

1

MBIT Research and Research Group: A History

Peter Lindgren

1.1 Introduction to the Background and History of MBIT

As I have mentioned elsewhere (Lindgren 2017), the research work of my PhD actually laid the ground for my interest in business models and later multi business model innovation. My son Thorbjørn and others have often asked me:

What are you working on and what is actually your job?

To explain this I thought it could be valuable to tell you briefly the story of the Multi Business Model Innovation and Technology (MBIT) research group and how I became interested in multi business model innovation.

This will also – I hope – explain why I am researching MBIT and why every morning I wake up with a smile on my face, eager to begin my work on discovering new dimensions of the manifold ecosystems of business models.

I have already covered my research before 2005 in the book *Network Based High Speed Product Development* (Lindgren 2017), so let's begin in the year 2005 when I began, together with a group of researchers, to investigate the “DNA of the business model”.

The Newgibm (New Global ICT-based Business Models) project and its corresponding book (Lindgren 2011) were the very first outputs of this work. Projects like Global E-commerce and Global Innovation followed and gave more confidence and motivation to study Multi Business Model Innovation as a way to resist the increasing amount of product innovation carried out under high speed and understand why neither product innovation nor service innovation were enough for businesses to survive in the coming years.

At this time Zara Inditex had already grown very large and Ryanair was slowly taking over more and more of the low-cost carriage business model ecosystem (BMES). Large and established businesses (SAS, Lufthansa, KLM, Air France) were slowly feeling “the breath” of these new types of businesses

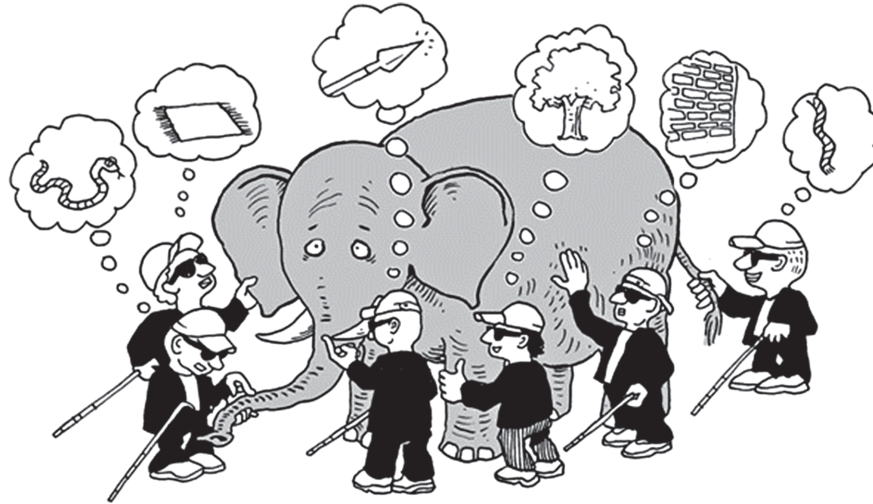


Figure 1.1 First things first – understand the components of the business model. Adapted from Yariv Taran’s PhD (Taran 2011).

and their business models – founded and built on the Multi Business Model Approach.

However we did not as a research group quite understand how they (Ryanair, Zara Inditex and a little later Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter) operated their businesses. Maybe, like a “humble bee”, they did not even know why they were flying themselves – but they did. We were trying to touch the “elephant” from different angles – but we had still no idea how the BM really look like and how we could define it (Figure 1.1).

However, what we could see was that the accepted and generally agreed upon best practice innovation and business innovation tools, frameworks, strategies and theories seemed not to work. This was a major trigger for us as researchers to find out how these businesses were thinking and doing business.

In August 2006 we applied to establish the International Center for Innovation (ICI) at the Center for Industrial Production at Aalborg University. The application was made as a network-based business model innovation project firstly by a core research group of six members meeting for three days in a November storm at a small fish restaurant called Niels Juel at Cold Hawaii (Cold Hawaii 2016) in Klitmøller in the Danish National Park in Thy (Pictures 1.1 and 1.2). The place itself is a case study of Multi Business Model Innovation and technology in action, and well worth a visit.

Later on, when gathering about 40 motivated network partners at the Cold Hawaii residence (Cold Hawaii 2016), the final project strategy for



Pictures 1.1 and 1.2 Niels Juel Restaurant in Klitmøller at the Danish National Park in Thy where the ideation and conceptualization of ICI took place.



Pictures 1.3 and 1.4 The strategy formation process for ICI.

ICI was produced under the process supervision of Kaj Voetmann, who also contributed later to the formation of the ICI LAB (Pictures 1.3 and 1.4).

Again the project meetings were held at Niels Juel Restaurant, hosted by its owner, Jesper Nielsen, who understood immediately what we were trying to achieve and was very happy to host us at this rural area by the North Sea.

The final core values of ICI, together with the cultures of ICI's core vision and the final application, were discussed, elaborated and finalized. The business model innovation strategy behind establishing ICI was decided upon and the operation plan was written. We could now “act and do” and make ICI happen.

After a long evaluation and acceptance phase from the EU, the Ministry of Economics and the Growth Forum for the Northern Region, in November 2007 we finally gained acceptance to fund ICI with 5.1 million euros. It enabled us to establish an applied research centre focusing on business model innovation in networks with a total budget of about 11 million euros heavily supported by industry – especially entrepreneurs and SMEs.



Picture 1.5 International Center for Innovation located at Aalborg University, Fibigerstraede 16, DK-9220, Aalborg, Denmark.

In November 2007 at the opening of the ICI (Picture 1.5) we invited some of the most well-known academics in business modelling at the time to give opening speeches on their work with business models and business model innovation (Pictures 1.6, 1.7 and 1.8).

Speeches were given by business theorist, author and consultant Alexander Osterwalder of Lausanne, Switzerland, Professor Henry Chesbrough of De Haas University, Berkeley, CA, USA and Professor Christopher L. Tucci of the College of Management of Technology, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Lausanne, Switzerland.

In 2008 The ICI opened its first International Innovation Hub at the Innovation Center Denmark's department at Silicon Valley, CA, USA (Innovation Center Denmark, n.d.) as part of one of the seven work packages that we had promised to deliver to our funders.

