

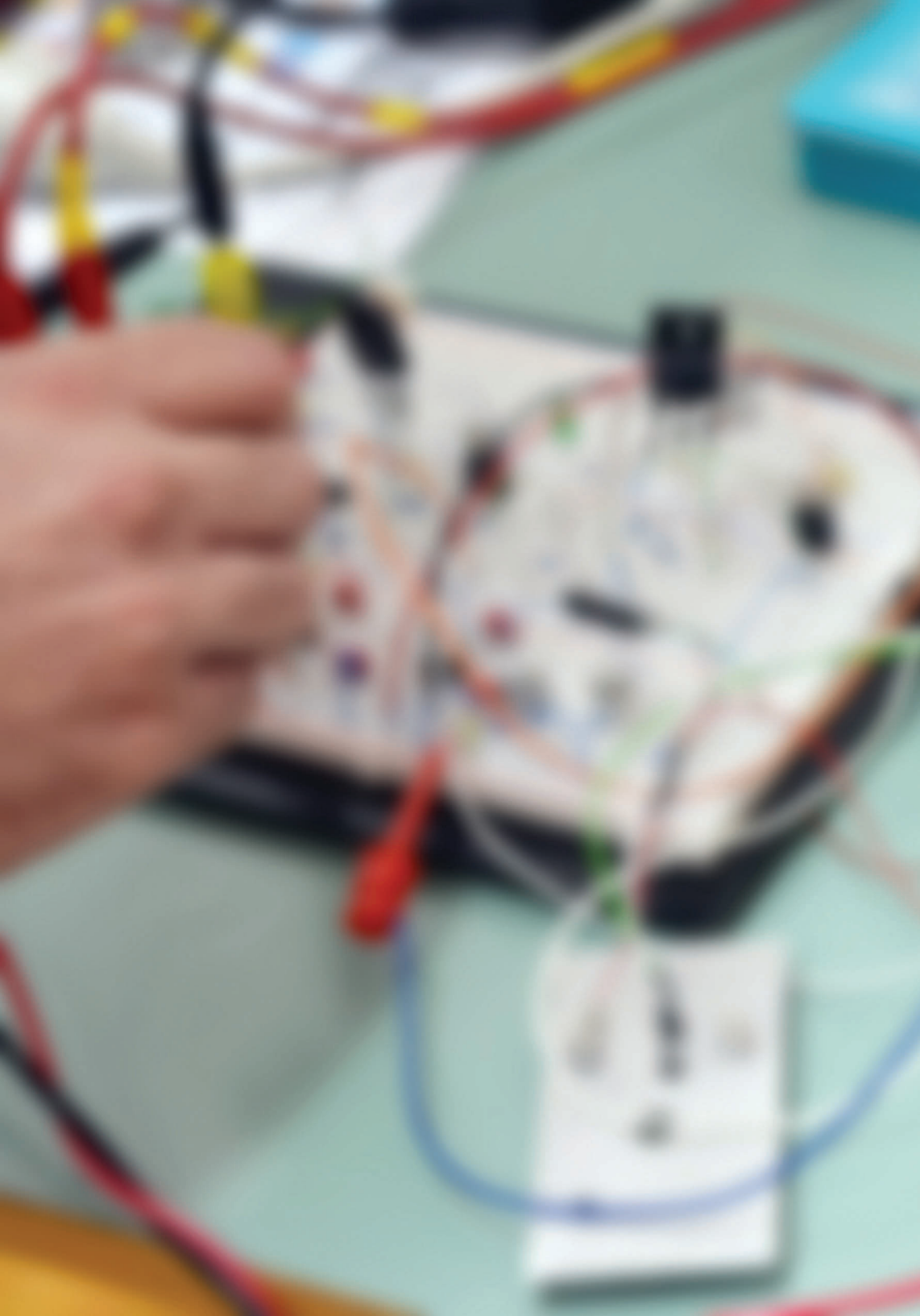


HOW A RESEARCHER CAN MAKE INNOVATIVE IDEA REAL AND PROFITABLE?



