KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

FINDING YOUR WAY THROUGH THE JUNGLE

FOR RESEARCHERS
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“Excellent, future-driven research in biomedical, engineering or human sciences lies at the root of valorisation, as well as an entrepreneurial spirit and passion.”

Hugo Thienpondt, 
Vice-rector Innovation & Industry Relations
Dear researcher,

Knowledge and technology transfer can be done through partnerships with industry and/or society, different kinds of research collaborations, licensing, the creation of spin-off companies and consulting services.

Society invests in our researchers. Through valorisation of research the university wants to give something back and create a positive impact on society by tackling the challenges of the 21st century, which are multidisciplinary and require an integrated approach of fundamental, strategic and applied research. Research and innovation go hand in hand. This is what distinguishes a university and turns it into a unique place.

The multidisciplinary VUB TechTransfer team facilitates the implementation of strategic and applied expertise into society. We are here to guide you on your research itinerary and to provide you with the necessary technical, legal or other information and tools. These pages are a rough guide to know-who, know-how and know-where at crucial moments during the valorisation process of your research results.

We hope this booklet can help you find your way through the jungle and we wish you a lot of success on your valorisation itinerary!

The VUB TechTransfer team
FACTS & FIGURES
VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL - 2018

3 CAMPUSES
- Brussels Humanities, Sciences & Engineering Campus
- Brussels Health Campus
- Brussels Photonics Campus

3,322 EMPLOYEES

16,374 STUDENTS

3,691 EMPLOYEES UZ BRUSSEL

1,804 DOCTORANDI
IN 3 DOCTORAL SCHOOLS

EUR 103 M RESEARCH BUDGET

EUR 30.4 M REVENUE FROM CONTRACT RESEARCH WITH INDUSTRY AND VALORISATION OF RESEARCH

192 RESEARCH GROUPS
INCLUDING 16 JOINT INT’L, 32 VUB-UGENT AND 13 VUB-ULB

2,208 ACADEMIC AND SCIENTIFIC PERSONNEL
FACTS & FIGURES
VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL - 2018

VICE-RECTORATE INNOVATION & INDUSTRY RELATIONS
assists in interaction with industry and society
legal issues, contracts, patenting, business development, communication, etc.

INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH FUND 2018
supporting 16 TOP research groups

SPIN-OFF COMPANIES
The VUB has 34 active spin-offs in many domains
2 new spin-offs in 2018

VUB SUPPORTS UZ BRUSSEL
as pioneer and world player
in valorising their knowledge, discoveries and technologies

PATENTS 2018
- active patent families: 142
- inventions reported: 38
- new patents filed: 24
WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE & TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER?

Knowledge & technology transfer encompasses a very broad range of activities to support mutually beneficial collaborations between the academic and business or public world.

This booklet focuses on the transfer of expertise and tangible as well as Intellectual Property (IP) between the university and industry-society, through the creation of spin-off companies, the licensing of IP, contract research or service agreements based on the outputs of university science and technology research of all faculties. This typically involves sciences and engineering, but more and more importance is attached to social sciences and the humanities.

The process of knowledge and technology transfer starts with observations and experiments leading to discoveries and inventions. An invention is any useful process, machine, composition of matter, or any improvement of the same. Often multiple researchers may contribute to the invention. Inventions form the basis of new products and processes and by transferring these research results to society and industry, the university plays an essential role in the development of society.

Research results are typically transferred through an agreement in which the university grants a license to a third party to use or further develop these results into a commercial product or service. Research results with the potential to provide clear societal, technical or commercial advantages over existing or known products or services, create great opportunities for setting up spin-off companies, for licensing to companies or for R&D collaboration, especially where such research results are well documented and covered by intellectual property rights (IPR). Without strong IPR few companies or investors would be interested to engage into a licensing agreement or spin-off investment, since in that case one is limited in keeping out competition.

Also, knowledge transfer does not necessarily imply a technological output product or service. It can also refer to a qualitative partnership between research and society in other ways such as educational projects or knowledge debates.
HOW CAN VUB TECHTRANSFER ASSIST YOU?

Technology transfer and valorisation of research results cover a very wide range of interactions between the university and society. VUB TechTransfer consists of a multidisciplinary team of experts on technology transfer, business consultancy, contract negotiation, scientific funding, legal and IP issues, event organization and communication. They provide follow-up and advice to researchers at every stage of a collaboration with third parties.

