



Research Valorisation

*A Policy Brief from the Policy Learning Platform
for a smarter Europe*

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Summary

The European Commission actively promotes [EU Valorisation Policy](#) as a critical component to maximise the social and economic impact of research and innovation. This involves leveraging research results to address societal challenges and drive green and digital transitions, particularly those funded publicly. Research valorisation is the process of creating social and economic value from knowledge by linking different sectors and transforming data, know-how, and research results into sustainable products, services, solutions, and knowledge-based policies that benefit society. It is also an essential aspect of technology transfer. This policy brief categorises valorisation into two main components: the commercialisation of research results and entrepreneurship. Many Interreg Europe projects have developed policies to promote research valorisation, offering valuable insights for regional policy learning. This policy brief presents a range of policy recommendations derived from Interreg Europe projects' experiences to inspire policymakers in designing and delivering effective policies for research valorisation.

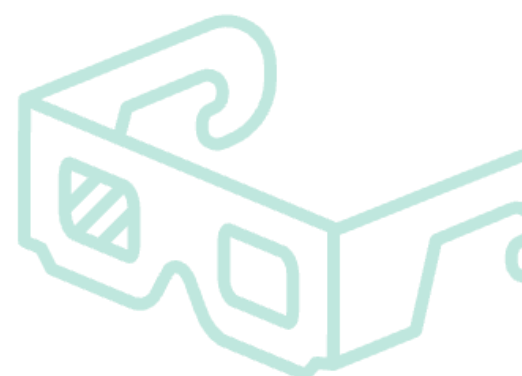
The knowledge, solutions and good practices showcased in this policy brief come mainly from Interreg Europe projects.

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Foreword From Balzhan Orazbayeva, University Industry Innovation Network (UIIN)

The University Industry Innovation Network (UIIN) is a dynamic network of academics practitioners and business professionals passionate about advancing university-industry interaction, entrepreneurial universities and collaborative innovation.

Innovation is the lifeblood of progress, but its full potential lies in our ability to not only produce groundbreaking research but also to harness and deploy its outcomes for the betterment of society. The European Commission recognises this symbiotic relationship between research and valorisation—a process that unlocks the transformative power of knowledge. So does UIIN, as we conduct large scale research initiatives [1] on valorisation and impact and deliver training [2] targeting academics with the aim to raise their valorisation capabilities. This policy brief on Research Valorisation stands as a testament to this recognition too, and offers a roadmap for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders alike.

The concept of valorisation has become increasingly important as universities strive to extend the impact of their research beyond the confines of academia. This is supported by our UIIN research too, which shows that academics want to see their research or knowledge used to solve practical problems or to help society.

Despite being such an in-demand part of research, the term valorisation can still be met with confusion; so much so, that many researchers may not realise that they already carry out valorisation activities. Research valorisation is the process of capturing value from research, making it more accessible to have greater positive impact on society. It is broader than commercialisation, knowledge transfer and innovation, and can also encompass other activities such as advisory services or consultancy concepts.

This policy brief categorises valorisation into two primary components: the commercialisation of research results and entrepreneurship. These are not isolated concepts but rather interconnected drivers of innovation and socio-economic development. By fostering a conducive environment for both research commercialisation and entrepreneurial endeavours, policymakers can amplify the impact of public-funded research and drive regional growth.

Through the lens of Interreg Europe projects, this policy brief offers concrete policy recommendations derived from real-world experiences. It is not just theoretical postulation but a rich tapestry of insights gleaned from projects on the ground, providing a treasure trove of insights and recommendations for policymakers seeking to design and implement effective policies.

As we stand on the cusp of a new era of innovation and transformation, the need for a comprehensive, forward-thinking valorisation strategy is more pronounced than ever. This policy brief serves as a guide, illuminating the pathway forward for those committed to maximizing the impact of research and innovation in shaping a sustainable and prosperous future for all.

[1] ERASMUS+ REVALORISE+, STEM_Valorise, Spanning Boundaries research initiatives

[2] UIIN Impactful Researchers Training Courses

Introduction



Universities are anchor institutions that play a crucial role in promoting regional economic development through various mechanisms, including knowledge transfer, the development of human capital, and the generation of innovations ([Rinkinen et al.](#)). Their contribution involves producing new knowledge, nurturing skilled research scientists, attracting talent to the local economy, and offering both formal and informal technical support to local industries.

Universities have multifaceted responsibilities that go beyond their traditional roles of developing human capital (education – the first mission) and producing new knowledge (research – the second mission). They are increasingly encouraged to embrace a ‘**third mission**,’ which involves actively engaging in regional development and contributing to society. Academics are thus pushed to have an impact that is “an effect on, change, or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or public services, health, the environment, or quality of life beyond academia” ([UKRI](#)). This third mission requires universities to adopt a more entrepreneurial approach and explore innovative services and initiatives aimed **at fostering regional growth and community development** ([OECD](#)).



To learn more about the importance of the links between university and industry for regional development, you can read [our policy brief on university-industry collaboration](#).

