Ask the Expert - series 2025

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A look at the WIPO IP Policy Toolkit: Unpacking the steps

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Background:
Socio-Economic Benefits of Institutional IP Policies

Member States recognize socio-economic benefits:

- Boosts private sector innovation
- Gets university research into society
- Creates jobs and new markets

Policy responses include:

- Laws giving universities IP ownership
- National IP guidelines and best practices
- Innovation-focused public funding
- Support for public–private partnerships
- Incentives like tax credits

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No One-Size-Fits-All Model for Tech Transfer

Global trends

- Inspired by leading innovation ecosystems (U.S., Europe, Asia)
- MLIC mirror these trends
- Tech transfer = “third mission” of universities

Different realities

- Research capacity, innovation culture, and SME needs vary
- Countries like China, Brazil, South Africa, Malaysia have passed TT laws
- But no universal IP policy or TT model works for all

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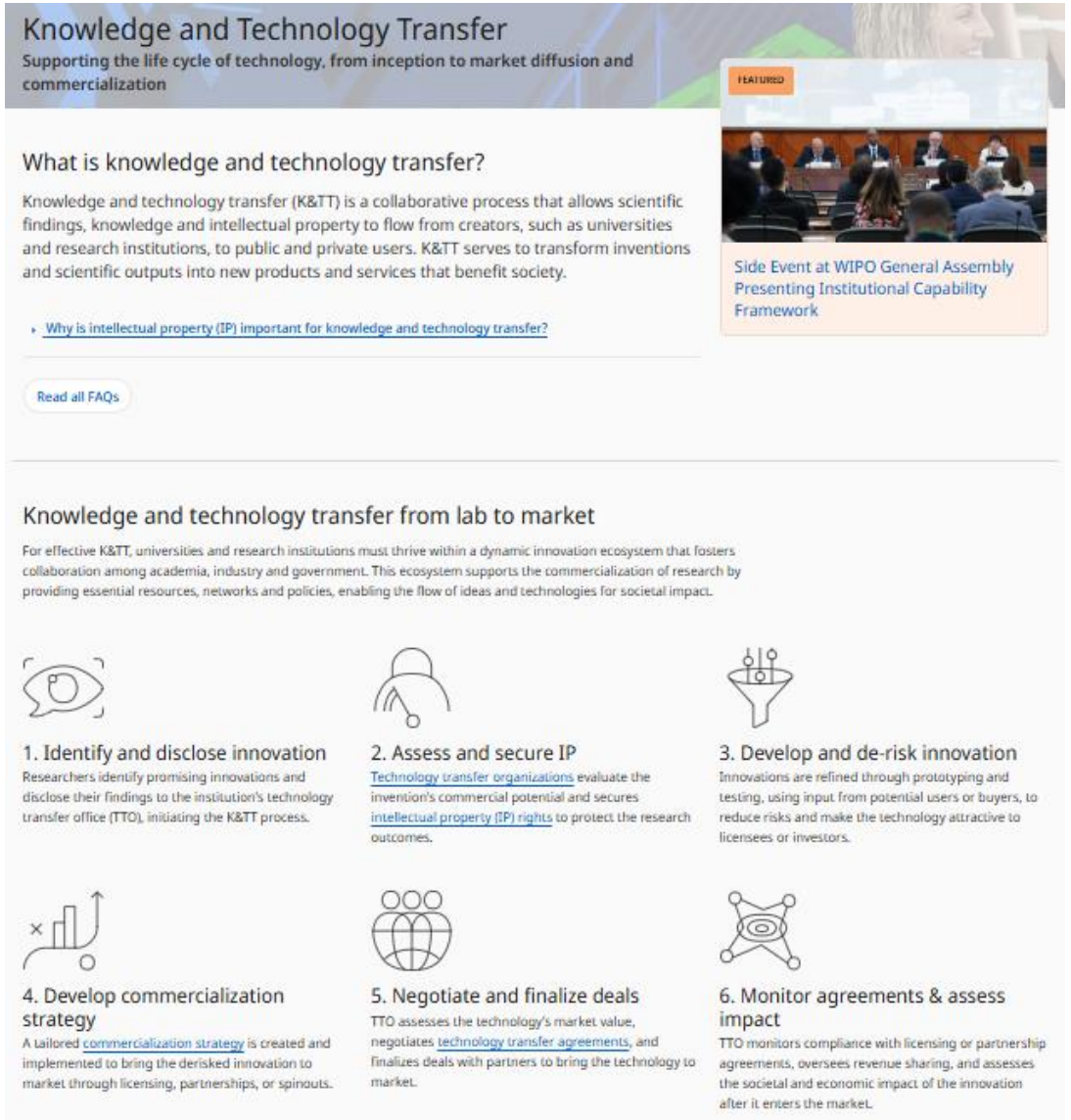
I.
WIPO KTT and IP Policy websites

KTT website



Knowledge and Technology Transfer

Supporting the life cycle of technology, from inception to market diffusion and commercialization

FEATURED

Side Event at WIPO General Assembly Presenting Institutional Capability Framework

What is knowledge and technology transfer?

Knowledge and technology transfer (K&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. K&TT serves to transform inventions and scientific outputs into new products and services that benefit society.

- Why is intellectual property (IP) important for knowledge and technology transfer?

Read all FAQs

Knowledge and technology transfer from lab to market

For effective K&TT, universities and research institutions must thrive within a dynamic innovation ecosystem that fosters collaboration among academia, industry and government. This ecosystem supports the commercialization of research by providing essential resources, networks and policies, enabling the flow of ideas and technologies for societal impact.

1. Identify and disclose innovation

Researchers identify promising innovations and disclose their findings to the institution's technology transfer office (TTO), initiating the K&TT process.

2. Assess and secure IP

Technology transfer organizations evaluate the invention's commercial potential and secures intellectual property (IP) rights to protect the research outcomes.

3. Develop and de-risk innovation

Innovations are refined through prototyping and testing, using input from potential users or buyers, to reduce risks and make the technology attractive to licensees or investors.

