

IGFAE general Innovation and Knowledge Transfer Plan

The objective of an Innovation and Knowledge Transfer Plan is to bring the scientific capacities as well as the technological achievements developed in the center closer to all socio-economic sectors, on a regional, national and international scale (companies, industry, health systems, public administrations, etc.), in order to transform research into social and economic welfare.

The IGFAE Innovation and Knowledge and Technology Unit is in charge of the implementation and development of such a plan, and supports researchers in innovation and transfer actions. The unit team is trained in identify transferable research results, assess commercial potential, IP, manage contracts for transfer results, support and advice on industrial initiatives, executive formation and has a close collaboration with the University Valuation, Transfer and Entrepreneurship Area.

The Plan is aligned with the IGFAE's Mission and Vision, its strategic plan and also with the National Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy (EECTI) 2021-2027. It is organized in four action areas, which at some point are complementary to each other. Those action areas to point at are: Knowledge and Technology Transfer, Innovation Management, Formation and Visibility.

The main actions and activities to carry out for each of the key areas are summarized in the following. The plan in general must be alive and iterative, and all the mentioned actions must be adapted at some extent to the precise development following the guidelines provided here.

Knowledge and Technology transfer refers to the process of conveying results stemming from scientific and technological research to the market place and to wider society, along with associated skills and procedures. It comprises different actions such as:

- Intellectual property: protecting inventions, deigns, works, algorithms, methods, etc. through patents, utility models, trademarks, copyright or trade secrets.
- Support for the setup and development of technology-based companies, start-ups, spin-offs.
- Boost the capabilities of the different research teams in the center, and build up relationships between them.
- Seek and support project calls and applications for projects with interest in knowledge and technology transfer, specially those focused on University-Companies collaborations.
- Support in prototypes and proof-of-concept developments.

Innovation management can be defined as the process through which any organization systematically develops a new product, service, process, or business model. The purpose of innovation management is to provide greater value – either to a customer, a key stakeholder, a business, or people in general. It tends to be separated out into five key phases, following a typical iterative Design Thinking strategy:

1. Empathize: be aware of the problem; explore the context; learn about and focus on the end users' needs; identify opportunities.

2. Define: clearly articulate the problem you want to solve; create a point of view; why it is important.
3. Ideate: brainstorm ideas and potential solutions; select and develop our solution.
4. Prototype: design a prototype, or series of prototypes, to test all or part of the solution; apply creativity to create.
5. Test and Implement: engage in a continuous cycle to continually improve the design; review and revise; show and don't tell.

The **formation** actions of the Plan consist of showing researchers the good practices for innovation and knowledge transfer, giving tips or providing them with useful tools, but essentially they are devoted to introduce the new culture in the organization. We must think out of the box and motivate people to initiate innovation and knowledge transfer ideas. This kind of change in the way of thinking, the way of working, a mind-change in general, is not a short-time process. It takes long, but once it is implemented, it produces a high positive overall impact in the center's results.

The direct actions can be summarized in informative talks, interactive workshops showing different tools, joint brainstorming with different research areas' teams, and offer to the researchers real problems to solve. The latter is a key for keeping the motivation.

Finally, the Plan also consider specific actions to improve the IGFAE **visibility**. The aim is to let people know what we can do for them.

In order to do that, among others, they are taken into account activities such as:

- Improve the services portfolio.
- Improve Innovation and Knowledge and Technology Transfer sections in the center's web page.
- Keep up to date the center activities in press, newsletters, etc.
- Make contacts with the local companies and industrial clusters.
- Engage in social networking communities.

Part of this work is done in collaboration with other units at IGFAE like the communication office.