

How can EU policy encourage its citizens to come up with innovations which will help us live more sustainable lifestyles? European business schools including Cranfield, are working together to help find the answer.

Report on the EU-InnovatE General Assembly, Munich, January 2015

EU-InnovatE: What's it all about?

EU-InnovatE stands for 'End User Integration, Innovation & Entrepreneurship'. It is an EU-funded research project that investigates the innovative and entrepreneurial roles of end users to shape a green EU-economy <http://www.euinnovate.com/en>

Cranfield are one of 14 institutions participating in the project. We are responsible for leading deliverables in two areas of the project (known as 'work packages' (WP)).

The first area is WP5 which is the design of sustainable future scenarios in the four domains of food, living, mobility and energy, and the creation of an agent-based simulation. Cranfield's contribution to this area is led by Liz Varga <http://www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/p2056/People/Faculty/Academic-Faculty-Listing-A-Z/Last-Name-V/Liz-Varga>. This work will run processes of sustainable user innovation and adoption to interactively allow two domains to co-evolve, ensuring that the connections between these highly related areas are also considered. The impact of liberating or constraining various policy indicators will allow an assessment of the impact of change.

The second area is WP6, concerned with investigating policies that can be put in place to encourage user innovation and entrepreneurship. Cranfield's contribution here is being led by Hugh Wilson <http://www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/p1702/People/Faculty/Academic-Faculty-Listing-A-Z/Last-Name-W/Hugh-Wilson> assisted by PhD researchers Christine Mera and Rosina Watson. In this area we will be coordinating efforts to experimentally test some policy options, through lab experiments, which will be run by Munich University, and an online enabled user conference which will be hosted by Cranfield.

General Assembly Jan 2105: Cross-cutting themes

In January 2015, the Cranfield team attended the EU-InnovatE General Assembly meeting Munich Technical University (TUM). The meeting marked the first year anniversary of EU-InnovateE and served to review and share progress on all the agreed deliverables to date, as well as to plan for the coming year. It was also used to identify four key themes that were coming up across all the six work packages which were discussed in breakout sessions. These are discussed in more detail below.

1) Policy for user sustainable innovation

The final output of the project will be policy recommendations for the EU, so all the work package teams need to be thinking about the policy implications of their work. In particular we identified the need to:

Expand the perspective on 'policy making:'

- In terms of actors. Not just government policy (at all its levels), but also the politics of the marketplaces, and also the 'subpolitics' of communities, users and intermediaries
- In terms of dimensions. Not just policy (the contents), but also politics (the process) and polity (the system)

- In terms of policy tools. Think really broadly – this could be under the headings of tool to engage, empower, enable and simplify, and also not currently used or acceptable policy tools

Provide a solid evidence–base of barriers and drivers

- Systematically collect barriers and drivers to prepare an evidence base for EU policymakers, and others
- Including categories such as: Funding, access, simplification, capabilities, institutions, cultural capital
- Compile and make sense of evidence base from different sources (cases, literature review survey) – from this project and beyond

Co-create and test pilot policies

- Empirically test and evaluate policies for effectiveness (and: efficiency, timeliness, appropriateness, acceptability)
- Design-test-apply-evaluate on small scale (e.g. communities) and then check scalability

2) Nature and roles of sustainable user innovation

The main insight from discussion on this theme was to recognize communities as an organizing element between organizations and individuals.

3) The innovator and entrepreneur

This discussion group identified the need to distinguish between the sustainable user innovator and sustainable user entrepreneur when thinking about policy since these groups are likely to have different traits and motivations demanding different policy levers to be applied.

There are therefore two distinct policy strategies to think about: One intended to enlarge the group of sustainable user innovators, the second to enlarge the group of sustainable user entrepreneurs.

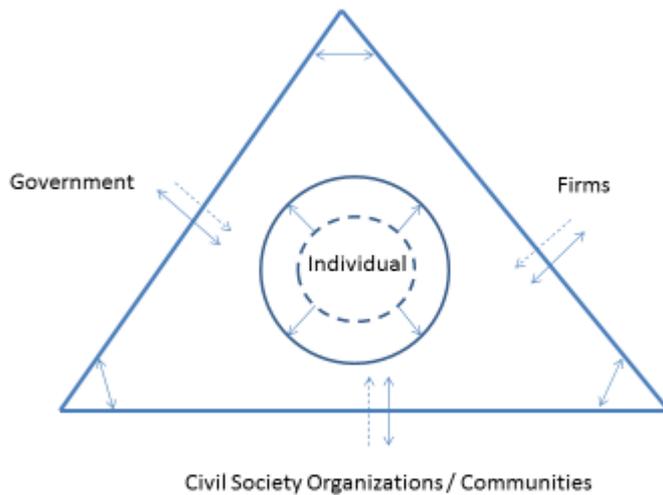
Community entrepreneurship was also identified as a possible way to 1) group different user innovators and 2) group user innovators with user entrepreneurs.

4) New means of governance

The shape of societal relationships (between government, firms, civil society organizations/communities) is changing. The diagram below depicts how this shape is changing:

- There are three main axes of government, civil society organizations and firms
- The role of the individual is growing
- We are moving from one way to two way relationships between individuals and all three of these axes
- There are also direct relationships at the corners of the triangle
 - Government and firms e.g. public/private collaborations, lobbying
 - Firms and civil society e.g. community based innovation
 - Civil society and government e.g. grassroots movements

This is an important contextual background for our thinking and ultimate policy recommendations.



Collaboration between participating universities

The assembly was an opportunity to bring together academics with shared passion and expertise in this area. It also helped us to see how our specific projects and deliverables fitted within the broader project. The breakout sessions gave us the time to engage in discussion with colleagues across Europe and across the work packages. These discussions, alongside a lively group dinner (involving a different local beer with each course) helped to form personal links between the team members which will no doubt help to enable collaboration and a flow of information across the project going forward.

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