



European IP Helpdesk

Stay ahead of the innovation game.

**IP in Business collaborations for
SMEs and Start-ups**

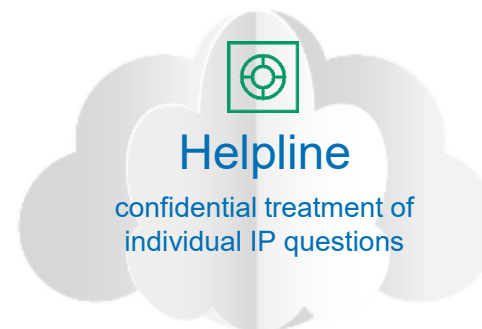
European IP Helpdesk
17.09.2026





European IP Helpdesk

- Service initiative of the European Commission
- Addressing **current and potential beneficiaries of EU-funded projects, researchers and EU SMEs**
- Free-of-charge first-line support on intellectual property (IP)
- Hands-on IP and innovation management support
- International pool of IP experts from various thematic fields
- Unique cooperation scheme with the Enterprise Europe Network: 43 ambassadors from 26 EU countries





The EC IP Helpdesks





Upcoming events



02
SEP
2026

Training and workshops

[EU - Webinar: Introduction to IP](#)

📺 Live streaming available

03
SEP
2026

Training and workshops

[EU - Webinar: IP in Biotechnology](#)

📺 Live streaming available

07
SEP
2026

Training and workshops

[Joint Webinar: Beyond Traditional Licensing - Impact Licensing as a Pathway to Exploitation and Societal Impact](#)

📍 Online only

📺 Live streaming available

08
SEP
2026

Training and workshops

[Joint Webinar: Protect, Share, Reuse - IP Management and Data Stewardship for Responsible Innovation](#)

📍 Online only

📺 Live streaming available

11
SEP
2026

Training and workshops

[EU - Webinar: IP in Horizon Projects \(HEU\)](#)

📺 Live streaming available

17
SEP
2026

Training and workshops

[EU - Webinar: IP in Business collaborations for SMEs and Start-ups](#)

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24
SEP
2026

Training and workshops

[EU - Webinar: IP and Artificial Intelligence](#)

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30
SEP
2026

Training and workshops

[EU - Webinar: Copyright in collaborative projects](#)

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07
OCT
2026

Training and workshops

[EU - Webinar: IP for Future and Emerging Technologies](#)

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15
OCT
2026

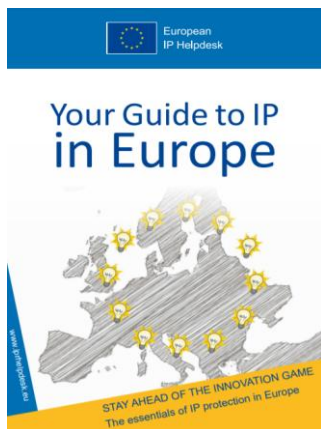
Training and workshops

[EU - Webinar: IP Management in ICT Projects](#)

📺 Live streaming available



EC IP (SME) Helpdesk Hub – Gateway to Information



- E-learning modules & more
- Guides / Topic, country, sector-specific factsheets / Infographics
- Case studies



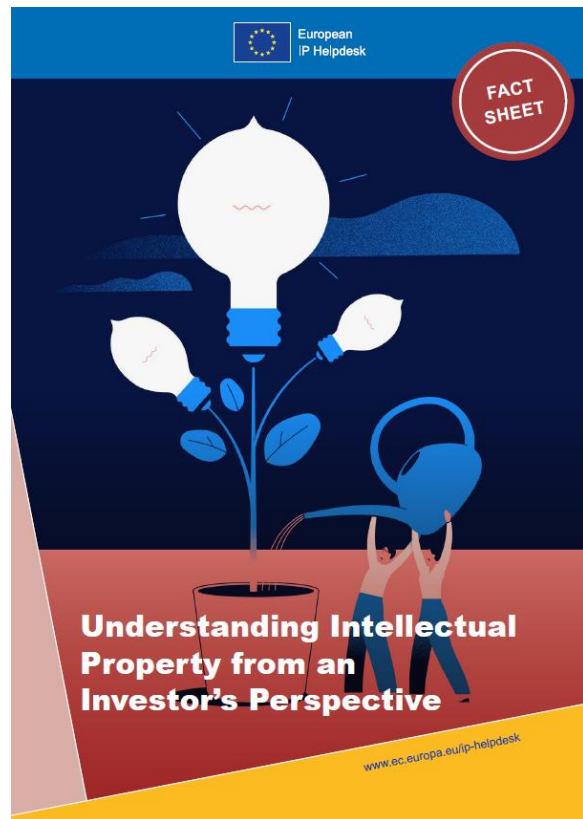
Ambassador Scheme

- **Cooperation scheme** with the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN): 43 ambassadors – 26 countries
- **Building IP capacities** among European SMEs
- **Overcoming language barriers**
- Making the topic **more accessible**
- Exchange and feedback from ambassadors on **needs of SMEs**
- Local **awareness** and **training events**

