



Centre for Studies
in Science policy



Grassroots innovation movements

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Grassroots innovation – some examples

[Car clubs

[Wind turbines

[Refrigeration (*zeer pots*)

[Mobile laundering

[Community currencies

[Solar home systems

[Irrigation systems

[Cycle rickshaw gear-trains

[Eco-housing neighbourhoods

[Rainwater harvesting

[Urban agro-ecology

[Green FabLabs



Grassroots innovation – characteristics

[Networks of activists, community organisations and individuals generating novel bottom–up solutions for sustainable development

[Solutions that respond to the local situation and the interests and values of the communities involved

[Grassroots involvement in process and outcomes of innovation

[Neglected by innovation policy – which is based in rent-seeking firms developing technologies – though inclusive innovation interest now

[artefacts (e.g. objects like portable milling machines)

[methodologies (e.g. participatory design techniques)

[actors (e.g. innovation scouts, social entrepreneurs)

[infrastructure (e.g. prototype databases, community workshops)

[policies (e.g. prizes)

[agendas (e.g. commons-based peer-production)

Grassroots innovation – STEPS project

[Grassroots innovation movements in historical and comparative perspective

[Six GIM case studies – deliberate variety:

- Honey Bee Network
- Peoples Science Movement
- Social Technology Network / Technologies for Social Inclusion
- Appropriate Technology Movement
- Lucas Plan and Movement for Socially Useful Production
- Grassroots Digital Fabrication

[3 questions:

1. Why did the grassroots innovation movement emerge and what was the aim?
2. How have activists mobilised support and activity, and what have been the major achievements?
3. What challenges have confronted the movement, and how has it addressed them?

[Methodology:

Background / context
Framings (e.g. ingenuity, empowerment, structural change)
Spaces
Illustrative initiatives
Path construction

Grassroots innovation – workshop aims

- [Aim:
- Share experience across various grassroots innovation movements
 - Draw lessons in context of policy interest in ‘inclusive innovation’
- [3 questions:
1. Why did the grassroots innovation movement emerge and what was the aim?
 2. How have activists mobilised support and activity, and what have been the major achievements?
 3. What challenges have confronted the movement, and how has it addressed them?
- [Workshop informed by 3 enduring challenges identified in our research so far ...
1. Pressure to scale-up whilst remaining context-sensitive
 2. Remaining appropriate whilst bringing about change
 3. Projects and programmes addressing structural change
- [Other themes in the invitation:
- Informal and formal expertise and activities
 - GI viewed as producing objects and viewed as mobilising networks
 - Economic development of GI
 - Knowledge politics in GI (e.g. knowledge commons and IP)
 - Indicators for GI
- [Format:
- presentations (**15 minutes**) and questions / small group discussion