

# Anticipation in the Governance of Innovation

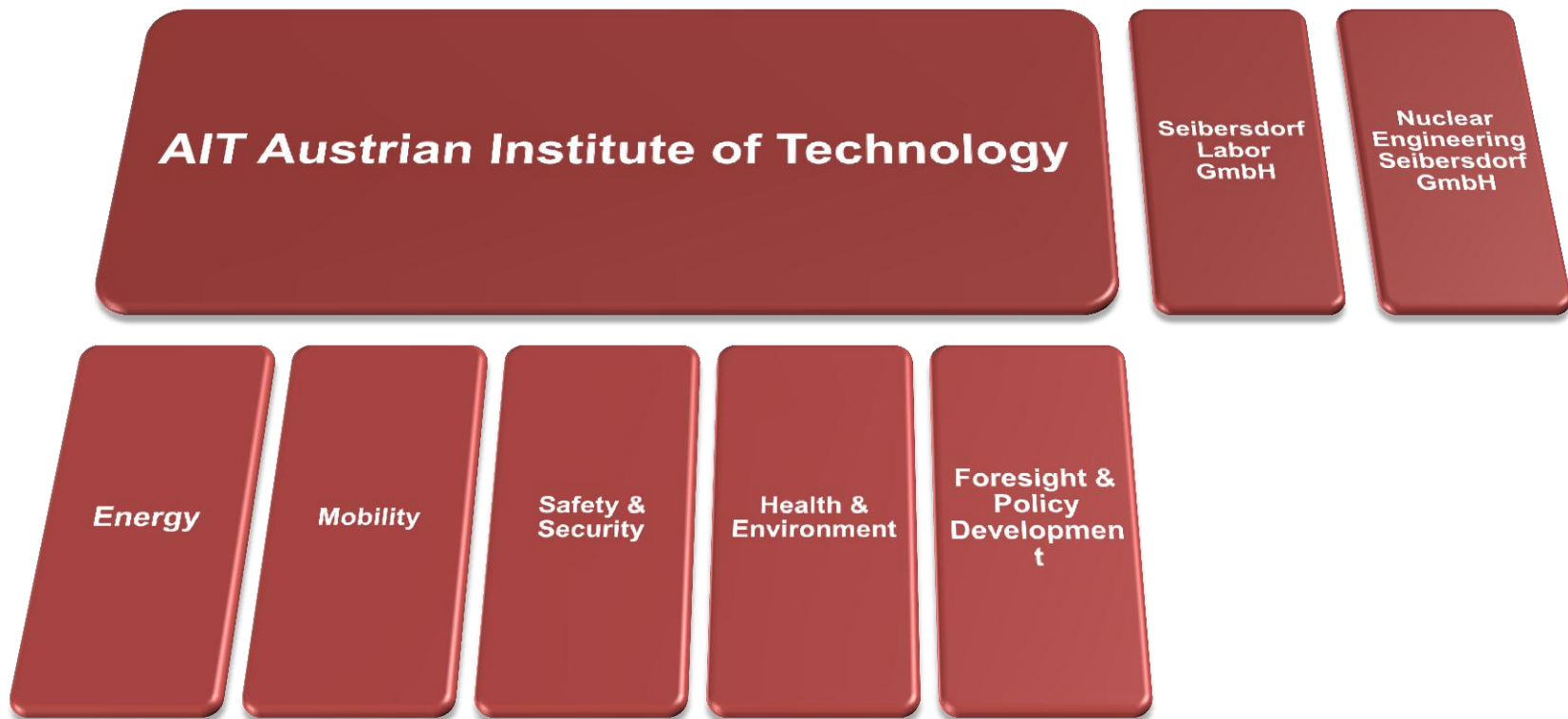
Expectations, Foresight and Technology Assessment

