could serve as a model for other regions in implementing an effective and responsive innovation system, and encourage wider public participation in regional development

Keywords: e-Tanov; innovation; regional apparatus; synergy; Surakarta



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Introduction

Innovation is widely recognized as a key driver in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public services. In the context of rapid technological advancements and increasingly complex societal demands, governments are under growing pressure to adapt and provide creative, responsive solutions to public sector challenges. One notable initiative is the *e-Tanov* (*Elektronik Data Inovasi*) application, launched by the Surakarta City Government to strengthen innovation synergy among regional apparatus. By integrating information and communication technologies into its innovation ecosystem, the Surakarta City Government has taken a proactive step toward fostering collaborative and sustainable public sector innovation. As noted by Supriyadi et al. (2020), *e-Tanov* functions as a digital platform that connects key stakeholders government institutions, communities, and private entities facilitating the creation of meaningful and context-relevant innovations. This initiative aligns with the broader governmental agenda to promote participatory governance and enhance transparency in public service delivery.

Collaboration among regional apparatus is essential to ensure the sustainability and scalability of innovation initiatives. Effective inter-agency cooperation enables the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and best practices for addressing administrative and societal issues. Yulianto and Rahardjo (2021) emphasize that synergy among regional institutions can significantly accelerate innovation cycles and improve service quality. However, despite its promising design, *e-Tanov's* implementation faces various internal and external barriers. Prasetyo et al. (2022) identify challenges such as limited resources, bureaucratic resistance to change, and insufficient institutional support. These obstacles underscore the need to identify enabling factors and best practices that can support the successful adoption and integration of digital innovations in governance.

Surakarta offers a particularly relevant case for examining these dynamics. Unlike many cities that still rely on *Bappeda* for innovation coordination, Surakarta hosts *BRIDA* (*Badan Riset dan Inovasi Daerah*), a dedicated regional innovation body. When compared to other digital innovation platforms in Central Java such as "Pindah Jateng" (provincial government), "Sida Nembang" (Tegal), and "Jelita" (Semarang) *e-Tanov* stands out for its collaborative and integrative functions. The application is not merely a communication tool but a collaborative network designed to facilitate multi-stakeholder engagement, embed participatory mechanisms in decision-making, and promote sustainable innovation (Abuhammad et al., 2024). Leadership commitment and inter-agency dedication are pivotal to its success. As highlighted by Wibowo and Anisa (2021), strong leadership can break down institutional silos and enhance cross-agency synergy, thereby improving the overall effectiveness of innovation initiatives (Rahayu, 2024).

Equally important is community participation, which ensures that innovations remain relevant, widely accepted, and responsive to public needs. Nugroho et al. (2023) assert that community involvement in public innovation processes increases public trust and accelerates the diffusion of new solutions. Embedding citizen feedback and user input into the development and evaluation of *e-Tanov* can therefore strengthen its outcomes. From a theoretical perspective, this research adopts the lens of adaptive innovation management, which emphasizes continuous evaluation and iterative refinement to sustain and improve innovations over time.

Despite the growing interest in digital innovation platforms, a significant gap remains in understanding how such systems tangibly influence inter-agency collaboration and long-term innovation sustainability. While previous studies (Supriyadi et al., 2020; Yulianto & Rahardjo, 2021) have acknowledged the potential of these platforms, few have offered empirical insights into their practical implementation challenges, measurable impacts, and adaptability to local contexts (Tomimi & Prasetyo, 2024). Moreover, the interplay between institutional leadership, stakeholder dynamics, and technological adoption in localized innovation ecosystems remains underexplored. This study seeks to address these gaps by examining not only the operational aspects of *e-Tanov* but also its institutional implications and potential scalability in other regions.

Surakarta's suitability as a research setting is reinforced by its strong tradition of innovation, robust digital infrastructure, and active community engagement. The presence of multiple universities and research institutions fosters collaboration between academia, government, and the private sector in co-developing solutions. Additionally, the city's demographic profile marked by high public participation and civic awareness supports community-driven innovation. Such engagement ensures that innovation outputs remain contextually relevant and aligned with local aspirations.

