Working on an innovation is a journey full of contingencies and complexities (cf. Van de Ven et al. 1999) and cannot simply be managed. But there patterns in these journeys, and experienced actors know about them and anticipate. A further complexity appears when the journey is not limited to one organization. This is almost always the case to some extent, and can be sought after, as in open innovation and in linking up with users and other stakeholders, up to civil society organizations. It creates specific challenges when the innovation originates in an academic context. This is more complex than can be handled by so-called technology transfer offices. There is a need to map the actual variety and complexity, and identify possible lessons.

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