4. Develop commercialization strategy

A tailored commercialization strategy is created and implemented to bring the derisked innovation to market through licensing, partnerships, or spinouts.

5. Negotiate and finalize deals

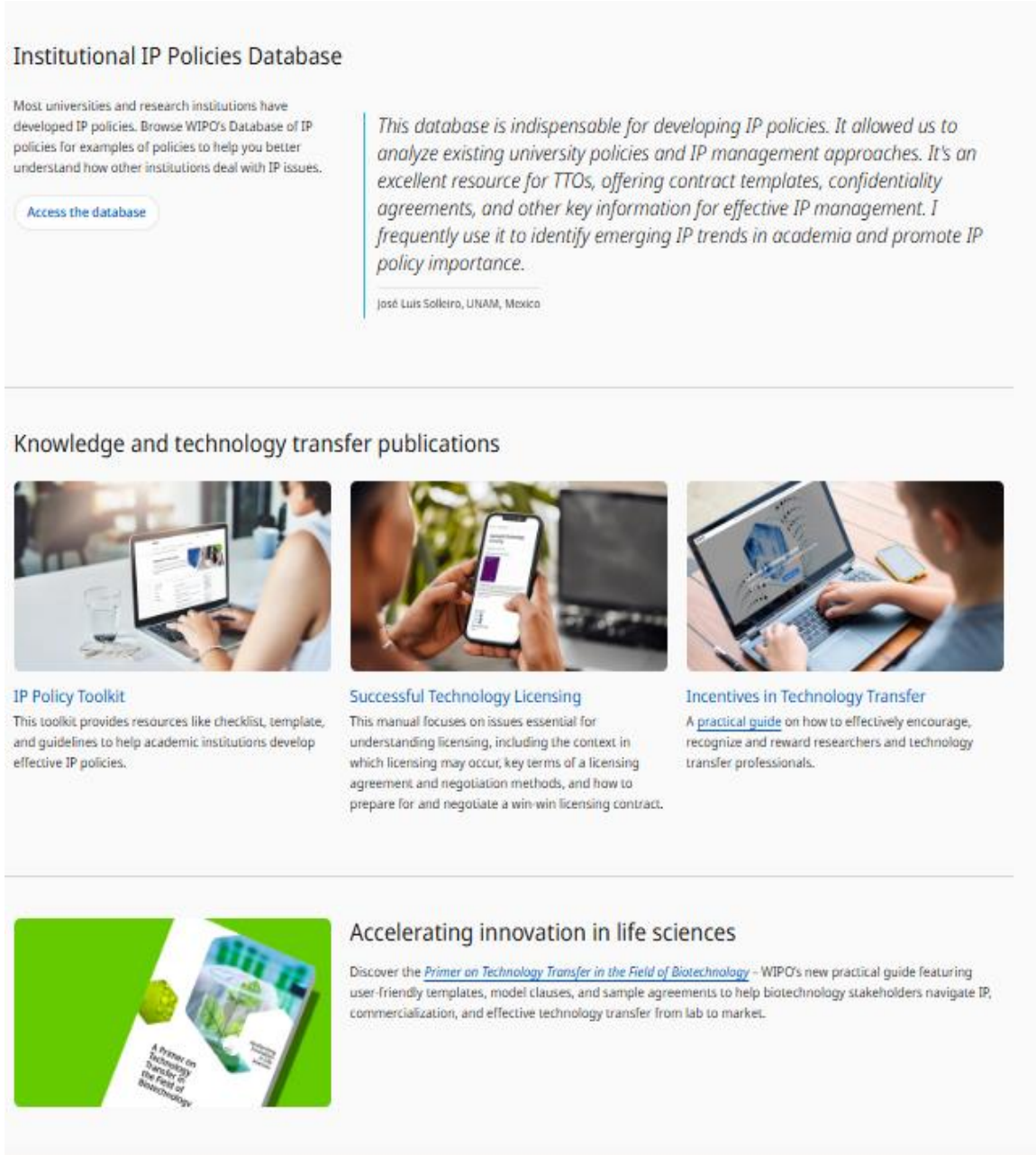
TTO assesses the technology's market value, negotiates technology transfer agreements, and finalizes deals with partners to bring the technology to market.

6. Monitor agreements & assess impact

TTO monitors compliance with licensing or partnership agreements, oversees revenue sharing, and assesses the societal and economic impact of the innovation after it enters the market.