The **third mission** encompasses a diverse spectrum of actions, ranging from promoting social equity and community development to fostering collaboration between universities and industries. University-industry collaboration activities can be regrouped into education, research, valorisation, and management (see table 1). This policy brief will focus on the valorisation activities, namely commercialisation of R&D results, academic entrepreneurship through spinoffs, and student entrepreneurship through startups.

University-industry collaboration	University-industry collaboration activities	Examples of Interreg Europe good practices
Education 	Curriculum co-design (e.g. employers involved in curricula design)	Pre-doctoral students , La Rioja, Spain.
	Curriculum co-delivery (e.g. guest lectures)	SKARPT UPPDRAG , Norrland, Sweden.
	Mobility of students (e.g. student internships)	PhD students in local administrations , France.
	Dual education programmes (e.g. part academic, part practical)	
	Lifelong learning for people from business (e.g. executive education)	
Research 	Joint R&D (including joint funded research)	Primas Proof of Concept , Asturias, Spain.
	Consulting to business (e.g. contract research)	TECNIOspring , Catalonia, Spain.
	Mobility of staff (i.e. temporary mobility of academics to business)	


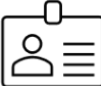
Valorisation 	Commercialisation of research results (e.g. licensing/patenting)	Playpark Brno , Czech Republic.
	Academic entrepreneurship (e.g. spinoffs)	Research Valorisation Programme 2.0 , Romania.
	Student entrepreneurship (e.g. startups, incubators)	
Management 	Governance (e.g. participation of academics on business boards)	Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant , Belgium.
	Shared resources (e.g. infrastructures, personnel, equipment)	
	Industry support (e.g. endowments, sponsorship, and scholarships)	Academy of Smart Specialisation , Sweden.

Table 1. University-industry collaboration types and activities. Source: own elaboration from [Davey et al.](#)

The significance of engaging in this third mission is heightened by the need for universities to secure additional funding in light of reductions in research funding. It also contributes to encourage reducing the **asymmetry of motives between university and industry to collaborate**. Universities aim to create knowledge and educate, while private firms seek to gain a competitive advantage by economically utilising useful knowledge. Collaboration between them is driven by universities' need for industrial capabilities and resource access, as well as the commercialisation of research, while private companies are motivated by access to cutting-edge research, infrastructure, and potential employees. At the same time, university-industry collaboration has tended to increase, especially when related to tackling societal grand challenges such as climate change or COVID-19.

Research valorisation

Valorisation refers to the process of translating and applying research outcomes or findings to create tangible benefits for society, industry, or the economy. It implies taking the knowledge, innovations, or technologies generated through research and turning them into practical and valuable solutions. Valorisation aims to bridge the gap between academic research and real-world applications, playing a pivotal role in overcoming the '**valley of death**,' a critical stage in innovation where funding is often scarce for transitioning early-stage university research (TRL 1–3) to a functional prototype (TRL 4–7). Collaboration with industry is instrumental in this process.

Valorisation has two main components—the commercialisation of research results and entrepreneurship. Research valorisation is thus an essential element of technology transfer.



“Technology transfer (TT) is a collaborative process that allows scientific findings, knowledge and intellectual property to flow from creators, such as universities and research institutions, to public and private users. Its goal is to transform inventions and scientific outcomes into new products and services that benefit society.”

[World Intellectual Property Organization, WIPO](#)



Research Valorisation categories	Activities	Short description
The commercialisation of research results 	Disclosure of inventions (DOFI)	Reveal new inventions or discoveries to relevant parties such as Technology Transfer Office (TTO)
	Patenting	Obtain legal protection for an invention, granting exclusive rights to the inventor(s) for a specified period
	Sales	Exchange ownership or rights to an invention or product for monetary compensation
	Licensing	Grant permission to others to use intellectual property (IP) rights, such as patents, trademarks, or copyrights, in exchange for royalties or other agreed-upon payments.
Entrepreneurship 	Research spinoffs	Creation of a new venture by researchers (usually related to their research)
	Academic startups	Creation of a new venture by students (usually related to their studies)
	Joint ventures	Co-creation of firms by academia and industry

Table 2. Research valorisation activities. Source: own elaboration.

Valorisation plays a significant role in policy due to its potential impact on regional development. This importance is highlighted by the Bayh-Dole Act, enacted in 1980 by the United States Congress, which was pivotal for technology transfer. The law aimed to streamline the commercialisation of federally funded research by granting intellectual property rights to universities conducting the research, thus incentivising them to pursue commercialisation. The Bayh-Dole Act led to a number of institutional reforms to create technology transfer offices (TTOs), to strengthen Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), to promote the formation of startups and incubators...

At the strategic and operational levels, university leaderships actively support research valorisation, drawing inspiration from recognised examples of best practices in valorisation and their effects on regional development, such as Stanford University in Silicon Valley, MIT for Route 128 in Massachusetts, Cambridge University in the United Kingdom, and Sophia-Antipolis in France ([Saxenian](#)). However, while elite universities often receive attention for their role in promoting valorisation and achieving global impact, it is crucial not to overshadow the importance of regional universities within their ecosystems. Despite only 20 universities in the EU rank within the top 100 ([THE ranking 2024](#)), there is a pressing need to adapt and contextualise successful practices from elite institutions to ensure a regionalised impact across all universities.

