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KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER TOOL-KIT



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This tool-kit is not designed to be a full or exhaustive introduction to this topic. It is intended to provide an overview of the issues that may need to be consider ning Knowledge Transfer activities at a Higher Education Institution (HEI) or Research I nstitute (RI).

The document is based on existing and evolving good practices from the Western Balkans Six and wider region.

The authors and the RCC can accept no responsibility for the outcomes and results of its use.

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A note on terminology: PRO and RPO

The term PRO (Public Research Organisation), used to cover both universities and research institutes, is becoming increasingly replaced by the term RPO (Research Performing Organisation). This is due to the number of private universities that perform research. In the Western Balkans Six this includes RPOs such as Epoka University in Albania and University of Donja Gorica in Montenegro. However, where private universities that perform research are not common, e.g. Slovenia and Croatia as well as countries like the UK, the term PRO persists including in official Calls and funding programmes, e.g. JRO (Javna-Raziskovalna Organizacija) in Slovenia. RPO has largely been used in this document except where the more specific PRO is correct for the context.

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ACRONYMS

BRL	Business Readiness Level
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CRA	Cooperation readiness assessment
CRL	Collaboration Readiness Level
CRM	Common Regional Market
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EDIH	European Digital Innovation Hub
EIT	European Institute of Innovation & Technology
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
FER	Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IP	Intellectual Property
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
JRO	Javna-Raziskovalna Organizacija (EN: Public Research Organisation)
KIC	Knowledge and Innovation Communities
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KT	Knowledge Transfer
KTH	Kungliga Tekniska högskolan (EN: Royal Institute of Technology)
KTO	Knowledge Transfer Office
KTT	(SL) Consortium for Technology Transfer from Public Research Organizations
KTTO	Knowledge and Technology Transfer Office
MTA	Material Transfer Agreement
NFP	Not for Profit
PACTT	Polish Association of Technology Transfer Offices
PoC	Proof of Concept
PRO	Public Research Organisation

PSC	Polish Alliance of Knowledge Transfer Companies
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RDAs	Regional Development Agencies
RDAs	Regional Development Agencies
RI	Research Infrastructure
RPO	Research Performing Organisations
SHAPE	SSHA for People and the Economy
SPV	Special Purpose Vehicle
SSHA	Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
TMRL	Team Readiness Level
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
TT	Technology Transfer
TTO	Technology Transfer Office
UL	University of Ljubljana
UNIRI	University of Rijeka
UoW	University of Warsaw
WB	Western Balkans
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organisation

1. Introduction to the RCC Knowledge Transfer Tool-kit

1.1. Origin

The Western Balkans Six Knowledge Transfer Tool-kit has been developed under an initiative funded by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) in 2025. The action fully aligns with the RCC implementation of the Common Regional Market (CRM) Action Plan 2025-28. In particular, the CRM's Human Capital Development component is focused on boosting the development of the regional innovation ecosystem to facilitate more intense academia–business cooperation.

The tool-kit builds on several related RCC initiatives, including 'Development of Open Access Policies for Research Infrastructures' (2020), the 'Technology Transfer Support Programme in the Western Balkans' (2021) and the 'Cross-border pipeline development for Technology Transfer Offices in the Western Balkans' (2022).

1.2. Definition of Knowledge Transfer

For the purposes of this tool-kit, knowledge transfer (KT) has been defined as '*the process of sharing information, skills and expertise between universities and businesses as well as other external organisations'. KT is seen to be wider than TT (Technology Transfer); the latter is often defined as: 'the process of identification, protection and transfer of intellectual property rights (IPR)'.* While TT has traditionally focused on commercialisation of research results by licensing or sale of patent rights, KT embraces the wider joint development, sharing and use of knowledge between partners using different mechanisms.

The mechanisms of knowledge transfer that have been considered when developing the tool-kit include:

- Joint research projects and collaborations
- Knowledge and infrastructure-based services
- Commercialisation of research results (traditional TT)
- Training programmes
- Tailor-made studies
- Internships for students and entrepreneurs
- Conferences, workshops and networking events

This tool-kit does not have a focus on traditional TT. Many tool-kits already exist that focus on the transfer of IPRs including those developed by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)[1]. While IP protection and transfer through licensing of rights is a very important mechanism to realise value from investments in research and development, it is a sub-sector of KT and is most relevant to the most powerful research universities and institutes. For smaller and less research-intensive universities, including many of those in the

1 See for example https://www.wipo.int/en/web/technology-transfer

WB6, there is a need to look more broadly at KT and to focus on more collaborative methods to generate and transfer knowledge to ensure economic and societal benefit. Some of these are listed above, e.g. collaboration, training and knowledge and infrastructure-based services.

1.3. The importance of KT for economic development and societal benefit

KT has long been recognised in Europe as being crucial for economic development. It fosters innovation, economic growth, and societal advancement by facilitating the sharing of knowledge, expertise, and innovations between research institutions, industry, and society. Effective knowledge transfer mechanisms are vital for Europe to remain competitive in a globalised and technology-driven economy. The European Union's commitment to KT is underlined in the Guiding Principles for Knowledge Valorisation and implementing Codes of Practice[2].

The importance of knowledge transfer is also increasingly recognised in the WB6. It enables the region to improve innovation, increase productivity, and foster economic growth by facilitating the flow of ideas, technologies, and best practices. Specifically, knowledge transfer can help address the region's challenges related to research and development, technology adoption, and skills development. KT is seen to play a strong role in scaling up and accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

1.4. How to use this tool-kit

This tool-kit has been developed for stakeholders in the WB6 KT ecosystem. It is primarily aimed at Knowledge Transfer Offices (KTOs) or their counterparts, e.g. TTOs and Innovation Centres. It will also be useful for university management, individual researchers and external stakeholders, e.g. enterprises including SMEs, policy makers and civil society organisations and individuals.

It is laid out as a series of KT scenarios linked to associated tools and illustrative good practice case studies with transfer paths. Tools and case studies are indicted with **Lower Case Caps** and can be found in Annex 1. It also guides the reader to existing tools and resources that have been found useful for the conditions of the WB6.

For example, a university considering using or even setting up its own online matchmaking platform might find it useful to consult the introduction and check-list in section **4.1. Using online matchmaking platforms** and then to refer to the Case Study **University Of Rijeka RIMAP Matchmaking Tool**.

2 See https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/research-area/industrial-research-and-innovation/eu-valorisation-policy/knowledge-valorisation-platform/guiding-principles-knowledge-valorisation-and-implementing-codes-practice_en

2. Getting Started with KT: Laying strong institutional foundations

KT in universities and research institutes is at its strongest when it is a clear part of policy and strategy. It needs to be clearly regulated to both provide incentives for staff, researchers and students to engage and ensure that their activity contributes to the overall interests of the institution, including through evaluation metrics. The starting point is a clear **KT Policy.**

2.1. KT Policy

A good KT Policy answers the following questions:

- WHY are we engaging in KT activities?
- WHAT do we want to achieve?
- HOW we will achieve this?

In addition, it typically sets out a framework for:

- Responsibilities (who will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy)
- Skills development (how any new skills needed to successfully implement the policy will be secured
- Monitoring and feedback (Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure how well are we doing and should we make changes)

These latter issues will often form part of a **KT Action plan** to implement the policy. This might include a clear link between the actions foreseen and the associated skills needed, e.g. matchmaking, proposal writing and project management as well as legal and financial advice.

A KT policy should be part of the wider university/research institute policy framework. This means that it needs to fully align with other policies and strategies, e.g. those dealing with education and research missions. When developing the policy, it is important that representatives from the other missions are part of the development team and that strategic units have been consulted, e.g. those dealing with international aspects.

A KT policy may also identify the need for new or amended internal regulations. These typically relate to:

- Individual consulting by research staff
- Access to and use of research infrastructure (RI) by external parties (an **Open Access RI Policy**[3])
- Intellectual Property (IP) Policy (ownership of results and financial benefit sharing from any successful commercialisation)

3 The RCC 2020 Principals and Guidelines for creating a Policy for Open Access to Research Infrastructures can be found at: https://www.rcc.int/files/user/docs/open_access/Principals%20and%20Guidelines%20to%20Open%20Access%20RIs.pdf

- Start-up/spin-off activity (participation in a new company either under an employment contract or through share ownership)
- An internal regulation on the KTO itself

It is often sufficient to start with a light KT Policy that gets things going, fits to the institutional culture and addresses critical issues. As KT activity increases and new issues are identified it can then be good to review the policy to see if it needs to be amended. The overall goal should be to encourage and not curtail involvement. For this reason, heavy regulation should to be avoided in the early days.

A tool to help guide an organisation through the development of a KT Policy can be found in Annex 1 (**Guidelines for developing a Knowledge Transfer Policy at a University or Research Institute**).

This covers the process of developing or revising a policy including who needs to be involved, how to gather and analyse information, agreeing on objectives and ensuring internal alignment.

The Guidelines make use of a number of small tools and templates including:

- **SWOT**
- **PESTLE**
- **Needs analysis**
- **Skills building**

These smaller tools allow the institutions to carry out an important analysis of their internal (SWOT) and external (PESTLE) operating environments, identify needs and put in place a plan to develop new skills.

When contemplating developing or revising a KT policy, you may find it useful to consider the following questions:

If no policy yet exists:

- ☐ Is the lack of a policy holding us back, e.g. by not realising clear potential for KT?
- ☐ Would having a policy bring us new and valued opportunities?
- ☐ Do we have the resources to both develop and implement a policy?
- ☐ Is there an internal appetite for change or will we encounter significant opposition?

If the answer to most of these questions is yes, you may benefit from developing a KT policy.

If a KT Policy exists:

- ☐ Is the existing policy clearly not 'fit for purpose'? E.g. it is constraining us and making it hard for us to respond to opportunities.
- ☐ Is the current policy not well aligned with other institutional policies in a way that is now creating difficulties?
- ☐ Have external changes, e.g. government policy or legislative changes, created a need for policy change?
- ☐ Have internal changes created new unforeseen issues that the present policy does not address, e.g. Conflicts of Interest are starting to arise more regularly?

If the answer to most of these questions is yes, you may benefit from revising the existing KT policy.

3. Understanding different KT partnerships and their main issues

KT Partnerships take many forms. They can include:

- Long-term joint research projects and collaborations
- Contract research
- Transfer of technology when rights are sold or licensed and TRL (Technology Readiness Level) is increased
- Short knowledge-based consultancies including tailor-made studies
- Joint ventures
- Testing or direct access to research infrastructure
- Studentships
- Industrial PhDs
- Regular and custom training activities for external users, e.g. business or policy makers
- Conferences, workshops and networking events

KT partnerships can last an afternoon (e.g. consultancy, a training course, a workshop or networking event), or they might continue for over a year, e.g. industrial PhDs and R&D collaborations. They can be based simply on knowledge, e.g. knowledge-based consulting, or they can involve use of highly specialised Research Infrastructure (RI). They can generate results that have economic and/or social value where greatest impact will come if they are formally protected and then licensed to a selected partner (with or without royalties).

Different KT partnerships will suit different organisational cultures, institutional missions, personal motivators and personalities. It is critical to select the right KT partnerships for internal and external environments and resources. Many RPOs (Research Performing Organisations, e.g. public and private universities and research institutes) will try many options before they settle on the approach that suits them best.

Many KT partnerships also revolve around external funding, e.g. a collaborative grant scheme or an innovation voucher. Availability of such funding (and the likelihood of securing it) should play part in deciding which KT partnership to pursue.

Longer KT partnerships often need to be strongly supported over the course of the full action, i.e. at the beginning, for example with legal services for a contract, during the project to help manage the relationship, as well as at the end when it may be important to make legal and financial decisions relating to any IP. This can mean access to specialised skills from the KTO or other support units.

When KT partnership is being paid for by the external partner, it is important to understand the market before setting up and offering KT services. Is there sufficient mass of customers interested and willing to pay? Would this be a one-off or is demand sufficient to sustain a training course on a regular basis?

When thinking of expanding into the different types of KT partnerships, the following short descriptions of the main issues and associated check-lists may be useful.

3.1. Long-term joint research projects and collaborations

Long-term R&D collaborations are often what first draws universities into KT activity, despite the fact that they can be quite complex to manage. Government policy to increase competitiveness in enterprises, including SMEs (Small and Med

ium Enterprises), increasingly encourages universities to act as knowledge providers to economic entities. The relationship is often based around a government grant that comes to both entities to cover their work. Unlike academic research, the joint research project is usually linked to a clear work plan with activities, milestones and deliverables jointly defined by both parties. The results of the project are usually used by the economic partner, but depending on the agreement between the 2 entities, or the dictate of the funding agency, they may be fully or jointly owned by the university. Cultural differences between how academic and commercial research is carried out and how the results are used or disseminated (patent vs. publish) can create tensions in this type of KT projects.

Collaborative research project can involve just two KT partners, e.g. the university and a company, but they can also be more complex with multiple parties that include different types, e.g. enterprises, policy makers, government agencies and NGOs.

Before launching a major initiative to support joint collaborate projects with industry it may be useful to consider the following questions:

- Are our academic researchers interested in the same research goals as industry?
- Will our academic researchers be able to meet industry norms and standards, e.g. with respect to project management and time keeping? Can they maintain this for the full duration of a long collaboration?
- Can we support our academic researchers to meet industry norms and standards, e.g. with trainings or a project manager?
- Is there funding available to support a long-term collaboration and how confident are we that we can secure it?
- Do we have access to specialised skills needed to address legal and financial aspects including setting up a contract, managing payments and possibly dealing with intellectual property rights and confidentiality/publishing issues?
- Are there any potential Conflicts of Interest that we need to anticipate and manage if our academics collaborate with industry?

If the answer to the majority of these questions is yes, you may also want to consider:

- Do we have the knowledge and competences (and dedicated time) to write a winning proposal?
- Do we have the network needed to create a winning consortium?
- Do we have potential in our SSHA (Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts) research to enter in KT for these disciplines?
- Are we able to manage the issue of students being involved in research projects, e.g. with regard to ownership of their results?

Funding to support collaborative research is often available from government agencies. Grants may come with their own rules and regulations, e.g. related to IP ownership. See section 5.1.

Many tools exist to help KT partners manage the issues in collaborative projects. These range from contract templates such as the series of agreements developed by the EU4TECH PoC project (Proof of Concept for the WB6) as well as the **UK Lambert Agreements**. For more information on different template agreements, see Annex 1.

3.2. Contract Research

Contract research differs from collaborative research in that one party (usually a commercial company) orders and pays in full for the work. It also defines the work plan including the deliverables, milestones and time-frame. Typically, the partner who has paid for the work also fully owns the results although there may be some scope for the university to use them for research and even to publish with permission. Contract research is even further away from academic research than collaborative research. It may not interest or satisfy all academic researchers.

Before engaging in contract research activity, it may be useful to consider the following questions:

- Will our researchers be motivated by ordered research if they cannot publish the results?
- Will our researchers be willing to follow a contract and work plan, e.g. with respect to deliverables and timed milestones?
- If academic researchers do not follow the contract, could this damage our reputation in a way that would impact our other KT activities or our teaching?
- Do we have the specialised resources needed to negotiate and sign such contracts and deal with invoicing and payments?

Funding to support contract research is often available in the form of innovation vouchers. Vouchers may come with their own rules and regulations, e.g. related to IP ownership. See section 5.1.

3.3. Transfer of technology when rights are licensed and TRL[4] is increased

Many universities aim to start their KT activities with a focus on TT, e.g. commercialisation of research results. This can be successful if the results are sufficiently valued by industry to be bought or licensed. However, securing strong patent rights can be expensive and finding a company to buy a result that they did not specify, and so does not have optimum market fit, can be very resource intensive. This is why a collaborative research project that lines up a potential technology adopter from the beginning, and where the external partner can help shape the new product or service that is being developed so it fits their market, may be a stronger approach.

Before investing significant resources into commercialisation of research results universities are urged to ask themselves the following questions:

4 TRL (Technology Readiness Level) is a scale used to indicate the maturity of a technology as it moves from basic/fundamental research (TRL1) through Proof of Concept (TRL3) to full market readiness (TRL9). See for example: https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/career-development/researchers/manual-scientific-entrepreneurship/major-steps/trl

- Do we have research results of sufficient strength that they will be valued by companies and are therefore worth the investment by the university/faculty into formal rights?
- Do we have an internal regulation in place or an external law that offers a starting point for clear ownership of research results generated by academic staff and how any financial benefits would be shared?
- Do we have the internal resources to search for and secure interested parties who might want to license or buy the results?
- Do we have access to the specialised skills needed to address legal and financial aspects of technology transfer including seeking formal IP protection and negotiating a licensing deal?

If the answer to the majority of these questions is yes, you may also want to consider:

- Do we have a clear process in place for handing rights to researchers if the university/faculty does not want to support their commercialisation and/or their IP protection?
- Does any financial support (such as POC funding) exist to help raise the TRL of the technology/solution?
- Do we have access to business developers who could help bring the technology closer to the market?

If you are considering a stronger focus on research commercialisation, you may find it helpful to also consult Refining processes and encouraging wider engagement below and Annex 1 tool **Researcher readiness.**

3.4. Short knowledge-based consultancies including tailor-made studies

Short consulting projects are often undertaken by academics based on their highly specialised knowledge. They are a good way for knowledge to be transferred out of the university and into an external entity like an enterprise. However, it is also common for academics to do this based on personal contacts and to receive the money directly from the company through an independent consulting/service agreement. This can create a potential problem for the university: although consulting often does not make use of significant university resources it does make use of the university's reputation and the time taken for the private consulting may be time that the university expected would be devoted to teaching and research. For this reason, some universities regulate consulting and state a maximum number of days that can be used for consulting and try to make the consulting contract with the university with a fair division of the fee between academic and university/faculty.

If a university wants to promote consulting as a legitimate and endorsed form of KT, it may wish to start by considering the following questions:

- Do we have/need a regulation on consulting activity for our academic/research staff? Is this already adequately covered by the employment contract?
- If we want consulting to be carried out through the University/Faculty, do we have access to specialised skills needed to address legal and financial aspects including setting up a contract and managing prompt invoicing and payments?
- Does promoting consulting activity have any negative implications for teaching duties? E.g. because staff employed to deliver lectures may not have sufficient time to also consult.

If the answer to the majority of these questions is yes, you may also want to consider:

- Are there any reputational issues for the University/Faculty in allowing our researchers/ academic staff to consult to external organisations? (Could this bring the university into serious disrepute?)
- Do we need to make use of indemnity insurance? (For ourselves or the researcher?)

3.5. Testing or direct access to research infrastructure

Many universities and faculties have specialised and expensive research equipment that is not being used to full capacity. Where the law permits, it could be used to carry out testing and R&D for or by external organisations. This can be very beneficial in generating money for consumables and equipment maintenance and repair. It is also a low risk way to get to know a potential KT partner and be able to further develop the relationship into other KT activities such as training or a joint R&D project.

Before starting to offer services based on specialised equipment the university should consider the following questions:

- Do we need an Open Access Research Infrastructure policy to regulate access to our equipment and deal with associated issues?
- If we are not going to use an Open Access policy, can we deal with each inquiry on a case by case basis? (What are the implications for resources and specialised support like contracting and payments? How will we deal with conflicting demands on the equipment from internal and external users and educational vs. research vs. commercial use?)
- Are there any particular issues we need to consider with regard to how the equipment was originally purchased? E.g. a grant mandating educational or research use only.
- Will we actively promote an Open Access to research equipment policy or simply respond if we are approached to use our facilities?
- How will we remunerate staff (research and technical) that supports testing under a commercial contract?

If the answer to the majority of these questions is yes, you may also want to consider:

- Do we need any specialised insurance? (Particularly if the equipment might be used by external organisations/individuals.)
- Do we need to demonstrate that we are using Full Economic Costing + a margin in our pricing to avoid market distortion?

If you are considering setting up services based on testing or direct access to research infrastructure, you may find it useful to consul the **RCC Guide to developing an Open Access RI Policy** (see above).

3.6. Studentships

Studentships are typically short-term arrangements between a faculty, a business (or another external organisation), and an undergraduate student. They often allow a company to investigate potential graduate recruitment while having a challenge solved; they allow a faculty to offer interesting and industrial relevant

challenges as part of their study programme and they allow students to gain new skills and explore possible employment opportunities. A collaboration via a studentship can often pave the way for longer KT partnership activities between a research team and a company because they have seen a good fit between their activities and have come to trust each other.

Questions to be asked before initiating a KT studentship programme:

- Do we have a process in place that allows us to hire a student on a short fixed-term contract, paid for by an external organisation? If not, are there any implications for the RPO of the student being hired directly by the external organisation?
- Are there any implications of the student working at a business, i.e. on their premises while they are officially employed by the university/faulty? E.g. IP management or insurance.

Before moving forward with KT partnerships you may also want to consider:

- Are there any reputational issues for the University/Faculty in allowing our students to work for an external organisation as part of their academic studies? (Could this in any way be damaging to the student or the reputation of the University/Faculty, e.g. if the expectations of the business are not met).

If you are thinking of setting up or revising a studentship programme you may wish to consult the Case Study **University of Zagreb Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing – Knowledge Transfer between University and Industry through student jobs and internship programmes** (Annex 1).

3.7. Industrial PhDs

Industrial PhDs are ones where all or part of the PhD grant is covered by an external (industrial) partner. These are very established in some countries where they are supported and promoted at domestic level with a specific regulation. They are less well established in the WB6 but there are examples of them, e.g. in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. They can also be the result of a one-off partnership between a company and a faculty; in this case the terms of the contract between the two institutions and the student may vary considerably.