www.wipo.int/en/web/technology-transfer

KTT website



www.wipo.int/en/web/technology-transfer

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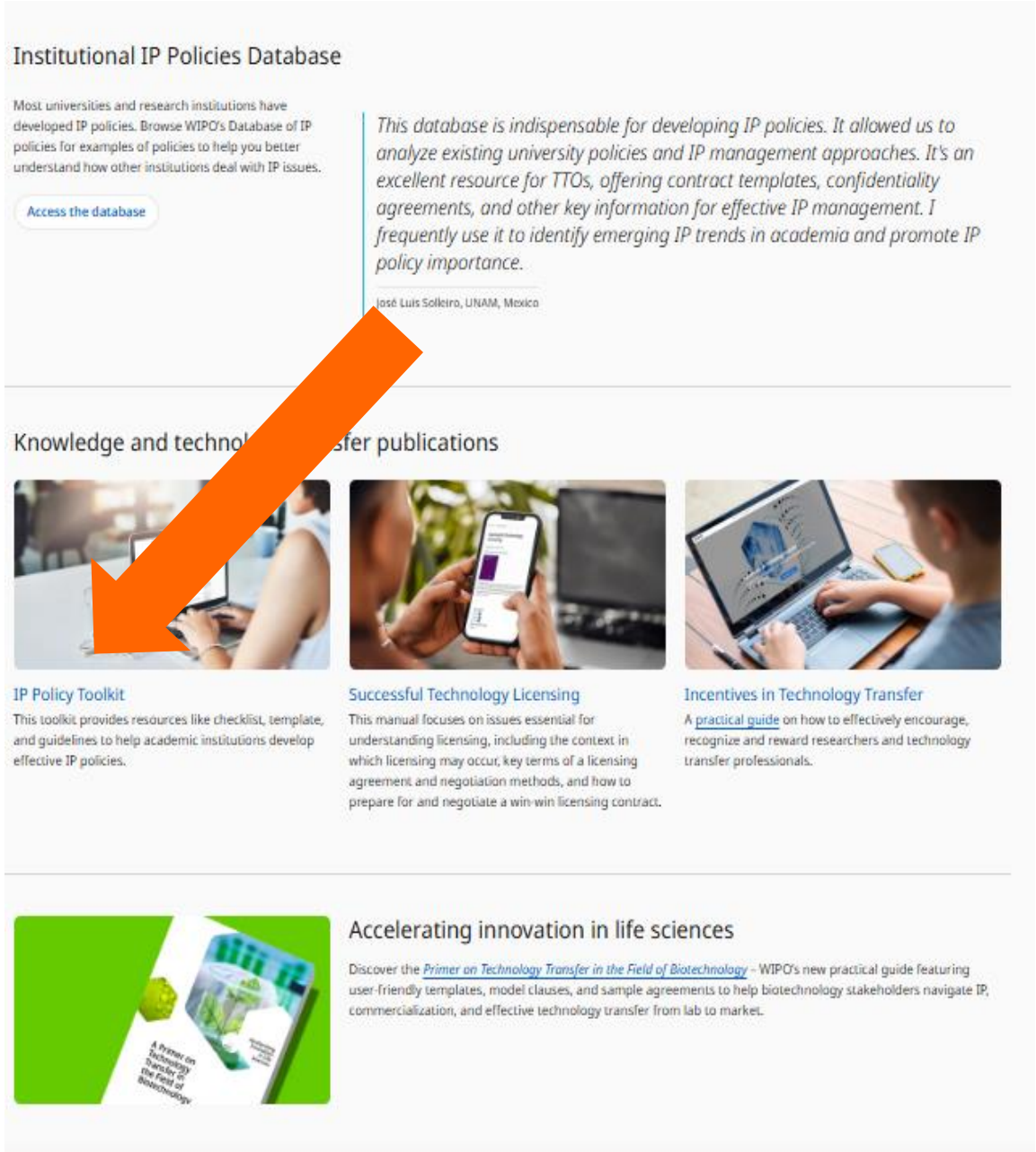
KTT website



Institutional IP Policies Database

Most universities and research institutions have developed IP policies. Browse WIPO's Database of IP policies for examples of policies to help you better understand how other institutions deal with IP issues.

Access the database

This database is indispensable for developing IP policies. It allowed us to analyze existing university policies and IP management approaches. It's an excellent resource for TTOs, offering contract templates, confidentiality agreements, and other key information for effective IP management. I frequently use it to identify emerging IP trends in academia and promote IP policy importance.

José Luis Solleiro, UNAM, Mexico

Knowledge and techno sfer publications

IP Policy Toolkit

This toolkit provides resources like checklist, template, and guidelines to help academic institutions develop effective IP policies.

Successful Technology Licensing

This manual focuses on issues essential for understanding licensing, including the context in which licensing may occur, key terms of a licensing agreement and negotiation methods, and how to prepare for and negotiate a win-win licensing contract.

Incentives in Technology Transfer

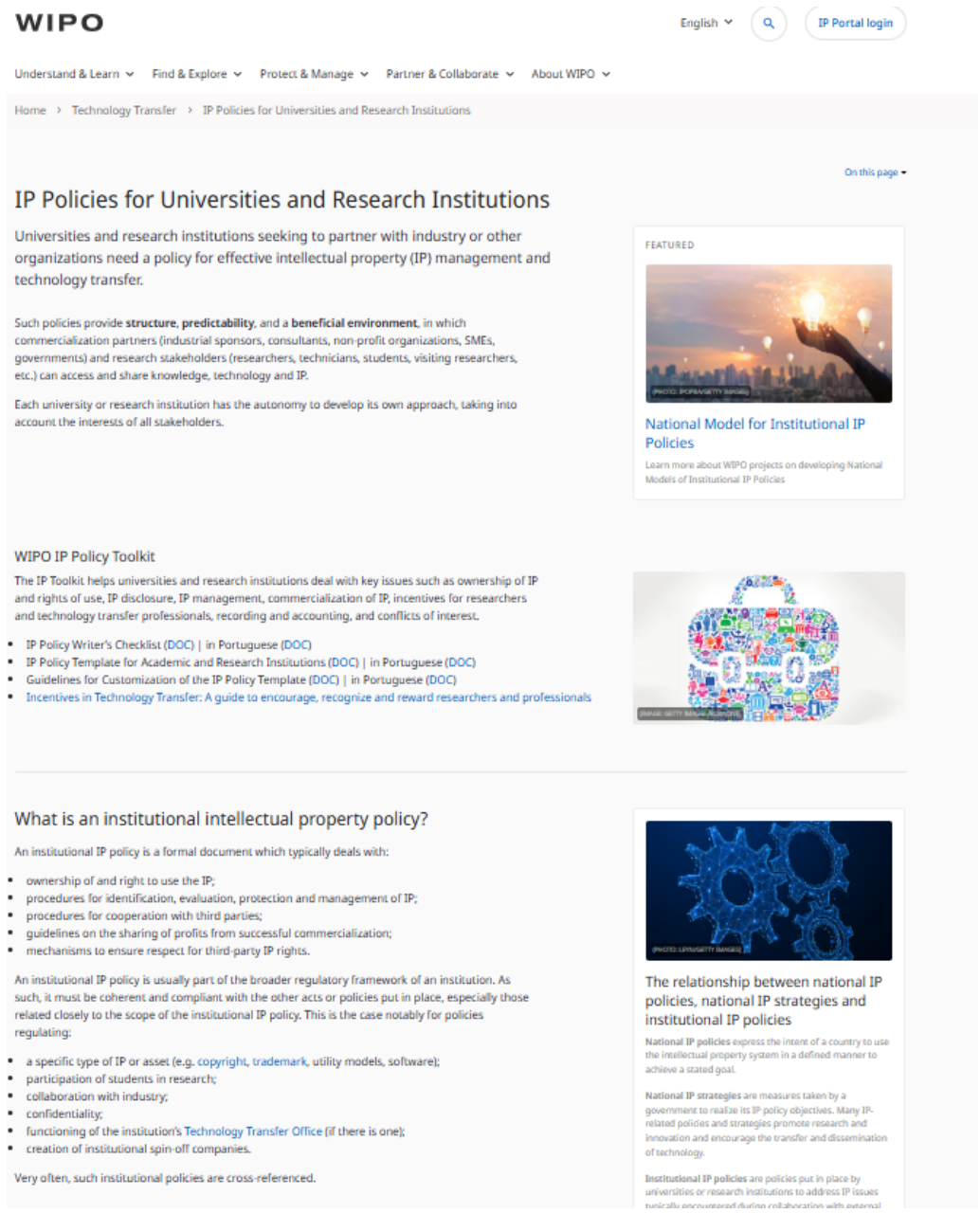
A practical guide on how to effectively encourage, recognize and reward researchers and technology transfer professionals.

