



## Report on IGLO in Action on Knowledge Valorisation

Online European Practitioner Workshop, 21 January 2025, Brussels

---

The report has been compiled in February 2025 by [FFG](#) and [KoWi](#) with thanks to the supporting [IGLO offices](#) (ELO, ISERD, NorCore, PoISCA, SBRA, SWERI, SwissCore)

Contact for questions and comments can be addressed to:

Inga Benner (KoWi) [inga.benner@kowi.de](mailto:inga.benner@kowi.de)

Kay Felder (FFG) [kay.felder@ffg.at](mailto:kay.felder@ffg.at)

Elisabeth Hajicek (FFG) [elisabeth.hajicek@ffg.at](mailto:elisabeth.hajicek@ffg.at)

Bettina Schelke (KoWi) [bettina.schelke@kowi.de](mailto:bettina.schelke@kowi.de)



**IGLO** is an informal association of Brussels-based non-profit R&D Liaison Offices. The aim of IGLO is to facilitate and enhance the interaction, information exchange and co-operation between Members of IGLO, their national research systems and the European institutions on issues related to EU RTD, in particular, the Framework Programme.



**FFG** The Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) is the national funding agency for industrial research and development in Austria. All FFG activities aim to strengthen Austria as a research and innovation centre on the global market and thus help to ensure the long-term availability of high quality jobs and maintain the prosperity of one of the world's wealthiest countries.



**KOWI** The European Liaison Office of the German Research is a dynamic information hub on all aspects of European research funding - for science organisations, German universities and researchers in Germany. We are in close contact with the EU institutions in charge of research policy and funding for research and innovation.

### Disclaimer

This report presents a summary of the IGLO in Action Knowledge Valorisation on 21 January 2025. The statements and findings presented are those of the individuals participating in the event and do not necessarily reflect the views of their institutions, the IGLO network or its individual members. This summary report is **not** an IGLO position paper or the network's official statement on the topic.

## Executive Summary

The online IGLO in Action Practitioner Workshop on Knowledge Valorisation on 21 January 2025 provided a platform for the direct exchange of European research and transfer management practitioners on the Council Recommendation (EU) 2022/2415 of 2 December 2022 on the guiding principles for Knowledge Valorisation (Guiding Principles), including a brief introduction of all four codes of practice. The workshop aimed to support the valorisation of research results and innovations into economic and societal values. By providing a platform for exchange between around 60 universities and research organisations, innovation and funding agencies, as well as policymakers from 16 EU Member States, it responded specifically to the recommendation of the European Commission's MLE (2023/2024) "to encourage intensive collaboration and networking among various actors."

Such exchanges play a crucial role in facilitating the interconnection of various sectors as well as transforming research findings into services, products and solutions for the benefit of society. Previously, learnings from national stakeholder workshops in Austria, facilitated by [NCP-IP](#), had indicated that strategic approaches within individual organisations as well as engagement by Member States and collaboration with the European Commission are necessary for the successful implementation of the Guiding Principles. This IGLO in Action workshop seconded these learnings at European level.

The IGLO in Action workshop concluded that a strategic approach from top-down as well as bottom-up activities is needed to support successful implementation. To ensure progress and to enable close collaboration among various (including "new") actors and stakeholders, investments in necessary infrastructures, skills and competencies are needed.

- The workshop succeeded in introducing the topic and providing the platform for good practice examples from the university and the RTO sector. In addition, more specific forms of engagement were shown to be needed, with, for instance, workshops aiming at specific target groups, dedicated co-creation settings, and/or further exchange of good practice examples.
- The workshop underlined that further work needs to be undertaken to highlight the added value of the shift in terminology from technology transfer (i.e. focus on patent, licencing, commercialisation, etc.) towards Knowledge Valorisation. Concerning this, it is vital to make the topic salient to the leadership in research organisations to ensure the necessary strategic support to practitioners to address issues around incentives, training and resources.
- Furthermore, this strategic level needs to be underpinned through the creation of a shared vision and by the political will to support implementation at policy level.

More broadly, within the geopolitical context, the development of a suitable roadmap for all levels of actors and the target groups will be helpful in order to maximise the societal and economic impact of knowledge. The importance of such a vision can be seen as part of the broader policy discussion, including the [Draghi report](#) on "The Future of European Competitiveness". It calls for the commercial exploitation of knowledge generated by European researchers in order to transform the European research and innovation landscape and to maximise the extensive European innovation potential.