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EU-SPRI Spring School

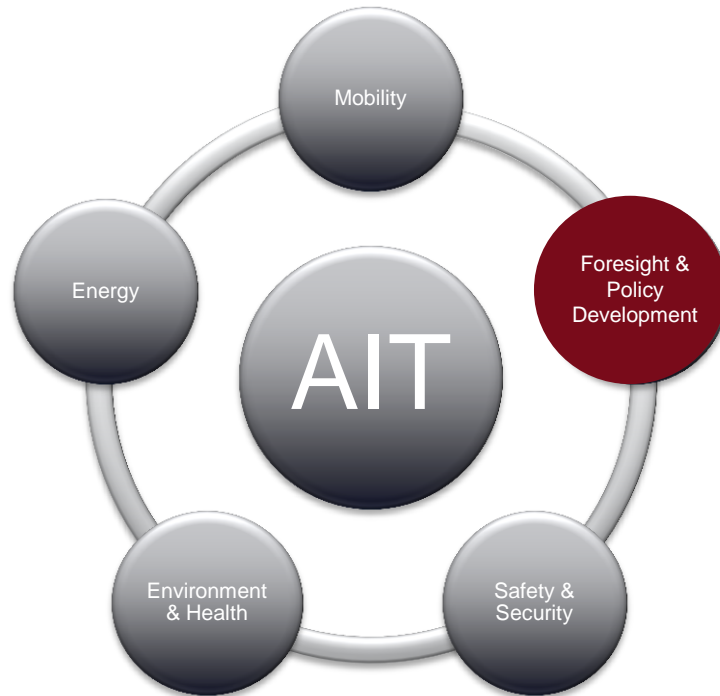
15-17 March 2012

# AIT Austrian Institute of Technology



# AIT - Foresight & Policy Development Department

- ~ 50 permanent researchers



# Foresight & Policy Development

## Mission Statement

Innovation- and sustainability research  
oriented towards the big challenges of the future

The expertise should be used for

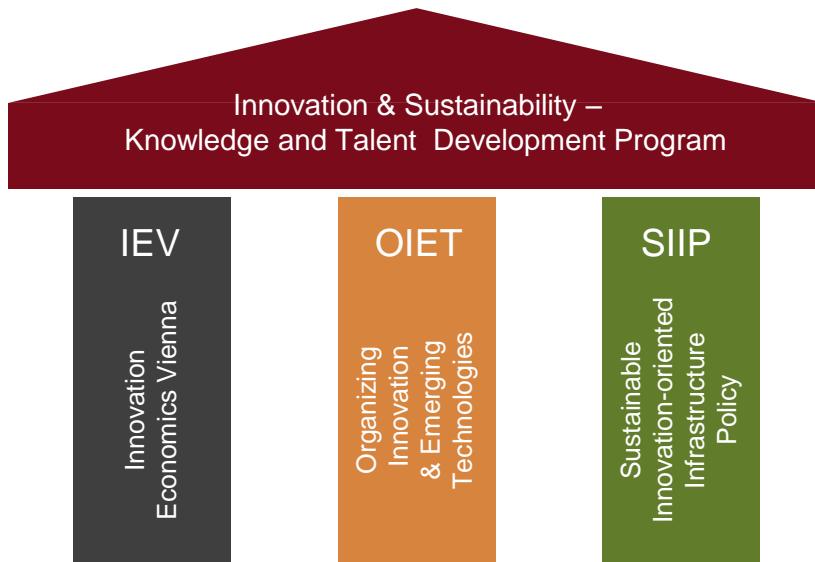
- a forward looking systemic RTI-policy,
- a sustainable regional development and design of innovative infrastructure and
- the establishment of new opportunities for entrepreneurship.

