

## Overview



Originally a chemical engineer, John Bessant has been active in the field of research and consultancy in technology and innovation management for over 40 years. In addition to his role as Emeritus Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Exeter he has visiting appointments at the universities of Stavanger, Norway and Erlangen-Nuremburg, Germany. In 2003, he was awarded a Fellowship with the Advanced Institute for Management Research and was also elected a Fellow of the British Academy of Management. He served on the Business and Management Panel of both the 2001 and 2008 Research Assessment Exercises. He

has acted as advisor to various national governments and to international bodies including the United Nations, The World Bank and the OECD.

Professor Bessant is the author of over 45 books and monographs and many articles on the topic and has lectured and consulted widely around the world. His most recent books include *Managing innovation* (2020) (now in its 7th edition), *Entrepreneurship* (2018) (both published by John Wiley and Sons) and *'Riding the innovation wave'* (Emerald, 2017).

You can find more and follow his blog at <https://johnbessant.org>

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## Qualifications

BSc, (Chemical engineering), BSc Psychology), PhD (Innovation studies)

## **Research**

### **Research clusters**

- [SITE](#)

### **Research interests**

- High involvement innovation
- Humanitarian innovation
- Scaling innovation
- Networks and ecosystems for innovation

My research is concerned with the process of technological innovation and its management. At enterprise level, it focuses on trying to identify the key structures and behaviours which enable organisations to renew their business offerings (products / services) and the ways in which they create and deliver them. Product and process innovation of this type requires capabilities both in 'doing what we do better' - continuous improvement' - and occasionally 'doing something different' - radical / discontinuous change. My research aims to improve understanding of what is needed here but also to identify or develop tools and techniques to enable organisations to build and sustain these capabilities.

I am increasingly interested in innovation management inside organizations engaged with creating social value – for example in the public sector or in not-for-profit organizations such as those operating in the humanitarian aid sector. In many ways these environments pose additional and complex challenges for organizing and managing innovation.

Another increasingly important dimension to this problem is the fact that organisations do not operate in isolation. Most activity involves different kinds of relationships with other organisations, and understanding how the principles of effective innovation management can be applied to inter-organisational networks forms an increasingly important area of my research.

### **Research projects**

- In my role as Visiting Professor at the University of Stavanger I am involved in a major project on 'Releasing the power of users' looking at user innovation and 'living labs' in the context of healthcare innovation.
- I am also involved in a variety of projects funded by humanitarian agencies looking at the challenge of moving innovation to scale

## Key publications

**Please add**

Bessant, J. (2019). The role of sustained innovation in the competitiveness and longevity of Hidden Champions. *Ekonomiaz*, 95(1).

Griesar, K., J. Bessant, and S. Bernschneider-Reif, (2018) *The Recipe for Corporate Longevity: From the Perspective of "Managing Innovation*. *Angewandte Chemie*, 57(16): p. 4130-4142.

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## Publications by category

(a) Books

**Please add**

Tidd, J. & Bessant, J., (2020). *Managing innovation: Integrating technological, market and organizational change, 7th edition*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.

Iakovleva, T, Bessant, J, & Oftedal, E. (2019). *Responsible innovation in digital health*. Cheltenham, Edward Elgar.

(b) Journal articles

**Please add**

Bessant, J. (2019). The role of sustained innovation in the competitiveness and longevity of Hidden Champions. *Ekonomiaz*, 95(1).

Griesar, K., J. Bessant, and S. Bernschneider-Reif, (2018) *The Recipe for Corporate Longevity: From the Perspective of "Managing Innovation*. *Angewandte Chemie*, 57(16): p. 4130-4142.

Tidd, J. and J. Bessant, *Innovation management challenges: from fads to fundamentals*. *International Journal of Innovation Management*, 2018. 22(5).

Bessant, J., et al., *Responsible Innovation in Healthcare - the case of health information TV*. *International Journal of Innovation Management*, 2017. 21(8).

## **External engagement and impact**

### **Awards and Honours**

- Elected Fellow, British Academy of Management
- Senior Fellow, Sunningdale Institute
- Senior Fellow, Advanced Institute of Management Research
- International Ambassador, Friedrich Alexander Universität, Germany
- Fellow, International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISPIM)

### **External positions**

- Currently Visiting Professor, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany and University of Stavanger, Norway
- Fellow, Centre for Leadership and Innovation, H.H. L. Business School, Leipzig, Germany
- Previous Visiting Professor Queensland University of Technology, Australia and National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Ireland
- Honorary Professor, Science Policy Research Unit, Sussex University
- Formerly Senior Fellow, Irish Management Institute, Dublin, Ireland
- Formerly Fellow, The Sunningdale Institute, National School of Government
- Member, EPSRC's College of Peers

## **Teaching**

- Innovation management
- Entrepreneurship
- Operations management

Professor Bessant's teaching focuses on how we can organise and manage the innovation process effectively - and how to extend and develop that capability as we encounter new challenges posed by an increasingly complex and turbulent environment. So his teaching includes both a 'roadmap' of the core process which we need to manage and then a series of key issues which we have to learn to deal with. Examples might be the huge challenge of 'sustainability' - how we create products, services, processes and business models which meet the needs of a predicted nine billion people, whilst simultaneously coming up with innovative solutions to problems like climate change and resource scarcity. Another big theme is healthcare - how we develop new models for providing high quality care for an increasingly old population without placing unacceptable burdens on financial and human resources. Another lies in how we tap into the latent creativity every individual possesses and make better use of this within our organisations, and as part of an increasing movement towards 'user-led' innovation.

## *Modules*

**2020/21**