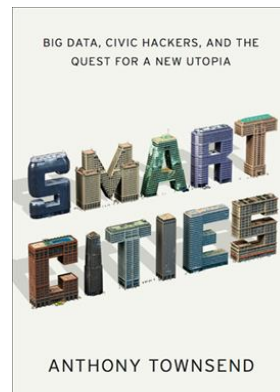




Manchester the original, modern internet city – how did this happen?

40 years of digital innovation and activism - from urban telematics to smart cities and beyond – good times, bad times and future times ...



Manchester & Sussex connections

Soft Solution - software workers coop – set up by ex-students from Sussex University

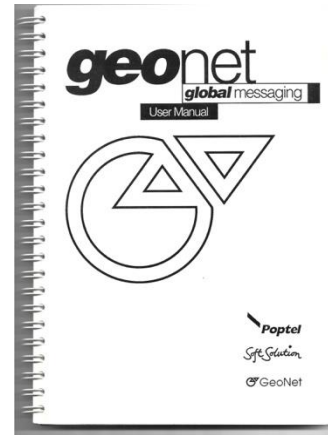
Poptel - proposals for a “Peoples Prestel” or “Popular Prestel” or “Popular Telematics” project – “Poptel” – supported by the GLC (in its dying days)

Manchester – network of community activists and trade unionists influenced by contacts with Sussex and GLC supported projects

Innovation - why not a radical version of Prestel for community organisations, trade unions, NGOs and other campaigning organisations? Ideas taken up by Manchester City Council in the mid-1980s

Idea of a “**Radical Reuters**” using online communications to share and network news stories in new ways

Poptel and distributed computing using networked “Host” computers, X25 gateways and X400 protocols together with fax and telex gateways, worked with **Geonet** and **Manchester City Council** in 1989/1990 to develop the idea of a **Manchester Host** Computer Communications & Information Network, launched in 1991



elevate your identity



Interdoc and new global networking

First global meeting of digital activists (probably ...) 1984 in Velletri, Italy



The Velletri Agreement

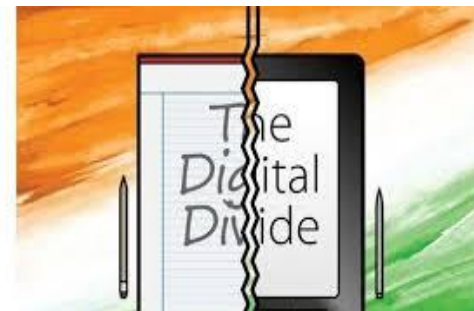
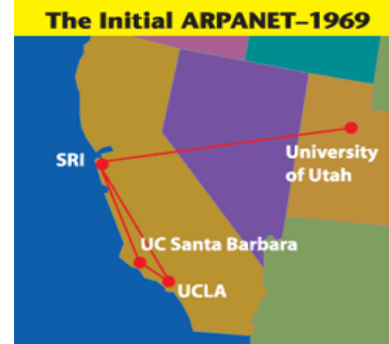
1. Statement of Purpose

- *A wide range of NGOs met in Velletri, Italy, from 2 to 7 October 1984 to discuss specific follow-up activity to the Documentation for Change meeting held in Lisbon Portugal in January 1982. The Velletri meeting focused on the recommendation “to establish a network of groups exploring the use of new information technologies for the exchange of feasibility studies, and experiences and findings.”*
- *The Velletri group was composed of representatives of grass-roots development action related information and documentation centers working at national and international level throughout the world.*

See: “Interdoc: The first international non-governmental computer network”, Brian Martin Murphy, 2005. <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/1239/1159%20Interdoc>

Overground, underground ...

