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Expanding the societal impact of innovation: An introduction to The Impact Licensing Framework

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The Impact Licensing Framework. What is it and why should we care?

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In this session we will introduce the concept of **Impact Licensing** and open a constructive dialogue on how it might be meaningfully embedded within the practices of technology transfer organisations. Impact Licensing is rooted in the idea that intellectual property and technology transfer can serve not only commercial objectives but also contribute more intentionally to societal and environmental value creation. By incorporating carefully designed provisions in licensing agreements, technologies can be deployed in ways that support broader public goals—such as improved access to essential innovations, sustainable development, and responsible innovation—while maintaining incentives for innovation and commercialisation.

Over the past years, growing attention has been given to how technology transfer frameworks can better align with global challenges and policy agendas, including the **Sustainable Development Goals** and broader impact-driven innovation strategies. Impact Licensing represents a new instrument within this evolving landscape.

The purpose of this session is therefore not only to present the concept and the recent advances for the embedding of Impact Licensing into tech transfer and innovation agencies, but also to open a collaborative space for **open reflection and constructive feedback**. Technology transfer offices and related agencies operate at the interface between research, industry, and society, and insights from the audience are essential to understand how such an approach could realistically be integrated into existing practices, policies, and incentive structures.

We have structured the session into two parts.

During **the first part of the session**, we will present the IL framework, specifically the Impact (I.M.P.A.C.T.) Licensing Principles and the Impact Licensing Ecosystem. The IL framework has been proposed and designed as a systemic response to persistent shortcomings in technology transfer to underserved markets, especially in low-and-middle-income countries (LMIC). Traditional licensing often prioritizes economic returns while neglecting societal needs, creating barriers to the equitable diffusion of critical technologies. IL introduces a purpose-driven, contractually binding framework that aligns the interests of technology holders with societal and environmental objectives. At IL's core lies the I.M.P.A.C.T. principles—Intentionality, Measurability, Participation, Additionality, Comprehensiveness, and Total Return on Assets—which together establish a comprehensive foundation for socially responsible technology transfer. The Impact Licensing ecosystem is a coordinated pathway of complementary actors to ensure the effective translation of key technologies into impact-driven outcomes for low-and-middle-income countries (LMIC) contexts. As part of the Impact Licensing Ecosystem, a network of accredited European Tech Transfer Facilities for Impact is currently being set up to ensure responsible, economically secure and impact driven technology transfer to underserved markets, additional to the existing commercial markets.

Currently the Impact Licensing Initiative is welcoming candidacies from eligible organisations (Tech Transfer Offices/Knowledge Transfer Offices, Innovation Agencies, Research Institutions, Foundations and private companies) to become part of the Tech Transfer Facility Network. The session will provide a deeper understanding on

- i) the benefits of becoming part of the network of Tech Transfer Facilities,
- ii) the mentorship programme and tools provided to candidate organisations and
- iii) the official accreditation process.

Therefore, during **the second part of the session**, we will invite the audience to provide feedback on how IL can be embedded into a broader institutional system of technology transfer organizations and analyse the conditions under which Impact Licensing could create value for relevant organisations and partners, e.g., by assessing strategic alignment of Impact Licensing with current institutional priorities, value proposition and incentives needed to spark increased commitment from TTOs/KTOs, operational and resource considerations (additional resources, tools and/or expertise needed), intellectual property and licensing conditions, business modeling and financial structure and governance/network structure.

If you are interested in the IL framework, please contact us at silvie@impactlicensing.org or johan@impactlicensing.org

More information on the IL Framework on <https://impactlicensing.eu/>