Companies often see an industrial PhD as a good and low-cost way to carry out non-critical R&D with access to specialised equipment, while simultaneously building a long-term relationship with a research team. It is also a good way of them identifying and recruiting good future employees. Sometimes but not always there is a requirement for the PhD student to spend some time physically working in the company; this can make the PhD attractive to the PhD student who is able to gain important on-the-job training and explore a potential employer before they graduate.

Questions to be asked before initiating an industrial PhD Programme:

- Is an industrial PhD the best way to conduct a collaborative research programme with the company?
- Will the PhD student be able to publish all their work in the time-frame needed to gain their PhD? (Might there be any issues of confidentiality?)
- Will the PhD student have both an academic and an industrial mentor?
- Are there any implications of the PhD student working at a business, i.e. on their premises, while they are officially employed by the university/faulty? E.g. IP management or insurance.

Before moving forward with an industrial PhD, you may also want to consider:

- Is there a plan in place in case the student decides to leave the research project before it is completed? How might this effect the relationship between university/faculty and company?

If you are setting up or revising Industrial PhDs you may wish to consult the NALED (Serbia) **Guide and templates for Industrial PhD studentships** (see online in Serbia[5] and an EN translation in Annex 1).

3.8. Regular and custom training activities for external users, e.g. from business or policy makers

Many universities can build on core educational skills and competencies by offering specialised training to external partners. This might be a custom workshop for a single organisation or it could be part of a CPD (Continuing Professional Development) course aimed at individuals from many different organisations. It could be a one-off training or there might be the intention to run it regularly.

Training is often a good way to explore longer KT partnerships with an institution by building trust and identifying topics of mutual interest where the knowledge provider could benefit the external institution more strongly. Training can often be the first step towards consulting and collaboration.

Issues to be considered before launching new training activities:

- Is there sufficient short- and long-term demand to justify setting up a training course? If not, should we first focus on creating it?
- Will the training course need to align with particular CPD standards, e.g. in order to secure demand from the private sector?
- Will the course be able to cover its own costs?

Before moving forward with new training activities, you may also want to consider:

- Who will own the rights to the training materials? (The University/Faculty or the academic who developed them?)
- Under what conditions might the academic be able to make use of the training materials outside the University/Faculty, e.g. to offer the same course at another institution?
- Are there any particular considerations to having individuals who are not students or staff attending training on University/Faculty premises, e.g. faculties reserved for publicly funded educational use that does not allow for commercial educational use?

3.9. Conferences, workshops and networking events

Conferences, workshops and networking events can be a very good way to explore KT activities with potential partners from different organisations. It is also a good way to gauge both internal and external enthusiasm for KT partnerships and explore whether there is a potential match for a particular topic and type of partnership.

5 https://startech.org.rs/htdocs/Files/02687/Smernice-za-doktorate-web.pdf

It is worth remembering that while a networking event may be quite short, e.g. half a day or even a couple of hours, the work needed to organise such an event and make it successful may be considerably longer and last some weeks and possibly months. Individuals who have been enthusiastic about the idea may be less enthusiastic about a long-term work-load, especially if they have other commitments like teaching that make a demand on their time. Specialised skills may be needed to secure sponsorship, publicise and promote the event to different audiences. If the event is to be regular, e.g. annual, there will be a need to collect feedback to make improvements and also to persuade newcomers that there will be benefits from attending.

Questions to be asked before commencing an event:

- Is there a sufficient critical mass of external and internal parties to make the activity successful?
- Is there a local champion who is committed to the event?
- Does the University/Faculty have access to the specialised skills needed to promote the event and organise the logistics?
- Can the costs be covered? (If this will depend on Sponsorship, is the University/Faculty confident that this can be secured?)

Before moving forward with wider KT events, you may also want to consider:

- Would this even benefit from being organised with other partners, e.g. other universities or with the support of an Industry Association or Regional Development Agency.
- Do we plan to make this a regular event so that collecting feedback is important for us in making changes to the following ones?

If you are considering setting up an annual networking event to encourage more KT, you may wish to consult the section **Finding and securing KT partners** below and the **UNI.MINDS Case Study** (see Annex 1).

4. Finding and securing KT partners

Knowledge transfer from universities and research institutes requires at least one external partner. This may be a commercial company but increasingly universities are being encouraged to undertake more KT for non-economic impact, e.g. for the benefit of society and the environment. This means working more with policy makers, Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), Not-for-Profit organisations (NFPs), civil society, etc.

Finding the right partner continues to be a challenge for individual researchers and research teams. While some one-off collaborations can evolve into long-term strategic partnerships, it is more common that there is a need to keep encouraging and generating new partnerships as external needs and internal offers change over time.

4.1. Using online matchmaking platforms

Methods for identifying partners have been strongly influenced by the emergence of online platforms where profiles and offers can be posted along with contact information. This approach addresses the issue of fragmented information that is located in many places and can be hard to a potential partner to find and monitor.

Online platforms can be used to bring together different KT themes including upcoming funding opportunities and the profiles of different partners, and technology and knowledge offerings. These platforms provide an excellent starting point for identifying potential KT partners and beginning the development of projects, particularly those requiring consortia and actors from the quad-helix.

A good example can be found in the **University of Rijeka RIMAP matchmaking tool** (see Annex 1). RIMAP serves as a central hub for publishing and exchanging information on available funding sources, and EU calls for research and development. It enables the formation of joint projects and application consortia by connecting companies and researchers. It also gathers various strategic documents and information on technology trends.

Online platforms like RIMAP have been shown to have measurable impact on KT activities. However, to be really valuable, such KT matchmaking platforms need to be refreshed frequently and there need to be regular campaigns, e.g. linked to the availability of funding, to bring potential partners to the platform. In short – such platforms do not run themselves and are no guarantee of KT results.

Before setting up such an online platform, you may find it useful to consider the following questions:

- Do you have/can you generate a critical mass of researchers and companies/external users who want to create a profile and actively seek out KT activities?
- Do you have the internal skills to set up and actively recruit to and promote such a platform to internal and external stakeholders, e.g. by staff in the KT Office?
- Do you have long-term funding to sustain the platform, e.g. continuous promotion and information updates, a system for monitoring the success of the platform (successful matchmakings), facilitating evidence-based changes, alongside the costs of simply maintaining the IT?
- Do you have a champion/responsible team to drive the development forward and ensure the platform is being used and adopting new approaches where possible, e.g. integration of AI to improve efficiency and further reduce costs?

If the answer to most of these questions is no, ask yourself if you need to carry out more internal preparation before trying to set up a platform and/or to make use of existing external platforms such as **Halo Science**[6]**, Innoget**[7]**, LEO**[8]. If the answer to most of these questions is yes, consider the **RIMAP CASE STUDY** for inspiration.

4.2. Using regular managed events

An alternative method to an online platform is to organise regular events that purposefully bring together different KT actors with the objective of initiating new partnerships and possible collaborations and so catalysing KT actions.

This approach can be very valuable as it allows networking and the early building of personal relationships. It can be used to facilitate very short challenges that can then be matured into longer collaborations, e.g. a 'try before you buy' approach. It is common for such events to allow businesses to showcase some of the challenges they are facing and for researchers and academic to present their activities and expertise. Different groups can meet in different surroundings, e.g. inside the university or at the premises of a local company.

A good example can be found in the **UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA UNI.MINDS TOOL** (see Annex 1). This annual event is organised by the KT Offices of several universities in partnership with a public agency dedicated to promoting investment, entrepreneurship, and internationalisation in Slovenia. The objective of the festival is to present what academia is developing, what are the needs of industry and how innovation from universities can help industry. The long-term goal is to build a wider innovation community, create new long-term partnerships and share knowledge for a better future. Over five years, the event has been able to demonstrate increasing successful outcomes and results, including initiation of new university-business collaborations and transition from event partnerships to strategic partnerships.

Before setting up such an event, you may find it useful to consider the following questions:

- Do you have the support of external agencies such as entrepreneurship/investment support agencies, chambers of commerce and industry?
- Can you secure the strong collaboration and participation of industrial partners, e.g. to ensure company visits and interesting challenges?
- Is there a reasonable match between research expertise and company challenges?
- Do you have the support of senior management at the faculties and the interest of researchers?
- Can you secure sponsorship or a grant to cover some of the costs?

If the answer to most of these questions is yes, consider the UNI.MINDS Case Study for inspiration.

If the answer to most of these questions is no, ask yourself if you need to lay stronger foundations with stakeholders before taking concrete steps to organise an event. You may also wish to consider starting with smaller and more focused activities as these can also be very valuable to catalyse KT activities, e.g. Business Breakfast networking events organised by a KT office that showcase different KT opportunities, including training and access to equipment and services.

6 https://www.halo.science
7 https://www.innoget.com
8 https://www.leadingedgeonly.com

5. Financing KT actions

KT partnerships typically require external funding. This is why the most effective matchmaking events are held around a new innovation funding call if it includes funding that can be used to finance a KT activity. Typical KT funding offered at national level includes:

5.1. Innovation vouchers

These are typically quite low value actions, e.g. EUR 2,000-15,000, which allow an enterprise to purchase support or services from a university or research institute using a voucher. The activities that can be bought are well defined, e.g. expert studies, prototype development and testing. The money normally goes directly from the funding organisation to the RPO and the enterprise receives the outputs and typically also owns any potential IPR. Innovation vouchers are a way to purchase contract research via a funding agency (see section 3.2 above). The contract is usually based on a fixed template from the Funding Agency, not the company. The enterprise is eligible to submit the funding application but the PRO may help to draft the proposal.

Innovation vouchers can be a good, low risk way for an enterprise and research team to get to know each other. If the relationship works well, they may decide to plan for a larger more R&D intensive activity using private funding or a larger research grant.

In the WB6, Innovation Vouchers have been offered by the Serbia's[9] and Montenegro's Innovation Funds[10] as well as the Fund for Innovation and Technological Development in North Macedonia[11]. There have also been some examples of cross-regional voucher schemes[12].

Because the value of an innovation voucher is small, it is often not considered cost-effective to evaluate individual applications. In this situation, they are awarded on a 'first come first served' basis to eligible applicants. This is also referred to as 'first finger' due to the online application submission. It has led to the development of submission software to ensure 'first finger' when a call opens and this has brought some schemes into disrepute with allegation of unfairness from some applicants.

A university considering using a voucher scheme for KT activity may wish to consider the check-list of questions below as well as those in section **3.2 Contract Research** to help them anticipate and manage risks.

- What are the benefits of the Voucher Scheme to the University/Faculty? E.g. will it lead to new knowledge of the research team involved or potential larger KT partnerships?
- Will using the voucher scheme prevent us from publishing results and is its publication important to the university as well as the academics involved?
- If there is a template contract supplied, are we comfortable with it?
- Does the University/Faculty have the internal capacity to manage the legal and administrative side of the contract, including potential issues related to ownership of IP?

9 See https://www.inovacionifond.rs/en/programs/innovation-vouchers
10 See https://fondzainovacije.me/en/programi/innovation-vouchers/
11 See https://fitr.mk/en/public-call-for-awarding-funds-through-innovation-vouchers/
12 See https://fitr.mk/en/western-balkans-innovation-vouchers-call/

- Will the researcher stick to the contractual timelines and deliverables and what are the implications to the University/Faculty if they slip/miss?
- Is the flow of funding manageable for us, e.g. if the contract specifies that all funding will be paid at the end, do we have cash reserves to make upfront payments needed to start and continue the activity?

If you decide to start making use of Innovation Vouchers, you may also want to consider:

- Can we monitor the outcomes in a consistent manner to assess the benefits of being involved in a voucher scheme to our organisation?

5.2. Collaborative R&D Grants

Collaborative R&D grants for KT can be for just 2 parties or a larger consortium, e.g. one involving more than one enterprise or university/research institute. They can also involve partners from the wider ecosystem, e.g. NGOs and policy makers. Grants offer funding to carry out R&D activities. They differ from innovation vouchers in that money comes directly to all involved partners to allow them to carry out their tasks. (See **Long-term joint research projects and collaborations above**).

In the WB6, funding for collaborative R&D has been offered by the Serbia's[13] and Montenegro's[14] Innovation Funds as well as the Fund for Innovations and Technological Development in North Macedonia (2023)[15].

There are some examples of R&D schemes that can be used across the region, e.g. **EUREKA Network projects**[16]. However, cross-regional collaborative R&D calls are still rare in the WB6 region.

The largest and most competitive collaborative R&D grants that support KT include those from **HORIZON EUROPE.**

A university considering using a collaborative grant scheme for KT activity may wish to consider the following check-list of funding-related questions as well as those in section 3.1 **Long-term joint research projects and collaborations** to help them anticipate and manage risks.

- Is the level of bureaucracy and reporting on this grant scheme commensurate with the benefit we expect to receive? If not, are other funding options available to us?
- Is the flow of funding manageable for us, e.g. if the contract specifies that all funding will be paid at the end, do we have cash reserves to make upfront payments needed to start and continue the activity?
- Have we worked with the partner before and was the collaboration positive?
- If we have not worked with them before, do we feel that R&D collaboration is the best way forward or would another lower risk KT mechanism be a better way?
- What are the pros and cons of this relationship? What are the potential risks? Can they be well mitigated?
- If there is a template contract supplied, are we comfortable with it?

13 See https://www.inovacionifond.rs/en/programs/collaborative-grant-scheme-program
14 See https://fondzainovacije.me/programi/programska-linija-kolaborativnih-grantova-za-inovacije/
15 See https://fitr.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Srednorocna-programa-na-FITR-za-2021-2023-godina-finalna_eng.pdf pp. 31-32
16 See https://eurekanetwork.org/programmes/network-projects/ and select a country.

5.3. Supporting matchmaking for a funding call

It can be very helpful for a KT office to monitor calls (and seek early information from a funding body) so that it can plan and organise matchmaking events in good time. Events can be organised around a particular call with the objective of identifying partnerships and then supporting the proposal writing. If a KT office is going to support proposal writing and project management, the skills required should be considered as part of the KT policy and action plan. If not, then a clear process should exist for referring potential partnerships onwards, e.g. to a research services office.

The following check-list may be useful for a KTO when it is searching for information and preparing to promote a call:

- Eligibility: Who will be eligible to apply (and join a proposal)?
- Maximum size of the grant
- Maxim percentage/amount that can come to a university partner
- Co-funding requirements
- Deadlines for applications
- Any particular sector focus or other restrictions?

If a KTO is going to support a call, e.g. by holding an info day or proposal writing workshop, it is critical to get the right people at the event. Asking participants to register for the event and collecting some advanced information about them will help to ensure that the right mix is present in the room. It will also help the KTO to identify gaps where a push may be needed to generate interest. If individuals who have engaged with the call in the past, or with similar funding actions, can be identified, their presence may be very useful. It is important to encourage an honest discussion of the successes and failures and lessons learned.

It can also be very helpful to try and get a representative of the funding organisation to come to the event and answer specific questions. This can both increase interest in attending and support the KTO which may not be able to answer all the questions for the audience.

Finally, the KTO may find it helpful for the success of its event if it asks itself the following questions in advance:

- What do we want the outcomes of this event to be? (Just dissemination of information or active steps towards matchmaking and formation of partnerships that will apply for a relevant call?)
- How will we know if our outcomes were reached? (How will we seek feedback after the event to measure the level of success?)
- Will we be following up with participants and further supporting the call, e.g. by further matching or by supporting the proposal writing process? (Do we need to manage the expectations of the participants regarding further support?)

5.4. Internal Innovation Funds

Many universities and research institutes find that their researchers are very focused on fundamental research because this is where the bulk of national research funding is focused. In addition, where there is applied work being carried the KTO struggles to transfer ideas to companies because they are still at a very

early stage, e.g. before there is a demonstrator, prototype or clear proof of concept. Where internal funding is available, some universities have set up their own internal innovation fund to encourage good researchers to become involved in more applied research and to help enthusiastic researchers increase the TRL of their research results, so they become interesting to a KT partner, e.g. from TRL2 to TRL3/4. Beyond directly supporting innovation, such a fund can contribute to a culture change inside a university as more researchers become interested in applied research, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Such internal funding can take many forms, e.g. a grant to just one researcher with a specific purpose such as creating a prototype or funding to support an applied collaborative research project with an external partner. Some funds suggest a portfolio of eligible activities and some are able to offer ongoing support to the projects as they mature.

Before you design an internal innovation fund, you may find it useful to consider the following issues:

- **Sustainability and predictability**: Can we secure long-term/ sustainable funding for this activity so we can make regular reliable calls?
- **IPR**: Who will own any IPR from the projects? Do we need to adopt or amend an IP Policy so that it aligns with the fund? Will IPR ownership be one of our eligibility criteria?
- **Size of calls and internal support for the process**: Given the overall size of the funding pot what would be the optimum size of a single grant to ensure that we can encourage and fund a number of high-quality applications and still have money to manage the scheme?
- **Equal and fair inclusions by topic/discipline**: Should we reserve a number of grants for different disciplines to encourage participation by STEM and SSHA topics or do we just apply the same criteria to all and an overall ranking system? How will we reflect the possible different costs of a project that needs access to lab equipment vs. one that can be done from a desk?
- **Main selections criteria**: What is our main objective in supporting projects? Is this to generate economic impact or are we equally supporting societal impact? How can we reflect this in our evaluation criteria? Does the outcome of this choice have implications for projects originating from STEM and SSHA disciplines?
- **Proposal writing**: Do we need to support the researchers to develop good proposals? How can we do this in a way that is fair to all, e.g. through open workshops.
- **Fair and transparent selection process**: Do we have access to external evaluators so that the scheme will be fair and unbiased? Will they need to be remunerated? Will external evaluation mean that all applications must be in the non-native language? Will this exclude some potential applicants?
- **How often should we have a call**? Is it better to have one annual call or a rolling application system so that good projects do not have to wait 12 months to apply? Does this have any implications for internal funding, e.g. alignment of reporting and payments with a financial year?
- **Duration of projects**: What should be the maximum duration of a project to ensure it can produce meaningful results? Will we offer some flexibility in implementation time if justified? Does this have any implications for internal funding, e.g. alignment of reporting and payments with a financial year?
- **Support for funded projects**: Will the KTO be able to support the funded projects, e.g. with investigation of the market or support to secure IPR? Do we have the knowledge and capacity in the KTO to do this?
- **Metrics/KPIs**: What KPIs should we set and what information needs to be collected both to demonstrate success and to encourage others to make use of the fund in the future?

Universities considering setting up an internal innovation funding may find it useful to consult the Case Studies and Good Practice transfer paths in the **University of Rijeka UNIRI-INOVA Call and University of Ljubljana Innovation Fund** (see Annex 1).

6. Managing commercial contracts

When universities and research institutes start to play a more active role in KT, they find themselves being drawn into commercial activities, e.g. offering commercial services and working with commercial partners. This can be challenging due to the not-for-profit (NFP) status of the organisation and a lack of internal legal experience in dealing with these issues.

NFP does not mean that a public research organisation cannot offer commercial services. In fact, any KT offer should be commercial to avoid market distortion. But it does mean that the funding needs to be used back in the organisation, i.e. to support core teaching and research activities; this could mean maintaining or purchasing equipment or buying consumables or even contributing to an innovation fund.

Typically, two main issues arise when starting to engage more strongly in KT activities:

- Setting up legal contracts – a need for legal skills
- Executing commercial contacts – a need for commercial norms

6.1. Setting up legal contracts

A wide range of template agreements now exists to help universities and research organisations to deal with the most important issues in a KT contract. These include:

- Ownership and exploitation of the results
- Publication rights and confidentiality clauses

However, many other standard legal clauses should also be deal with, e.g. warranties, guaranties, payments, termination, etc.

Most universities and research institutes have a legal department which will be used to scrutinise legal agreement, e.g. for purchase of equipment or employment. Where they do not have so much experience with the key issues in KT agreements it can be useful to examine Good Practice template agreements, even if they are in an international language such as English.

Valuable resources that have been developed for the KT community in Europe and the WB6 include:

- **Partnership agreements for Industrial PhDs (NALED, Serbia, 2025)**[17]
- **KT Collaboration Agreements governing IP aspects (EU4TECH PoC Western Balkans 2022)**[18]
- **Lambert Model Agreements and Tool-kit (UK)**[19]

17 https://startech.org.rs/htdocs/Files/02687/Smernice-za-doktorate-web.pdf
18 Held by the Serbian Innovation Fund/ Serbian Science Fund
19 https://ke.org.uk/resources/lambert-agreements/

- **Model Agreements for Research and Development Cooperation (June 2022, 4th Edition) from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK)**[20]
- **WIPO model contracts for academic institutions**[21]

What is critical for any good KT legal agreement is that it does not treat KT as a special case. It must apply the same legal norms as it would to any other legally binding agreement between 2 or more parties. In this sense, it must acknowledge that sometimes things can go wrong!

When getting involved with KT contracts, you may find it useful to consider the following issues:

- Who has the overall right to sign and resulting responsibility for contractual requirements? It is critical that the correct person signs a KT contract. This is usually the Dean of a Faculty or the Rector's representative. It is usually not correct for researchers to be signing agreements with external organisations like enterprises; this includes Material Transfer Agreements (MTAs) that might be part of a wider KT contract and have implications for IPR and commercial exploitation of the results.
- Who checks the contact to make sure that all KT and standard clauses have been addressed properly? The internal university lawyer may be very good with the standard clauses to protect the university. The KTO may be able to add their own check-list with KT issues such as ownership and protection of results and confidentiality/publication clauses.
- Who is responsible for ensuring that the KT contract is being implemented correctly? If the Rector is ultimately held responsible for the contract, it may not be best practice to leave implementation fully in the hands of a researcher. Regular review should be planned.

