

Collaborations with Industry

What Do We Mean by Collaborating with Industry? What Is the Benefit of and What Is Needed for a Collaboration?

Collaborations with industry are project-related co-operations over a limited period of time. Their advantage is that accounting is not calendar-related and, thus, they supplement the department's current funding. Another advantage that is gaining increasing importance for DKFZ investigators is that industry contacts provide access to large appliances, prototypes and other methods (such as high-throughput screening). Each collaboration requires a separate agreement that needs to be tailored to the individual project. [For all collaborations concluded with non-industrial partners as well as for EU/BMBF projects, please contact Dr. Bettina Crispin, head of "Administrative Project Management" M250]

How Can I Prepare a Collaboration?

Industry identifies interesting projects, for example at exhibitions (our tip: "collecting" business cards) and conferences. Information about companies is also available at the Office of Technology Transfer. Suggestion: To identify new projects it can be useful to review not only scientific publications but also existing patents (reflect future focus) of companies.

What Are the First Steps of Drafting a Collaboration Project?

Following initial talks with industry, you will first have to provide a rough draft of a working concept, which will then be discussed with the industrial partner. It comprises first cornerstones of the collaboration such as duration, milestones, goal, staff, material resources, travel expenses, etc. Please get your contact person at Technology Transfer involved before sending off a working concept.

At this stage it is important to refrain from mentioning or negotiating concrete monetary figures.

Who Is My Contact at the DKFZ?

You should contact the Technology Transfer Office staff with a draft and discuss the cornerstones and milestones of a prospective agreement in more detail with the responsible technology manager.

In a joint meeting (including the Project Department, if necessary), further key data are clarified. (Does the financial frame of the company correspond to the working package of the DKFZ? Is the timeframe realistic?)

Who Will Contribute to Drawing up the Agreement? Who Will Negotiate with the Company?

The Office of Technology Transfer coordinates the collection of information required, negotiates with the company and prepares all contract drafts through to the last valid version. The Project Department will help with the financial calculation. We need you to provide a detailed project description including time line (rule of thumb: to allow for unexpected delays, the working package must be feasible in less than duration time (90%)). Depending on the circumstances, this outline will be part of the contract, usually as an appendix. In most cases, Technology Transfer will be able to negotiate better terms regarding the wording of the contract and finances. A close exchange between the investigators and Technology Transfer about necessary/possible adjustments is useful.

How Will the Contract Be Completed? Who Will Sign It?

Technology Transfer will finalize the contract in coordination with all parties involved (investigators, Project Department, company). Subsequently, the final version will be signed by the Members of the Management Board. By your signature you agree to the whole project and the individual legal provisions (duty to report publications, secrecy, final report, etc.)

How Can I Check the Current State of Financial Resources?

The Project Department will keep your collaboration project under a project number corresponding to the one assigned by Technology Transfer. Your contact person at the Project Department will tell you the current state of the account and will help you with any questions you may have.

What Should I Do If Something Goes Wrong with the Collaboration?

If a collaboration has started and it turns out that something is not going according to plan (company does not pay; does not supply material; a milestone is delayed; etc.), please notify your contact person at the Technology Transfer Office immediately. Only if we have your feedback can we provide support by intervening and, if necessary, adjusting the agreement.