UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Getting help with open innovation

- The capabilities needed to implement open innovation
- How innovation 'intermediaries' can help you acquire them
- A structured approach to selecting an intermediary
- Examples of over 100 intermediaries who support innovation

Why read this report?

Firms increasingly need to collaborate with other businesses in order to introduce new products or services. Such partnerships – known as 'open' innovation – help them gain access to new technologies, ideas or skills they require to keep pace with today's evolving markets and changing customer demands. However, this more collaborative approach is an innovation in itself, and demands a new set of capabilities which many businesses do not possess.

Companies looking for help with open innovation will find numerous organisations offering assistance – from commercial and technical consultancies, to government departments, national and local development agencies, academic networks and university technology transfer offices. These organisations have come to be known as 'innovation intermediaries'.

This report aims to help companies select the most effective source of help with open innovation. It describes the capabilities companies need in order to implement open innovation successfully and the range of assistance offered by different types of innovation intermediaries. It suggests a structured approach to selecting the most appropriate intermediary for a particular company's needs and illustrates this with case studies and examples. The report will also help intermediary organisations to clarify and improve their services for their clients.

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The author is grateful to the following for sponsoring the research project underpinning this report: BP, CIRA, Crown Cork, Doosan Babcock, EPSRC, GSK, IXC-UK, NESTA, Oakland, PepsiCo, Quotec and Shell.

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Getting help with open innovation

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Foreword

Rapidly evolving technologies and markets mean that firms increasingly need to cooperate with others to develop and introduce leading products and services.

Companies are finding they need a whole new set of skills and resources if they want to succeed with this more collaborative approach.

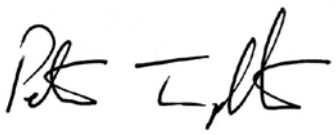
Many organisations now offer services to meet the growing demand for help in this area. But such is the variety of support on offer companies are understandably confused about who best to go to for help – or even how to decide what help they need.

As one of the 'intermediary' organisations offering support for innovation, we are very aware there is no 'magic bullet' solution. The best approach depends on the individual needs and priorities of the company concerned. This report shows how important it is for intermediaries to be as clear as possible about the kind of help they offer, delivering real value based on robust expertise.

The report is based on a year-long research project with a number of industrial collaborators. It presents a structured approach to help firms identify what kind of help they need and who might be best placed to provide it.

Guidance is provided for support organisations on presenting their services clearly to companies, so they can find the best provider for their needs.

I welcome this new report on an important topic and am sure that both companies and intermediaries will find it helpful in navigating today's innovation challenges.



Peter Templeton

Chief Executive
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Executive summary

Developing a steady stream of new products or services is essential for most firms if they are to succeed in today's highly competitive markets. Very few firms can do this using their own resources alone and must look for potential collaborators outside their own company to provide the technologies, skills or knowledge they lack.

Managing this more collaborative approach – known as 'open innovation' – demands a range of skills and capabilities which many firms do not possess. Companies may try to develop these new skills in-house to provide an ongoing resource, or they may seek adhoc assistance with particular tasks from outside sources. Whether they try to develop skills in-house or seek external support, companies are likely to use the services of organisations offering assistance with innovation issues. Such organisations have become known as innovation 'intermediaries'.

Intermediaries come in a bewildering range of forms, from commercial and technical consultancies, to government departments, national and local development agencies, academic networks and university technology transfer offices. They can help with a wide range of innovation issues, including market and technology strategy development, product development, partner selection and specific technology problems.

Given the range of issues and the diversity of organisations available, selecting the most appropriate intermediary for your needs can be a daunting task. This report provides companies with a structured approach to assess each organisation in four key areas:

- What capabilities does the intermediary offer?
- What networks do they reach?
- What kind of business model do they use?
- What is their style and approach?

Intermediaries vary considerably in terms of the capabilities they offer their clients. Some may have particular strengths in helping companies to develop a strategy for the future. Others may focus more on intelligence gathering, helping to monitor new technologies or identifying suitable collaborators for their clients to work with. The differences may not be immediately obvious as there is a natural tendency for intermediaries to try to offer as comprehensive a service as possible.

Social networks play a vital role in most company's intelligence gathering and access to some form of network forms a key part of most intermediaries' services. Each intermediary's offering varies considerably, however, in terms of the kind of people, skills and knowledge they can reach. It is essential to understand exactly what is being offered in order to determine whether a particular intermediary's network is likely to be suitable for your company's needs.

There are a range of issues relating to the business model of an intermediary which companies should consider. These include the charging model used – if a charge is made – the intermediary's position in relation to IP, and whether they are a private company or public body.

Finally, the intermediary's general style and approach are important considerations. This includes such things as the time and resources they require customers to contribute to a project, and whether they prefer to support companies directly by embedding staff in the firm or offer a more remote relationship.

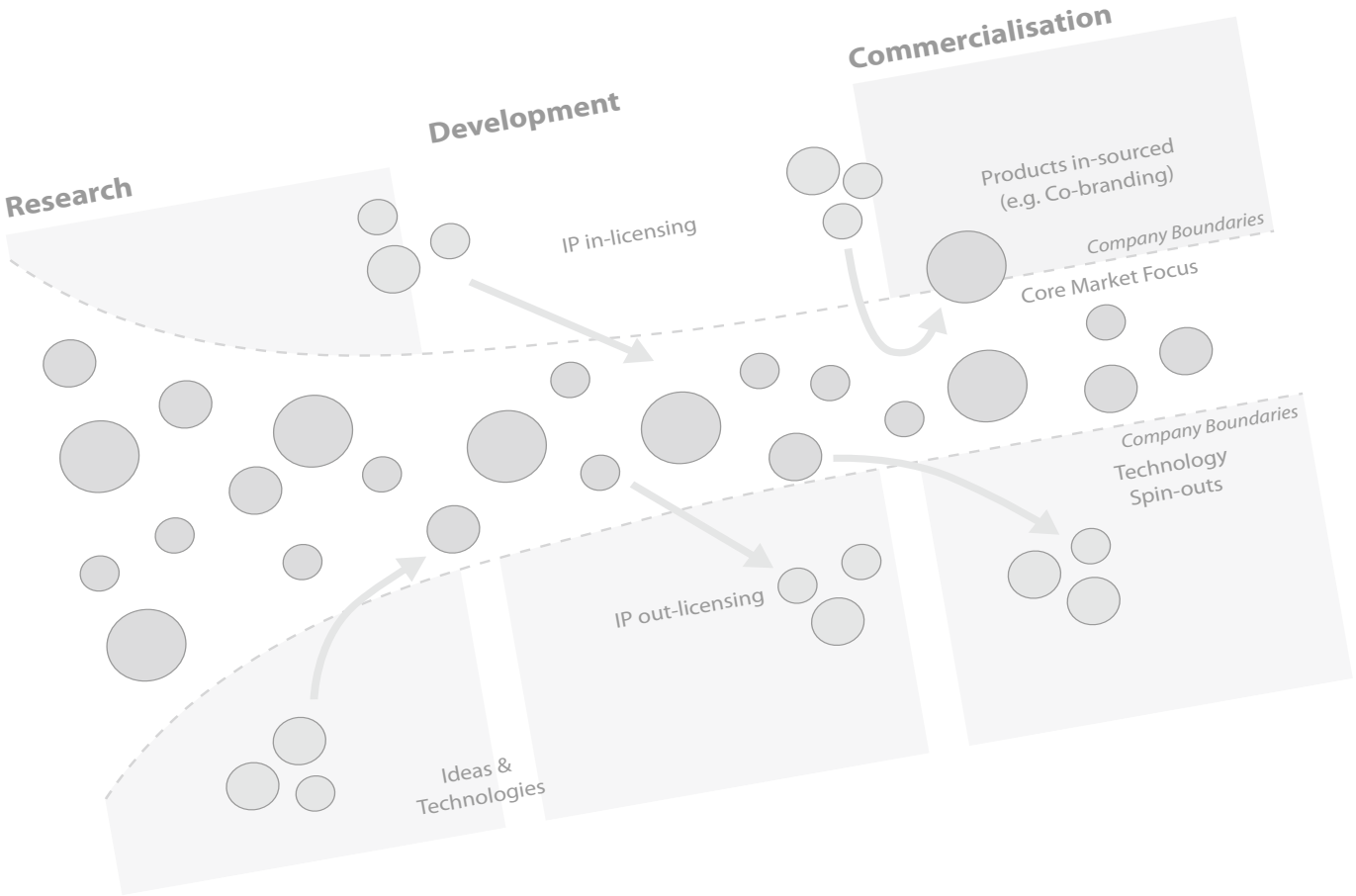
There is no 'right' or 'wrong' approach in terms of these four areas. The best approach for a particular company will depend on its needs and priorities and preferred style of working.

It is therefore essential to be clear about what you want from an intermediary in order to be able to assess whether a particular one is right for you.

Intermediaries, in turn, should be prepared to articulate clearly what their services consist of.

Contents

Open innovation: an introduction



A more collaborative approach

Maintaining and increasing the pace of innovation is a fundamental requirement for companies trying to remain competitive today. With increasingly complex technologies and constantly changing markets, very few firms are able to introduce new products or services using their own resources alone and must look for sources of expertise and potential collaborators outside their own company.

With this approach – known as 'open innovation' or OI – innovation becomes an increasingly distributed process, involving players dispersed around the globe, prepared to innovate in a more collaborative way.

In a traditional, 'closed' innovation process all the invention, research and development is kept secure and confidential within the company until the end product is launched. With OI the company makes use of external capabilities (e.g. know-how, technologies) and even allows other organisations to spin out products from its innovations.

The key characteristic of OI is that the company's boundaries become more permeable. The funnel-shaped diagram below is a common representation of the open innovation process. It shows that OI is characterised by the involvement of all company functions, at different stages of the innovation process, not just R&D. Ideas (the mauve circles) are investigated at the research stage and the best and most promising of these make it to development and commercialisation phases. Some ideas may come in from outside the company – others may leave it, licensed to others, or to form new spin-out businesses. Less promising ideas are dropped.

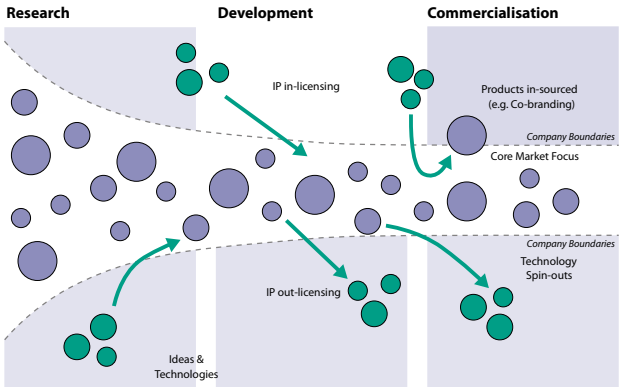


Figure 1: A diagram illustrating open innovation. The boundaries of the firm, represented by the dashed lines of the funnel, are permeable and allow ideas and technologies (the mauve and green circles) to pass in and out of the firm.

Four phases of open innovation

Open Innovation has several distinct phases. One of the most popular frameworks for this is the Want►Find►Get►Manage process described by Witzeman et al. (2006).

Want = define what we want and how we can innovate

Find = find technologies and partners to work with

Get = negotiate the agreement with the external partner

Manage = manage the relationship throughout the collaboration

This simple framework makes it easier to understand and communicate the different capabilities a company needs at each stage of the open innovation process.

Want capabilities include those needed to identify the areas in which a company should innovate, what would and wouldn't fit the innovation processes.

Find capabilities include those needed to scan for new opportunities and threats in technology and marketing; learn about interesting trends and developments in science and technology; and identify and select potential partners.

Get capabilities include those needed to negotiate a deal with a partner and communicate the value of the deal to the rest of the organisation to gain support.

Manage capabilities include portfolio and project management, public relations and problem solving.

Getting help with open innovation

Few companies are likely to possess all the skills and resources needed to practice open innovation. Many will need help, for example, searching for the technologies they require or identifying other companies to collaborate with.

In recent years a large number of organisations have been set up to support OI, offering help with different stages of the innovation process. Existing innovation consultancies have also re-branded themselves to include OI services. Among the most famous at the time of this report are Innocentive, NineSigma and Yet2, but the list is much more extensive and the services available are extremely varied (see appendix for a list of intermediaries identified as part of this project). The services provided range from provision of technical or business expertise, to access to information or contacts.

The organisations offering help with OI come in such a variety of forms that a whole new vocabulary has been created to describe them. For example, some companies define themselves as commercial and technical consultancies, others as marketplaces and crowdsourcing services. Government departments also provide help with innovation, for example through local and national development agencies, and inward investment offices. Other organisations which offer support include university technology transfer offices and specialised networks of experts.

The one common factor shared by these organisations is their ability to help their clients reach a wider range of expertise, information, capabilities or services than they can find on their own. In academic literature the term innovation 'intermediaries' is often used to describe such organisations. For convenience this is the term we have adopted in this report.

Acquiring capabilities for open innovation

Companies go about acquiring the capabilities they need for open innovation in two main ways (Figure 2). Both approaches can involve making use of intermediary organisations. However, the criteria used for selecting the intermediaries will vary according to the approach used.

The approaches represent two ends of a spectrum, but are not mutually exclusive. Companies may use both depending on their preferred way of operating and their needs at any particular time. At one end of the spectrum, companies can build and use their own in-house capabilities for OI. At the other they make use of the capabilities of others, outside the company, on an ad hoc basis.