WE ASSIST YOU IN

- finding an industrial partner
- finding the right funding for your applied research project
- protecting and publishing knowledge & IP strategy
- supporting industrial valorisation, contract research and negotiations
- creating spin-off companies
- participating at events/fairs focused on knowledge exchange
- boosting your entrepreneurship skills

Contact the VUB TechTransfer team

VUB IN REUTERS TOP 100 OF EUROPE’S MOST INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITIES
May 2019

Reuters TOP 100 institutions all produce original research, create useful technology and stimulate the global economy. More than 600 universities were screened. VUB ranks 59 which is a very good result considering the size of the university. VUB is one of the 7 Belgian universities in this prestigious ranking. Reuters takes into account the number of academic publications as well as the quantity and value of patents.
FROM RESEARCH TO KNOWLEDGE & TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

The itinerary of knowledge and technology transfer from ideas and experiments to innovative research results is represented in this interactive timeline. By clicking on the different steps and tools you get access to a lot of information and advice.

KEY STEPS

- **Literature study**
- **Prior art search**
- **Patent search**
- **Lab notebook**
- **I-DEPOT**
- **Find funding**
- **VUB TechTransfer News**
- **Documenting R&D results**
- **Software: protect or open source?**
- **Invention disclosure form**
- **Software disclosure form**
- **Exchange of information/materials**
- **Publication or any other form of disclosure**
- **Exchange of information/materials**
- **Non Disclosure Agreement/Material Transfer Agreement**
- **Subsequent funding**
- **Service Agreement**
- **Codes**
- **Service Agreement**
- **DECIDE ON IP RIGHTS**
  - **License?**
  - **Spin-off?**
  - **Collaboration?**
- **RESULTS APPLICABLE?**
  - **License?**
  - **Spin-off?**
  - **Collaboration?**
- **KNOWLEDGE & TECH TRANSFER**
  - **License**
  - **Spin-off**
  - **Collaboration**
- **RETURN**
  - **Monetary and/or otherwise**

TOOLS

- **FUNDING**
  - **Literature study**
  - **Prior art search**
  - **Patent search**
  - **Lab notebook**
  - **I-DEPOT**
  - **Find funding**
  - **VUB TechTransfer News**

Consider your intellectual property rights in time
FUNDING FOR STRATEGIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH

TYPES OF RESEARCH FUNDING

There are many ways to fund research, depending on the content, academic discipline, duration, scale and purpose of your research project.

BASIC or FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH is carried out to increase understanding of fundamental principles. The main aim of this kind of research is not to create or invent something. In many cases the end results have no direct or immediate commercial benefits. However, in the long run it can be the starting point for many marketable products and applied research.

STRATEGIC BASIC RESEARCH is high-level basic research with an emphasis on risk, inventiveness and innovation. The strategic importance and the dimensions of the valorisation perspectives on the medium-long term (3 to 10 years) of this kind of research are set out from the beginning. Strategic basic research is still generic; it does not focus on one single industrial sector but has clear possible applications, of which a large group of possible end users recognizes the potential economic and/or societal value. This kind of research is often carried out by large consortia of research groups.

The primary purpose for APPLIED RESEARCH is to discover, interpret and develop methods and systems for the advancement of human knowledge on a wide variety of scientific matters. There is a lot of competition between different players on the market; end users clearly steer this type of research. Collaboration with industrial partners is typical for applied research.

VUB TECHTRANSFER GIVES ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO RESEARCHERS FOR:

- Flanders VLAIO & FWO calls
- Brussels-Capital Region funding through Innoviris
- Projects with SOCs and spearhead clusters
- EU projects with application-driven purpose
- Funding for applied projects with valorisation potential by other (international) organizations or administrations

Contact the VUB TechTransfer team
INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH FUND

A special type of government funding gave birth to the Industrial Research Fund (Industrieel Onderzoeksfonds or IOF) in 2004. Trying to meet the overall academic demand for a more attractive and flexible research environment and more diverse types of researchers, this fund enables the development of a devised long-term policy for strategic and applied research at universities. The Flemish universities receive funding according to their output performance, such as the number of contracts with industry, publications and citations, the share in the European Framework Programme for R&D, the number of patents and spin-offs.