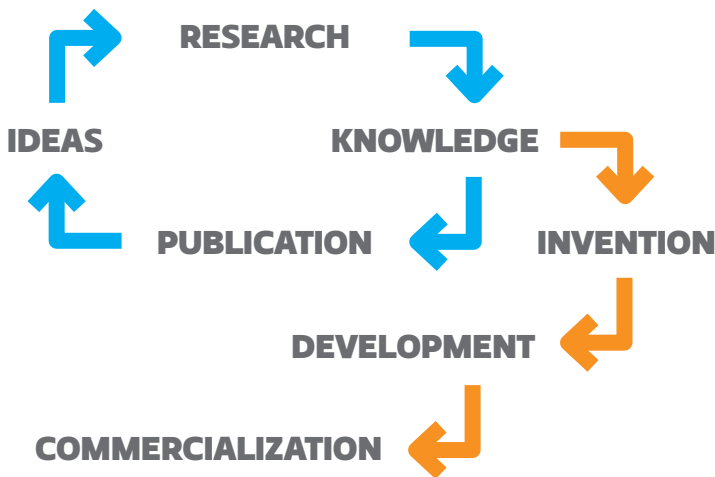
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HOW A RESEARCHER CAN MAKE INNOVATIVE IDEA REAL AND PROFITABLE?

Technology transfer is the process of converting knowledge and the results of scientific research into useful products and services. Such a transfer can be implemented/achieved/accomplished through publishing of scientific papers, education of students that later enter the labor market and especially in collaborative projects with industry. However, in the strict sense, technology transfer implies a formal protection and licensing of the technology to the third parties, under the guidance of technology transfer experts.



Source: Accelerating Technology Transfer and Commercialization at the National Institutes of Health

WHY A RESEARCHER WOULD WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER?

The reasons for participating in technology transfer are unique to each researcher and they may include:

- Creating a positive impact on society
- Creating a sense of personal fulfillment
- Recognition and financial reward
- Providing additional funds for research and other scientific work
- Comprehensive educational opportunities for students
- Approximation of students to future employers

1. RESEARCH

[RESEARCH GROUP, LABORATORY, ETC.]

Observations and experiments during the scientific work often lead to new discoveries that can be implemented as innovations.

The innovation is any useful process, technical solution or composition of matter, which is new or which improves existing state of the art and has a potential market value.

As a precondition, it is important to implement several things in your everyday work:

- Keep record of all your activities and procedures (lab notes)
- Keep yourself regularly informed through all the available sources
- Define the “state of the art”¹
- Take into account the rights of third parties
- Keep confidential or protected all the technical drawings, knowledge, practices, and other information
- Consult experts (Technology Transfer Office, etc.)

TOOLS FOR THE TRANSFER AND PROTECTION OF KNOWLEDGE

Quality agreements regulate all the important aspects of cooperation: Confidentiality, transfer of materials, description of the actions, duration, deadlines, milestones, payment, rights and obligations of the partners, intellectual property, and use of

* (Text in brackets [] indicate the responsibility for the activity)

1 “State of the art” comprises everything that is, in any way, available to the public in the world on certain matter (written or oral description, by use, etc.)

discovery, commercialization and jurisdiction of the court. More information and examples of individual contracts can be found at: www.cortexstim.net/platforma

2. INITIAL DISCLOSURE

[RESEARCHER, FACULTY AND/OR TTO]

In order to evaluate the discovery and decide on further actions related to the formal disclosure and procedures for the protection of intellectual creations, first step includes the communication between staff responsible for innovation at the institution or with the responsible person (e.g. Head of the laboratory, Head of the institution).

At this stage, institution independently makes decision on further action².