The *e-Tanov* initiative holds considerable promise for fostering innovation synergy among regional apparatus in Surakarta. By addressing existing challenges and optimizing key enablers such as leadership support, digital readiness, and community involvement the program can significantly contribute to public service improvement. Through this research, the authors aim to provide a deeper understanding of public sector digital innovation in Indonesia, offering practical insights for other regions seeking to replicate similar models. The findings are expected to support the development of evidence-based innovation policies that strengthen inter-agency collaboration and enhance service delivery in the public sector.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with an in-depth case study design to capture the dynamics of innovation management within the Surakarta City Government. The case study method was selected because it enables a holistic understanding of how *e-Tanov* operates, the ways it fosters innovation synergy, and the contextual factors influencing its implementation. The primary data were obtained through:

1. **In-depth interviews** with key informants, including:
 - a) Officials from BRIDA (*Badan Riset dan Inovasi Daerah*) who are directly responsible for managing *e-Tanov*.
 - b) Heads of relevant regional apparatus (e.g., *Dinas Komunikasi dan Informatika, Bappeda*) involved in the application's coordination and use.
 - c) Staff-level government employees who use *e-Tanov* in their daily tasks.
 - d) Community representatives and innovation stakeholders (e.g., local business owners, academic partners) who interact with the system.
2. **Direct observation** of *e-Tanov's* operational use, including monitoring its interface, workflow, and collaborative features during coordination meetings and innovation proposal reviews.
3. **Document analysis** of official reports, policy documents, meeting minutes, and *e-Tanov* system guidelines to complement and validate interview and observation findings.

This descriptive case study aimed to examine how *e-Tanov* enhances collaboration among regional apparatus, identify the challenges encountered, and highlight successful practices. The approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of interaction patterns between institutions, the influence of digital tools on work culture, and the role of leadership in fostering collaboration. In addition, public perspectives on innovation synergy were also explored to assess the perceived impact of the platform beyond the government environment

To broaden the analysis, the study also included a limited comparative review of other innovation systems in Central Java, such as “Pindah Jateng,” “Sida Nembang,” and “Jelita.” This comparison provided additional insight into the strengths, weaknesses, and unique features of *e-Tanov*, as well as lessons that could inform replication in other regions. The research placed equal emphasis on both outcomes and processes. It examined not only the tangible results of *e-Tanov* but also the underlying collaboration mechanisms, the barriers faced (e.g., resource limitations, bureaucratic inertia), and the strategies employed to address these challenges. By focusing on the process, the study aimed to uncover practical pathways for sustaining innovation in local governance.

Result and Discussion

The data collected during this research showed a significant increase in the number of successfully submitted innovations between 2022 to 2024.



Source: Authors, 2025

Figure 1. Data on Regional Innovation Achievements in Surakarta (2019-2024)

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of *e-Tanov* in Surakarta has led to a notable improvement in the institutional capacity to manage, coordinate, and document regional innovations. Since its introduction, *e-Tanov* has served not only as a centralized digital repository but also as an integrated coordination mechanism that streamlines the innovation submission process. By standardizing documentation procedures and enhancing traceability, the platform has helped reduce administrative bottlenecks that previously hindered innovation management.

A comparative review with other regions in Central Java reveals that Surakarta’s progress is relatively more dynamic. For instance, while other local governments such as Tegal with its “Sida Nembang” system and Semarang with “Jelita” have shown moderate increases in innovation outputs, their growth trajectories have been more gradual, and their systems often focus on sector-specific innovations. In contrast, *e-Tanov*’s integrative design supports cross-sector collaboration, enabling multiple agencies to co-develop and co-submit

innovations. This broader scope allows for more comprehensive problem-solving and promotes the sharing of resources and expertise between institutions.

Another distinguishing factor is the active role of *BRIDA* in Surakarta, which differs from other cities that still rely on *Bappeda* for innovation coordination. This institutional arrangement has allowed Surakarta to adopt a more research-driven and participatory approach to innovation management. In addition, leadership commitment and structured stakeholder engagement have contributed to creating a more conducive environment for innovation synergy compared to peer regions.

However, despite these achievements, questions remain regarding the depth, quality, and sustainability of the innovations being submitted. Other regions have reported challenges in ensuring that submitted innovations translate into long-term improvements in public service delivery – a concern that is equally relevant in Surakarta. Without robust qualitative evaluation mechanisms, there is a risk that innovation outputs may be driven primarily by compliance requirements rather than genuine problem-solving. Addressing this gap would require incorporating performance-based indicators and community feedback loops to assess not only the quantity but also the transformative impact of innovations.

In summary, Surakarta's experience with *e-Tanov* demonstrates that a well-designed digital innovation platform, combined with institutional leadership and cross-sector collaboration, can accelerate innovation culture in the public sector. When compared with other regional systems, *e-Tanov* stands out for its integrative approach and governance model, offering lessons for other local governments aiming to replicate or adapt similar frameworks.

A. Purpose of Assessment and Award

This regional innovation assessment activity aims to:

1. Motivate provincial and district/city governments to increase innovation in public services aligning with the categories of highly innovative and innovative, and encourage less innovative regions to improve.
2. Promote the implementation of good governance by increasing transparency and accountability in the decision-making process.
3. Increase public participation in the innovation processes carried out by local governments, ensuring that people feel involved and develop a sense of belonging to the innovations produced.
4. Reward local governments that successfully implement innovations in government administration, with respect to transparency and effectiveness in improving public services and community welfare.

