The Open Innovation Team (OIT) is a cross-government unit that works with academics and other experts to help generate analysis and ideas for policy.

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HOW WE WORK

We provide a consultancy service for our customers, with our work normally falling across three main categories: engagement, analysis and ideas.

Engagement
We organise workshops, seminars, visits, conferences and networking events that bring officials and outside experts together to share insights and ideas.

Analysis
We work with academics and others to research and explain the latest evidence on topics we've been asked to look at, and we provide advice on what this evidence means for policy.

Ideas
We work with leading thinkers to generate, develop and test new ideas that our customers might like to take forward.

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HOW WE ARE FUNDED

We cover our costs through a mix of paid project work for our customers and sponsorship deals with our four university partners - Brunel, Essex, Lancaster and York.

We have a close relationship with our university partners, but it is not exclusive. We work with any university or other non-government organisation as we wish.

More than 350 experts from 120 different organisations have contributed to our work over the past 18 months.

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KEY STATS

We work across all policy areas, including education, health, growth and digital transformation. The list is growing all the time.

ACADEMICS

350+

355 academics and other experts have contributed to work we've delivered for central government since January 2019.

PROJECTS

30

Since January 2019, we've delivered **30** projects for **12 different** central government customers, including Cabinet Office, Home Office, DfE, DCMS and BEIS.

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

4.5/5

We gather feedback on all our projects and have an average customer satisfaction score of 4.5 out of 5. See the case studies below for more detail.

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We agree a bespoke project to suit the needs of each customer. Some of the tools we use most often are summarised on the following slide.

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COMMON ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

WORKSHOP

Interactive session between academics and policy makers focused on sharing insights and ideas about a policy problem

1-2 months

EXPERT PANEL

Set-up and help manage a panel of the most relevant experts to inform policy thinking.

2 months +

SEMINAR SERIES

A seminar series brings a stream of selected experts to share their insights and ideas with your team.

2 months +

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COMMON ANALYTICAL TOOLS

RAPID REVIEW

A short OIT report summarising the views of leading thinkers on a topic.

2-3 weeks

DEEP DIVE

A detailed OIT report summarising the latest evidence on a topic and explaining what this means for policy.

2-3 months

APPLIED RESEARCH

A research collaboration between officials and academics to address an agreed policy question e.g. an evaluation or proof of concept for a technology solution.

3 months +

THINK PIECE

A short note written by a top expert with OIT support.

1 month

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CASE STUDIES

RECENT PROJECTS

IMPROVED TRAINEE TEACHER SELECTION

DfE's Teacher Services Team asked us to investigate whether and how the quality of teaching applicants can be measured, and to help create a set of metrics for doing so.

Problem
DfE wanted to understand trainee teacher quality to improve training, retention, and overall teacher performance

Our Work
We consulted 30+ academics to produce a deep dive report that recommended a set of metrics for measuring teacher quality at the point of recruitment.

Outcome
Our report set out an approach for developing a set of teacher quality measures which DfE is now following.

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Problem

DCMS wanted a better understanding of how tech leaders across Europe saw the UK's tech policy and capabilities, to inform their post-Brexit European engagement strategy.

Our Work

We conducted field research in Berlin and Paris, held interviews with 30+ tech leaders across three countries, and coordinated contributions from 12 UK embassies across Europe.

Outcome

The final report will inform DCMS' approach to engaging with the European tech sector in coming years.

UK DIGITAL STRENGTHS & POLICIES

DCMS commissioned us to investigate European perceptions of the UK's tech sector and tech policies.

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NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CENTRE

The National Leadership Centre (NLC) commissioned us to lead a programme of academic engagement around public service leadership.

Problem

NLC needed a better handle on the evidence about leadership to shape its work. It also wanted to build a network of academics to help it become a hub for leadership expertise.

Our Work

We mapped a network of 60 UK experts on leadership, organised four workshops around the country, commissioned a set of 17 accessible articles, and filmed a set of videos.

Outcome

Our work has helped NLC build links with academics, develop its research strategy, and shape thinking on leadership development.

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'We had a fantastic experience working with OIT, and it enabled us to achieve so much more with our trust project than we could have independently.'

Ministry of Justice

'The speed at which OIT was able to obtain and present a baseline understanding of existing academic research in our field of interest was beyond our in-house capabilities.'

Department for Education

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'The OIT produced an excellent piece of work, which addressed exactly the topics the team were considering at just the right moment.'

Cabinet Office

'The team were highly enthusiastic and engaged in helping us connect with academic experts. They offered a flexible approach, helping us drive collaboration forward when it was needed. It has been an excellent relationship and one that we would have struggled to maintain without the OIT.'

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

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