

LEARNING WORKSHOP

8th and 9th March, 2010, Detroit



This project is implemented through the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme co-financed by the ERDF.

During the US Study Tour, the **3rd Learning Workshop** of the CERIM project was taken place on the 8th and 9th of March, 2010 in the presence of several experts of TechTown and WSU.

The experts acted as a jury by asking aimed questions, giving feedbacks and advices on CERIM members' early stage projects that have been selected from their connected PROs. The workshop was fragmented to two days so all projects were presented to all TechTown fellows.

The workshop started with a short introduction of the experts and was preceded by their presentations on the theoretic background of technology transfer and their approach in TechTown and WSU in the implementation of the strategies. CERIM members held short presentations on several scientific projects that have been shortly evaluated by the experts' team. The workshop was moderated by **Peter Csíkos**, ValDeal Innovations Ltd. and **James Eliason PhD.**, Director of TechTown Stem Cell Commercialization Centre.

The experts' team consisted of the above professionals:

- **Randal Charlton**, Executive Director of TechTown
- **Nancy Cappola**, Director of Soft Landings program
- **Anne C. Di Sante**, Senior Director, Technology Transfer, WSU Technology Commercialization
- **Eric K. Stief**, Director of Venture Development, WSU Technology Commercialization
- **Nancy Christ**, Director of New Projects in TechTown
- **Lori Simoes**, Technology Licensing Manager, WSU Technology Commercialization
- **Judy M. Johncox**, Associate Vice President for Technology Commercialization, WSU Technology Commercialization

Feedbacks of the workshop of 8-9th March on CERIM partners' projects from TechTown experts:

Not all CERIM partners could participate on the workshop by presenting their projects due to limited time and secrecy issues but each participants have attended the presentations and the feedbacks of the technology transfer experts.

Projects of Inno AG

The two presented projects were Cannula and NOx-reduction.

When trying to licensing a medical technology to company, you need to be able to prove clinical benefits. It is seldom enough to claim possible cost reduction. Especially not when the possible margin already is large, which is the case for the cannula. Thus the recommendations were to initiate clinical studies comparing the new cannula with conventional ones. Such studies are also probably required for granting market approval by the FDA.

Regarding the NOx-reduction, the potential licensing customers are large OEMs in the automotive industry. These companies are at present experience difficulties, in the US especially. Thus trying to achieve a licensing deal with a technology that requires substantial further development is at the moment difficult. Moreover, since the benefit of the technology is most obvious for diesel engines, which is not as common in the US as in Europe, the US is probably not the most attractive market for the NOx-technology. At the moment at least. However, there are a lot of American companies developing such technologies. We were recommended to make contacts with them.

Projects of the University of Zilina

Recommendation of the USA site was in our case of AGV vehicles really identical. They advise us licensing our product to somebody, who has created the network of sales, services and productions in the area of logistic products. For us should be most important to focus for development of next generation of AGV according to the agreement with him.

Projects of ValDeal Innovations Ltd

ValDeal presented several projects with a special emphasis on Waterjet milling technology, Gravity R&D Ltd's recommendation engine and Cure Nose anti-allergy device.

Case1 Waterjet milling technology-

Lori Simoes asked about the possible business models of Waterjet and the current status. She suggested a business partner for Waterjet, who might be interested in a common research with the project owners. Eric Stief asked question about the possible ways of recycling scrap tires and the intellectual property and the know-how – the special knowledge that is represented by the invention which is the core of this technology. As this is an early stage project, it is hard to tell whether a licensing deal or capital raise can be taken place as soon as the Hungarian pilot will be built up. There are a lot of questions to answer about the operation of the technology as well.

Nancy Christ was sure that she has heard about technologies like this: this field is competitive, meanwhile the possibility of producing finer grain size and to produce revulcanized rubber out of the rubber powder thanks to its excellent properties. They already heard of similar-like technologies but these were probably using conventional shredding or grinding.

Case2 Cure Nose

Nancy Cappola asked about the intellectual property and was interested in those projects more that had strong IP in the background. The cure nose project seemed to be of her interest as a strong IP is in the background of the project.

Case3 Gravity R&D

The success story of Gravity R&D, a recommendation engine that has great references and was developed in Hungary, raised interest amongst the TT experts. Gravity R&D Ltd. is an already successful startup that has won several awards and has gained first round investment. Its case served as a good example of university students' inventions that may bring value for commercial companies. As it is an IT project, the protection of the intellectual property is in question as the core algorithm is not to be protected by patents.

Projects of the Slovak Academy of Sciences

Case 1 „Carboxymethylated Pyridoindoles as Pharmaceutical Agents“

For pharmaceutical industry are only IP protected compound structures interesting, in this case the biggest handicap is the existence of the Slovak patent only. The clinical studies of phase I-III costs a millions of dollars, hence for the presented substance it is hardly possible to get the support. Direct cooperation with middle size drug developing (producing) company is advisable. In the case of the other drugs developed by the institute a contact to James Eliason and Nancy Christ is advisable.

Case 2 „Compatibilizer for blends of biodegradable plastics“

For the applications of the biodegradable polymers e.g. in packing industry company in Detroit could use presented know-how, contact to NanoScience Engineering Corporation was recommended by Erick Stief. If licencing is proposed, than IP protection should be realized for this particular know-how. Contact to James Eliason and Nancy Christ is advisable.

Case 3 „Complex measurements of materials thermophysical properties“

Clear definition of the advances for given apparatus is required, e.g. faster measurements on simplified equipment design in comparison to commercially available equipments and access to more detailed physical characteristics from one equipment instead of using single one for each measurement are important factors for the marketing. It is necessary to clear who are the competitors on the market. If the entrance to the US market is supposed than business plan and further steps should be clarified. Contact to James Eliason and Nancy Christ is advisable if the business start in US is planned.

Case 4 „Technology of direct write e-beam lithography and pattern transfer“

Operation on intercontinental base is possibly not suitable because of the existence of the local labs at US universities. However, possible cooperation could be with Prof. Dr. Auner group at Faculty of Engineering WSU. Contact first James Eliason to proceed..