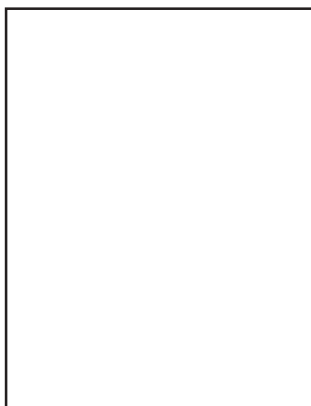


# University research results

## Strategies for its commercialization

Jon Sandelin

Universities have been at the forefront of publicly funded institutions, particularly in the developed countries, for R&D activities and output. Now, technology development, patenting and licensing are being pursued more proactively in order to make universities more market-oriented. Innovative strategies are being formulated and implemented by them towards commercializing their technologies and thus meeting the goals of markets and society. This article discusses the current status and trends of university-generated R&D commercialization in the USA in general, and in Stanford University in particular.



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### Introduction

University research results are transferred into society in many ways. Graduated students, published papers, meetings, conferences and seminars, industrial liaison programmes, faculty consulting, and laboratory visits are some of the ways in which newly created knowledge within the university moves off-campus and is available for general use.

But if selected research results are to be transformed into new and useful products or services (i.e. commercialized), investment of capital is required. The sources of investment capital, however, normally require that such investments are protected. Such protection is afforded through intellectual property (IP) laws enacted and enforceable within the territory the products will be sold. The University Technology Licensing Office (TLO) serves this role.

The TLO reviews submitted invention disclosures, selects those with commercial promise, and then obtains intellectual property protection to encourage risk capital investment by licensees.

University patenting and licensing on a broad scale in the USA is relatively new, dating from the 1980 enactment of Public Law 96-517 (the Bayh-Dole Act). But from the turn of the century through the 1970s, the transfer of technology through licensing from universities was quite limited and there existed only a handful of TLOs in the USA. Faculty who chose to patent their inventions were subjected to criticism, and their associated universities were reluctant to become involved. Ownership of intellectual property rights for government-funded inventions went to the government and the process of obtaining title to permit licensing by universities was often difficult and time consuming.