6.2. Executing commercial contracts - using a daughter company

The NFP status of most HEIs and Research Institutes can present particular problems for KT activities. These include:

- The standard % of overheads that must be applied to a project
  - These are often much higher than would be applied by a commercial company and can make a KT service too expensive for a company to purchase.
- Restrictions on short-term employment contacts
  - This can make it very hard to employ a student on, for example, a short-term KT contract to do work in the university, paid for by a contract with a company.
- Purchasing equipment and consumables
  - Universities may need to make purchases based on obtaining several offers and selecting the lowest priced one. This may take significant time and may not offer the optimum outcome for a commercial contract.

To deal with these and other issues a number of HEIs have established 100% owned daughter companies which have commercial rather than NFP status and are able to operate more flexibly and commercially in

20 See https://www.bundeswirtschaftsministerium.de/Redaktion/EN/Publikationen/Technologie/model-agreements-for-research-and-development-cooperation.html
21 See https://www.wipo.int/en/web/technology-transfer/agreements

executing commercial KT contracts. Good regional examples include INNOFEIT[22] in North Macedonia and the Special Purpose vehicles that have been set up at many universities in Poland.

When considering establishing a daughter company to help with commercial activity, you may find it useful to consider the following issues:

- Is it legal for an HEI to establish a commercial entity under national law? If so, are there special rules and conditions, e.g. in terms of the activities it can undertake or how those activities need to be governed and reported on?
- Maintaining a daughter company will require an increase in administration and reporting. Do the benefits really outweigh the disadvantages?
- Does the University or Faculty have the internal resources, including legal and financial advice, to enable them to manage the daughter company correctly?
- Who will be in charge of the overall management of the new entity (e.g. be the CEO or Managing Director) and could this create any potential Conflicts of Interest? If so, how can these be addressed?

For further ideas on the benefits and challenges of using a daughter company you might find it useful to consult the Case Study **Polish Universities and SPV**s.

22 See https://inno.feit.ukim.edu.mk/

7. Achieving critical mass of support services

One significant challenge in the early days of KT activity is gaining critical mass in a KT office. While the level of KT activity inside the organisation is low, it is natural to employ just one or perhaps two people and to ask them to deal with all aspects of KT. This can require them to have both specialised knowledge and qualifications, e.g. relating to IPR and legal contracts, as well as a diversity of skills, e.g. matchmaking between academic and business partners and auditing tools and skills to help establish contract research services.

While a very small team keeps costs low, it also leads to challenges in responding to particular needs. This in turn can mean that the KT activity does not grow and at times gets a bad reputation from both academic and business communities.

A number of different approaches have been explored to secure critical mass of KT support. These range from trying to set up one national office that will serve all national public research organisations, to outsourcing the activity to commercial entities that have multiple PRO clients. Both approaches come with their own challenges, predominantly that they create too much distance between researchers and the KTO.

One approach that has been shown to work well is the consortium KTO model now in its third iteration in Slovenia. In this model (see Annex 1 **University Ljubljana - KTO consortium**), the individual small KTOs receive a grant as a formal consortium that requires them to work together to provide a critical mass of KT services. It allows one KT office to call on the specialised knowledge to be found in one of the consortium partners. But it does not require any PRO to give up its own on-site KTO with strong linkages back to its own research/academic base. This model does rely strongly on the provision of funding from a government agency and the willingness of multiple KTOs to collaborate. However, by achieving critical mass through collaboration, many PROs find that the level of KT engagement from academics and researchers has increased to the point where a larger home team at the KTO can be justified, and securing more external funding to support KT activities also becomes more reliable.

7.1. A check-list for exploring critical mass through collaboration:

Do you regularly find that

- You are focused on a very small set of KT activities but there seems to be potential in the PRO for a wider range?
- Your KTO cannot respond to specific requests for support because they require specialised qualification/skills, e.g. IPR matters.
- You do not have funding to allow you to expand the skill set needed to realise potential or respond to specialised requests.

If you responded yes to most or all of these questions, you may benefit from exploring collaborative KT services with another PRO or an external commercial KT/TT organisation.

If you take this step, *there should be a clear focus on transferring knowledge into your own KTO so you do not become dependent on external support when it can ultimately be provided internally.*

Issues to be addressed in a successful collaborative model include:

- ☑ **Funding**: Significant collaborative activities that will take time to develop and mature also require substantial funding with a significant time horizon, e.g. 3-5 years. Such levels of funding may mean that they have to be part of a national programmed action (see below).
- ☑ **Policy support**: Due to the level of funding required and the fact that such collaborations require multiple publicly funded universities/research institutions they are unlikely to succeed without policy support that is expressed through programmed funding. This can take several years to achieve due to first the lobbying needed, the programme design and the stage of a funding cycle/availability of funds, e.g. from the EU.
- ☑ **Institutional support**: A significant action such as this will not be possible and yield results without clear support from senior management. In particular, it is important that the third-stream mission is seen to be strategically important to the university and that this remains the case even if the senior management team, including the Rector, changes.
- ☑ **Regulations**. Clear internal regulations, usually embedding in a KT policy and/or IP policy are usually needed to enable the KTOs to support each other's technology pipelines.
- ☑ **Trust and willingness to work together**: Productive collaboration will not occur unless the KTOs are willing to collaborate and not compete. This can require a culture change if they have been sued for competing for funding. It may also be a challenge if their institutions naturally compete for students (education) and researchers (research ranking).
- ☑ **External capacity building (mentoring and training)**: Simply bring together a larger team of generalists from many KTOs may not create a significant change in the quality and quantity of Knowledge Transfer. There may be a need for external mentoring and also access to training courses. This may mean tapping into other projects, e.g. capacity building operating with EU funding or to plan some individual KTO mentoring and joint training as part of the overall action. This should be considered in the overall design.

For more information on setting up and growing a KT consortium model to achieve critical mass, see the Case Study **University Ljubljana - KTO consortium** (see Annex 1).

8. Refining processes and encouraging wider engagement

As KT activities start to become more established and expand in a university or research institute, they will benefit from being refined, e.g. by encouraging more participation, including from non-STEM subjects, and defining the way that the KTO offers its own services to different researchers.

8.1. Stimulating internal users – education and training

While some researchers will find their own way to the KTO or even independently engage in KT activities such as consulting and joint projects with industry, others will need to be encouraged to engage. Training workshops can be a good way both to stimulate interest and to develop skills, particularly for your researchers and PhD students.

Because some aspects of KT can be rather specialised, e.g. an understanding of the IPR system, using legal contracts, undertaking market research, etc. some KTOs make use of external projects that have funding for training and also access to a pool of good trainers. However, over time it is very helpful if this knowledge can come to reside inside the KTO or with some internal staff/researchers so that training workshops can be run predictably and without the need to rely on projects.

Before setting up KT training, you may find it useful to consider the following questions:

- Do we have the internal knowledge needed to run a good KT workshop?
- If we do not have internal resources then do we have external partnerships, e.g. with our national IP Office, or ongoing funding projects that can be used to provide us with training?
- Does the specialised knowledge available to us match our internal needs, e.g. if the workshop is for SSHA staff, can the local IP Office match the needed topics?
- Will that need to be a one-off workshop or can we transfer the knowledge to our own employees and then run the workshop ourselves (what would we need to make this feasible?)?

If the answer to the majority of these questions is yes, you may also want to consider:

- Who are the target participants and what do we want to be the outcome of the training?
- If the training stimulates a lot of requests for support, can the KTO cope with this?
- Should we start with some generalist KT workshops or is there a real need for some discipline specific ones?
- Should KT training be part of our overall services at the PRO?
- Should attending a KT workshop be mandatory for some students or researchers, e.g. part of undergraduate or doctorate studies? If so, will it need to meet certain educational standards?

If you are considering setting up KT training workshops, you may find it useful to consult the University of Ljubljana Case Study **MODULAR TRAINING OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP** (see Annex 1).

8.2. Moving beyond the STEM subjects

Most universities and research institutes start their KT and TT activities with a strong focus on the STEM subjects (physics, chemistry, mechanical engineering, biological sciences, etc.). The focus on such engagements is often securing patent rights and transferring rights to commercial companies or starting technology-based business. STEM-based services often offer specialised testing using research equipment. The reason for this STEM-focus is that RPOs have traditionally been encouraged to think about generating economic value from technology transfer, in part because the funding for the research has come from the economy and there is a logic in retuning it. The other reason is that TTOs are often encouraged to help cover their costs, and sale or licensing or industrial rights is an obvious way to try and accomplish this.

In recent years, the potential for KT from SSHA has been recognised and the term 'SHAPE' is being used increasingly in the EU (SHAPE: Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts for People and the Economy/Environment). However, KT from the SSHA disciplines is still more linked to achieving societal than economic impact.

KTOs may find that they need to refine their own internal service offering if they are going to work with SSHA researchers and academics. An analysed approach and tool to support this comes from the University of Warsaw in Poland. It consists of a questionnaire to assess the needs of researchers from these disciplines. The results can be used to develop new KT services.

Questions to ask internally before using this or developing a similar tool for an organisation would include:

- Do we have a significant proportion of researchers from non-STEM subjects who are not engaging in KT activities?
- Do we think there is sufficient SHAPE potential to justify making changes?
- Do we have the internal resources (human resource and knowledge) to develop and provide specialised SSHA services alongside the present portfolio?
- Would taking such a step have the support of critical stakeholders, e.g. senior management and in particular Deans at the Faculties and heads of relevant departments?
- Do we see any potential negative effects from such an expansion, e.g. not being able to meet demand from established STEM customers or negative impact on the overall KT metrics that we need to report? E.g. quantitative funding rather than qualitative impact KPIs.

For more information on setting up services for researchers from the SSH, see Annex 1 Case Study University of **WARSAW - ASSESSMENT OF SSH RESEARCHER NEEDS AND ASSOCIATED QUESTIONNAIRE TOOL**.

8.3. Assessing researcher preferences and readiness

In the early days of a KTO there is a tendency to try and engage with as many researchers as possible in order to stimulate KT activity. As time progresses, the KTO often finds that some researchers and teams are better suited to some and not other KT activities. In particular, early enthusiasm for taking applied research towards innovation can wear off. This can create problems for the KTO as it tries to interest an enterprise in early stage technology and finds that support from the researcher has melted away. This can negatively impact

the willingness of the enterprises to work with the research organisation and can even lead to reputational damage (an unreliable partner).

It can be very helpful for a KTO to be able to assess systematically which activities fit well to the personality and experience of an individual researcher/research team and which ones might need to be avoided, either permanently or until more experience and skills have been gained. This approach can be particularly effective if it is done with young researchers who are interested in building their skill set through KT training and are willing to engage with the researcher readiness analysis and in producing an action plan for themselves.

Questions to ask internally before using this or developing a similar tool for an organisation would include:

- Are we working with early stage technologies?
- Do we find that some researchers are not committed to supporting the transfer process?
- Is this having a negative impact on our relationships with external partners?
- Do we have any resources to try and improve KT skills, particularly with young researchers?
- Do we have internal capacity to carry out a meaningful researcher assessment?
- Would taking such a step have the support of senior managers in the university and in particular the departments involved?

For more information on assessing the readiness of researchers to work on different KT activities, see the analysed Case Study **University of Warsaw - Cooperation readiness assessment** and the associated **Co-operation readiness assessment tool** (Annex 1).

8.4. Recognising and incentivising engagement in KT

Many researcher evaluation metrics still omit innovation activity: they focus on peer reviewed papers and not activities that lead to wider impact for the economy, environment and society. This means that active academic entrepreneurs and innovators are not recognised for their efforts and there is no strong incentive for others to follow their path and engage in KT activity.

To overcome this barrier, some universities have set up their own awards, both at the level of individuals and for academic units, e.g. at the level of a faculty or a department. The award may include a financial element which can be regarded as a prize and used as wished or which may have to be demonstrably used to support further R&D&I activities. They are normally designed to be open to all disciplines.

Use of innovation awards has been shown to contribute to change in the internal culture and environment of a university. They can help to strengthen the innovation mission alongside that of teaching and research.

Before setting up an innovation award, you may find it useful to consider the following issues:

- **Funding**: If the award will include a financial aspect, do we have access to a long-term and reliable source of funding?
- **Target**: Will this be for individuals or teams? How might this be influenced by the level of funding available?
- **Assessment**: Who will assess the application? How can we identify individuals who are seen to be trustworthy, impartial and unbiased?

- **Assessment criteria**: How can we select assessment criteria that are equally applicable to all disciplines, e.g. basing the award on aspects like patenting would exclude disciplines that do not produce industrial property.
- **Critical mass of responses**: Are we sure that we will get sufficient high-quality applications to make the award seem worthwhile? Will we need to carry out strong promotion efforts to ensure a good result?
- **Metrics**: If this is to be a regular award, what metrics do we need to collect so we can see if it is having the desired effect and also starting to have longer term measurable impact within the university?

Universities considering setting up reward that recognises research engagement in KT, designed to incentivise others to follow in their footsteps, may find it useful to consult the Case Study and Good Practice transfer paths of the **University of Rijeka Knowledge Transfer Award**.

Annex 1: Good Practice Case Studies and tools

Part 1: Case studies with transfer paths

Introduction to the analysed case studies

These set of 11 Good practice Case studies form part of the Copyright Regional Cooperation Council 2025 'Toolkit for Knowledge Transfer at Public Universities in the Western Balkans Six'.

Each case study is designed to illustrate an aspect of the main tool-box. Each one has been analysed to help other institutions to successfully adopt them.

Case studies begin with an indication of where they are used in the KT journey, e.g. very early to stimulate researcher engagement or towards the end of the process to support 'transfer'. There is also an indication as to if they are sector or discipline specific, e.g. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) vs. SSHA (Social Sciences, Humanities, and the Arts). They also indicate crucial partners involved, e.g. the involvement of other RPOs or policy makers.

Each Case Study is presented as a 'problem solution'. This is followed by outcomes and current status and development trajectory. This is then followed by the analysis of critical aspects for adoption to ensure impact, e.g. critical framework conditions.

Where relevant, links have been provided to other external tools that have supported original use.

Where possible, a name and contact point of the original 'owner' has been provided to allow others to seek further information. It should be noted that contact names can change quite rapidly in the KT field.

The Case Studies are intended to be helpful to the wider KT community of the WB6. However, the authors and the RCC can accept no responsibility for the outcomes and results of their adoption and use.

Case Study 1. Cooperation Readiness Assessment (CRA)

Good Practice Owner: University of Warsaw (UoW), Poland

Stage: Preferably before KT activities have even commenced

Sector Specific: No

Partners involved: The University, Knowledge and Technology Transfer Office (KTTO), researchers (research teams)

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

From the early days of its activity, the KTTO of UoW was very much focused on promotion and commercialisation of research results generated by university researchers; this typically took the form of know-how or protected IP rights.

KT and TT activity focused on the technology and knowledge. Commercialisation potential was identified mostly via market analysis and identification of potential customers. The KTTO Brokerage Team actively searched the market, collected data and feedback from potential users. In parallel, based on collected date, a valuation report (price estimation) was prepared. When a potential client was identified and signalled interest in the technology, the KTTO managed the negotiation and licence agreement process. In all cases, due to the early stage of technology development – typically TRL3-4 - the engagement of the researchers was critical in the early implementation phase of a licence agreement. This took the form of additional R&D work, expert advice, supervision, etc.

Over time, it became clear that different researchers had very different attitudes to supporting the necessary cooperation. This ranged from a very negative, passive approach with no interest in interaction or support for a licensee to very flexible, supportive and open for further cooperation approach. This "human factor" related to a researchers' openness and readiness for cooperation with commercial partners became even more evident when different university units (faculties, laboratories, technology centres) started to offer access to university research infrastructure or knowledge/infrastructure-based services.

The KTTO learned the hard way that when researchers were not interested and supportive this could lead to a licensed technology not maturing further as well as relationships with companies suffering negative impact. In the worse case, the research team, faculty and university might suffer reputational damage which would affect further KT activities.

The solution

The KTTO set out to develop and implement a **Cooperation Readiness Assessment (CRA)** as part of the overall technology scouting process. This was addressed to the researchers themselves rather than to their research.

The CRA is a simple questionnaire with several questions. It is filled in and scored by the KTO technology brokers. This usually happens after 3 to 5 face-to-face or online interviews have taken place and a trustful relationship established. The questions focus on issues including:

- Motivation of the researcher to collaborate with external commercial partners
- Experience in such cooperation
- Networking abilities
- Soft interpersonal skills

Information is gathered by the KTTO technology brokers. The individual answers are supplemented with the broker's individual scoring of the quality of their own relation/contacts with researchers (e.g. easiness of contacts, availability for calls/meetings, response time for emails, timely delivery of inputs, etc.). A summary of the results of the questionnaire can be presented as a simple number (sum of points) or in the form of radar graph illustrating strong and weak elements of the cooperation ability of the researcher.

The outcome

Using the CRA has demonstrated the importance of the correct identification of a researchers' attitude to and ability for participation in commercialisation process and more general knowledge transfer process (e.g. access to infrastructure, knowledge or R&D based services, collaborative research, etc.). After several years of implementation, the KTTO has identified quite a large number of researchers with the potential to participate effectively in knowledge transfer processes, providing insights in their preferences, and minimising the risk of a mismatch between expectations and reality. A researcher's cooperation characteristic (cooperation profile) is now an important element of decision making in different daily KTTO procedures.

Current status and development trajectory

Initially, the CRA was used as supportive tool in the identification of potential risks for a commercialisation process. When the CRA was validated, it became an important factor in the decision making process of commercialisation strategies. Over time, some questions reflecting a researcher's interest in entrepreneurial activity were added to help with decisions on spin-off / spin-out / venture building strategies.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- Internal KTTO acceptance that researchers are different and this can and will affect outcomes
- Internal understanding of different researcher personalities needed to develop a strong survey instrument
- KTTO broker ability to build close, trustful contacts/relations with researchers to extract reliable information
- Clear communication from the KTTO and other university units using this type of assessment tool to the research community about the purpose and function of the assessment

Additional external tools inspiring development of the Good Practice

During the development process of the CRA tool inspiration was gained from a number of different sources:

- KTH Innovation Readiness Level™ – A method, visual tool, and resource library guiding the development from early-stage idea to innovation on the market. Licensed under CCX BY-NC-SA by KTH Sweden. In particular, the Team Readiness Level (TMRL) and Business Readiness Level (BRL) approach
  - See: https://kthinnovationreadinesslevel.com/
  - See: https://kthinnovationreadinesslevel.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/10/Team-readiness-level.pdf
  - See: https://kthinnovationreadinesslevel.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2018/10/Business-readiness-Level.pdf

- Collaboration Readiness Levels – The CRL is used by Australia's national science agency CSIRO and have been created using the insights gathered from the University of Queensland and Queensland University of Technology

  - See: https://www.csiro.au/en/work-with-us/funding-programs/SME/Collaboration-Readiness-Level

For more information on this Good Practice contact: UWRC Ltd. – University of Warsaw spv.

Case Study 2. Knowledge Transfer between University and Industry through student jobs and internship programmes

Good Practice Owner: University of Zagreb Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing (FER), Croatia

Stage: Early. To initiate partnerships and actions.

Sector Specific: ICT, focused on fields of study. Transferable to other disciplines/ sectors.

Partners involved: The Faculty, Career Centre, students, companies, researchers.

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

There was no unified platform for FER students to find internships or student job opportunities. Companies seeking to engage students had to rely on informal faculty contacts and recommendations; this was inefficient and burdensome for academic staff. A dedicated system for advertising student internships (work experience 'practice') and jobs did not exist. This limited knowledge transfer and work experience opportunities for students.

The solution

In 2011 FER established a dedicated Career Centre that hosts career fairs and networking events and has two ways to connect students with industry opportunities.

There is online portal that allows companies two modes of engagement:

(1) posting student job advertisements year-round, and

(2) offering student internship positions through a structured annual Professional Practice (internship) programme coordinated by the Faculty.

Each summer, the faculty invites companies to sign up and propose internship projects; students then apply through the centralised online system during a fixed call period. This centralised approach streamlined the process for both students and employers, replacing ad-hoc arrangements with a transparent, accessible platform.

Over time, the programme was expanded to include all senior undergraduate students (those with at least 60 ECTS credits) in addition to graduate students, ensuring a broad talent pool. Internships are kept short (3–6 weeks) and scheduled during summer break so they do not conflict with coursework.

The majority of participating companies choose to offer a stipend to interns, though it is not mandatory. The Faculty has put in place a formal framework and support system to sustain the initiative and participation remains high each year. Participation is listed on a Certificate (or Diploma) Supplement, but without ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) points.

The outcome

The introduction of the internship programme led to a significant increase in student-industry engagement. Students praise the programme as an *excellent opportunity* to apply their theoretical knowledge in a real-work environment and gain practical skills.

By 2021 the programme had grown to 118 companies providing 350+ positions, with over 230 students participating in summer internships. Companies benefit by accessing a pool of talented young engineers and often continue collaboration with the students after the internship.

The programme enables students to gain valuable professional experience in companies, enhancing their practical skills and improving employment prospects after graduation. It provides teachers with insight into current industry expectations, helping align curricula with market needs and technological trends. For the faculty, it strengthens links with industry, creating a solid basis for future research and innovation collaborations.

The parallel student job postings portal is likewise heavily used, with continual listings of part-time jobs and trainee positions throughout the year.

Current status and development trajectory

This good practice is now well-established at FER and continues to operate annually. The Professional Practice programme has become a regular part of the academic calendar each summer.

As of 2025, the FER Career Centre platform is an integral interface for university–industry cooperation, continually updated with new job postings and an annual call for internships.

