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## Clients and crises major drivers of property and construction innovation

Leading-edge clients and crises are the key drivers of innovation in Australia's property and construction industry, a major study from the CRC for *Construction Innovation* has revealed.

*Construction Innovation's* BRITE Project team spent three-years researching innovation in the Australian property and construction industry to produce the *Innovate now!* report.

The *Innovate now!* report concluded clients with high levels of technical competence, challenging needs and extensive experience provide significant opportunities for innovation.

"The more demanding, technically competent and experienced the client, the more likely it is to stimulate innovation in projects, by demanding outcomes that exceed business as usual," said Dr Karen Manley, BRITE Project team leader.

"Businesses that are slow to innovate may need to find the courage to expose themselves to this kind of pressure if they want to improve business performance," Dr Manley said.

Similarly, a cooperative team approach in the face of a crisis can also lead to innovative solutions.

"Normally, crises are seen as a disaster on a project, but our research indicates that old adage about finding the positive in any situation certainly rings true," Dr Manley said.

A series of BRITE case studies has demonstrated the value of innovation. Significant benefits, such as cost, time and energy savings, resulted from the innovations in each study.

Public-sector clients are seen as major drivers of innovation in the industry. They have the highest rate of investment in research and development, the highest rate of adoption of advanced practices and technologies and the best return on innovation.

All of which led the BRITE Project team to conclude that an effective innovation program should focus, where possible, on cultivating deeper and broader relationships with repeat public-sector clients.

The *Innovate now!* report details the findings of an industry-wide survey and 12 best-practice case studies involving 400 businesses, 14 government organisations, eight industry associations and four universities. The information gathered has been distilled into a useful guide for improving innovation performance, with examples and suggestions for developing an innovation program.

The full report will be launched on September 28<sup>th</sup> at the Australian Institute of Building, Construct 2006 Conference and lodged at [www.brite.crcci.info](http://www.brite.crcci.info) for free download. The guide provides detailed steps for businesses wanting to improve their innovation performance, and checklists to help develop an innovation program.

Dr Karen Manley, BRITE Project Leader, CRC for *Construction Innovation*  
Phone: (07) 3864 1762 Email: [k.manley@qut.edu.au](mailto:k.manley@qut.edu.au)

The CRC for *Construction Innovation* brings together 21 industry, government and research partners in a collaboration to find innovative solutions to improve the economic, environmental and social benefit of the design, property, construction and facility management sectors as well as the Australian community. Website: <http://www.construction-innovation.info>