Accelerating innovation in life sciences

Discover the *Primer on Technology Transfer in the Field of Biotechnology* – WIPO's new practical guide featuring user-friendly templates, model clauses, and sample agreements to help biotechnology stakeholders navigate IP, commercialization, and effective technology transfer from lab to market.

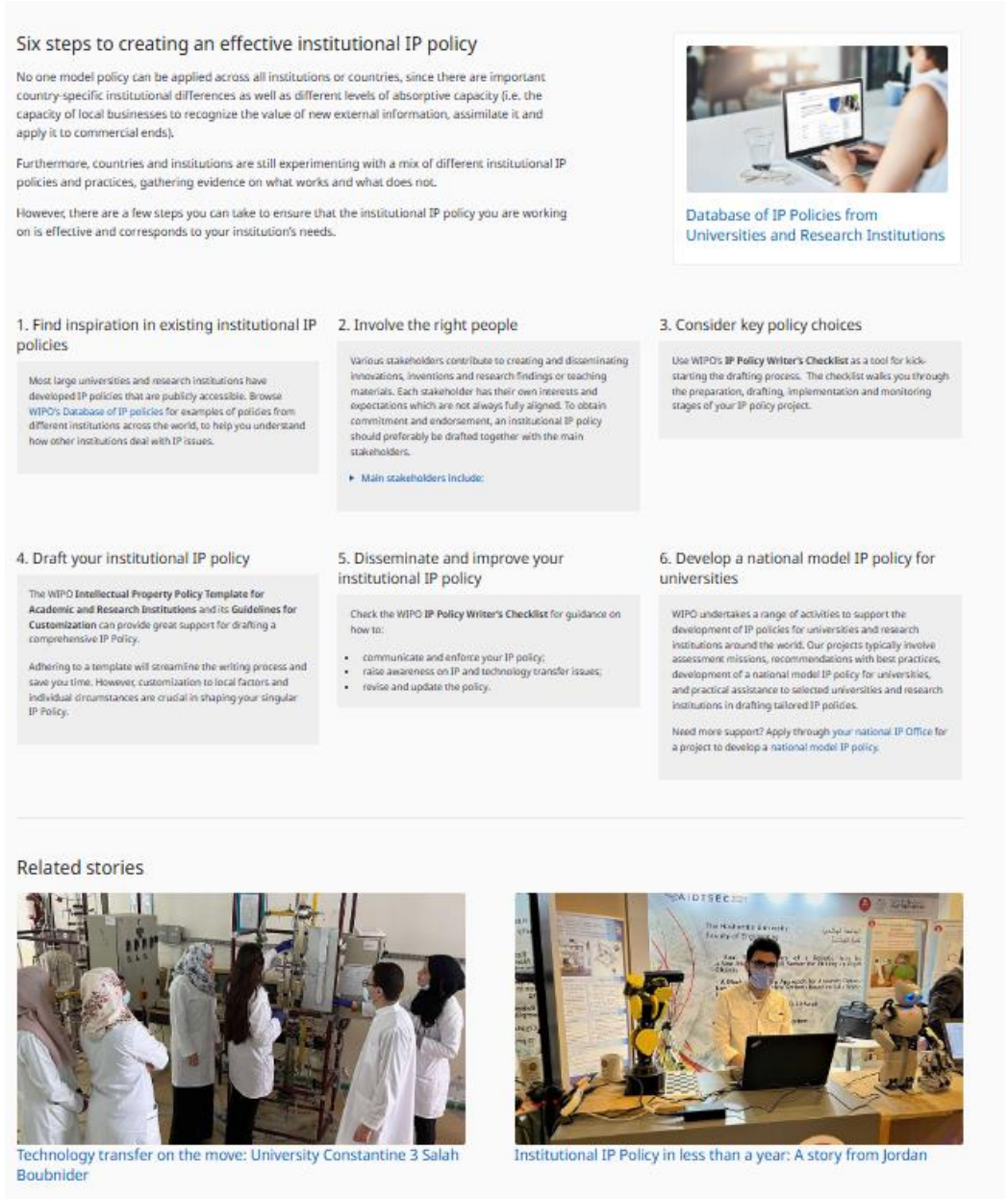
www.wipo.int/en/web/technology-transfer

IPP Toolkit website



https://www.wipo.int/en/web/technology-transfer/ip-policies#toolkit

IPP Toolkit website



Six steps to creating an effective institutional IP policy

No one model policy can be applied across all institutions or countries, since there are important country-specific institutional differences as well as different levels of absorptive capacity (i.e. the capacity of local businesses to recognize the value of new external information, assimilate it and apply it to commercial ends).

Furthermore, countries and institutions are still experimenting with a mix of different institutional IP policies and practices, gathering evidence on what works and what does not.