The IOF means are allocated to research groups that clearly exceed the average scale of a standard university’s research unit. IOF groups are able to conceive a detailed long-term roadmap and vision and have strongly motivated how the extra IOF funding might contribute to their proprietary valorisation strategy. These Groups of Expertise in Applied Research or GEARS focus on building a portfolio of application-oriented knowledge for economic purposes and their effective valorisation. These groups have to prove their existing track record in valorisation activities, as demonstrated by their revenues from industry/license revenues, patents and spin-offs.

The Industrial Research Fund also funds proof-of-concept projects that aim to bring scientific research closer to the market and focus on research in a later transitory stage from proof-of-principle to proof-of-concept. IOF Accelerator projects aim to support running GEAR programs with a single injection of funds to realise a substantial acceleration effect in the IOF parameters.

The coaching and support of mandates and projects financed by the IOF is the responsibility of VUB TechTransfer. All legal information about the Industrial Research Fund can be found in the ‘Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering betreffende de ondersteuning van de Industriële Onderzoeksfondsen en de interfaceactiviteiten van de associaties in de Vlaamse Gemeenschap’.

To know what groups receive IOF funding, take a look here.
TOOLS

LITERATURE STUDY
A thorough literature study lies at the basis of starting or applying for a research project. It documents the state of the art in your domain and it allows you to justify the need for your own research.

- **Universities’ library catalogue:** search for scientific literature.
- **Google Scholar:** provides a simple way to broadly search for scholarly literature across many disciplines and sources: peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts and articles, from academic publishers, professional societies, preprint repositories, universities and other scholarly organizations.
- **Patent search:** see below

PRIOR ART SEARCH
To evaluate the patentability of an invention, a thorough prior art study must be performed. Prior art is any evidence that your invention is already known. The mission is to find evidence that disproves the novelty of your idea, invention, research results. Your hope is that you will fail of course, but try to be your own biggest critic and do not ignore evidence you may not like. Keep records of everywhere you look and everything relevant that you find. Also, update your prior art searches periodically as you develop your idea/invention.

PATENT SEARCH
A further prior art search to find out if your invention is patentable is obviously checking whether patents already exist. To maximise your chances of finding relevant information, use keywords or search terms which best describe your invention/idea. Obvious key words or general terms will be unhelpful. The most productive search terms may be specialist technical terms. It may also take a few preliminary searches to find better keywords. When you have listed the relevant keywords, prepare strings of up to four keywords (four is the maximum number when using, for example, Espacenet) in different combinations. Find plurals and variants and use truncations to cover them (in Espacenet one can use ‘*’). In patent searches it is very helpful to use the patent classification system. Try to find out by a number of preliminary searches or by browsing in the list of patent classes (Espacenet provides a separate search function to find the proper patent class) the classes relevant to your invention/idea. It is important not to think too narrowly.

Free public databases:
- [European Patent register](#)
- Espacenet
- Patentscope
- US Patent register
TOOLS FOR FUNDING AND PROJECT CALLS

FIND FUNDING:
An overview of strategic and applied research funding as well as recent calls can be found on the ‘Find funding’ pages of our website.

VUB TECHTRANSFER NEWS:
Calls are announced in our weekly newsletter on Thursday. If you do not yet receive it, subscribe here.

DOCUMENTING R&D RESULTS

Adequate documentation of your research results is essential for obtaining or using the necessary IP rights.

TOOLS

LAB NOTEBOOK
Important to establish date of invention, inventors and documentation of research work.

I-DEPOT FOR IDEA OR CONCEPT
Consider submitting an i-DEPOT prior to disclosing any idea or concept (including e.g. research ideas, inventions, algorithms, software code, designs, questionnaires, methods and processes, etc) to third parties. Registration of an idea or concept through e.g. i-DEPOT helps greatly in documenting prior confidential information to be disclosed under a Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA). An i-DEPOT is not an intellectual property right. It is just a means of registration. The information disclosed cannot be publicly accessed by any third party.
RESULTS APPLICABLE? LICENSE, SPIN-OFF, OR COLLABORATION?

In this stage of your trajectory it is important to consider which kind of valorisation you are aiming at. Valorisation can be done through partnerships with industry and/or society, contract research, licensing, the creation of spin-off companies and consulting services.