Rationale for promoting research valorisation

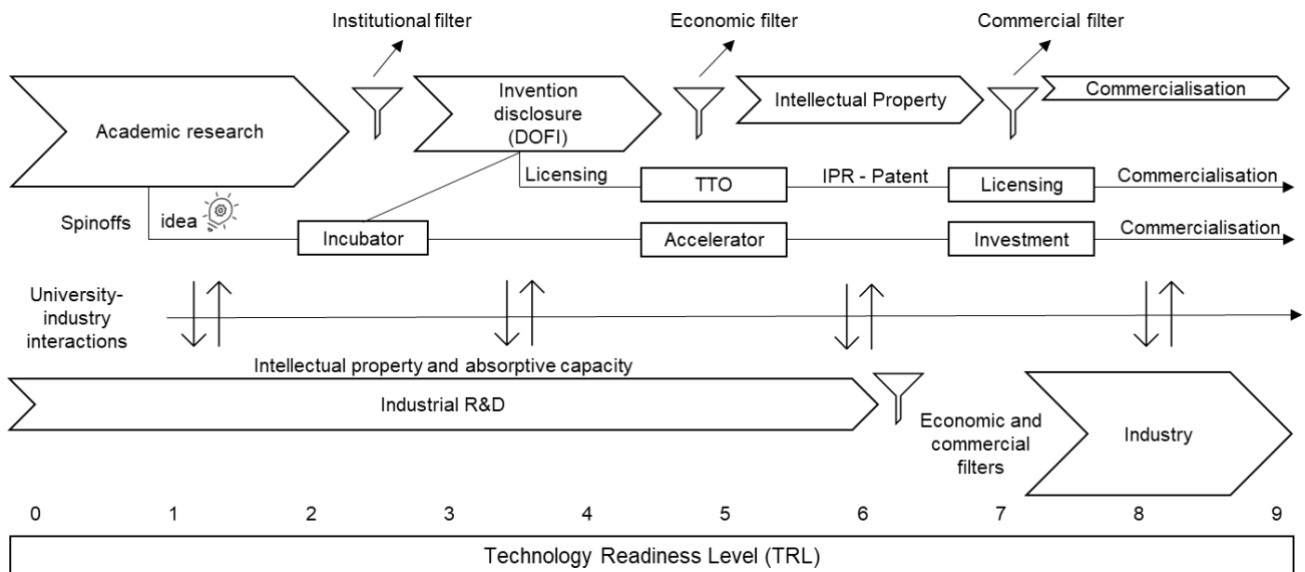


Figure 1. Knowledge filters and commercialisation pathways. Source : own elaboration from [Carlsson et al.](#)

As outlined earlier in the text, research valorisation encompasses two primary categories: the commercialisation of research findings (including Disclosure of Invention (DOFI), patenting, licensing, and sales), and entrepreneurship (involving research spinoffs, student startups, and joint ventures). While these categories interact, they typically follow **distinct pathways**. Entrepreneurial endeavours often begin with support from incubators and accelerators, and may attract venture capital investment before progressing to commercialisation. On the other hand, the commercialisation of research outcomes typically involves coordination through a Technology Transfer Office (TTO), management of intellectual property rights, licensing agreements, and subsequent commercialisation efforts.

The journey from academic research to commercialisation is impeded by what is conceptualised as the **knowledge filter**. This filter represents various institutional, economic, and commercial barriers that hinder the transition of research findings into practical applications. Institutionally, academic research often lacks incentives, resources, and awareness of industry needs for direct engagement in commercialization efforts. Organisational barriers, university policies, and academic culture may further hinder researchers from actively pursuing commercial opportunities. Economically, there may be limitations in the capacity to convert inventions into valuable intellectual property, which is essential for commercialisation. Commercial filters, including the ability to secure licensing agreements or establish spinoff ventures, also pose significant challenges.

The thickness of the knowledge filter is directly linked to the ability of academic research to advance toward commercialisation. When research lacks adequate economic and commercial viability, the knowledge filter becomes more pronounced, decreasing the likelihood of successful commercialisation efforts. This knowledge filter is affected by multiple factors and can be reduced through university actions and policy initiatives. Moreover, the **level of interaction between universities and industries**, as well as the **industries' capacity to assimilate research knowledge**, significantly influence this knowledge filter throughout the research-to-commercialization journey.

Policies for valorisation

The [OECD report on University-Industry Collaboration](#) offers a comprehensive overview of 21 policy tools to promote university-industry collaboration. The 21 policy tools can be divided into financial, regulatory, or soft instruments. Regional policymakers are called to design the most effective policy-mix using a variety of such tools to enhance research valorisation.

