

Templates for relevant agreements and information on the whole technology transfer process can be found on the FLI intranet.



Spin-offs

Founding a new company (spin-off) is an alternative option for the exploitation of technologies developed at FLI and enables the transfer of research and development results into marketable products and services. In addition, spin-offs can apply research and development results to areas that are no longer pursued by the FLI. This may be realized within the framework of strategic partnerships, where appropriate.

Moreover, spin-offs offer FLI employees a route to an independent entrepreneurial future. At the same time they create jobs in technology-oriented and skill-intensive fields that are of particular importance to the future of science and industry in Germany.

Ascension supports

Ascension evaluates whether patent protection of an invention is possible and economically worthwhile. If so, suitable patent and exploitation strategies are developed in collaboration with the inventor. Ascension contacts possible industrial partners and negotiates contracts. Scientists are continuously integrated in the process and are accompanied further during industrial collaborations. Furthermore, Ascension monitors contract compliance.

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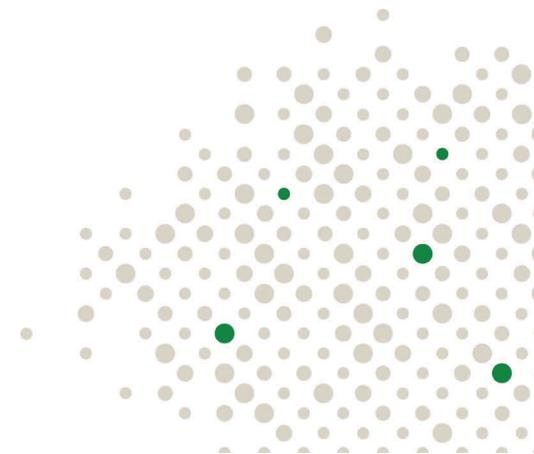
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What is technology transfer?

Technology transfer (TT) in research facilities comprises the protection and commercial exploitation of intellectual property with the goal of turning publicly funded research projects into applied technology. In this way, the proceeds generated can in turn be used to finance further research projects.

The Leibniz Association sees its role in TT as:

- promotor of the public awareness of science
- partner for business
- partner for research-based policy consultation.

In line with the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research funding program for the establishment and strengthening of technology transfer, the FLI has established structures for efficient technology transfer that connect internal and external expertise. Internal issues of technology transfer are administered by the scientific coordinator and the FLI's legal department.

For the exploitation of its intellectual property, the FLI cooperates with Ascenion GmbH, a company specialized in technology transfer in the life sciences. Besides the FLI, Ascenion is technology transfer partner of other research centers in the Leibniz and Helmholtz associations and of the Hannover Medical School (MHH). Ascenion has branches in Munich, Hamburg, Hanover, Braunschweig, Berlin, and Neuherberg. The FLI is assisted by a dedicated Technology Manager (Center Manager) at Ascenion.

What is intellectual property?

Intellectual property (IP) is protected by law and includes all inventive and creative achievements of a person or legal entity. In technology transfer, IP comprises patented chemical compounds and processes, as well as design patents and specific know-how. An invention, always involves a new idea. This may be related to previous knowledge or involve the modification of existing items or processes to quantitatively or qualitatively enhance their performance. In principle, an invention provides a technical solution to a certain problem.

How does technology transfer work at the FLI?

1. Publication Screening

The FLI's publication rules stipulate publication screening to identify inventions as well as valuable material and know-how prior to their disclosure. Thus, a strategic plan for obtaining property rights can be established before the invention becomes no longer patentable due to prior publication.

1. Invention disclosure

The FLI aims to honor inventive achievements and guarantee transparent handling and appropriate remuneration according to the German Employee Inventions Act. Each employee is legally obliged to disclose his inventions to his employer.

3. Claiming/release of inventions

By claiming an invention, the employer becomes holder of the IP right and is therefore exclusively eligible to submit a patent application. In the event that the employer releases the invention, the inventor has sole rights of disposal, provided no other agreement was made.

4. Patenting

The patent application is carried out by an experienced patent attorney, authorized by the FLI. The patent attorney is responsible for the correspondence with the patent offices and accompanies the FLI through the examination procedure.

5. Material Transfer Agreement

The exchange of materials (e.g. cell lines, plasmids, antibodies) between research groups (academic or industrial) is a necessary and important part of research activities and should therefore be carried out as quickly and smoothly as possible. All relevant aspects of such transfers are settled in a Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) between the corresponding partners.

6. Confidentiality Disclosure Agreement

Scientists rely on the exchange of data in their research projects. To avoid the transfer of data that might be patentable but are not yet protected, exchanges should only take place after closure of a Confidentiality Disclosure Agreement (CDA) or a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA).

7. Cooperation Agreement

The FLI enters cooperation agreements with both academic and industrial partners. Cooperation with industrial partners are particularly valuable in the development of application-oriented technologies. However, academic cooperation, for example European joint research projects in the EU framework program, can also result in valuable IP.

8. SPARK@FLI (Technology Transfer Unit)

The SPARK training program helps to understand clinical needs, develops a target product profile and strengthens project management abilities. These essential tools not only increase the likelihood of success, but also help decrease both the cost and time required to accomplish this goal. Translating discoveries from bench to bedside is a challenging process and allows us do advanced scientific discoveries and ensures that government-funded research translates into improved health for our society.

Employees are encouraged to suggest translational projects which will be selected under strict criteria such as addressing and important unmet clinical need, the novelty of the approach and increased likelihood of subsequent funding by other programs.

The researches will be advised by an industry advisory board as well as a program manager with transfer-experience, who will work in close cooperation with the research team, identifying deficits for the transfer, setting up project goals and actively monitoring the progress.

SPARK's mission is to accelerate the transition of basic discoveries in biomedical science, fundable by other translational programs. SPARK provides training opportunities in translational research to faculty members, postdoctoral fellows and students, moving the projects closer to commercial drug or diagnostic development.