The opening for this centre was held at Stanford University Faculty Club (Pictures 1.9 to 1.18), gathering figures in Danish and American industry, organizations and academia as well as entrepreneurs, to reveal the core value of ICI – research-based business model innovation – in an interdisciplinary collaboration between stakeholders from all kind of competence fields.

Later on, ICI connected with the Innovation Center Denmark's departments in Shanghai and Munich (Innovation Center Denmark, n.d.). In October 2010 a midterm evaluation report was made by COWI consulting group evaluating the first three years of ICI (COWI 2010). The evaluation was very



Pictures 1.6, 1.7 and 1.8 Business model guest speakers at the ICI opening.

positive and ICI was allowed to finish the last 2.5 years of its total funded time period. ICI finished its funded operation in spring 2013.

ICI formed the basis and platform for a young research team (Picture 1.19) focusing on business model innovation research from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Different business model (BM) typologies and frameworks, and approaches to innovating business models were studied with academic partners worldwide and businesses who laid their projects on BM and Business Model Innovation (BMI) open to study from different academic angles and viewpoints. Several researchers valued and contributed to the knowledge of BMs and BMI from this work.

Associated Professor Yariv Taran did valuable research work on verifying and finding the fundamental “building blocks” of the BM – which we later called **business model dimensions**. This work was published in his PhD Dissertation “Rethinking it All: Overcoming Obstacles to Business Model Innovation” (Taran 2011) and later on in the paper “A business model

8 *MBIT Research and Research Group: A History*



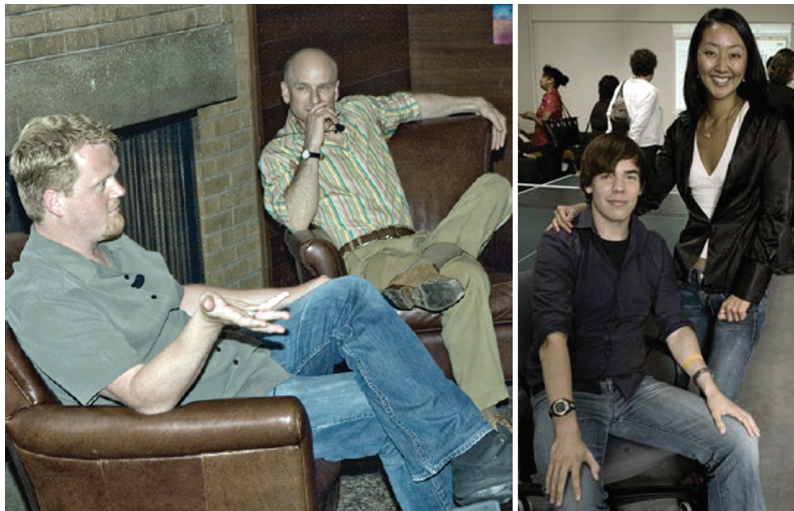
Pictures 1.9, 1.10 and 1.11 Participants listening to speakers at the ICI opening in Silicon Valley, USA.



Pictures 1.12 and 1.13 Special guest speakers Professor Larry Leifer of Stanford Mechanical Engineering, Member of Bio-X and Affiliate of Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment, CA, USA, and Professor Woody Powell, of Stanford University Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, CA, USA speaking at the ICI opening in Silicon Valley.



Picture 1.14 Rebecca Hwang, Head of Development at YouNoodle.com, speaking at the ICI opening at Stanford University Faculty Club.



Pictures 1.15 and 1.16 Professor Jeffrey Schnapp of Humanity Lab, Stanford University, Henrik Bennetsen, Head of Research, Humanity Lab, Stanford University and Joachim Krebs, Chief Technologist at YouNoodle.com with the company's Head of Development Rebecca Hwang at the ICI opening at Silicon Valley.

innovation typology” (Taran et al. 2015). Yariv Taran also contributed to our first work on risk related to BMI and how to classify this risk. He proposed a framework covering complexity, radicality and reach, which we will comment on later in this books Part 1 and Part 2.

Ailin Mazura Abdullah contributed to the first work on **business model innovation leadership (BMIL)** (Abdullah and Lindgren 2008; Lindgren and Abdullah 2013), especially covering the difference between BMIL and business model innovation management (**BMIM**).



Pictures 1.17 and 1.18 Martha Russell, Executive Director of mediaX at Stanford University and Senior Research Scholar with the Human Sciences Technology Advanced Research Institute at Stanford, and Professor Keith Devlin, co-founder and Executive Director of the university's H-STAR institute, co-founder of the Stanford mediaX research network and Senior Researcher at CSLI, speakers at the ICI opening in Silicon Valley.



Picture 1.19 ICI Research Team 2008 – Professor Peter Lindgren, Associate Professor Yariv Taran, Research Fellow Ailin Mazura Abdullah, Associate Professor Rene Chester Goduscheit, Research Fellow and Consultant Jacob Høi Jørgensen, Research Fellow Subria Clemmensen, Research Fellow Kristin Falck Saghaug and Assistant Professor Jacob Ravn.

Subria Clemmensen in her very first work contributed to the concept of **Green Business Models** (Lindgren and Clemmensen 2008) and the earliest ICI research on sustainable business models.

Associate Professor René Chester Goduscheit commenced the research group's first work on **network-based business model innovation**, focusing on the basics of how businesses can lead a business model innovation project in an inter-organizational network. He contributed to the research group's earliest work on networks and how to define a network.

Jacob Høj Jørgensen contributed to our first work on **customer innovation leadership** and the difference between **customers** and **users** in business model innovation. He also contributed to seeing the value proposition of a business model (products, services and processes) from both the user's and customer's viewpoint. This work laid the first foundation for the **business model panorama view**.

Assistant Professor Jacob Ravn contributed to business models operating at the **bottom of the pyramid (BOP)**; in other words business models operating in a BMES where users or customers have no money or very small amounts of money (Ravn et al. 2009, 2010; Rayn 2012). Jacob Ravn, together with Martin Kroghstrup, also contributed to research on network-based business model innovation targeting the BOP market.