- **Financial tools** include R&D and innovation grants, funding support for infrastructures and intermediary organisations, tax incentives with a focus on collaboration, direct financial support for spin-offs, and financial support to recruit PhDs or postdoctoral students.
- **Regulatory tools** aim to provide incentives to the different parties involved in university-industry knowledge transfer, including intellectual property (IP) rights regime, regulations regarding the creation of spin-offs by researchers, and sabbaticals and mobility schemes for researchers.
- **Soft tools** include less interventionist models of public policy focused on awareness building, networking events, and the development of guidelines, standards and codes of conduct.

Financial policy tools	Regulatory policy tools	Soft policy tools
R&D innovation subsidies/grants for industry-science research	IP regulations publicly-funded research	Outreach activities to raise awareness of science-industry opportunities
Tax incentives for companies purchasing research from universities	Regulation of spin-offs founded by researchers & students	Training programs on knowledge collaboration
Grants for IP applications from universities	Sabbaticals & mobility schemes for researchers to work in industry	Collective industry-science roadmapping & foresight
Financial support to academic spin-offs	Career rewards for researchers engaging in knowledge collaboration	Guidelines, standards, & codes of conduct for science-industry collaboration
Financial support to firms to recruit PhDs & post-docs	Open access & open data provisions for publicly-funded research	Networking support to build science-industry linkages
Financial support for universities to host industry researchers		
Public procurement of university research		
Innovation vouchers for R&D services from universities		
Performance-based funding systems for university linkages with industry		
Public-private partnerships creating joint research laboratories		
Funding of infrastructures & intermediaries for collaboration		

Table 3. List of the 21 policy tools. Source: [OECD](#).

Utilising the policy tools outlined in Table 3, regional policymakers can craft the most effective policy mix to tackle their specific research valorisation challenges. However, **designing a coherent and effective policy mix necessitates navigating high levels of complexity**. Combining multiple policy instruments may yield synergies, but it could also potentially weaken the impact of individual tools. Additionally, complex policy mixes may lead to coordination failures, as they require effective coordination among various actors within the regional government, facilitated through multi-level governance. ([OECD](#)).



The Policy Learning Platform can help you design and deliver better policies for promoting research valorisation. Have a look at our [peer review report on challenge-driven innovation policies to promote university-industry collaboration for the Autonomous Region of the Azores, Portugal](#).

European policies for research valorisation

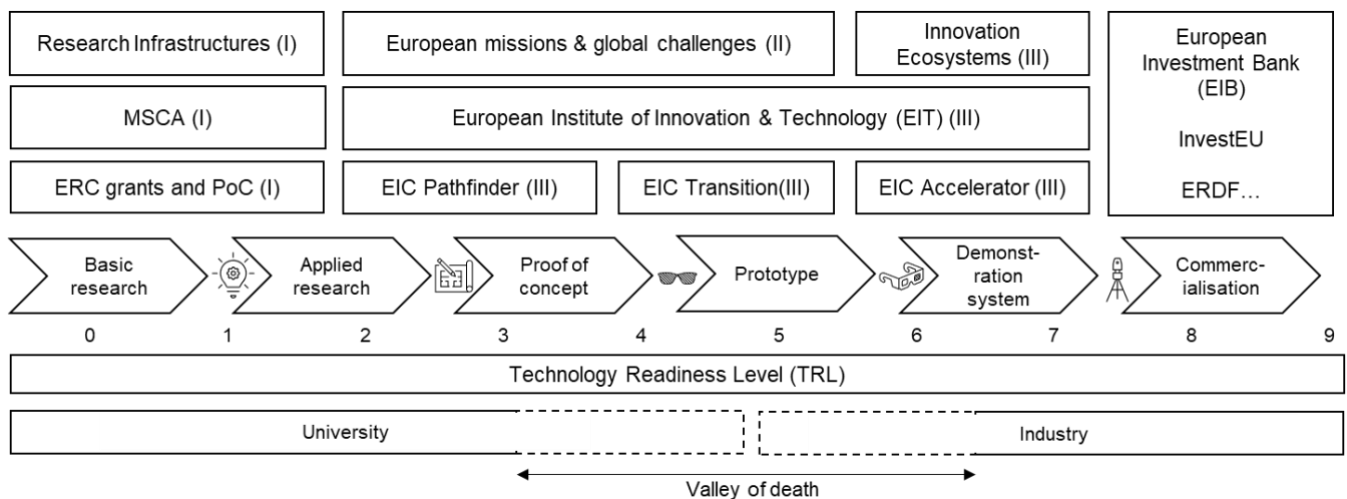


Figure 2. Horizon Europe funding opportunities, (I) Pillar I - Excellent Science, (II) Pillar II – Global Challenges and European Industrial competitiveness, (III) Pillar III – Innovative Europe. Source: own elaboration.

