

FME HighEFF

Centre for an Energy Efficient and Competitive Industry for the Future



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Abstract
<p>University-industry collaboration (UIC) is an important source of knowledge development and innovation in industry. However, academia and business have different goals, which creates barriers for UIC. Successful collaboration relies on strong mutual relationships, and the establishment of formal research centers has become a key policy instrument to foster stronger UICs. We study the initial establishment of a university-industry research center to gain insights into the coordination activities firms use to build relationships that overcome the differences in goals between academia and industry. We find that larger differences in goals between the firm and the university partner cause firms to take a more active role by using structured coordination activities in the preformation stage of the research center. By contrast, firms whose goals are more aligned with those of the university partner can coordinate by means of more unstructured activities when the center is in operation. We identify the content of coordination mechanisms used in UIC and theorize on how partners' different organizational goals influence the use of these activities. Our findings have important implications for how activities in UICs, particularly in research centers, can be designed to strengthen the relationship between university and industry partners and enhance knowledge development and innovation.</p> <p>To be published in Journal and technology transfer.</p>