The model has proven successful and is now embedded in the faculty's operations, with dozens of companies returning every year and increasing interest from students.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- Institutional commitment and resources: Strong support from faculty leadership ensured the sustainability of the programme.
- Industry engagement and mentorship: Active participation from companies is essential – firms prepare quality internship projects and provide mentors to guide the students; this greatly enhances the experience.
- Clear formal agreements and guidelines: The cooperation is governed in the internship by a standard agreement between the faculty and each company, defining roles and responsibilities (e.g. company must provide supervision and safe working conditions, and the faculty handles student postings). This legal framework builds trust and clarifies expectations (e.g. liability, confidentiality, duration), making all parties comfortable with the collaboration.
- Accessibility and student eligibility: Keeping the programme open to a wide pool of students (for example expanding the internship programme to include undergraduate students who have attained a certain study progress) helped drive adoption. Clearly communicated eligibility criteria and an easy application process via the online system encouraged high student turnout.
- Timing and alignment with academics: Scheduling the internships during the summer period (for a duration of 3–6 weeks) was important to avoid conflict with academic obligations. The short, flexible format allows students to participate without extending their studies, and companies can accommodate interns during a convenient timeframe.
- Visibility through a centralised platform: Having a one-stop online portal for all student opportunities greatly improved visibility. Students can browse and apply to numerous internship and job postings in one place, and companies can reach the entire student body efficiently. This centralisation was key to scaling the practice and ensuring its impact.

For additional information consult:

1) Student jobs at FER (in Croatian; some jobs are advertised in English):

Browse through current selection: https://www.fer.unizg.hr/karijere/ponuda_poslova

Instructions on how to post a new opening: https://karijere.fer.hr/poslodavci/oglasi-za-poslove/

2) Student internships at FER (in Croatian):

Recent call (2024/2025): https://www.fer.unizg.hr/prakse/natjecaji

Sign up page for companies and students: https://www.fer.unizg.hr/studiji/diplomski_studiji/ljetne_prakse

Agreement with companies: https://www.fer.unizg.hr/_download/repository/CKF_Sporazum_s_poduzecima_2025.pdf

Case Study 3. UNI.MINDS Festival of science and innovation

Good Practice Owner: University of Ljubljana Slovenia

Stage: Can be used at all stages but is particularly helpful to initiate new partnerships and possible collaborations that can then be further strengthened and developed.

Sector Specific: No

Partners involved: Knowledge transfer offices of 3 Slovenian Universities (Ljubljana, Maribor and Primorska), SPIRIT Slovenia (public agency dedicated to promoting investment, entrepreneurship, and internationalisation in Slovenia, supporting businesses and investors with strategic advice and operational assistance).

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

Connecting academia with industrial partners can be highly beneficial, but it comes with a number of challenges. These include:

- Understanding differing priorities – Academia often focuses on fundamental research and long-term knowledge development, while industry prioritises immediate applications and profitability.
- Communication Barriers – Researchers and business professionals may use different terminology and approaches, making collaboration difficult.
- Limited Industry Awareness in Academia – Researchers may lack understanding of industry needs, leading to projects that are not commercially viable.
- Locating each other - Industry often does not know whom in research organisations to contact.
- Risk Aversion – Companies may be hesitant to invest in experimental or unproven academic research, but it is easier to talk to researchers they have connections to.

Three Slovenian universities identified these challenge as inhibiting the growth of their KT activities.

The solution

The UNI.MINDS festival was designed specifically to help address these challenges. Networking and building personal relationships is the key feature of the festival. UNI.MINDS brings together academia, business, and innovation support actors (like SPIRIT Slovenia, EIT KICs (European Institute of Innovation & Technology Knowledge and Innovation Communities)) with a focus on European and world trends and the expertise of the three largest universities in Slovenia.

The objective of the annual festival is to present what academia is developing, what the needs of industry are and how innovation from universities can help industry. The aim is also to build a wider innovation community, create new long-term partnerships and share knowledge for a better future.

The long-term goal is to build an innovation community, create long-term partnerships and share knowledge for a better future.

UNI.MINDS targets:

- Researchers and University students
- Slovenian and international companies
- EIT KICs, public organisations, and non-profit institutions
- Policy makers

In the last five years the festival organisers have selected and presented many interesting topics, identified interesting speakers from academia and industry, and organised multi-day events, presenting:

- European and world development trends
- activities and expertise of the researchers
- success stories and best practices in University-Business Cooperation
- company visits and presentations of company challenges
- workshops for industry
- research and innovation support instruments

The outcomes

The festival can be linked directly to a number of outcomes:

- More than 400 people registering for the event each year
- Exchange of information and expertise between companies and researchers
- Growing innovation community
- New university-business collaborations initiated
- A transition from event partnerships to strategic partnerships

For more information see:

Wrap-up video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUnZqaa-VAc

Current status and development trajectory

The UNI.MINDS festival is now in its 6th year and continues to connect researchers and businesses internationally.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- Support of industry-related governmental organisations (such as entrepreneurship / investment support agencies, chambers of commerce and industry)
- Collaboration of industrial partners (to ensure company visits and promising challenges, and to present industrial trends)
- Support of senior management at the faculties and the interest of researchers

- A match between research expertise and company challenges
- Impact measurement to prove that the festival produces results and to convince stakeholders to continue to attend and support.

Additional external tools used by the UNI.MINDS to further strengthen outcomes:

- Matchmaking tools (for online festivals): Whova: https://whova.com, Hubilo: https://www.hubilo.com/
- Expertise search engine: https://app.prenosznanja.si/

For more information on this Good Practice contact: University of Ljubljana

Urša Jerše (Ursa.Jerse@uni-lj.si); Simona Rataj (Simona.Rataj@uni-lj.si)

Case Study 4. Matchmaking platform RIMAP

Good Practice Owner: University of Rijeka, Croatia

Stage: Early in the KT process to help generate KT projects and assist with matchmaking and consortia formation

Sector Specific: No

Partners involved: University of Rijeka and Agency for Regional Development of the Primorje - Gorski Kotar County - Prigoda.

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

The University of Rijeka (UNIRI) Strategy for the period 2021-2025 identified knowledge transfer and regional involvement as one of its four main pillars. One of the stated goals is to "Increase cooperation between the university and the community". However, the University of Rijeka is not 'integrated'. This means that individual faculties have a high level of autonomy, verifiable metrics are not always available to the rectorate, and it can be hard to drive strategy if actions take place at faculty level.

Observations and anecdotal evidence suggested that the information needed to initiate and implement KT actions was highly fragmented. In particularly, there was not one place to find upcoming funding opportunities, identify potential partners and begin the development of projects, particularly those requiring consortia and actors from the quad-helix.

The solution

To enhance connections and cooperation with industry, public institutions and NGOs, the University of Rijeka developed the Regional Innovation Matchmaking Platform RIMAP. The platform was developed in cooperation with the Regional Development Agency of the Primorje - Gorski Kotar County - Prigoda, with the main focal point at the Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity of the University of Rijeka, and in synergy with the Science and Technology Park - STEPRI of the University of Rijeka.

Launched in 2021, RIMAP is a regional online innovation platform designed to facilitate knowledge transfer between the academic community and businesses, public institutions, and NGOs within the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County and beyond.

RIMAP serves as a central hub for publishing and exchanging information on available funding sources, and EU calls for research and development. It enables the formation of joint projects and application consortia by connecting companies and researchers. It also brings together various strategic documents and information on technology trends.

Individuals and organisations using the platform can create a profile. Public and private sector entities are encouraged to publish development proposals, human resource needs, and company's products on the site. Researchers, in turn, can present their expertise, services, and available research infrastructure through their profiles, resources that may be of interest to industry and other sectors. Search functions allow users to search for and find relevant profiles, technologies, funding calls, etc. based on key word search terms. In this way, RIMAP facilitates networking and collaboration across the quadruple helix, supporting the practical uptake of academic knowledge in industry.

Results and outcomes

Since the launch of the platform[23] the number of registered companies, researchers, and public sector entities has grown to include over 100 companies, 200 researchers, and 30 public institutions. Together, these stakeholders have published more than 80 development proposals and services.

RIMAP is now established as a virtual meeting point where local businesses and public institutions can submit innovation proposals and seek research partners from academia or other enterprises. The platform features individual researchers and research groups from across the University of Rijeka, showcasing their multidisciplinary expertise, specialist knowledge, and research infrastructure available for collaborative projects.

RIMAP also offers the possibility to advertise the need for specific human resource profiles and expert knowledge. These opportunities may relate to standard employment, temporary work, or short-term project collaboration.

RIMAP also plays an informative role, regularly publishing calls, tenders, and funding opportunities for scientific and development projects. It aims to provide timely and relevant updates to its members and subscribers regarding funding schemes, programmes, and business opportunities.

Current status and development trajectory

RIMAP was recognised as a best-practice example during the EU Knowledge Valorisation Week 2023 and was also featured in the European Commission's Final Report of the Mutual Learning Exercise on Knowledge Valorisation.

Currently, RIMAP is serving as a baseline for developing the YUFE Innovation Platform (currently available at URL: https://yufe-rimap.uniri.hr/), expanding its reach from regional to European level. This is being developed in collaboration with EDIH (European Digital Innovation Hub) Adria and the YUFE Alliance – a dynamic network of European universities supported by the European Commission.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- **A critical mass of researchers and companies who want to create a profile actively seek out KT activities.**
- **Continuous promotion of the platform and success stories by stakeholders to attract new members and create a snowball effect.**
- Sustainable funding to set-up and maintain the platform.
- A champion/ responsible team to drive the development forward and ensure the platform is being used and adopting new approaches where possible, e.g. integration of AI to improve efficiency and further reduce costs.
- A system for monitoring the success of the platform, i.e. successful matchmakings, to facilitate evidence-based changes.

External linkages to additional information

- European Commission: Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Kosova, H. and Vanrie, P., *Mutual learning exercise on knowledge valorisation – Focus on skills, intersectoral cooperation and incentive systems – Final report*, Kosova, H.(editor) and Vanrie, P.(editor), Publications Office of the European Union, 2024, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/146102

23 https://rimap.uniri.hr/

- Knowledge Valorisation Platform: Repository of Best Practices – Regional Innovation Matchmaking Platform - RIMAP

For more information on this Good Practice contact:

University of Rijeka, University Centre for Research and Innovation, inovacije@uniri.hr

Case Study 5. UNIRI-INOVA Call

Good Practice Owner: University of Rijeka, Croatia

Stage: Early in the KT process to stimulate engagement

Sector Specific: No (although interdisciplinary is expected)

Partners involved: University of Rijeka plus, involvement of other quadruple helix partners including industry and civil society.

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

The University of Rijeka (UNIRI) Strategy for 2021–2025 identifies knowledge transfer and regional engagement as one of its four strategic pillars. This includes increasing the number and quality of research, educational, and professional partnerships with the local and regional community, economy, and civil society. The strategy also seeks to enhance the University's regional influence through joint strategic interdisciplinary projects.

However, because the University of Rijeka is not 'integrated' and so Faculties have a high degree of legal autonomy it can be hard for the Rectorate to drive strategic change and collect metrics on KT engagement. In addition, it was observed that researchers were predominantly focused on fundamental research and showed limited interest in engaging with industry and other stakeholders from the quadruple helix.

The solution

To tackle the issue of limited researcher engagement and given the constraints of available external funding, the University developed an internal funding scheme to support knowledge valorisation: the UNIRI-INOVA Call.

In the long-term, this initiative aims to foster a culture of innovation-driven research and position UNIRI as a key partner for local and national industry in development and commercialisation efforts.

The University launched the first UNIRI-INOVA Call for Proposals in February 2022. The call offered small-scale funding primarily intended to support the exploration of innovative ideas in collaboration with an industry partner, with the overarching goal of fostering continued cooperation towards development and commercialisation.

The call required projects to be interdisciplinary in nature, and applicants had to demonstrate an existing collaboration with an industry partner at the time of submission. A total of €35,000 was made available, funding five projects with maximum €7,000 each. The project duration was limited to one year. The application and reporting process was deliberately kept simple to encourage participation and minimise administrative burden.

The outcome

The first call attracted strong interest from researchers across multiple university units. Encouraged by this response, the University has since issued four additional calls. Several of the funded projects have led to concrete outcomes, including collaborative product development, prototype creation, and – in some cases – the formal protection of intellectual property, e.g. with industrial rights.

Current status and development trajectory

This year (2025), the completion of six projects is expected, along with the launch of the fifth round of calls. Depending on the available funding, an increase in the grant amounts is anticipated. Furthermore, several researchers have emerged as innovation leaders and are being considered for roles as ambassadors for commercialisation and applied research.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- Funding is needed for both the Award and management of the scheme including a possible small payment to the assessors (see below).
- Funding should have long-term reliability and enable the university to offer a predictable Call schedule and respond to changes in external costs over time.
- Access to external reputable national 'evaluators', including representatives of companies from particular sectors.
- Some flexibility in the implementation and reporting period, e.g. from 12 to 18 or even 24 months can be very helpful to address delays and enable strongest outcomes and impact.
- Transitioning from periodic calls, e.g. annual, to a rolling application system may improve outcomes by enabling good ideas to be addressed when they arise and without a possible near 12-month delay, e.g. if an annual Call has just closed.
- Involvement of previous grant recipients in promoting the call and encouraging collaboration with industry may be beneficial.
- Collection of metrics over time will enable the impact of such a scheme to be measured and for evidence-based changes to be made.

For more information on this Good Practice contact:

University of Rijeka

University Centre for Research and Innovation

Department for Innovation and Knowledge Valorisation

inovacije@uniri.hr

Case Study 6. University of Ljubljana Innovation Fund

Good Practice Owner: University of Ljubljana (UL) Slovenia

Stage: Early in the KT process (TRL (Technology Readiness Level) 3 onwards) when funding is needed for further development of a solution/technology.

Sector Specific: No

Partners involved: The University, Knowledge Transfer Office (UL KTO)

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

During 2018 when the University of Ljubljana Knowledge Transfer Office (UK KTO) was reformed, the University of Ljubljana noticed that they were often struggling to transfer research results to the commercial sector. This was because the results were seen as 'too early' and so 'too high risk' for companies to adopt; this was particularly true for SMEs. The university TTO was getting feedback from industry that the research results were interesting, but needed further maturing, e.g. through additional R&D and further testing. The early stage of development was also a barrier for a researcher to take them forward independently, e.g. through a start-up company. However, there was no public money available at national (or international) level to help bridge this gap between academic research (TRL 1-2) and maturity for commercial adoption, e.g. (TRL 6)

The solution

In 2020, using internal funds, the University set up its own Innovation Fund, targeting projects at the PoC (Proof of concept) stage of development, e.g. TRL 3. Successful applicants could secure up to EUR 25,000 to use on further R&D, e.g. consulting services, feasibility study, prototype production, market analysis or research; material costs; equipment depreciation; and participation or appearance at trade shows to present and promote the technology to potential adopters and development partners. The applicants also had access to business mentoring, business development workshops and KTO support to secure further follow-on funding or to start their own company.

The outcome

Using the Innovation Fund has been shown to be successful in supporting the transfer of knowledge and technology beyond the academic sector:

- one PoC secured two external R&D contracts at the end of the project;
- several projects have been transformed into spinoffs that are licensing technology from the university and have secured significant early-stage investment;
- there have also been instances of follow-on funding from international external sources including an international incubator.

Current status and development trajectory

The Innovation Fund is now in its 6th year and continues to invest its annual budget of EUR 100K into 4-5 PoC projects. It has moved from using internal funds to being able to access public money from the national research agency. It now incorporates a second stage of funding to allow successful projects to secure further EUR 50,000 to move closer to the market and support start-up formation.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- Eligibility to apply to the fund requires that the existing results be owned by the University. This in turn relies on a strong institutional IP Regulation.
- To ensure annual calls that support the research process the PoC funding needs to be sustainable, reliable and predictable and not project-based.
- Researchers need to be supported to make the transition from writing an excellent research proposal to writing a strong PoC application. This can require info days, workshops and some dedicated support from the university, e.g. via the KTO.
- The University needs to be able to secure the support of external evaluators and an Innovation Board which will ultimately take the decision on which projects to fund. To keep costs low these individuals need to be willing to work pro bono or for very low levels of remuneration.
- To increase the impact of the funding the PoC individuals/teams need to be supported with business advice and tools (provided by the KTO). This can include sector specific mentoring and workshops.
- A separate source of funding to secure IP rights can be useful in case the PoC project generates further patentable results.

Additional external tools used by the Innovation Fund to further strengthen outcomes:

During the period of project support The IF makes use of two tools to support the PoC projects:

- KTH Innovation Readiness Level™ – A method, visual tool, and resource library guiding the development from early-stage idea to innovation on the market. Licenses under CCX BY-NC-SA by KTH Sweden.
  - See: https://kthinnovationreadinesslevel.com/
- Market Opportunity Navigator - A framework created by Sharon Tal, an Israeli entrepreneurship specialist, and co-authored with Marc Gruber, to help entrepreneurs identify, evaluate, and prioritise market opportunities.
  - See (for example) https://onopia.com/the-market-opportunity-navigator/
- The Impact methodology by Alastair Banks and Jeff Skinner: Finding partners through social media.
  - See the training: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ytVWioHKwQk&t

For more information on this Good Practice contact: University of Ljubljana

Urša Jerše (Ursa.Jerse@uni-lj.si); Simona Rataj (Simona.Rataj@uni-lj.si)

Case Study 7. Using an SPV to support Knowledge Transfer at Polish universities

Good Practice Owner: University of Warsaw, Technology University of Warsaw, Technology University of Gdańsk, Technology University of Poznań, Poland, etc.

Stage: Across the KT process

Sector Specific: No

Partners involved: University SPVs, researchers (research teams), SMEs, large companies

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

The reform of the Polish Higher Education system in 2011 introduced a clear definition of transfer of technologies created at universities through either **direct** or **indirect commercialisation**. In simple terms, **direct commercialisation** involves sale or licensing of research results and related know-how and as a rule, it is to be handled by technology transfer offices (TTOs). **Indirect commercialisation** involves establishment of a new company (startup, spin-off, spin-out) to exploit the research results and is normally the domain of a special purpose vehicle[24] (SPV) established by the university in the form of a wholly owned daughter company, based on commercial law.

The changes introduced stimulated traditional forms of technology and knowledge transfer; however, they did not contribute to more collaborative forms of knowledge transfer such as contract research, knowledge-based services, and joint projects offered by universities. These activities, particularly knowledge-intensive services, expertise and access to infrastructure, were traditionally operated and managed on the level of faculties and engaged the central university administration (law, accountancy, high-level official for signing agreements, etc). Income from these forms of KT stayed low and below a university's potential and ambitions.

This situation raised issues for the universities, not just because of the loss of commercial income but because institutional grants (statutory financing) are based partly on metrics linked to the number and value of KT services delivered.

Feedback gathered by the SPVs suggested that companies found HEI administration difficult to engage with and services were often seen as expensive due to the 30% over-head changed by a public institution.

The solution

From the early days of implementation of the new law in 2011 it was clear that SPVs have a freedom to engage in commercial activities that can go far beyond their core mission to support establishment of research-based companies and to manage the portfolio of shares in spin-offs. Many Universities and SPVs quickly realised that compared to the central HEI administration, an SPV is much more flexible and cost efficient in administrative tasks, shorter in decisive processes, more professional in project management, and well suited to operate with autonomy and freedom in a commercial environment. In addition, SPVs need only charge a 10% over-head fee.

In years 2015-2020 several universities and SPVs started to experiment with the outsourcing of management and administrative tasks related to commercial contracts between universities and commercial companies. This started with case-by-case contracts, where the SPV played the role of the intermediary body between a company (client) and the university and its research staff as the providers of expertise, service or infrastructure. In most cases, when this outsourcing activity was scaled up, the university signed a framework contract with its SPV defining tasks, responsibilities, and fees (usually on the level of 10%) for outsourced services.

24 A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) is a separate legal entity, often a limited liability company, created for a narrow, specific business goal.

Under most framework contracts an SPV is now actively searching for clients and matching them with university researchers or research teams. On a daily basis, the SPV signs contracts with companies and directly manages contracts with university staff, while periodically reporting to their parent university and transferring payments for access to infrastructure or surplus on contracts.

The outcome

After some years of experimenting, several universities including Gdańsk Technology University, Kielce University of Technology and Białystok University of Technology decided to fully outsource management of commercial service contracts with companies to their SPV. Some others, including Warsaw University of Technology and Poznań University of Technology, decided to partially outsource management of specific types or sizes of contract.

The measurable results of implementation of this model have been shown to reach tens of millions of euros for large technical universities like Technology University of Warsaw or the Technology University of Gdańsk.

In summary, this model has been shown to create value for both parties: universities and SPVs. A university and its staff can benefit from additional revenue from increased stream of research services (knowledge transfer) and the SPV raises funds for their maintenance and development of the spin-off portfolios.

Universities retain the full control (ownership) over their SPVs, so they can control the level of effectiveness and cost (KPI (Key Performance Indicator) based management) and can benefit both from direct payments for delivered services, access to infrastructure, etc. as well as from dividends from subsidiary SPV. In the meantime, evaluation metrics to award statutory funding have been modified to reflect the present situation, and income generated by the SPVs is included in the university's income in the evaluation of their activities.

In addition, the model implemented has radically improved the perception of universities as knowledge-based service providers from the company (client) perspective. It is more natural for companies to sign agreements with other commercial entities like a SPV then with public organisations. Due to their agile nature SPVs can offer processes which are shorter, less bureaucratic, economically more effective, while content and access to the knowledge base is precisely the same as when companies approach a university directly.

Current status and development trajectory

Since 2020 one can observe a growing role for and capacity of networking and interactions between individual SPVs. The Polish Alliance of Knowledge Transfer Companies (PSC – https://psc.edu.pl), established in 2014, has become a forum for almost 40 SPV to develop joint projects and offers cross-university research teams for complex interdisciplinary services or contracted research. The principle for the PCS is not to leave a client without service. An internal communication platform allows PSC members to search for multi-university teams, offer subcontracting, joint promotion of an integrated offer, etc.