Kristin Falck Saghaug contributed to the work on **competence** – specifically the **human resource part of the BM** and **the values of the human related to BMI**. She published her PhD dissertation at the Faculty of Engineering at Aalborg University combining **theology and business model innovation** (Saghaug 2015) and made several contributions on the release of intellectual capital (IC) in BMI (Lindgren, Rasmussen and Saghaug 2013). Further, she contributed to **BMIL** related to how to **release knowledge** from SME businesses involved in BMI and to a deep research study on **BMI related to the Blue Ocean Strategy approach** (Lindgren, Saghaug and Clemmensen 2009, 2010). She also made a very important contribution on **difference related to IC and BMI** (Saghaug and Lindgren 2010).

Rasmus Joensen worked with **the establishment of the ICI** and **the ICI platform**, enabling businesses in Northern Denmark to develop and implement new global business models. His own business became one of the first partners in the project.

Rasmus Jørgensen contributed to a deeper understanding of the BMI model related to previous innovation models (Lindgren, Jørgensen et al. 2011). His work, together with his stay in Stanford University and the Innovation Center Denmark, made it much clearer to us how an innovation model for business models differs from other innovation models. His work laid the ground for proposing a sixth generation of business model innovation models (Lindgren, Jørgensen et al. 2011). Together with Kristin Margrethe and Yariv Taran we proposed and worked with new generations and ideas about BMI models. In this context Kristin Saghaug did a very valuable study on 36 women-owned businesses in Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden and Denmark) in the EU-funded project “Women in Business” (WIB 2013). This led to a new BMI process model which we will comment on in more detail later in the book.

Several businesses and not least the Region North Jutland valued this initial work on BMI. These businesses were invited in and to participate in the ICI Lab which later on laid the ground for the concept of the Multi Business Model Innovation Lab.

1.2 The Multi Business Model Innovation Lab

ICI hosted a first prototype of a **Business Model Innovation Lab**, where 11 network-based business model innovation projects were created and brought to their business model ecosystems in 2008–2013. All projects were based on minimum of five businesses from very different competence fields and included several researchers. Funding was given to the businesses to innovate their business models, but it could only be used to buy knowledge – not equipment, buildings or administrative help.

Provital, Assess2innovation, Skywatch, Space Creator, Mobile Tracking, SAFE and Cspot were some of the business models, who were established on the ICI platform. Comspace, Gabriel, COWI, Jydsk Løfteteknik, Skagen Beton, Hanstholm Havneforum, Skov A/S, Dolle A/S, Tankegangen, Skagen Foods, Acula, Aikon and many more valued the research and collaboration with ICI. All of the “new business models” were – when accepted – motivated to enter the ICI Business Model Innovation Lab as seen in a sketch model in Figure 1.2.

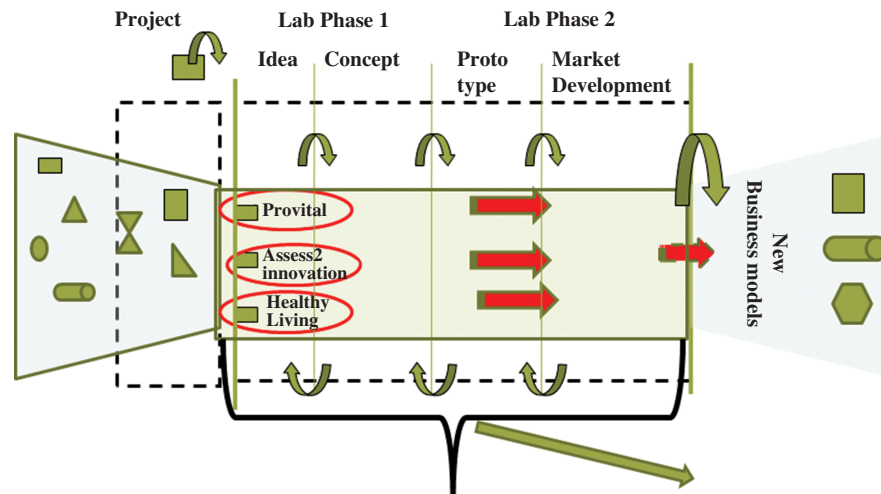
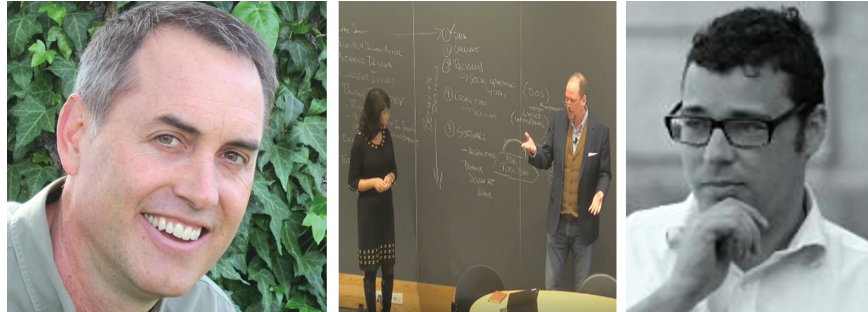


Figure 1.2 A sketch of the ICI Business Model Innovation Lab.



Pictures 1.20, 1.21 and 1.22 Professor B. J. Fogg, Stanford University, US; Margarita Quihuis – Co-Director, Peace Innovation Lab at Stanford University, Mark Nelson, Director, Peace Innovation Lab at Stanford University; Professor Morten Karnøe Søndergaard, Aalborg University.

In 2010 ICI opened a new collaboration with Stanford Peace Innovation Lab around business models and BMI on behalf of peace. The Obel Fund supported this initiative and B. J. Fogg, Mark Nelson and Margarita Quidis were central to this work, together with Professor Morten Karnøe Søndergaard, Aalborg University as seen in Pictures 1.20, 1.21 and 1.22.

This began a new focus on and contribution to our business model research in ICI, concentrating on values of business models other than money. This work, together with the Neffics (Neffics 2012) BMI case study of the HSDJ Children’s Hospital in Barcelona, Spain owned by 1,200 monks, laid the ground for the change of one of the names of the seven dimensions in the Business Model Cube. The term “**value formula**” instead of previously just profit formula was chosen. It became very clear to the researchers that BMs focused and established on other values than money were existing and very highly important to understanding the game of business and multi business model innovation in the future.

