

**Call for Papers for the Workshop:**

**From Knowledge to Profit? Scientific Institutions and the Commercialization of Science**

DATE: 10-12 October 2016

PLACE: Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin

ORGANIZER/HOST: Research program „History of the Max Planck Society” (GMPG)

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Deadline for abstracts (250-300 words): 28 February 2016

The relationship of science and technology – often seen as the relation of basic and applied research – is a constant theme in science and technology studies. Especially the commercialization of scientific research has steadily gained attention in the last years. Our workshop will focus on scientific institutions such as universities, independent research institutes and other national and international scientific organizations, and the roles they play in the commercialization of science.

The contributions to the workshop should examine the process of commercialization in science with a special focus on scientific institutions and their internal and external relationships in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Papers applying a comparative approach are especially welcome. Proposals are invited from all relevant perspectives: science studies; history of science, medicine and technology; cultural studies; business history; economic history; and the history of law.

**Definition and Agenda**

According to our definition, commercialization of science is the utilization of scientific work and knowledge for commercial purposes in various ways, including ‘feedback reactions’ of commercialization processes on scientific research. From a historical perspective the

commercialization of science is not new. Various forms of cooperation between industry and academic science reach far back in time, though a consensus has been reached that it has been deeply rearranged in the last few decades. Foremost, commercial criteria now have a stronger influence on scientific research than ever before. Some recognize a profound transformation of academic traditions in these developments (truth oriented vs. application; concept of mode1/mode2), others highlight the increased importance of universities for economic development in relationship with the industry and the state (concept of the triple helix). As an alternative it has been suggested to analyze the different *commercialization regimes* of science (Mirowski and Sent 2008).

Our starting point is that the ways and methods of commercialization have been diverse. *Processes of commercialization* affect institutions in many ways and on various levels, comprise different dimensions and take place in specific social contexts. The Cold War, the competition of political systems, economic crises, privatization, deregulation, and globalization come to mind. We see the capitalist economic system and the transformations of capitalist societies as an overarching point of reference. However, we include processes of commercialization in non-capitalist social systems. Our goal is to contribute to the understanding of the temporally, regionally and nationally different mechanisms of commercialization and their political economies in a historical context.

### **Themes and research questions**

The workshop covers a broad spectrum of aspects of commercialization in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with an emphasis on national and international comparisons. We welcome contributions that focus on scientific institutions and their governance, intellectual property law, financing and economics, the practices and effects of commercialization, science policy, and discourse. Next to the relatively often studied theme of patent protection, themes may include the licensing of research instruments, terms and clauses in employment contracts, publishing clauses, contract research, cooperation with industries, convergence of civil and military research contexts (dual-use-problem), outsourcing, start-ups and spin-offs, the architecture and spaces of technology transfer, and the politicization and the (public) debates of problems surrounding commercialization.

Overarching questions are: What is the object of commercialization at universities, independent research institutions and other scientific organizations (including foundations, societies and associations)? When and how has the concept of commercialization changed? What were the driving forces of commercialization inside and outside of scientific institutions? In which ways did particular institutions change due to commercialization processes? To what extent did the 'market' influence the production methods of scientific knowledge and how did market forces change scientific practice? To what extent did commercial viability become a criterion of scientific innovation? Who were the significant actors in the research institutions, and how did they act in a national and international context? Finally, we are interested in the relationship of commercialization and knowledge and technology transfer, which has been a dominating concept of innovation studies and science policy studies in the last years.