



### **Making Transitions Happen Platform**

Opportunity for a Challenge PhD

Topic: **Innovation policy for challenge led sociotechnical transitions**

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**Climate-KIC** created the **Making Transitions Happen** challenge platform to integrate innovation, education and entrepreneurship activities for sociotechnical transition. It is a cross-disciplinary platform acting as enabler and accelerator of the transition to a low carbon economy. With a focus on policy interventions and challenge led, broad based models of innovation it engages citizens, communities and companies. Facilitated by Climate KIC's regional network it prioritises place based transitions through systems innovation in the arenas of built environment, mobility, energy networks, and area development. The aim is to transform European regional innovation policy and practice on climate change.

Climate-KIC was established in 2010 as one of three Knowledge and Innovation Communities of the **EIT (European Institute of Innovation & Technology)**. CEO, Mary Ritter states that 'the challenges posed by climate change require an economic and societal revolution' and that the aim of Climate-KIC is 'to accelerate and stimulate the innovation required for such a transformation.' (*Nature Climate Change* September, 2011) Climate-KIC's new business plan for 2014 was recently approved by EIT with a major expansion of its budget to €76 million. EIT is the major innovation funding delivery body addressing societal challenges in EU Horizon 2020.

The Making Transitions Happen doctoral studentship will provide support for 3 years, renewable annually subject to satisfactory progress. The award will pay UK/EU tuition fees and a maintenance stipend, currently £15,600 (€18,600 approx.). In addition a Climate-KIC studentship includes £4000 per annum to cover consumables and conference costs, and £1000 per month for up to 6 months to cover the mobility expenses involved in working in different locations. The holder is expected to participate in Climate-KIC activities including 'the Journey', a 5 week intensive climate innovation summer school, and MTH platform events. Based at Imperial College the student will be expected to spend time with policy oriented organisations in London such as the Policy Studies Institute and the Institute for Sustainability, as well as internationally.

This particular doctoral project will examine policy developments in the European Union and in a selection of national governments of 1. the broad based challenge led approach to innovation and 2. the pursuit of a transition to a low carbon society. It will investigate changes in concepts of innovation that have been associated with these policy developments such as business model and systems innovation, sociotechnical transitions, place based innovation, and the network model of innovation. More fundamentally an assessment will be made of the adequacy of the firm based Schumpeterian evolutionary economics framework for policy guidance on innovation policy to address the challenge of climate change. In particular the effectiveness of key areas of policy based on this framework - national and regional systems of innovation and cluster policy will be addressed.

A core theme of the PhD will be to investigate the implications of multilevel governance for innovation policy. The national focus of traditional innovation policy is increasingly questioned in relation to environmental sustainability and climate change. International collaboration as envisaged through eg 'supergrid' projects, and city based schemes of eg integrated mobility imply the need for a different multilevel orientation. The notion of contrasting science or practice led modes of innovation( Lundvall) will also be employed to make an appraisal of different categories of 'innovation actor' and the way in which these are involved in innovation policy.

The role of international organisations in articulating and promoting models of innovation policy is an important area to understand in relation to the potential for change. In particular, intergovernmental bodies such as the European Union, the OECD and the UN (eg IPCC, UNEP) are influential, as well as international consultancy organisations such as Technopolis ,McKinsey, Gartner and Arthur D Little. The project will assess the role of these bodies in responding to the new challenge led broad based model of innovation policy. A framework based on policy network approaches will be adopted.

The output from the project will be a new framework to understand the international dynamics of innovation policy development in relation to the challenge of climate change. It will be conceptually & empirically informed and of practical value to policy actors who are seeking to implement a new transitions oriented policy framework

Candidates will be expected to have excellent qualifications in a social science field such as sociology or politics and /or an interdisciplinary field such as science, technology & innovation studies or environmental/sustainability studies. This position is currently open and an early commencement is desirable. Interested candidates should send a cv to Professor Fred Steward, ([f.steward@psi.org.uk](mailto:f.steward@psi.org.uk)) and indicate their earliest possible start date.