At the research stay at Stanford University the interest of **persuasive technologies** (Fogg and Kaufmann 2003) and **persuasive business models** (Lindgren, Søndergaard et al. 2013) also commenced. Professor Morten Karnøe Søndergaard, Niels Einar Veirum and Katharina Wopulus contributed tremendously to the research and development in this field (Lindgren, Søndergaard et al. 2013). This research laid the vision for MBIT to be able in the future to create and study persuasive business models.

Parallel to the establishment of ICI, a new Center for Tele Infrastructure (CTIF) had been established, led by Professor Ramjee Prasad and his research team. CTIF focused on wireless and future wireless technologies, security



Figure 1.3 CTIF research focus areas.

technologies and many more research fields related to these topics. Many more topics were added through the years that followed (see Figure 1.3).

We knew at that time that CTIF's research and global partners (Figure 1.4) were doing world-class research and had access to some of the best businesses in the world (Huawei, Tata, Cisco, Nokia, Ericsson, Alcatel-Lucent, ETSI, IEEE, Princeton University, MIT and many more). It was a perfect network partner and match to ICI and to fulfill ICI's vision and strategy. CTIF had the technology and technology research. ICI was researching and developing the business model research needed and valuable for the technology.

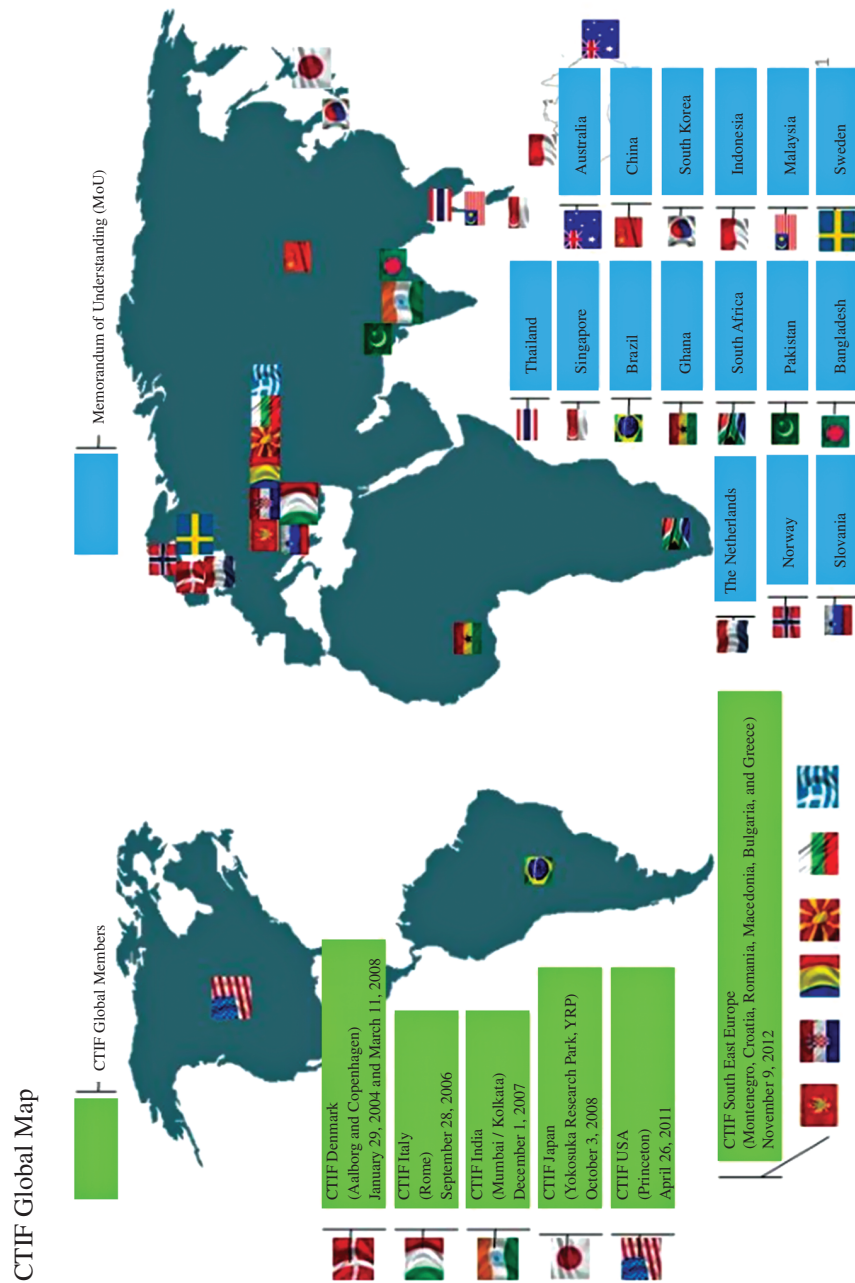


Figure 1.4 CTIF's global partners 2016.

CTIF became highly valuable to our business model research from the very first moment. In 2006, when ICI was invited to join CTIF and later made me responsible for its thematic area of Multimedia, Applications and Services we became even closer network partners.

1.3 The Establishment of the Multi Business Model Innovation and Technology (MBIT) Research Group

In 2011, when I was still working as a guest researcher at Stanford University, I took a very tough decision. I decided to leave ICI and wrote a letter to its board to announce that I would leave my post as head of the ICI research centre. I took this decision because for a long time I had felt that the rest of the management of ICI was not following the vision and strategy we originally had agreed upon, or fulfilling the promises we had given to our supporting network partners and not least our funders – EU, Ministry of Economics and Region North Jutland.

A midterm evaluation report had showed that we were on track but our new 2013–2017 strategy for ICI was not accepted in November 2010 by the board of ICI and the University of Aalborg in particular. I deeply felt that ICI was taking a direction that was not in line with its original idea, aim and application. Most important, I felt that our research on BMI was not ambitious enough to become world class and I feared that it would fall back if we could not realize our 2013–2017 proposed strategy.

