

# From invention to productivity

## Closing the UK's innovation adoption gap



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Closing Britain's innovation adoption gap requires stronger organisational capability. The Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (IKE) sets out how accreditation, certification and professional development can help organisations assess readiness, develop competence, assure delivery and scale measurable results.

The UK should make adopting and scaling innovation a national economic priority. Scientific investment delivers value when organisations translate knowledge into better products, productive workplaces and improved public services. This requires investment in people and management practices that make technological change work.

The Government's Technology Adoption Review<sup>1</sup>, published in June 2025, identified management and workforce skills gaps, organisational resistance to change and fragmented business support as barriers to adoption. Its findings warrant parliamentary scrutiny of progress.

At IKE, we approach innovation as a professional discipline, supported by organisational accreditation, programme validation, professional certification and executive education. These mechanisms underpin the four linked-stages for adoption: **Assess, Develop, Assure and Scale**.

**1. Assess organisational capability.** IKE's Investor in Innovations accreditation examines six categories: Strategy and Alignment; Organisational Readiness; Core Capabilities, Technologies and Intellectual Property; Industry Foresight; Customer Awareness; and Impact and Value. It benchmarks practice against ISO 56000 family of Standards. Assessment generates an independently validated innovation profile, an action plan and recommendations. IKE's Digital Maturity Assured Framework adds a diagnostic of digital readiness and priorities for digital transformation, and

is aligned to the ISO 42000 family of Standards.

- 2. Develop professional competence.** IKE's Certified Innovation Practitioner develops practical innovation skills. Its Certified Innovation Leader programme addresses strategic leadership. Innovation for Digital Business Transformation and Prioritising for Innovation Success provide further innovation development and adoption routes. Organisations should translate learning into workplace assignments with accountable sponsors and measurable outcomes.
- 3. Assure programmes and delivery.** The Certified Innovation Programme accreditation assesses organisations' internal innovation programmes; a graduate development option accredits innovation components within graduate schemes. Successful organisations also gain IKE Assured provider status. Separately, IKE Certified Innovation Centre, Hub and Lab Trademark Schemes validate capability in innovation giving employers and delivery partners a defined set of characteristics to assure the quality of their innovation.
- 4. Scale against evidence.** Each adoption project should establish a baseline, a responsible owner and criteria for wider deployment. Measures should include sustained use, process completion times, error rates and cost per transaction. Scale decisions should consider implementation costs and service quality alongside productivity. Knowledge exchange should carry

lessons from both successful and unsuccessful trials into subsequent projects. Investor in Innovations reinforces continued improvement through annual monitoring, review and reporting during its three-year award period.

The four linked-stages for innovation adoption, connect capability baseline, professional competence and validated delivery with operational results. Evaluation should establish how capability translates into measurable gains.

Government support should fund capability assessment, leadership training, workforce development and process redesign, alongside technology and implementation. Smaller businesses need proportionate requirements and advice on suitability, costs and expected benefits before committing resources.

Regional partnerships should link businesses with universities, colleges and experienced adopters. Demonstration facilities and shared learning should explain implementation challenges, unsuccessful trials and conditions for success, spreading far beyond established innovation clusters.

Treating innovation capability as a **national economic asset** would strengthen the UK's ability to convert invention into widespread prosperity.

### References

<sup>1</sup> Department for Business and Trade, et al (2025). *Technology Adoption Review*. pp. 3–8.