The most recent development is an initiative of the PSC and PACTT (Polish Association of Technology Transfer Offices) presented under the umbrella of the Polish Presidency in the EU Council and called #EUInnovateTogether. The idea behind this initiative is to connect big European companies with the vibrant scientific community in Central and Eastern Europe. SPVs help companies to define specific technological or market challenges and match them with university resources offering integrated Strategic Research Agendas, which are plans with proposed solutions, expert teams and initial budgets. In May 2025, the first #EUInnovateTogether Round Table summarised the first steps in cooperation between PCS/SPVs and 8 EU companies (GSK, Roche, ORANGE, Veolia, ABB, Kronospan, Medicover and Ringier Axel Springer) (https://www.gov.pl/web/eu-innovation-journey/Innovate-Together).

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- An understanding of company needs and perspectives
- An understanding of the benefits of outsourcing administrative and financial tasks from a university to its subsidiary SPV
- Good quality of market experienced and motivated SPV staff to be able to deliver the commercial service as wanted by the enterprises and at a higher level than the HEI

Additional illustrative information on the Good Practice:

Links to several SPVs implementing presented model:

- Institute for Innovation and Technology of Białystok Technology University Ltd. - https://instytutpb.com
- Institute of Applied Research of Warsaw University of Technology Ltd. - https://www.ibs.pw.edu.pl
- Excento Ltd. – Gdańsk University of Technology SPV – https://excento.pl/zamowienia/
- Politechnika Innowacje Ltd. – Poznań University of Technology SPV – https://put.poznan.pl/sc

For more information on this Good Practice contact: UWRC Ltd. – University of Warsaw spv.

Case Study 8. Slovenia KTO consortium

Good Practice Owner: University of Ljubljana and consortium partners

Stage: When initiating or growing KT support, particularly from a very low level.

Sector Specific: No

Partners involved: University of Ljubljana, University of Primorska, Jožef Stefan Institute, National Institute of Chemistry, National Institute of Biology, University of Maribor, the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia, Faculty of Information Studies Novo Mesto.

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

By 2013 Slovenia had enacted legislation to support TT and KT, including the Employment Invention Related Act, which gives institutional ownership of inventions to universities. However, despite some early efforts to establish KTOs dating back to 2006, support for KT was still at a very early stage. There was a lack of dedicated funding to set up offices, a lack of individuals with relevant skills and most universities were unwilling to invest much in the activity unless they could be sure it would yield results. Most KT actions were project based which meant that individuals would develop skills but then move on to new positions. Most KTOs lacked critical mass of people and skills.

However, there was a perception, in particular from the Research Institutions and reflected in EU policies, that knowledge transfer should be playing a stronger role for more Public Research organisations and that there was untapped KT potential in the universities and research institutes in Slovenia.

The solution

After an early attempt to address the issue in 2013- 2024 by offering funding for patenting, in 2017, the government launched a more substantial five-year project: Consortium for Technology Transfer/KTT 2.0 (2017-2022). The objective of the project was to promote connections and cooperation between public research organisations (PROs) and the business sector, and to strengthen the competencies of technology/ knowledge transfer offices (KTO), researchers, and companies.

The result was KTT (Consortium for Technology Transfer from Public Research Organizations), a consortium co-financed by the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science, and Sport and European structural funds (ERDF – the European Regional Development Fund). KTT was set up to perform the activities of technology transfer for eight major Slovenian public research organisations, led by the Jožef Stefan Institute and comprising University of Ljubljana, University of Primorska, National Institute of Chemistry, National Institute of Biology, University of Maribor, the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia, and Faculty of Information Studies Novo Mesto.

The outcome

The original KTT consortium initiative succeeded in combining several elements in a five-year timeframe.

- Establishment and financing of technology transfer offices.
- Exchange of experiences and collective cross-institutional learning from different (public and private) universities as well as non-university research institutions – a mix that is relatively rare internationally.

- Measurable effect at the level of individual researchers through training and the exchange of good practices. This is visible in the number of ideas and inventions brought into the office as well as the increasing number of patent applications, spinoffs and collaborations.

Current status and development trajectory

The 2017-2022 programme has been succeeded by the Support of Knowledge Transfer Office Activities **(JRO KTO 2024-2029)** programme. This is largely a continuation of the 2017-2022 programme but sees the number of participating PROs (SL: JRO Javna-Raziskovalna Organizacija (EN: Public Research Organisation) and KTOs expended from 8 to 13, the formation of 2 district groups (one for the 10 RIs (Research Institutes) and another for the 3 HEIs (Higher Education Institutes)) while enhancing even closer connection among the KTOs.

The University of Ljubljana is the consortium leader for the HEIs, supporting the work of other KTOs through its central KTOs. The objective of the project is again to promote connections and cooperation between PROs and the business sector, and to strengthen the competencies of technology transfer offices, researchers, and companies.

A quick overview of the current JRO KTO programme:

- Establishment of new KTOs
- Strengthening Connections: Enhancing collaboration between KTOs and stakeholders in the innovation ecosystem
- Skill Development: Improving the knowledge and skills of KTO employees

Funding: Supported by the European Union's European Regional Development Fund and Slovenia, with a total of up to €4.3 million available.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- Long-term reliable funding
- Support of the financing organisation (Ministry or Agency)
- Support of the top university leadership (giving clear recognition of the 3rd mission)
- Regulations (internal rules), supporting 3rd mission, e.g. clear IP Policy
- Trust and collaboration between different KTOs
- Being able to provide external mentoring in the early days for the KTO staff from more experienced KT professionals, e.g. from KTOs elsewhere in the EU. This will require funding or being able to tap into a suitable EU initiative.
- Access to external training activities, particularly in the early days, to build the skills base, global community and international connections. As with the mentoring, this is likely to require access to funding or to exiting fully funded initiatives.

Additional external tools used by the Consortium to further strengthen outcomes:

- **Intellectual Property (IP) Management Tools** – Platforms for patent filing, trademark registration, and copyright protection.
- **Technology offers databases** – Systems that promote research outputs and facilitate licensing opportunities, e.g. In-Part (https://www.inpart.io/)

- **Collaboration & Networking Platforms** – Digital hubs that connect researchers with industry partners and investors, such as In-Part (see above Innoget (https://www.innoget.com/), Halo Science (https://www.halo.science/), LEO (https://www.leadingedgeonly.com/)
- **Access to market analysis & business intelligence tools** – for assessing commercial viability and market trends, e.g. publicly available information from publications such as Markets&Markets.
- **Legal & Contract Management Tools** – Systems for handling agreements, licensing deals, and compliance, e.g. commercial KT management software/systems and DocuWise.

For more information on this Good Practice contact: University of Ljubljana: Urša Jerše (Ursa.Jerse@uni-lj.si) and Simona Rataj (Simona.Rataj@uni-lj.si)

Case Study 9. Modular training for entrepreneurship

Good Practice Owner: University of Ljubljana (UL)

Stage: Early in the KT journey to stimulate interest, engagement and use of the KTO services.

Sector/ Discipline Specific: No

Partners involved: University of Ljubljana, external trainers

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

The University of Ljubljana identified a need for comprehensive training for doctoral students and researchers that addressed four main areas closely related to research and its (broader) social impact:

- Cooperation with the external environment,
- Impact of research,
- Entrepreneurial competencies,
- Intellectual property.

The solution

The UL Knowledge Transfer Office worked in collaboration with the UL Doctoral School to prepare modular training intended for doctoral students and researchers from the University of Ljubljana on entrepreneurship, impact and intellectual property. The training consists of 4 modules:

- Module 1 Benefits of working with the external environment
- Module 2 Market orientation and social impact
- Module 3 Entrepreneurship, enterprise building and related skills
- Module 4: Intellectual property and role towards the publication of articles

The target audience were UL researchers, PhD students; some of the trainings were opened also to others (PROs and their researchers).

The trainings were organised every Monday and Tuesday, from 15.00 and 18.00, between January and February.

Lectures were held in person and, for some specific topics, online.

The trainings were delivered by a mix of internal experts (IP, patent databases) and external experts (entrepreneurship topics, writing compelling articles, finding partners through social media and AI tools). Lectures were held both in person and online.

The trainings were funded by internal funds of the University.

The outcome and current status and development trajectory

To date:

- 20 PhDs attended the lectures in person
- 105 researchers attended the lectures online

Overall satisfaction with the lectures and trainers was very good.

Learning from the pilot training

- Support from the PhD school is essential
- Include PhD supervisors to promote the training among PhD students
- 8 consecutive weeks of training represents a lot of work for the organisation and for the participants; perhaps a well distributed modules over a longer period would result in more participation

What happened next:

Going forward the KTO is planning another training – deep tech entrepreneurship training in the framework of the DeepTech LaunchPad project. It intends to use the training materials to build a website with content provided by UL + other available relevant content (for the self-paced learning).

In addition to these modules, the KTO plans to offer additional trainings, focused on practice, exercises and mentoring (workshops).

It also plans to offer some modules regularly as an elective course for PhD students.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- Support from the PhD school is essential
- Include PhD supervisors to promote the training among PhD students
- Trainings need to be focused (focused exercises and mentoring) as a lot of training material is already available online
- A good approach is to combine working on cases and offering mentoring support when building a case
- To boost attendance from PhDs it is useful to work through their mentors (mentors are the key “make it or break it” factor when it comes to research & commercialisation activities of the PhD)

Additional external tools used to further strengthen outcomes

- Market opportunity navigator

For more information on this Good Practice contact: University of Ljubljana: Urša Jerše (Ursa.Jerse@uni-lj.si) and Simona Rataj (Simona.Rataj@uni-lj.si)

Case Study 10. Assessment of Social Sciences and Humanities researcher needs

Good Practice Owner: University of Warsaw (UW), Poland

Stage: Early in the KT process – e.g. when establishing KTTO services

Sector Specific: No but focused on the Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH)

Partners involved: The University, Knowledge and Technology Transfer Office, researchers

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

Established more than 20 years ago, the University of Warsaw (UW) Knowledge and Technology Transfer Office (KTTO) started its activities with a strong focus on patentable results from the STEM faculties. After 10 years it has established a strong and positive reputation with researchers from the natural sciences. However, the SSH community were not interacting with the KTTO. No research results from the SSH disciplines had been registered for transfer and fewer than 20% of WU spin-offs had originated from SSH research teams. This situation led the KTTO to question if the services they offered were appropriate for SSH researchers and whether SSH scientists were aware of and understood the possible types of KT activities they could engage with based on their knowledge.

Anecdotal evidence suggested that researchers from SSH had a low understanding of the University's KT processes, lacked experience in participation in KT activities and had a low understanding of IP management rules in the context of know-how generated in SSH, e.g. algorithms, procedures, research questionnaires, analytical tools, etc.

However, despite a lack of engagement in formal KT processes including disclosure of potential IP, it was clear to the University that many SSH researchers were successfully engaging in consulting activity. While this was a personal contract with a company the researcher was still benefiting from the reputation of the University. The low entry barrier to delivering knowledge-based services to commercial customers along with the benefit of not having to add the University's 30% overhead fee to the price was recognised as a rational for some scientists not to engage in the formal KT processes offered by the KTTO. Such direct contracts diminished the official revenues flowing to the University. This also had a negative effect on the overall metrics used to assess the HEIs and to award intuitional grant funding (statutory financing).

In short, the University recognised that some SSH researchers were not engaging at all in KT activities while others were engaging independently. Both situations were detrimental to the University and there was a need to try and bring both groups into University-managed SSH KT activities.

The solution

Based on a desire to offer a 'carrot and not a stick', the KTTO set out to develop tailor-made services for the SSH research community. It took some inspiration from the 2024 WIPO Report "*Incentives in Technology Transfer. A guide to encourage, recognize and reward researchers and professionals*" and developed a questionnaire to assess the needs and preferences of SSH researchers in a uniform way. The questionnaire consisted of just 14 questions in 6 sections. These covered previous experience in KT, motivation for KT, preferred forms of KT as well as contextual questions and open space for suggestion for SSH KTTO services. Several questions were simple multiple choice while others were sentences to which a researcher could agree or disagree on a scale from 1 to 5.

The outcome

The questionnaire was piloted on students of the SSH Doctoral School in early 2025. The results were used to redesign the structure and content of the lectures on Knowledge Transfer delivered to the Doctoral School.

The survey clearly revealed that for SSH researchers certain elements, such as the definition of know-how and forms of its transfer, use of research methods and tools as knowledge-based services, valuation and monetisation strategies, are very important issues. In comparison to researchers from natural sciences, their SSH colleagues more often underlined the importance of personal recognition and a positive attitude from the high-level university hierarchy towards their entrepreneurial and KT activities.

Current status and development trajectory

Due to the fact that the WU SSH Doctoral School recruits students from all SSH faculties (sociology, psychology, linguistic, liberal arts, law and administration, journalism, bibliology, etc.) Dean teams are now aware of the assessment process and are very interested in implementing this at their faculties.

This faculty-based activity is planned for the new academic year, starting in October 2025. The results of the faculty-based assessments will provide input for an adaptation of the core curriculum for the course on the Knowledge Transfer to the needs of each faculty. More in-depth thematic workshops are also under design and will be implemented accordingly.

Overall, the University is taking an approach of 'carrot' vs. 'stick'. Workshops are likely to encourage researchers who are not currently engaging in KT to join such activities. In the longer term, development of tailored high value KTTO services may encourage those who are independently engaging to make their activity more legitimate. This would mean the university can avoid having to impose a formal regulation on consulting activity.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

To develop the survey:

- A good understanding of SSH-specific research results and research methods which could be transferred
- An understanding of specific needs and mindset of SSH researchers

To deliver the change needed:

- Flexibility of the KTTO in offering tailored trainings for different researcher profiles
- Openness within the university for experimentation with different approaches to expand and legitimise SSH KT activities

Additional external tools inspiring development of the Good Practice:

Inspiration for development of the questionnaire for assessment of the SSH researcher's needs came from the questionnaire used by WIPO in preparation of its Report (see Annex B):

- "Incentives in Technology Transfer. A guide to encourage, recognize and reward researchers and professionals" – https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=4714

For more information on this Good Practice contact: UWRC Ltd. – University of Warsaw spv.

Case Study 11. Knowledge Transfer Award

Good Practice Owner: University of Rijeka Foundation, Croatia

Stage: At the end of the KT process to recognise and reward success and to encourage others to engage.

Sector Specific: No

Partners involved: University of Rijeka and private sponsoring companies

Outline of the Good Practice:

The problem

An analysis of knowledge transfer activities at the University of Rijeka revealed that engagement in market-oriented initiatives by individual university constituents (i.e. faculties) largely depends on leadership attitudes, mandate priorities, and personal preferences rather than being driven by scientific discipline or professional expertise.

Moreover, the current science and higher education framework in Croatia generally fails to support – and in some cases even hinders – the implementation, development, scaling, standardisation and valorisation of knowledge transfer. As a result, KT efforts are primarily driven by highly motivated individuals, while the broader institutional role of university constituents often remains limited or even obstructive.

The University of Rijeka recognised that committed individuals are not being rewarded and this lack of recognition does not encourage others to emulate KT behaviour and engagement.

The solution

To recognise and reward these committed individuals and to encourage others to participate more actively in KT the University of Rijeka Foundation launched the Knowledge Transfer Award.

First awarded in 2019, the award celebrates and rewards exemplary cases of successful knowledge transfer from the University of Rijeka to the business sector and the wider community. As outlined in the call for applications, knowledge transfer encompasses all activities through which the University's competencies, expertise, and equipment are used to create value for economic and societal stakeholders. This includes the commercialisation of the University's intellectual property through sound business practices, benefiting the University, its constituents, staff, and society at large.

Candidates for the award are employees and/or students at all levels of the University of Rijeka, organised in teams with a minimum of two members. Applications may be submitted by team leaders, University of Rijeka constituents, or by legal entities such as businesses and other organisations.

The Evaluation Committee is composed of members of the Foundation's Governing Board, and it always includes a representative from the University and a representative of the sponsor. Based on the Evaluation Committee's proposal, the University of Rijeka Foundation Governing Board makes the final decision on the winners.

The outcome and current status and development trajectory

The award was established in 2019 and has been awarded annually since. The annual budget is EUR 3K. It is granted in the following categories: Consultancy, Contract Research, and Technology Transfer. A maximum of one (1) award per category is granted annually, and the award includes both a certificate and a monetary prize.

In addition to this centralised university-level award, the University Senate has recommended the establishment of similar awards or recognitions at the level of individual university constituents, e.g. faculties. This would further highlight best practices and acknowledge those who have achieved the most effective collaborations with industry or the public sector in the previous year.

Critical aspects for Good Practice adoption and impact

- If the reward involves a financial aspect, then the university needs a reliable source of funding
- An internal assessment team and a selection committee that includes wider stakeholders and is respected and trusted by the applicants
- An enthusiastic research community which will respond to the annual call
- Good promotion efforts, including by past recipients to help demonstrate the impact of knowledge transfer and to generate a snowball effect, encouraging more researchers to engage in KT activities
- Collection of relevant metrics so that the award process can be refined and the impact of the action assessed

For more information on this Good Practice contact:

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University of Rijeka Centre for Research and Innovation

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Part 2: Guidelines, tools and templates

Tool 1. Guidelines for developing a Knowledge Transfer Policy at a University or Research Institute

2. Introduction to the Guidelines

2.1. Purpose of the Guidelines

These guidelines are designed to help universities and research institutions to develop and adopt a policy for Knowledge Transfer (KT). They may also be useful for intuitions which want to review and revise their existing KT Policy.

2.2. Definition and scope of Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge Transfer can be defined as

"The process of sharing information, skills and expertise between universities and businesses".

KT can happen through various mechanisms including knowledge and infrastructure-based services, joint research projects, commercialisation of research results, training programmes, or internships for students. Informal interactions, like conferences or networking events, also play a role in this exchange of knowledge.

KT is often also referred to as **Knowledge Exchange (KE)**, reflecting the fact that that knowledge can come from both sides and in a good interaction if flows in both directions.

The term KT is often used interchangeably with **Technology Transfer** (TT). However, under most definitions, TT is narrower in scope and largely focus on the identification, protection and transfer of research results through sale or licensing. This can be for economic, societal or environmental benefit. KT/KE/TT are all part of the so called 'third stream' mission of a university: they are complimentary to the first mission of teaching and the second mission of research.

It is important to recognise that different individuals and organisations may use the same terms in different ways. Their commonality is that the goals of KT, TT and KE are all to foster innovation and support economic growth and societal benefit by connecting academic insights with practical needs.

In these guidelines we use the term KT as defined above.

How to use these guidelines

These guidelines are intended to be a practical tool. Universities and research institutions may decide to use all or parts of them. They are designed to offer both a process as well as practical examples of how others have approached implementation. They focus on the WHY (are we doing this?), the WHAT (should we do) and the HOW (should we do this). They also look at how you can try and measure success.

It is important to remember that to be effective a process must fit its environment. For this reason, do not be afraid to deviate from what is suggested if a different way will fit better to your needs and produce a stronger result.

3. Developing a KT Policy: Why, What and How

3.1. WHY are we engaging in KT activities?

Many universities and research intuitions are increasing their engagement in knowledge transfer. They are doing this for a variety of reasons and in different ways.

Before diving in, it is important so start by asking: *Why are we engaging in Knowledge Transfer?* Organisational mission along with policy pressure from line ministries and organisations like the European Commission (EC) can play a role in embracing KT, but each university and research institute should be able to identify and communicate a specific institutional rational and objective for engagement to their internal and external stakeholders. This objective can be ambitious, should align with institutional mission, should be formulated in a way that is easy to understand, but should also be realistic and feasible in relation to the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organisation.

Examples of 'why' include:

- The University is committed to international level and world-leading research that is exploited and disseminated for the benefit of our communities

Our strategic Objectives are:

- To promote and support collaborations and partnerships across the institution and with external partners locally, nationally and globally to enhance research excellence and facilitate knowledge exchange.
- To enhance the impact of our research in its broadest terms, and to widen dissemination of our research for the benefit of our communities, whether local, regional, national or global, including our staff and students.

(Oxford Brookes University 2020)

3.2. WHAT do we want to achieve?

Universities often set high-level objectives for KT, e.g. realising the Mission, playing a role in the knowledge economy, benefiting society, contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Beyond the high-level objectives, it is important to be able to translate these into more operational objectives, e.g. generating more research opportunities linked to 'real world' problems; diversifying funding for research away from public grants, e.g. by getting a business customer to pay for contract research; seeing research results being transferred and used in the external world and not confined to a publication; creating learning opportunities for students who carry the mentored/ supervised activity for a business as part of their study programme; generating income from use of specialised equipment, e.g. by offering specialised testing services, that can be used for maintenance and repair; and providing training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to businesses through workshops and structured educational courses.

Operational objectives must align with internal resources and stakeholder commitment: not all research groups will want to carry our contract research for SMEs if there is no prospect of an academic publication from the work; offering business training will only be successful if there is a pool of interested businesses to enrol in the courses.

Operational goals form part of the monitoring and evaluation framework for a policy, e.g. the number of projects with businesses, the value of the research contracts, the number of services offered by a laboratory,

the impact for a business of attending a training course.

Examples of 'what' include:

- We will pursue opportunities for knowledge exchange with industrial, commercial, public sector and other partners, to enable them to benefit from our research capabilities, intellectual property and other knowledge assets and to enable us to establish pathways to impact.
- We will continue to support and develop collaborative research across departments and faculties, and with external partners, in order to respond more effectively to multi- and interdisciplinary initiatives, and research priorities, locally, nationally or globally.
- We will establish appropriate infrastructure and services to underpin collaborations and partnerships and ensure these are effective in supporting, developing and promoting inter- and multi-disciplinary research including doctoral supervision, placements and knowledge exchange.