So in February 2011 I left ICI and began to think of a way to realize the proposed strategy that we had had for “the ICI business”. I began this journey by preparing and configuring a new research group with my old master and PhD Supervisor Associate Professor Kim Bohn, Aalborg University (Picture 1.24). Post Doc Ole Horn Rasmussen (Picture 1.23) and some master’s students at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering at Aalborg University joined us very soon afterwards and in 2012 we could finally found the Multi Business Model Innovation and Technology (MBIT) research group, based on the original proposed strategy for ICI but with a different set-up.

Ole Horn Rasmussen contributed in this time period to the work on **the BM Cube** and **the relations of BMs** – specifically the concept of **the relations axiom** as a tool and framework to map the relations between BMs (Rasmussen and Lindgren 2015). Further, he contributed to **the theoretical verification of the BM Cube**, the relation axiom and the concept of the **BMES**. His work on **the reverse butterfly model** laid the theoretical ground for the connection between the BM and the BMES (Rasmussen and Lindgren 2016a).



Pictures 1.23 and 1.24 Researcher, Teacher and Consultant Ole Horn Rasmussen and Associate Professor Kim Bohn.

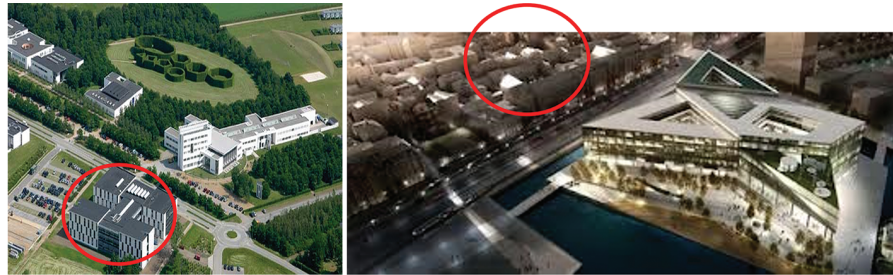


Pictures 1.25, 1.26 and 1.27 Head of Aarhus University B-tech Professor Michael Goodsite, Head of Department of Engineering Professor Thomas Toftegaard, Head of Aarhus University B-tech Jacob Eskildsen.

In spring 2013 Associate Professor Annabeth Aagaard and I began to work out how to realize the MBIT strategy (MBIT 2014) and proposed this to Aarhus University – Head of Aarhus University B-tech Professor Michael Goodsite (Picture 1.25) and Head of Department of Engineering Professor Thomas Toftegaard (Picture 1.26) – in summer 2013.

After some adjustments and negotiation, the new MBIT strategy 2014–2020 was accepted by Aarhus University and Associate Professor Anna Beth Aagaard and I were hired at the University of Aarhus – Department of Business Development and Technology – under our new Head of Aarhus University B-tech Jacob Eskildsen (Picture 1.27).

Two MBIT labs were initially established in Aarhus University – one in B-tech Herning (Picture 1.28), and one in the Science and Technology Navitas Building (Picture 1.29).



Picture 1.28 and 1.29 MBIT labs at Aarhus University: B-tech Herning; and Science and Technology Navitas Building.

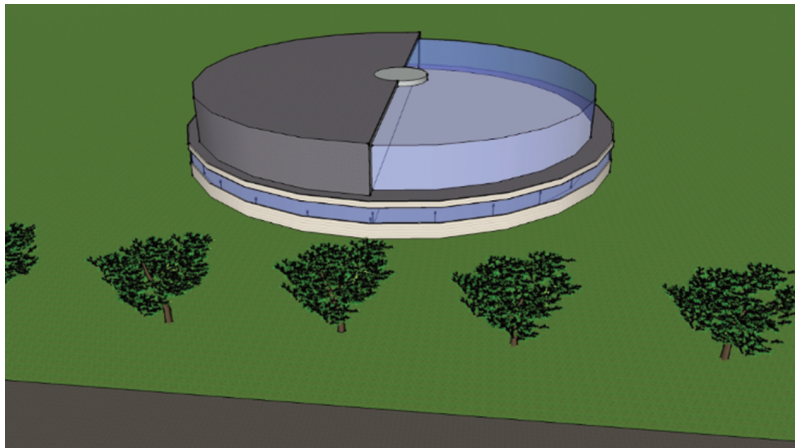
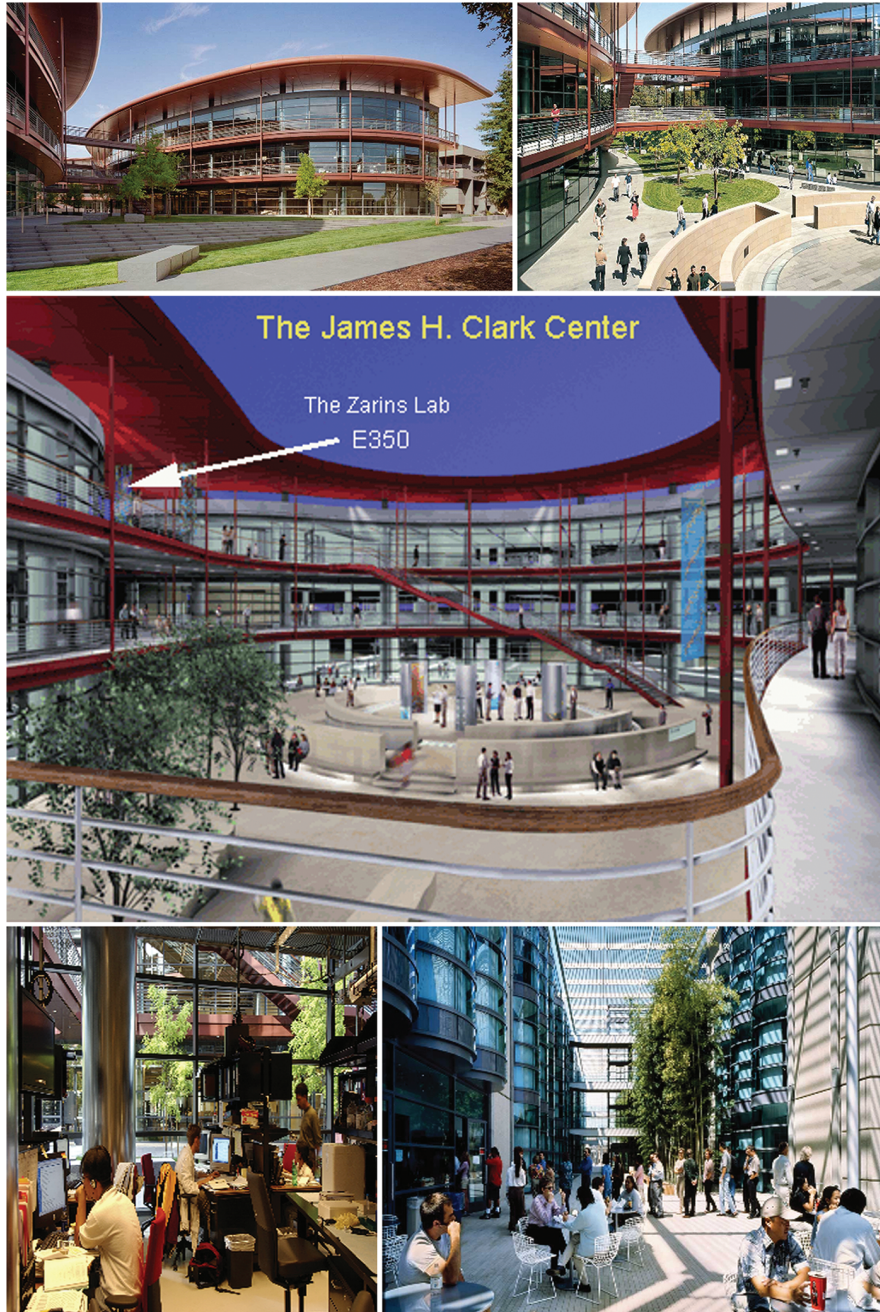