In-house, semi-permanent approach

This approach relies on building capabilities for open innovation in-house, forming a semi-permanent resource for the company. These capabilities are only semi-permanent as they often rely on the contacts and knowledge of one or more employees, and can be lost when these people leave. Intermediaries with whom the company has developed a long-term relationship may form a part of this internal resource, provided they can be relied upon for stable, ongoing support.

Ad hoc, external approach

This approach uses external support, on an ad hoc basis, to complement a company's own internal capabilities. The tasks outsourced in this way could be anywhere in the Want►Find►Get►Manage phases of open innovation. In the ad hoc approach, intermediaries are typically asked to help a company with a pre-defined task, such as gathering specific intelligence, identifying and selecting a prospective partner or solving a technical problem. As illustrated in the case study on page 9 the two approaches often complement each other. Pros and cons of these approaches are listed in Figure 2.

The majority of companies we interviewed said they used intermediaries on an ad hoc basis. This may be due to the fact that the ad hoc approach is easier to remember as it involves a conscious decision-making process. The ad hoc approach is also clearly associated with a specific task and hence it is easier to comment on the effectiveness of the experience. The semi-permanent approach on the other hand is less formalised and people often felt it was serendipitous, so difficult to describe and quantify.

The choice of whether to follow an ad hoc or a semi permanent approach appears to be largely down to personal preference.

"Generally it is difficult to transfer our thoughts and needs to others. It's much easier for me to research them myself."

"The approach of internal scouting versus external scouting is variable. Some people prefer one over the other, in no precise order. And it should be this way!"

"We are very pleased with the work by intermediary X. They know us well and they come back quickly with interesting and relevant information. When budget allows us, we always go back to them."

Ad hoc external approach

Pros:
- Access on demand to external competences and networks
- Faster timescales
- Costs easier to evaluate and more explicit
- Fresh impartial perspective
- Further services may be available

Cons:
- Can discourage development of internal capabilities
- Difficult to choose the right provider
- May be costly
- Ring-fenced for specific tasks

In-house approach

Pros:
- Costs spread over time: small progressive build-up of resources and contacts
- Continuous support available, not linked to any specific projects, needs or budgets
- Helps build up resources to be used for a wide range of tasks/needs

Cons:
- Developing/maintaining competences is expensive – difficult to justify investment, especially if outside current focus
- Competences are associated with individuals (who may leave)
- Difficult to evaluate nature of competences
- Often overlooked as a resource

Figure 2: Capabilities for open innovation can be acquired externally on an ad hoc basis or by using in-house resources

Technology intelligence and open innovation

Over three quarters of the 42 intermediaries we interviewed said that they provided help with either the 'Want' or 'Find' phases of OI (see Figure 3 below). These are typically technology intelligence activities that aim to capture and deliver relevant information to decision makers. Firms need to be able to get information about a wide range of things including new technologies that might impact their sector, potential innovation partners, or future opportunities and threats in their field. A company's technology intelligence activities act as the 'eyes and ears' of the firm and TI is an essential capability for firms trying to practice OI.

Kerr et all identified four principal types of intelligence gathering (see Figure 4). These are categorised according to whether the information sought is located inside the company (Mine and Trawl) or outside (Target and Scan), and whether the information is something the company already knows about (Mine and Target) or is something not yet identified (Trawl and Scan):

Mine: extracting explicit intelligence information from internal resources such as libraries and databases.

Trawl: making in-house information explicit, particularly information that is not known to be there.

Target: focusing on new technologies outside the company and monitoring their development.

Scan: keeping abreast of any unforeseen developments beyond the firm that could have an impact on the business.

Figure 3: Over three quarters of the intermediaries we interviewed provide help with the 'Want' and 'Find' phases of OI. Just over half help with negotiations and legal support. Only 19% provide support with managing relationships.

The most relevant search modes for open innovation are those that look outside the organisation – Target and Scan.

Building capabilities in-house for organising and managing technology intelligence activities is challenging, given the huge growth of available information and the diversity of intelligence and resources companies need.

The information can come from two main sources: published material and people. Both are necessary for TI as there are strengths and limitations intrinsic in each.

Published information: for example academic papers, patents, magazines, blog, websites etc.

Pros:

- depth of information: potentially provides access to great deal of information; data-mining and other techniques can be used to extract the knowledge
- explicit knowledge: the information is clearly presented (although it may have to be reinterpreted for specific needs)

Cons:

- difficult to search: a certain degree of structure is required to undertake data-mining. Software tools are not yet perfect
- 'old' information: it can sometimes take a long time to get into the public domain. Academic papers can take months or even years to be published; patents typically take up to 18 months to be published
- source and reliability issues: in some cases it can be difficult to evaluate the credibility of the information source, for example on a webpage or in a magazine article.

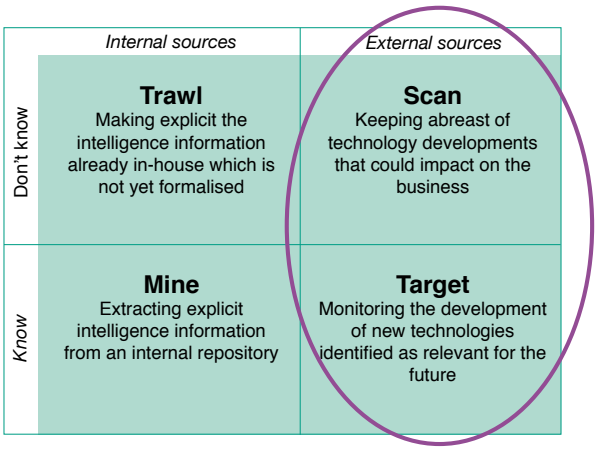


Figure 4: There are four different ways of looking for information, depending on whether you are seeking answers inside or outside your organisation, and whether it is an open-ended or a directed search (Kerr et al, 2006). The most relevant of these for intermediaries in open innovation are Scan and Target.

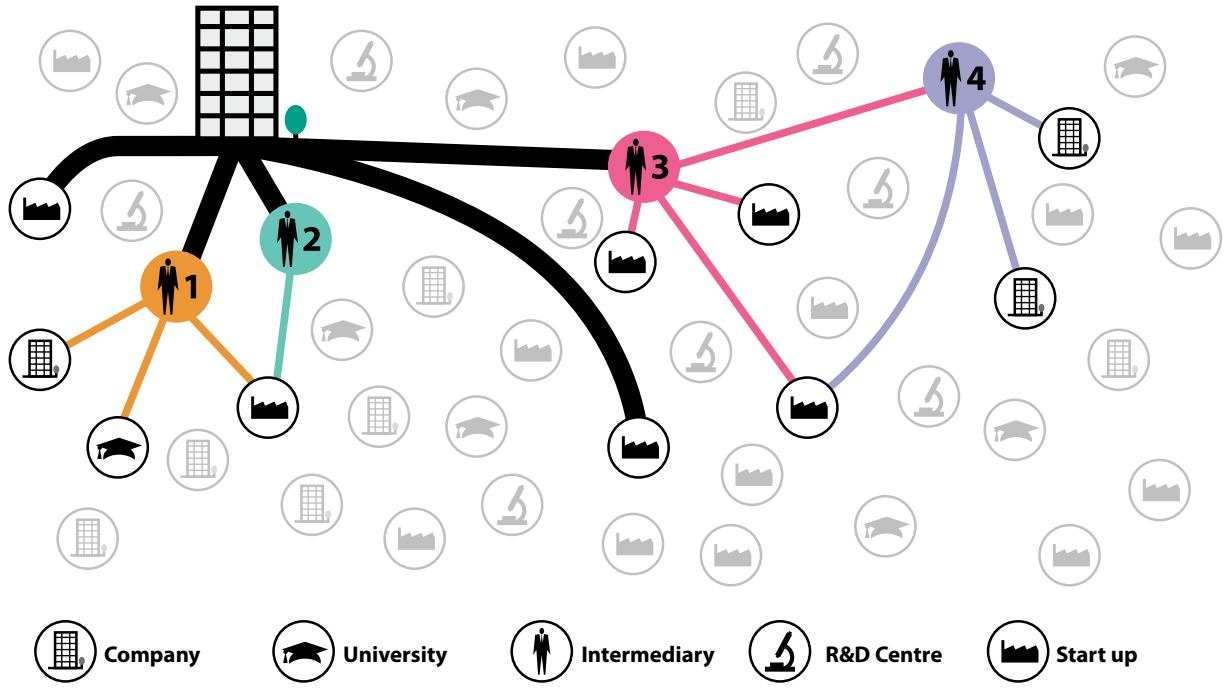


Figure 5: Intermediaries can provide access to networks of contacts, greatly extending a company's knowledge sources

Information from people: direct contact with people via social networks, for example talking with university groups, communities of practice, focus networks for specific technological issues, organisations that provide innovation services, people at fairs, conferences and debates.

Pros:

- 'newer' information: it may be possible to access pre-publication knowledge
- easier to evaluate quality of source: you can understand and probe the capabilities of those you are talking to
- access to tacit knowledge: people are able to present information in an organised way and adapt and supplement it to meet their audience's needs

Cons:

- maintaining and creating networks of social relationships consumes resources
- it is difficult to justify and quantify the value of these social networks
- establishing who you might reach via a personal network beyond your immediate contacts can be difficult

Most innovation and business managers surveyed as part of our research preferred to access information via direct contact with people rather than by searching for it in published material. They believe the information gained this way is of greater value to them. Research into technology intelligence (Mortara et al, 2009/Toolbox) has identified the central role played by people in intelligence systems. However, it is clearly impossible for companies to identify, and establish direct contact with every university department, start-up or other interesting group that might be a source of relevant information or help. To overcome this problem, companies increasingly make use of intermediaries in order to exponentially grow their number of contacts. This enables them to be selective while still making the most of limited resources.

Figure 5 above illustrates the kind of networks companies use to connect with external sources of information. They may either have direct links with people or organisations, for example university groups or start-ups, or they may access their knowledge indirectly through intermediaries. The graphic shows how intermediaries are an important way to identify and reach large numbers of potential innovation partners – including whole networks of contacts.

Direct contacts provide access to 'tacit' knowledge, tailored to suit the searcher's needs; many people consider them the best way to get relevant information.

Published sources are seen as useful to map the landscape and to identify the most valuable contacts in a domain and to check the credibility of information already gathered via personal networks.

The two approaches are not mutually exclusive and are often used together.

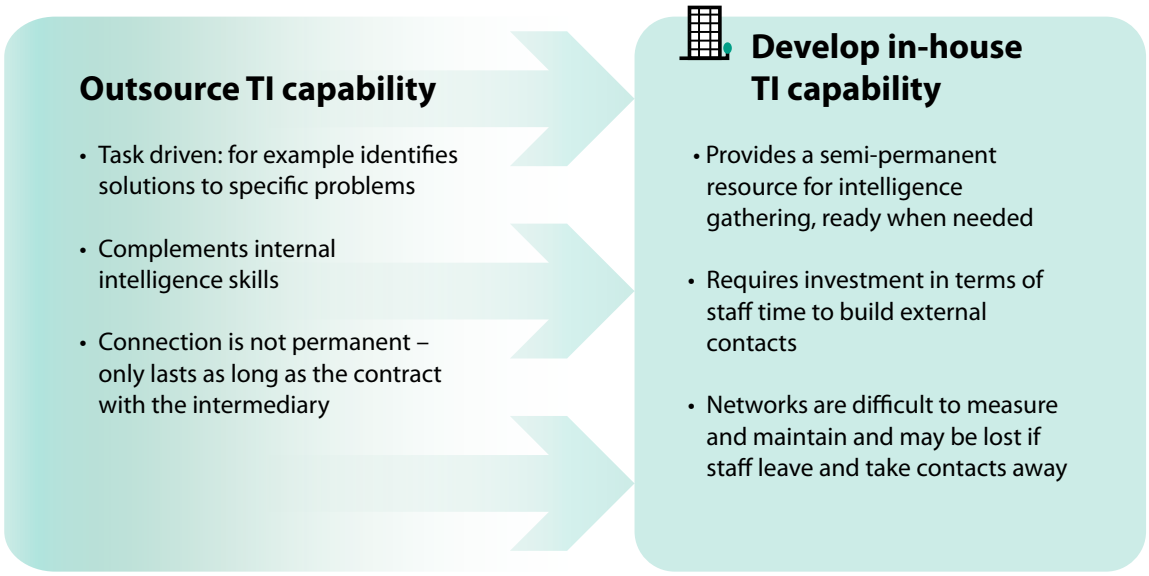


Figure 6: Technology intelligence (TI) activities can either be outsourced on an ad hoc basis, or developed in-house to provide a semi-permanent resource for the company

Two approaches to getting help with technology intelligence

As with other OI capabilities, intelligence gathering can either be managed in-house or outsourced on an ad hoc basis (see Figure 6). One approach does not exclude the other, of course, and companies may make use of both, depending on their needs and preferences. Companies have a tendency to return to the same supplier for ad hoc intelligence services. These regular suppliers gain an increasing understanding of their customers' needs and so become part of the company's more permanent intelligence capability, often offering useful, unsolicited information as the relationship develops.

Some intermediary organisations operate halfway between an ad hoc and a permanent resource by embedding a consultant in their client's company. These 'retained contractors' provide general support for innovation over a long period of time, rather than having a pre-determined task to perform.

The case study of a consumer electronics company, opposite, illustrates how ad hoc and in-house approaches can coexist in the same organisation.

The industrial collaborators on our project were most interested in understanding how to use intermediaries for ad hoc tasks, and the research therefore focused on this issue. The remaining sections of this report present a structured approach which can be used to help support the selection of intermediaries for such purposes.