DECIDE ON IP RIGHTS

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Intellectual property rights are a powerful tool to facilitate R&D collaboration between VUB research teams, society and industry. Therefore it is crucial to consider your IP rights in time during the valorisation process, when you are developing your research results towards commercial applications.

Intellectual property rights prevent unauthorized use of your research results by third parties and as such allow you to determine (through negotiation) the conditions of research collaboration, attract funding or investment. They allow VUB and yourself to profit from commercial exploitation and - last but not least - safeguard your freedom to operate.

There are several types of IP rights. Proper understanding and strategic combination of these types of IP - including publications of your research results - guarantee the best outcome and fit with your R&D and valorisation strategy.

TYPES OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

- Patents
- Trademarks
- Designs
- Trade secrets / confidential know-how
- Copyrights

USEFUL LINKS

- Belgium - FOD Economie
- Benelux - BOIP
- Europ - EUIPO
- Worldwide - WIPO
Prior to a patent being granted on your invention, your patent application undergoes an exhaustive examination procedure during which the patentability requirements are assessed. **The patent application procedure consists of four main phases:**

**REPORTING**

The invention needs to be thoroughly described in our VUB Invention Disclosure Form and inventors need to be diligently identified. Initial study of prior art and discussion with VUB Tech Transfer IP team allows to evaluate the disclosed invention and patent strategy.

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**PRIORITY APPLICATION (0-12MONTHS)**

The date of filing of the initial patent application establishes a priority date. Only prior art (including your own!) publicly available before this priority date will be used by the patent office(s) to examine the patentability of your invention.

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**INTERNATIONAL (PCT) PHASE (12-30 MONTHS)**

An international patent (PCT) application allows to broaden the geographical scope of protection of your invention and needs to follow the priority application at the latest 12 months after the priority date. The PCT application will be published 18 months after the priority date. Any draft publication relating to your invention might contain further elements that are not covered by any priority application. Consequently, any draft publication prior to the publication of the PCT application needs to be checked for such additional elements. During the PCT phase, the patent office will provide an international search report (ISR), listing the relevant prior art documents, and written report (WO) summarizing the patentability of your invention the way it has been claimed. Further patent prosecution will be based on this ISR and WO.

It is essential to identify strategic R&D and commercial partners, and to establish proof of concept of your invention and validate your initial research results before the end of the international application phase (30 months after the priority date).

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**NATIONAL PHASE (> 30 MONTHS)**

Eventually patent applications are being granted by national authorities. At the end of the international application phase, a choice of countries has to be made. The decision to move into national phase as well as the choice of countries is dependent on outcome of international search report, status of R&D validation and proof of concept, R&D collaboration, commercial valorisation opportunities and strategy.

Do not publish about your invention prior to any patent application being filed. Contact VUB Tech Transfer in time for advice.
**PATENT VS PUBLICATION**

**CONSIDER YOUR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS IN TIME: PRIOR TO PUBLICATION OR COLLABORATION WITH 3RD PARTIES.**

Publication of your research results can be perfectly combined with patent prosecution. It just takes the right strategy since any public disclosure (presentation, abstract, paper, thesis, etc) prior to a patent application can be detrimental to the patentability of your invention, regardless of the location of the disclosure, the carrier, its nature, etc. Therefore, publication of your invention should only occur after filing a patent application and after having disclosed and discussed your research results to the VUB TechTransfer IP team.

Furthermore, any party outside VUB cannot get a patent granted on inventions that have been publicly disclosed by VUB. As such, by combining patent applications with academic publication(s) we can safeguard freedom to operate to your inventions and research results, while preserving your academic output.

**PLEASE CONTACT VUB TECHTRANSFER FOR ADVICE BEFORE PUBLISHING YOUR RESEARCH**

**TOOLS**

**INVENTION DISCLOSURE FORM**

An invention disclosure form is a confidential document that describes an invention. It is written by a scientist or engineer and sent to the VUB TechTransfer IP team, who will give advice on the patent strategy that is most suitable.
SOFTWARE: PROTECT OR OPEN SOURCE?

Software code (as well as other aspects such as software architecture, flow charts, etc) is protected via copyright. However, software code implements algorithms that might be patentable (if novel, inventive and sufficient technical effect). A patent would provide protection of such algorithm regardless of the way it is being expressed in code.