However, there are a few steps you can take to ensure that the institutional IP policy you are working on is effective and corresponds to your institution's needs.

Database of IP Policies from Universities and Research Institutions

1. Find inspiration in existing institutional IP policies

Most large universities and research institutions have developed IP policies that are publicly accessible. Browse WIPO's Database of IP policies for examples of policies from different institutions across the world, to help you understand how other institutions deal with IP issues.

2. Involve the right people

Various stakeholders contribute to creating and disseminating innovations, inventions and research findings or teaching materials. Each stakeholder has their own interests and expectations which are not always fully aligned. To obtain commitment and endorsement, an institutional IP policy should preferably be drafted together with the main stakeholders.

▸ Main stakeholders include:

3. Consider key policy choices

Use WIPO's **IP Policy Writer's Checklist** as a tool for kick-starting the drafting process. The checklist walks you through the preparation, drafting, implementation and monitoring stages of your IP policy project.

4. Draft your institutional IP policy

The WIPO **Intellectual Property Policy Template for Academic and Research Institutions** and its **Guidelines for Customization** can provide great support for drafting a comprehensive IP Policy.

Adhering to a template will streamline the writing process and save you time. However, customization to local factors and individual circumstances are crucial in shaping your singular IP Policy.

5. Disseminate and improve your institutional IP policy

Check the WIPO **IP Policy Writer's Checklist** for guidance on how to:

- communicate and enforce your IP policy;
- raise awareness on IP and technology transfer issues;
- revise and update the policy.

6. Develop a national model IP policy for universities

WIPO undertakes a range of activities to support the development of IP policies for universities and research institutions around the world. Our projects typically involve assessment missions, recommendations with best practices, development of a national model IP policy for universities, and practical assistance to selected universities and research institutions in drafting tailored IP policies.

Need more support? Apply through your national IP Office for a project to develop a national model IP policy.

Related stories

Technology transfer on the move: University Constantine 3 Salah Boubnider

Institutional IP Policy in less than a year: A story from Jordan

https://www.wipo.int/en/web/technology-transfer/ip-policies#toolkit

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Five Steps to Develop an Effective IIPP

1. Seek inspiration from existing IPPs
2. Convene suitable persons
3. Analyze the main policy options
4. Writing your IPP
5. Disseminate and improve its IPP.

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II.
WIPO IP Policy Toolkit

Institutional IP Policy Toolkit

1. Database
2. IP Policy Writer's Checklist
3. IP Policy Template
4. Guidelines for Customization
5. Incentives
6. Model agreements

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IP policy database

"*The WIPO IP Policy Database is an excellent resource because of the diverse global information collated and especially the fact that you can search to* ***see how specific issues/policies have been dealt with in other institutions****. Very valuable when reviewing your institution's IP policy.*"

Andrew Bailey, RC&I, UCT, South Africa

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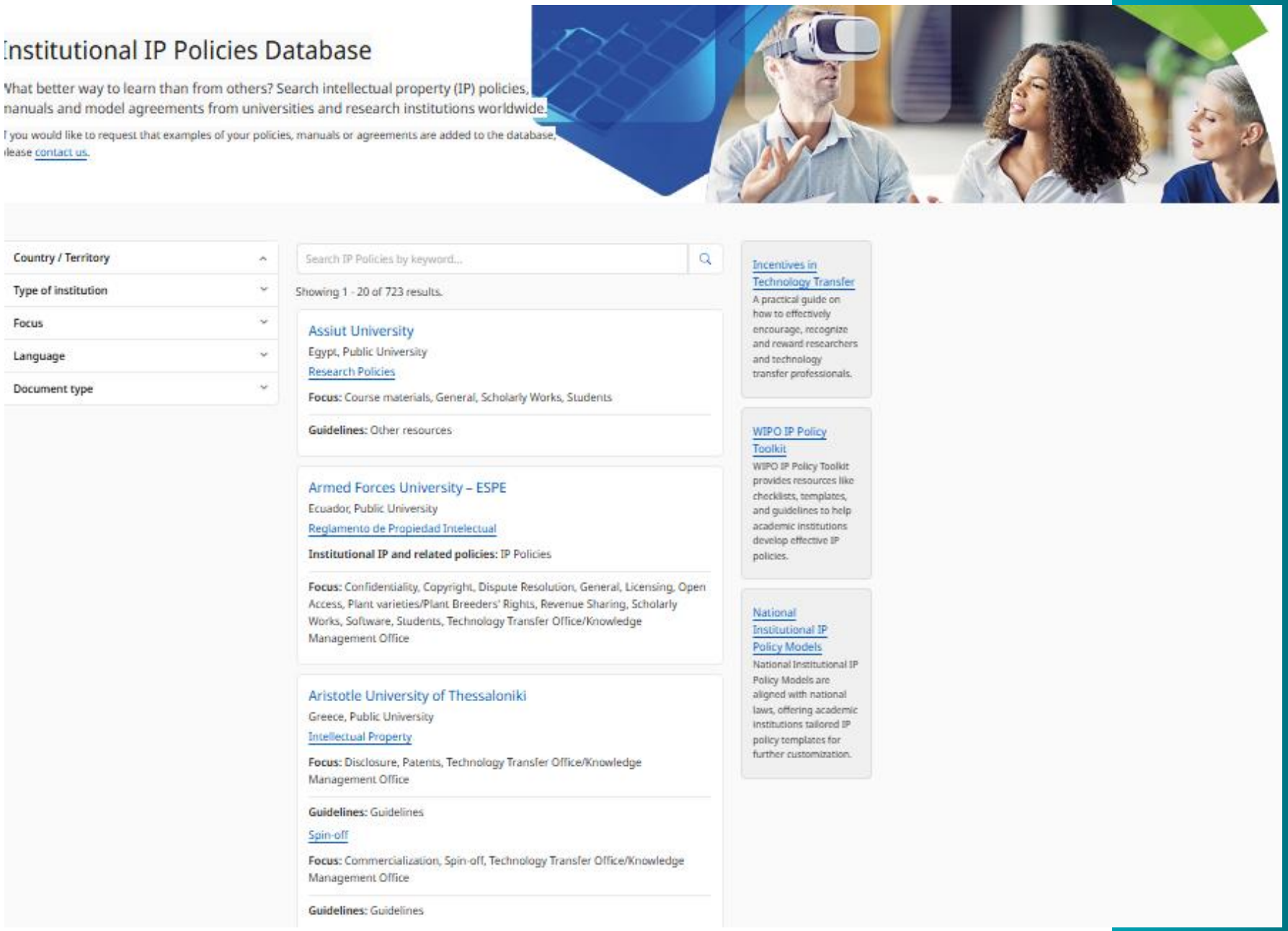
Link to database



