

INNOVATION CHALLENGE

FOR the past five years, the Cooperative Research Council for Construction Innovation has been pushing the case for new and improved processes, goods and services in the construction industry through its BRITE project. The Queensland-based council, drawing together 21 industry, government and research partners, completes its task this year and will not be renewed.

But it leaves a powerful legacy. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, main and trade contractors in the civil and building sectors have shown strong willingness to adopt innovations. They needed to: even with the improvement, the construction sector ranks third from the bottom among industry sectors in its expenditure on innovation, and second last in the proportion of income generated from innovation – behind electricity, gas and water supply, manufacturing, communication services, transport/storage and mining, among others.

Research by the BRITE project into 12 projects across the country shows 93% of all innovators in the construction industry achieve higher business profits, and all benefit from improvements to their reputations that made them likely to be more successful in winning future projects. They find clients are keen to work with innovative businesses because of the substantial benefits that can be achieved on projects.