Since patent applications are published, patent databases might also contain a lot of interesting information to develop your own solutions. Many patents listed in the patent databases might not be granted or might no longer be valid (in Belgium or other countries) and consequently the information contained might be free to be used.

TOOLS

SOFTWARE DISCLOSURE FORM
A software disclosure form is actually an invention disclosure form, a confidential document that describes an invention. It is written by a scientist or engineer and sent to the VUB TechTransfer IP team, who will give advice on the patent strategy that is most suitable.

SUBSEQUENT FUNDING

To valorize your research subsequent funding is often indispensable. Take a look at the ‘Funding for strategic and applied research’ chapter.

TOOLS

FIND FUNDING
An overview of strategic and applied research funding as well as recent calls can be found on the ‘Find funding’ pages of our website.

VUB TECHTRANSFER NEWS
Subscribe to our weekly newsletter, containing calls, techtransfer related events and news.
**EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION/ MATERIALS**

A major alternative to patent applications for protecting your invention is to keep the invention confidential. Confidential information is regarded as intellectual property; however it is not covered by a statutory IP right. Before talking to companies or individuals not bound by confidentiality, decide exactly how much you can tell them without describing the crucial parts of your invention. Don’t discuss the technical aspects in too much detail but instead discuss the competitive advantages. When dealing with companies you should disclose nothing without at least a signed Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) and free forms of legal protection in place, such as copyright or unregistered design rights. You should however try to avoid obsessive secrecy or a demand for payment before disclosing any detail.

A Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) is a contract that governs the transfer of tangible research materials between two organizations, when the recipient intends to use it for his or her own research purposes. The MTA defines the rights of the provider and the recipient with respect to the materials and any derivatives.

**CONFIDENTIALITY OF BACHELOR/MASTER STUDENTS**

Bachelor/master students are often involved in R&D work within VUB research teams and have access to VUB confidential information. As VUB is often bound by confidentiality towards our R&D partners, students should also be bound by confidentiality obligations when they are involved in R&D partnership projects or when they are involved in research being developed towards further valorisation.

**CONFIDENTIALITY TOOLS**

- **NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT**
- **NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT FOR VUB STUDENTS**
- **MATERIAL TRANSFER AGREEMENT - USE THE NDA FORM**
When you have decided on your IP strategy and you have taken the necessary steps to protect your intellectual property, you will consider to publish on your research results. The number of publications from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel steadily increases year by year. This not only yields better publication and citation ‘scores’ for the university, but also higher funding. Research performance, measured by publications, citations and PhDs, is indeed an important parameter in Flemish government policy, aiming at increasingly internationally competitive universities.

Optimal visibility of your research results is crucial for good communication towards colleagues in the field, and thus for the ‘impact’ of your research. All researchers are therefore strongly encouraged to actively participate in a good research publication culture.

**GENERATING MAXIMAL VISIBILITY & IMPACT**

- Publish your research results in media that are read by as many researchers as possible in your domain (and if possible also in other areas), including a selection of international journals with a peer review system.
- Publish your research results in media that are easily accessible (in any case its contents) to a large part of the academic world, for instance in open access journals or in journals included in the citation-indexes of Thomson Scientific.
- Provide as much as possible openly available full text versions of your publications, for instance in an institutional repository, on your own website or in a database organized by your research domain (always respecting rules set by editors or confidentiality agreements!).
- Enhance your and your team’s visibility in the international research community by collaborating with other research teams (in publications, projects, networks,...) and by referring to your partners and their work (in your publications, on your website,...).
- Make sure that your correct and complete affiliation is mentioned in publications, in particular those that are finalized by co-authors. Mention the full university name ‘Vrije Universiteit Brussel’ in Dutch, preferably accompanied by the abbreviation VUB and the address.
STARTING A SPIN-OFF COMPANY

The establishment of spin-off companies is increasingly becoming a key mechanism of knowledge and technology transfer. Spin-offs are start-up companies whose main activities are based on the formal transfer of research results originating from the university. This transfer can take different forms (e.g. a license agreement or share capital participation) depending on the specific case. Up till now more than 35 spin-off companies originated from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

A privileged relationship between a lab and a spin-off company is beneficial to the growth of the company, and certainly in its early stages. These agreements can refer, for instance, to rights on future results generated in the lab, the use of equipment and technical support, and the financial conditions for the use of these facilities.