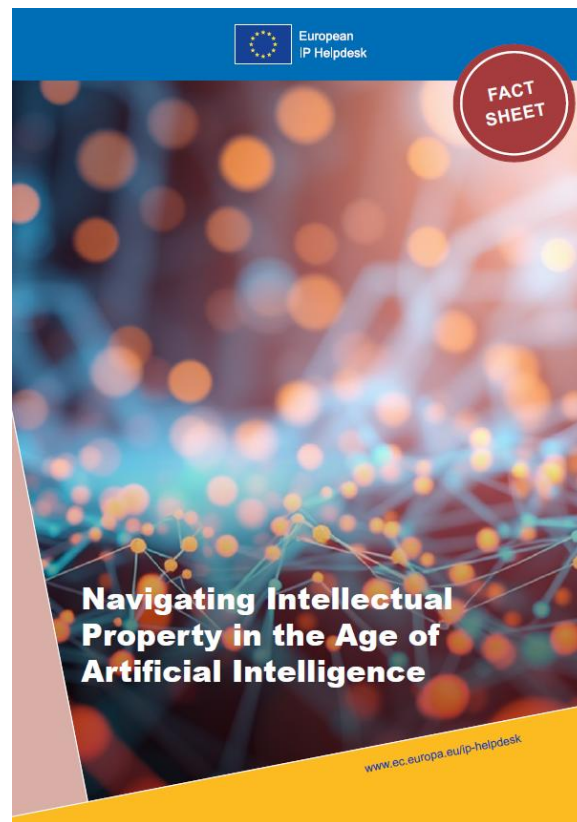




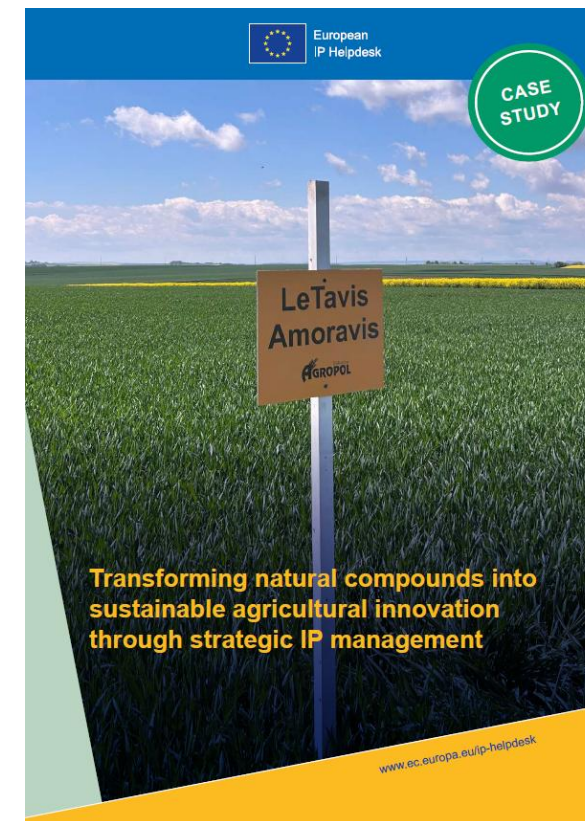
New Publications!



[Understanding Intellectual Property
From an Investor's Perspective](#)



[Navigating intellectual property in
the age of artificial intelligence](#)



[Letavis](#)



Thank you!

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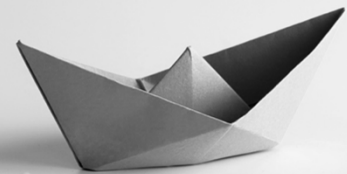
European IP Helpdesk

Stay ahead of the innovation game.

- 40 years practical experience of early stage technology exploitation
- Experience in Research, Industry and Investment
- Member of ISO and CEN committees developing Innovation and IP Management standards
- Member of Licensing Executives Society

IP in Business Collaborations

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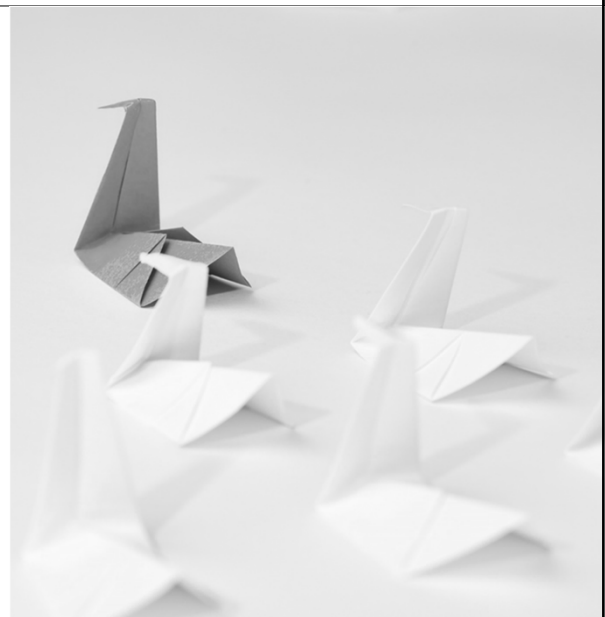


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Roadmap

- **WHY BOTHER COLLABORATING**
- **IDENTIFYING AND LEVERAGING INTELLECTUAL ASSETS**
- **DEVELOPING SHARED STRATEGIES**
- **MANAGING AND SHARING INTELLECTUAL ASSETS**



2



Why collaborate?

All companies need to innovate (or die!)

SMEs have limited resources or capacity

Partnering with others can provide access to new assets
and opportunities

3



Where to collaborate?

What are the **gaps** or in the product or service offerings?

How could the product or service be **improved**?

Are there **new products or services** which could help the
company?

Working with others can help

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Can you get more value from your IP assets?

IP which is not yet being used, but could be further developed with others?

Core IP which could be built on to develop new innovations?

Applications of IP in other sectors or fields of use?

Sharing IP can help

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Where are new opportunities?

New geographic territories not yet addressed

New fields of use

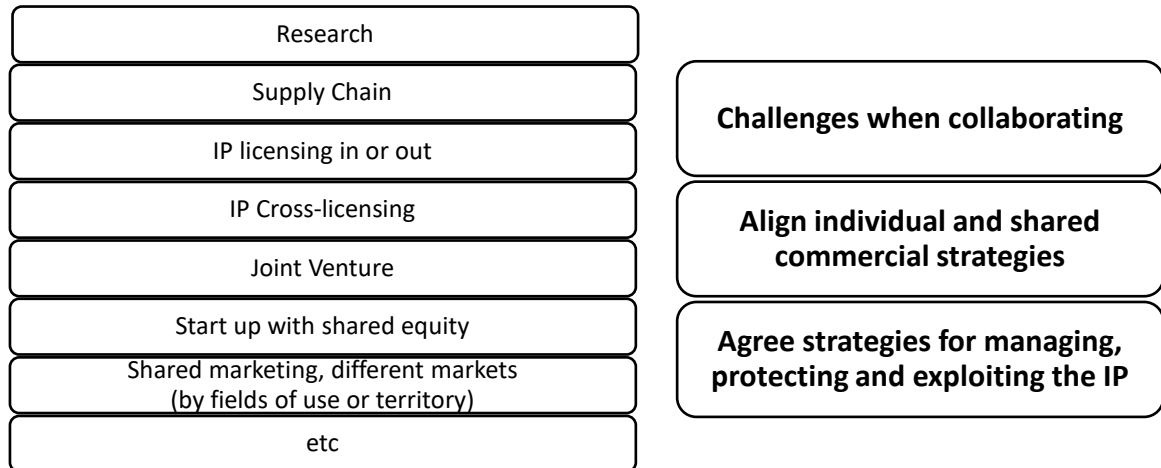
New market sectors

Working with others can help to access these

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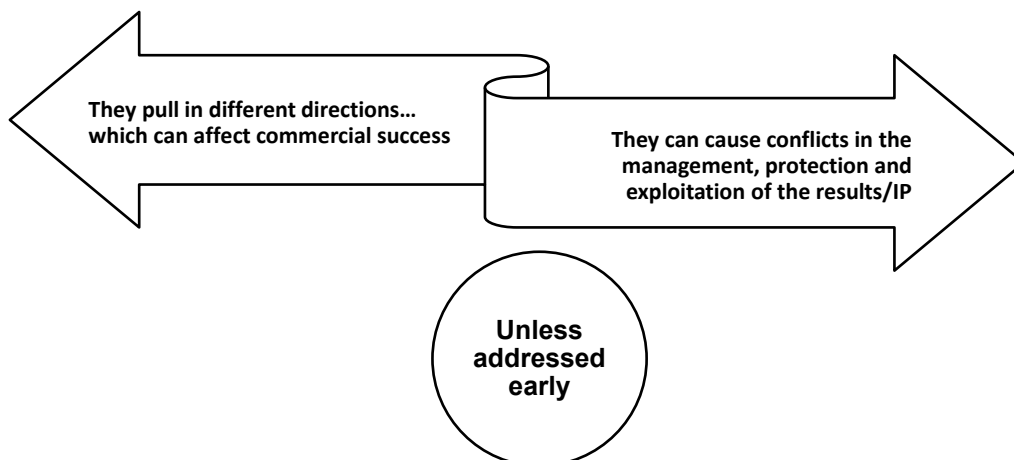
Many types of business collaboration