Horizon Europe stands as the European Union's key funding programme dedicated to advancing research and innovation, boasting a substantial budget of €95.5 billion for the period 2021-2027. Horizon Europe is structured around three pivotal pillars, each with distinct objectives aimed at fostering scientific advancement and addressing global challenges:

- **Pillar I** focuses on reinforcing scientific capabilities and pioneering new knowledge. It focuses on research endeavours ranging from TRL 0 to 3. Its emphasis lies in fundamental research and early-stage proof-of-concept (PoC).
- **Pillar II** serves as the cornerstone of Horizon Europe: it is dedicated to propelling the development of cutting-edge technologies and tackling global challenges. This pillar facilitates Research and Innovation Action (RIA) calls targeting TRLs 2-6, alongside Innovation Action (IA) calls addressing TRLs 6-8.
- **Pillar III** is geared towards fostering market-creating breakthroughs and cultivating innovation ecosystems. It plays a pivotal role in valorising research outcomes. Its focus lies in catalysing the transition of research findings into tangible market solutions, thereby stimulating economic growth and societal progress. Pillar III includes the [European Innovation Council \(EIC\)](#), the [European Institute of Innovation and Technology \(EIT\)](#), and [European Innovation Ecosystems \(EIE\)](#).

European
Innovation
Council



The **European Innovation Council** is the Europe's flagship innovation programme to identify, develop and scale up **breakthrough technologies and innovations through different funding initiatives** (pathfinder, transition, accelerator). EIC represents 70% of the budget earmarked for SMEs.

PATHFINDER

R&I grants
(from early technology
to proof of concept)

TRANSITION

R&I grants
(proof of concept to
pre-commercial)

ACCELERATOR

Grants & investment (via EIC Fund) for
single SMEs & start-ups
(from pre-commercial to market & scale-up)



European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) supports [Knowledge and Innovation Communities \(KICs\)](#), bringing key actors (research, education and business) together around the common goal for nurturing innovation. It promotes **entrepreneurial skills and support the transformation of European universities**.



[European Innovation Ecosystems \(EIE\)](#) aim to create more connected and efficient innovation ecosystems to support the scaling of companies, encourage innovation and stimulate cooperation among national, regional and local innovation actors.

The European Commission is also supporting [EU Valorisation policy](#) through various initiatives. These include the [EU Guiding Principles for Knowledge Valorisation](#) which sets out a common line on policy principles and measures to improve research valorisation. Additionally, the Commission promotes the [Code of Practices on intellectual assets management](#) and [standardisation](#) to support the implementation of the guiding principles by providing more detailed guidance on these areas of research valorisation.



Interview with Ignacio Díaz-Crespo, University of Zaragoza, Spain (VIADUCT)

The University of Zaragoza is the leader of the Interreg Europe project VIADUCT that aims to valorise public research to drive technology transfer and commercialisation through creation of spin-off ventures.

How can academic researchers be effectively motivated to commercialise their research findings?

In Europe, research and academic careers heavily prioritise scientific publications. However, there is a growing recognition for the need to shift this paradigm. Motivation being a personal matter, the most effective approach to fostering commercialisation among researchers involves providing ample resources to streamline the process and compensating them for their additional efforts. Adequate economic support is essential for conducting proof of concept (PoC) trials, in vivo experiments, or scaling up technology. Furthermore, current economic incentives may not always be enticing enough for researchers.

Can you provide an example of a significant policy initiative aimed at bridging the ‘valley of death’ in research valorisation?

One notable example is the 2021 ‘Proof of Concept’ Public Funding Call in Spain. This initiative aimed to promote and expedite the transfer of knowledge and research project outcomes from the Spanish national Plan into tangible products, services, or other beneficial applications for the economy, society, culture, or public policies. It aimed to foster the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit of research teams, enhance their capabilities through training, advice, or mentoring, and fortify the transfer strategies of beneficiary institutions.

In universities with limited research valorisation, what initial steps would you recommend to promote this practice?

Unfortunately, valorisation demands a significant allocation of resources; without which, success is unlikely. Essential steps include acquiring high-skilled staff to effectively engage with researchers, comprehend diverse inventions, assess technology readiness levels (TRLs), and identify milestones for advancement. Moreover, a deep understanding of the industrial landscape is vital for identifying relevant companies, assessing prevailing technologies, and establishing links for technology transfer. Adequate economic resources are crucial for conducting proof of concept tests or in-vivo trials. Proficiency in industrial property management is necessary for devising protection strategies and managing patent applications effectively. Additionally, commercial expertise is indispensable for articulating inventions in an industrial context, engaging with potential partners, and negotiating complex exploitation agreements.

Policy recommendations

This policy brief provides policy recommendations to promote research valorisation, from more general to more specific advice focusing on the two main valorisation categories—the commercialisation of research results and entrepreneurship. Both paths can be equally successful, and policy makers should consider ways to support them in their effort to promote research valorisation. The recommendations related to the two categories are illustrated with good practices coming from Interreg Europe projects.

