



EXTERNAL RELATIONS

2017-03-15

Reg.no C2017/233

Policy on Dissemination and Utilisation of Knowledge and Research

Introduction

University research and education generate knowledge relevant to society. The university is responsible for ensuring that such knowledge will be used for the common good and the Higher Education Act clearly states that research results should be put to good use. The university's collaboration with the community should also lead to an enhanced ability to note ideas and issues which in turn may lead to new partnerships and social benefits. The university's cooperation with external actors should create added value for society and for the university. This is also a prioritised goal of Karlstad University's Strategic Plan for 2016–2018.

Knowledge generated in academia holds potential for utilisation and growth that may benefit the entire country. It is of the utmost importance for the university to develop and streamline utilisation through commercialisation or other forms of knowledge dissemination. The university should promote the utilisation of research and education through developing innovative research and educational environments and appropriate support structures.

The university is a central actor in a knowledge-driven innovation system and has a responsibility to work actively to strengthen dialogue and cooperation with regional actors and appropriate public authorities in strategically tackling research and innovation issues with the purpose of further developing regional and national innovation systems. A robust innovation system is a determining factor in the success of commercialisation or broader utilisation of research and education.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe the basic principles for the university's role in utilisation of knowledge and research. The dissemination of knowledge and research results is part of our responsibility and it is therefore important that Karlstad University has well-functioning channels for streamlining the utilisation of knowledge and research. Some of the knowledge generated at the university is of no immediate commercial value, but it may have significant social value and could

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make an important contribution to societal development. It is therefore important that the university and its employees are continually actively involved in the community.

Some of the knowledge and research results generated may have potential for commercialisation through the creation of new businesses, licensing, or selling rights. Efficient channels of utilisation also have to be established for this type of knowledge.

It is important that the potential for utilisation beyond the regular academic channels, such as publication and continued research support, is recognised early on in the research process. Research leaders and advisors have a key role in this respect. The university's Grants and Innovation Office has to provide professional support both for broad, non-commercial utilisation and for commercialisation.

This policy should provide support in the process of utilising research and education by:

- Defining the concept *intangible assets* and describing intellectual property rights;
- Listing the principles applying to Karlstad University's utilisation of research and education;
- Ensuring value creation for the university as a whole;
- Ensuring researchers' and research funders' commitments.

Intangible assets

An intangible asset is some form of intellectual achievement which a person or organisation disposes of and which has been achieved or developed internally. Intangible assets can include internal routines and working methods, compute software, know-how, customer lists, own databases, research results, inventions, certifications and trademarks. Some types of intangible assets may be placed under legal protection in the through intellectual property rights.

Intellectual property rights include many types of legal protection, such as patents, designs, trademarks, company names and copyright. Each right protects different aspects of an intellectual achievement and different criteria have to be fulfilled to obtain protection. Intellectual property right holders retain sole right to their intellectual achievements, which means that they can prevent others from exploiting such achievements commercially. Intellectual property rights are assets that may be bought, sold, or licensed. According to the Act (1949:345) on the Right to Employees' Inventions (LAU), employers have in some cases the possibility of assuming the rights to employees' inventions. LAU should, however, not be applied to the intellectual rights of academic staff at universities and university colleges. This "teacher exception" [*lärarundantaget*] means that academic staff retain the right to their patentable inventions. At Karlstad University, this exception is made for lecturers, researchers and doctoral students.

According to the general principles of intellectual property, intellectual property rights pertaining to non-patentable ideas are retained by the creators of these assets, unless otherwise agreed or unless practice dictates otherwise.

Principles

The basic principles of the freedom of research have to be maintained: research issues may be freely selected, research methods may be freely developed, and research results may be freely published (Ch. 1 Sec. 6 of the Swedish Higher Education Act and Ch. 2. Sec. 18 of the Instrument of Government).

The university's research and education funds may not be used to protect innovations, for example through funding the registration of patents, trademarks or designs.

Throughout the utilisation process, the ambition is to minimise the university's dependence on political, ideological and economic stakeholders. This is crucial in maintaining the university's credibility and innovative success. The university should utilise research and education without jeopardising its core values.

The university takes a positive approach to side-line occupations that contribute to the utilisation of research and education. Side-line occupations may not compete with regular university activities or have detrimental effects on the university's research and education commitments. If an innovation is exploited through a privately owned or co-owned company, the side-line occupation has to be reported to the university. See Karlstad University's Side-Line Occupation Policy for more information.

If research is based on an agreement between the university and an external funder, it is important that the university has control over the obtained results so that it can fulfil its contractual obligations.

Lecturers, researchers, doctoral students and other staff members should inform the university about research and education that can be utilised. The university provides advice on such matters.

Already at the application stage, some national and international research funders make special demands about protecting the intangible value of research results and distributing such values correctly. Agreements should ensure that results may be published and that researchers may continue to work in the same research area after the period specified in the agreement. The Grants and Innovations Office and the university's legal advisor should therefore be involved in contractual and intellectual property matters already at the application stage.

Lecturers, researchers, doctoral students and other staff members who have innovative ideas but no interest in ownership or in the commercialisation process are encouraged to inform appropriate persons about their ideas and to make a decision on a potential utilisation process via another party, with the support of the university.

The Grants and Innovations Office, in conjunction with the university's legal advisors, will provide assistance in legal and contractual matters, and as regards funding support and innovation consultancy.

Lecturers, researchers, doctoral students and other staff members should be given the opportunity to undertake training in entrepreneurial approaches and the utilisation of research and education.

Karlstad University students should primarily approach Drivhuset if they have ideas they want to realise. Drivhuset refers students with innovative ideas to the Grants and Innovations Office that provides appropriate support.