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Different businesses = different motives and cultures



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Many skills and resources needed

Pre- and post-deal scientific and technical support

IP lawyers

Commercial and licensing legal support

Marketing and communications

Finance to support transfer activities

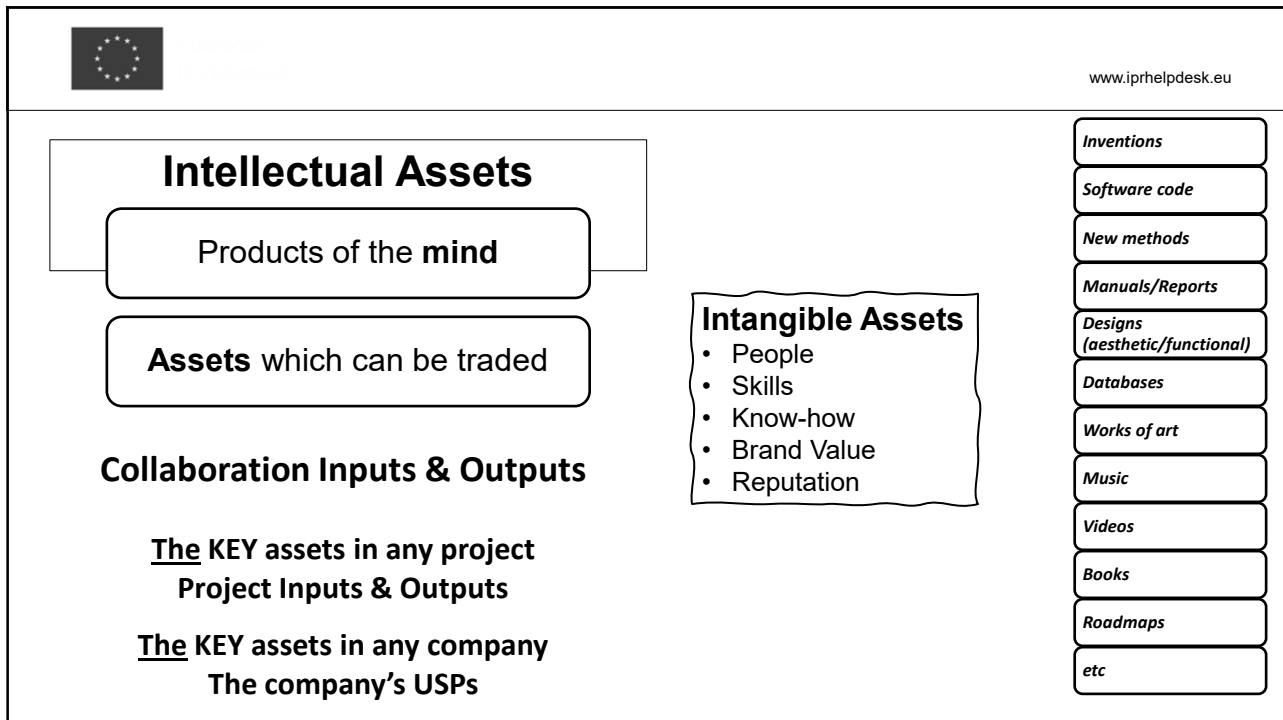
Etc

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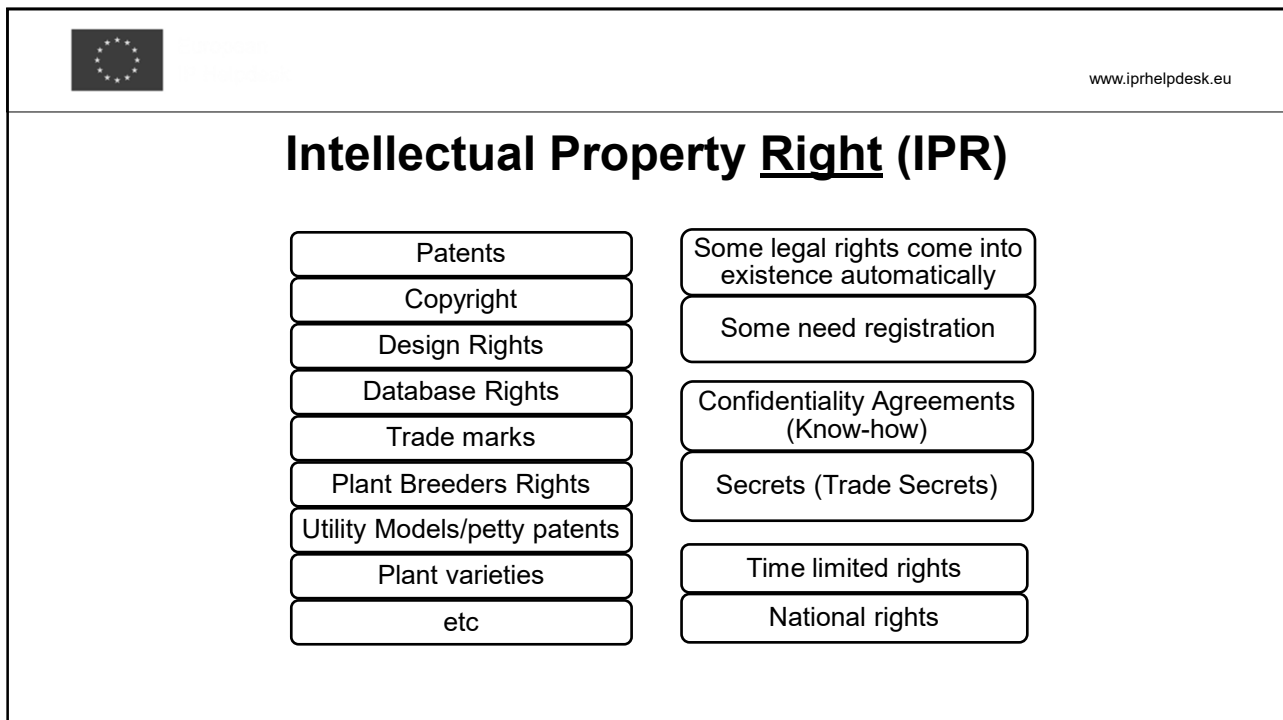


COLLABORATION
=
GIVE & TAKE
=
“SHARING” ASSETS

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What is the deal?

legal right to prevent
others using their creation
(without agreement)

commercial purposes
(only)

for a **limited period**

In return for

disclosing details

**so others can develop new
innovations**

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Who benefits?

