



Professor Robin Roy, Open University, UK

Robin Roy received his B.Sc. in Mechanical Engineering in 1967, followed by a M.Sc. and in 1971 a Ph.D. in Design Technology, all from The University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST). After working as an engineering trainee in Sweden and lecturing in the USA, he joined the Faculty of Technology at the Open University in January 1971 as one of the first Lecturers in Design. He was promoted to Professor of Design and Environment in 1999.

Prof. Roy's research has focused on three related interdisciplinary areas: creativity in invention and design; the economic and managerial aspects of product design and technical innovation; and design for the environment. In 1979, he founded the Design Innovation Group (DIG) to act as a focus for research on the management, and effective practice of design and innovation in industry. Among the research carried out by the Group was a joint OU/UMIST project that evaluated the commercial returns and other benefits of the Design Council's Support for Design programme. The findings of this research received national and international attention when published in 1991. Other research, Factor 10 Visions, investigated the potential for major reductions in the environmental impacts of major product-service systems, such as higher education housing and transport, in order to help avoid climate change and other major environmental problems.

Prof Roy's more recent research 'People-centred ecodesign', conducted in collaboration with Milton Keynes Energy Agency and the National Energy Foundation, examined the drivers and barriers to consumer adoption of energy efficiency measures and micro-generation technologies (including solar thermal, solar PV and micro-wind) plus early adopter's experiences of using the products and systems.

This project was followed up by a scoping study with the Energy Saving Trust led by Prof Roy, funded by the Carbon Connections programme, on drivers and barriers to adoption of low carbon domestic heating and hot water technologies including ground source heat pumps, wood boilers and biomass stoves. This work surveyed those considering adopting these technologies and the decisions and experiences of early adopters. This work provided the basis for Prof Roy's work on the Energy Saving Trust's heat pump field trial which focussed on the experiences of ninety UK heat pump users to accompany the EST's technical monitoring of heat pump performance.