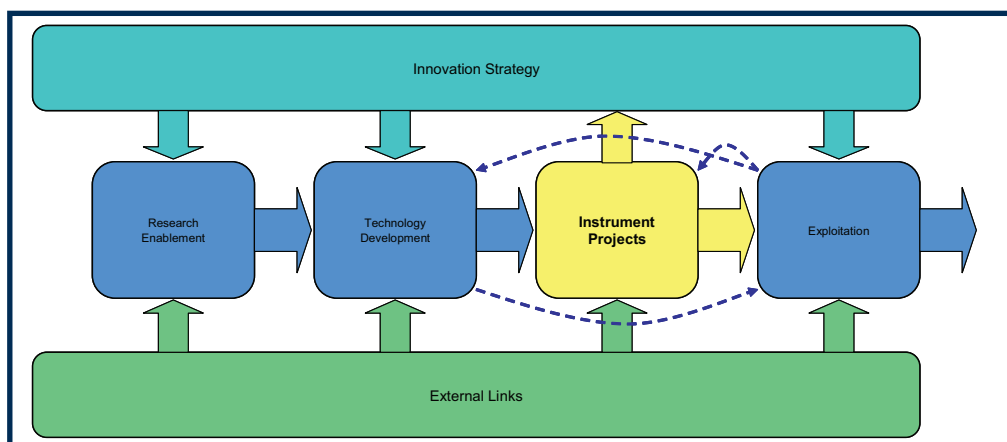


The Innovation Group at the UK ATC takes a pro-active approach to ensuring that the UK remains at the forefront of world astronomy while simultaneously providing the UK tax-payer with maximum exploitation and impact of publicly funded research and development.

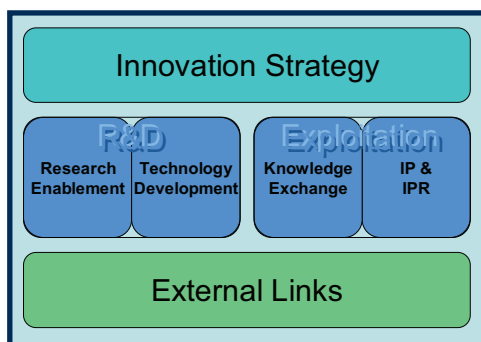


The aim of the Innovation Group is to support the main instrument building activity of the UK ATC through the supply of key technology R&D, and by providing a route to exploitation.

The Innovation Group has four main subdivisions, as shown in the diagram below. Each has a different, but complementary, function with separate projects and associated funding. Examples of which are:

Technology Research and Development

- Cooled MDM: Cryogenic miniature deformable mirrors for adaptive optics systems, in collaboration with Paisley University.



There are four main subdivisions within the Innovation Group, of which two can be further subdivided.

- Smart Focal Planes: Leading a European research program with 14 partners. Developments include the StarPicker high-precision cryogenic positioning system for ELTs.
- ELTs: Technology development for next generation Extremely Large Telescopes and the engagement of UK industry. Leading some of the instrument studies which influence telescope design.

Exploitation

- Photonics KTN: Founding members of this DTI Knowledge Transfer Network, covering all aspects of photonics (sub-mm/THz to UV).
- SUPA KT: Knowledge Transfer activities within the Scottish Universities Physics Alliance.
- PSRE 3: Exploitation through the third Public Sector Research Establishment Fund of UK ATC generated IP, and Proof of Concept work. Also, exploitation in the UK of ESO technologies.
- IP/IPR: Protection and management of UK ATC developed IP and IPR.

External Links

- ENOC: The UK hub for the European Network of Optical Clusters, linking with optics and photonics clusters across Europe.
- Industry Links: Connections with industry, and other key external organisations, across the UK.

Innovation Strategy

- Technology Management: Providing the strategic direction for future R&D, technology development, and exploitation routes. Input into Research Council technical direction.

Colin Cunningham was appointed as Director of Technology Development at the UK ATC in 2002, and more recently in 2006 Julian Dines was appointed Head of Innovation. This reflects the Research Council's increasing emphasis on the importance of knowledge exchange and exploitation of Research Council developed technology IP from R&D.

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