3. FORMAL DISCLOSURE

[RESEARCHER, FACULTY AND TTO]

Technology transfer process officially starts when disclosure of intellectual creation is submitted to Technology Transfer Office. Intellectual creation that was created at one of the University's Faculties has to be disclosed by the researcher and the head of the Faculty together. Creation is disclosed through the Intellectual creation disclosure form that can be found on the TTO's website.

It is important to note that by disclosure process intellectual creation still remains confidential. In order to provide the best possible assessment, protection and commercialization disclosed creation should be well documented and described.

DISCLOSURE OF INTELLECTUAL CREATION HAS TO BE PRECEDED BY ANY PUBLIC DISCLOSURE (SUCH AS SCIENTIFIC PAPER, CONFERENCE PRESENTATION, GRADUATE THESIS, ETC.)!

OTHERWISE, PATENT PROTECTION IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE!

² In accordance with Articles 98 and 99 of the Labor Act the employee shall inform the employer of his invention made at work or in connection with work.

4. ASSESSMENT [TTO]

Technology transfer experts (in cooperation with the researcher) discuss innovation, conduct patent searches and analyze the market and competition to determine the potential commercial value. This process usually results in due diligence report and assessment of commercial value report that underlie any decisions on further action.

5. PROTECTION [FACULTY AND TTO]

During this process the protection of intellectual creation is conducted in order to create the preconditions for commercialization. Patent protection, a common method of legal protection of technical breakthroughs, starts by submitting patent applications to the State Intellectual Property Office, or by filing international (PCT) applications. After submitting the application, it will take several years and substantial financial resources to obtain the requested Croatian and/or foreign patents.

Other options for protection of intellectual creation are copyrights, trademarks and industrial design.

6. IDENTIFICATION OF BUSINESS MODEL [RESEARCHER AND TTO]

In collaboration with researcher, TTO staff will identify companies that have the expertise, resources and business contacts for the realization of the proposed technology on the market. This may include a partnership with an existing company or formation of spin-out/spin-off company. The active involvement of researcher can greatly shorten and accelerate this process.

6.1. CREATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SPIN-OFF COMPANY [TTO]

If the formation of spin-off company was selected as the optimal path for commercialization, TTO staff may help in the planning, establishment and (if there is a possibility) in securing funding.

6.2. LICENSING RIGHTS TO EXISTING OR TO SPIN-OUT COMPANY [TTO]

If the existing or newly established spin-out company is suitable and interested to purchase a license, TTO experts will identify interests, goals and plans to fully and in the best possible manner commercialize new intellectual property.

7. LICENSING [TTO]

License agreement is an agreement between the holders of intellectual property and a third party that is awarded with rights to the technology (sometimes without giving up rights to the publication and further development) in order to gain financial or any other benefits. License agreement is used in both business models, in case of spin-out/spin-off company or existing company. Sometimes, preliminary contract that allows third party permission to evaluate the technology for a limited period of time before purchasing a license is used.

8. COMMERCIALIZATION [RESEARCHER, TTO]

The company that holds license continues to develop technology and implements new business investment to develop a product or service. This step may result in further development, regulatory approvals, marketing and sales, support, training and other activities. Researchers can have an active role in this part if they are interested.

9. REVENUES [RESEARCHER, FACULTY, UNIVERSITY]

In order to enable the financing of further research and to encourage future participation in the process of technology transfer, profit earned by commercialization is distributed between researchers, Faculty, University and other institutions (in case of joint ownership of creation) according to valid regulations of intellectual property rights and signed contracts³.

³ In accordance with Articles 98 and 99 of the Labor Act employee is entitled to an award established by the collective agreement, employment contract or special contract.

Coordinator of the project “Enhancement of science–business cooperation for intraoperative neurophysiologic technology in Croatia (CortexSTIM)” is University of Split, School of Medicine. The main project target is preparation and implementation of research and development (R&D) activities for novel and innovative intraoperative neurophysiologic devices used during brain surgeries.

Project partners are: FESB – Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture (Split), TTO – Technology Transfer Office (Split), SGM Medical (Split), Clinical hospital Dubrava (Zagreb).

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