

Challenges to Tacit Knowledge Transfer in Academic-Industry Partnerships

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Partnerships between academic institutions and private entities have the potential to enable efficient commercialization of research. Patent licensing can serve as a conduit to facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge, allowing for ongoing relationships between inventors, research teams, and private companies to flourish. Sometimes, however, conflicting interests can hinder technological development. This paper discusses some of the issues that may arise in the transfer of tacit knowledge in academic-industry partnerships, illustrating with examples from the strawberry industry. It examines how patent licensing can encourage diversity in both academic and private innovation, but when interests diverge, tacit knowledge may be lost and commercialization suffer. The paper evaluates mechanisms to mitigate potential harms caused by such conflicts.