



# Interface Tunisia Coherent Knowledge and Technology Transfer Policies

(Expert Group Meeting)

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# Agenda

Study : Including Technology Transfer in the Tunisian Legislation

1- Main findings

2- Main Lessons

3- Opportunities For New Innovative Jobs /Sills

# Main Findings (1)

- The Tunisian legislation is fully supportive of technology transfer, valorisation and commercialisation of the outcomes of the public research :
  - Various financial mechanisms have been developed to boost R&D. But not necessarily technology transfer activities;
  - A range of structures have been created to boost transfers of the outcomes of the public research activities to the industrial sectors
  - Appropriate incentives have been enacted to generate and exploit intellectual property assets;

# Main Findings (2)

- Variety of structures dealing with TT with ambiguous attributions :
  - TT attributions are overlapping between various institutions and organisations with no clear ;
  - TT structures are being created at universities and research centres lacking financial means and clear agenda
  - TT structures are being created at universities and research lacking specialised skills and appropriated staffs ;

# Main Lessons

## Strategic level

- A number of pre-requisites are needed:
  - A national research and innovation strategy has to be clearly identified
  - A robust industrial and productive sector has to be developed
  - A national policy establishing universities independence

## Operational level

- A number of common pitfalls to be avoided:
  - There is no TT without taking financial and technical risks
  - TTOs are not and cannot be hollow shells : multifunctional organisations with limited human and financial resources

# Opportunities For New Innovative Jobs /Sills

## Financial Aspects

This is Technology Transfer, people:

' It [investing in innovation] is supposed to be disruptive. It shouldn't be predictable, and it never has been.'  
Prof. Mark Lemley. 2017

If you engage in a Technology Transfer action (Join research collaboration, join venture, licensing etc.) and you expect the outcome of your investment to be certain, then be sure that you are doing it wrong !

## Skills

This is Technology Transfer, people:

Lack of qualified human resources is one of greatest, if not the major bottlenecks identified in a number of countries

Managing technology transfer activities from universities to industry requires skilled human resources and interdisciplinary teams with Legal, business, scientific and licensing expertise.



## Technical Skills

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# Patent Searching – Patent Analytics skills (1)

**A search report** is a report establishing the prior art- state of the technology. It has to be taking into consideration in deciding whether the invention for which a patent patent application is to be drafted is patentable or not.

## Technical Skills

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# Patent Searching – Patent Analytics skills (2)

**A freedom to operate report (FTO)** is required to determine whether a particular action, such as testing or commercialisation a technology can be done without infringing a valid intellectual property right

The average cost of an FTO analysis is around USD 1800-2800 depending upon the complexity of the invention

## Technical Skills

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# Patent Drafting

**A patent Attorney** is an attorney who has the specialised qualifications necessary for drafting and representing patentees on obtaining patents and acting on their behalf in all matters and procedures relating to patent filling and oppositions.

## Technical Skills

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## Tech- Commercialisation

Technology Transfer is all about brokerage services: bringing buyers and sellers together to facilitate purchasing intangible property.

**A Technology Broker** is a trusted advisor who helps enterprises/universities to find, evaluate, and select the right product and/or vendor for a specific business problem in a given technology area.

## Technical Skills

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# Tech- Commercialisation

Tech Description (Offer)

Broker    Tech Transfer

Tech Request (Demand)

## Technical Skills

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## Tech- Commercialisation

Technology Transfer is all about brokerage services: bringing buyers and sellers together to facilitate purchasing intangible property.

**Technology Licensing** agreements whereby an owner of an IP asset (the licensor) allows another party (the licensee) to use modify, and/or resell its property in exchange of a compensation (lump sum royalties).

# Ex. On how to staff a TTO

## 3 full time employees

**1- Director, Technology Transfer office.** [Registered Technology Transfer Professional \(RTTP\)](#), [Certified Licensing Professional \(CLP\)](#).

Experienced in patent searching, basic drafting, technology assessments, market and patentability research. Drafting and negotiating contracts.

**2- Licensing officer.** (Technical life sciences background). Experienced in patent searching, basic drafting, technology assessments, market and patentability research. Developing target audience-appropriate marketing strategies and content for designated AUC technologies and innovations.

### 3- Senior Financial and Administrative officer

Handling all administrative duties; Managing legal prosecution matters and managing all financial and budget related matters.

**4- Outsourcing 50% of its activities in the private sector** e.g. patent drafting activities.

## Services provided by the TTO

- Managing and protecting Intellectual property (IP) rights, and the IP rights of the university.
- Acting as the link between the university and industry, fostering collaboration, confidence and trust.
- Raising awareness and publicizing innovative technologies generated by the university.
- Evaluating patentable ideas and assessing their commercial value.
- Advising and developing IP management policies, strategy, and procedures on campus and technology commercialization related aspects.
- Monitoring licenses and other intellectual property agreements and distribution of resulting income.
- Licensing IP assets to companies or entrepreneurial teams with a high potential for successfully commercialize.
- Handling other issues related to copyright, trademark, and research funding agreements.

## Beneficiaries

- University faculty
- University Students & Researchers
- SME's and entrepreneurs locally and regionally

# Conclusions

Tech Transfer is a question of legal frameworks. It is about setting up TTOs. **MOST IMPORTANTLY: It is about who can do the job?**

Tech Transfer, at this stage, is about **setting up skills qualifications** e.g.: a patent agent in the US is a person who has passed the US patent and trademark office's patent bar, and is registered with the US PTO to prepare, file and prosecute patent application on behalf of the patentee.

Tech Transfer in our countries, at this stage, needs **'legal regulations', therefore, 'legal recognition' for its actors to enable them to operate TT activities.**