

Vortragsangebot für die 18. GfHf-Jahrestagung 2023

Knowledge transfer: Combining meso- and micro-level analyses

Michael Hoelscher¹, Ulrich Schmoch², Bernd Kriegesmann³, Philipp Komaromi¹

1: DUV Speyer; 2: Fraunhofer ISI, Karlsruhe; 3: Westfälische Hochschule, Gelsenkirchen

Thema: Transferforschung

Stichworte: third mission, knowledge transfer, comparison, multilevel analyses, survey

Research Question

Within the WIDEN-project we analyse patterns of knowledge transfer at German universities at the meso-level of the organization as well as on the micro-level of individual researchers. One aim is to identify different transfer profiles.

Since about the early 1980ies third mission activities at universities became increasingly relevant, but with a focus on technology transfer, thus patent applications, licences and spin-offs were discussed. A recent trend is an increased focus on knowledge transfer also from non-technical disciplines. In this context, knowledge transfer is defined in a broader way as all types of transfer to non-scientific partners. However, the different roles of these two and their interplay is not yet really well understood.

Design/methodology:

An online-survey of all professors of all disciplines at 60 German universities is being conducted, asking about their activities in knowledge transfer. The survey is still in the field. While we already have a relatively high absolute number of responses, one has to take into account that, as the response rate on online-surveys is only moderate, a bias as to the responding scientists is probable, so that the answers are not really representative.

On this basis, it is nevertheless possible to compare types of knowledge transfer, the differences by partners, motives, barriers or financial sources. The aim is to develop transfer profiles for organizations as well as for individual researchers.

Findings so far

The paper presents for the first time data from the first study in Germany addressing the topic of transfer in such a broad way and with such a broad database. With this very broad survey, we are able to analyse different aspects of knowledge transfer in different disciplines in more detail.

A main finding is that the activities in knowledge transfer in the non-technical disciplines are considerable. But, as far as we can say up to now, incentives from the central management of the universities are generally low, as the interest for large contracts from enterprises and for license income dominates. Therefore, it is necessary that the public financial support of the universities, at present primarily based on the research performance, also includes knowledge transfer in non-commercial areas. This will allow the central management to support all types of knowledge transfer.

Anmerkung der Autoren:

Wir können den Vortrag sowohl in deutscher als auch in englischer Sprache vorbereiten, letzteres wäre uns aber lieber.