- Military and academic research
- Activist networking
- Free-Nets or New Value Chains
- New business models and entrepreneurs
- Boom & Bust – dot.com bubble
- Local economic projects
- Tackling the “Digital Divide”
- Users as active producers of content – not just consumers, e.g. Peer to Peer (P2P)





Innovation and Economic Development

- **Digital pioneers influenced the City's Economic Development Strategy from 1989 onwards:**
 - **Manchester Host – UK's first public access computer communications and on-line information system – launched in 1991**
 - **Electronic Village Halls – neighbourhood based ICT access centres: 1992-**
 - **Manchester Community Information Network (MCIN) launched in 1994**
 - **Digital Arts Projects – Digital Summer 1998 celebrating the 50 years since the launch of the world's first real computer (with memory) in Manchester**
 - **Creative Industries Development Service (CIDS) supporting creative clusters in arts, culture, film, music and much more**
- **1990s – convergent creative, cultural & digital agendas, including Manchester as an “Information City” predating ideas of a “Digital City” or “Smart City” – Manchester's role in launch of .coop**
- **2000s - Open networks, open source, open data – Manchester Living Lab Network and links with European Smart Cities Network**

Local initiatives

Manchester University & Manchester

Polytechnic (became Manchester Met University in 1992)

G-MING – Greater Manchester Inter Network Group (1993-)

MANAP – Manchester Network Access Point (1997-)

Independent initiatives – **Telecity** – **XHTML**

Manchester City Council Telematics Strategy

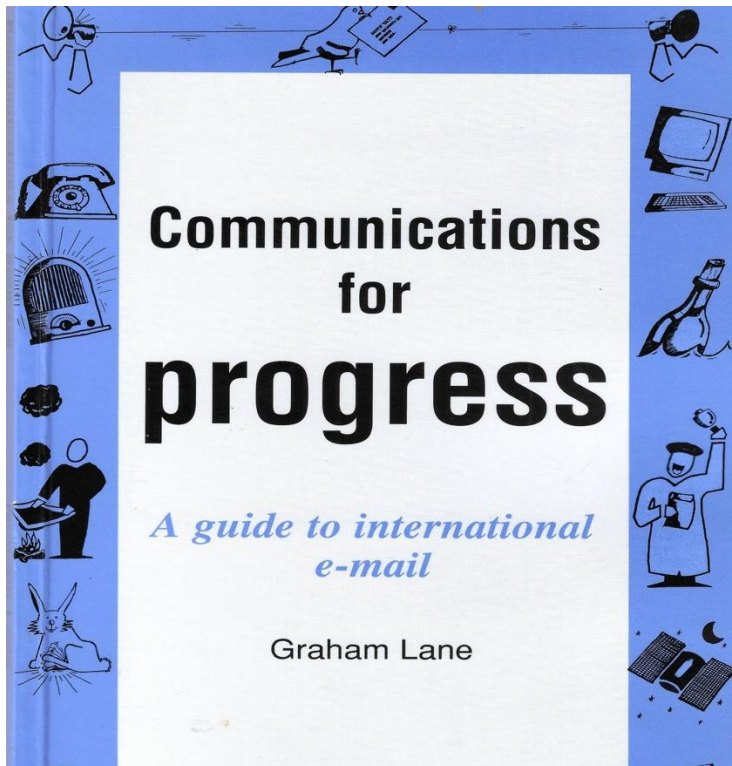
European partners and projects

- **Telecities** – founder member in 1993, now part of Eurocities and still active after 32 years
- **Infocities** (1997-1999) with Manchester, Barcelona, Bologna and Helsinki (amongst others)
- **IRISI** – Inter-Regional Information Society Initiative pilot project with 6 EU regions, including NW England in the UK



