

Must innovate to succeed

THE 2004 BRITE Innovation Survey Report launched recently has identified 82 highly innovative businesses, including 26 that have developed world-first innovations. Innovation is widely seen as the key to better productivity and profitability in the building and construction industry.

Researchers from the BRITE Research Project of the Cooperative Research Centre for Construction Innovation examined the characteristics common to these high innovators – drawing out the things they do differently. “This examination of successful innovators is expected to be a valuable resource for the industry. It will help promote more widespread adoption of best practice,” says project leader Dr Karen Manley.

The survey polled more than 1,300 businesses in the commercial building and road/bridge sectors in NSW, Victoria and

Queensland. The survey report makes 10 recommendations for property and construction businesses wishing to improve their innovation performance:

- enhance in-house skills by providing training programs and employing new graduates, rather than relying on recruiting experienced employees
- use innovations to reduce clients' costs
- actively monitor developments internationally, and in related industries
- have formal systems to (i) include lessons from previous projects in work processes and (ii) encourage staff to share ideas
- formally evaluate the effectiveness of advanced technologies and practices
- increase links with universities and other research institutions
- implement a broader range of the technology, knowledge and human resources strategies listed in the survey report.

News in brief

Innovators step forward

The 2004 BRITE Innovation Survey of the building and construction industry identified 82 highly innovative businesses, including 26 that have developed world-first innovations. Researchers on the BRITE Project would like those innovators, and any others in the industry, to step forward and share their successes.

The BRITE Project is driven by the CRC for Construction Innovation, based at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane.

The BRITE team are now seeking nominations from organizations who would like their innovations to be profiled for industry dissemination. To be eligible, the innovation should have been used on a completed commercial building or construction project. There should be measured benefits from the innovation such as reduced energy costs, building costs, whole-of-life costs, time. The team is particularly interested in the activities of small- to medium-sized businesses, especially in regional areas.

Those interested may contact Dr Karen Manly on k.manley@qut.edu.au or phone 07 3864 1762.