

# Barriers to Industrial Exploitation

Maximising the industrial impact of SPIRE project outputs



**Context** – Technology developed in collaborative projects can often fail to deliver its full exploitation potential. Furthermore, there are significant challenges in the transfer of outputs into sectors beyond the core project focus.

**Issues** – Just being a great concept does not ensure that a technology delivered by a project will find widescale industrial acceptance. In most cases there will be barriers – some real, but some perceived – that left unaddressed result in project outputs being stuck at the proof of concept stage. Common barriers cited by SPIRE industries include:

We have *many* projects that meet our investment criteria. We don't have the resource/ capital to do them all.

We only make big investments every 5 years. The project timeline doesn't align with this.

The technology is ok on a simple demonstrator, but it's much more complicated to fit that into the real plant alongside other systems.

We are not convinced that the claims of this innovation will be as good as they say. It doesn't sound risk free.

We're different to sector X. I don't understand how that would work here.

I think it sounds good but the operators will probably not be keen on changing how they operate the plant.

We normally only buy equipment from these approved suppliers

That would be ok whilst we're running the plant in mode A, but we also need the plant to be flexible for other modes of operation.

**Recommendations** – Put simply, however good it is, a technology stands little chance of exploitation without a strong pull from industrial end users. In order to maximise the pull, a project team should consider the following actions:

- Build an understanding of the voice of the customer during the project, through stakeholder engagement. An innovation needs to have the potential to solve a real problem.
- Focus on communicating what an innovation **does**, rather than what it is.
- Ensure that limitations are clarified as well as success stories: don't over-sell and be clear on the risks.
- Introduce innovations and the value of new technologies through trusted value chains, or intermediaries (e.g. cluster organisations) for better end-user perception.
- Work with potential end-users to understand uncertainties that may hinder future investment
- Build an understanding of the regulatory landscape for the relevant industry sectors.
- Develop a business case for implementation of a new technology. This can be the story of how the innovation will benefit those working in the end-user organisation and what thresholds will make the investment worthwhile (e.g. if Carbon Tax goes above €x / tCO<sub>2</sub>e).

Above all, project teams must help industry to address the perceived barriers and avoid creating opportunities for people to raise them.

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