

Technology Transfer Calls for Stronger Links Between Higher Education and *Industry*

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Abstract

Links between higher education and industry are of vital economic importance. These links provide the environment for innovation and technology transfer and are crucial for sustaining competitiveness, reinventing organizations, creating new businesses, fighting unemployment, and accelerating development programs. Recently, many countries realized their deficiencies in the areas of education and technology, and major efforts are being made to enhance their international competitiveness. The most recent proposal is for the establishment of a “University for Industry.”

University research in many countries is based on a tight relationship between University and economic activity. In Europe and South America, although less commonly than in the U.S.A., there's already a large amount of experiences related to the creation of "on campus" or "spin off" companies based on the results and knowledge obtained from research in University departments and R&D centers financed with public funds. The virtual base of this results in communication technologies enables private use and the appropriation of the benefits by their authors. European model, historically widely separated from private companies, has produced high quality basic research, but it has failed to obtain profit from technological development. Research funds happen to be basically public. University institutions and faculties should think about their current ethic convictions to create a new Industry-University model in the context of a global economy.

Industry-University Cooperative Research Centers on industrial R&D laboratories are small academic centers designed to foster technology transfer between universities and firms. Since Research Centers depend on industry support we expect them to further the research of member companies. These Research Centers promote industry-university technology transfer.

This article discusses the background in which the development of links between higher education and industry and the University for Industry will be made.