Higher Education, Knowledge Transfer Mechanisms and the Promotion of SME Innovation (Entrepreneurship and Higher Education)

This chapter addresses the question: How can higher education institutions (HEIs) promote innovation in the small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) in their region? It assesses what we know from previous research about various mechanisms involved in the promotion of SME innovation by higher education institutions. A variety of mechanisms exist, including technology consultancy, technology transfer offices, contract research, science parks, incubators, technology centres, shared research equipment, educationindustry labour mobility, and technology training. However, existing linkages between higher education institutions and regional SMEs tend to work best when they are informal rather than formal, and thus the extent to which they are actually used is not precisely known. Recommendations for policy development in advanced (OECD) economies are suggested.
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