Setting up a spin-off is an iterative process, during which one has to constantly (re-)evaluate earlier decisions based on new information. Nevertheless, some fundamental steps have to be taken and intermediary milestones reached in order to successfully progress towards incorporation.

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<td>GATE 2: PROOF OF VIABILITY</td>
<td>GATE 3: DEVELOPMENT PHASE</td>
<td>GATE 4: SPIN-OFF GENERATION</td>
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<td>- proof of concept</td>
<td>- market positioning/validation</td>
<td>- VUB Transfer Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- IP strategy</td>
<td>- proof of market</td>
<td>- product development</td>
<td>- spin-off creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- entrepreneurial commitment</td>
<td>- business plan</td>
<td>- investment/funding</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- assembling a company team</td>
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**LICENSING OF RESEARCH RESULTS TO START-UP**

CONTACT VUB TECH TRANSFER FOR ADVICE & SUPPORT
ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

VUB TechTransfer organizes yearly (Advanced) Starter Seminars aimed at introducing business and entrepreneurship to young professionals. Students and researchers acquire the vocabulary and mindset needed to develop their venture and interact more efficiently with tech transfer offices, investors and other partners. They learn about finance, marketing, Intellectual Property rights, HR, ... in order to define a viable strategy in a complex business world.

“As an engineer or scientist you don’t have any background in business management. Through the starter seminars I obtained the necessary basic knowledge about marketing, business planning, financial and other aspects when starting up a company. Not in the least thanks to a number of inspiring speakers. Now I have the privilege myself to testify as an entrepreneur at one of the sessions!”

Daniël Van Nieuwenhove
Co-founder and former CTO VUB spin-off Optrima, merge with SoftKinetic (acquired by Sony), now President Sony Depthsensing Solutions

TOOLS

BUSINESS MODEL CANVAS

CODES

(ADVANCED) STARTER SEMINARS
FUNDING (THE PREPARATION OF) SPIN-OFFS

Funding a start-up is yet another challenge entrepreneurs will face. VUB TechTransfer can show the way to different funding schemes offered by public authorities and commercial investors.

Depending on the required amount, one can choose from various sources of funding:
- the so-called 3F’s: family, fools & friends
- Business Angels
- venture capitalists (a.o. QBIC Fund)
- financial institutions
- government initiatives
- EU Innovation in SMEs programme

Check our website for funding through Innoviris and VLAIO (Agentschap Innoveren en Ondernemen).

QBIC FUND

Qbic is a seed and early-stage and sector agnostic interuniversity fund investing in spin-offs and young innovating companies that have a technology link with Qbic’s partner universities and research institutions, UGent, UAantwerpen, VUB en VITO.

The Qbic Fund is the successor of the Baekeland II Fund of UGent and the BI3 fund of VUB. The two institutions pooled the expertise of their respective tech transfer services to improve the success of risk companies through economies of scale and further professionalization. The second Qbic Fund - Qbic II - started in December 2016 and now has a capital € of 58,9 million. With in aggregate close to € 100 million under management, Qbic is one of the largest interuniversity spin-off funds in Europe.
WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR INCUBATORS...

The VUB co-manages two business incubators: **IICB** in Flanders and **ICAB Business & Technology Incubator** in the Brussels Region. They provide office space and a broad range of support.

**ICAB**
The **ICAB Business & Technology Incubator** became fully operational in October 2009. ICAB is located in the Arsenaal site next to the VUB campus in Etterbeek. ICAB is a business and service centre for entrepreneurs who want to launch a company in ICT or engineering.

**IICB**
**Business Incubator IICB** offers young and dynamic enterprises, active in or planning to enter the market of high-technology products or services, the possibility to grow in an environment stimulated by the presence of other enterprises already active in similar fields. It is located in the Research Park of Zellik, close to the VUB University Hospital of Brussels.
COLLABORATING WITH THIRD PARTIES

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel supports all R&D activities throughout the entire process, from scientific discovery and exploration of new knowledge, to invention and development. These activities touch a yearly research budget provided by project financing of different governments, the university’s own funding sources and income from the private sector.

In this network of synergies, it is not always easy to align the interests of all stakeholders. The handbook ‘Responsible Partnering’ issued by the European Commission highlights maximum beneficial and responsible use of public research and proposes a set of actionable guidelines to implement them. This for instance involves treating collaboration strategically, organizing lasting relationships and establishing clear intent. It is a must read for any researcher planning to interact with the industry.