The state
by avoiding secrecy

- Improves innovation capacity, stimulates innovation, enriches society

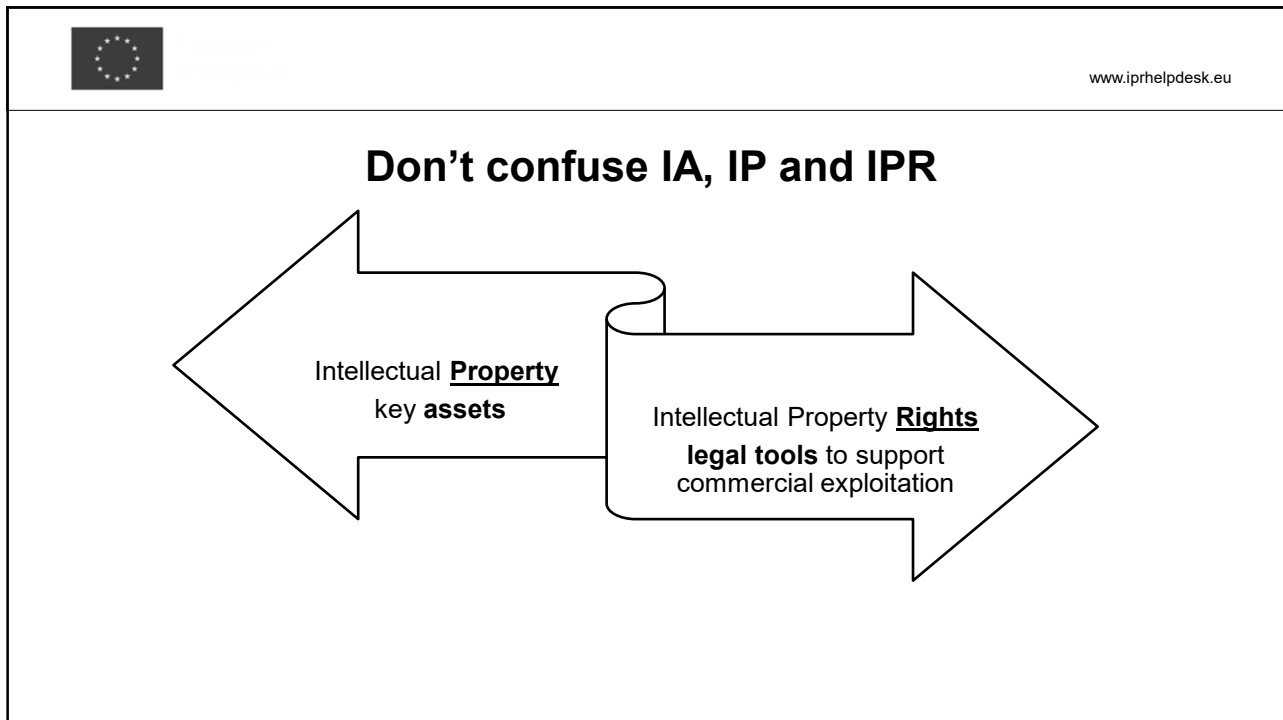
The creator
by being able to prevent
unauthorised commercial use

- Unless they come to an agreement (which may be financial)

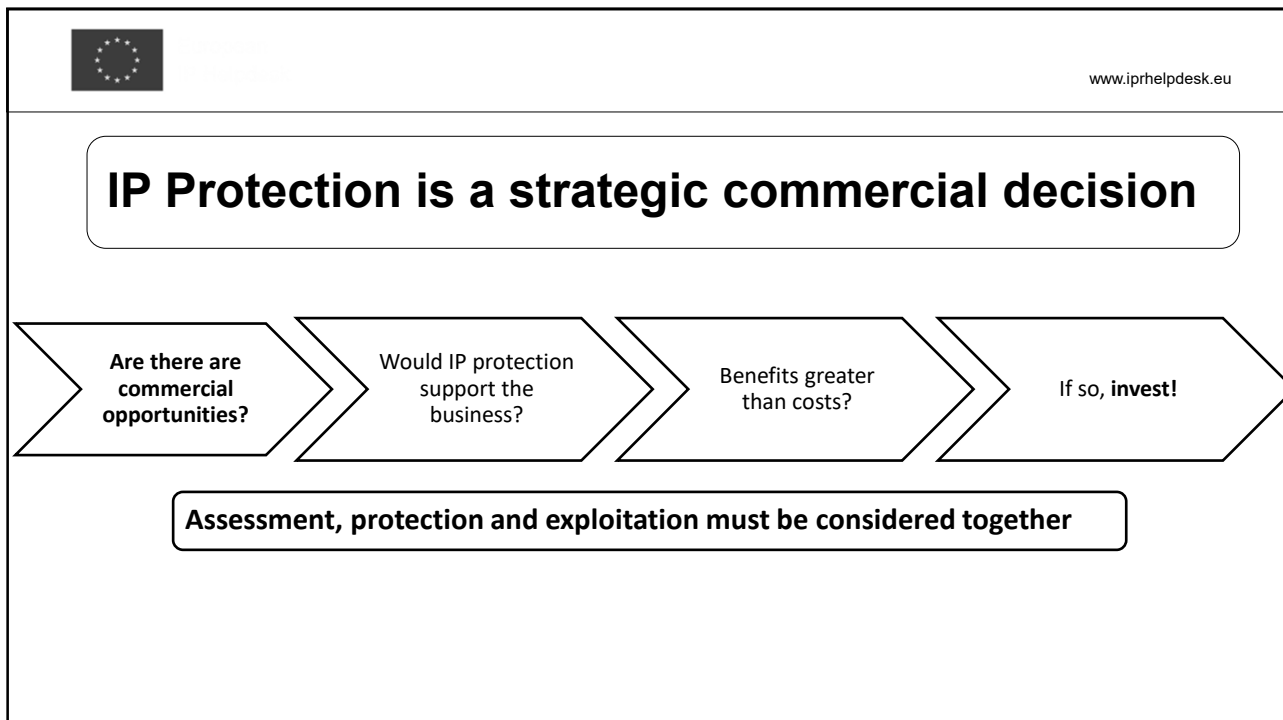
Investors
(time, money, facilities, etc)
from the limited monopoly