1. Design a comprehensive policy mix with financial, regulatory, and soft policy tools

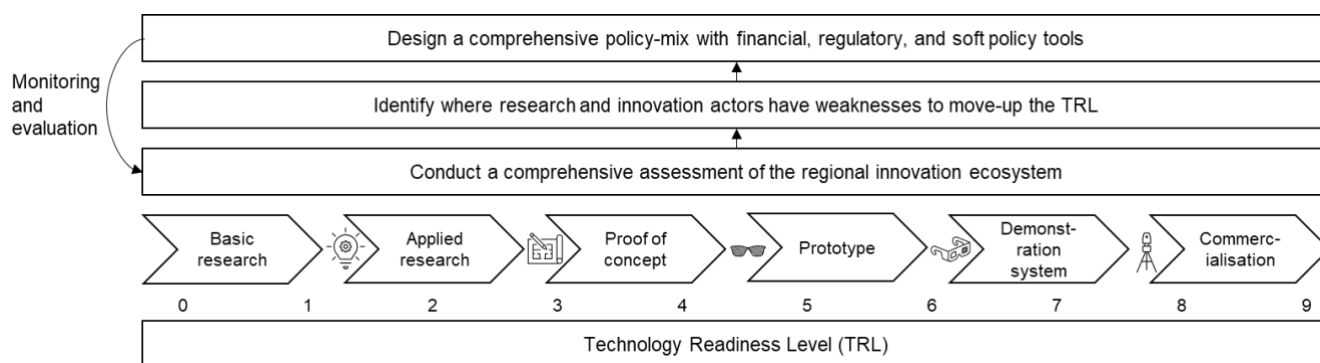


Figure 3. Designing a comprehensive policy mix with financial, regulatory, and soft policy tools to address regional research valorisation challenges. Source: own elaboration.

Regional policymakers play a critical role in fostering research valorisation within their respective innovation ecosystems. To effectively facilitate this process, policymakers can implement the following strategies:

- **Conduct a comprehensive assessment:** Gain a nuanced understanding of the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the regional innovation ecosystem. This involves evaluating various factors such as research infrastructure, industry collaborations, funding mechanisms, and regulatory frameworks.
- **Identify weaknesses in advancing technologies:** Pinpoint specific barriers that impede the progression of technologies along the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) scale. For example, if there are challenges for research and innovation actors in bridging the gap between TRL 4 to 6, tailored programs can be developed to address this gap.
- **Design a comprehensive policy mix:** Develop a holistic set of policy instruments encompassing financial, regulatory, and soft policy initiatives. By addressing the identified weaknesses, policymakers can create an enabling environment conducive to research valorisation.

It is imperative to establish robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the policy mix in achieving its intended objectives. These tools enable policymakers to make informed decisions and refine strategies to enhance research valorisation outcomes.

2. Boost the commercialisation of research results

Policymakers are called to consider three main ingredients for a successful process of research valorisation through the commercialisation of research results: design a driving policy programme to initiate the process (good practice 1), reinforce the role of intermediaries such as the Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) (good practice 2), and raise awareness about their valorisation objective (good practice 3).

Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) are key intermediaries to promote the commercialisation of research results. Numerous universities are establishing their TTOs to serve as intermediaries, managing intellectual property (IP) assets and facilitating the commercialisation of new technologies in response to the universities' third mission, aligning societal needs with technological solutions ([Borrás et al.](#)).

TTOs play a crucial role in supporting academic commercialisation activities by bridging universities and industry, connecting companies with innovative technologies and university researchers. Their intermediation aims to mitigate information asymmetries in technology transfer processes.

Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) must develop the following capacities:

- **Assessing commercial potential:** TTOs must adeptly evaluate the suitability of research outcomes for commercialisation, determining their potential for licensing or sale as intellectual property assets. This involves meticulous scrutiny to inform decisions on patent applications, safeguarding intellectual property rights.
- **Adaptability to emerging trends:** TTOs need to stay agile in response to evolving technological landscapes and market demands. This adaptability enables them to identify emerging technologies and discern potential markets for academic innovations.
- **Investment in a skilled workforce:** A skilled workforce is essential for successful patenting and commercialisation efforts. TTOs should invest in comprehensive training programs to equip employees with the necessary knowledge and competencies in intellectual property rights.
- **Strategic financial planning:** Given the substantial financial resources required for patent applications and renewal fees, TTOs must develop strategic financial plans. Optimizing resource allocation maximises the impact of technology commercialisation initiatives.
- **Role as boundary spanners:** TTOs serve as bridges between university researchers and industry stakeholders, raising awareness for their services, facilitating effective communication and collaboration. This involves navigating disparities in motivations, behaviours, and languages to foster mutually beneficial partnerships (see [Borrás et al.](#)).
- **Leveraging European capacity-building initiatives:** The European Commission has developed many capacity and support services to facilitate [EU Valorisation Policy](#). TTOs must keep up-to-date with latest policies for valorisation such as [Guiding Principles for Knowledge Valorisation and the 2020 Intellectual Property Action Plan](#) and can leverage on capacity-building and support initiatives such as [EU Valorisation Platform](#), [Horizon Results Booster](#), [Horizon Results Platform](#), or [European IPR Helpdesk](#).

The selected good practices can inspire regional policymakers to promote the commercialisation of research results by developing a steppingstone program to initiate the process (good practice 1), adopting strategic approaches for TTOs to patenting and licensing (good practice 2), and raising awareness of TTO services and valorisation opportunities (good practice 3).