(Oxford Brookes University 2020)

3.3. HOW will we achieve this?

Resource management lies at the heart of successfully implementing a KT Policy. Without strongly committed individuals, with the right skills, competencies and available time, a KT policy is likely to remain on paper. When this happens, it will be obvious from the associated monitoring metrics.

When selecting activities to help the organisation achieve its specific and overarching goals the availability of individuals from the organisation (researchers, technical staff, students, administrative support), customers (businesses and other organisations) and funding should be a primary consideration.

3.4. Monitoring and feedback

The best way to know if a KT policy is having the desired effect is to monitor results. These should always be measured against a clear baseline ('where are we now?'). It is good to set targets, and these can be ambitious but should also be achievable. Metrics can be both qualitative and quantitative.

It is obviously important that a process and/or system exists to gather performance indicators. However, where it is hard to judge the results of an activity based on the existing available indicators the organisation should consider finding a way to gather new ones.

A KT policy should be regularly reviewed, e.g. annually, and action taken based on the results. This might mean driving the policy harder, e.g. by offering more support and incentives for involvement, or revising the policy if it has been shown not to fit well with internal or external environments.

4. Developing a KT Policy: The process

A strong KT policy is the output of a collaborative effort with different stakeholders. It reflects analysis and consultation.

4.1. Allocating responsibilities

To develop a KT policy a university or research institute will typically start by designating a senior individual who will have the overall responsibility. They may also designate someone more operational to take the task forward on a day-to-day basis. Some universities put together a small team of individuals who represent different experience and skills, e.g. research, legal, teaching functions, etc.

4.2. Selecting analysis tools and approaches

To gather information for the KT Policy it is important to use a variety of tools. These might include:

- SWOT
- Skills and Expertise: Needs and Gap analysis
- External ecosystem mapping and analysis tools

Templates and notes to help you use these three tools can be found in Section 6.

Different approaches can be used to gather the information needed to formulate the policy. This could include small meetings with selected individuals or much larger open meetings to gather input and analyse the results. Meetings should consider topics such as the objectives of a policy and the activities that people would welcome to achieve KT. They can also include discussion of the metrics that would be used to monitor and evaluate the policy and any barriers and constraints that people would face. The SWOT is a particularly good way to capture the outcome of these discussions. Meetings are also a good place to identify gaps in the skills and expertise matrix.

4.3. Deciding on overall and specific objectives

Overall and specific objectives often change after early discussions have taken place with stakeholders.

It can be helpful for the core team (or responsible person) to offer and justify a first suggestion. This can then be discussed. It is very common for individuals to suggest changes. Changes often strengthen the objectives, but they should always be clearly justified, e.g. 'the stated objective is not fully in line with the Mission of the institution. A better objective might be…..'.

You can expect to go through a number of iterations when formulating the objectives. It is worth persisting with this process as full alignment and support from stakeholders increases the likelihood that the final policy will be accepted and show strong results.

4.4. Aligning the policy internally

It is important that any new policy fully aligns with existing policies, e.g. with regard to teaching and research. To ensure alignment it is valuable not just to review the existing policies but also to include individuals on the team developing the KT Policy who have responsibility for their implementation or ensure that they are involved in reviewing it in draft form.

KT Policy drafters may find it useful to develop a matrix of objectives for teaching, research and KT, and make sure that they are all clearly aligned with the overarching objectives. This is an opportunity to identify any misalignments and to see where there may be synergies, e.g. when recruiting or developing new skills.

4.5. Setting KPIs

KPIs are critical for measuring if the policy is having the desired effect. There should be enough KPIs to capture the picture but not so many that they become onerous. An attempt should be made to capture both qualitative and quantitative impacts.

Common examples of quantitative KT KPIs include:

- Number and financial value of different contracted KT collaborations
- Number of new and returning organisations partnering with the university on KT
- Number of different types of organisation (and indication of the diversity of KT partnerships)
- Number of workshops, events, and other interactions as well as an indication of the number and type of organisations and individuals attending
- Number of patents filed
- Number and value of licenses
- Number of new companies launched (startups and spinoff/spinouts)

Qualitative indictors

Some funding agencies[25] also encourage collection of more qualitative indicators through impact case studies. These provide qualitative evidence of the societal and economic benefits of KT activities.

As outlined in section 3.4 above, it should be possible for the KPIs to be collected without major administrative effort. It is important that a baseline can be established before the KT policy is introduced.

The team developing the KT policy should consult the KPIs widely before they are adopted. Consultations should include any team currently responsible for collecting the metrics, e.g. a legal office at the university as well as heads of faculties and research teams.

Once the KPIs have been agreed, a baseline should be established. If this proves difficult – for example, because some faculties do not currently collect or share the required information with central management, or because resource constraints or informal systems make these practices difficult to change – the KPIs should be reviewed.

4.6. Developing an Action Plan

The KT policy should be translated into an action plan. This would typically cover the first 3 years of implementation with information being collected annually.

The action plan should identify specific actions to be taken and the individuals responsible for them. It should also indicate how actions will be funded and sustained.

Based on a needs analysis, the plan may need to include actions to support new skills development and capacity building if this has been identified as important for the implementation of the policy. In this case, it

25 Examples of templates used to capture case studies can be found on the UK website: https://www.ukri.org/publications/knowledge-exchange-framework-kef-narrative-guidance-for-kef3/

is important to consider how such capacity building will be funded and if this has the support of those who would need to be involved (see stakeholder analysis).

4.7. Reviewing and modifying the draft Policy

The KT policy needs to be presented and circulated several times as it evolves. This will help to ensure that it has the support of the most powerful and interested stakeholders, that it fits the internal strengths and weaknesses, reflects the ecosystem and will achieve its objectives. Both less formal meetings and workshops and more formal review should be used with timescales for response clearly laid out. (These should be in agreement with any internal regulation on such a review process.)

4.8. Adoption

Any official policy document needs to be adopted in accordance with internal regulations. This formal process should be considered at the beginning of the policy development to ensure that it is reflected in the actions that follow.

Summary: 10-point Step-by-Step actions to develop a KT Policy and Action Plan

*(**Step 0**: Set up the KT Policy team. Make sure that the process for officially adopting a new policy is clear to them, e.g. in terms of adoption by an official body such as a Senate. Make sure they understand any time constraints or consultation steps that must be followed and insert them into the process below as needed).*

***Step 1**: Start by drafting a high level strategic KT objective. (Be prepared to modify this as you progress.)*

***Step 2**: Carry out a SWOT analysis, ecosystem mapping and stakeholder analysis (see the templates and instructions tools at the end of these guidelines). Discuss the results. Ask if the results support the high-level objective. If not, agree a new high-level objective.*

***Step 3**: Based on the analysis and discussions, select several specific objectives that can be translated into clear actions. (Again, be prepared for these to change after you have undertaken more analysis.)*

***Step 4**: Examine the objectives for alignment with existing policies and strategies. Consider if it might be better if the KT strategy is merged into another broader policy, e.g. Innovation or even Research and Innovation. Respond accordingly and redraft as necessary.*

***Step 5**: Present the results of your analysis and test the overall and specific objectives with the stakeholders you have identified and in particular those at the top of the power/interest grid. Discuss if the feedback means that objectives may need to change.*

***Step 6**: Make a first full draft of the KP Policy linking objectives to the results of the analysis. Include draft KPIs. Circulate this to the most important stakeholders and set a realistic deadline for comments and suggestions.*

***Step 7**: Based on the feedback, produce a revised draft of the Policy including KPIs.*

***Step 8**: Based on the specific objectives and KPIs draft an associated Action Plan for implementing the Policy. Consider a 3-5-year timeframe. Circulate the action plan to stakeholders. Gather feedback including an indication of current gaps in the skills and resources that would be needed to implement the action plan.*

***Step 9**: Review the draft policy and action plan in the light of the feedback and the skills and resources gap analysis. Decide if additional actions can take place to secure skills and resources needed, or if the action plan will need to be modified so it can be implemented with existing skills and resources. Make adjustments to the Policy with KPIs and Action Plan. Circulate the final draft version for final feedback or move to step 10.*

***Step 10**: Enter the formal process for approval and adoption (see Step 0).*

Regional examples of polices that support KT

University of Rijeka Innovation Strategy

https://uniri.hr/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/2012_Innovation_Strategy_University_of_Rijeka.pdf

The objectives of the Innovation Strategy are:

- To establish a successful system of transferring ideas, research results, knowledge and technology to the business sector in order to enable the commercial implementation,
- To enable a successful transfer of knowledge, experience and technologies from business sector and their subsequent use in the activities of the University of Rijeka.

University of Ljubljana

The University of Ljubljana Strategy 2022–2027 includes five development areas and three supporting areas.

The development areas of the strategy are:

- developing education for creativity, innovation, criticality and social responsibility, embedded in the domestic and international environment,
- promote excellence in science and the arts, internationalisation, interdisciplinarity, openness and social relevance,
- build on support for the transfer of knowledge and the arts to all spheres of social life,
- promote an accessible, inclusive and equitable academic environment, and
- strengthen the social role and place of UL in national and global societal dialogue.

Supporting templates

Knowledge Transfer SWOT template and instructions

Introduction to the tool

Knowledge Transfer (KT) approaches and practices should reflect the internal research environment of an organisation as well as the external environment (ecosystem) in which it operates. For example, university A that is not carrying out significant applied research and that is located in an area with many SMEs will approach KT in a very different way to university B that performs very strong research in the field of biotechnology and that is located in a town or country with very strong biotech industry including start-ups and large pharmaceutical companies.

One of the best ways to analyse both internal and external environments is by using a SWOT. This looks at Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats related to an activity such as KT.

Strong SWOT analysis identifies Strengths than can overcome Weaknesses and help to mitigate Threats. It also seeks out Opportunities that align with Strengths.

SWOT analysis is best undertaken by a small group that can then ask for feedback on the analysis from other stakeholders. This allows the SWOT to be refined. Once there is general agreement, the SWOT analysis can be used to plan and make strategic decisions.

Below is a SWOT template with some instructions on how to approach the tasks to ensure that the SWOT is a powerful tool.

Instructions for undertaking a powerful SWOT analysis:

1. Defining the purpose of the SWOT

Carefully define the **purpose** of your KT SWOT, e.g. 'To help us set up and assign resources to KT in our HEI' or 'To help us review and revise our current KT strategy'. The more carefully you define the purpose the more likely you will obtain a useful SWOT analysis.

2. Establishing a SWOT team

Bring together a small group of stakeholders who are knowledgeable about different aspects of KT as well as the organisation, e.g. researchers, KT/TT experts, representatives from the legal and finance offices and management. Elect a moderator to ask questions and keep people moving forward/on topic and scribe to take notes.

3. Gathering input (I): Internal environment

Use the template to gather ideas on the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats related to ***KT at the organisation***. Keep thinking carefully about the purpose and make sure everybody stays on topic during the discussions. If necessary, politely remind people of the purpose and draw them back to it if the conversation becomes too broad.

You might find it easiest to use a whiteboard so you can move ideas around, reflect priorities and show linkages (use arrows).

4. Gathering input (II): External environment

Consider if it would be useful to repeat the exercise for the external environment/ecosystem. You may need to involve a slightly different group, e.g. one including representatives from the business community (SME owners, start-ups, chamber of commerce, etc.).

5. Seek further feedback

Once you have an internal (and perhaps also an external) SWOT, share it more widely and ask for feedback. If you have undertaken only an internal SWOT, then it will be very important to gain input from the ecosystem as it may have a very different perspective and may be able to identify opportunities and threats that you have not considered.

6. Refine the SWOT

Based on all the feedback, create the final version of the SWOT.

7. Apply the final result

Use the analysis for the Purpose you defined, e.g. to help you develop or refine a KT strategy.

SWOT TEMPLATE

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	Priority
		HIGH
		MEDIUM
		LOW

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS	Priority
		HIGH
		MEDIUM
		LOW

Skills and Competencies

Checklist of existing/needed skills and competences

The checklist below is designed to help you identify any major gaps in the skills and competencies that you need to effectively carry our KT activities.

Skills and competencies are very strongly aligned with KT activities. This means that they will vary from institution to institution. For example, most organisations need some level of legal support to manage KT contracts; however, research organisations dealing with STEM (Science, Technology Engineering and Maths) research may need specialised advice on patenting while those supporting the AHSS (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) may need specialised advice on copyrights. In a similar way, there may be a need for particular understanding of different sectors in order to identify and communicate with potential external KT partners that align with internal research strengths. HEIs intending to make use of specialised research infrastructure in their labs may need access to supporting technical staff.

This list is based on suggestions gathered from the WB6 KT Peer Learning Group. It is not designed to be exhaustive, and you may not need all the suggestions below.

Checklist of skills and competencies that you may need access to as you establish KT activities:

- ☑ Legal skills (contracting and IP management)
- ☑ Financial skills (accounting and invoicing)
- ☑ Marketing and communicating skills (to engage with potential partners)
- ☑ Sector specific skills (to analyse market opportunities and to engage in meaningful direct discussions with organisations from specific sectors)
- ☑ KT translation skills (to act as the broker between the research and business environments)
- ☑ Funding skills including grant applications and grant management
- ☑ Project Management skills

Gap analysis tool

This gap analysis tool is designed to help you identify where you have access to needed skills and competences (S&C) and where you would need to recruit/develop or otherwise find other ways to gain access to them for you KT activities. It is best used in conjunction with the checklist of existing/needed skills and competences.

Needed Skills (see checklist). These are skills that you will need access to in order to implement an effective KT strategy and plan.	Internally available? (Indicate source, e.g. unit or named individual)	External access? (Indicate source and any restrictions/conditions, e.g. financial constraints)	Gap Highlight where the needed skill is not currently available.

S&C Action Plan

Indicate how you might try and fill the identified gaps. This could include recruitment, resource sharing and training of existing human resources.

Missing skill	Priority	Plan to secure skills

Knowledge Transfer Ecosystem Checklist:

The checklist below is designed to help you identify any major gaps in the ecosystem needed for effective Knowledge Transfer (KT).

This list is based on suggestions gathered from the WB6 KT Peer Learning Group. It is not designed to be exhaustive, and you may not need all the suggestions below.

Checklist of aspects to consider as you establish KT activities:

Internal

- ☑ Critical mass of researchers willing and committed to engage
- ☑ Backing of senior management
- ☑ Internal regulation to support the activity, e.g. one that deals with the use of equipment and engagement of academic staff in KT activities
- ☑ Designated KT support (e.g. a Knowledge Transfer Office, Research Services Office, Technology Transfer Office, Innovation Centre, etc.)
- ☑ Sufficient understanding of the topic (e.g. by the researchers and their management)

External

- ☑ A local commercial sector or other potential KT partners that fit your KT offering
- ☑ Sources of funding to support engagement, e.g. innovation vouchers
- ☑ Supportive intermediary organisations, e.g. chamber of commerce, cluster organisations

Tool 2. Cooperation Readiness Assessment (CRA) – User Manual

Introduction to Cooperation Readiness Assessment (CRA) and guidelines

The **CRA** is a qualitative tool used internally by Knowledge Transfer Offices (KTOs) to evaluate how ready a research team is to collaborate with industry or other external partners. It is typically applied after initial contacts and interviews have built trust between KT staff and researchers. The CRA focuses **on five dimensions** of researcher behaviour and attitude that affect collaboration outcomes.

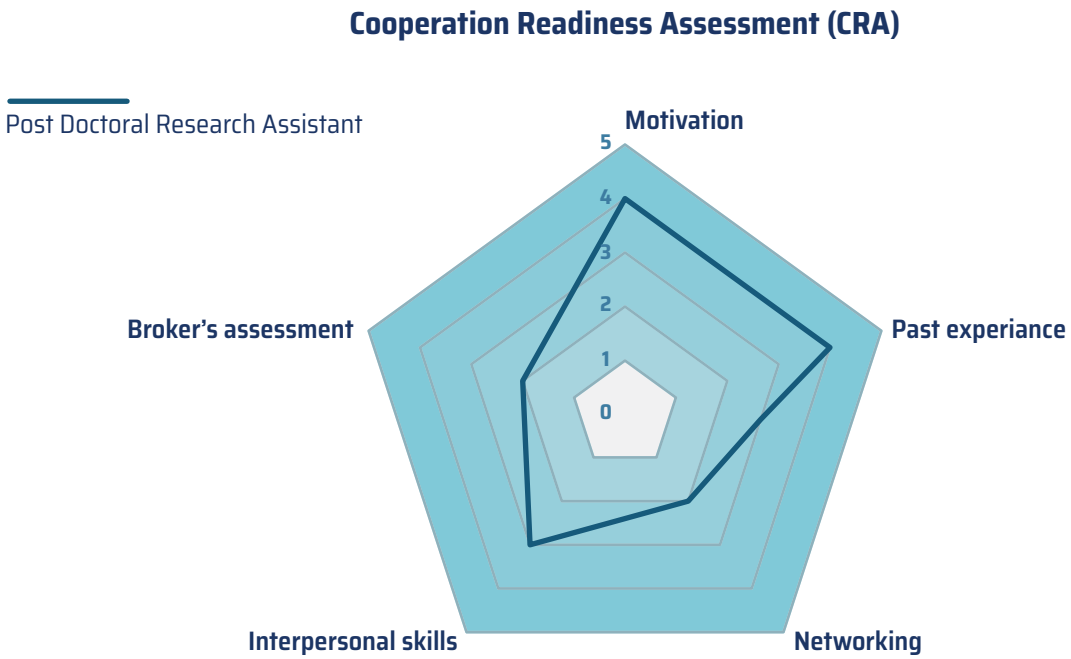
- Motivation
- Previous experience in commercial cooperation
- Networking
- Interpersonal skills
- KTO personal assessment

For each dimension, KTO staff uses **guiding questions** to gather information during multiple interactions, then assigns a score (0–4) based on their overall judgment.

This manual explains each dimension, its rationale, and the purpose of the guiding questions, and provides detailed scoring guidelines with practical scenarios and case examples.

The assessment is designed to be **internal**. It can be used to help the KTO to determine which support services might be best for the team based on the sort of KT activities they are best suited for, e.g. collaborative research (low TRL) vs. bringing a new product to market with an enterprise (high TRL).

It can be useful to revisit the survey after a few years to see if preferences or readiness have shifted.



Main dimensions

1. Motivation (to collaborate with external partners)

Importance: Researcher motivation is the driving factor for any successful collaboration. A highly motivated team will proactively support project needs, contribute effort beyond basic requirements, and stay engaged to overcome challenges. In contrast, a researcher with low or negative motivation may ignore requests, resist adapting their research, or even undermine projects. In practice, KTOs have observed that when researchers lack interest in practical applications, technology licensing can stall or fail. Assessing motivation early helps identify whether to proceed, adjust the collaboration approach, or manage expectations.

Guiding questions

- What is the team's main motivation (scientific, financial, prestige)?
- Is the team interested in working with an external partner?
- Is the practical application of knowledge important to the team?
- Is the opportunity to generate additional income important to the team?

Purpose of Guiding Questions: The guiding questions under Motivation probe the researchers' underlying reasons for partnering with industry. They explore whether the team values scientific discovery, financial gain, prestige, or societal impact. The questions also check if the team sees practical applications as important and if they welcome additional income opportunities. These questions help KTO staff understand the team's priorities and incentives, ensuring that any proposed collaboration aligns with what the researchers actually care about.

Scoring (0–4): A KTO staff member assigns a score after several conversations, reflecting the team's enthusiasm and interest in collaboration. The score is a holistic judgment, not a mathematical average. Bullet-point scenarios illustrate behaviours typical at each score level:

Interpretation of the responses

Score 0 – Very Low Motivation:

- The researcher is dismissive or hostile towards the idea of working with industry.
- They express that they "don't do business" or that profit motives are irrelevant to their work.
- Requests to discuss commercial applications are met with silence or outright refusal.
- They rarely respond to emails or cancel meetings about technology transfer.

Score 1 – Low Motivation:

- The researcher is hesitant or indifferent about external cooperation.
- They agree to meetings but only when it is convenient (e.g. during office hours) and give no signs of enthusiasm.

- They often redirect conversations back to academic goals (publications, pure science) rather than application.
- They may faintly acknowledge money or industry contacts, but without real interest.

Score 2 – Moderate Motivation:

- The researcher shows some openness but lacks commitment.
- They listen to ideas about collaboration but are non-committal, often saying "maybe" or "we'll see".
- They understand the concept of practical applications and extra income, but have not actively pursued them.
- They may join discussions about industry only if prompted, or on the condition that it does not interfere with their academic agenda.

Score 3 – High Motivation:

- The researcher is clearly interested in working with industry.
- They ask questions about practical use of their work and express curiosity about market potential.
- They have positive attitudes towards funding or recognition from industry partners.
- They agree to schedule follow-up meetings promptly and appear eager to explore opportunities.

Score 4 – Very High Motivation:

- The researcher is enthusiastic and committed to collaboration.
- They proactively seek opportunities to apply their research in industry settings.
- They talk about targeting real-world problems, startup ideas, or additional income streams.
- They volunteer information about any related projects and actively ask how they can contribute to or benefit from a partnership.

Mini-Case Studies – Motivation:

Case (Score 0): Dr A is a chemistry professor who firmly believes research should stay within academia. When a KTO staff member mentions a company interested in her catalyst, Dr A responds, "I work for the glory of science, not for business", and stops replying to follow-up emails. The KTO staff member senses complete disinterest; this aligns with a 0 score.

Case (Score 1): Dr E is polite but guarded. When asked about motivation, he says he is "open to discussion" but spends the conversation emphasising fundamental research. He rarely reaches out outside scheduled calls and postpones a site visit twice. This reserved stance corresponds to a score of 1.