"Generally it is difficult to transfer our thoughts and needs to others. It's much easier for me to research them myself."

"The approach of internal scouting versus external scouting is variable. Some people prefer one over the other, in no precise order. And it should be this way!"

"We are getting increasingly good at scouting. We do more internal scouting and use intermediaries less and less"

"We would never be able to do intelligence gathering overseas without the help of intermediaries."

"Most of my information comes from intermediaries. I have some good contacts in each one and they are always sending across information they think will be of interest."

"We make sure we tell X about any new developments at our company. It helps improve the quality of leads they give us."

Case example: different approaches to intelligence gathering in a consumer electronics company

A consumer electronics company established an Intelligence Group whose task was to identify relevant and interesting new technologies. A substantial part of the group's role involved creating effective networks of contacts from which to gain information. Although 70% of the company's intelligence information comes from published sources (such as academic papers, patents, journals and the web), and only 30% from their network of contacts, the company rates the quality of the information from networks much more highly, considering it to be tailored to its particular requirements.

Intermediaries have played a crucial role in the company's intelligence gathering activities, both by accessing ad hoc networks for the company to use for one-off tasks, and by being a part of their permanent network of contacts.

Ad hoc networks

Paying for external resource to support intelligence gathering is difficult for the Intelligence Group to justify, since this is the role they have been tasked to perform. However, the company has made use of external consultancies, particularly when it has needed help with a new kind of task. In these instances, learning the skills and processes involved, and gaining access to new contacts, was more important than the actual results of the work. The company has also used technical consultants if it needed to solve a problem quickly and lacked experience of the technology involved.

Semi-permanent networks

Intermediaries also form a vital part of the company's more permanent network of contacts, built up in-house by the Intelligence Group and other staff members. The group set about its search for useful contacts on a geographic basis. Having identified countries or regions of interest for their sector it created 'country guides', containing information about technology and innovation in the region, based on a template to capture the information required. The group then identified intermediaries, such as regional development agencies, technology transfer organisations, consultants and venture capitalists, that could help them make contact with relevant sources of expertise and information, at a national, regional and research centre level. Visits were organised to each country, using checklists to ensure a structured process was followed.

The intermediaries they use are of different kinds and perform different functions. Some act as 'gate openers' and are typically used only once, to clarify the structure of a field or a domain. Others form a part of the company's longer-term network of contacts and are kept informed about its evolving needs and priorities.

The company's scouts solicited the services of several different intermediaries in parallel, to triangulate information. This approach helps to mitigate the bias of individual intermediaries. The company provides intermediaries with high-level information about the organisation and its areas of interest, together with a clear list of the questions they want answered. They found it was important to establish relationships with individual people in the intermediary's organisation in order to encourage trust and a good flow of information. Even so, only some people would come back periodically with relevant information.

As links in these kinds of networks are generally established between individuals, there is a risk that the connection will be lost if the member of staff involved moves on. It is therefore useful to have multiple contacts.

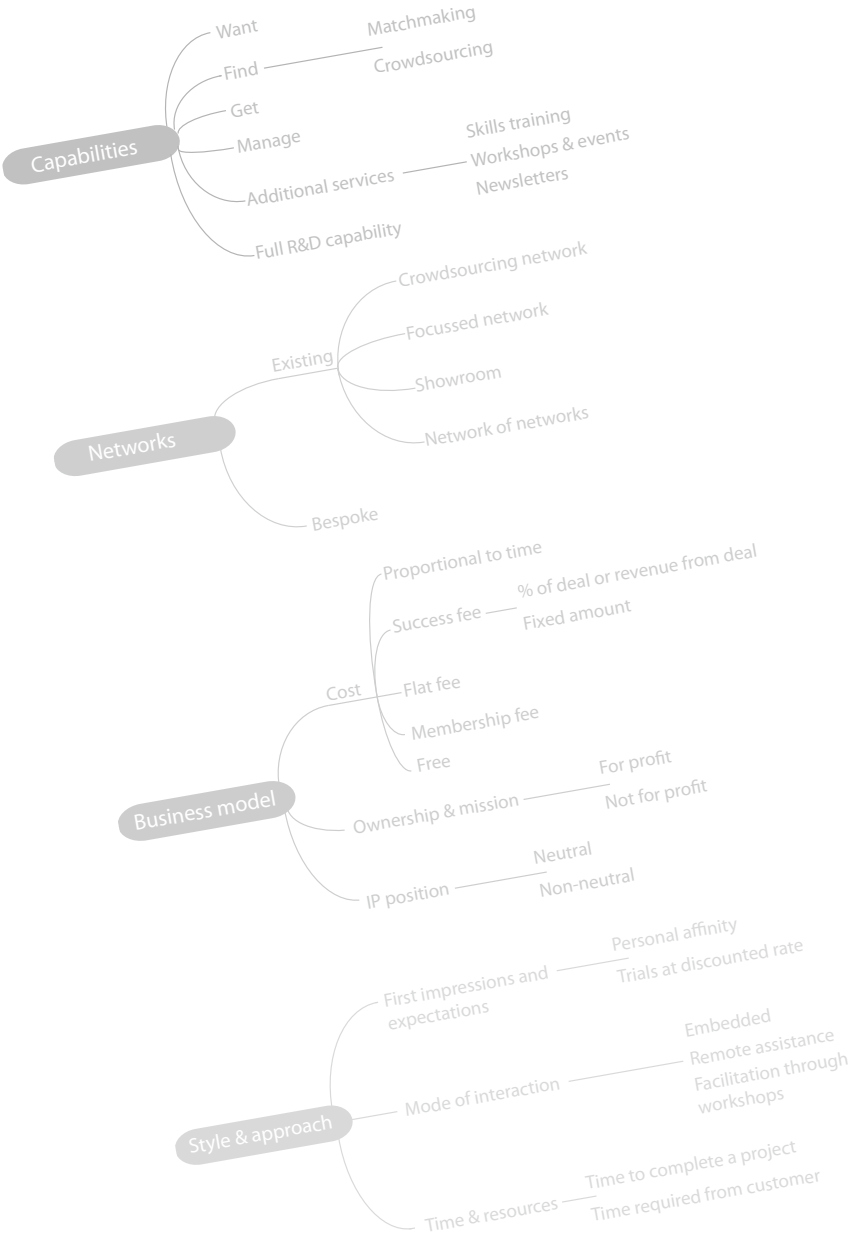
What does this mean for my company?

- Intermediaries are useful for helping with one-off tasks, particularly if the task demands skills or resources you don't have.
- Be aware of the more intangible benefits to be gained from intermediaries e.g. expansion of your personal network of contacts. Foster the relationship – over time, intermediaries can become part of your company's more permanent resources as they grow familiar with your needs.
- Establish relationships between individuals to encourage a good flow of information between the intermediary and company. However, be aware the contact may be lost if the staff members involved leave the organisation.
- Use the services of several intermediaries if possible, in order to validate information and avoid intermediary bias.
- Build up your company's in-house skills and information-gathering capabilities to meet on-going needs and to spread costs over time.

Selecting an intermediary

The challenges

Key criteria to consider



This section introduces a structured approach to selecting an intermediary on an ad hoc basis, for a specific task or tasks. Intermediaries can provide help across the spectrum of innovation issues – some examples of the kind of tasks they can help with are shown in the panel on the right.

When setting out to choose an intermediary it is important to bear in mind that there is no single 'right' approach to innovation. Intermediaries use a variety of methods to help companies tackle innovation problems, and also display a range of business models and ways of working. The best approach for a particular company will depend on its needs and priorities and preferred style of working. It is therefore essential to be clear about what you want from an intermediary in order to be able to assess whether a particular one is right for you. Intermediaries, in turn, should be prepared to articulate clearly what their services consist of – and avoid the temptation to oversell themselves.

The challenges

Finding an intermediary that meets your particular needs is not a straightforward task. To begin with, it is often not clear what kind of services a particular organisation offers. There is no standard terminology for the tasks undertaken and approaches used, so cross comparison can be difficult. Websites often lack clarity on exactly what an intermediary can provide, many describing themselves in terms of broad goals and styles of approach rather than with precise details of their services. In addition, they will often adapt their offering to try to meet a client's needs. Since they inevitably have different strengths, this 'flexibility' can make it difficult for customers to evaluate their services.

Details of charges (if made) are hardly ever revealed at the outset. Other factors that may not be obvious are how much time the client will need to contribute to a project or how long it is likely to take. In addition, intermediary organisations are constantly evolving: names frequently change, organisations merge and services are rebranded.

Key criteria to consider

To provide a structured way of assessing the offerings of different intermediaries we have identified key issues to raise with each one, in order to make comparisons easier. These are based on a detailed survey of 42 intermediary organisations, designed to reveal the variety of their offerings and the different characteristics of each (see Figure 7). The four key areas we identified are:

- What capabilities can the intermediary offer?
- What networks do they reach?
- What kind of business model do they use?
- What is their style and approach?

All four areas should be considered when evaluating which intermediary to choose. The final decision will be highly subjective, and will depend on your specific circumstances.

Innovation tasks: examples of when intermediaries can help…

Macro strategy and the external context

- What are the macro trends that could influence my business over the next 20 years?
- How can I raise my company's profile in new markets?
- How can I find new ways to innovate?

Market strategy

- How do I identify new markets for my products?
- What are the potential barriers to entry for this particular market?

Technology strategy and technology landscape

- What new technologies could emerge in my sector?
- Should we develop a new technology ourselves or buy it in?
- What patents exist in this area?
- What new regulations may be introduced in my field?

Process and product development

- I need help converting my technology into a product
- I need help getting my product manufactured at the right price

Technology commercialisation strategy

- I have a platform technology. What are the options for taking this to market?
- I have early stage prototypes of three potential products. Can you help me understand and compare the commercial viability of these products?
- I have unused patents. Can you help me license them out?

Location issues

- Does this country have a centre of expertise for this technology?
- What are its particular technology strengths and weaknesses? What kind of technology infrastructure does it have? What kind of funding mechanisms exist?

Partner selection

- Can you help me find a partner who I can work with to do X?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of this university or research institute?

Problem solving

- I have a clearly specified technology problem. Can you find me a solution?

Extra resource

- I need some extra resource at particularly busy times - can you help?

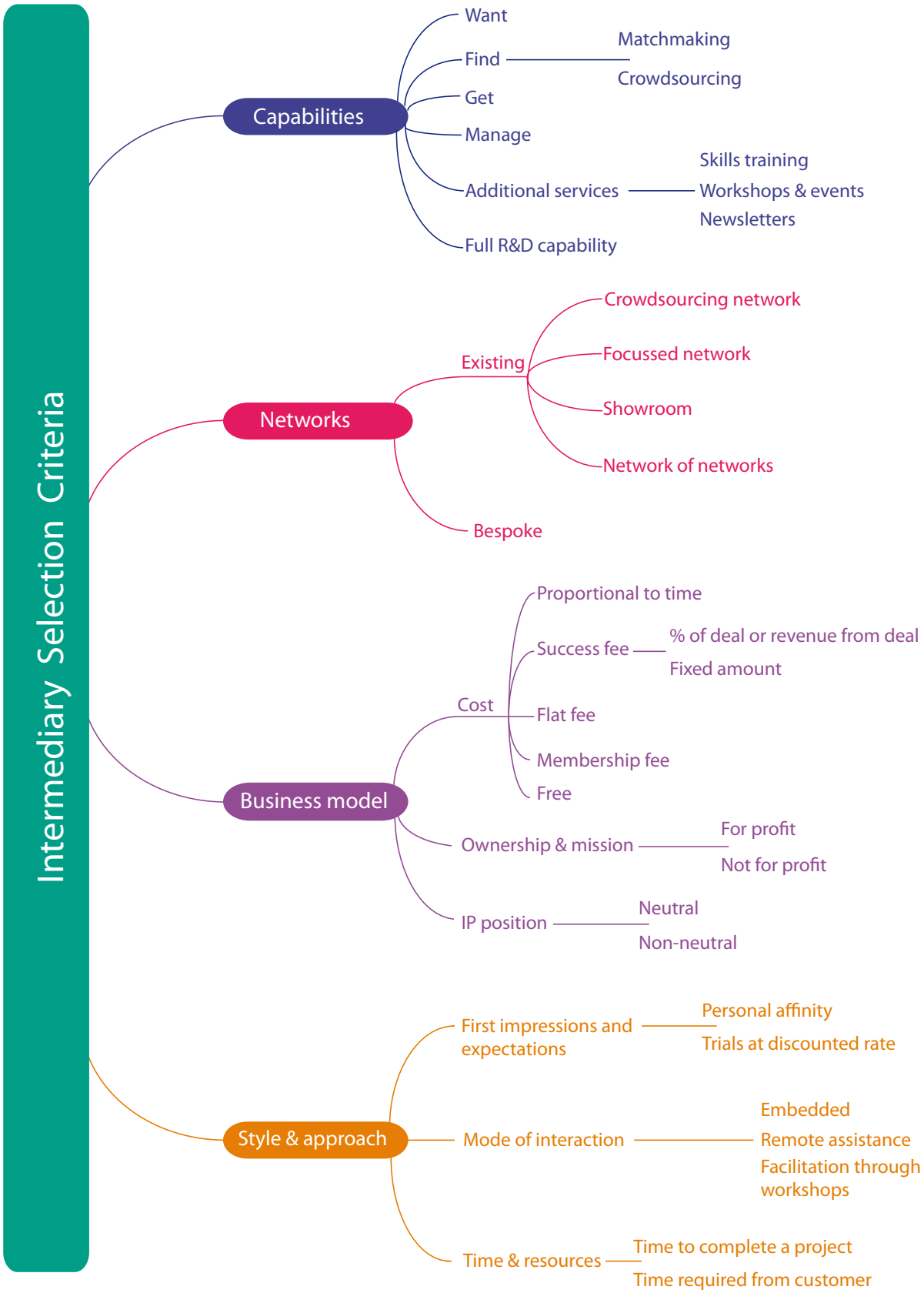


Figure 7: Four key selection criteria for assessing an intermediary's offering were identified, based on a survey of 42 intermediaries. This framework can also be used by intermediaries, to help them present their services to companies in a clear and structured way.