# AIT - Foresight & Policy Development Department

Netzwerkpartner des I&S-Programms

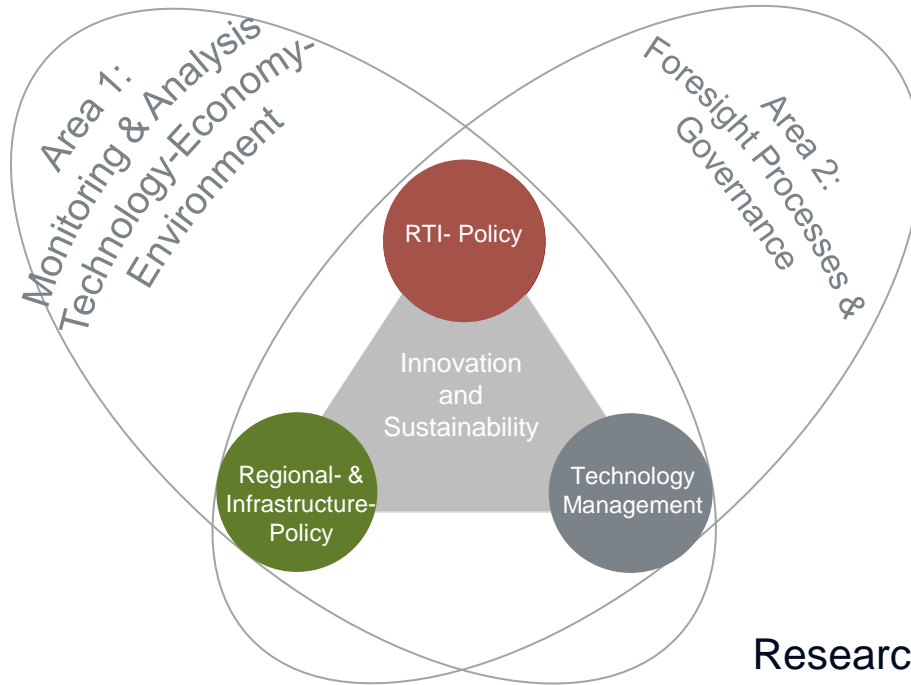


- ~ 50 permanent researchers
- ~ 20 PhD- and Master students per year





# AIT - Foresight & Policy Development Department



- ~ 50 permanent researchers
- ~ 20 PhD- and Master students per year
- ~ 150 bis 180 cooperation partners
- 2 main Research Areas and 3 Business Units

## Research Field AREA 2

- Foresight and Policy Strategies
- Governance of complex systems
- Innovation-oriented and sustainable infrastructure policy

## Research Field AREA 1

- Models for complex social and physical systems
- Monitoring & Data Mining
- Development and application of methods and tools

# Foresight@AIT

- Foresight infrastructure
  - Networks, conferences, monitoring, training
- Foresight methods
  - Process design, weak signals, impacts
- Thematic foresight
  - Energy, mobility, security, urban futures, production
- Foresight on research and innovation systems
  - New models of doing research and innovation, institutional change
- Foresight for policy strategies
  - RTI policy, infrastructure policy regional policy
- Corporate foresight
  - Firms, research organisations, public agencies



## EU-SPRI Forum

- European Forum for Studies of Policies for Research and Innovation
- Strengthen the active but dispersed interdisciplinary community of researchers focussing on interdisciplinary dimensions related to policy and governance in the field of knowledge creation and innovation
- ~ 15 member organisations
- Activities
  - Biannual EU-SPRI conferences
  - Early career researcher conferences
  - PhD Schools
  - Exploratory activities
  - PhD circulation awards



## 1st EU-SPRI PhD Spring School

Anticipation in the Governance of Innovation: Expectations,  
Foresight and Technology Assessment

## Why is there a growing demand for „Foresight“ ?

- Growing demand for an anticipatory and strategic approach to decision-making in government and industry, due to
  - Acceleration of the pace of change in science and society
  - Growing interdependence and international networking leading to higher complexity
  - Limits to established forms of long-term planning in the face of complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty of the future
  
- „Thinking, debating and shaping the future“ (EC 2002)
  - The future cannot be predicted, but is open and malleable  
→ *Scenarios and adaptive strategies*
  - Limited influence of individual actors on the direction of change  
→ *Coherent and coordinated action*
  - Need for shared orientations, visions and leitbilder  
→ *Integration of diverse perspectives*
  - Moving from visions to concrete actions  
→ *Mobilisation by participation*

# Expectations and foresight

- „Instrumental“ purposes of foresight
  - To provide orientation when navigating future landscapes
  - To underpin and inform strategic decisions
  - To help coordinate decisions of heterogeneous actors towards some kind of shared vision
  
- „Foresight is embedded in a sea of expectations“
  - Everybody does „foresight“ at any time
  - Expectations are highly volatile
  
- Dealing with the heterogeneity of expectations
  - Foresight as specific opportunities to reflect and adjust expectations, maybe even create new ones

## Key questions underpinning the Spring School

- What is the role of expectations in the governance of innovation? What is specific about this role in different settings (policy, corporate, science, public) and different technology contexts (e.g. emerging technologies versus established technologies)?
- How can we trace the impact of societal expectation dynamics, foresight and technology assessment – for specific actors, organizations, technology fields?
- How are expectations generated and shaped - in different contexts as different types of discourses, different foresight procedures etc.? Which kinds of expectations are ‘produced’ and which actors are central?
- How does expectation-building in societal discourses, foresight and technology assessment interrelate and influence each other?
- How are expectations conceptualized in different approaches?
- How to deal with uncertainty and rapidly changing expectations in research, technology and innovation policy?