Case (Score 2): Dr C, a biologist, mentions that applying her findings to real-world problems "could be interesting", but emphasizes, "My main focus is publishing". She attends a kick-off meeting reluctantly and agrees to think about industry tests. Her lukewarm engagement suggests a score around 2.

- **Case (Score 3):** Professor D says he "sees value" in industrial feedback and notes that extra funding would help his lab. He attends a technology fair with the KTO staff member and asks detailed questions about potential use cases. He does not push for ownership or rush the process, but he shows clear interest — fitting a score of 3.
- **Case (Score 4):** Dr B is an engineer who founded a university spin-off. During meetings, he eagerly discusses how his latest sensor prototype can save energy in factories. He asks about potential grants and partners and even outlines a rough budget. He checks his calendar immediately to set up the next meeting. His energy and initiative match a score of 4.

2. Previous Experience

Importance: Previous experience with industry or external projects gives insight into how smoothly a collaboration might proceed. Teams which have successfully worked on contracts or joint projects know what to expect: managing budgets, meeting deadlines, adhering to requirements, and communicating with non-academic partners. Inexperienced teams may underestimate the effort required, overlook important steps (like IP agreements), or have unrealistic expectations. Assessing previous experience helps a KTO identify potential risks: for example, a researcher who has delivered on past contracts likely understands deliverables and timelines, whereas a team with no history may need extra guidance or could inadvertently cause delays.

Guiding questions

- Has the team leader worked with external entities before (projects, contracts)?
- Has the team worked with external entities before (projects, contracts)?
- Has the team carried out the commercial contracts (how many, value)?
- Has the team received references from previous clients?

Purpose of Guiding Questions: The Previous Experience questions ask whether the team and its leader have worked with external entities before, the nature and number of commercial contracts they have done, and whether they have client references. These questions let a KTO gauge familiarity with industry processes. They also reveal credibility: a team with multiple completed contracts and good references likely knows how to meet industry partner needs. Conversely, no track record or lack of accountability (no references or report of work done) signals that extra effort may be needed to bring the team up to speed.

Interpretation of the responses

Scoring (0–4): The KTO scores how seasoned the team is, based on cumulative experience:

- **Score 0 – No Relevant Experience:**
  - The team and leader have never worked on any external contract or joint project.
  - They have only purely academic grants or publications on their record.
  - They may be unfamiliar with terms like 'deliverable', 'scope', or 'client requirement'.
  - They have no references or evidence of collaboration with industry.

- **Score 1 – Minimal Experience:**
  - The team leader has had perhaps one minor interaction with industry (e.g. a small fee-for-service test or a brief consultancy).
  - The team might have attended an industry-academia project but played a minor role.
  - References are limited or informal; for example, "we did a small water test for a local company last year".
  - Overall, they lack a track record of formal contract work.
- **Score 2 – Some Experience:**
  - The team has participated in a couple of industry-relevant projects or contracts (e.g. 1–2 projects, maybe government or EU funded with industry partners).
  - They have partial familiarity with project management and meeting client demands, but may have relied on academic funding structures.
  - They might have one or two references from past collaborations.
  - They know basic procedures (like issuing invoices) but may still need guidance.
- **Score 3 – Good Experience:**
  - The team leader and/or members have led or contributed to multiple external projects (e.g. R&D contracts, consultancy projects).
  - They have successfully delivered results in past collaborations (e.g. developed a prototype for a company).
  - They can provide contactable references who can confirm their quality of work.
  - They speak knowledgeably about budgets, timelines, and adapting research to client needs.
- **Score 4 – Extensive and Successful Experience:**
  - The team boasts a strong history of industry collaboration. For example, the leader has managed several sizable contracts or worked closely with industry partners for years.
  - They have a portfolio of past projects of significant value, and multiple, very positive references from industry.
  - They may have published case studies or patents arising from earlier collaborations.
  - They articulate lessons learned from past projects and apply that knowledge proactively.

Mini-Case Studies – Previous Experience:

- **Case (Score 0):** Dr F is a fresh postdoctoral researcher who has only worked on university grants. He has never interacted with companies beyond sending his research paper to a corporate journal. When asked about past contracts, he looks puzzled. The KTO realises Dr F has no relevant experience, indicating a score of 0.

- **Case (Score 1):** Dr J's only industry experience was contributing data to a large multi-partner project, but he was not directly contracted by a company. He has no firsthand knowledge of bidding or delivering to private clients. He mentions a vague summer internship in industry a decade ago. This slight exposure suggests a score around 1.
- **Case (Score 2):** The energy research team led by Dr H has done one EU project involving a company (they built a lab prototype) and one government project studying market potential. They delivered both on time with moderate effort. Dr H provides contacts who give generally positive feedback. This moderate portfolio corresponds to a score of 2.
- **Case (Score 3):** Dr I and his team have 3 completed contracts with industry over several years, including custom testing for manufacturers. They have a well-written technical report from each. While experienced, Dr I admits he sometimes had to be reminded about paperwork. His knowledge level is solid, fitting a 3 score.
- **Case (Score 4):** Professor G runs a robotics lab that collaborates with local industry. Over the last 5 years, she has completed 6 industry-funded projects (totalling €200k) and has reference letters from two CEOs praising her work. In conversation, she confidently outlines how she incorporated client feedback in past projects. This depth of experience merits a score of 4.

3. Networking

Importance: Effective networking reflects a research team's external engagement. Teams that regularly attend workshops, industry fairs, or matchmaking events typically have broader awareness of market needs and may already have contacts that can become partners or early customers. Networking indicates proactiveness: it shows the researchers are interested in exchanging ideas outside academia. In regions like the WB6, where formal industry-science bridges are still growing, researchers who seek out networking opportunities often achieve more successful collaborations. On the other hand, teams that are isolated may lack critical insights about industry trends and miss out on organic partnership opportunities. Understanding a team's networking behaviour helps a KTO to anticipate how much introduction work they will need to do and whether the team is likely to approach potential partners directly in future.

Guiding questions

- Does the team leader participate in events organised by TTO (mixers, fairs, etc.)?
- Do team members participate in events organised by TTO (mixers, fairs, etc.)?
- Does the team leader (members) participate in events other than scientific conferences?
- Is the team leader (members) a member of any business/industrial organisations?

Purpose of Guiding Questions: The Networking questions explore whether the team leader and members participate in events beyond their labs. For example, involvement in KTO-organised mixers, industry fairs, or non-academic conferences shows willingness to connect. Questions also ask if they belong to industry associations or business organisations. These queries reveal how outward-looking the team is. A team active in relevant communities is likely easier to connect with partners. If they rarely leave their academic bubble, a KTO may need to invest extra effort in relationship-building or coach them on networking etiquette.

Scoring (0–4): The score reflects the breadth and depth of the team's networking activities:

Interpretation of the responses

- **Score 0 – No Networking:**
  - » Neither the team leader nor the members attend any industry or inter-sector events. They only go to academic conferences or workshops in their narrow research field.
  - » They are unaware of local technology fairs, trade shows, or TTO events, and have never participated.
  - » They are not part of any professional associations or committees.
  - » When such events are mentioned, they seem uninterested or think "that's not for me".
- **Score 1 – Minimal Networking:**
  - » Perhaps one or two team members have attended general science conferences or a company-sponsored event, but this was not by their own initiative (e.g. invited by a colleague).
  - » They have heard of TTO mixers or tech days but have never attended or only went once by chance.
  - » They may follow some online forums or social media groups but have no active participation in professional societies.
- **Score 2 – Some Networking:**
  - » The team leader or members occasionally attend relevant events. For example, they went to a career fair or visited a company expo with the class.
  - » They have attended at least one technology transfer workshop or science-industry forum (perhaps organised by the KTO or a faculty).
  - » They might have one or two professional connections (e.g. on LinkedIn) in industry but mostly stay in academic circles.
- **Score 3 – Good Networking:**
  - » The team leader regularly participates in industry-related events (e.g. annual trade fair, innovation contests, KTO match-making events). They may even present their work at these venues.
  - » Team members also join such events; networking is seen as part of their routine outreach.
  - » The leader is a member of a local industry-research association or cluster.
  - » They have a growing network of contacts in companies and often engage with them outside formal projects.

- **Score 4 – Extensive Networking:**

  - The team actively builds and maintains a large network. For example, the leader chairs a technical committee, chairs a session at an industry conference, or is on the board of a professional society.
  - Team members frequently attend and sometimes organise networking events or hackathons. They may have business partners or alumni in industry.
  - The team collaborates informally with start-ups or consults with companies even before formal projects.
  - They clearly understand the value of networking and leverage it to generate collaboration leads.

Mini-Case Studies – Networking:

- **Case (Score 0):** Team K consists of mathematicians who work almost entirely online and meet only with academic peers. When the KTO mentions a local industry fair, the team leader remarks: "We don't usually go to those; it's out of our field". The team has never attended a non-academic event, matching a score of 0.
- **Case (Score 1):** One PhD student in Dr O's group joined a student startup weekend last year. Otherwise, the group has little external interaction. The leader knows of TTO events but has never prioritised attending. This minimal participation corresponds to a score of 1.
- **Case (Score 2):** Dr M's lab sent a representative to a careers fair once, and they have attended a university-hosted entrepreneurship workshop. They have heard about but not yet attended the annual industry-science forum in their city. Their activity is moderate, fitting a score of 2.
- **Case (Score 3):** The biotech team under Professor N participates in most biotech symposia, and they often join company-sponsored challenges. They are members of a biotechnology association and have a mailing list of industry contacts. While not community leaders, they network well, justifying a score of 3.
- **Case (Score 4):** Dr L leads an interdisciplinary energy research group. She is a board member of an industry association and helped organise a renewable energy conference. Her team regularly staffs the university booth at the tech expo. They exchange business cards with potential partners and even co-host meetups. This level of engagement merits a score of 4.

4. Interpersonal Skills

Importance: Interpersonal (soft) skills determine how effectively a researcher can communicate and collaborate. Technical knowledge alone is not enough; researchers must explain ideas clearly, negotiate project scopes, and build rapport with partners. Good interpersonal skills foster trust and prevent misunderstandings. A researcher who listens, explains results well, and adapts to different audiences will help keep collaborations on track. Conversely, poor communication or social skills can frustrate partners (e.g. if a researcher cannot articulate their progress, or if they come across as abrupt or disrespectful). In challenging projects, teams with strong interpersonal skills often navigate conflicts and changes more successfully. Overall, this dimension helps predict the human factor in collaboration – essential given the diverse backgrounds and expectations of stakeholders.

Guiding questions

- Does the team leader (team members) easily establish relationships?
- Does the team leader (team members) have experience in public presentations?
- Does the team leader (team members) have experience in negotiations?
- Is the team leader fluent in any foreign languages?

Purpose of Guiding Questions: The questions in Interpersonal Skills ask whether the team can easily establish relationships, and whether they have experience in public presentations or negotiations. They also check for foreign language fluency, which is important in international partnerships. Together, these questions reveal how well the team can interact beyond their immediate academic circle. For example, someone who is outgoing and practiced at presentations is likely to represent their team well in meetings. Being fluent in a common industry language (often English) reduces barriers. Knowing a team's interpersonal capabilities allows the KTO to anticipate communication training needs or when to involve additional support (e.g. translators or communication coaches).

Scoring (0–4): Scores reflect the overall maturity of the team's soft skills:

Interpretation of the responses

Score 0 – Very Poor Skills:

- The team leader and members struggle to build new professional relationships. They may be extremely introverted or standoffish in meetings.
- They have never given a public or industry-oriented presentation; in fact, public speaking terrifies them.
- Negotiation experience is absent; they get flustered when discussing terms or budgets.
- They speak only their native language, which is not commonly used by the potential partner (e.g. no English for an international project), making communication difficult.

Score 1 – Below Average Skills:

- The team can handle small group interactions but rarely initiates new conversations beyond their department.
- They have given a few talks at local seminars but avoid large or mixed audiences. They might read from slides with minimal explanation.
- They have little or no formal negotiation experience and rely on advisors for contracts.
- They know basic English but hesitate to use it, leading to misunderstandings or slow explanations.

Score 2 – Average Skills:

- The team leader and members can introduce themselves and discuss their work with outsiders, though sometimes awkwardly.

- They have delivered presentations in familiar settings (e.g. within the university) and attempt to adapt slides for non-specialist audiences.
- They have been part of negotiation meetings but usually let administrators handle legalities.
- They communicate in English at a functional level; conversations happen but with noticeable pauses or searching for words.

Score 3 – Good Skills:

- The team easily connects with new people; the leader quickly establishes rapport in meetings.
- They have experience presenting to diverse audiences (e.g. industry stakeholders, potential investors) and adjust their talk style accordingly.
- They have been involved in negotiating project terms (perhaps at a technical level, leaving legal aspects to others) and understand the give-and-take nature of deals.
- They are fluent or proficient in English (or the partner's language), making discussions smooth. They may even speak a third language if relevant.

Score 4 – Excellent Skills:

- The team is charismatic and very comfortable in all professional interactions. The leader is a clear, confident communicator.
- They have given high-profile presentations (e.g. at conferences or to corporate partners) with compelling storytelling.
- They actively negotiate terms, skilfully balancing technical needs and partner demands, and often propose creative solutions.
- They are highly multilingual and can seamlessly switch languages as needed, demonstrating cultural awareness and flexibility.

Mini-Case Studies – Interpersonal Skills:

Case (Score 0): Dr P is brilliant but painfully shy. In meetings, he nods at questions but rarely speaks up; his emails are curt and he often omits important details. He gets tongue-tied presenting to the company team, and the KTO has to interpret for him. He only knows local language, making an English call almost impossible. These issues reflect a score of 0.

Case (Score 1): Dr T can talk to known colleagues but hesitates with strangers. She gave one departmental talk nervously and mumbled through slides. In email, she sometimes misses pleasantries. She has never participated in negotiating terms and relies on her dean to translate contracts. She knows basic English (enough for simple emails) but the KTO often repeats queries. Her skills are limited, matching a score of 1.

Case (Score 2): Dr R speaks well enough but sticks to technical jargon unless prompted. At a demo meeting, she handed over presentations to the KTO to avoid questions, indicating some discomfort. She helped negotiate her last project's requirements but always deferred to legal counsel for the contract. She has intermediate English and can follow a meeting but cannot express herself fully. This mix of strengths and weaknesses suggests a score around 2.

- **Case (Score 3):** Professor S is personable and energetic. He moderated a Q&A at an industry workshop and fielded tough questions with humour. In a negotiation meeting, he clearly explained why a certain material was needed and helped find a compromise deadline. He is fluent in English and speaks French during project calls. Overall, he communicates effectively, fitting a score of 3.
- **Case (Score 4):** Dr Q leads a physics lab and runs a student outreach programme. In meetings, she listens, summarises discussions clearly, and smiles when making points. She has presented her research at international symposiums, confidently answering layman's questions. During contract talks, she calmly negotiates milestones. She speaks fluent English and German, delighting foreign partners by switching languages. Her social ease and experience earn a 4.

5. KTO's Assessment

Importance: The KTO's Assessment dimension captures the quality of the day-to-day working relationship between the KTO staff and the research team. It reflects intangible factors such as mutual respect, responsiveness, and reliability. A positive KTO-researcher relationship often determines the efficiency of coordination: if a researcher treats the KTO as a serious partner, they will more likely follow through on agreements. Conversely, if a researcher feels the KTO is an intruder or dismissive, important information may be withheld and deadlines ignored. This dimension is crucial because even a competent researcher may derail collaboration through uncooperative behaviours. Using the broker's personal experience allows these nuanced observations to be quantified.

Guiding Questions

- Do you feel treated seriously or like an intruder?
- How easy is to set up a call or a meeting?
- How long do you have to wait for a response to emails?
- Do they keep their promises / deadlines?

Purpose of Guiding Questions: These questions are subjective and ask the KTO to evaluate how they feel interacting with the researcher. For example: does the researcher make the KTO feel respected or unwelcome? Are calls and meetings easy to set up, or does the researcher delay scheduling? How quickly does the researcher respond to emails? Does the researcher keep commitments and honour agreed deadlines? These questions focus on practical collaboration dynamics: if a researcher consistently delays or defaults, that signals a red flag. The broker's answers help summarise the human connection aspect of cooperation.

Scoring (0–4): The score is based on the broker's aggregated experience in all communications with the team:

Interpretation of the responses

- **Score 0 – Very Poor Interaction:**
  - The KTO feels consistently unappreciated or frustrated. The researcher treats all inquiries as a nuisance.
  - Setting up a call or meeting is extremely difficult; the researcher may cancel at the last minute or not show up.

- Email responses take weeks or never come. Promises made (e.g. to send data or materials) are frequently broken without explanation.
- The KTO often needs to intervene with higher management just to get basic cooperation.

Score 1 – Below Average Interaction:

- The researcher is polite but distant. The KTO often senses hesitation when making requests.
- Meetings happen but usually only after multiple follow-ups; the researcher might be late or cut calls short.
- Email replies are slow (several days) and sometimes incomplete, requiring reminders.
- The researcher occasionally misses a promised deadline or delivers late, usually apologising but needing prodding.

Score 2 – Average Interaction:

- The KTO gets a generally professional but not warm relationship. The researcher treats tasks earnestly but without extra effort.
- Scheduling a meeting takes a reasonable number of emails/calls (perhaps scheduling through an assistant).
- Email responses come back in a day or two, sometimes terse but they answer the question.
- Deadlines are mostly met, though occasionally the KTO has to check in. There are no major lapses, but also no exceptional cooperation.

Score 3 – Good Interaction:

- The researcher is friendly and respectful; the KTO feels heard and taken seriously. Calls and meetings are easy to arrange; the researcher often initiates scheduling to keep progress.
- Emails are answered promptly (within a day) with complete information. Promised deliverables (reports, samples, data) are provided on time or early. The researcher even thanks the KTO for guidance.

Score 4 – Excellent Interaction:

- The KTO feels very well-treated and as a valued collaborator. The researcher is enthusiastic during every interaction.
- Meetings are set up quickly, sometimes spontaneously, and the researcher may even invite additional team members or stakeholders to join.
- Emails get answered almost instantly, often with helpful details or solutions beyond what was asked.
- All commitments are honoured reliably; the researcher surpasses expectations (for instance, sending extra information or drafting project outlines proactively). The relationship is highly productive.

Mini-Case Studies – KTO Assessment:

- **Case (Score 0):** In working with Dr U, the KTO finds itself constantly dismissed. Dr U rarely picks up the phone and, when he does, he seems annoyed. He often replies months late, saying "Just saw this email". After promising to send preliminary test results by last Friday, he has not delivered and does not respond to follow-ups. The KTO feels treated as an obstacle, and scores this as 0.
- **Case (Score 1):** Dr Y's communication is somewhat inconsistent. She responds to emails after a couple of days, occasionally asking the KTO to repeat information ("Which document did you mean?"). Setting meetings requires the KTO to send multiple scheduling emails. When a deadline passes, Dr Y offers excuses (for example, "I was away at a conference") but does eventually comply. The KTO senses that Dr Y tries to be helpful but sometimes drops the ball, making this an interaction level of about 1.
- **Case (Score 2):** The collaboration with Dr W is steady and cooperative but unremarkable. Calls are arranged after a couple of emails, and Dr W is polite during conversations. He typically responds to emails within 1-2 days. He keeps his promises, although he often needs gentle reminders ("just checking if you got that report"). The KTO does not feel any tension but also sees no extra initiative. This typical partnership fits a score of 2.
- **Case (Score 3):** Working with Professor X, the KTO notes ease in communication. Meetings are promptly scheduled via a shared calendar invite. Professor X is good-humoured and interested, often ending conversations by asking, "Is there anything else I can prepare?". Email queries are answered the same day, usually in full detail. Slight issues (like a missed small deadline) have happened once, but the Professor apologised and quickly remedied it. This reliable professional dynamic scores a 3.
- **Case (Score 4):** The KTOs interactions with Dr V are exemplary. Dr V answers each email within hours, asking clarifying questions when needed. When the KTO suggested a weekly check-in, Dr V immediately set up a recurring call and invited the lab manager to join. In meetings, Dr V listens intently and offers to take notes. He consistently hands in data ahead of schedule and even provides additional background reading to help the KTO explain the project to others. These positive interactions justify a 4.

Summary of the Dimensions and Guiding questions

Motivation (to collaborate with external partners)	
Supporting questions:	*Comments:*
What is the team's main motivation (scientific, financial, prestige)?	
Is the team interested in working with an external partner?	
Is the practical application of knowledge important to the team?	
Is the opportunity to generate additional income important to the team?	
Score	
Previous experience in commercial cooperation	
Supporting questions:	*Comments:*
Has the team leader worked with external entities before (projects, contracts)?	
Has the team worked with external entities before (projects, contracts)?	
Has the team carried out the commercial contracts (how many, value)?	
Has the team received references from previous clients?	
Score	
Networking	
Supporting questions:	*Comments:*
Does the team leader participate in events organised by TTO (mixers, fairs, etc.)?	
Do team members participate in events organised by TTO (mixers, fairs, etc.)?	
Does the team leader (members) participate in events other than scientific conferences?	
Is the team leader (members) a member of any business / industrial organisations?	
Score	
Interpersonal skills	

Supporting questions:	*Comments:*
Does the team leader (team members) easily establish relationships?	
Does the team leader (team members) have experience in public presentations?	
Does the team leader (team members) have experience in negotiations?	
Is the team leader fluent in any foreign languages?	
Score	
KTO (internal) assessment	
Supporting questions:	*Comments:*
Do you feel treated seriously or like an intruder?	
How easy is to set up a call or a meeting?	
How long do you have to wait for a response to emails?	
Do they keep their promises/deadlines?	
Score	

Tool 3. Social Sciences and Humanities Survey: Guidelines for use by the Knowledge Transfer Office

Introduction to the SSH survey and guidelines

The SSH survey can be used by Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO) or a similar unit[26] as part of the technology scouting process. It has been developed to be specifically relevant for faculties from the social sciences and humanities (SSH).