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1,500 policy documents from > 700 institutions

Topics

- Collaboration
- Confidentiality
- CoI
- Consultancy
- Contract research
- Open access
- Revenue sharing
- Spinoff
- etc

Types of documents

- Policy
- Guidelines
- Templates and agreements

Link to database

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IP Policy Writers' Checklist

A practical tool to guide institutions step-by-step through drafting a sound and tailored IP policy.

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IP POLICY WRITERS' CHECKLIST

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IP Policy Writers' Checklist
A Mechanism for Kick-starting the Policy Drafting Process

Version January 29, 2019

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2. IDENTIFYING AND ANALYZING THE STAKEHOLDERS

An IP Policy will not be successful in isolation; it needs buy-in from senior executives, way down to the individual employee/student level. In addition, successful knowledge t will also depend on the dynamic interaction of the Institution with its environment and p industry partners. Before you dive into the policy-writing process, you should think throug will be affected by your policy, and how you can garner their buy-in.

Checklist 3 – Stakeholders to Be Consulted

- ☐ Internal Stakeholders – Within the Institution, the emphasis should be on crea culture of innovation and entrepreneurship that takes IP into account as part o person's regular job. One of the best ways to accomplish adherence to your IP is to include the entire Institution community in the drafting process. Do yo understand the views on commercialization of:
  - senior management[6] (central administration, departments, colleges);
  - potential IP creators[7] (faculty, administration, staff, students, visitors);
  - IP managers and technology transfer professionals[8] (staff or IP Manage Offices, Commercialization Committees, etc.); and
  - human resources and legal department?
- ☐ Regional Partners – The way in which the region accepts and responds to aca commercialization plays an important role in the ultimate impact of an IP Policy Institution and the community[9]. Have you consulted the following players:
  - relevant government agencies;
  - local industry (small and large);
  - networks and clusters;
  - local communities; and
  - relevant indigenous groups?

Checklist 4 – Feedback Plan

- ☐ How will you inform stakeholders about the changes you are about to develop?
- ☐ How frequently and at which stages will communication take place?
- ☐ Who will be responsible to consult the relevant parties?

3. UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXTUAL ENVIRONMENT

While the policy development process is in itself a valuable undertaking, other factors - both external and internal – will affect your Institution's ability to succeed in its knowledge transfer and academy-industry relationships. A comprehensive study of the contextual environment is needed to be able to make the best policy choices.

3.1 ANALYSING THE LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

An Institution's IP Policy must be consistent with national employment and IP legislation and any exemptions that may exist for public researchers or for Institutions and their faculty. Unfortunately, it is not always straightforward to find out what are the national rules on the ownership and commercialization of IP emerging from Institutions.[10] The help of an IP lawyer may be needed to help clarify the key legal issues.

Checklist 5 – Key Legal Environment Issues

Does your country have any laws, regulations, policies or guidelines that focus on:

- ☐ default legal regime for employee's inventions/creative output
- ☐ ownership of research results in publicly sponsored research
- ☐ specific ownership rules for public research institutions and possibility to modify them contractually
- ☐ specific ownership regime for students/visiting researchers/doctoral students and possibility to modify it contractually
- ☐ specific regime for commercialization procedures
- ☐ requirements regarding transfer of IP and licensing
- ☐ creation of spin-offs
- ☐ organization and support of commercialization processes within the Institution (e.g. IP Management Offices[11], special propose company)
- ☐ apportionment of expenses and revenues from research activities and the subsequent commercialization of the results
- ☐ exemptions for research use
- ☐ publication of scientific results financed by public bodies
- ☐ possession, use and transfer of biological materials (biodiversity laws)
- ☐ access to and benefit-sharing of genetic resources or traditional knowledge
- ☐ non-disclosure and non-compete clauses in research contracts
- ☐ incentives (e.g., legal requirements for researchers to disclose; royalty sharing or equity participation in spin-offs; tax reduction for incomes from IP commercialization, number of inventions filed or patented as one of criteria for academic achievements' assessment)
- ☐ conflicts of interest involving research staff and IP activities
- ☐ mandatory IP licensing requirements.

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IP Policy Template and Guidelines

- Provides a ready-to-use framework covering key IP management issues

  - Must be customized using WIPO's Guidelines to reflect local laws and institutional needs

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IP Policy Template and Guidelines

WIPO Intellectual Property Policy Template for Universities and Research Institutions

Version January 29, 2019

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Coming soon

- Model policy for the use of copyrighted works.
- IPP in biotechnology.
- Guiding principles of socially responsible TT.
- Covid provisions and future pandemic preparedness.