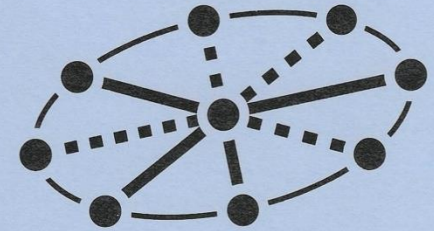
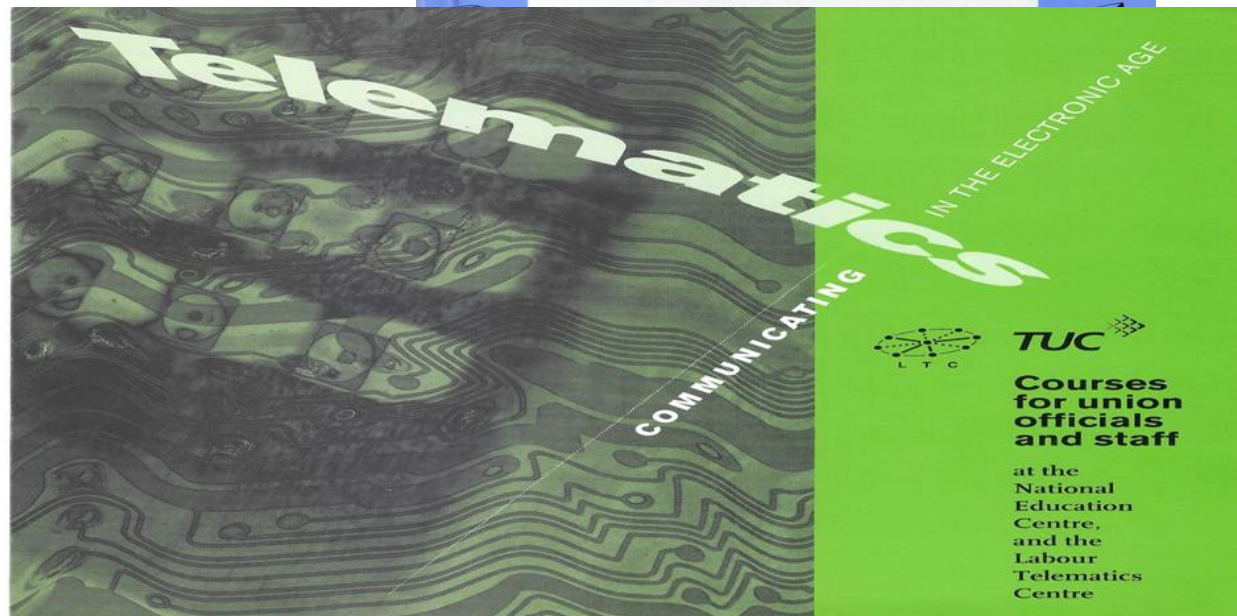
1990

Graham
Lane (CIIR)



1992

LTC
launched in
Manchester



LABOUR TELEMATICS CENTRE

Electronic Communications
and
Information Technology
for
Trade Unions

Human rights, social justice and the labour movement

UNIONS21
building tomorrow's unions

<http://unions21.org.uk/>



<http://www.labourstart.org/welcome/>



<https://www.sunrisemovement.org/gnd>



BY GUY WATZMAN © 2017

<https://www.labornotes.org/about>

LABORNOTES PUTTING THE MOVEMENT BACK IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT

<https://unionbase.org/>



poptel

APC
ASSOCIATION FOR
PROGRESSIVE
COMMUNICATIONS

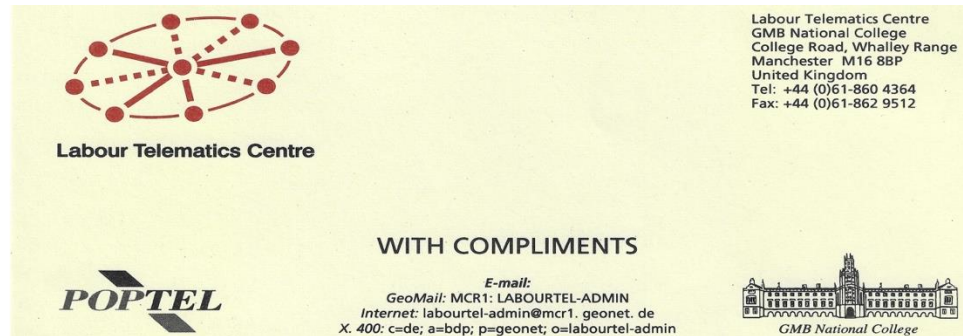
GreenNet



Creative & Social Innovation

Community engagement and creative & digital convergence

- Take up of online services by community networks, e.g. **Manchester CAB**, and cultural organisations, including **Arts About Manchester** and the **NW Arts Board**
- Trade union involvement – establishment of the **Labour Telematics Centre** in Manchester with the GMB College and TUC

