

# Baltic Seminar of University Administrators

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## **Innovation – The way to get closer to industry**

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# Innovation

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*Innovation is the creation of better or more effective products, processes, services, technologies, or ideas that are accepted by markets, governments, and society.*

***innovation = IMPLEMENTED invention***

*Innovation differs from invention in that innovation refers to the use of a new idea or method, whereas invention refers more directly to the creation of the idea or method itself.*

# People

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- ❑ Innovative thinking is a characteristic of people NOT universities the people are working for.
- ❑ Universities should create processes and environment supporting and rewarding innovative people.

# Responsibility

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- ❑ Majority of inventions is coming from universities.
- ❑ Majority of innovations is provided by industry.
- ❑ Universities' responsibility is NOT to create and provide innovations but to transfer inventions into industry to initiate innovations and benefit from them.

# Responsibility

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- Usually being inventive is NOT the first step to being innovative.
  
- Universities' responsibility is to:
  - protect inventions,
  - search for and provide external support for implementation of inventions.

# Needs and concerns

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## □ Scientists

- we have results ready for commercialization but we do not know (how to do) it ...
- we have results ready for implementation but somebody have to convert them into products ...
- we have results ready for implementation but we do not have enough time to do so ...
- we have many ideas but we do not know how to acquire private equity or how to prepare a business model ...
- we want to be scientists not businessmen ...

*Is there somebody inside of the university that could support us and tell how to do it?*

# Challenges

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- In most cases managing research activity is NOT the same as managing a spin-off company.
- *... so we have a good idea we raised funds to implement it, but who will manage the process?*

# Challenges

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- Large universities with multiple faculties should invest in cross-disciplinary research. The strength is just there!
- ... *but how to motivate independent faculties to search for common opportunities?*



# Funds

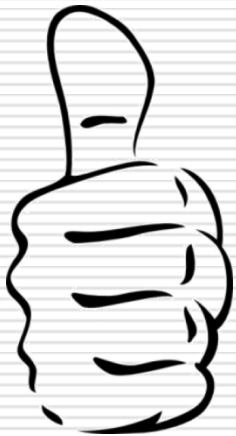
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- Funds are there!
  - UE funds,
  - NCBR/NCN funds,
  - VC funds
  
- The real challenge is to raise them and to spend them effectively.

# Approach

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Money is a goal – get the money and minimize the effort required to retain it.



**Money is a result** – get the work done well and maximize benefits from it.

# Communication

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- Barriers between academia and industry still exists but they can be crossed. The problem is not with people but in communication!

# Boundary spanner

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- Boundary spanners serve strategic roles in organizations by gathering critical information, obtaining feedback and perceptions from the external environment through their stakeholder networks and then interpreting and translating that information back into their organization. Ultimately, if the boundary spanner is effective, the process can lead to innovations in strategy, processes or products.

# Boundary spanner

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- The key activities of the role:
  - ❖ creating internal and external networks;
  - ❖ issue identification;
  - ❖ translating the knowledge back into the organizational culture;
  - ❖ influencing and educating internal and external stakeholders;
  - ❖ creating buy-in and support;
  - ❖ identifying internal senior-level champions.

# Last year GUT ...

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- ... initiated two spin-off funding processes with VC partners,
- ... initiated cross-faculty projects,
- ... defined strategic R&D areas,
- ... tighten relations with big local and countrywide industrial partners that are resulting in new strategic projects,
- ... gained active involvement of scientific staff.

# Thank you

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