

Warsaw, 07.06.2016

Press release

## **Building bridges: Sharing best practices on commercialization of technology** *Conference*

The conference *Building bridges: Sharing best practices on commercialization of technology* will take place on 9th June 2016 at the Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer Management of the Warsaw University of Technology. It is co-organised by the Embassies of Switzerland, Canada and the United States under the patronage of the National Centre for Research and Development.

Switzerland, Canada and the United States are three countries at the forefront of global innovation, each with specific strengths and different approaches in terms of policies towards education, research and innovation. The conference will gather experts and practitioners from these countries as well as from Poland with the aim of sharing experiences and best practices in four key areas fostering the innovation capacity of the economy, namely:

- technology transfer,
- the contribution of venture capital,
- the role of intellectual property rights, and
- the need for cooperation between academia/science and business.

*“This conference is a great discussion forum gathering top experts from the world’s most innovative and, at the same time, diverse countries: Switzerland, Canada and the United States”,* says HE Andrej Motyl, Ambassador of Switzerland to Poland. *“Switzerland consistently ranks at the forefront of various innovation and competitiveness world rankings. Record-breaking projects such as the recently opened longest tunnel in the world – the Gotthard tunnel – or flying around the world in a solar-powered aircraft are concrete illustrations of Switzerland’s high innovation capability. During the conference, we will look jointly with our Polish partners for new ways of bringing scientific and technological advances to the market: how to ensure the practical implementation of new ideas? In Switzerland, universities of applied sciences as well as research institutes such as Empa are key actors in bridging the gap between research and practice. Cooperation between the academia and industry is also one of the strengths of all three countries’ innovation capacity. Furthermore, our distinguished speakers will share their expertise on the role of intellectual property rights – Switzerland is a world leader in terms of patent submission per capita – and venture capital in stimulating innovation.”*

*“Canada is a world leader in science, technology and innovation, and is recognized as one of the most innovative and competitive economies in the world”,* says HE Stephen de Boer, Ambassador of Canada to Poland. *“In that context, we are delighted to be able to share our experience with experts from Canada representing the different elements of the innovation ecosystem, from practitioners, investors and support structures such as the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. Canada has a long history of contributing to many of modern history’s most important scientific and technological breakthroughs. From the discovery of insulin and the invention of the first*

*cardiac pacemaker, to the development of the Java programming language, Canada has long been recognized for its ability to commercialise new discoveries and technologies. Today, we are looking at the commercialisation of technologies in new areas such as the development of revolutionary crop treatment technology, of technology to instantaneously analyze manufacturing data or of up-and-coming wearable technologies. International R&D collaborations and partnerships are a key component of Canada's economic agenda and the Government of Canada has been making significant investments to support investment in innovation and in innovation cooperation. We look forward for the development of mutually beneficial innovative economies, and supporting entrepreneurship and creative ideas. "*

*"The United States is a committed partner in Poland's economic development", says HE Paul Jones, Ambassador of the United States to Poland. Through the U.S.-Poland Innovation program, strong educational ties and exchange programs, and our broad and multi-faceted investment and business relationship, the United States and Poland have already demonstrated the power of innovation collaboration. U.S. Embassy Warsaw is excited to join our friends from the Canadian and Swiss Embassy for a day-long discussion on key innovation support structures, including venture capital, business-academia partnerships, and intellectual property protections. The United States is home to more high-tech companies than anywhere in the world and has been at the forefront of technological development for decades, and we welcome the opportunity to share our experiences and knowledge. We all benefit from a smarter, more innovative global economy."*

The detailed program of the conference is available below. Please select the following link to register for the conference:

<https://goo.gl/umL4ZM>

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## **Building Bridges: sharing best practices on commercialization of technology**

**June 9<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**Centre for Innovation and Technology Transfer Management (CZiITT),  
Warsaw University of Technology, ul. Rektorska 4 (Warsaw)**