What does this mean for my company?

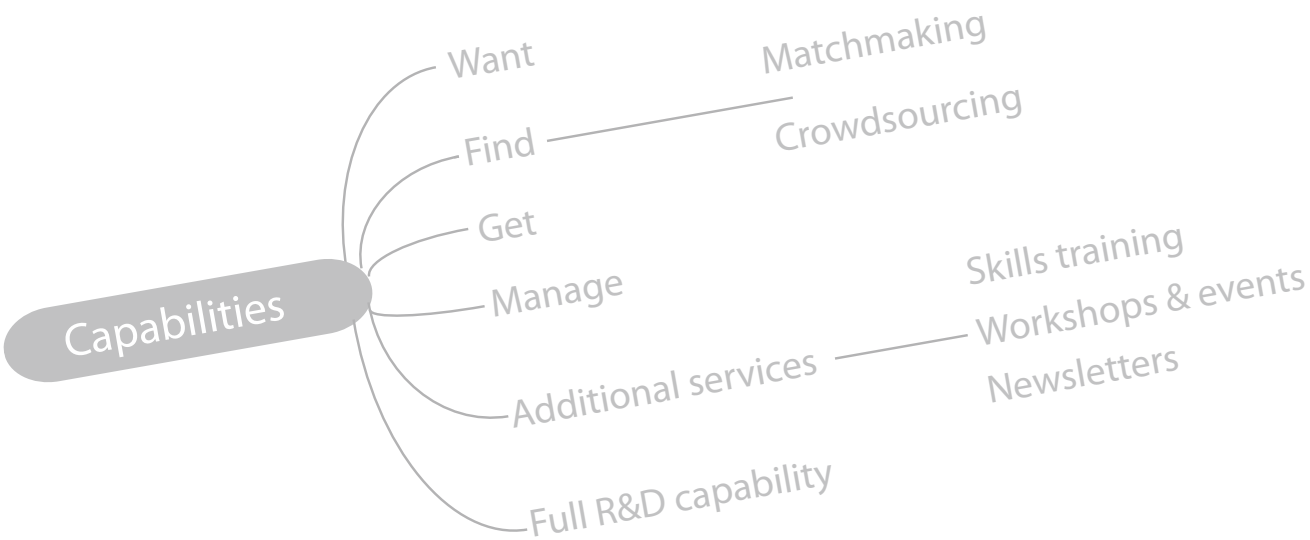
- There is no single 'right' approach to innovation. It depends on the needs, priorities and preferred working style of the company concerned.
- Be very clear about what your needs and priorities are before seeking help from an intermediary.
- Be aware that intermediaries use very different methods and their services may vary considerably in terms of capabilities, networks, business models and working style.

What does this mean for intermediaries?

- Be as clear as possible about the services you do and do not offer. Use straightforward language and avoid jargon or buzz words.
- Resist the temptation to oversell your organisation or to offer services in areas outside your expertise.
- Provide as much detail as you can about your services and working style in your publicity materials.

What capabilities do intermediaries offer?

Want
Find
Get
Manage
R&D capability
Other services



Intermediaries vary considerably in terms of the services they offer and the problems they can solve – in other words, the capabilities they can provide for their customers. The differences may not be obvious, however, as there is a natural tendency for intermediaries to present themselves as providing as comprehensive a range of services as possible. Companies therefore need to be clear exactly what help they need and to investigate carefully if an intermediary can do what they require..

The Want►Find►Get►Manage framework (see page 6) is a useful way to consider the range of capabilities that intermediaries can provide.

Want

The majority of intermediaries offer 'innovation management' services, involving helping companies to understand their innovation needs. Technology roadmapping exercises, futures and scenario planning techniques, knowledge management exercises and IP portfolio reviews are all techniques which are employed by intermediaries to help companies understand 'the big picture' or to define a strategy to address a specific task. Many technical intermediaries provide these types of services as a complementary offering to go with their other services.

Find

Most intermediaries offer services in the 'Find' category. These consist of capturing and delivering the information the client needs to make decisions. Questions can be both targeted (Who are the key players in field X? Can you find technology options for technology Y?), and scans (Can you map out the landscape of potentially relevant technologies for us?)

However, intermediaries differ in the methods they use to find such information for their clients. Some take a **matchmaking** approach, proactively searching for information that matches a company's specific needs. This might be because the company needs a partner with particular facilities, or one who has the expertise to solve a technical problem. The intermediary may use an existing network of contacts, or create one specially, designed to include the contacts most likely to be able to help. Some intermediaries also offer specialist tools and techniques to find the information required. A matchmaking approach is suitable for finding the answer to specific problems, such as 'I need a partner with these capabilities in this location', 'I need to find a company working with this technology' or 'I want to find someone to solve this technical problem'.

Others use a **crowdsourcing** approach, trying to attract in relevant information or ideas from one or more groups of people. Crowdsourcing is a relatively new approach to problem solving which has become possible thanks to growing access to the internet. It allows companies to broadcast their innovation needs with the aim of attracting multiple options and solutions. A company may be seeking ideas for new markets or applications for a technology, for example. The intermediary may use either an existing network or one that has been specially created. Prizes or other forms of reward may be offered to induce people to take part. The results from crowdsourcing depend on whether the network used has the kind of expertise required. Many users discover to their cost that an intermediary's network does not contain the skills and expertise they need (See box on page 21).

Get

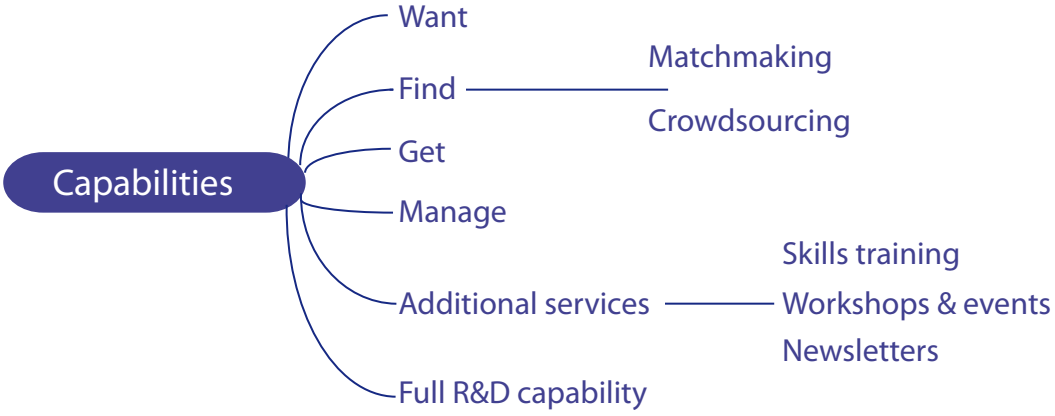
These services provide support to establish agreements in relation to technology acquisition or collaborations, including IP. Sometimes the intermediary develops structured agreements which take into account the needs of the various parties with the aim of making the transaction as fair as possible. The 'get' capabilities are often provided in association with other services, for example access to databases of available patents (sometimes called marketplaces).

Manage

Very few intermediaries in our sample said they provided support for the management of relationships between partners, and to successfully integrate technology into the mainstream business processes. Support at this stage can be helpful to overcome obstacles and frustrations as they arise.

R&D capability

Some intermediaries have full R&D departments which can be used to develop technologies, products and solutions on behalf of their clients, for example designing a new product or



developing a new process technology. Others might only offer technical advice or identify other companies for their clients to work with. Each of these options may be appropriate for a particular company. Deciding between them will depend on the kind of help required.

Other services

A number of additional services are offered by intermediaries to support their main offering. These include:

- Access to a database of technology needs and offers (proprietary or public), which can be trawled for useful technologies or used to advertise technologies available for commercialisation.
- Application of special techniques and tools (e.g. TRIZ). Some intermediaries offer methodologies to stimulate creativity, break down the complexity of a problem or to search other fields for solutions.
- Newsletters etc. promoting other services and communicating interesting information.
- Skills training.
- Future scenarios exercises, eg for a particular sector
- Advice on likely trends in government policy and which government department to make contact with.
- Funding options to commercialise a technology or to develop it into a product (for example government funds or VCs).
- Workshops and networking events to facilitate information and knowledge sharing. These are generally well received and appreciated by companies. However, some reported that discussion remained at a fairly superficial level due to the attendees' different perspectives and confidentiality issues.

What does this mean for my company?

- Intermediaries offer assistance at different stages of the innovation process (e.g. early stage research, applied research and development, commercialisation)?
- They may help companies to commercialise their own technologies and/or to acquire technologies externally
- Areas they may help with include:

  Innovation management: defining what a company needs in terms of new technologies and innovation

  Intelligence gathering: Identifying available technologies and potential technology partners

  Negotiation support: Helping to get agreement on deals through support with negotiation and legal issues

  Relationship management: Support with managing the relationship between companies and their partners, including IP services

  R&D capability: laboratories and technical facilities

  Other: networking events, newsletters, training

What networks do they reach?

Bespoke networks
Existing networks
Crowdsourcing
Showrooms
Focused networks
Network of networks

Social networks play an important role in most company's intelligence gathering. For many intermediaries providing access to an existing network of contacts is one of the key elements of their offering. For their clients, such networks represent a valuable resource – ponds in which they can fish for information, expertise and technologies.

Bespoke networks

Some intermediaries create a bespoke network for their clients, instead of – or as well as – offering access to one that already exists. These 'snapshot networks' bring together expertise and resources specially designed to solve their client's problems.

Network 'architects' use different methodologies to design a network. A modified version of this approach is adopted by intermediaries who rely on a vast network of consultants to build an ad hoc group of expertise around a project or problem.

Some intermediaries offer both the creation of bespoke networks and access to an existing network. See example E in Table 1 on Page 35.

Existing networks

The majority of intermediaries interviewed about their services mentioned access to an external network.

Network characteristics that need to be considered when selecting an intermediary include:

Size: Networks can vary greatly in terms of the number of people they contain. We found examples ranging from 40 to 15,000.

Type of people in the network: It is important to find out what kind of people are in the network. Intermediaries that act as gatekeepers for a specific area or group such as a university technology transfer office or local development agency, describe their networks in terms of how many scientists, SMEs or government contacts it contains.

Network type: We observed four main types of network that can be accessed through intermediaries, each with its own dynamics, characteristics, pros and cons:

- Crowdsourcing
- Focussed
- Showroom
- Network of networks

Each network is described in detail on pages 21-22. It is important to fully understand the kind of network being offered by an intermediary in order to assess whether it is likely to meet your needs and whether it will put you in touch with the right people – or simply duplicate existing contacts. Our research showed that disappointment with an intermediary was often down to the simple fact that they did not reach the 'right' people.

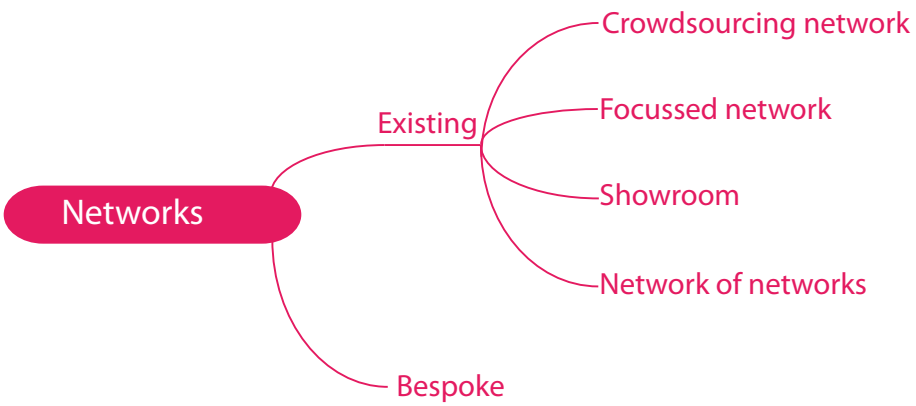
Is it the right crowd?

It is important to review the make up of an intermediary's network to make sure it will provide what your company needs.

Check what expertise it contains. Find out who is part of the network and whether they are the same as others you already have access to.

