

# General principles of Technology Transfer

## at Swiss Universities (1)

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The primary tasks of universities are education and research, based on open dissemination and making results freely available to the public. An additional responsibility of universities is the valuation of economically interesting research results. An active technology transfer and intellectual property management will see the universities work put to effective use for the public through collaboration with existing companies or with start-up/spin-off firms.

Therefore, the universities are interested in cooperating with private enterprise and support their staff in their pursuit of such collaborations. The different objectives of universities and private enterprise must be taken adequately into consideration in the defining of mutual projects and in technology transfer. The following principles have been set up to provide guidance on such issues.

1. **Partnership relations in cooperating with private enterprise:** The cooperation between private enterprise and universities rests on the basis of partnership. The diversity of different projects is taken into account by means of a flexible procedure suited to each separate project.
2. **Protection of intellectual property, intellectual property rights :** The universities recognize the significance of the protection of intellectual property and the resulting intellectual property rights for the later commercialization of research results. They make efforts, out of their own responsibility, or together with the cooperation partners, to obtain adequate protection of research results in that they patent economically interesting results or protect them in another suitable way.
3. **Freedom of publication:** The publication of scientifically interesting research results is a central task of universities. Through this, the advancement of the academic junior staff is ensured, and the existence in international competition is guaranteed. Before publication, adequate time for the preparation and submission of a patent application can be provided thus enabling the future economic realization of research results.
4. **Rights to intellectual property:** Research results made by university staff during their research activity are owned by the universities (according to existing laws). The rights of the partners to results which are acquired during collaborations are stipulated by contract.
5. **Contracts:** The universities lay down guidelines regarding authorization of, and right to sign contracts.
6. **Share in economic success:** The universities are entitled to an appropriate financial share of the revenues generated by the cooperation partner through commercialization of the intellectual property rights. The contributions of each partner are taken into account. A share of returns is allocated to the involved scientists and their institutes.
7. **Conflicts of interests:** In the cooperation between universities and external partners, conflicts of interests may arise which result from the different tasks and aims of the partners participating. In order to avoid or recognize at an early stage such conflicts of interests, a clear separation between the rights and duties of the partners involved, and transparency in the collaboration are essential. To govern conflicts of interests, the universities lay down suitable internal guidelines and define further appropriate measures.