Joint Research Publications: A Performance Indicator of University-Industry Collaboration

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Abstract

In the increasingly competitive and globalising world of higher education, the future of universities relies on how successfully they interact with their environment. Collaborative linkages with research partners, including industry, can prove vital for research intensive universities. However, indicator-based assessments of academic performance may not sufficiently capture those linkages with private sector partners and processes of direct interaction with industry. This article introduces an analytical framework and associated performance indicators that may contribute to effective assessments, monitoring and evaluation of research cooperation with industry and other business enterprises. The empirical information is extracted from ‘university-industry co-authored research publications’ that can be gathered from publicly available bibliographical databases or from a university’s in-house information systems. The analytical power of this evidence-based approach is illustrated by way of Center for Science and Technology Studies’ (CWTS’) University-Industry Research Cooperation Scoreboard (UIRC Scoreboard) which provides internationally comparative measurements on the world’s largest research-intensive universities. Examples of scoreboard data, and further applications of this source, are presented. The concluding discussion highlights both the possibilities and caveats for research evaluation practices within academia as well as strategic management of a university’s knowledge assets.

Keyword: University-Industry Research Cooperation; Third Mission Indicators; University Rankings; Performance Assessment; Knowledge Management

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