

IP PRAGMATICS

Cross organisation exploitation in different fields

Background:

The InterAct Partnership (www.interactpartnership.co.uk) is a unique collaboration between six leading UK public sector research establishments:

- Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)
- Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl)
- The Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera)
- Health Protection Agency (HPA)
- Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL)
- Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA)

InterAct aims to help the partners create new commercialisation opportunities through combining their intellectual property (IP), know-how and R&D capabilities. Whilst each of the partners has their own unique fields of expertise (animal health; medical health; food, agricultural and environment; and defence) they have many common underlying scientific strengths. Examples of these strengths include in vitro diagnostics of all types (e.g. antibody based; molecular diagnostics etc) and vaccine research and development. It is synergies and opportunities that can be created across these and other areas of scientific strength that InterAct aims to exploit.

Objectives:

The InterAct Partnership sought an experienced technology commercialisation organisation to provide strategic marketing services for the evaluation and joint exploitation of the partners' Intellectual Property (IP). Specifically the tasks required included:

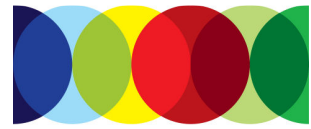
- Working with the Partners to complete annual IP audit reviews of all their portfolios (both tangible and intangible IP) and identify at least 20 high level technology clusters
- Organising multiple Partner workshops in different technology clusters to bring together scientists; providing workshop briefs for participants in advance of each workshop and following up on actions from the workshops in order to propose and take forward identified projects.
- Preparing and agreeing new inter-Partner business development plans for the highest priority technology clusters
- Establishing new joint exploitation vehicles (licences, JVs, spin out companies, enhanced service offerings) by providing international technology licensing, fund raising, business planning and deal making support.

Approach:

IP Pragmatics provided the InterAct Partnership with a cross disciplinary technical and commercial team, which acts as a fully functioning "out-sourced technology transfer office" for the Partnership. The three full time equivalent positions are resourced on a flexible basis using a combination of dedicated project managers and flexible business development expertise from across the whole IP Pragmatics consulting team. This flexibility allows the Partners to access a wide range of technology exploitation expertise depending on the technical, commercial field and exploitation vehicle type of the individual exploitation opportunity.

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The Partnership is also able to leverage IP Pragmatics' wider client activities and contacts with, for example, cost sharing on attending bio-partnering events, leveraging company marketing visits and general market intelligence.

Result:

Following a very successful three year project, the project was awarded funding for a second three year term. Over the 6 years, IP Pragmatics has helped the Partners identify more than 220 new project opportunities through direct IP auditing and facilitating 36 workshops across widely differing areas of scientific interest. Project examples include:

- Animal and human health vaccines
In vitro diagnostic tests and platforms covering different commercial sectors (agriculture, animal health, environmental, clinical); different approaches (antibody, molecular and chemical/electronic based); and both laboratory and Point-of-Care
- Biocides and disinfectants
- Aquaculture
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Quality Control Reagents and Proficiency Testing
- Electronic tags
- Environmental monitoring technologies

To date IP Pragmatics has helped catalyse the formation of 46 successful exploitation vehicles, which includes 16 licences, 16 enhanced service offerings, 1 distribution agreement, 8 new products, 1 technology sale, 3 research collaborations, and 1 spin-out company. Although the project is now officially complete, there are over 30 more potential exploitation vehicles which have been identified and are being taken forward by the InterAct partners,

and these are expected to increase the revenue generated by the project still further.

The Partnership also manages its own Proof of Concept (POC) funds, which provide initial development funding to allow nascent opportunities to be progressed to a point where their commercial value can be better realised through licensing or further venture funding. Altogether the InterAct POC Funds have invested in 69 projects, with IP Pragmatics assisting the Partners with market assessment and POC application critique as part of the investment process.