

Polish R&D policy towards commercialisation of high-tech achievements

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Abstract

Business – research institutions collaboration in terms of R&D commercialisation is often regarded as difficult, if not impossible. Entrepreneurs are deterred by long-lasting, complicated procedures at research institutions, the necessity of bearing costs without a guarantee of a return. Companies are not ready to take the risk, fearing the loss of their own R&D resources.

The NCBR has long decided to challenge such approach. Increasing the involvement of businesses in R&D is the key to the growth of innovation in our economy. Thanks to the EU funding, we now have the largest ever means to support Polish companies willing to develop on the basis of their R&D results.

In order to effectively use these unique opportunities, we have to provide a very good quality of projects conducted, so we set the bar high in competitions organised by the NCBR. We try and encourage the private sector to actively participate in R&D spending. We listen to entrepreneurs' views and act upon their recommendations.

Our attitude has already borne fruit. It is perhaps best illustrated by the steady increase in the capital commitment of Polish entrepreneurs in broadly defined R&D. Of the 2,755 contracts signed by the NCBR in 2010-13, as many as 1,637 concerned financial support for companies acting either individually or together with other entities as part of consortia.

The years 2010-12 also saw nearly a doubling of BERD. In 2010 BERD amounted to PLN 2.77 billion, while two years later it was PLN 5.3 billion. In 2013, those expenses amounted to PLN 6.29 billion, which represents 43.6% of Poland's total R&D expenditure

NCBR's other flagship activities towards commercialisation include:

- A wide range of **programmes which cover a full R&D cycle "from idea to industry"**
- Preference given to **applications submitted by science-business consortia**, with the latter playing the leading role
- Preference given to projects with the **entrepreneurs' significant own financial input**
- **Go_Global.pl** - a programme that provides grants for preparing a strategy for global market entry, adaptation to the requirements of a given market as well as for the strategy's development and verification in dealing with potential investors. The programme is aimed at companies developing high and medium-high technology products.
- **BRIDGE programmes** - Poland's first instruments combining public and private funds from venture capital

Last but not least, we have recently announced the results of the first round of calls for applications in a competition under the **Fast Track programme**. Entrepreneurs received decisions on their projects within **60 days**. This is a step change in R&D financing in the private sector. By reducing the time of decision-making to just 60 days after submission of documents, the NCBR meets the demand of entrepreneurs who stressed that the duration of the project often determines its competitive edge.