While these objectives are progressive, the current assessment system tends to emphasize *output metrics* (e.g., number of innovations submitted) rather than *impact metrics* (e.g., efficiency gains, citizen satisfaction, long-term scalability). This results in a potential dissonance between what is being reported and what is being experienced by citizens on the ground. A more critical evaluation framework is needed one that not only counts

innovations but also measures their effectiveness, replicability, and sustainability.

B. Innovation Criteria

Regional innovation profiles submitted to the Minister of Home Affairs are required to meet certain criteria, including:

1. Contains Novelty: The proposed innovation must demonstrate a novel element that provides tangible benefits to the region and community.
2. Benefits: Innovations should be effectively increase Regional Original Revenue (Pendapatan Asli Daerah/PAD) and improve the performance and quality of public services.
3. Does Not Impose Burdens on Citizen: Innovations should avoid imposing unlawful burdens and restricting citizen's access to services.
4. Government Affairs: Innovations must be related to regional authority and should be replicable in other regions by considering the local context.
5. Types and Forms of Innovation
6. The innovations that can be reported by local governments include:
7. Digital Innovation: The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to expand service coverage.
8. Nondigital Innovation: Utilization of manual tools employed alongside Prosedur Operasional Standar (Standard Operating Procedures/SOPs).

Although these criteria are well-defined, implementation in practice often lacks rigorous oversight. For instance, novelty is frequently interpreted narrowly, leading to redundant or superficial innovations. Moreover, there is limited discussion on how local governments balance the need for innovation with concerns about resource allocation, risk management, and inclusivity. These tensions must be addressed to ensure that innovation serves its intended purpose—solving real public problems, not merely improving institutional ratings.

C. The Role of e-Tanov in Innovative Government Award (IGA)

The e-Tanov implementation is also highly relevant to the Innovative Government Award (IGA). E-Tanov facilitates the collection and monitoring of innovation data, while ensuring that all submitted innovations meet the criteria established by the IGA. Thus, e-Tanov has contributed to fostering better innovation, both in terms of quantity and quality, among regional apparatus, while ensuring that the impact of these innovations is measurable.

D. BRIDA Participation

The participation of Badan Riset dan Inovasi Daerah (BRIDA) of Surakarta City in the implementation of IGA is also an important aspect. BRIDA plays a key role in providing technical support and outreach to regional apparatus, enabling them to produce high-quality innovations that meet the required standards. By utilizing the data generated through e-

Tanov, BRIDA can conduct further analyses and provide insightful recommendations for the development of regional innovations.

Innovation is widely acknowledged as a key instrument in transforming the efficiency, responsiveness, and effectiveness of public sector services. Amid rapid technological advancements and increasingly complex demands from society, governments are not only expected to adapt but also to proactively develop creative, inclusive, and impactful solutions to emerging challenges. Within this context, the integration of innovation into public administration has moved beyond a trend and become a structural necessity. One of the significant steps taken in this direction by the Surakarta City Government is the development and implementation of the e-Tanov (Elektronik Data Inovasi) application—an information system designed to manage innovation data and foster synergy among regional apparatus in a structured, digital, and collaborative manner (Sari & Ramdhanty, 2025).

The implementation of e-Tanov marks a turning point in how innovation is institutionalized at the local government level. As noted by Supriyadi et al. (2020), e-Tanov serves as more than just a data collection tool; it functions as an integrative platform connecting government agencies, the private sector, academia, and the community in a dynamic innovation ecosystem. It enables local agencies to register, manage, and monitor innovation initiatives while facilitating knowledge sharing and reducing information silos across departments. This approach reflects the spirit of open government and supports the shift from siloed bureaucratic structures to more horizontal, participatory models of governance. Moreover, it supports Indonesia's national agenda for innovation, particularly within the framework of the Innovative Government Award (IGA).

The case of Surakarta is especially interesting because the city has long been recognized for its cultural richness, educational institutions, and community engagement—factors that create a fertile ground for innovation. The presence of BRIDA (Badan Riset dan Inovasi Daerah) in Surakarta further strengthens its institutional capacity to manage innovation. Compared to other cities in Central Java that still operate under Bappeda, Surakarta demonstrates a more advanced, innovation-focused administrative structure. BRIDA not only supports innovation capacity building but also acts as a hub for coordinating cross-sector collaboration, particularly in the design, implementation, and evaluation of local innovations.

However, while the rise in innovation submissions through e-Tanov is impressive evidenced by a substantial increase from 25 innovations in 2022 to 150 in 2024 this numerical growth raises critical questions regarding the depth, quality, and impact of those innovations. There is a tendency among regional governments to focus on quantitative metrics how many innovations are submitted without sufficient reflection on their actual usefulness, sustainability, or relevance to citizens' needs. Innovations may be produced to comply with administrative requirements rather than being driven by genuine problem-solving intent. This phenomenon reflects what some scholars refer to as “innovation for reporting's sake” (Hartley, 2021), in which the process of innovation becomes performative rather than transformative.