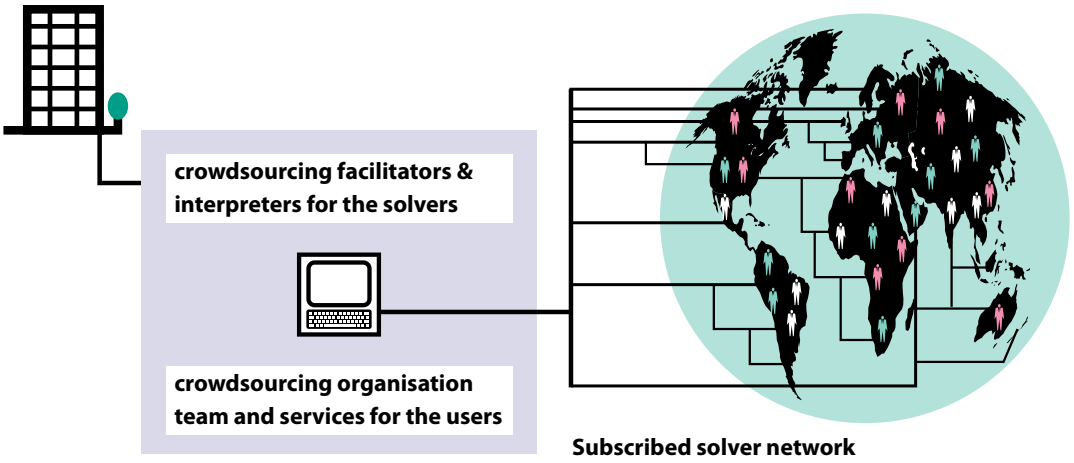
One intermediary's network was highly focused, offering access to a defined group of people with a particular range of expertise. This suited one client perfectly as they had no other means of accessing this kind of expertise in this part of the world. For another client, however, the network offered nothing new. "They knew the same people we knew and came back with the same contacts we identified. Their network wasn't appropriate to explore new contacts – but we learned this too late."

Only one crowdsourcing intermediary looked at by researchers explicitly described its group of solvers in terms of profile, nationality and expertise. Making this standard practice would help companies in selecting a suitable intermediary.



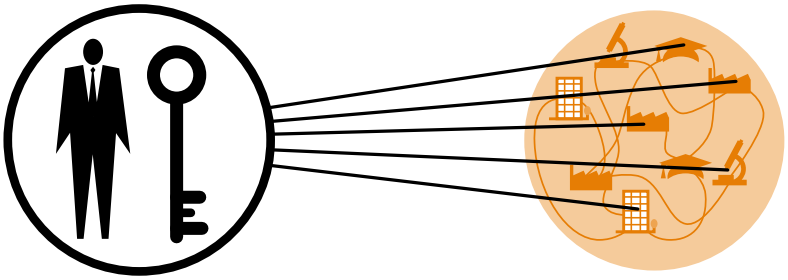
Types of networks

Crowdsourcing networks



Crowdsourcing: A relatively new approach to problem solving, made possible by the spread of the internet. Problems are broadcast to a network of people who are invited to offer solutions. Organisations offering crowdsourcing services may provide facilitators to assist those trying to offer solutions. Potentially anybody, anywhere could be included if they have relevant expertise or knowledge, but a critical mass is needed for such a network to be effective. Some kind of prize or reward may be offered to encourage participation. Rules may be laid down to protect intellectual property. The value of this approach is dependent on the network used and its appropriateness for the task in hand. Issues to consider include what skills and knowledge does the network offer and are these limited by nationality and language barriers.

Focused networks



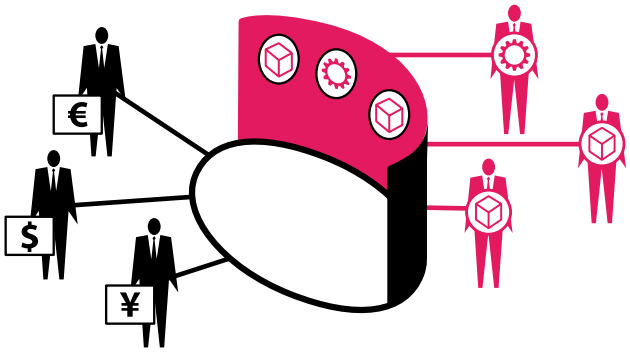
Intermediaries (eg local development agencies, technology transfer offices and professional associations) act as a gatekeeper/matchmaker for a particular network.

They provide access to communities of knowledge such as:

- Innovation networks
- Start-ups in incubators
- Experts in a particular field

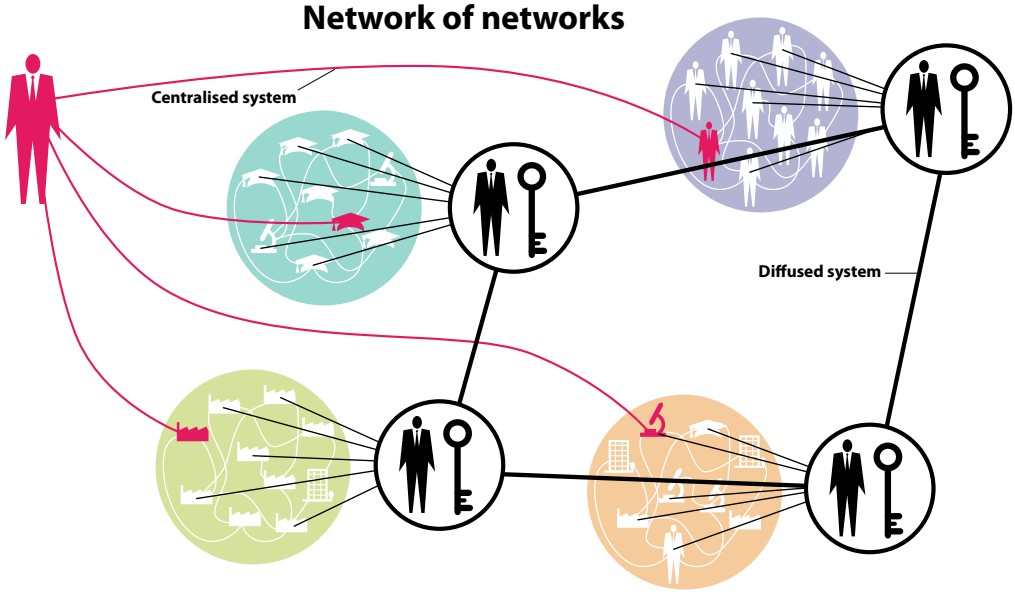
Focussed: A defined network of contacts with common characteristics, for example companies on a science park, members of a university or professional association, a group of start-up companies, a special interest group. Members of such networks may represent a great asset in terms of the specific expertise they offer. Conversely, if the network involves people of very similar backgrounds, the variety of knowledge available may be limited. Intermediaries, such as local development agencies, technology transfer offices, consultancies and standards bodies, can act as gatekeepers to such networks, broadcasting a company's needs to the group. They may also offer specific matchmaking services where they identify particular members of the group most likely to be able to meet their client's needs.

Showrooms



Showrooms These networks are typically called marketplaces, although transactions do not generally take place within them. Their purpose is to enable those with technologies to sell and those looking for a technology to buy, to find each other. Information is generally displayed via the internet, with organisations listing their ideas, needs, technologies, IP etc for others to view. Intermediaries help buyers and sellers to find each other by providing a platform where needs and technologies are displayed. Access to the lists of ideas and technologies may be restricted to the intermediary and its clients or they may be publicly available. In the latter case technologies are typically patent protected. However, one company has developed a platform to display unsuccessful ideas put forward as solutions for crowdsourcing challenges, to give others the chance to acquire them. Intermediaries may display a list of technology needs publicly, or they may match up needs with appropriate technologies.

Network of networks



Network of networks These 'super' networks bring together activities and resources from multiple networks, potentially providing a single point of access for all of them. They may involve a single organisation acting as a central entry point (centralised system) or make connections via members who belong to multiple organisations (diffused). Super networks offer the benefit of greatly expanding the area of search, but they could also present problems of knowledge management if the number of potential solutions grows too large to analyse efficiently.

What does this mean for my company?

Questions to ask about the intermediary's networks and range of expertise they provide access to:

- How many staff do they have and what expertise do they offer?
- What other organisations or individuals can we reach via the intermediary, which we can't contact in other ways?
- Does the intermediary provide access to an existing network?
- What are the characteristics of their network(s) in terms of expertise offered, geographical focus, size etc and does it meet our needs?
- Can they create a bespoke network if required?

What business model do they use?

Charging

IP position

Ownership and mission

A number of issues relating to the business model of an intermediary need to be considered as part of the selection process.

Charging

Cost is always an important factor, particularly for smaller firms. Even in large corporations the individual making the decisions may only have discretion over a relatively small budget. Intermediaries that make no charge, or whose fees are subsidised, often represent an attractive option.

Intermediaries rarely declare their charges up front, so it is usually necessary to get in touch directly in order to get an idea of costs.

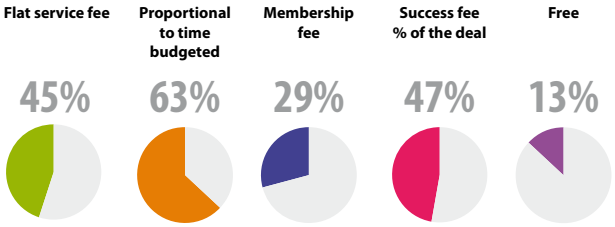


Figure 8 Distribution of charging models within our sample of intermediaries

Various charging models were used by the intermediaries we observed (see Figure 8):

- **Time-based** The intermediary's time is charged on an hourly or daily rate basis. Rates vary greatly. Some intermediaries have a minimum budget and will not work for less than a certain figure. Others increase their daily rate if the project runs for more than a certain length of time.
- **Success fee** The intermediary charges a fixed percentage of deals they instigate, or of any revenues generated. A success fee is usually agreed in advance, for example when IP is exchanged. This model is unacceptable to some users, especially for projects a long way from commercial success, where value is uncertain.
- **Flat fee** This is made for such things as posting on a website or performing a literature search.
- **Membership fee** Gives access to particular benefits and services, for example unlimited postings on a crowdsourcing network.

"With X there are no extra fees once they have identified a match. With Y one never knows where they are going to end in terms of fees."

"No intermediary declares their fees clearly. This means you have to get in touch in order to get a quote."

"Innovation is an uncertain process. It is difficult to define up front what constitutes success and to decide fees accordingly"

"Success fees work well – they provide an incentive for the intermediary to identify a suitable answer."

"I am sceptical of success fees. They may encourage the intermediary to come up with any answer, good or bad."

- **Free** Government sponsored bodies often provide services at no charge. Other organisations may provide free help in combination with other services. Some intermediaries may provide free assistance if the work brings them some benefit, for example attracting more people to their network.

IP position

Intermediaries understand the sensitivity surrounding IP and almost all of those involved in supporting new partnerships are 'IP neutral' – that is they do not expect a share in the IP involved and simply act as a facilitator. Their services can include providing:

- a clear set of rules or a platform for the IP transfer process
- legal support for one or both parties
- advice on how to develop, exploit and protect the IP

However, intermediaries admit that IP transfer is a challenge and they do not necessarily have all the answers. Many revealed that it can take months, if not years, to complete a deal.

Intermediaries who take an active part in the development of a new technology or provide support with R&D may take a less neutral position and expect a share of the IP. These include universities or technical consultants, who will have established procedures for negotiating the transaction of IP. These will vary in their flexibility and could entail licensing, sharing or selling the IP.

"Ownership of IP is often a reason for negotiations to stall."

"Sometimes universities can be too rigid in negotiating their IP."

"Some intermediaries have a clear set of rules that regulates the IP transaction. This offers advantages and can prevent surprises."

Ownership and mission

The majority of intermediaries are privately-owned companies, but a few are publicly listed. Some are government bodies or sponsored by government. A small number are collaborative ventures involving several organisations, for example universities.

It is important to be aware of the ownership and mission of an intermediary, in order to be aware of possible bias. Government organisations, for example, may not charge for their services but may have a set of metrics to demonstrate the value of their services, which could influence their approach.

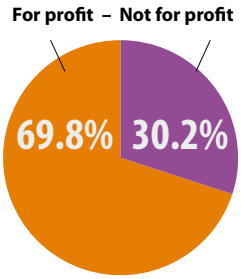
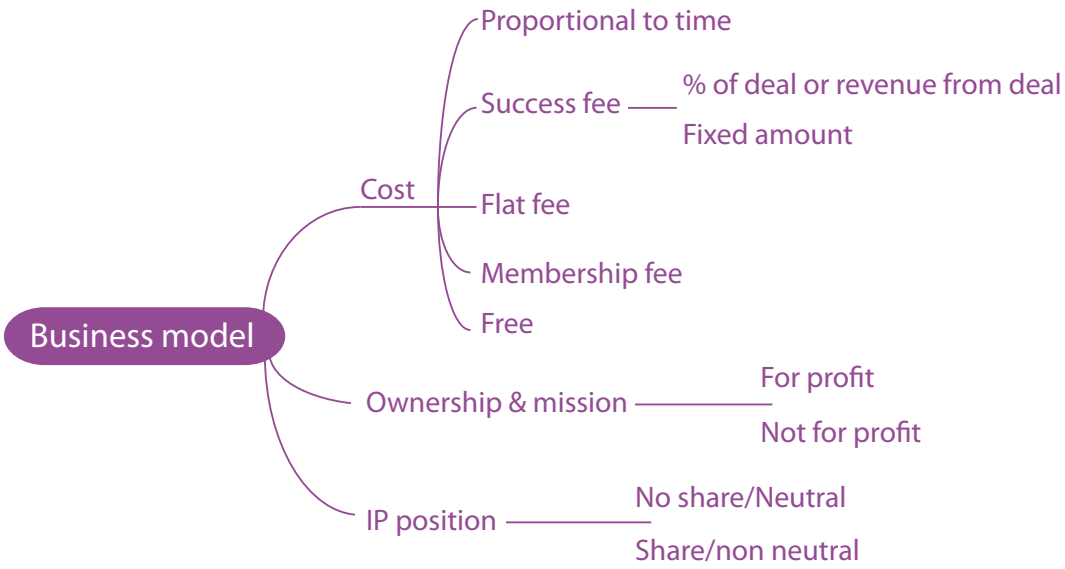


Figure 9 Relative percentages of our sample of intermediaries established as profit making/not for profit organisations



What does this mean for my company?

