

Leveraging Publicly Financed IP in the Life Sciences for Spin-Outs and Start-Ups

ABSTRACT

Collaboration with publicly financed institutions provides many opportunities for commercialisation of innovative technologies within the life sciences. There are various possible models for collaboration, whether these between such an institution and its spin-off companies, or such an institution and private entities. This panel discussion will explore the preferred practices with regard to collaboration between publicly financed institutions and private entities, with a focus on spin-off and start up company collaborators.

SPEAKER PANEL

Anita Nel

Anita Nel is the Chief Director: Innovation and Business Development at Stellenbosch University and also the CEO of US Enterprises (Pty) Ltd, the University's commercial company.

Anita is an experienced technology transfer professional with her roots in technology innovation and venture capital stretching as far back as 1998. She started her career in technology with Thawte Consulting, a digital security firm and, transitioning through the company's acquisition by Verisign in 2000, moved to HBD Venture Capital Fund. At HBD Anita was involved in investing in various technology start-ups before taking up the challenge of joining and restructuring Innovus, the technology transfer office of Stellenbosch University. Since she started at Stellenbosch University, Anita has grown Innovus to become one of the leading university technology transfer offices in Africa and in the process established herself as a thought leader in the industry. As part of this journey, Anita has established and grown the highly successful LaunchLab Business incubator at Stellenbosch and was instrumental in starting and raising the University Technology Fund of South Africa that provides funding for many new technology start-ups at universities.



As a well-respected contributor to the international technology transfer fraternity, Anita currently serves on the ATTP adjudication panel for RTTP applications and holds several directorships on boards of young and upcoming technology companies. She holds a Master's degree in Psychology as well as a post graduate diploma in Education and a Bachelor degree in Science.

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Gideon Burger



Gideon studied BSc Animal Biotechnology at the University of Stellenbosch after which he went into sales of research and scientific equipment for the past 12 years. In 2014 he founded Axiology Labs, a company that supplies and supports scientists in psychophysiological recording equipment. With the need being identified and an opportunity for specific customizable VR products and biofeedback tools.

Axiology Labs has also been instrumental in the Covid-19 crisis and have to date laid out over 50 new labs and continuous to assist in the fight against the pandemic.

Gideon is also one of the founders of Stellenbosch University spin-out company AxioVR.

Saberi Marais

Saberi Marais is the Technology Commercialisation Manager at UCT. He focusses on assisting UCT researchers and innovators to valorise their research outputs. He started his tech transfer career in 2006. His portfolio includes broadly-defined biotech innovations and innovations for social impact. He has experience in licensing technologies and assisting start-ups to ideate, secure funding and commercialise their opportunities. Through his work he has enabled tech and non-tech business incubators, Provincial and national government agencies and programmes, and businesses to assist local innovators to realise their goals.



Saberi worked at TIA as the Head of the Seed Fund Programme. Saberi was also the Business Development Manager at Innovus, Stellenbosch University; and a Technology Transfer Manager at the South African Medical Research Council. Saberi's co-founded Science Café Cape Town, an initiative that promoted science communication and appreciation among the public. Saberi has a MBA degree from Stellenbosch University; and undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at UCT in Molecular and Cell Biology (*cum laude*).

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Tamlyn Shaw



Tamlyn Shaw holds an MSc in Medical Biochemistry from the University of Cape Town and is one of the founding members of Cape Bio Pharms. She was director of scientific services for 2 years for Cape Bio Pharms and helped get the start-up off the ground for the first 2 years.

After receiving grant funding from the DTI and co-investment by the University of Cape Town, Cape Bio Pharms has successfully commercialised the technology developed by BRU with an exclusive licence to key IP. This technology is a plant-based expression system able

to produce a wide range of recombinant proteins using a distant cousin of the tobacco plant as the bio-reactor. This plant-based platform can produce a wide range of proteins cheaper, faster, better and safer and ensure security of supply for South Africa.

When COVID hit, Tamlyn assisted the business to connect with test kit manufacturers and secure funding for scale up, later into sales and business development for the subsidiary company, Cape Biologix. She is the main spokesperson for the company and also hosts the company Youtube product videos and conversations in science series.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuM0ZOKahV2pbhK3OmQ2Ocw>

Rosemary Wolson

Rosemary Wolson has occupied various roles in the South African technology transfer system. She is currently Director of the UJ TTO. She joined UJ from the CSIR where, as Senior Intellectual Property Manager, she was responsible for managing the IP portfolio to support technology transfer. At UCT before that, she was involved in establishing a new technology transfer office and developing the research contract management function. She has also worked as a researcher at the Science and Technology Policy Research Centre at UCT.



Rosemary has a B.Sc (Hons) in Microbiology, an LLB and an MPhil, all from UCT. She is currently the Vice-President for Innovation and Technology Transfer of the Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association. She has participated as a member or advisor to various stakeholder bodies, including the National IP Management Office Advisory Board. Rosemary has published in peer-reviewed publications (including book chapters and journal articles); presented on innovation topics at conferences and seminars in South Africa and internationally; and has acted as a mentor and provided training, facilitation and capacity-building. She acts by invitation as a peer reviewer and an external examiner.

She is passionate about innovation and its potential to change lives for the better.

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Facilitator: Joanne van Harmelen



Dr. Joanne van Harmelen leads the Biotechnology and Life Sciences Cluster in ENSafrica's Intellectual Property ("IP") department. She is a qualified patent attorney specialising in patent filing and prosecution in the biotech and pharmaceuticals sectors. Joanne holds a PhD in medical microbiology and vaccine development. She has extensive experience in the field of biotechnology and life sciences, having prepared and filed patent applications locally and in foreign jurisdictions in the fields of microbiology, biochemistry, molecular medicine, agrobiological, bioremediation, bioprocessing, biopharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, cosmetics and food sciences. Joanne is also experienced in the preparation and filing of plant breeders' rights applications.

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