In the context of a research collaboration or when providing scientific services, the university is subject to a legal and regulatory framework when collaborating with companies and other third parties. The provisions thereof are set by:

- the Flemish Decree on Higher Education which regulates the scientific or social services by universities or university colleges and with regard to relationships of universities or university colleges with other legal entities;
- the Regulation on scientific and social services;
- the Regulation on overheads;
- the Regulation on valorisation.

CONTRACT RESEARCH

Every – however small – collaboration must be formalised in an agreement in order to confine legal risks. When negotiating a collaboration agreement, you should inform and consult the legal advisors of VUB TechTransfer in time.

While preparing your deal setup, keep the following issues in mind:

TASK DESCRIPTION
A detailed description of the tasks to be performed by the VUB is essential, in particular with regard to the definition of the results.
FINANCIAL PROVISIONS
The total cost for the execution of a research project comprises the following elements:
   1. all costs with regard to personnel, working, equipment and any other cost related to the project;
   2. overheads (see regulation on overheads);
   3. 21% Value-Added Tax (VAT).

The financial department of the VUB is responsible for the invoicing, but this needs to be initiated by the promoter.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS
Background knowledge of the VUB (already existing knowledge of the VUB which was not generated in execution of the project) remains at all times the ownership of the VUB and user rights can be granted under conditions to be agreed (market conform terms). The results generated in execution of the project can be made available under different forms (transfer of ownership, granting an exclusive/ non-exclusive license, co-ownership, etc...). To be agreed on a case by case basis.

PUBLICATION
The right to publish has to be safeguarded and can be made subject to conditions to be agreed (when necessary for protection of confidential information or the research results).

FAIR FINANCIAL RETURN
In case the results can be valorized, a fair financial return needs to be granted to the university. The distribution follows the previously described valorisation procedure.

WARRANTIES - LIABILITY
The execution of a project can only be done on a ‘best effort’ basis. No warranties whatsoever can be granted. A limitation of liability of the VUB is essential.

APPLICABLE LAW - DISPUTE RESOLUTION
Belgian law and the courts of Brussels have jurisdiction.

SCREENING AND SIGNING OF CONTRACTS
Each contract needs to be screened by VUB TechTransfer. Only the rector of the VUB is authorized to sign contracts. Promotors and co-promotors will co-sign for acknowledgment and acceptance.
KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER  - Finding your way through the jungle

RETURN: MONETARY AND/OR OTHERWISE

The transfer of knowledge from university to industry generates financial return to the university which subsequently can be reinvested in research. The Vrije Universiteit Brussel has developed a policy and code on the transfer of these research results to industry.

These rules on technology transfer can be summarized as follows:

- All research results obtained by researchers (no master students) within the framework of their relationship with the VUB are the property of VUB.
- All research results capable of commercialization or social implementation must be notified to VUB TechTransfer prior to publication in order to assess the need for protection.
- Researchers shall provide all due assistance to the VUB during the technology transfer process.
- VUB organizes the transfer of research results by a primary or a secondary procedure. The primary procedure denotes the procedure financed by the patent fund of the VUB. The decision to initiate the primary procedure is taken after receipt of the disclosure form. If VUB decides not to start or to stop the primary procedure, the research team is authorized to continue the secondary procedure autonomously at their own expense.
- All income acquired during the primary valorisation procedure is distributed as follows:
  1. One third of the net income (income after deduction of central management costs, overheads, and technology transfer costs, including costs for IP protection) is for the VUB patent fund;
  2. Two thirds, minus a possible deduction of a personal fee to the inventors, shall be awarded to the research team(s) to finance further scientific research.
  3. A personal fee can be paid to the researchers and can’t exceed a total of more than one third of the net income.
OUR MISSION

CONNECTING SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

Our mission is to valorise scientific research results in order to make an innovative contribution to improve society. Income from these activities can be reinvested in excellent research. VUB TechTransfer continuously strives towards connecting the university’s research-expertise with industry-society.

OUR PARTNERS

Together with VUB Foundation, the philanthropic fundraising team, and Crosstalks, the interdisciplinary networking platform, VUB TechTransfer forms the Vice-rectorate Innovation & Industry Relations headed by Vice-rector Prof. Dr. Ir. Hugo Thienpont.

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