

Chapter 15

About Russian Regional Users' Innovation Based on Digital Information

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ABSTRACT

Research and development are increasingly becoming global and implemented on a collaborative basis. This leads to the need for the search of partners, resources and ideas outside the company. Moreover, end-users of innovations are being considered as key actors in the regional innovation process. Thereby, innovation intermediaries serve to establish or improve the relationship between all stakeholders with complementary skill sets or interests. These intermediaries pursue the aim to support the generation and diffusion of innovation. Due to the active development of information and digital technologies in the international practice have gradually emerged new forms of innovation intermediaries, which have not been applied yet in Russia.

INTRODUCTION

There is a gap between applied research and the real economy in Russia. This problem hasn't yet been solved. Golichenko (2011) considers that technological supply is far away from the technological demand. To turn this situation around, firstly, it is necessary to strengthen of research and innovation potential of non-state enterprises through the transfer of a part of applied research institutes, whose activities are closer to development than to research. Secondly, to establish networks of technological centers for diffusion of new technologies. Thirdly, to create networks of "meeting places" for knowledge producers and their potential customers – manufacturers for cooperative activities (Golichenko, 2011).

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-2826-5.ch015

It must be noted, however, that innovation infrastructure that is commonly understood as a set of inter-related structures, which serve and provide the implementation of innovation activity, has a low level of interaction between participants in Russia. Hence, there needs to be a shift to the network organization of infrastructure that ensures high level of participants' cooperation. The process of developing objectives and problems, which need to be solved in the framework of such networks, should be the most transparent and interactive. It implies an open communication between representatives of the manufacturing industry, science, society, government ministries and departments. This would obviate and overcome market failures through the self-organization of science and business. Moreover, the identification of goals may be carried out using both top-down and bottom-up approaches (in the framework of the key technologies).

The number of objects of innovation infrastructure (business incubators, business accelerators, technological parks, innovation centers, centers for technology transfer and commercialization etc.) is expanding at a very rapid pace. Unfortunately, the same could not be said of their effectiveness. It is worthy of note that continues to be the problem with overcome the gap between the state research and development sector, the sector of research and development of universities and the private sector of the economy. The increase in the number of intermediaries in innovation sphere, whose functions are performed by objects of innovation infrastructure, does not solve the task to integrate the national innovation system of Russia. Unsystematic character of the creation of innovative infrastructure and its institutional weakness determines the weakness of the interaction between science and industry. In recent years, the concept of innovation ecosystem is gaining strength and recognition. This theory describes evolving interrelations between economic actors, the change of innovation activity models and their relations with external environment (Mercan and Goktas, 2011). According to this approach, development, implementation and distribution of social innovations considerably influence innovation growth and economic development in the framework of socio-economic system. Of particular interest, from our point of view, is the integration of ecosystem approach and innovation intermediation theory in order to research of regional innovation systems.

The present research is devoted to searching ways to unite the innovative ecosystem concept with the theory of innovation intermediation, emphasizing specific types of innovation intermediation and fundamental mechanisms thereof, supporting incentives and the role in the innovation ecosystem. The research results may be implemented into managerial practices in order to improve and increase the innovation feature and competitiveness of regional innovation systems of the Russian Federation and of concrete enterprises in particular. In this connection, the main objectives of the proposed research are as follows:

1. To conceptualize the theory of innovation intermediation in the framework of a broader theory of innovation ecosystems;
2. To research key mechanisms of innovation intermediation functioning within the ecosystem of innovations;
3. To arrange types of innovation intermediaries and to compare the suggested types of innovation intermediaries highlighting scopes of activity, functions, main participants, functioning scales and other parameters;
4. To consider opportunities of the "Living Labs" innovative approach in development of regional innovation ecosystems;

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