**09:30-10:00 Registration**

**10:00-10:30 Opening Remarks**

- Dr Piotr Dardziński, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Science and Higher Education
- Stanisław Dyrda, National Centre for Research and Development
- Prof. dr hab. Rajmund Bacewicz, Vice Rector for Science, Warsaw University of Technology
- John Law, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the United States to Poland
- Chantal Moser, Head of Economic Affairs, Embassy of Switzerland in Poland

### **Master of Ceremonies:**

- Nicolas Lepage, Counsellor & Senior Trade Commissioner, Embassy of Canada to Poland

**10:30-11:45 Panel 1 - Technology Transfer: R&I to market**

Technology transfer has become a major issue for research institutions: how to ensure that scientific and technological developments are accessible to a wider range of users who can then further develop and exploit the technology into new products, processes, applications, materials or services. It involves a wide range of issues such as research cooperation with industry, inventions, patent applications and licensing, as well as setting up spin-off companies.

Moderator: Maciej Sadowski, Startup Hub Poland

### **Panellists:**

- Tibor Turi, Manager, Ontario Regional Office | Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
- Gabriele Dobenecker, Head Marketing, Knowledge & Technology Transfer, Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technology Empa
- Jay Schrankler, Executive Director, Office for Technology Commercialization, University of Minnesota
- Marek Seretny, Faculty of Management, Dean's Representative for International Projects, Warsaw University of Technology

**11:45-13:00 Panel 2 – Path to innovation: linkages between academia and industry**

Cooperation between academia and the private sector can take various forms, including conducting fundamental research that flows into the development of new products and processes of a commercial partner. It also implies knowledge transfer from the research institution to a company. In addition, closer cooperation with business helps universities to develop curricula that are relevant and meet the needs of students and society. Establishing international cooperation can contribute to building on already existing research. This contributes to provide graduates with the right skills and mind-sets for the global labour market.

Moderator: Daria Tataj, Founder and CEO, Tataj Innovation

Panellists:

- George Jackowski, Chief Scientific Officer, Pivotal Therapeutics
- Jacques Hefti, Senior Lecturer of Innovation & Entrepreneurship, ZHAW School of Management and Law
- AF “Mehdi” Anwar, Jefferson Science Fellow at the U.S. Department of State
- Iwona Cymerman, Grantee and Laureate of the Foundation for Polish Sciences

#### 13:00-14:00 Networking lunch

#### 14:00-15:15 Panel 3: Intellectual property rights: your insurance policy

Thinking of technology commercialisation as the process of bringing new products and services to the market, intellectual property rights play a key role as they protect the - often large and highly risky - investments of innovative and creative companies thereby providing incentives to undertake such investments in the first place. An effective use of the intellectual property rights tools is an important contribution to the successful technology transfer from science to business.

Moderator: Tomasz Snażyk, Managing Partner, SGP Legal

Panellists:

- Justyna Regan, Attorney and Counselor at Law, [Miller Canfield](#)
- Hans-Ulrich Stamm, Economist, Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property
- Jean Bonilla, U.S. Department of State
- Piotr Zakrzewski, Deputy Director, Department of Promotion and Innovation Support, Polish Patent Office

#### 15:15-16:30 Panel 4: The role of Venture Capital in a competitive innovation ecosystem

Studies show that regardless of government regulations and general conditions, only a small number of original product ideas actually make it to market and even fewer are effective and successful. There exist various reasons for this, including the so-called “funding gap” where not enough funding is available to get existing products ready for the market. This affects typically young, innovative and technology-oriented start-up companies, which do not have significant revenues or collaterals. Venture capital can contribute to filling this gap.

Moderator: Michał Dżoga, Director of Public Policy for Europe at Intel Corporation & Chair of the Board of the Coalition for Polish Innovation

Panellists:

- Marlena Labieniec, Strategy and Operations, NAVA Ventures
- Jean-Pierre Vuilleumier, Managing Director, CTI Invest
- Louis Foreman, Edison Nation
- Marek Borzestowski, GIZA Polish Ventures

#### 16:30-16:45 Closing remarks

- Marcin Postawka, Deputy Director, Centre for Management of Innovation & Technology Transfer (CZiTT), Warsaw University of Technology