Figure 1.5 A sketch model of a MBIT lab innovated at the ICI Lab.

This was not a new idea. It had already been initiated by researchers at ICI under research assistant Gert Spender who drew up a sketch model of a MBIT lab that could be replicated to as many places as needed, both physically and digitally (see Figure 1.5).

The inspiration was very much taken from the Stanford University Clark Center (Pictures 1.30 to 1.34).

Here young students, researchers and business people meet in a building or place where they innovate future business and technology. What inspired me very much during my stay and several visits was the Clark Center's concept – built around people meeting at the restaurants and cafes at the floor level, with plenty of meeting rooms and spaces to talk and eat together, and food and drink from all over the world. The research labs are just nearby or on the next floor in a building, and here more detailed discussions and innovation



Pictures 1.30, 1.31, 1.32, 1.33 and 1.34 Stanford University Clark Center.

can take place. The Clark Center is an open centre where everybody can walk in – researchers, business people, students... It is a perfect place for BMI – and research-based BMI.

1.4 The MBIT Strategy

The MBIT strategy was built with this inspiration and as a five-year strategy – 2014–2019. From the very first moment it was an open business model strategy (MBIT 2014), inspired by Professor Henry Chesbrough's ideas and concepts, with a vision to move the MBIT Lab out in the open space – to where the BMI projects were actually happening and really taking place.

The MBIT strategy aims:

- To create a world-class interdisciplinary research centre for MBIT.
- To become an increasingly attractive research project partner for local, regional, national and international businesses, institutes and universities.
- To contribute to the engineering study programmes at B-tech (primarily at master's level, but also at bachelor's degree level) through research-based teaching and by profiling the programmes to the local business and educational communities.
- To support businesses of any kind with business model innovation and business model innovation technology, solutions and tools.
- To create a vibrant talent development environment for students at PhD level and at the final stage of the MSc in Engineering study programme.

The MBIT qualitative objectives and interests were formulated in 2013 within three areas:

1.4.1 Research

MBIT pursues and publishes research in the area of engineering and engineering management as consisting of network-based and integrated businesses and their business engineering design methodologies, which include:

- Business engineering operations frameworks
- Business technological artefacts
- Multi business model and innovation systems
- Business model information systems
- Business model information technology
- Multi business model modelling
- Entre-, intra- and interpreneurship
- Strategic multi business model innovation

- Sustainable business models
- Data-driven business models

1.4.2 Education

- MBIT contributes to the engineering study programmes at Aarhus University – B-tech, and in particular, to the research base underpinning the MSc in Engineering study programme (cand.polyt.)

1.4.3 Business

- MBIT aims to build bridges between technology and business. MBIT aims to bridges businesses of all kinds (private, public, NGO...) in means of business development, business development technologies, and entre-, intra- and interpreneurship as well as strategic business model innovation.

To pursue these themes, MBIT aims at executing research-based BMI activities such as:

- Combining business models and related big data from experiments with (applied) science to understand the processes in scientific and engineering business model challenges and problems
- Designing science research, i.e. understanding, analysing and systematizing frameworks as well as strategic approaches to determine the design and combination of business model innovation
- Mapping analytical tools to understand business models and business model innovation in businesses and in different business model ecosystems from a business innovation perspective, e.g. technological business model innovation as a prerequisite for integration and efficiency of business models, or business model competences and capabilities as enablers for different multi business model configurations
- Applying an open approach to technology, engineering and business model innovation in the context of changes and supporting diversity by combining ‘as-is’ and ‘to-be’ business models, businesses and business model ecosystems into new opportunities
- Applying business model innovation leadership and management processes with a particular focus on business model innovation leadership, strategic leadership of business model innovation and operations processes. This particularly supports complex and changing business models and business model ecosystems related to businesses and business model innovation

- Ensuring the involvement of technological and engineering aspects in concrete business model design implementation and operation of business model solutions
- Ensuring entre-, intra- and interpreneurship in business innovation
- Ensuring execution, monitoring, control, evaluation and adjustment of business model innovation

The quantitative objectives can be seen in the MBIT Strategy document (MBIT 2014).

From the very beginning, the MBIT research group has invited master's degree and PhD students to participate in MBIT research activities and projects. The model for MBIT research was sketched out from the very first draft of the strategy, as shown in Figure 1.6.