- To get a return on investment

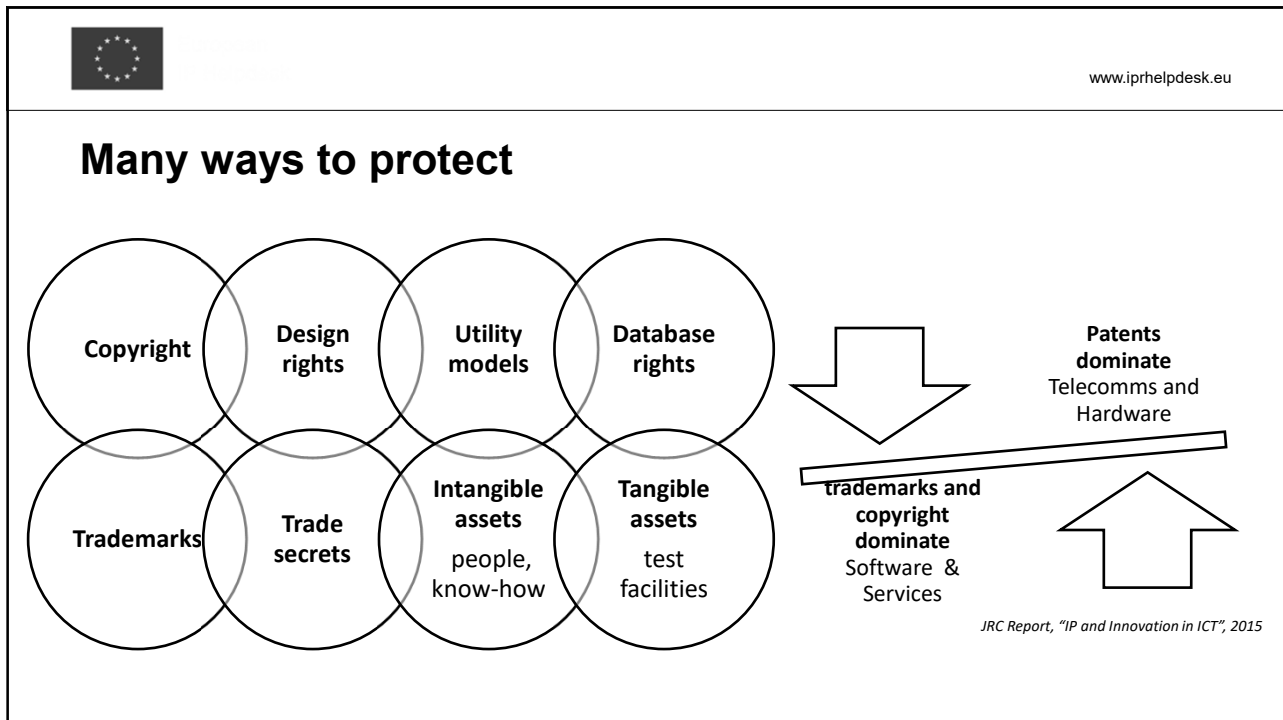
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Ensure <u>all</u> the relevant assets are identified (as well as all the contributors)				
Patentable IP	Copyrightable IP	Designs (design rights)	Trade secrets, etc	Intangible assets
• Computer implemented inventions (software!) • Processes • Products • Apparatus	• Software code • Reports • Engineering drawings • Manufacturing and user guides	• Functional • Eye-appeal	• Formulas • Methods • etc	• People • Know how (e.g. best way to implement) • Potential Brand value (supported by Trade or Service Marks)

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THE STRATEGIC USE OF INTELLECTUAL ASSETS IN BUSINESS COLLABORATIONS

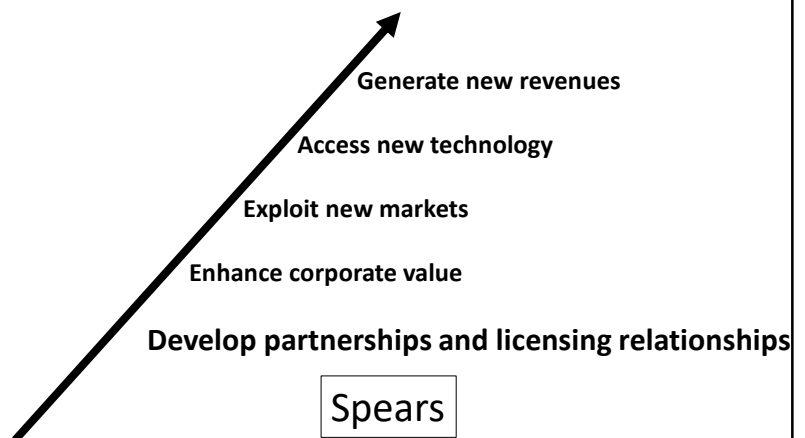
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The strategic value of protected IP

Defend position
Secure market share
Protect products or services
Create barriers to entry
Enhance competitiveness
Avoid litigation

Shields



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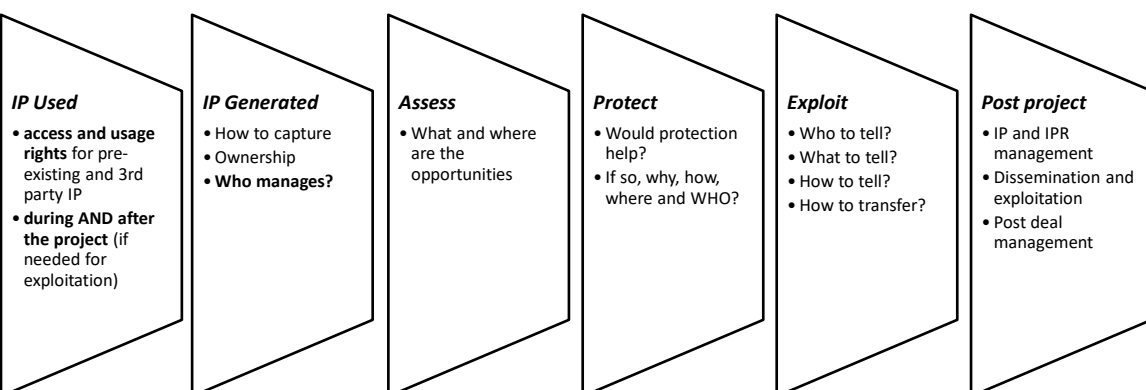


MANAGING THE KEY ASSETS IN COLLABORATIONS

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The 6 pillars of IP Management



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REACHING A COMMON UNDERSTANDING

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What are the collaboration opportunities?

The **opportunities** for **all** the collaborators

Who will address which opportunities (individually or collaboratively)

How the collaboration affects **competitive positioning**

What are the **gaps** in knowledge, competence and assets
which the collaboration can reduce

