

Manchester Institute of Innovation Research

Understanding the social, economic, political and managerial dimensions of science, technology and innovation.

Research at the Manchester Institute of Innovation Research seeks to better understand how science, technology and innovation contribute to solving societal problems. We approach this challenge through a holistic programme of four connected research areas.

Innovation in firms

We analyse the ever changing strategies, processes, mechanisms and sources of innovation in firms, including the evolving international division of labour in generating innovation. We pioneer research into business services and the creative and cultural industries.

The specific role of the state

Our research helps to develop our understanding of the role of the state in creating, maintaining and improving the conditions for science, technology and innovation. We study the relationship between public policies and funding decisions, as well as the direction and effects of innovation on society.

Dynamics of emerging technologies

Emerging technologies, such as nanotechnology or synthetic biology, hold enormous potential for wealth and societal wellbeing. However, the nature of their contribution is uncertain and often socially contested. We work to develop new concepts and methods to understand the significance of emerging technologies, new business models for their commercialisation and the conditions for responsible innovation.

System transitions and societal challenges

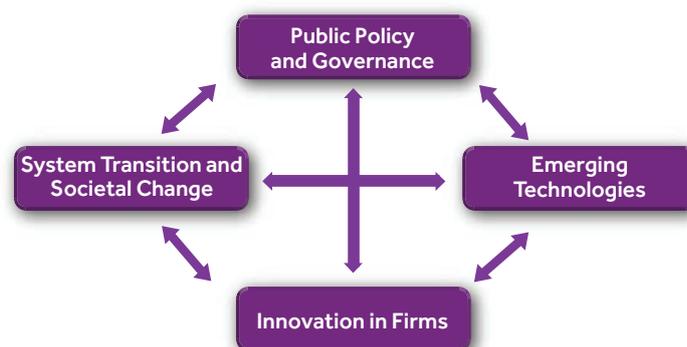
Addressing societal challenges such as climate change, energy security, transport and resource efficiency requires a radical shift in entire systems. We conceptualise and analyse the necessary combinations of new technologies and service models, industrial supply chains, public infrastructures, public debates and consumer practices, and supporting policies and regulations.

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Innovation is no end in itself. We need to understand how it creates economic value and, even more importantly, how it contributes to societal welfare.

Professor Jakob Edler
Executive Director, Manchester Institute of Innovation Research

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Esteem highlights

The Institute is a leading global contributor to science and innovation studies literature. Our staff are members of international Research Councils and sit on the editorial boards of leading academic journals, while many are also elected members of national and European academies.

The Institute plays a leading role in international academic associations such as the European Forum for Studies of Policies for Research and Innovation (on science and innovation policy: www.euspri-forum.eu) and the International Sustainability Transitions Research Network (www.transitionsnetwork.org).

One illustration of our esteem is the inclusion of Professor Frank Geels in the Thomson Reuters list of Highly Cited Researchers.



Innovations are increasingly generated in global systems and networks. It is essential to understand these processes and the nature of global innovation value chains for enhancing firms' competitiveness and value creation.



Professor Silvia Massini
Manchester Institute of Innovation Research

Examples of our research

Synthetic biology of fine chemicals

The Institute contributes to a large scale research Centre for Synthetic Biology of Fine and Specialty Chemicals, which is engaged in developing knowledge and innovation for drug development, agricultural chemicals and new materials for sustainable manufacturing. Our research aims to understand the business, health, sustainability, ethical, and regulatory implications of these new technologies, and to support our engagement with all stakeholders.

Transition pathways

We investigate future transition pathways to sustainable, low carbon societies in electricity, heat, mobility, agro-food and land. We combine integrated assessment models, multi-level perspectives and action research at grass-roots level to ascertain what drives and hinders the transition, and to inform private and public stakeholders about the necessary changes in consumer practices, firm strategies, public policies and framework conditions.



Science and innovation policy evaluation repository (SIPER)

We are developing a better understanding of science and innovation policy impact and related evaluation practices. The aim is to improve evaluation practice and policy design and implementation. The project involves close interaction with national and international policy makers and organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank, and is part of a large scale European research infrastructure development (RISIS).

Understanding the contribution of creative industries

Creativity and design are essential sources of - and ingredients for - innovation, but have long been neglected. A large EU-funded project led by the Institute analyses the significance of creativity and cultural and creative industries in Europe and beyond, substantially enhancing the level of knowledge and understanding of the nature and characteristics of creativity and innovation.

Working with stakeholders

An integral part of our mission is to have an impact on policy, industry and society. We work closely with international organisations such as the European Commission, the OECD, WIPO, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme. We also work with ministries, agencies and third sector organisations in the UK and abroad, and with regional bodies such as the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce. We have strong research links with small and large firms such as BAE Systems and GE Healthcare, and with business federations such as the European Industrial Research Management Association.



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