## Contents

Executive Summary .....	2
The Workshop .....	4
Format .....	4
Background.....	4
Aim of the workshop.....	4
Participants.....	4
Contributors .....	4
Overview of inputs .....	5
Opening Remarks EU Knowledge Valorisation Policy Latest developments (EC, DG RTD).....	5
Ioannis Sagias, Unit, E2 Valorisation policies and IPR, Directorate E, Prosperity, DG Research & Innovation, European Commission .....	5
Moving from Technology Transfer to Knowledge Valorisation .....	5
FFG Austrian Research Promotion Agency, Elisabeth Hajicek, Programme Manager NCP-IP .....	5
Case Studies of Good Practice Examples from Germany and Austria.....	6
Simone Hess, Head of Staff, Unit for Research - Knowledge - Translation – Transfer. Hannover Medical School (MHH, Germany).....	6
Ingrid Kelly Spillman, Partner, xista and Christian Bertsch, Head of Science Education, VISTA. ISTA (Institute of Science and Technology Austria).....	6
Discussion .....	7
Set up.....	7
Key points.....	7
Summary .....	8
Recommendations .....	8
Strategic Level .....	8
Operational Level .....	9
Appendices: Slides in order of presentation.....	from 10

## The Workshop

### Format

The IGLO in Action online practitioner workshop on Knowledge Valorisation was jointly organised by FFG and KoWi under the IGLO (Informal Group of R&D Liaison Offices in Brussels) umbrella. IGLO in Action is an established format, focussing on connecting practitioners from IGLO countries to provide the insights from their day-to-day work with EU R&I funding.

### Background

The EU's [Guiding Principles for Knowledge Valorisation](#) aim to maximise the transformation of research and innovation results into solutions that benefit society. They address mainly national, regional and local policymakers but are also relevant for practitioners, such as research managers from various sectors, particularly within the university sector.

The **Four Codes of Practice** in the area of Knowledge Valorisation have been created to provide more specific guidance. Additional recommendations on the topic were also provided in 2024 via a Mutual Learning Exercise on Knowledge Valorisation (link to summary [report](#)).

### Aim of the workshop

The workshop's aim was to introduce the new terminology, including the Guiding Principles (Council Recommendation (EU) 2022/2415 of 2 December 2022 on the guiding principles for Knowledge Valorisation) and four codes of practice. This was to enable a discussion on how the shift from technology transfer to knowledge transfer and ultimately to Knowledge Valorisation constitutes a substantial change for the work of research managers and technology transfer officers. With this broader perspective in mind, the webinar was to facilitate the collection of lessons learnt, thereby bringing forward discussion at national as well as at European level, which this report is intended to further support.

Furthermore, the aims were:

- to better inform relevant practitioners and actors in the field on the topic itself;
- to collect their views and perspectives on Knowledge Valorisation;
- to discuss how the Guiding Principles on Knowledge Valorisation inform the ways in which research results are created and exploited (at European universities, research institutes, Research Technology Organisations and in industry).

### Participants

Approximately 70 research and transfer managers from 16 different countries (Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland) were in attendance. Participating organisations were either universities or RTOs, with a respective split of 3 to 1. They represented a variety of regional, national as well as academic characteristics.

### Contributors

The IGLO in Action organisation team is grateful to the speaker from the European Commission on Valorisation unit RTD E.3 and for the two inspiring Knowledge Valorisation case studies presented to

us by colleagues from [Hannover Medical School \(MHH\)](#) and the [Institute of Science and Technology Austria \(ISTA\)](#).

## Overview of inputs

Opening Remarks EU Knowledge Valorisation Policy Latest developments (EC, DG RTD)  
*Ioannis Sagias, Unit, E2 Valorisation policies and IPR, Directorate E, Prosperity, DG Research & Innovation, European Commission*

DG RTD provided a short explanation of the concept of Knowledge Valorisation, the state of play of the various European Commission initiatives as well as an outlook on what to expect. Knowledge Valorisation is an umbrella term with the aim to more broadly cover the exploitation of research results. Beyond traditional tech transfer, Knowledge Valorisation also encompasses, for example, policymaking, standardisation (incl. the update of existing standards), and industry-academia exchange and citizens.

