

Technology transfer in Sri Lanka

Successes and failures in research organizations

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R&D organizations today have to learn how to commercialize their inventions and newly-developed technologies. Their successes and failures in technology transfer depend on the commercialization strategies that they adopt. The National Engineering Research and Development Centre (NERD Centre) of Sri Lanka has had its own share of successes and failures during its 25 years of operation. Today it has emerged as a leading player in technology transfer in the country. This article gives an overview of the Centre's activities and presents some of its real-life case studies.



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Introduction

The National Engineering Research and Development (NERD) Centre of Sri Lanka has been actively involved in the transfer of technology. Given that it is a research organization, its successes and failures would help us understand how technology transfer really takes place.

The NERD Centre

The NERD Centre of Sri Lanka was incorporated in 1974 under the State Industrial Corporation Act. Initially based in Colombo, in 1978 it moved to its present location at the IDB Industrial Estate in Ekala, Ja-Ela.

Technology transfer objectives

Where identifying and promoting technology transfer are con-

cerned, NERD's broad objectives are:

- To examine both direct and indirect mechanisms of technology transfer and, when required to do so, to offer counsel to appropriate government and private institutions in Sri Lanka;
- To economically design, manufacture and test prototype machinery and pilot plants as required by industrial, commercial and other end-users; and
- To offer sustained consultancy services to public and private sector enterprises, to undertake research and to promote training activities to broaden the base of the country's engineering and industrial design and research capabilities.