

Intellectual Property Clustering

Andrew R.O. Watson, PhD, and Angus Livingstone

Andrew R.O. Watson, PhD, is a technology development manager in the Office of Technology Transfer and Business Development at Oregon Health & Science University in Portland. Angus Livingstone is the managing director of the University-Industry Liaison Office at The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Introduction

Every university has them: numerous pieces of intellectual property (IP) that remain unlicensed and may never be fully exploited. As a large percentage of university patented and unpatented IP goes unlicensed, IP clustering is a viable option in addressing this problem.

Tapping into even a small portion of the value of this otherwise unlicensed IP can bring new licensing revenues into university technology transfer offices and fulfill the missions of many such offices by transferring technology from the laboratory to the market for public benefit. Clustering IP can create a new, more marketable and valuable product with which to approach corporations and investors. There are several variations on IP clustering, each with their own processes and challenges.