The overall motivation for fostering Knowledge Valorisation is that too much EU-funded research and innovation remains unexploited, or could be exploited further or differently. The European Commission is aware of the complexities around making Knowledge Valorisation work, the multitude of actors with different needs as well as the wide range of valorisation channels. Knowledge Valorisation is an area where DG RTD is trying to supply more tools at large.

It was also stressed that Knowledge Valorisation can be part of the solution to the greater challenges and policy objectives to be tackled by the EU in the coming years, including those highlighted in the Draghi Report on Competitiveness.

The European Commission is also aware of issues and barriers, including disparities between different countries, regions, and sometimes even organisations within a country when it comes to capacities and experience with Knowledge Valorisation. Researchers are often not rewarded for engagement with exploitation activities. There is ongoing work by the European Commission on further Codes of Practice, metrics as well as the collection of Knowledge Valorisation best practices.

Existing European Commission guidance and tools are now grouped on the [Knowledge Valorisation platform](#).

Next steps for the European Commission include awareness raising for the use of the already developed guidance, tools and codes of practice, capacity building of Knowledge Valorisation services, work on a European scheme on socially responsible licensing principles, as well as a learning lab for value creation aimed at students, researchers and innovators. Research actors can expect a series of projects implemented through future Horizon Europe topics.

## Moving from Technology Transfer to Knowledge Valorisation

*FFG Austrian Research Promotion Agency, Elisabeth Hajicek, Programme Manager NCP-IP*

The session was intended as an explainer to facilitate the discussion. It was based on learnings from Austrian stakeholder workshops during 2023 and 2024. The resulting guidance is to be provided and published as part of [NCP-IP](#) in 2025). The information provided focussed on:

- Overview of Knowledge Valorisation

- Terminology (i.e. Technology Transfer, Knowledge Transfer)
- Overview and details on the Codes of Practice
- Purpose and Key Recommendations
- Definitions as well as Implementation issues.

### Case Studies of Good Practice Examples from Germany and Austria

How do organisations organise themselves internally, from coaching researchers, science explained in the park to own venture capital funds?

*Simone Hess, Head of Staff, Unit for Research - Knowledge - Translation – Transfer. Hannover Medical School (MHH, Germany)*

Simone Hess from MHH explained how her organisation build up what could in the future be called a Knowledge Valorisation unit, bringing relevant functions and competences from EU research management and transfer activities into one team. The team provides a single point of contact for researchers seeking national, EU and international funding, as well as offering advice and coaching on different aspects of Knowledge Valorisation. The service accompanies the researchers from the basic research idea, all the way to transformation of results into solutions that benefit society.

The MHH model already works well, but there is room for improvement. In order to truly implement Knowledge Valorisation for EU projects, Simone also shared some practical considerations and needs: expectations are increasing and becoming more complex to manage as consortia are becoming bigger and more complex with more actors and stakeholders to be involved. The focus is the expansion from generating knowledge to transferring it and implementing it, ideally in a profitable way. *This needs to be supported professionally and researchers need to be trained, but who will train the trainers and who picks up the additional bill in times of ever scarcer resources?*

*Ingrid Kelly Spillman, Partner, xista and Christian Bertsch, Head of Science Education, VISTA. ISTA (Institute of Science and Technology Austria)*

ISTA presented two aspects of their Knowledge Valorisation work: societal engagement through VISTA and tech transfer through XISTA.

VISTA is the outreach brand of their institute that has taken on the challenge of bringing more understanding of how science works to citizens. This is done via a number of ways, including science presentations in parks, training for school teachers, fostering the dialogue with young students all the way to building a state-of-the-art visitor centre to open in 2025. Research staff are incentivised to participate in these activities, for example through credits for PhD students and training in science communication.

ISTA also runs XISTA, an ecosystem going beyond traditional tech transfer office work, with the aim of helping researchers deliver innovation to society with positive impact. It provides traditional tech transfer support with an emphasis on spin-off generation as well as a fellowship programme for its researchers with intensive nurturing and training to help ideas develop into viable spin-offs. There is also a science park with lab facilities and office space for prospective spin-offs. The services are completed by XISTA science ventures, a venture capital fund which is independent of the ISTA institute. The fund invests in early stage science-based spin-offs all over Austria and beyond.