Questions to ask about the intermediary's business model:

- Are they a commercial organisation or not-for-profit?
- How do they charge for their services (e.g. time-based, flat fee, success fee, free)?
- What is their position regarding any IP generated (e.g. IP stays with client, IP is shared with the client)
- Does the organisation have a particular mission? Could this influence its approach?

What is their style and approach?

Initial approach

Time and resources

Mode of interaction

Self positioning – a cautionary note

An intermediary's style and general approach are important factors which need to be considered as part of the selection process. Are the cultures of the organisations similar? Will the individuals involved get on well together? Such issues can play an important part in how satisfied a company is likely to be with the services of an intermediary.

> "Who you access is just as important as what organisation they belong to. There has to be a good character match."

Initial approach

One of the most important moments in the relationship is when client and intermediary first get in touch. This is the time when expectations are formed and judgments made. Companies felt that intermediaries often failed to put enough effort into preparing for this first meeting or to understanding their needs.

Users had definite likes and dislikes in terms of style and approach. The methods used by one intermediary were described in glowing terms by company A, but raised strong objections from company B. It is very important to understand how a particular intermediary works in order to decide whether they are likely to suit your organisation. Many users appreciated the chance of an initial trial at reasonable rates, to gain more information about an approach.

> "X are too confusing. They need to tidy up their website – I spent an hour trying to find their telephone number."
>
> "We like working with this intermediary because of the ease of access."
>
> "We didn't set the right expectations at the beginning. We wanted more constant communication during the project in order to have confidence in the result."

Time and resources

The time and resources required from the customer to complete a project is a hidden cost, and one that is often not considered when evaluating the services of an intermediary. The amount of time required can vary considerably between one intermediary and another. For some companies the fact that a project was completed quickly, or demanded little input from them, was a positive factor.

Mode of interaction

Intermediaries vary greatly in the kind of interaction they expect with their clients. Some proudly promote the 'internet only' approach. The majority, however, encourage a much closer relationship with frequent meetings, phone calls and visits to each others' premises.

A few follow the practice of embedding someone within the client company, enabling continuous contact and close understanding of the customer's needs. This approach provokes different responses. Some companies find it intrusive and difficult to deal with. Others reported that the process worked well and identified important issues they were unaware of.

> "Having someone working inside the company was excellent for digging out bits of information we didn't know we had. They identified what was important for us."
>
> "For our company, having an external person operating inside didn't work. Even internally we have high confidentiality rules, so it was difficult to allow access."
>
> "It causes a lot of problems when there are staff changes in our client companies. It means we need to regain focus and trust. Quite often their objectives change as well."

Self positioning – a cautionary note

How intermediaries describe themselves and which aspects of their services they promote as particularly special are further factors companies can use to help in the selection process. This needs to be tempered with some caution however.

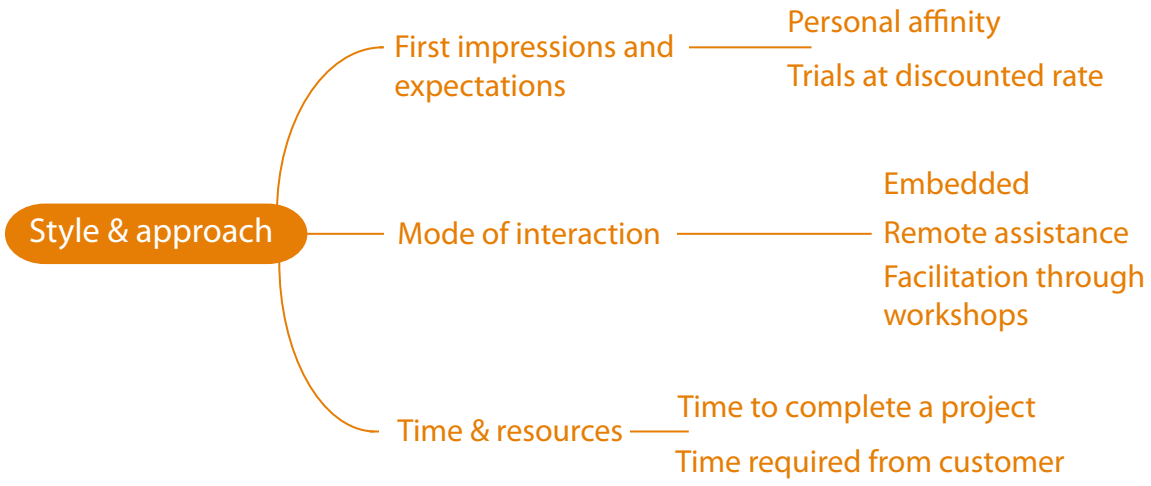
As we have seen, there is no single 'right' approach to innovation and different users appreciate different things about an intermediary. Asking an intermediary to describe their strengths will therefore only produce clear and useful answers if the intermediary understands a company's needs and preferred approach.

Companies should be clear about what they need from an intermediary and communicate this effectively. Intermediaries, in their turn, should be prepared to describe the essential aspects of their services, avoiding jargon and indicating what makes them distinctive. In particular, they should avoid over-selling their offering, as exaggerated claims are likely to irritate potential customers and may raise expectations, which will only be disappointed.

The choice of intermediary depends very much on a company's needs and preferred working style, as the following example shows.

Intermediary X used a problem solving technique based on the TRIZ methodology to identify solutions in fields unrelated to that of their clients. They then organised workshops inviting other companies to develop solutions of common interest. Company A's managers found this provided some positive results, but nothing exceptional. Instead they decided to go with Intermediary Y which offered to crowdsource solutions in a network of solvers that included scientists worldwide.

Company B, on the other hand, liked Intermediary X's TRIZ techniques and the fact that it offered to find specific 'matches' in its network of experts to solve the company's problem. The company preferred this to the crowdsourcing approach.



What does this mean for my company?

Questions to ask about an intermediary's style and approach:

- How long do they take to complete a typical project?
- How much time is usually required from the customer?
- How do they prefer to interact with clients? (e.g. consultants embedded in the customer's organisation, facilitated workshops, remote support etc)
- Remember that different approaches suit different companies. You need to find the right approach for your circumstances.

Selecting intermediaries: practical examples

Partner selection

Problem solving

As we have seen, intermediaries are naturally anxious to meet their clients' needs – even if this means offering to perform tasks beyond their normal range of services. This flexibility can make it difficult from a company's perspective, as the services offered by intermediaries do, in fact, vary quite considerably. Clearly a way is needed to identify the differences between contending offerings.

To illustrate how the selection approach outlined in this report can be used in practice, we looked at two of the most common problems for which companies consult innovation intermediaries:

- selecting a partner with whom to work
- solving a technical problem

We looked at a selection of intermediary organisations offering services in these areas and plotted their offering in terms of the key criteria we identified earlier:

- capabilities
- networks
- business model
- style and approach

The results are summarised in Tables 1 and 2.

Plotting the characteristics of the various intermediaries in this way, helps to reveal the differences between them.

One company set up a process in relation to the intermediaries they work with. They nominated a business manager to monitor and coordinate interactions with each intermediary. This manager was the only point of contact for intermediaries and was responsible for evaluating every interaction with them.

Another firm organised a one-day event and invited a number of intermediaries to pitch their services. This enabled the company to evaluate the intermediaries carefully and to discuss preferred working practices with them directly.

Partner selection

Table 1 shows the responses received from six intermediaries when asked to describe their services relating to partner selection. All six indicated that they commonly help their customers with partner identification and selection, including due diligence.

The table reveals some significant differences in their approach. The choice of who to go with will depend on a company's needs and priorities. For example:

- Intermediary A, B, C and D all have access to a specific network of expertise, which they reach using a matchmaking approach (i.e. proactively look for connections on behalf of their customers). These networks are of different sizes and focus (e.g. one is within a university, another in a particular country). Companies must decide for themselves which might be the best network for them, with the characteristics they require. They also need to check that a network offers new contacts and does not duplicate what they already have.
- Differences can be further identified in the costing models used and also their position in relation to IP.
- Some offer help in additional areas, for example IP services or innovation management. Others do not.
- Intermediary E accesses a network of expertise which is proprietary (i.e. a database which can be accessed only through them), but complements this with a proactive search for partners outside their contact base. This model seems more complete, but also prompts questions about their mission.
- Intermediary F works by creating a bespoke network for each client – it does not have a proprietary one of its own. It aims to meet the needs of each company by searching the world for suitable innovation partners. Unlike Intermediary E it does not charge a flat fee, but one proportional to the amount of time the work takes. It works with its clients remotely rather than embedding staff in each company.

	Networks		Capabilities	Business model		Style and approach	
						Interaction	Time
A	Connects business to research in country X	**Existing network:** These organisations preside over a network. They act as gatekeepers between the network and the external world. They are in a very good position to report on who in the network could best match their clients' needs. For most of their clients access to a specific network is the most important part of their offering.	Want (innovation management) Find (matchmaking)	Flat fee	IP neutral	Remote assistance Workshops	6-12 months
B	Connects business to research at university X		Find (matchmaking) Get (IP services)	Flat fee Proportional to time Success fee	IP non neutral	Remote assistance	1-24 months
C	Connects business to universities in area Y		Find (matchmaking) Get (IP services)	Flat fee Proportional to time Membership fee Success fee	IP non neutral	Remote assistance	0.5-12 months
D	Connects business to government and lobby organisations in country Y		Want (innovation management) Find (matchmaking) Funding & policy advice	Proportional to time	IP neutral	Remote assistance	3-24 months
E	Connects business with partners belonging to their network		Want (innovation management) Find (matchmaking)	Flat fee	IP neutral	Embedding	0.5-24 months
	Provides intelligence on who are the best potential partners	**Bespoke network:** These organisations explore the world population looking for potential innovation partners, identifying those who match their client's needs. The network they create is a snapshot and is a unique combination, obtained by comparing their clients' requests with what is available.					
F	Provides intelligence on who are the best potential partners		Find (matchmaking)	Proportional to time	IP neutral	Remote assistance	0.5-2 months

Table 1: The variety of offerings offered by six intermediaries in relation to partner selection

Problem solving

Table 2 indicates the responses received from eight intermediaries asked to describe how they help customers find solutions to technical problems.

Structuring their responses against our key criteria reveals the similarities and differences in their approaches. For example:

- All the intermediaries have a neutral position regarding IP and merely act as a mediator between parties with no expectation of taking a share themselves.
- The majority provide remote assistance – i.e. they will work independently on a problem and come back to the client with their solutions.
- Huge differences can be noted in terms of the network accessed. Some will compile a 'snapshot' of the best contacts for their client by 'scouting' on their behalf.
- Others give access to a specific network, but do this in two different ways. Some 'attract' responses using a crowdsourcing approach, others proactively matchmake in their own network.
- Their networks vary in size, location and the type of expertise accessed. The characteristics of a network are likely to affect how confident a client feels about any new 'solutions' they produce.
- Some intermediaries offer further capabilities and services which may or may not be of interest, such as a technical testing facility, or support for the implementation of the solution, or prototype production.
- Charging structures are another important area to be explored. Some intermediaries offer multiple costing models. Others offer a single approach. One of the most common costing models is to estimate the overall time required for completing a project. In this case the hourly rate is a good means of comparing different offerings.
- Other models proposed by intermediaries include a pre-determined success fees. This model can be unpopular with companies who find it difficult to anticipate the real impact of the intermediary's intervention.

	Network	Network characteristics			Capabilities	Business model		Style
1	Focussed Bespoke	EU, US, South Pacific	SMEs, Research Institutes, Universities	N/A	Want (innovation management) Find (matchmaking)	Flat fee	IP neutral	Embedded
2	Network of Networks Bespoke	Global	Consultants	15,000	Find (matchmaking)	Success fee	IP neutral	Remote
3	Crowdsourcing	EU, US	Academics	220,000	Find (crowdsourcing) Get (IP services)	Success fee Membership	IP neutral	Remote
4	Crowdsourcing	Global	Academics, Experts, Inventors	18,000	Find (crowdsourcing) Get (IP services)	Success fee Membership Proportional to time	IP neutral	Remote
5	Focussed	Local	SMEs	N/A	Want (innovation management) Find (matchmaking) R&D (process & product design)	Success fee Membership Proportional to time	IP neutral	Remote
	Network of Networks	EU	Consultants Academics and SMEs	4000				
	Bespoke	N/A	N/A	N/A				
6	Bespoke Showroom	N/A	N/A	N/A	Find (matchmaking) R&D (process & product design)	Success fee Membership Proportional to time	IP neutral	Remote
7	Network of Networks Showroom	Global	Consultants	200	Find (matchmaking, crowdsourcing) Get (IP services) R&D (product development)	Success fee Membership Proportional to time	IP neutral	Remote
8	Bespoke	N/A	N/A	N/A	Find (matchmaking) R&D (process & product design) Want (innovation management)	Proportional to time	IP neutral	Remote

Table 2: The variety of offerings from eight intermediaries in relation to technical problem solving

Appendix

Background to this research

This report is based on a year-long research project by the Centre for Technology Management (CTM) at Cambridge University's Institute for Manufacturing (IfM). The project was undertaken in collaboration with a consortium of industrial and other partners, including: BP, CIRA, Crown Cork, Doosan Babcock, EPSRC, GSK, IXC-UK, NESTA, Oakland, PepsiCo, Quotec and Shell.

The research builds on previous projects on innovation undertaken by CTM. One project studied the implementation of OI in large multinational companies, and another the ways in which companies keep ahead of new technological developments. Both projects highlighted the important role played by intermediaries in relation to innovation.