The MBIT Research Lab approach aimed at taking in different research projects within the field of MBIT's research area and attracting different competences from different faculties – art, science and technology, business, social science and health – either internally from Aarhus University or from other universities or knowledge institutions. The approach in MBIT was to work with networks of businesses – seldom one business alone – because there is and was a strong belief in MBIT Research Group that future BMs will be created in networks of different competences. This idea and concept of BMI was not new but inspired by the Newgibm (Lindgren 2011) approach that we worked with back in 2005–2007 (Figure 1.7).

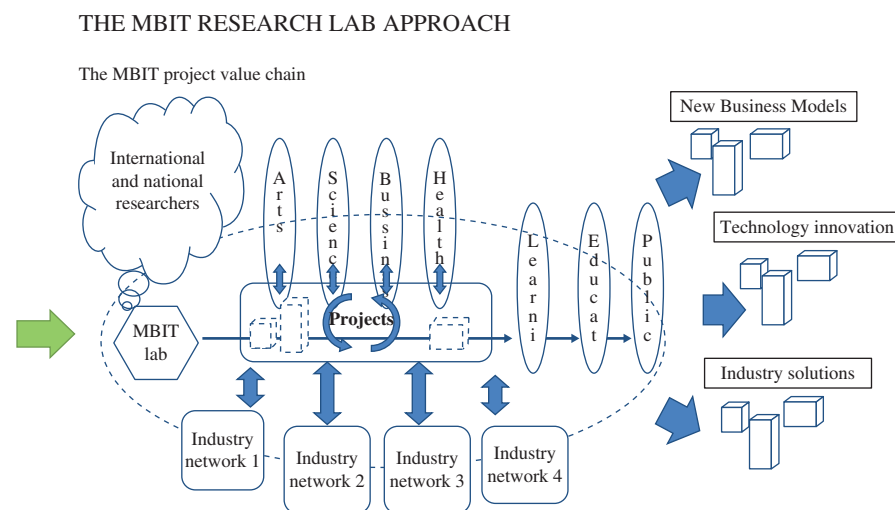


Figure 1.6 The MBIT Research Lab approach.

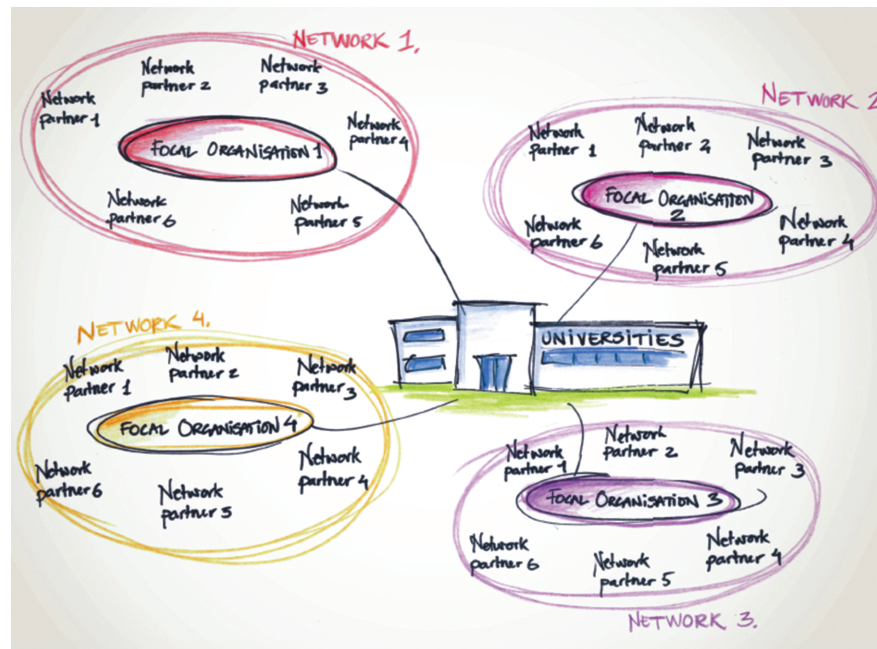


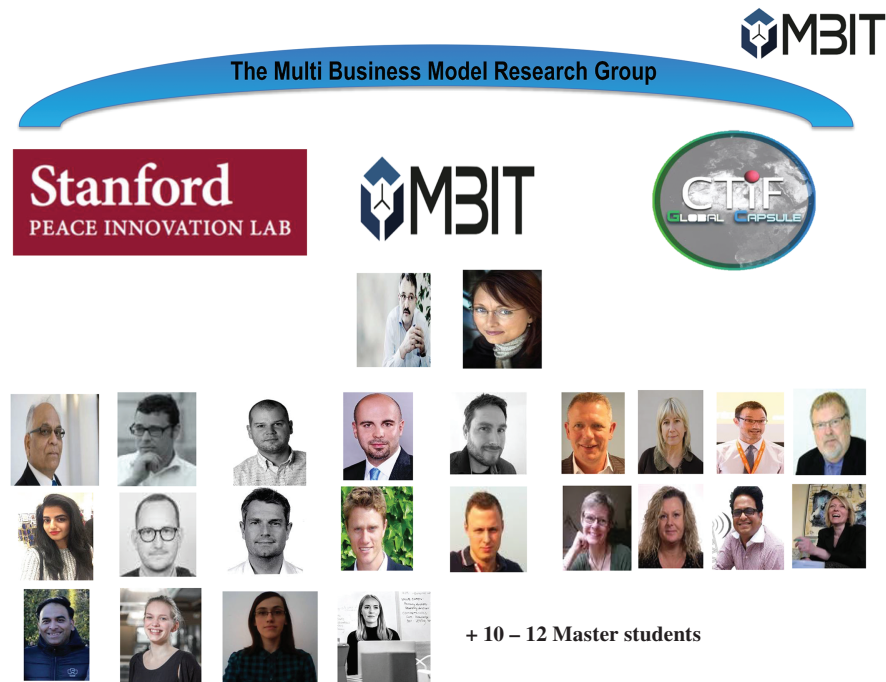
Figure 1.7 The Newgibm approach adapted from the Newgibm book (Lindgren 2011).