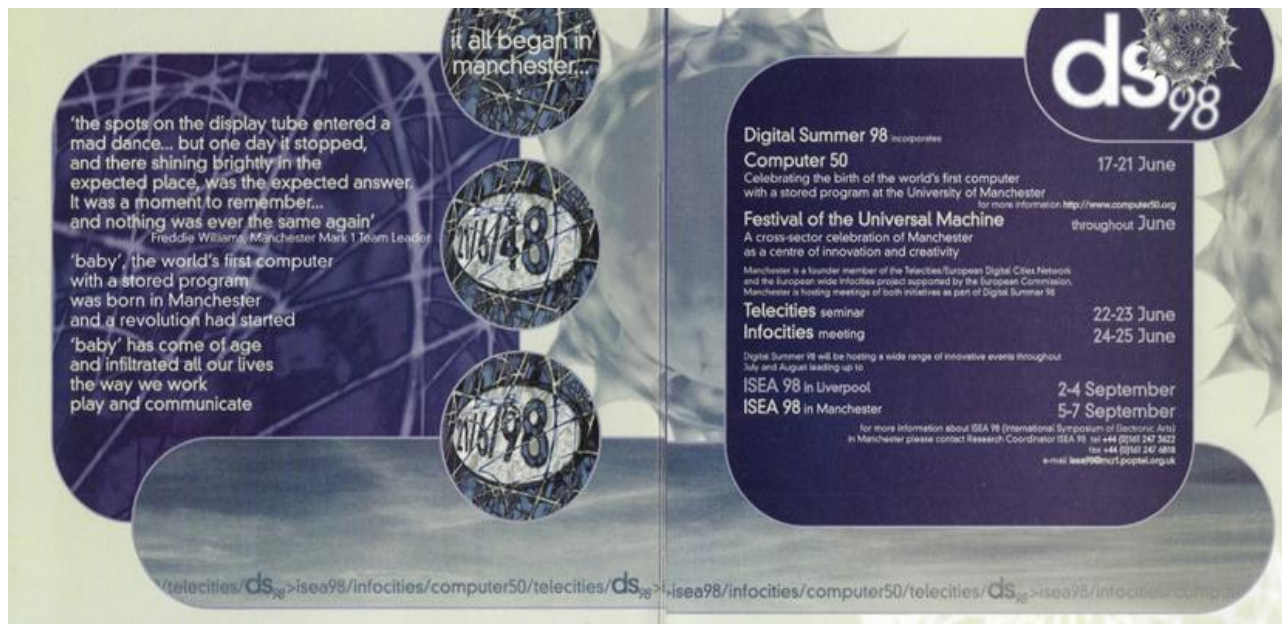
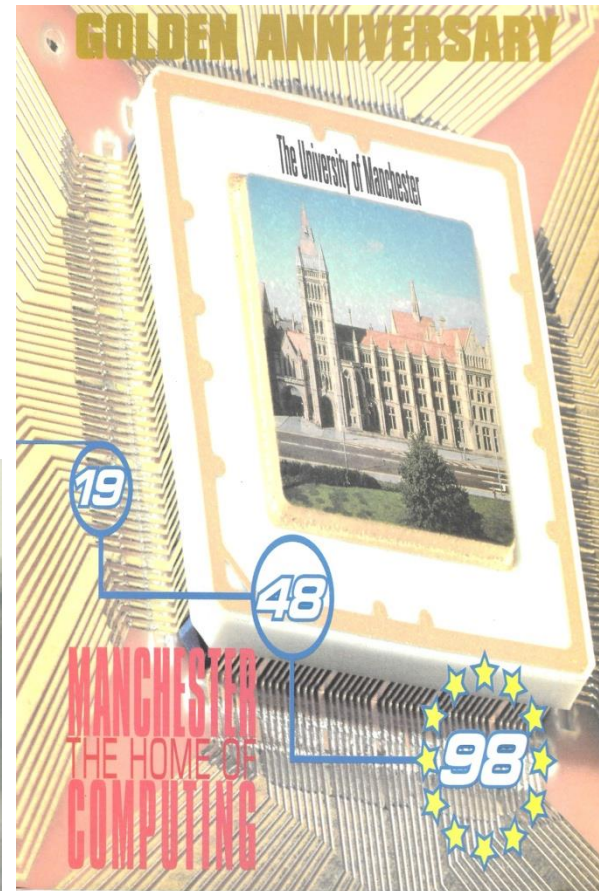


