

Executive summary (TTP Workshop)

Joint research projects (R&D relations) between academia and companies represent a huge opportunity for leveraging scientific or technology results toward economic value. The participants of this work package are identifying issues, barriers and enablers for good collaboration between academia and companies. As identified during the 2011 work of the TTP, IPR issues encountered in such cases are a key topic to be addressed. This focus on IPR in our joint work 2012 is based on our recognition of the importance of IPR management and proper contractual arrangements in joint innovation initiatives and their potential shortcomings: such as negotiations which are too long, arrangements that do not properly fit the situation, delays in innovation projects, misunderstandings between lawyers of the parties involved, between researchers and lawyers and between industry on one side and academia on the other side.

We believe that EIT ICT Labs, as a Europe-wide strategic network of excellent players in innovation and technology transfer, can and should play an important role in a process improvement for supporting innovation and technology transfer. There is more than one way to transfer technology from academia to industry. To create common ground, we are analysing different approaches like client-sponsored research, contract R&D, strategic partnerships, joint ventures and spin-off/spin-in companies as well as possible components of licensing deals like upfront fees, equity, development milestones, commercial milestones, and royalties. To overcome a “one size fits all” approach, we are investigating these existing tools and approaches to identify the best pathway to commercialize research and technology for a given situation and attempt to provide a cohesive set of best practice for selection and negotiation of collaboration contracts. The expected results are (1) process efficiency (2) better contracts in the sense of accuracy to the parties’ objectives (3) better regard of the dynamics of innovation projects (4) higher chances of commercialization.

The mix of participants from various backgrounds and roles (legal IP, business units, researchers, engineers) from both industry and academia is a key asset for reaching the objectives. For the workshop, we involve EIT ICT Labs Partners in review and dissemination of the intermediate and final results. In the workshop, the participating partners are property lawyers, innovation managers, technology transfer professionals or R&D project officers. Ultimately, we disseminate results to parties outside EIT ICT Labs.