The very difficult task for the MBIT Lab is to make it possible for researchers from all competence and knowledge fields to study the BMI projects together and be willing to do this independent of their background and competences. However, this is one of the core competences that we want to build in the MBIT research centre and the MBIT Lab. Today – August 2017 – we have gathered a team containing a wide range of MBIT researchers (Picture 1.35).

All researchers' interest and research areas could be found at the MBIT website (MBIT 2014). The MBIT research group has visiting researchers continuously at the lab and about 10–12 master's students working with the group.

The next difficult part was to make MBIT Lab independent of place. Our vision was to have MBIT Lab “move” to the place where the BMI project was taking place – either this was a physical, a digital or a virtual place. We have come some way down this road, but have some way to go. This is our ambition to achieve in prototype in 2018.

Jesper Bandsholm, one of our first master's students, participated in the MBIT Lab and in this context contributed to the study and test of the **Bee Board** and **BMES** in several empirical cases: amongst others The Green Lab



Picture 1.35 MBIT research team, August 2017.

Skive case (Lindgren and Bandsholm 2016). This was done in a physical set-up inside and outside the MBIT Lab in Herning.

Signe Stagstrup Jensen, together with Associate Professor Jane Flarup, contributed to research on **competence related to BMI** (Flarup et al. 2016) in our search for “**The DNA of BMI**”. Signe and Jane studied the competence profiles of more than 400 master’s engineering students, trying to identify the DNA of BMI.

Morten Laulund and Mads Buur Sandfelt contributed to the **community-centric business model ecosystem**, especially digital BMES communities and their BMs.

Malene Rønnow contributed to the first experiments in the MBIT Lab on what was called “**the B-lab**” as a working title, a **simulated BMI environment** (Figures 1.8 to 1.10, Pictures 1.36 to 1.39). The aim of the research was to find the most optimal **BMI environment** and later optimize the BMI environment in the favour of **optimizing the “production of BMs”**.

Cosmina Radu, with Ambuj Kumar and Per Valter, continued this research with experiments rolling out and testing the B-lab from 2015 to 2017. The aim



Figures 1.8, 1.9 and 1.10 Sketches of the B-lab.

was to have more than 25 B-labs in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Bulgaria and Romania up and running by January 2018. Figure 1.11 shows a sketch of the roll out of B-labs by summer 2017.

PhD Fellow Troels Andersen currently researches and contributes to MBIT's research on strategic multi business model innovation and PhD



Pictures 1.36, 1.37, 1.38 and 1.39 Malene Rønnow together with test equipment, testing and monitoring situations in the BMI environment.

Fellow Torben Cæsar Bjerrum researches and contributes on data-based business models for the MBIT research group. PhD Fellow Kristian Løbner researches and contributes on business model innovation leadership in incumbent project-based organizations for the MBIT research group. They are all expected to finish their PhDs before 2020.

1.5 Future of MBIT Research and Research Group

The MBIT research group was in August 2017 standing close to “the start of 2018”. We now had about 25 researchers in our team and had integrated Stanford Peace Innovation Lab and the CTIF Global Capsule into the lab and research group. 17 B-labs/cubes (Figure 1.11) were installed in Sweden and Denmark.

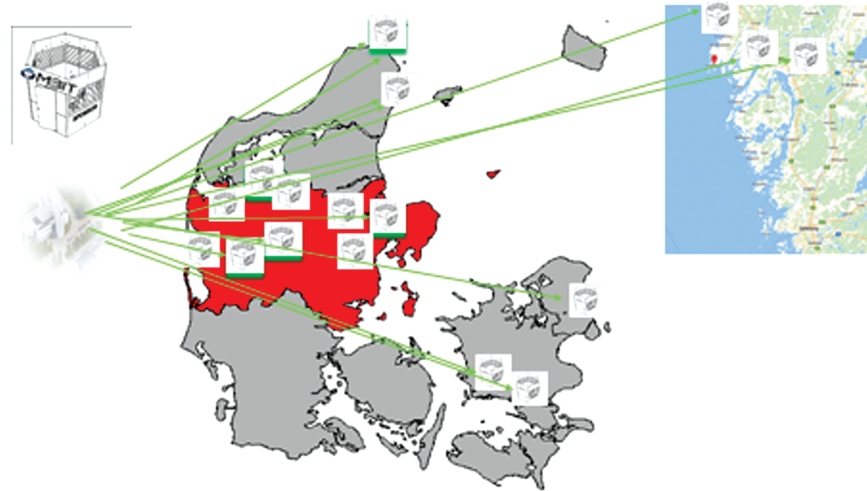


Figure 1.11 Map of the B-labs and MBIT test environment spread out in Denmark and Sweden in summer 2017.

A new strategy for MBIT 2020–2025 was under construction already started to be formulated in 24th May 2017. A first draft of the new MBIT strategy was supposed to be presented at a two-day strategy workshop hosted by one of our partners in autumn 2017. Then Head of Department Anders Frederiksen called me the 18th of August 2017 to discuss a proposed change in the setup and strategy of MBIT. This I will comment on in the Part 2 of the book.

With this introduction, which answered some basic questions on why I am working with business models and the Multi Business Model Approach, I would like to thank all members of my research team, all partners and funders that have contributed and supported ICI and MBIT in making our strategies happen. It has not been an easy journey – or an easy business model(s) – to implement the BMES. Every day we had to work hard in the field between business, technology and research. Some would say it is “blood, sweat and tears” – but it was worth it. In fact, when I turn up in the new MBIT Lab I see the same smiles and enjoyment in my research team as I saw right from the beginning of ICI. Multi business model innovation is a mindset and a language – once you have touched and learned it you will never forget.

It’s like “being your business.”

That is what I discovered in my many travels to businesses around the world to research and gather cases. Those business and their employees that try hard every day to “be their business” are most often those who achieve the highest performance – either measured in money or other values, or both. Often it is the other values that make them wake up early in the morning and start working.

Chapter 1 ends with giving a big thanks to Junko Nakajima and her team at River Publishers for working with me on this book. Thanks to River Publishers – and Rajeev Prasad for letting me publish this work through your business.