Building on this earlier research, the next project focused on the ways in which intermediary organisations can help to increase the effectiveness of open innovation and intelligence gathering activities. In particular, it aimed to:

- understand the ways in which companies can improve their innovation and technology intelligence activities by engaging with intermediary organisations
- provide criteria for companies to support the selection of intermediaries to work with
- give guidance to intermediaries on how to improve their services and to organise their business models

Research approach

Preliminary interviews were conducted with 30 users of intermediary services and 30 intermediaries. From this a semi-structured questionnaire was designed, comprising 25 questions, aimed at highlighting differences and similarities between the intermediaries.

A total of 42 intermediaries were interviewed in depth. For each question, data were analysed by tagging the responses obtained, exploring the variability within the groups and identifying key trend characteristics. From this we derived a set of criteria which can be used to support the selection of intermediaries.

Intermediary organisations

During the course of this project we built a list of over 100 organisations offering support with innovation. A brief description of their services is provided in the table below. The descriptions are taken from each organisation's website, to give an idea of the range and diversity available. This is not an exhaustive list and inclusion does not imply endorsement by the author of this report.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
3i	www.3i.com	3i is an international investor focused on Private Equity, Infrastructure and Debt Management, investing in Europe, Asia and North America.
42 Technology	www.42technology.com	Our facilities and skills mean we can effectively develop products designed for manufacture to be made at your manufacturing site, off-shore, or we can find manufacturing partners for you. Our engineers' skills cover technology strategy and management, mechanical design, quality systems, structural analysis, physics, sensors, instrumentation and mechatronic devices.
5i Principals Group	www.5iprincipalsgroup.com	5i Principals Group helps its clients achieve rapid growth through IP support for mergers & acquisitions, patent portfolio management, strategic technology acquisitions, innovative product development, managed turnkey access to US markets.
100% Open	www.100open.com	100%Open is a new open innovation agency spun out of NESTA, the UK's National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts. We offer the bespoke services of strategic planning, programme design and delivery, training and venturing. We combine business acumen with extensive hands-on experience of implementing successful open innovation, together with a yen for connecting brands with new people and fresh opportunities.
Acacia Research	www.acaciaresearch.com	Acacia Research's subsidiaries partner with inventors and patent owners, license the patents to corporate users, and share the revenue. Acacia controls over 150 patent portfolios covering technologies used in a wide variety of industries.
Advisory Council for Aeronautics Research in Europe (ACARE)	www.acare4europe.com	ACARE aims to develop and maintain a Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) for aeronautics in Europe.
Amadeus Capital Partnership	www.amadeuscapital.com	We invest across the technology spectrum in industries that include communications and networking hardware and software, media, e-commerce, computer hardware and software, plus the medtech and cleantech sectors.
AngelNews	www.angelnews.co.uk	AngelNews is a commercial news service for the investment market, especially for business angels, venture capitalists and the companies they back.
Applied Minds	www.appliedminds.com	The little Big Idea company.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
Ausicom (AIC)	www.ausicom.com	The AIC's mission is to work with Australian industry, research organisations, and governments to ultimately create high value jobs, exports, and wealth by taking innovative ideas to market. Using our networks and experience, we deliver services to achieve that by establishing partnerships, improving skills, and providing commercialisation advice.
Battelle	www.battelle.org	Battelle is an international science and technology enterprise that explores emerging areas of science, develops and commercializes technology, and manages laboratories for customers. Battelle supports community and education programs to promote an enhanced quality of life for our community neighbors.
Berlin Partner	www.berlin-partner.de	Companies interested in working together for Berlin and supporting Berlin Partner are invited to take advantage of our extensive experience, high-ranking contacts and strategic networks. Berlin Partner supporting members and licensees are granted special access to the Berlin business community as well as to important political contacts.
Bjorksten | bit 7	www.bjorksten.com	Bjorksten | bit 7 is a product design and product development consulting firm whose work spans strategy, innovation, design, engineering, prototyping, and testing, through new product implementation. Business development centers are located in Madison, WI and Chicago, IL.
British Dental Association (BDA)	www.bda.org	The BDA is the professional association and trade union for dentists in the United Kingdom and was founded in 1880.
British Design Innovation (BDI)	www.britishdesigninnovation.org	BDI is the trade organisation for industrial designers, service designers and innovation professionals that promotes members' creative expertise, knowledge and experience. BDI is a not for profit yet commercially focused organisation. It brings together the 'thinkers and linkers' in the innovation space including strategic designers, brand and business owners, academics and dealmakers. These experts exchange knowledge and ethically and safely create, develop and trade Intellectual Property (IP).
British Private Equity and Venture Capital Association	www.bvca.co.uk	The British Private Equity and Venture Capital Association (BVCA) is the industry body for the UK private equity and venture capital industry.
Cambridge Consultants	www.cambridgeconsultants.com	For 50 years, Cambridge Consultants has led the way in innovative product development. We are the development partner of choice to many of the world's leading blue chips as well as the virtual development team for ambitious start up companies.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
Cambridge Enterprise	www.enterprise.cam.ac.uk	Cambridge Enterprise exists to help University of Cambridge inventors, innovators and entrepreneurs make their ideas and concepts more commercially successful for the benefit of society, the UK economy, the inventors and the University.
Cambridge Network	www.cambridgenetwork.co.uk	The Mission of the Cambridge Network is to link like-minded people from business and academia to each other and to the global high technology community for the benefit of the Cambridge region.
Carbon Trust	www.carbontrust.co.uk	Our mission is to accelerate the move to a low carbon economy by working with organisations to reduce carbon emissions and develop commercial low carbon technologies.
CIRA	www.cira.it/html/inglese/home/	Centro Italiano Ricerche Aerospaziali (CIRA) – Italian Aerospace Research Centre.
COLIPA (The European Cosmetics Association)	www.colipa.eu	The voice of Europe's EUR 58.1 billion cosmetic, toiletry and perfumery industry since 1962.
Competitive Technologies (CTTC)	www.competitivetech.net	Working across a broad spectrum of disciplines and industries, CTTC provides distribution, patent and technology transfer, sales and licensing services to intellectual property owners seeking to commercialize their innovative products and technologies.
_connect	www.ktnetworks.co.uk	Brought to you by the Technology Strategy Board, _ connect provides an effective and powerful way for you to collaborate online, network and share knowledge with other innovators.
Connect 2 ideas	www.connect2ideas.com	Connect 2 ideas is a resource for people developing new technology and market leading products. An online matchmaking service for people with innovative ideas, Connect2ideas also offers support from a team of technology scouts and account handlers.
Corven's H-I Network	www.h-i.com	Comprises senior executives and key influencers of leading global organisations committed to fostering innovation, growth and operational excellence.
C-Tech Innovation	www.ctechinnovation.com	We help organisations to implement new processes and create new products; assist them in knowledge transfer and in commercialisation and business support.
DEKA Research and Development Corporation	www.dekaresearch.com	DEKA Research and Development Corporation is an established company focused on the development of radical new technologies that span a diverse set of applications.
East of England Development Agency. (See also RDAs)	www.eeda.org.uk	East of England Development Agency (EEDA) facilitates the production of the East of England's regional economic strategy.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
ELDIS	www.eldis.org	Eldis is one of a family of knowledge services from the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex. Our aim is to share the best in development policy, practice and research. Browse more than 26,000 summarised documents from over 7,500 development organisations - all available free to download. Share your work with over 80,000 development practitioners.
Enterprise Capital Funds	www.bis.gov.uk (then search for Enterprise Capital Funds)	Enterprise Capital Funds (ECFs) address a market weakness in the provision of equity finance to SMEs by using Government funding alongside private sector investment to establish funds that operate within the 'equity gap'. An equity gap arises where businesses with viable investment propositions are unable to attract investment from informal investors or venture capitalists.
Enterprise Europe	www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu	The Enterprise Europe Network helps small business to make the most of the European marketplace. Working through local business organisations, we can help you: • Develop your business in new markets • Source or license new technologies • Access EU finance and EU funding
European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)	www.efsa.europa.eu	The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is the keystone of European Union (EU) risk assessment regarding food and feed safety. In close collaboration with national authorities and in open consultation with its stakeholders, EFSA provides independent scientific advice and clear communication on existing and emerging risks.
Europe Innova	www.europe-innova.org	Europe INNOVA is an initiative of the European Commission's Directorate General Enterprise and Industry which aspires to become the laboratory for the development and testing of new tools and instruments in support of innovation with the view to help innovative enterprises innovate faster and better. It brings together public and private innovation support providers such as innovation agencies, technology transfer offices, business incubators, financing intermediaries, cluster organisations and others.
Evaluserve	www.evalueserve.com	We provide a range of custom research, analytics and Intellectual Property and Legal Process Services, supporting our Clients around the world. Our team of 2,000+ analysts covers multiple industries across every continent in more than 50 languages.
Fairfield Resources International	www.frlicense.com	FRI's mission is to help identify and capture the full value of all your intellectual assets.
Faraday Packaging	www.faradayknowledge.com	Faraday offers a range of technical and design consultancy services to meet your product and packaging innovation needs.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
Faraday Partnership	www.thefaradaypartnership.co.uk	Whether through coaching, facilitation or consultancy, the Faraday Partnership brings out the best in your people. Whatever challenges you face we can help you realise (and raise) your ambitions, improve skills, increase motivation, and harness commitment.
Flexx innovation	www.flexxinnov.com	Our four Service Groups help clients leverage both external and internal innovation
Fraunhofer Institute	www.fraunhofer.de/EN	The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft undertakes applied research of direct utility to private and public enterprise and of wide benefit to society.
Free Patent Auction	www.freepatentauction.com	Patent Auction.com is an online marketplace for innovative ideas protected by patent rights. The broad range of inventions for sale or license touches upon all fields of industry.
Gen3 Partners	www.gen3partners.com	Our mission is to be the world's preeminent open innovation services provider and thereby help our clients improve speed to market and the return on their innovation investments.
Idea connection	www.ideaconnection.com	Ideaconnection takes on challenges from companies large and small. With diverse teams, world-class facilitators, and a high 'solve' rate, we are solving problems ranging from nanotechnology, virtual reality, biochemistry, to marketing and sociology.
IfM Education & Consultancy Services	www.ifm.eng.cam.ac.uk/working	IfM Education and Consultancy Services (IfM-ECS) provides a rapid dissemination route for new ideas and approaches developed at Cambridge University Institute for Manufacturing. Industrial practitioners, with many years of senior management experience, engage directly with industry, governments and other agencies via consultancy, executive education and events. IfM Education and Consultancy Services Ltd is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the University of Cambridge.
Imaginatik	www.imaginatik.com	Imaginatik helps to design, operate and deliver mission-critical innovation processes in a highly dynamic, resource-scarce business world.
Industrial Research Institute (IRI)	www.iriinc.org	IRI is the nation's leading association of companies and federal laboratories working together to improve their research and development capabilities. As a membership association, the member organizations form its governance and develop its programs and services to meet their needs.
Innocentive	www.innocentive.com	Our expertise is in Open Innovation. We can help expand your innovation capabilities by building a more collaborative approach to problem solving, and providing the means to tap into the best minds within your company as well as creative problem solvers throughout the world.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
Innocrowding	www.innocrowding.com	InnoCrowding is a management consulting company specialized in innovation ecosystems implementation and deployments, innovation management, and seeding early to late stage investments for innovative companies or entrepreneurs.
Innoget	http://innoget.com/	Innoget is a portal for Open Innovation through which companies and Research Partners - organizations and individuals, such as research centers, scientists, university researchers, inventors and technology companies - from around the world interact to develop and share R&D projects and innovations.
Innovation Advisory Service South East (IASSE)	www.iasse.co.uk	A support network for new and existing businesses in the South East of England.
Innovaro	www.innovaro.com	We develop compelling strategies, identify, design and model breakthrough ideas; accelerating those ideas into the market successfully.
Innovation Centres (Scotland) Ltd	www.innovationcentre.org	Innovation Centres (Scotland) provides top-class incubation and a vibrant home for entrepreneurs and companies who are engaged in providing the next generation of Scottish high-technology businesses and new jobs.
Innovation UK	www.innovationuk.org	Innovation UK provides a global platform for the UK's most innovative companies, products, research and applications and highlights Britain's delivery and successful exploitation of innovative ideas.
Innovation Xchange IXC UK Ltd	ixc-uk.com	We introduce people and organisations with a technology focus to those with complementary solutions or challenges so that together they can combine their assets to solve problems, create new products or develop access to new markets.
Innovative Partners	www.innovativepartners.nl	Dutch innovation management company.
Innovia Technology	www.innoviatech.com	Innovia specializes in breakthrough product and service innovation and in creating new business for leading companies.
INRIA	www.inria.fr	INRIA, the French national institute for research in computer science and control, operating under the dual authority of the Ministry of Research and the Ministry of Industry, is dedicated to fundamental and applied research in information and communication science and technology.
International Network for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (INSME)	www.insme.org	The International Network for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises is a non profit association open to international membership.
InterDigital	www.interdigital.com	InterDigital develops fundamental wireless technologies that are at the core of mobile devices, networks, and services worldwide.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
Interface-The knowledge connection for business	www.interface-online.org.uk	Interface is a matchmaking service connecting businesses quickly and easily to world class expertise, knowledge and research facilities available in all Scotland's Universities and Research Institutes. Interface's free and impartial service stimulates innovation and encourages companies to consider academic support to help solve their business challenges.
Invent Resources	www.inventresources.com.au	With over 40 years of combined industry experience, the team at Invent Resources understands the complexities of bringing an idea to fruition.
Inventables	www.inventables.com	Our Marketplace helps vendors of materials and technologies market their products to people who are looking to solve sourcing problems.