Tony Wilson's "Music33" online music store

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/aug/10/youve-been-smoking-too-much-the-chaos-of-tony-wilsons-digital-music-revolution>

<https://8sided.blog/tony-wilsons-three-way-proposition/>





Living Labs – user driven open innovation

<https://enoll.org/>

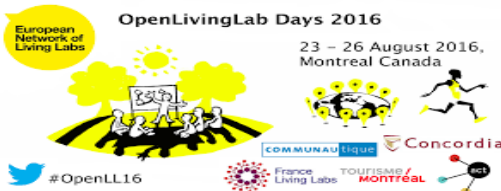
- MIT Media Lab Smart Cities Research Group: Prof. Bill Mitchell (1945-2010)

<http://news.mit.edu/2010/obit-mitchell>

- Intelcities Project (2001-2005): City of Helsinki, Nokia Research + Manchester: City as a “Living Lab”
- European Network of Living Labs (ENoLL) set up in 2007: 20 cities, now 300+
- Towards a new definition of ‘Smart Cities’ with people at the centre – example of an EU funded project coordinated by the City of Manchester: “SMARTiP: Smart Metropolitan Areas Realised Through Innovation & People”

<https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/document/smartip-smart-metropolitan-areas-realised-through-innovation-people-smartip>

European
Network of
Living Labs



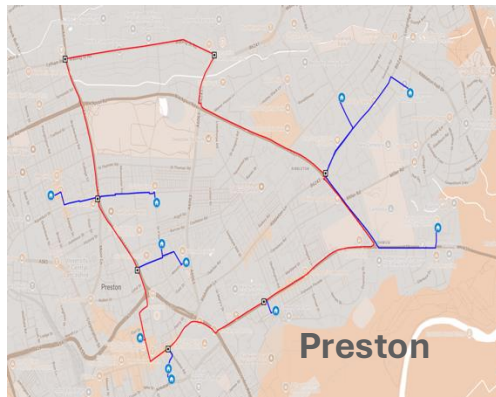
The Cooperative Neutral Host – innovative working models for the re-use of public sector assets

Current situation



7 years' operation

Turnover	£300k
Fixed Assets	£900k
Share capital	£460k
Active user members	18
Fibre network	300k



Plus a new network in Preston for 2025

<https://cni.coop/>



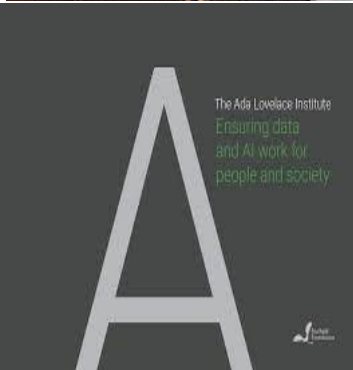
**Cooperative Network
Infrastructure**

Digital Activism 4.0?