## Discussion

### Set up

Participants were split in a total of eight groups of between five and eight practitioners, consisting of a mix from different countries, types of organisations and job profiles to discuss the added value of the concept of Knowledge Valorisation as well as its implementation in the context of their day-to-day work and collaborations along the following three questions:

- 1. What is the added value provided by a broader understanding of Knowledge Valorisation compared to the more traditional approach of knowledge transfer?**
- 2. What does this change in understanding mean for the role of research management more broadly? What is the role of transfer managers and where is the overlap between professions? Is there an opportunity to work together and if yes, how? What is needed for such a collaboration?**
- 3. How can the envisaged increased collaboration between a wider range of stakeholders be undertaken effectively?**

Beyond answering the set questions, participants had the opportunity to share ideas and suggestions to facilitate the increased uptake of a Knowledge Valorisation mind-set and related activities in EU research and innovation projects.

### Key points

Question 1: What is the added value provided by a broader understanding of Knowledge Valorisation compared to the more traditional approach of knowledge transfer?

- Knowledge Valorisation is a more inclusive term: it can pave the way for tackling societal challenges as it goes beyond technical solutions, embraces all disciplines and a wide range of stakeholders. It better integrates and reflects social sciences and humanities approaches.
- Knowledge Valorisation allows researchers to be involved with different activities and investors are given more possibilities to engage.
- Knowledge Valorisation leaves more room in projects to work on the entire value chain (which also brings challenges).
- Knowledge Valorisation should not only mean use of a “push-strategy” where researchers are pushed to exploit their results but there is need for a “pull-strategy” through addressing existing market needs at the centre.

Question 2: What does this change in understanding mean for the role of research management more broadly? What is the role of transfer managers and where is the overlap between professions? Is there an opportunity to work together and if yes, how? What is needed for such a collaboration?

- Organisations often already carry out Knowledge Valorisation activities intrinsically, but it is not always labelled and often not (yet) a joined-up process within organisational structures
- Implementing Knowledge Valorisation successfully poses challenges. The multitude of actors that need to work together, including within a single organisation, within an EU project and also more globally.

- Knowledge Valorisation could foster collaboration, help organisations better structure and align their capacities on technical and societal transfer.
- Knowledge Valorisation needs to be incorporated from the start, from the first project ideas and implemented throughout.
- Areas where transfer and EU research managers could work together are proposal support as well as implementation (examples: IP, business plans, multi-actor approach/consortium building, industry-academia collaboration, outreach to citizens etc.)

Question 3: How can the envisaged increased collaboration between a wider range of stakeholders be undertaken effectively?

- Different actors (research managers, transfer officers etc.) need to have basic knowledge of each other's work.
- Those supporting and training researchers to work on Knowledge Valorisation also need continuous training and coaching.
- Including stakeholders from outside academia and finding common ground and a way of communicating can be a challenge.

## Summary

- Having clear expectations, rules, templates for incorporating Knowledge Valorisation in proposals and projects is important: a Knowledge Valorisation plan could be made part of Horizon Europe proposals, the evaluation and following a Knowledge Valorisation plan in projects could be a requirement in the Grant Agreement.
- Knowledge Valorisation will not just happen if there is no dedicated funding, including from the Framework Programme.
- A cultural shift will be needed – researchers need to embrace entrepreneurship, translating research for business application, society and policy makers. They need to be incentivised to do this, from their hierarchy as part of changes in the system as a whole.
- Successful change from a solely technology transfer perspective to the broader concept of Knowledge Valorisation cannot just come from the working level, it needs to be understood, wanted, promoted, prioritised and rewarded from the top. The concept and relevance of Knowledge Valorisation needs to be communicated by the European Commission to not just to research managers and TTOs, but also to the leadership level, i.e. university deans and those heading up research institutes and RTOs.

## Recommendations

### Strategic Level

- Guidance from the Commission to the policy level at universities on how to implement these new approaches and with a focus on desired outcomes.
- Mutual learning of the Commission with vice deans, policy officers as well as national ministries on how to implement these guidelines and develop shared visions for Knowledge Valorisation.
- Increased internal collaboration within organisations to manage the interfaces between EU research projects and Knowledge Valorisation aspects effectively.

### Operational Level

- More resources need to be dedicated to this collaboration and Knowledge Valorisation activities (e.g. staff, access to expertise).
- Better training and awareness for researchers and support staff to help create the right mind-set to support Knowledge Valorisation.
- Support from the hierarchy – Knowledge Valorisation needs to be wanted and fostered top-down within the organisation.
- Researchers need incentives to engage with Knowledge Valorisation.
- Research and transfer management have different ways of operating and often still work towards different KPIs – this needs to be overcome.