

DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION FROM THE BOTTOM-UP: INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURS ENABLING DISTRIBUTED ENERGY

Resilient, low-carbon innovation

Distributed energy based on diverse renewable supply can increase the resilience of a low-carbon economy. But distributed energy is a poorly developed innovation system that faces an uneven playing field in Australia – including policy and market resistance.

Despite the challenges, a growing number of organisations are attempting to shape the economic and social landscape in which distributed energy can diffuse. Multiple pathways for innovation exist.

However, little is understood about the strategies used by these institutional change agents or how these actors may affect the trajectory of innovation in the energy sector.

This study of Australian cases explores the strategies of intervention used, the conditions shaping those strategies and the untapped opportunities for supporting distributed energy.

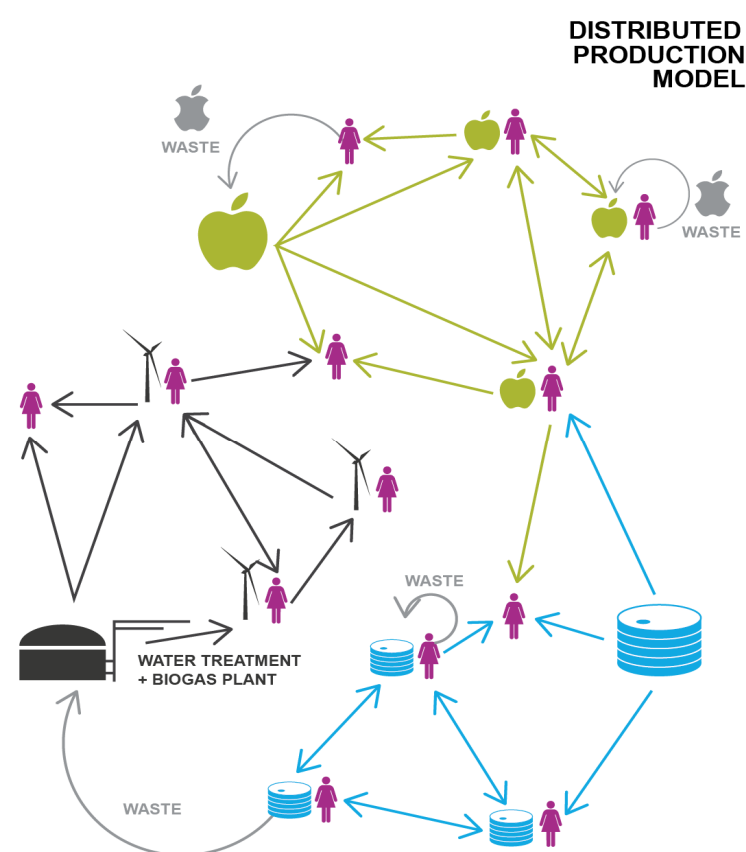


Figure 1 Distributed energy is a networked, localised model that blurs production and consumption. Prosumers are key players.

Despite an uneven playing field, bottom-up change agents are working to shape the energy sector regardless of policy. Conditions are ripe for disruptive change.

Solution

For distributed energy to play a key role in the economy a strong innovation system must exist.

This PhD research will seek to identify:

- Which strategies are effective at addressing innovation system (IS) weaknesses and in what contexts.
- Where institutional entrepreneurs or policy-makers must address IS weaknesses and what may prevent this
- How strategies are aligned to different possible trajectories of innovation

Benefits

Identifying how bottom-up agents of change can support distributed energy can help:

- Identify business and policy opportunities to increase the penetration of renewable energy
- Democratise the energy grid
- Strengthen certainty for the renewable energy industry
- Identify untapped strategic partnerships

Do you know organisations intervening strategically to support distributed energy in Australia? I'd love to hear from you.

Contact

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