Innovation

10 YEARS OF IBL

"Ten years ago, innovation at IBL wasn't a function. It was an instinct. It lived in our entrepreneurial DNA and in the resourcefulness of our people, but there was no shared method, no common language and no structured way to take an idea from spark to scale. The Innovation Blueprint was born from that realisation: a clear, evidence-based approach designed to help teams identify the ideas worth pursuing, test them and make better decisions about where to invest. Today, we have the ability to innovate at scale and a growing community of intrapreneurs across IBL: people who have both the confidence and the tools to act on the growth opportunities in their businesses. Innovation at IBL is no longer something we do only by instinct. It is also something we do by design."



Delphine Lagesse
Group Strategic Innovation & Excellence Executive - IBL Group

SCALING THE BLUEPRINT ACROSS OUR BUSINESSES

The Innovation function's work is focused on making innovation more systematic across the Group. At its core is the IBL Innovation Approach, a structured methodology designed to adapt to diverse business contexts and industries. It is tailored to each specific context and formalised in a document known as the Innovation Blueprint, giving teams a practical framework to identify opportunities and build innovation portfolios.

The Blueprint was applied more deeply across Operations during the year. The Innovation team worked closely with businesses to understand their priorities and translate them into individual Innovation Blueprints, helping them explore opportunities, test ideas and in some cases, move these ideas into structured innovation sprints.

The Innovation Ambassador community is a key part of this work. With 13 ambassadors across the Group, the network brings innovation closer to the businesses and provides a channel for sharing tools, practices and learning across businesses. The community meets every three months as part of a rolling upskilling programme, helping businesses develop their own innovation muscle rather than rely solely on the Head Office.

BUILDING INNOVATION CAPABILITY ACROSS IBL

The IBL Innovation & Excellence Awards remain the Group's annual showcase for innovation, but their role has grown beyond recognising innovative ideas. The Awards double as a structured upskilling journey, with mandatory workshops built around the three award categories. In FY2026, more than 150 people took part in these training sessions across Mauritius and East Africa, covering areas such as business modelling, testing ideas, customer experience, pitching and root-cause analysis.

Feedback from participants continues to shape the programme's focus. This year, it pointed to a need for more capability-building around operational efficiency innovation, leading to the development of a targeted workshop.

The next step is to strengthen how projects are followed through and track their progress.

The approach is also spreading beyond the Group Awards. Both Winners and Healthcare Distribution have launched their own internal innovation awards, adapted to their respective contexts. Healthcare Distribution has taken their Awards regional, and now includes all Mauritian and East African teams, drawing strong engagement across the region. This gives businesses their own platforms to develop innovation and build innovation capabilities, while the Group continues to provide strategic guidance.

Case study

USING INNOVATION TO SHAPE A CLUSTER'S STRATEGIC PLAN

IBL's Logistics, Aviation & Shipping (LAS) activities bring together four businesses with distinct activities, priorities, and ways of working: Logistics, Aviation, Shipping and Freight Forwarding. With regional projects increasingly spanning multiple businesses, there was a growing need for more collaboration and synergies between them. This also created an opportunity to step back from day-to-day operations and set a clearer direction for the future.

LAS worked with IBL's Innovation team and an external consultant to assess industry trends, the macroeconomic environment and potential disruptions to understand the forces shaping its businesses. This work fed into a strategic roadmap built around three pillars: operational excellence, innovation and talent and people.

The Innovation Blueprint provided structured working sessions for teams across BUs and divisions to work through these priorities together. Rather than looking at opportunities through the lens of individual businesses, teams were able to challenge established ways of working, consider opportunities across the cluster, and explore where the businesses could create greater value together. This generated a portfolio of 22 initiatives, ranging from projects ready for immediate implementation to ideas requiring further development and testing.

From this portfolio, LAS now has a common direction for the future, a pipeline of opportunities to draw on over time, and a common approach for acting on them. A cross-functional team spanning Operations, HR, IT and Finance was set up to carry the plan forward and monitor its execution, with General Managers accountable for their own business units, and a nominated innovation champion for the cluster.

OUTCOMES

- **Three-year strategic plan** established for IBL's Logistics, Aviation and Shipping activity
- **One shared innovation approach** across five businesses
- **22 opportunities** identified across the cluster, creating a pipeline for action

"We operate in an environment of constant disruption, so habits that haven't been questioned in years need to be. It's easy to get absorbed in the day-to-day and lose sight of the biggest picture when businesses are as operationally demanding as ours. What this process gave us wasn't just a plan, but a way to bring four different businesses into the same conversation and think about the future of the cluster as a whole. Innovation gave us the tools and the discipline to explore potential synergies, where our businesses can complement each other and where it would make sense to pool our capabilities and resources. Our teams are starting to think from a cluster perspective now, and that's the mindset shift we need to perform."

Yannis Fayd'herbe
COO - Logistics