

Collaboration between research and industry

Academic-industry engagements at TRL 3–4 for applied research and development (R&D) in selected European countries has been explored, in particular its benefits, barriers, and opportunities. Building a trusting relationship is at the centre of success and should be improved on both sides. By addressing these key areas, it aims to pave the way for more effective knowledge transfer, increased innovation, and ultimately, greater societal benefit.

About

SHAPINGBIO

ShapingBio is an EU-funded project with the overall aim to support and accelerate bioeconomy innovation and the deployment of new knowledge in the EU and its member states.

ShapingBio aims to provide evidence-based and concrete information and recommendations for better policy alignment and stakeholder actions to realise the cross-sectoral potential of the bioeconomy and to reduce the fragmentation across biobased sectors and the food system, as well as in policies across regions, domains and governance levels.

www.shapingbio.eu



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Programme under Grant Agreement number: 101060252



Researchers who wish to make technology transfer a key part of their work can benefit from the following recommendations

Preparing for technology transfer

- Start-ups and small companies often lack the budget for public research. **Researchers should seek public funding at regional, national, and European levels to support these activities and foster collaborations**, as it will also help to accelerate the implementation.
- **Be aware of administrative policies on technology transfer and intellectual property within universities and research organizations**, as these can be time-consuming and complex, potentially deterring companies.

Engaging through collaboration with industry

- **Applicability of Research:** Gain understanding of the market needs and ensure research meets market needs for real-world applications.
- **Focus on Applied Research:** Tailor research to industry needs for direct impact.
- **Build Relationships:** Network with industry professionals to foster collaboration and building up trust for long-term commitment.
- **Be Attentive and Adaptable:** Be flexible and adjust research plans as needed on industry feedback and changing market needs.

For technology transfer these points of attention should be considered to build a trustworthy and long-term relationship.

For researchers:

- Bridge the business-research gap by understanding economic aspects and scaling challenges in your proof of concept.
- Establish clear collaboration rules on knowledge, secrecy, and publishing to build trust.
- Align research timelines with the faster-paced industry environment.

For companies:

- Find collaborators through tech transfer organizations, clusters, and scientists' academic networks.
- Simplify administrative procedures for efficient technology transfer.
- Communicate project goals, timelines, and outcomes clearly to avoid misunderstandings (e.g. discuss openly about secrecy vs publishing of results).
- Provide mentorship and resources to help researchers navigate industry collaboration.
- Create a culture of collaboration by fostering open communication, mutual respect and shared success.
- Clarify financing needs and develop expertise in applying for public funding.