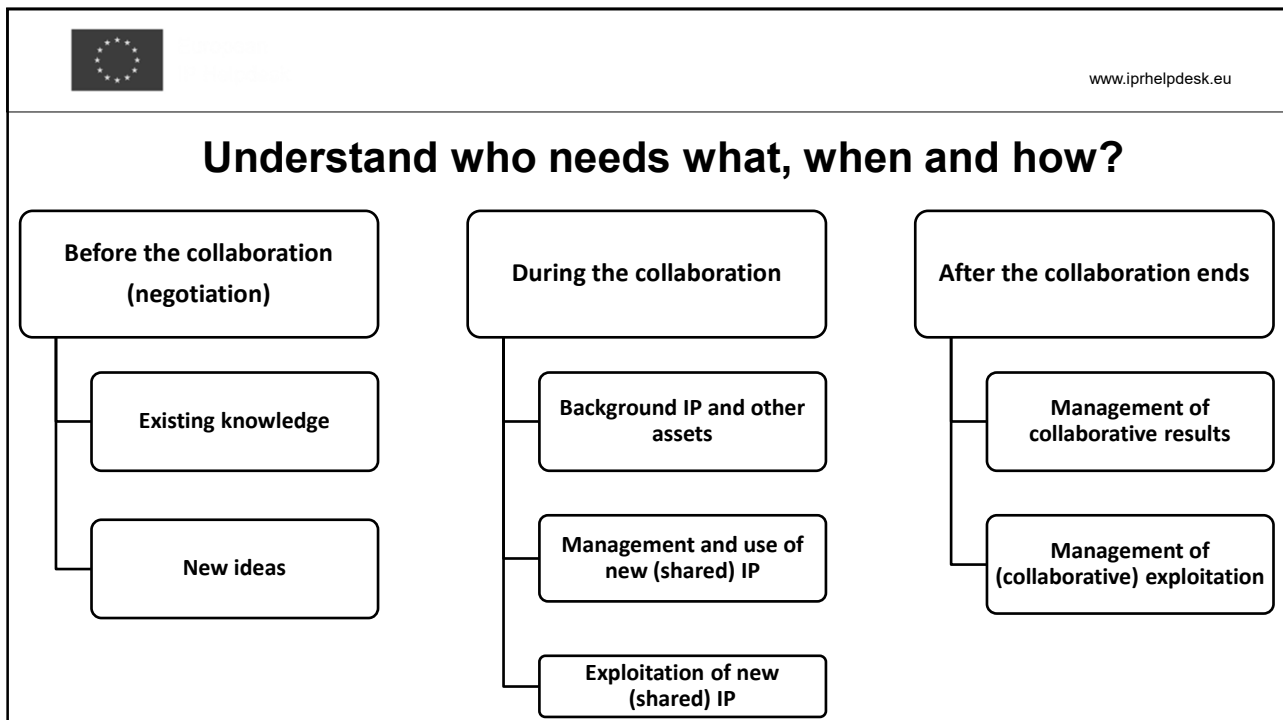
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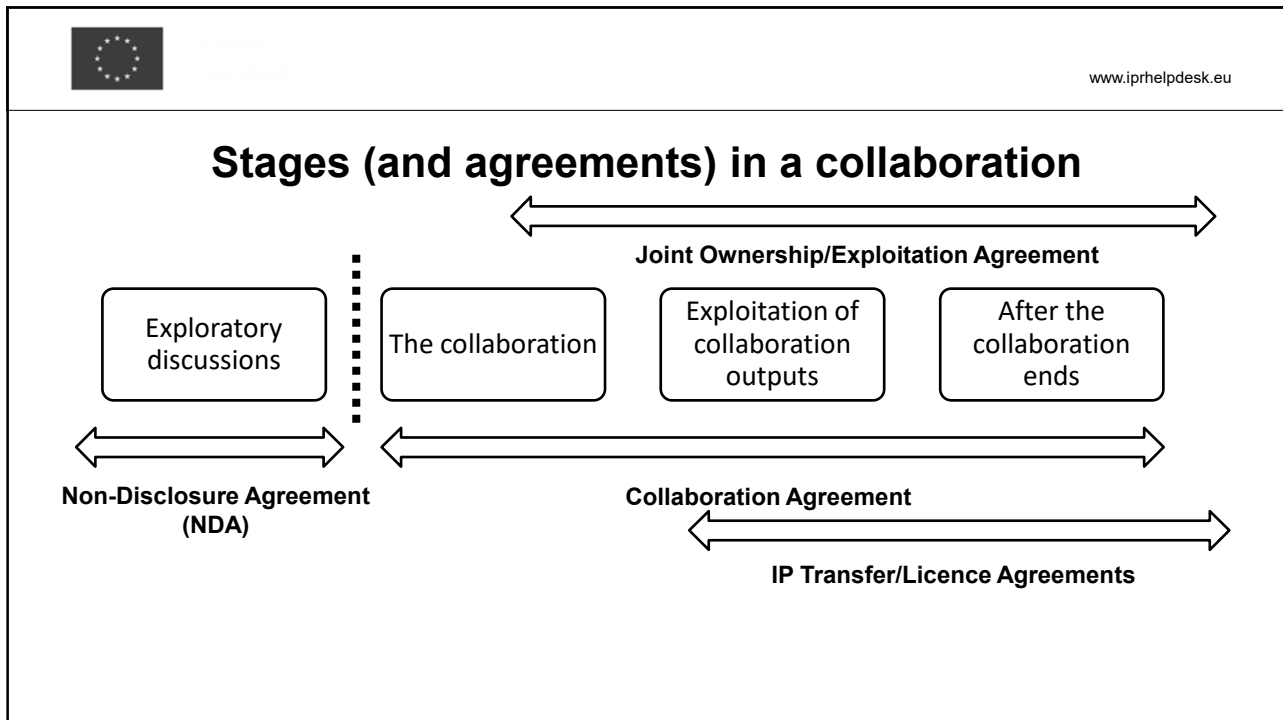
Needs, Contributions, Benefits, Risks Matrix

Partner	P1	P2
Needs	What are the needs/wants/challenges you want to address?	
Contributions		What do you plan to contribute to the collaboration?
Benefits	What do you want to get out of the collaboration?	
Risks		What are your main concerns or potential risks which might reduce your expected benefits?

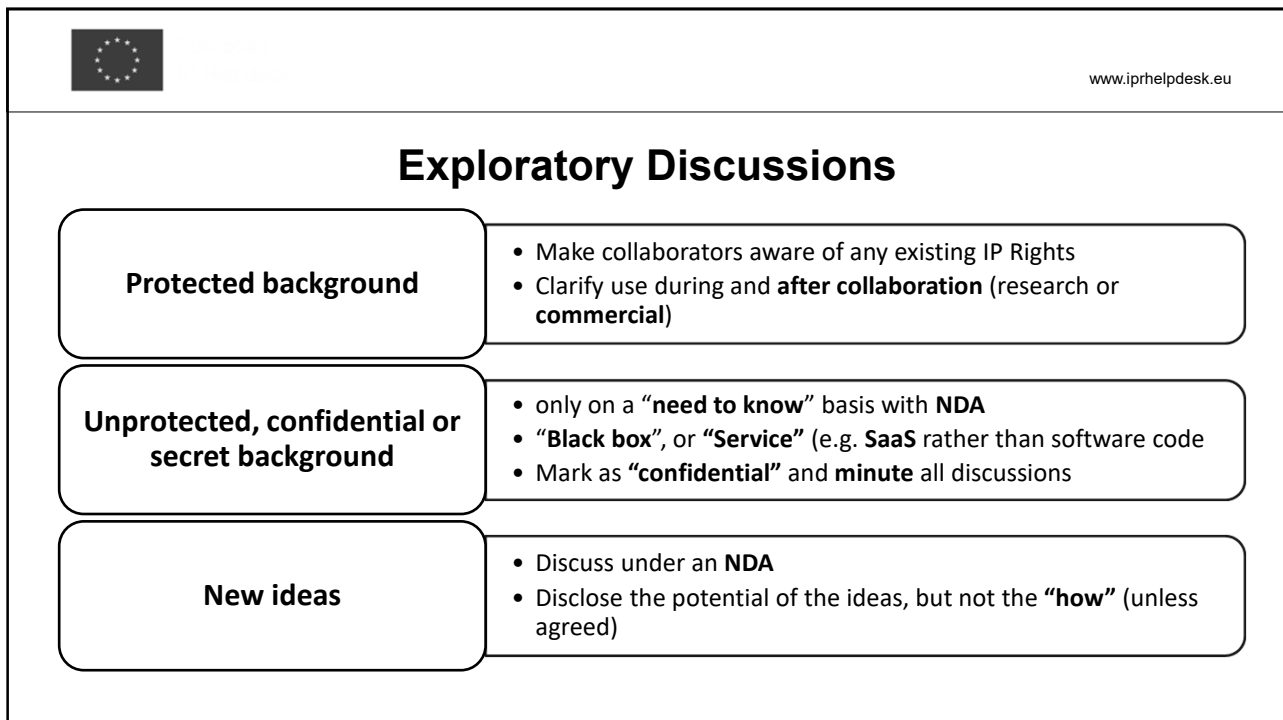
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Non-Disclosure Agreements

