

SPRU Training Course: Innovation Policy in a Changing Global Context

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Day 4: Energy Systems

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Energy systems are a critical underpinning of all development. Traditionally capital-intensive and provided by global corporations (oil and gas) and monopolistic utilities (electricity), existing energy structures are increasingly challenged both by the global imperative of climate change mitigation, where fossil fuel combustion is the key policy arena, and the advent of flexible small-scale technology, often enabled by digital means. At the same time energy is a highly politicised sector where issues of affordability, access and energy security often cut across the climate change agenda.

This session will look at the three main domains of energy provision (electricity, heat/cooling and mobility) and examine the implications of the climate change and digital challenges for the formulation of innovation policy in energy, recognising the need for access and security as well as the problem of managing the ‘stranded assets’ (and people!) of the fossil fuel-based system.

