Technology Transfer @ EPFL
a short overview

WIPO - OMPI seminar on patents and technology transfer
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The EPFL today ...
... a growing campus

2010:
7'800 Students
5 Schools
2 Colleges
320 Labs
2'900 Sci. staff and faculty (FTE)

Federal budget ~ 550 MCHF/y
External funding ~ 200 MCHF/y
EPFL’s missions (according to the law)

1) Teaching & Education

2) Research

3) Innovation & Technology Transfer

Contribute to create and develop ...
future companies
future jobs
future products / services
future competitiveness
future quality of life

Relations with the economy early and continuous commitment of EPFL

2010: opening Innovation Square for R&D hubs of leading Cnies
2009: additional affordable m2 for start-ups: "Le Garage"
2008: seed fund (polytech ventures)
2007: revised TT regulations & overhead policy
2006: new partnerships: endowed chairs, indus. incubators
2005: centers, programs, innovation grants, TT alliance
2004: vice-presidency for innovation and TT
2003: legal framework adapted for efficient TT
2000: first equity deals
1999: rules for remuneration of inventors and labs
1999: entrepreneurship courses
1998: technology transfer: creation of the TT office
1997: coaching for early stage start-up projects
1995: pre-seed money for start-up projects: foundation FIT
1993: legal personality -> IP strategy / licensing
1991: science park created: foundation PSE
1988: policy for research contracts & partnerships
1986: two first major strategic industrial partnerships
1986: industrial liaison program: Cast / association APLE
...
The Technology Transfer Office
Professional services for researchers

Our duties as TT office

We are a service for the labs and for the EPFL

- **Research agreements**, incl. service contracts and partnerships with Companies (negotiations / approval)
- **Intellectual property**: evaluation, protection & management
- **Technology licensing**: licenses and other TT agreements
- **Interactions with start-up companies**: licenses, equity, R&D agreements, access to labs, conflicts of interests, etc.
- **TT policies**, laws and regulations related to TT, ...
- **@ EPFL**: **practical course for PhD students** in mgmt of innovation and TT within doctoral school > MINTT [www.mintt.ch](http://www.mintt.ch)
Technology transfer / licensing @ EPFL  

a few key numbers of the TTO

Research agreements handled by the office: > 300 / year
New invention disclosures: ca 80-100 / year
New priority patent applications: ca 40-50 / year
New licenses / TT agreements signed: ca 30-50 / year
New Start-ups: ca 10-15 / year (> 180 since 1990)
Licensing revenues: ca 1-3 MCHF / year
Active patent cases (mgmt EPFL-TTO): > 300
Active licenses / TT agreements: > 350

Not included: IP directly transferred through R&D contracts

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Technology licensing (main actions of EPFL-TTO):

Evaluate invention disclosures
Definition of a transfer strategy

Protect intellectual property when appropriate
Search for partners

Licensing and transfer agreements

IP management, license follow-up, financial management, distribution of returns (3 x 1/3 rule)

Æ "cradle-to-grave" responsibility !!
Not only patents are interesting for our partners ...

- Software
- Detailed specifications of a system, drawings, data
- Design and realization of a circuit board
- Design and testing of an IC or micro-system
- Demonstrator, early stage prototype
- Biological material, chemical compound
- Know-how
- Trademark
- ...

EPFL Invention disclosures (total ca 1'100)

- Patent filed
- In evaluation / stby
- No filing

Patent families (total ca 700)

- To be licensed / transferred
- Licensed / transferred
- Abandoned

Licensed / transferred patent families (total ca 350)

- Active and managed by EPFL-TTO
- Managed by licensees or abandoned after license / transfer
**Objectives of the policy:**

- Easier and shorter negotiations
- Attractive IP conditions for companies
- Clear general rules with possibilities for special cases (flexibility)
- Fair contributions to indirect costs (overhead policy - OH)

> 3 "std" types of industrial contracts:

- Research agreement (OH 40%)
- Industrial grant (OH 20%)
- Service agreement (OH 60%)

(see also [http://sri.epfl.ch](http://sri.epfl.ch))
Special agreements with corporates

- multi-years / multi-labs research programs in key fields of common interest (framework agreements)
- endowed chairs & donations
- mutual access to costly research infrastructures
- academic activities of industrial researchers

✓ active marketing and follow-up
✓ top management commitment

Technology Transfer: our philosophy

- Do what is “best for the technology”
- Foster good industrial relations
- Be reasonable
- Be flexible
- Be action/results oriented

from K. Ku, Head of OTL and ICO of Stanford

... and read also the documents:
- Nine Points to Consider in Licensing University Technology
- University Technology Transfer “Why we do what we do”

available on the AUTM website:
www.autm.net/White_Papers/3754.htm
Technology Transfer ...

... always in very close collaboration with the scientists / inventors and the responsible professor!!

We want and need:

proximity & team work!

Technology transfer / licensing  a few TT cases  (1/2)

Audio technologies
- many licenses and IP transfer
- lic. to Logitech (echo-canceling / web cam)
  - start-up

Delta Robot
successful industrialization > 20y
follow-up applications

Early detection of bladder cancer using phodynamic therapy (jointly with univ. hosp.)

Security of documents
many licenses to various partners
Technology transfer / licensing

Contact lenses for monitoring of intraocular pressure - start-up with VC financing

IT network security - start-up with VC financing

Telemetrically-controlled implants - start-up acquired by corporate

Photovoltaic Dye Solar Cells - many licenses worldwide

Collaboration with corporates

Partnership with Nestlé
2 endowed chairs
R&D program

Partnership with Logitech
Joint project incubator on campus
R&D and student projects

Partnership with Merck-Serono
3 endowed chairs
R&D program

Partnership with NOKIA
Nokia lab on campus
R&D program

Partnership with ALCAN Eng. Products
ALCAN innovation cell on campus
1 endowed chair, R&D program

+ Swissquote, Debiopharm, La Poste, EOS, Crédit-Suisse, ...
Technology Transfer is people's business

Academic research ↔ Economy & industry

« win - win »