

Maybe they can? University technology transfer offices as regional growth engines

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Abstract

We focus on the interdependence between regional conditions and the design of university technology transfer offices (TTOs). The traditional activities of TTOs range from identification of research results from the university setting and transferring them to the market. At least three factors are needed in the vicinity of a TTO; active university and researchers, industrial absorptive capacity and investors. Although the expected role of TTO is to bridge these different factors and act as the glue of the process, it could only be true when TTOs are able to substitute or provide replacements for missing pieces in the technology transfer process. Passive TTOs may fail in their mission to promote technology transfer. By taking a pro-active role in their region's knowledge-based infrastructure development, 'valleys of death' may be crossed. In this paper, we aim to understand how variation in regions and TTOs influence the technology transfer process. We suggest a redesign of the activities to assist in putting pre-conditions into place to facilitate regional development.

Keywords:

technology transfer offices, TTO, regional development, assisted linear models, academic entrepreneurship, higher education