The reliance on e-Tanov as a mechanism to support the Innovative Government Award (IGA) should be examined critically. While the system ensures procedural transparency and

standardization, it may also risk over-bureaucratizing innovation itself. By requiring detailed documentation, administrative compliance, and predefined criteria (novelty, utility, public benefit, ethical design, and alignment with government authority), e-Tanov may unintentionally discourage grassroots or unconventional innovations that fall outside bureaucratic parameters. For instance, highly adaptive and context-specific solutions emerging from low-resource villages may not fit neatly into the reporting templates, and as a result, may be overlooked or underappreciated in the innovation assessment process.

Furthermore, studies such as those by Yulianto & Rahardjo (2021) emphasize that innovation is not solely about tools or platforms, but about people and processes. The success of e-Tanov and similar systems is largely dependent on human factors, such as the commitment of leadership, the digital literacy of civil servants, the organizational culture of openness to change, and the ability to collaborate across departments (Sadhana et al., 2025). Wibowo & Anisa (2021) point out that leadership support and institutional buy-in are critical variables in determining whether digital innovation platforms like e-Tanov can be scaled and sustained in the long term. Without a strong enabling environment, digital platforms can easily become underutilized or misaligned with operational realities on the ground.

Community participation is another cornerstone of successful innovation. As Nugroho et al. (2023) assert, involving citizens not only increases the legitimacy of public innovations but also enhances their relevance and adoption. In Surakarta, where residents are known for their active civic engagement, the potential to co-create innovations with the community is substantial. Yet, current usage of e-Tanov remains largely bureaucratic, focusing on inter-agency documentation rather than public feedback mechanisms. This gap points to a missed opportunity: the e-Tanov platform could be expanded to include citizen reporting, feedback loops, and collaborative design features that make innovation a truly participatory endeavor (Ndung & Loli, 2023).

Additionally, comparative analysis with other local innovation platforms in Central Java reveals important contrasts. While Tegal City developed the "Sida Nembang" application and Semarang implemented "Jelita," these platforms vary in scope, purpose, and institutional integration. The Central Java Provincial Government's "Pindah Jateng" app is another innovation example focused on digital service delivery. However, what distinguishes e-Tanov is its specific targeting of internal government synergy, rather than citizen-facing service innovation. This differentiating factor, while useful, also limits its potential unless complemented with external engagement tools.

There is also a need to critically evaluate the role of BRIDA. As both facilitator and evaluator of innovations, BRIDA operates in a space where institutional neutrality must be maintained. While it plays a valuable role in training, mentoring, and assessing local innovations, there is a risk of conflict of interest when the same agency evaluates the success of the systems it supports. Clearer role separation or the establishment of third-party evaluators could improve objectivity and strengthen institutional trust in the innovation assessment process.

In conclusion, while the e-Tanov application has undoubtedly contributed to institutionalizing innovation management in Surakarta, its effectiveness cannot be judged solely based on the quantity of innovations submitted. A deeper, more reflective inquiry is needed to assess whether these innovations translate into meaningful improvements in public service delivery, equitable citizen access, and long-term governance reform. The success of e-Tanov should not be reduced to technical or administrative efficiency, but rather evaluated based on its capacity to facilitate adaptive, inclusive, and transformative innovation across sectors. Moving forward, further research should explore the integration of user-centered design, participatory feedback systems, and impact-based evaluation within e-Tanov and similar platforms. Only through such a comprehensive and critical approach can regional innovation systems in Indonesia fulfill their promise of delivering real value to the communities they serve.

Conclusion

This research concludes that e-Tanov has successfully fostered innovation synergy within the Surakarta City Government by drastically increasing the number of innovations submitted. From 25 innovations in 2022, the number surged to 150 innovations in 2024, reflecting the positive impact of this application on strengthening collaboration between regional apparatus. Not only does E-Tanov help in collecting data, but it also serves as a catalyst for creativity and innovation. Therefore, support from regional leaders and public participation are critical to the success of this program. BRIDA's participation is also a key factor in providing technical support and outreach to produce innovations of exceptional quality. We would like to express our gratitude to all parties who have contributed to this research. We realize that this research is not without its limitations, both in terms of methodology and data analysis. Therefore, we hope that in the future, further research can be conducted to explore the long-term impact of e-Tanov and the resulting innovations, and to identify other contributing elements that can further strengthen the innovation ecosystem in local governments. The findings of this research could serve as a model for other regions that seek to improve innovation in public services.

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