GOOD PRACTICE 1: Research Valorisation Programme 2.0. (RVP 2.0) - Romania



The Research Valorisation Programme 2.0 (RVP 2.0) represents a collaborative effort between the North-East Regional Development Agency (RDA) and the World Bank, with the goal of facilitating the commercialisation of research outputs from public research organisations (PROs). This intensive 10-month program, conducted in English, serves as a platform for mentoring, capacity-building, and fostering interaction between PROs and industry stakeholders. It provides invaluable support in knowledge exchange, focusing on areas such as marketing strategy, intellectual property rights (IPRs), and commercialisation strategy. Through RVP 2.0, participating research teams have the opportunity to elevate the technological and market readiness of their projects, pinpoint potential markets, and deepen their understanding of IPRs.

[Click here to find out more about this practice.](#)

This initiative can serve as a source of inspiration for regions where research universities struggle with low levels of research commercialisation. Particularly beneficial for those establishing technology transfer offices (TTOs) or embarking on efforts to promote research commercialisation, RVP 2.0 offers a first steppingstone and practical roadmap for enhancing the translation of research findings into tangible societal and economic benefits.

GOOD PRACTICE 2: UNIZAR research results evaluation methodology - Spain



This good practice outlines a comprehensive methodology for assessing research results to determine their potential for commercial exploitation and transfer at the University of Zaragoza (UNIZAR), Spain. It involves conducting patentability reports to check for novelty, invention step, and industrial applicability, followed by a strategic evaluation covering financial resources, stage of development, research group skills, legal protection, and market potential. The assessment aims to provide an index indicating the transferability potential of a result, with input from the research team. The benefits include optimising resources for research centres, providing feedback to researchers, and delivering innovations with high commercialisation probability to companies. The practice requires dedicated financial and human resources and has been successful at UNIZAR, resulting in a significant number of exploitation licenses and spin-offs.

[Click here to find out more about this practice.](#)

This practice offers a proven methodology to other universities or TTOs to adopt more strategic approaches to patenting, licensing, and commercial exploitation. The practice can inspire TTOs with a track-record in licensing and patenting. UNIZAR signs between 15-20 exploitation licences per year, generating around half a million euros a year in royalties, and is one of the top 3 Spanish Universities in terms of licences signed and royalties' incomes.

GOOD PRACTICE 3: Scouting Public Lab Inventions: Bridging Innovation in Grand Est - France



This good practice involves proactive scouting of innovative research findings within university labs through two main actions: weekly permanencies and educational events organised by business and detection officers from SATT Conectus, the regional TTO from Alsace, France. These officers aim to integrate into lab teams, fostering trust and facilitating faster tech transfer. Researchers benefit from ongoing support and educational opportunities, while Conectus efficiently identifies transferable research results. Evidence shows that this approach has led to successful tech transfer projects. Key lessons include the importance of trust, flexibility, integration with academic activities, and political support.

[Click here to find out more about this practice.](#)

This practice provides a path forward for TTOs to raise awareness and engage with academics on TTOs services and valorisation opportunities of research results. Scouting public lab inventions through regular activities like permanencies and educational events is particularly beneficial for well-established TTOs with ample resources.

3. Support to entrepreneurship

While many universities lack the potential for commercialising research results due to limited research capacities in frontier technologies, they all have the potential to generate entrepreneurship. Universities can have an important role to play in diffusing technologies through startups. As a result, regional policymakers must favour the design of policies to support entrepreneurship and spinoffs, especially in less-developed and transition European regions.

Entrepreneurship plays a vital role in research valorisation, notably through spin-offs—startups born from university research aiming for commercial success. These ventures symbolise the entrepreneurial spirit within academic institutions and serve as catalysts for wealth creation and regional development. However, they face challenges such as mismatches in mindset, difficulty accessing funding, and often low returns on investment for universities. Despite these challenges, effective support is key. By providing mentoring and supports, university support programmes can empower spin-offs to navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship and maximise their potential for success.

The selected good practices can inspire regional policymakers to promote entrepreneurship by designing an university spinoff programme (good practice 4), providing a broad range of resources acting as a toolbox for entrepreneurship (good practice 5), and enhancing existing spinoffs programmes around regional S3 priorities (good practice 6).

GOOD PRACTICE 4: University of Tartu (UT) spin-off programme - Estonia

The University of Tartu (UT) spin-off programme is designed to foster new business creation in the realm of deep technological innovation. The initiative aims to bridge research results or ideas into marketable products or services. The programme endeavours to equip UT scientists, students, or researchers with the essential skills to establish and manage a business. Coaching services include training, business and scientific mentoring, market analysis, and IP regulation assessments. Additionally, network-building and team-building activities are regularly organised to facilitate business matchmaking and peer-to-peer collaboration.

[Click here to find out more about this practice.](#)

This programme represents a compelling model for supporting spin-offs originating from academic institutions, as demonstrated by the University of Tartu. Its success serves as a blueprint that can be emulated in regions where universities are increasingly championing entrepreneurship and spin-off ventures.