WIPO Model

PPI Template

Guidelines for customization

National/regional models

(Drafts and finals)

Algeria

Belarus

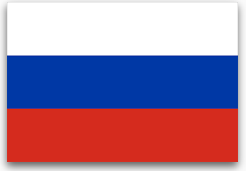
Colombia

India

Jordan

Morocco

Panama


Russia

Kyrgyzstan

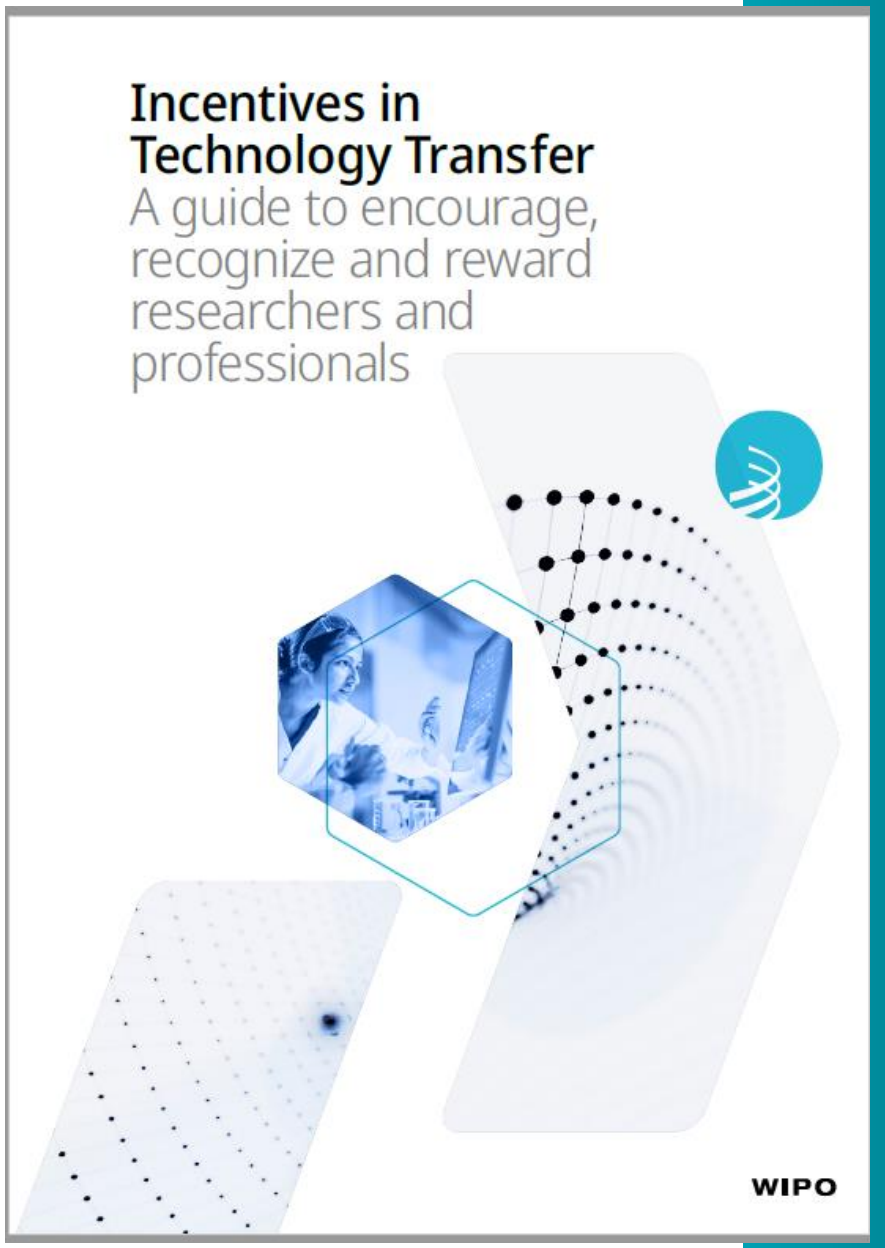
South Africa

Viet Nam

Incentives Guide

"In general, researchers are very hesitant to turn the key to the entrepreneurial world. ***Being aware of incentives can help researchers make the most of the opportunities presented by entrepreneurship and knowledge sharing.***

Paul Van Dun, General Manager, Research and Development, KU Leuven (LRD), Belgium



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INCENTIVES FOR RESEARCHERS

Non-financial

- Recognition
- Flexible working conditions
- Support for entrepreneurship
- Additional funds
- Right of publication
- Return IP

Professional Career

- Promotion criteria and evaluation process

Finance

- Revenue share
- Shareholders' equity
- Directors' fees
- Consulting fees

LY

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Incentives for TTPs

Non-financial

- **Recognition**
- **Continuous professional development**
- **Flexible employment conditions and welfare**

Professional Career

- **Promotion criteria and evaluation process**

Finance

- **Competitive salaries**
- **Performance-related payments**

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III.
Good practices and trends

1. IP Policy Development
Key Steps

SMALL DRAFTING TEAM

REFERENCE COMMITTEE

CONSULTATION PROCESS

APPROVAL PROCESS

📝 **A collaborative and thorough development process ensures an IP policy that is clear, effective, and widely supported.**