- just a few examples:
- Algorithmic Justice League
- Alan Turing Institute
- Ada Lovelace Institute
- AI Now Institute



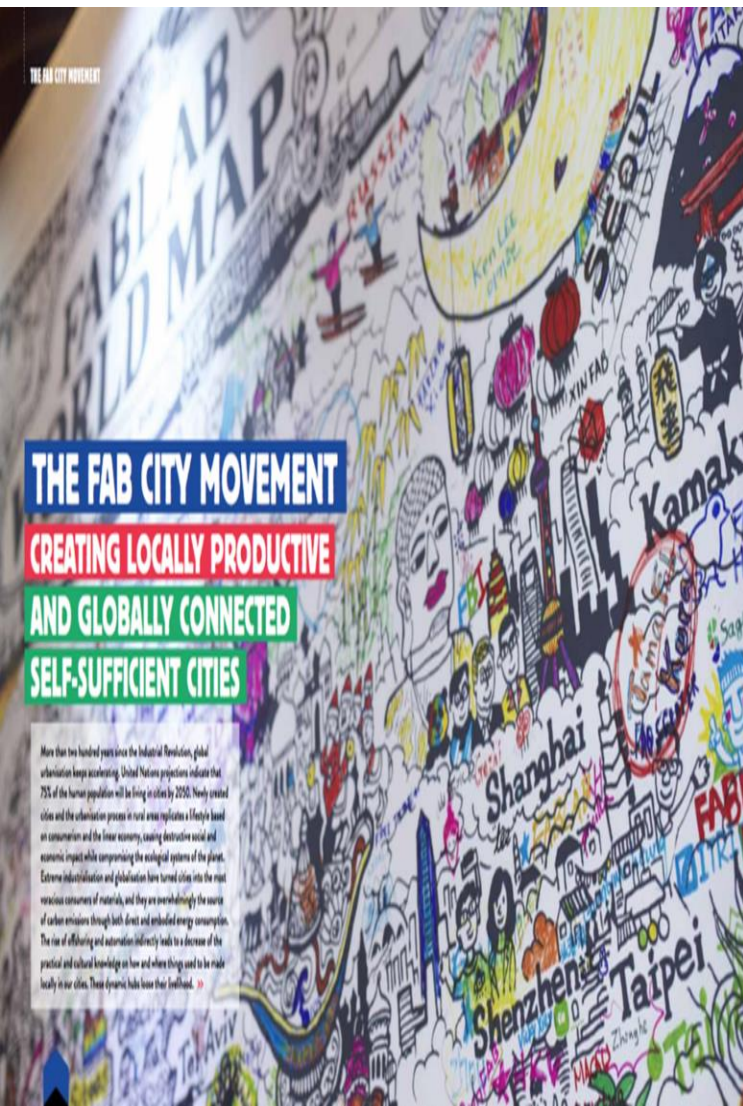
<https://www.turing.ac.uk/>



<https://www.ajl.org/about>

<https://www.adalovelaceinstitute.org/about-us/>

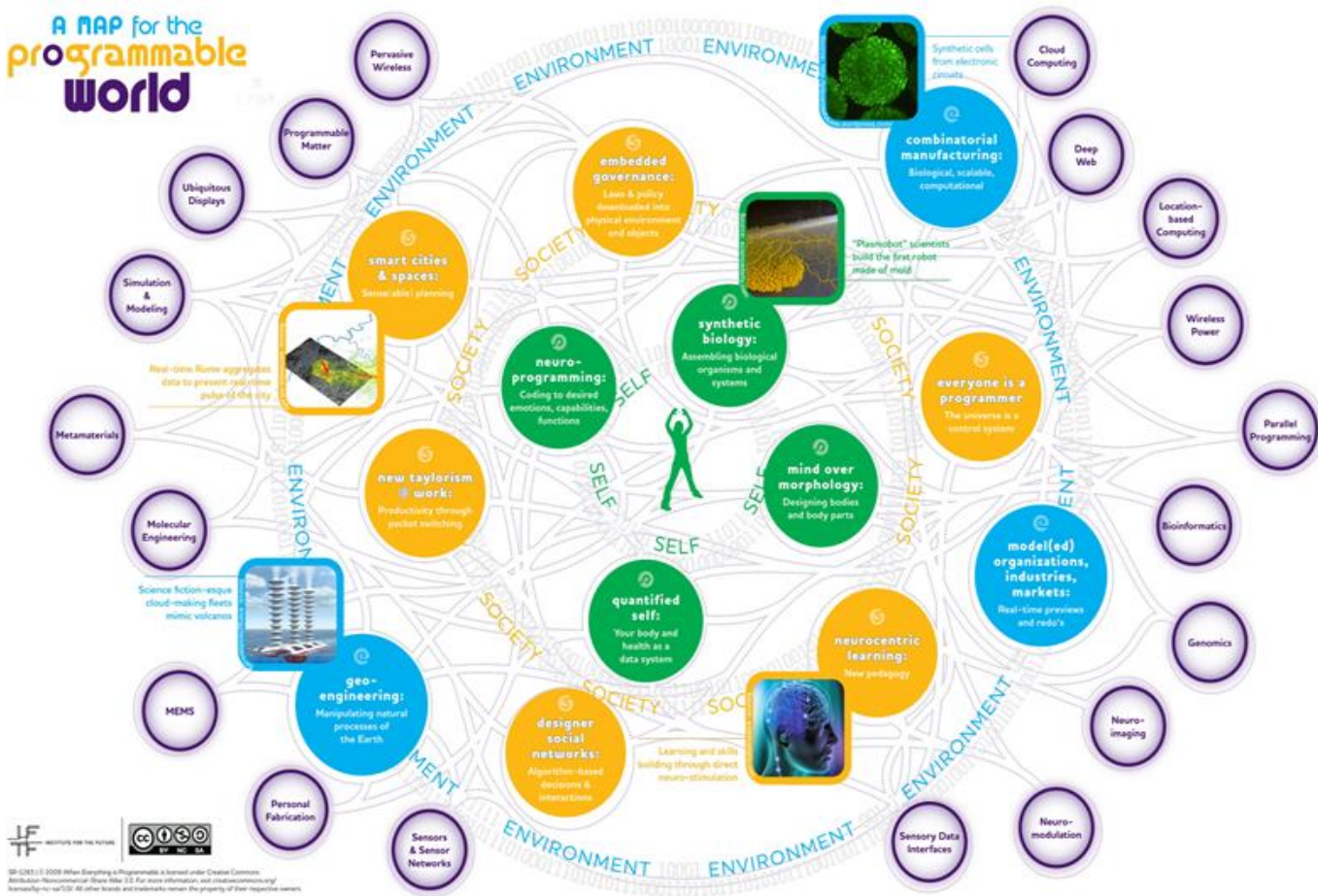
Living Labs & Fab Labs to Living Cities & Fab Cities <https://fab.city/>



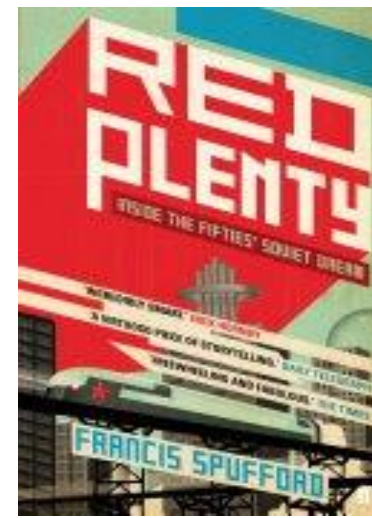
Challenging cities to balance out consumption and production by 2054



A MAP for the programmable world



“Soviet man, be proud, you opened the road to the stars from Earth!”
(1963 - Mikhail Soloviev)





Thank You!

dave.carter@manchester.ac.uk

<https://www.mui.manchester.ac.uk/research/themes/>

European
Network of
Living Labs