GOOD PRACTICE 5: Resolve: seed funding and boosting health technologies - Portugal

RESOLVE is a programme dedicated to expediting the commercialisation journey for startups and spinoffs within the health sector in North Portugal. It is designed to provide essential support and management tools, acting as a toolbox to help startups overcome common barriers, such as the 'valley of death', where many ventures struggle and face high risks of failure. The programme offers a range of resources, including calls for selecting innovative startups, mentoring provided by MBA students, financial support tools such as proofs-of-concept and prototyping, access to open innovation platforms, opportunities to meet with investors, forums for engagement with end-users, and a fast-track pathway to clinical studies. The overarching goal is to accelerate the commercialisation process and provide a viable pathway for startups to progress from Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) 3-4, indicative of applied research and prototyping, to TRL 8, signalling readiness for commercialisation.

[Click here to find out more about this practice.](#)

RESOLVE serves as a comprehensive toolbox for existing spinoff programmes and can inspire other regions aiming to offer robust support for health startups on the path to commercialisation. Its broad range of resources effectively addresses common challenges, making it a potential blueprint for similar initiatives.

GOOD PRACTICE 6: SPARK Scan Plan Act Revolutionary Kit - Italy

SPARK is a programme to enhance university-industry collaboration and the uptake of scientific research in the business world. It brings together researchers with low TRL research concepts with business actors who have market knowledge. SPARK provides a space for discussion between researchers, and innovation centres, associations, public authorities, and private companies, and end-users. The programme allows researchers to test the business feasibility of their scientific research results and business actors to have access to latest scientific findings. The SPARK programme was designed and implemented by the Regional Innovation Agency of Emilia Romagna: it was organised around regional S3 priority areas: Agrifood, Culture and creative industries, Mechatronics, Building and Constructions, Health & Wellbeing industries.

[Click here to find out more about this practice.](#)

This practice has the potential to enrich existing spinoff programs by equipping experts with diverse skills across different TRLs to guide researchers seamlessly from ideation and planning to execution and monitoring phases, particularly within the context of regional S3 priorities. However, its effectiveness hinges upon robust coordination capabilities and heightened awareness to ensure optimal outcomes.

Sources and further information

Our experts provide a tailored set of resources, contacts, or in-depth analyses to help you find the answers you are looking for. Explore our services that can help you solve your regional policy challenges.

Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform information

- Policy brief on [university-industry collaboration](#)
- Policy brief on [regional missions](#)
- Policy brief on [clusters: driving the green and digital twin transition](#)
- Peer review on [challenge-driven policies for university-industry collaboration in the Azores, Portugal](#)
- Peer review on [university-industry collaboration in Upper Silesia, Poland](#)
- Matchmaking on [university-industry collaboration for the twin transitions](#)
- Workshop on [university-industry collaboration](#)
- Story on [intellectual property rights](#)
- Story on [innovation vouchers](#)

Other sources

- European Commission - [EU Valorisation Policy](#)
- European Commission - [EU Valorisation Platform](#)
- European Commission - [Guiding Principles for Knowledge Valorisation](#)
- European Commission - [The 2020 Intellectual Property Action Plan](#)
- European Commission - [Horizon Results Booster](#)
- European Commission - [Horizon Results Platform](#)
- European Commission - [European IPR Helpdesk](#)
- OECD – [university-industry collaboration](#)
- UIIN – [University Industry Innovation Network](#)



Interreg Europe Programme

Interreg Europe is an interregional cooperation programme co-financed by the European Union. With a budget of 379 million euros for 2021-2027, Interreg Europe helps local, regional and national governments across Europe to develop and deliver better policies through interregional cooperation projects and its Policy Learning Platform services. The programme promotes good practice sharing and policy learning among European regions in 29 countries – the EU27, Norway and Switzerland. Interreg Europe contributes to the EU cohesion policy together with the other European Territorial Cooperation programmes known as Interreg.

Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform

The Policy Learning Platform is the second action of the Interreg Europe programme. It aims to boost EU-wide policy learning and builds on good practices related to regional development policies.

The Platform is a space where the European policy-making community can tap into the know-how of regional policy experts and peers. It offers information on a variety of topics via thematic publications, online and onsite events, and direct communication with a team of experts.

Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform expert services

Our team of experts provide a set of services that can help you with regional policy challenges. Get in contact with our experts to discuss the possibilities:



Via the [policy helpdesk](#), policymakers may submit their questions to receive a set of resources ranging from inspiring good practices from across Europe, policy briefs, webinar recordings, information about upcoming events, available European support and contacts of relevant people, as well as matchmaking recommendations and peer review opportunities.



A [matchmaking session](#) is a thematic discussion hosted and moderated by the Policy Learning Platform, designed around the policy needs and questions put forward by the requesting public authority or agency. It brings together peers from other European regions to present their experience and successes, to provide inspiration for overcoming regional challenges.



[Peer reviews](#) are the deepest and most intensive of the on-demand services, bringing together peers from a number of regions for a two-day work session, to examine the specific territorial and thematic context of the requesting region, discuss with stakeholders, and devise recommendations.

Discover more: www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning



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