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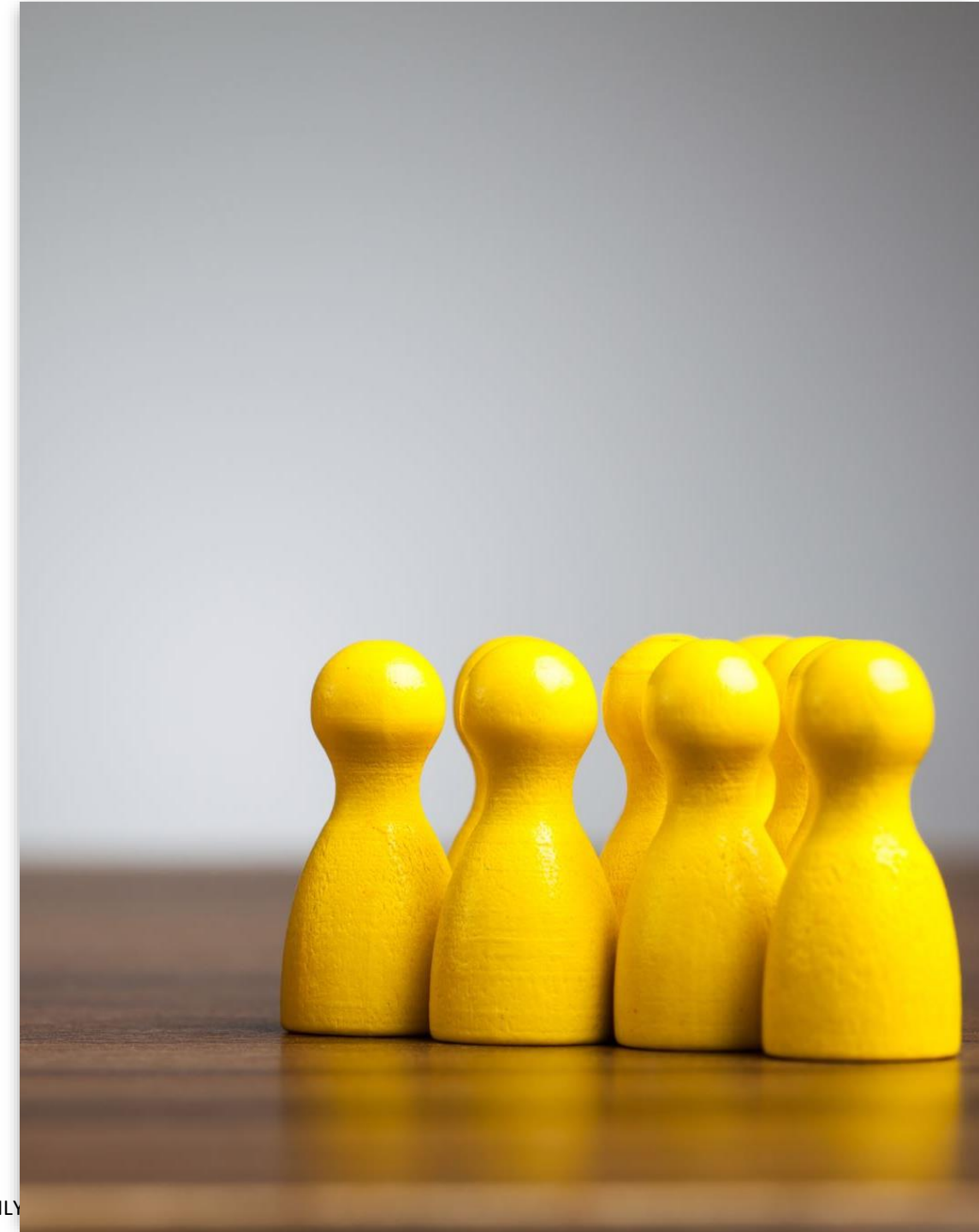
2. Align with Other Policies and Documents

- Research Policy / Ethics
- Employment Contracts and HR Policies
- COI Policy
- Data Management and Sharing Policy
- External Work/Consulting
- Student IP Policy
- Collaboration and Partnership Agreements
- Trademark Use



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3. GR and eTK – On the New WIPO Treaty

WIPO Member States adopted WIPO Treaty on IP, GR and Associated TK on May 24, 2024.

The Treaty aims to enhance the efficacy, transparency and quality of the patent system with regard to GRs and TK associated with genetic resources (aTK) and prevent patents from being granted erroneously for inventions that are not novel or inventive with regard to GRs and aTK.

The Treaty establishes a mandatory patent disclosure requirement – this requires patent applicants to disclose the country of origin of the GRs and/or the Indigenous Peoples or local community providing the aTK, if the claimed inventions are 'based on' GRs and/or aTK. If such information is unknown, the source of the GRs or aTK should be disclosed.

A failure to disclose the required information would be subject to appropriate, effective, and proportionate measures. Where there has been fraudulent intent in regard to the disclosure requirement, post grant sanctions or remedies may be provided for. Fraud aside, no Contracting Party should revoke or render unenforceable a patent solely on the basis of an applicant's failure to disclose the required information.

In addition, the new instrument would invite countries to establish databases of GRs and aTK.

The new patent disclosure requirement could be a measure to indirectly support implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol by their respective Contracting Parties.

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Upcoming Guidelines for Researchers

- Researchers should start tracking GRs and aTK used in their work.

- WIPO is developing guidance to support Treaty-aligned research practices.

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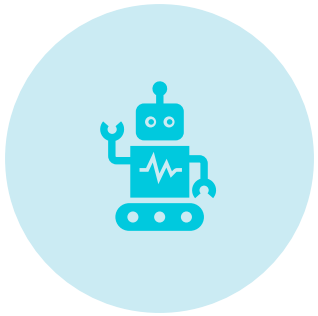
4. AI - New Considerations for IP Policies



IP policies should **clarify** ownership and inventorship in AI-assisted research.

Researchers must **disclose** when AI tools are used to generate or assist in inventions or publications.

Institutions should assess how AI-generated content is treated under IP law and define internal procedures accordingly.

Guidelines should promote transparency, documentation, and **responsible use** of AI in R&D.

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Case Studies and Success Stories

University Constantine 3 Salah Boubnider

First in Algeria to develop an IP Policy in order to increase the likelihood of TT and academic research commercialization.

"*We realize that IP management plays a significant role in economic development and would like to use its potential for the growth of science, technology and business in Algeria*"

"The support provided by WIPO in drafting the policy has been more than simple assistance: it has been a training from which we have learned a great deal,".

The process as a whole has also gathered the different entities within the University around a shared objective of technology transfer." - Ms. Nawel Outili

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Case Studies and Success Stories

Technology Transfer in Action in Southern Africa

Empowering Southern African Tech Transfer: WIPO's On-the-Job Training Program

- 12 selected TTPs from Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe
- 8-week experience in South Africa
- Working closely with experienced TTPs at South African TTOs of North-West University, Stellenbosch University, University of Cape Town, University of Johannesburg, University of South Africa, and University of the Western Cape.
- IP Policy drafting

https://www.wipo.int/web/technology-transfer/w/stories/tech-transfer-southern-africa

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Closing Thoughts

"Innovation begins with ideas — impact begins with policy."
Let's turn knowledge into value, responsibly and strategically.

Innovation begins with ideas.
Impact begins with policy.

Let's turn knowledge into value, responsibly and strategically.

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Thank you

Lien Verbauwhede

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