Always have an NDA prior to any discussion related to confidential information (trade secrets, know-how or new ideas)

An NDA **only covers disclosure, NOT commercial transactions**.
Make the **purpose of the disclosure** clear in the NDA

Do not use an NDA beyond exploratory discussions

Confidentiality and trade secret **laws may differ outside Europe**, so ensure NDA serves its purpose – and is “water tight”

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During the collaboration

Clear management responsibilities, structures and procedures for:

- **Accessing** existing IP
- **Capturing, assessing**, and agreeing strategies for **protecting** new IP
- Agreeing terms of **joint ownership**, and its management and exploitation
- **Implementing the exploitation** strategies

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Capturing the collaboration outputs

Which partners contributed (and what) - to determine owners

Other contributors (e.g. students, advisory board members, etc)

Any other external funding or facilities used?

Any relevant confidentiality agreements

Any publications or disclosures already made?

What other IP (3rd party or background) will be needed to use IP?

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Ownership – beware!

Default position without a written agreement
(variations by IP and in national law)

each joint owner owns an **undivided interest** in the whole work.

- It doesn't matter who contributed most

each has the **right to exploit without the other's permission**

- but must pay the other joint owners equal shares of earnings

No right to transfer or grant someone else an **exclusive license**

- Without permission of other joint-owners

If case of **infringement**, one joint-owner can sue the infringer without consent or involvement of the other(s)

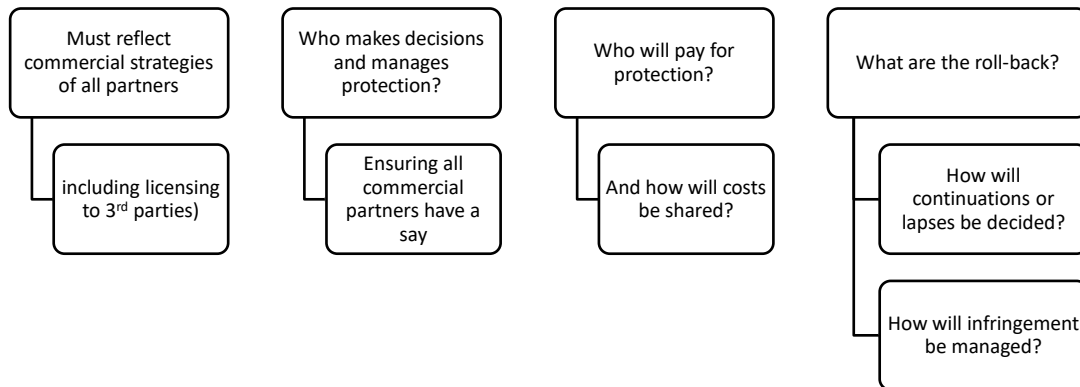
- But any damages or compensation recovered will need to be shared

It is always best to have a written agreement!
Processes to agree relative contributions and to take decision

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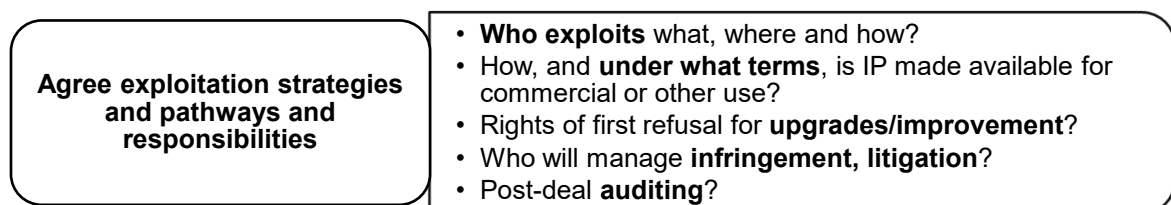
Assessing and Protecting the Results



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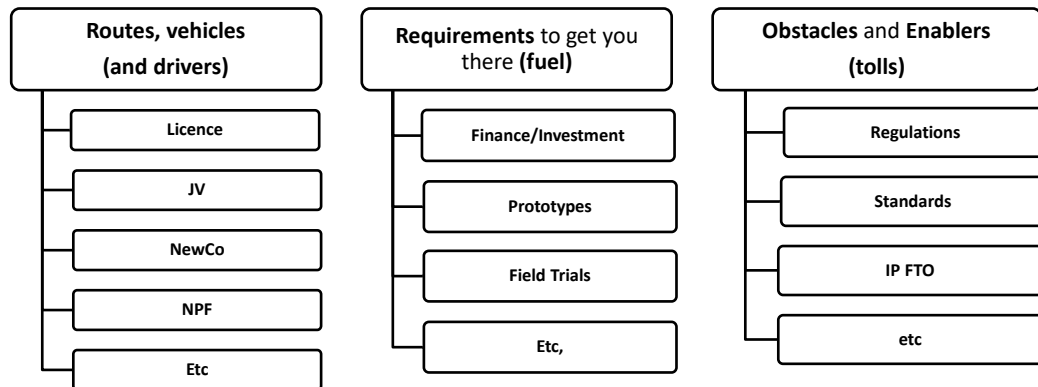
Agree exploitation of the collaboration outputs



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Different routes to value creation



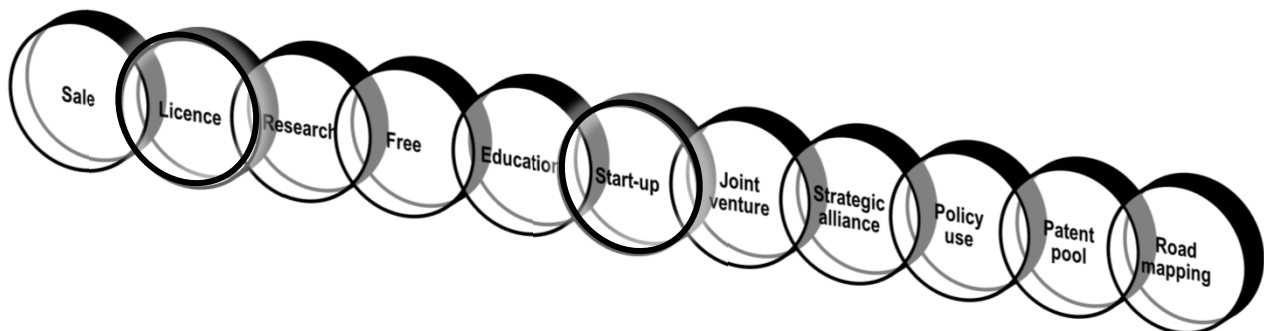
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Providing Access to Intellectual Assets

Like physical property, knowledge is a **valuable asset** which can be **traded** – bought, sold or leased, given away free, used in JV's, as collateral, etc...