The goal of the survey is to understand SSH faculty interests, experiences, and attitudes towards collaboration with a KTO with the overall objective of offering the most appropriate support and services to the SSH researchers so they can engage more strongly in KT.

It is important to remember that knowledge transfer in SSH often means policy advising, public outreach, or consulting, not just patents or products. SSH researchers typically focus on socially relevant problems and have already engaged with non-academic audiences, (e.g. policymakers, professionals, community groups) as part of their research work. With this in mind, the survey questions are designed to diagnose faculty needs and readiness, identify barriers, and inform KTO outreach strategies.

The guide below is for KTO/TTO staff (or similar). It explains the purpose of each section of the survey and how to interpret responses in an SSH context. It also includes practical tips for staff.

26 Names of the units which use this survey can vary. TTO, CTT, Innovation Centre are all common terms. This set of guidelines uses KTO for simplicity and to align with other documents in the tool-box.

Section 1. Respondent Background

Questions and suggested (possible responses):

1.1. I am from a Department/Unit:

- ☐ (List of Departments)
- ☐ Other .....

1.2. I work in a position:

- ☐ (List of positions)
- ☐ Other

1.3. Years at the PRO:

- ☐ up to 5
- ☐ 5-10
- ☐ over 15

INTERPRETATION OF THE RESPONSES

- ☐ **Department/Faculty and Discipline:**

Rational and purpose: Different SSH fields have different audiences, e.g. a law faculty might engage with courts or government, while a literature scholar might reach out to cultural organisations. *Identifying the respondent's department or academic unit helps KTO staff to tailor KT services to the particular customer.*

Why it matters: SSH fields traditionally "focus on issues of social relevance" and transfer knowledge to politics, civil society, or professional practice. Knowing the department lets you match KT offers, such as a policy-writing workshop vs. an NGO networking event, to their specific context.

What answers reveal: A diverse set of departments suggests that the KTO should offer a broad range of KT support activities. In contracts, if a high proportion of responses come from one area, e.g. history, it indicates a strong interest or need there – consider targeted communication, e.g. highlight relevant success stories.

Tip: Emphasise to respondents that **all fields have transferable knowledge**. For example, tell faculty in public health or education that their insights could inform policy or training, just as engineering faculty transfers technology. Track which departments respond to the survey. This will help to guide your future outreach, e.g. department newsletters, faculty meetings.

- ☐ **Academic Position/Role:**

Rational and purpose: Knowing whether someone is a professor, researcher, lecturer, etc., indicates their influence, experience, and workload.

Why it matters: Senior faculty may have broader networks but less time; junior faculty may be eager to build collaborations. Position also correlates with academic incentives, e.g. PhD students may care most strongly about CV achievements, while full professors may care more about societal impact.

What answers reveal: If many junior researchers respond the offering, training workshops or grant guidance may be useful KTO services. If mostly full professors respond, then it may be better to focus on support for strategic partnerships or institutional projects.

Tip: Use knowledge of titles to fine-tune communication. For example, when emailing junior researchers, mention the career benefits of KT (grants, visibility); for senior faculty, highlight leadership opportunities (advisory roles, writing white papers). In interpreting survey trends, high engagement from certain ranks can signal who values KT most in your institution.

- **Years at the University:**

Purpose: Gauging how long respondents have been at the university provides insight into their familiarity with institutional processes.

Why it matters: Newer staff (<5 years) might not yet know about KTO and could need a basic introduction. Long-tenured faculty may have established ways and be sceptical of new services or may simply not have been engaged before.

What answers reveal: If respondents with >15 years overwhelmingly say “had no need” (Section 3), they may have long-held misconceptions about KT, e.g. believing it is only for engineers. Conversely, if newer faculty indicate low awareness, it suggests that the KTO needs to focus on raising awareness of the KTO and its supporting services.

Tip: Cross-tabulate “years” with “awareness” or “past use” in the survey data. For example, if only senior staff report having worked with the KTO, it may mean that younger staff either did not know about it or have not had opportunities to engage. Use this to plan mentorship pairings: experienced faculty can share how they applied KT concepts in SSH contexts (e.g. a senior political science professor may have advised government and can speak to that experience).

Section 2. For people who indicate that they have previously worked with the KTO

For respondents who have already engaged with KTO, the survey asks about **services used, satisfaction, and outcomes**. These questions help the KTO to evaluate its impact on SSH faculty staff and identify strengths or gaps.

Questions and suggested (possible responses):

2.1. What KTO services have you used in 202X and how would you rate them?

Multiple answers can be marked. Please rate from 1 (bad) to 5 (very good)

	Rating				
KT services	1	2	3	4	5
Consultation					
Training/workshops					
"Named domestic programme" grant					
Assistance in submission of a 'Creative Result' to the KTO					
Intellectual property protection process (patents, trademarks, and other forms of protection)					
Commercialisation assisted (with support) by the KTO Technology Broker					
Promotion of research results (press articles, KTO social media, etc.)					

2.2. Identify to what extent collaboration with the KTO has increased your involvement in scientific projects with commercialisation potential.

Rank from 1 (no impact) to 5 (significant impact)

Impact of KT services	1	2	3	4	5

2.3. Would you seek support from KTO in the future?

Yes/No

If Yes:

2.4. Your response to the question about future cooperation with KTO was positive - why?

If No:

2.5. Your response to the question about future cooperation with KTO was negative - why?

Would you recommend collaboration with KTO to other academics at our university?

Yes/No

If Yes:

2.6. Your response to the question about recommending cooperation with KTO was positive - why?

If No:

2.7. Your response to the question about recommending cooperation with KTO was negative - why?

INTERPRETATION OF THE RESPONSES

Service Usage and Ratings:

Question: *"What KTO services have you used in 202X and how would you rate them?"* (Survey options: consultation; training/workshops; KTO grant programme; assistance in submitting a Creative Result; IP protection; commercialisation support; promotion of research).

Purpose: To identify which services are actually used by SSH faculty staff and how well those services met expectations.

Why it matters: Not all KTO services may be relevant to SSH. For instance, SSH researchers might rarely submit patents, but they may still use "consultation" (for research methods or networking) or "promotion of research" (to publicise their work).

What answers reveal:

- **Service relevance:** If an SSH faculty staff member marks a service, it means they found it relevant. For example, checking "Consultation" may indicate they sought advice on finding external collaborators or interpreting their research for non-academic audiences. High ratings (4–5) imply satisfaction, while low ratings (1–2) signal problems with service content or delivery (e.g. workshops not SSH-focused).
- **Unmet needs:** If certain items (e.g. "Innovation Incubator Funding Programme") are seldom marked by SSH respondents, it might mean SSH faculty staff either do not know how it applies to them or truly have no interest in that type of funding. Conversely, if "Promotion of research" is frequently rated, it shows SSH faculty value help sharing their findings through media or events.
- **Quality assessment:** Patterns of ratings help prioritise improvements. For example, if **"Training/ workshops"** are widely used but rated only 2–3, the KTO should consider redesigning content to be more relevant to SSH (e.g. sessions on writing policy briefs instead of only tech transfer processes).
- **Tip:** When reviewing results, encourage KTO staff to read any free-text comments accompanying poor ratings for clues on why the score is so low. Share success stories too: if a historian rated "Promotion of research results" highly because the KTO helped place an article in the press, mention that example when talking to other history faculty.

- **Use department breakdowns:** e.g. if the Psychology Department shows high satisfaction with "Consultation", invite them to share with colleagues from other departments how those consultations worked; peer recommendation can be powerful.

- **Involvement in Projects (Impact Ranking):** Question: "To what extent has collaboration with the KTO increased your involvement in scientific projects with commercialisation potential?" (Rank 1=no impact to 5=significant impact).

Purpose: To measure KTO's effect on participants' research activities.

Why it matters: For SSH, "commercialisation potential" may seem oddly phrased, but it generally means involvement in projects with external or real-world outcomes. This question checks whether KTO is helping faculty expand their work (e.g. into funded collaborations, joint initiatives, or applied research).

What answers reveal:

- **High scores (4–5):** Faculty staff feel that the KTO helped to open doors (e.g. connecting them with industry, NGOs, or funding). For example, a response of 5 might indicate that the KTO helped secure a contract with a government agency. This suggests success and a model to replicate.
- **Low scores (1–2):** Faculty staff saw little impact. This could mean that KTO activities (e.g. a one-off workshop) did not translate into follow-up projects. It might also reflect a mismatch between expectations and outcomes. In SSH, it could be that faculty value non-commercial outcomes (e.g. influencing policy) that they do not perceive as "projects with commercialisation potential".
- **Tip:** If many SSH faculty staff give low scores, clarify what "commercialisation potential" means for them. Perhaps the term is misleading for SSH. Instead, ask if the KTO helped them form any new partnerships or secure policy or funding outcomes. If scores are low, consider redirecting KTO efforts towards offering services that build project pipelines (e.g. matchmaking events between faculty and local government or businesses relevant to the social sciences). Include a note when interpreting trends: a low average here may not mean the KTO has failed SSH staff, but that more work is needed to translate KTO support into ongoing collaborations for them.

- **Future Support (Y/N and Why):** Question: "Would you seek support from the KTO in the future? [Yes/No] – Why?"

Purpose: To gauge faculty's willingness to remain engaged with KTO.

Why it matters: A "Yes" indicates trust and interest in KTO's role. A "No" highlights issues to address. Especially in SSH, motivations can be subtle: a positive answer may come because the KTO helped write a policy brief or find a research partner, while a negative answer may stem from misunderstanding the KTO's mission.

What answers reveal:

- **"Yes":** The reasons given (in free text) tell you what worked. For example, "Yes – the KTO helped me refine my project proposal" shows a practical benefit. KTO staff can use these quotes in outreach (with permission) as endorsements. They can state "Yes because…" and mention specific needs (like "I got valuable advice on presenting my research to industry"), that highlights successful services.
- **"No":** These reasons are crucial. Common answers might be "I haven't had time," "I don't see how it applies," or "No further needs right now". For SSH, "I don't see how it applies" often reflects the view that a KTO only deals with STEM, not humanities, echoing the sentiment that SSH KT is undervalued.

Use this feedback to refine explanations. For instance, if someone says "No, because I'm focused on publishing", it may mean they need convincing that KTO activities, such as community engagement, also count as scholarly contribution.

- **Tip:** Follow up on insights. If positive responders cite a specific person or service, ask them to mentor others or join an advisory panel. If negative respondents cite misunderstandings, tailor FAQ or orientation materials to address those (e.g. clarify that the KTO can help with industry-funded sociology projects or with patenting an educational game). Record recurring reasons ("too busy", "irrelevant to my field", etc.) and train staff to address each, e.g. emphasise flexible, time-efficient KTO offerings, or clarify the broad meaning of "knowledge transfer".

- **Recommendation to Others (Y/N and Why):** Question: "Would you recommend collaboration with the KTO to other academics at our university? [Yes/No] – Why?"

Purpose: To assess the KTO's reputation among users.

Why it matters: Word-of-mouth is powerful. A strong "Yes" shows satisfaction that can drive new engagements; a "No" points to trust issues or negative experiences. In SSH, a positive recommendation might highlight career benefits or societal impact, while a negative one might suggest dissatisfaction with the KTO's focus.

What answers reveal:

- **"Yes":** The reasons indicate KTO's strengths as perceived by users (e.g. "KTO staff understood my work and helped publicise it"). Use this to identify champions. For example, if several individuals recommend the KTO because of its helpful training sessions, consider turning those trainers into peer promoters in faculty meetings.
- **"No":** Reasons like "They only help engineers" or "We had a bad experience with communication" are red flags. If many staff express no confidence in the KTO, it may reflect systemic issues (lack of SSH focus, poor follow-up, etc.). Use these to pinpoint possible solutions. For instance, if the complaint is "The KTO didn't understand my project area", KTO staff may need SSH-specific training.
- **Tip:** Maintain a list of referral-worthy stories from "Yes" answers to use in marketing ("Professor X says the KTO…"). If a user says "no" and blames communication, consider a follow-up call to learn more and show that the KTO is responsive. Use recommendation rates as a quick metric of overall satisfaction.

Section 3. People Who Have NOT Worked with the KTO

This section identifies **barriers, awareness, and potential needs** among faculty staff who have not yet engaged with the KTO. The questions here inform how to broaden the KTO's reach into the SSH community.

Questions and suggested (possible responses):

3.1. Why haven't you worked with KTO until now?

	☒
I had no need	
I have nothing for commercialisation/collaboration with external organisations in my field	
I don't believe in commercialisation/collaboration with external organisations in my field	
I didn't know about the existence of KTO	
Other (please explain):	

3.2. What KTTO services do you think will be useful for you in the future and how would you rate your needs?

Multiple answers can be marked. Please rate your needs from 1 (no need) to 5 (very important)

	Your needs				
KT services	1	2	3	4	5
Consultation					
Training/workshops					
Securing a KT support grant					
Assistance in submission of a Creative Result to the KTO					
Intellectual property protection process (patents, trademarks, and other forms of protection)					
Commercialisation assisted (with support) by the KTO Technology Broker					
Promotion of research results (press articles, KTO social media, etc.)					

3.3. Identify to what extent collaboration with the KTO has increased your involvement in scientific projects with commercialisation potential.

Rank expected impact from 1 (no impact) to 5 (significant impact)

Impact of KT services	1	2	3	4	5

3.4. Would you seek support from KTO in the future?

Yes/No

If Yes:

3.5. Your response to the question about future cooperation with KTO was positive - why?

If No:

3.6. Your response to the question about future cooperation with KTO was negative - why?

3.7. Would you recommend collaboration with KTO to other academics at our university?

Yes/No

If Yes:

3.8. Your response to the question about recommending cooperation with KTO was positive - why?

If No:

3.9. Your response to the question about recommending cooperation with KTO was negative - why?

INTERPRETATION OF THE RESPONSES

- **Reasons for Non-Engagement (Multiple Choice):** Question: "Why haven't you worked with KTO until now?" (Options include: "I had no need", "Nothing to commercialise", "Don't believe in commercialisation in my field", "I didn't know about KTO", etc.)

Purpose: To identify the main barriers or misconceptions preventing collaboration.

Why it matters: SSH faculty staff may not view their work through a "commercialisation" lens, so their answers often reflect deeper attitudes towards KT.

What answers reveal:

- **"Had no need" or "Nothing to commercialise":** These may mean respondents truly have no immediate project for the KTO, or they misunderstand what a KTO does. In SSH this often signifies that the faculty staff are not aware of how KTO can support non-tech projects.
- **"Don't believe in commercialisation in my field":** This shows scepticism about the KTO's relevance. It echoes a known pattern in SSH, where knowledge transfer is undervalued. Faculty might agree with "the KTO only does patents".

- **"Didn't know about the KTO":** A straightforward awareness gap. Surprising if true, but it highlights an outreach failure (maybe they missed earlier emails or are new).
- **"Other":** May include reasons like "Too busy", "Language issues", or "the KTO is only for students". Categorise these responses qualitatively.
- **Tip:** Use these answers to target communication. For example, if many chose "didn't know", make sure the KTO is on the department mailing lists and that faculty orientations mention it. If "don't believe in commercialisation", reframe messaging: emphasise "knowledge exchange" or "community engagement" instead of "commercialisation". When you see "no need", try follow-up: they might simply not have been asked – schedule a courtesy call to explain potential collaborations. Note that these barriers are common in SSH, so plan events or materials that explicitly counter them (e.g. a seminar on KT for Non-STEM Research).

☐ **Perceived Future Needs (Services Rating):** Question: "What KTO services do you think will be useful for you in the future and how would you rate your needs?" (Same list of services as in Section 2, rated 1–5 for importance).

Purpose: To identify which services appeal to non-users.

Why it matters: Even if they have not used the KTO, their "needs" ratings reveal untapped demand. For SSH faculty staff, they may rate consulting or workshops highly but ignore "commercialisation support". This shows where to focus expansion or better explanation.

What answers reveal:

- **High importance ratings (4–5):** A high score means the respondent perceives potential value in that service. For example, if many non-users rate **"Training/workshops"** as 5, they are looking for skill-building (maybe in grant writing, policy communication, or method workshops). If **"Consultation"** scores high, they want one-on-one advice. If **"Promotion of research"** is high, they want help publicising their work.
- **Low importance ratings (1–2):** Suggest no interest or understanding. If **"IP protection"** is low among SSH, they likely see it as irrelevant; this matches their discipline. If **"Innovation Incubator grant"** is low, perhaps they do not realise anyone else applied (check Section 2 results).
- **Tip:** Plan services around expressed interest. For example, if "Consultation" is highly desired, advertise that the KTO can advise on finding non-academic partners (like cultural institutions or NGOs). If "IP protection" is low, that is OK – instead, talk about "copyright, trademarks, or data licenses" where relevant to SSH. Use the ratings to prioritise: if most non-users rate **"Training"** high, schedule more workshops on topics they want (e.g. "How to turn research into policy recommendations?").

☐ **Expected Impact (Ranking Question):** Question: "To what extent could collaboration with the KTO increase your involvement in projects with commercialisation potential?" (1=no impact to 5=significant impact).

Purpose: To gauge whether non-users see a **future benefit** from working with KTO.

Why it matters: This captures their openness. If respondents believe the KTO can significantly help them (scores 4–5), they are prime candidates for engagement. If they believe impact is negligible (1–2), they do not see value.

What answers reveal:

- **High scores:** The faculty recognise some potential for KTO to make a difference. They may have projects in mind but are not sure how KTO fits. High expectations are an opportunity – KTO staff should follow up with these individuals as they are likely to convert.
- **Low scores:** SSH staff doubt the KTO's relevance or impact. This often correlates with "had no need" or "no belief" answers earlier. For example, someone in pure mathematics might rightly think that engaging with the KTO will not impact their work. Among SSH staff, low scores suggest a need for vision-setting: share examples of how the KTO has helped others in their field (e.g. an economist who connected with industry data projects). Tip: Cross-reference this ranking with the "Would you seek support?" question: if someone expects high impact but answered "No" on seeking support, investigate why. Perhaps they think the KTO will help others but not them personally. Use their high potential rating to craft personal outreach, e.g. "You gave a 5 for potential impact – let's schedule a meeting to explore specific opportunities".

☐ **Future Support (Y/N and Why):** Question: "Would you seek support from the KTO in the future? [Yes/No] – Why?"

Purpose: To see if non-users intend to engage moving forward.

Why it matters: Even if they have not worked with the KTO yet, a "Yes" suggests they might become users; a "No" indicates resistance.

What answers reveal:

- **"Yes":** Their reasons (open text) tell you what is attracting them. Maybe they mention "I might need help with IP" or "I would like training on pitching my research". Use these clues to follow up quickly. For example, if an anthropologist says "Yes, I'd like consultation about an EU grant", connect them with the right KTO advisor.
- **"No":** Common reasons might mirror Q3.1 ("don't see relevance", "too busy", etc.). If they repeat "I had no need", it means nothing changed. Use this to refine the KTO's outreach: a "No" might become a "Yes" after a personal invitation or evidence of relevance. Tip: Track "Yes" respondents by department so KTO staff can reach out proactively. If possible, set up a quick welcome call explaining KTO services. For "No" respondents, schedule occasional check-ins or invite them to general events; sometimes just knowing the KTO is interested can soften a "No" over time.

☐ **Recommendation to Others (Y/N and Why):** Question: "Would you recommend collaboration with the KTO to other academics? [Yes/No] – Why?"

Purpose: Even non-users have opinions about KTO.

Why it matters: This gauges brand perception. A "Yes" might mean they have heard good things informally ("My colleague had success") or see the KTO's reputation as positive. A "No" may reflect scepticism or misinformation ("I think it's only for engineers").

What answers reveal:

- **"Yes":** They might cite second-hand experience ("Professor X benefited from working with the KTO"). Use this: ask if those colleagues would speak at an event or if you can feature their story anonymously as a testimonial.
- **"No":** Reasons may include "It seems irrelevant" or "I don't trust it will help". This highlights the need to rebuild the image of the KTO among SSH. If many non-users say "No" because they think the KTO is only for STEM commercialisation, this confirms the message that our communication needs to stress "knowledge transfer" broadly and provide SSH-specific success examples.
- **Tip:** Note which non-users are willing to recommend, and if they say why, you may discover informal champions. If a "No" reason is something fixable (e.g. "KTO hours are inconvenient"), consider addressing it (maybe offer an evening Q&A session). Use overall recommendation trends to measure KTO's perceived value in the faculty community.

Putting it all together and taking action

After collecting survey responses, KTO staff should analyse trends within and across the different sections. For example, if the majority of SSH respondents mark "I have nothing to commercialise" but also rate **"Consultation"** and **"Promotion"** as high need, it suggests a mismatch between perceived and actual needs. Staff can then emphasise how consultation and promotion fit SSH goals. Likewise, if satisfaction ratings are low for certain services among SSH, plan to adapt those services (perhaps create SSH-tailored workshop content or provide testimonials from SSH users).

Always tie survey findings back to action: use the identified needs and attitudes to plan outreach (e.g. targeted workshops, informational emails, or peer mentoring) and to adjust services (e.g. offering examples of successful KTO-SSH collaborations). The insights from this survey should feed into the KTO's strategic planning – by highlighting **which services resonate with SSH faculty members and where education or service design is needed**, the survey becomes a practical roadmap. Keep explanations clear and jargon-free when communicating with respondents (e.g. use "knowledge sharing", "policy advice", "community projects" rather than just "patents" or "spin-offs") to show the relevance of the KTO to SSH work.

By carefully interpreting each question's answers as outlined above, KTO staff can better align their efforts with the SSH community's unique context – turning this survey into a powerful training and planning tool.

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