But, many more ways of extracting value...



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Licence	or	New Venture?
Licensee has expertise and resource		New Company must acquire expertise and resource
Can address different fields of use and geographical areas		Needs a critical mass of expertise and a committed and enthusiastic team
Established markets & suppliers		New markets for new suppliers
Evolutionary/incremental technology		Revolutionary or platform technology
The IP fits a gap in someone else's portfolio		Delivers a unique business advantage
Low financial commitment – less risk		Needs capital - more risk
Early returns – may grow over time		Returns take longer – but could be large

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Licensing (in general)

Granting right to use Granting the right to use the **protected IP** under agreed terms and conditions

- Field of use
- Geographic territory
- To validate not sell
- Subject to conditions

European IP Helpdesk Bulletin No.1 - IP Licensing





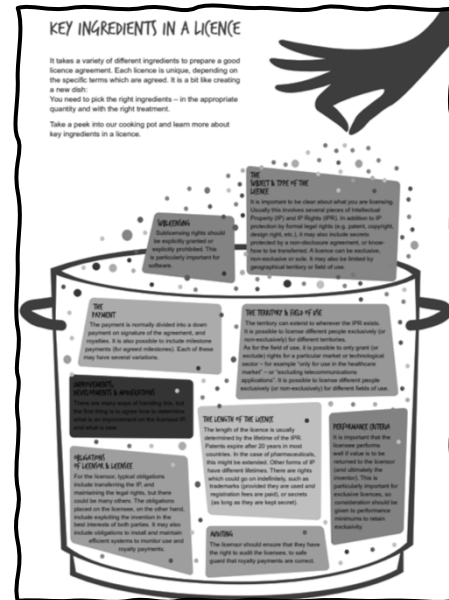
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Every clause in a licence agreement is a negotiating point



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THE END OF THE COLLABORATION (IS NOT THE END OF THE IP!)

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Agree what happens after the collaboration ends

Terms of access and use of IP **post-collaboration**

Ongoing management of jointly owned IP and its protection

Who will **manage** and **monitor existing licences**, and **derivative works** including auditing

How will **infringement and litigation** be managed?

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More Help... “Knowledge Valorisation in R&I Collaborations” Thematic Package from IP Helpdesk

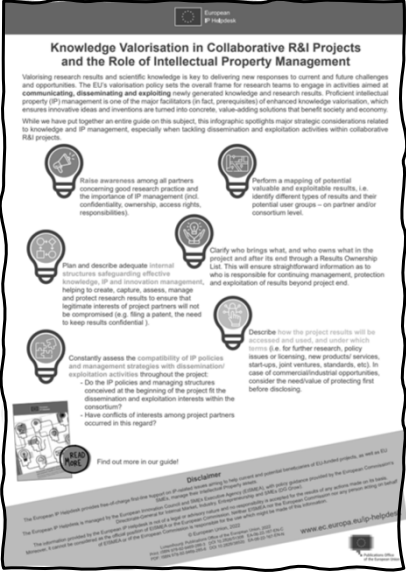
- **Successful Valorisation of Knowledge and Research Results in Horizon Europe**
- **Your Guide to Intellectual Property Management in Horizon Europe**
- **Article: Leveraging Innovation Through Collaboration - IP Challenges And Opportunities For SMEs In The Context Of EU-Funded Collaborative Research Projects**



[Knowledge Valorisation in R&I Collaborations \(europea.eu\)](https://europea.eu)

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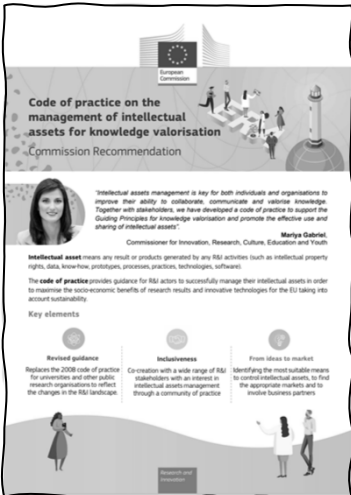

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- <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/aa98a200-c11b-11ec-b6f4-01aa75ed71a1>

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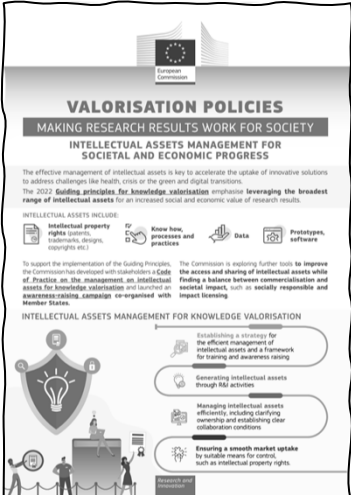

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5 March 2024



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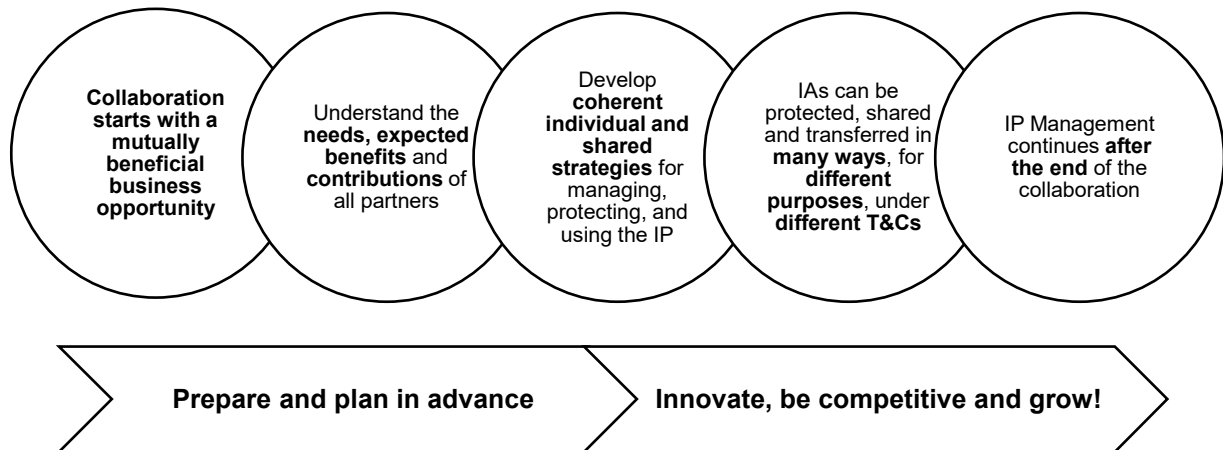


7 May 2024

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Summary



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Presentation produced by Dr. Eugene Sweeney, Iambic Innovation Ltd. 2025

DISCLAIMER

The European IP Helpdesk provides free-of-charge first-line support on IP-related issues aiming to help current and potential beneficiaries of EU-funded projects, as well as EU SMEs, manage their Intellectual Property assets.

The European IP Helpdesk is managed by the European Commission's Executive Agency for Innovation and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME), with policy guidance provided by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG Grow).

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