Invention Machine	www.invention-machine.com	We are committed to helping companies design a predictable, sustainable innovation process so you can deliver the right products the first time, economically and consistently.
Inzenka	www.inzenka.com	Inzenka helps blue chip companies to develop and deliver breakthrough customers propositions and new ventures in adjacent markets.
IP Auctions GmbH (IPA)	www.ip-auction.eu	IP Auctions is an independent member of a network of companies that specializes in patent evaluation, patent monetization and patent management within the following technology sectors: nanotechnology, mechanical engineering, consumer electronics, automotive, life science, medical science, pharma/ biotech and "green" technologies. IP Auctions' objective is to commercialise first-class IP rights via auction.
IP Group	www.ipgroupplc.com	IP Group's core business is the creation of value for its shareholders and partners through the commercialisation of intellectual property originating from research intensive institutions.
ITECS Innovative Consulting	www.itecs-consulting.com	ITECS Innovative Consulting is a technology marketing development company that helps businesses, universities, and nonprofits fund, develop, and commercialize their high-potential technologies by leveraging the government as a funding source or customer. We do this by helping clients identify funding streams, access the government market, and develop robust value propositions.
Japan External Trade Association (JETRO)	www.jetro.go.jp	JETRO is a government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world.
Keltie	www.keltie.com	Keltie is a partnership of patent and trade mark attorneys based in the City of London.
Korean Institute of Science and Technology Information (KISTI)	www.kisti.re.kr/english	KISTI is a specialised institute for science and technology and innovation services to the public to provide national competitiveness in science and technology.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
Kuopio Innovation (Innovation Magnet)	www.kuopioinnovation.fi	Kuopio Innovation Ltd., the pioneer of innovation know-how, is a non-profit organization which creates national welfare by actively contributing appearance of new innovations and their effective commercialization. Kuopio Innovation Ltd. supports partnering between international companies and Kuopio Science Park-based SMEs and academia.
London Technology Network	www.ltnetwork.org	We promote innovative collaborations and help to stimulate technology-intensive innovation between universities and business. To do this, we have created a network of over 100 university-based research experts linking 6,000 academics across London, the East and South East, to map their research in order to provide technology solutions to business needs.
Medius	www.medius-associates.com	Medius Associates is a global specialist provider of business development services to the pharmaceutical and healthcare sectors.
Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT)	www.might.org.my	MIGHT is an independent and non-profit organisation that is driven by a membership drawn from both the public and private sectors. MIGHT's predominant role is to enable consensus building and coordination for Industry-Government partnership in high technology.
MIT Industrial Liaison Program	http://ilp.mit.edu/about.jsp	The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Industrial Liaison Program (ILP) is dedicated to creating and strengthening mutually beneficial relationships between MIT and corporations worldwide.
MOSAID Technologies Incorporated	www.mosaid.com	MOSAID Technologies Incorporated is one of the world's leading intellectual property (IP) companies, focused on the licensing and development of semiconductor and communications technologies.
National Institutes of Health	www.nih.gov	The National Institutes of Health (NIH), a part of the US Department of Health and Human Services, is the nation's medical research agency.
National Science Foundation (NSF)	www.nsf.gov	With an annual budget of about $6.9 billion (FY 2010), we are the funding source for approximately 20 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities.
Nerac	www.nerac.com	Nerac is a Research and Advisory Firm for companies developing innovative products and technologies. From concept to commercialization, we help our clients uncover the key business questions they should be asking, then we help them find the answers.
National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA)	www.nesta.org.uk	NESTA is the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts - an independent body with a mission to make the UK more innovative. Our endowment status means we operate at no cost to the UK taxpayer. We invest in early-stage companies, inform policy, and deliver practical programmes that inspire others to solve the big challenges of the future.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
Netherland Foreign Investment Agency (NFIA)	www.nfia.co.uk	For foreign companies wishing to establish their business in the Netherlands and to take advantage of the Dutch business environment as a strategic base to cover Europe, the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency (NFIA) is the first port of call.
Ninesigma	www.ninesigma.com	NineSigma offers a full array of state-of-the-art products and services that will engage your company with the global innovation community, and enable you to leverage those connections for optimal value through proper organizational and process alignment. Our open innovation services are highly adaptable to meet your specific needs, regardless of where you are in your open innovation journey.
Oakland Innovation	www.oakland.co.uk	Oakland helps organisations to develop a clearer picture of their markets by exploring business development opportunities, examining how best to leverage new technologies, and delivering strategic intelligence to enhance innovation and realise business potential.
Optima Innovations	www.optima.com.my	Optima Innovations is a total web & multimedia agency that helps companies establish, maintain and grow their presence on the World Wide Web.
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	www.oecd.org	OECD brings together the governments of countries committed to democracy and the market economy from around the world. The Organisation provides a setting where governments compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice and coordinate domestic and international policies.
Oxford Innovation	www.oxin.co.uk	Oxford innovation provides a range of services for the knowledge based economy and to organisations interested in business growth, technology commercialisation and economic development. Oxford Innovation is the UK's leading operator of Innovation Centres and runs Investment Networks that link investors with businesses seeking funding.
PA Consulting Group	www.paconsulting.com	PA Consulting Group is a leading management and IT consulting and technology firm. Independent and employee-owned, we operate globally in more than 30 countries and transform the performance of major organisations in both the private and public sectors.
PERA	www.pera.com	Pera is one of Europe's leading innovation and business support organisations with a presence in eight European countries. Established in the UK over 60 years ago as an industry association owned by the companies it serves, we now work to improve the growth and competitiveness of industry and business in Europe.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
PharmaVentures	www.pharmaventures.com	We offer a comprehensive range of health care deal advisory services. Our unrivalled bank of specialist knowledge, experience and network of contacts within this industry makes us uniquely placed to support your business in all aspects of transactions
Philips Applied Technologies	www.apptech.philips.com	Philips Applied Technologies provides solutions to technical and business problems. We specialize in contract innovation services, including product development, consultancy and manufacturing support. Our customers range from global companies to start-ups and small businesses. For all of them, we bring specialist know-how, practical experience and an outside perspective that delivers measurable results.
PIRA	www.pira-international.com	Providing market research and strategic / technical consulting, for the packaging, printing and paper industry supply-chains. With global laboratory testing and simulation facilities, we specialise in food contact, material properties, primary packaging and distribution testing.
Plexus Ventures	www.plexusventures.com	Plexus Ventures is a leading global business development firm serving the pharmaceutical industry for more than 15 years. We provide business development services to clients in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, consumer health, and drug delivery industries worldwide.
PRESANS	www.presans.com	The French startup PRESANS developed and implemented the Multistep Dynamic Expert Sourcing (MDES) approach. It relies on a combination between a state-of-the-art web-mining technology and a secured multistep problem solving process.
Promete	www.promete.it	Italian website only. Promete Srl, spin-off company dell'Istituto Nazionale per la Fisica della Materia (INFM-CNR) opera nel campo dell'innovazione e del trasferimento tecnologico, con l'obiettivo strategico di rafforzare il collegamento fra mondo della ricerca e tessuto produttivo, attraverso la strutturazione di attività di trasferimento di know-how alle imprese.
PSL	www.pslcbi.com	Our Executive Partnering Knowledge Network comprises market-leading organisations from a wide range of sectors. Members meet regularly and enjoy high-level presentations from partnering specialists in different industries. Members also receive advice on partnering issues and can download free our range of partnering guides.
Quotec	www.quotec.co.uk	Quotec is a wholly owned UK based subsidiary of CSIR – the Science and Industry Research Council of South Africa. We operate globally but with a strong emphasis on the UK and Europe. We work independently for industrial and government clients in the area of technology exploitation and innovation.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)	www.englandsrdas.com	Regional Development Agencies promote and enable economic growth in England's regions by creating the conditions to grow businesses and by helping to create additional, better quality, higher-paid jobs. [RDAs are due to be closed down in 2012 to be replaced by Local Enterprise Partnerships]
Research Councils UK	www.rcuk.ac.uk	Research Councils UK (RCUK) is a strategic partnership between the seven UK Research Councils. The Research Councils work together to provide a wide range of common business services via joint Council business units. A number of these units also provide services to external customers.
RTC North	www.rtcnorth.co.uk	RTC North is an independent company delivering initiatives and business services which support economic growth.
Sagentia	www.sagentia.com	With a deep understanding of innovation in technology and business, we develop and deliver innovative products for our clients, helping them grow and become more competitive.
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)	www.sbir.gov	The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Technology administers the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Program.
SenterNovem	www.senternovem.nl	SenterNovem is an agency of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs which promotes sustainable development and innovation, both within the Netherlands and abroad.
SETsquared	www.setsquared.co.uk	SETsquared is a collaboration between the universities of Bath, Bristol, Southampton and Surrey which partners in enterprise activities and collectively supports the growth and success of new business opportunities through spin-outs, licensing and incubation. The Partnership also works with industry through research collaboration and consultancy.
SKM Enviros	www.enviros.com	SKM Enviros is a market leading consultancy providing water, environmental, sustainability and health and safety solutions.
South West Research Institute	www.swri.org	Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) is an independent, nonprofit applied research and development organization. The staff of more than 3,300 specializes in the creation and transfer of technology in engineering and the physical sciences. The Institute occupies more than 1,200 acres in San Antonio, Texas, and provides nearly 2 million square feet of laboratories, test facilities, workshops and offices.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
St John's Innovation Centre	www.stjohns.co.uk	St John's Innovation Centre provides early stage knowledge-based companies with business advice, strategic consultancy, introductions and flexible accommodation. It was the first innovation centre of its kind in Europe and has become world-renowned for its success as a business incubator. It is located at the heart of the Greater Cambridge technology cluster, in which it plays a pivotal role.
Strategic Allies	www.strategicallies.co.uk	Strategic Allies Ltd uses its network of international technology scouts to uncover real innovation opportunities for both business growth and to fill those technology roadmap "gaps".
Strategie & Innovazione	www.stratinnov.it	Strategie & Innovazione Srl is an Italian consultancy group specializing in market research, marketing and positioning of products, and databases – all services designed to give our clients a cutting edge in the Italian market.
SustainAbility	www.sustainability.com	We are a think tank and strategy consultancy working to inspire transformative business leadership on the sustainability agenda.
TAEUS	www.taeus.com	TAEUS takes a systematic approach to evaluating companies' IP portfolio. Utilizing a qualified network of subject-matter experts and innovative tools and processes, we assess each company's IP portfolio relative to the competition with an unbiased viewpoint from both a technical and business perspective.
Technology Catalyst	www.technologycatalyst.com	Leveraging more than 25 years of consulting experience with 10 years of startup and turn around experience, Technology Catalyst has a new offering to help businesses struggling with the economy. Pressure on revenue, expenses, right sizing and other production or operation challenges are now common for many businesses. With that in mind, we are offering a consulting service to come along side you and help your business meet its goals.
Technology Strategy Board	www.innovateuk.org	Our role is to stimulate technology-enabled innovation in the areas which offer the greatest scope for boosting UK growth and productivity. We promote, support and invest in technology research, development and commercialisation. We spread knowledge, bringing people together to solve problems or make new advances. We advise Government on how to remove barriers to innovation and accelerate the exploitation of new technologies.
Technopolis	www.technopolis.fi	Technopolis Plc provides business environments and services for knowledge-intensive companies and organizations. The service portfolio ranges from comprehensive business and development services to modern premises.
The Evidence Network (TEN)	www.theevidencenetwork.com	TEN measures the impact of innovation enablers on the client or member companies they serve.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
ThinkFire	www.thinkfire.com	ThinkFire is a full service intellectual property advisory, brokerage and licensing services firm. Our mission is to help global technology companies and other intellectual property owners develop and execute IP strategies that maximize the return on their investment in IP.
Thomson Reuters	www.thomsonreuters.com	We combine industry expertise with innovative technology to deliver critical information to leading decision makers in the financial, legal, tax and accounting, healthcare, science, and media markets, powered by the world's most trusted news organization.
TPL Group	www.tplgroup.net	TPL Group is a purpose-built boutique that specializes in the development, commercialization and management of IP assets as well as the leveraging of those assets to drive advanced product development.
The Technology Partnership (TTP)	www.ttp.com	TTP is a technology and product development company. We work in partnership with our clients to bring new products to market, creating new business from advances in technology. We develop and commercialise diverse technologies and products across a broad range of market sectors.
TWI	www.twi.co.uk	TWI is one of the world's foremost independent research and technology organisations. Based in Cambridge, UK, since 1946, and with several offices around the world, we have a long history of invention and innovation. We work across all industry sectors and are experts in all aspects of materials joining and related technologies.
Tynax	www.tynax.com	Tynax operates an online technology trading exchange currently featuring over 150,000 patents and technology assets for sale. Combined with its specialist staff, this enables the company to provide unique, full-service brokering capabilities to buyers, sellers and other intermediaries.
UBM Techinsights	www.ubmtechinsights.com	UBM Techinsights is the preeminent provider of sophisticated information services, consulting, and management software for technology companies seeking to leverage and protect their technology and intellectual property assets.
UKTI	www.ukti.gov.uk	Government agency which works with UK-based businesses to ensure their success in international markets and encourage the best overseas companies to look to the UK as their global partner of choice.
Venture 2	www.venture2.net	Venture2 helps leading companies achieve their business goals through open innovation & collaborative innovation. Our methods provide unique value by bridging the gap between companies seeking innovation and the innovators who create it.

Intermediary	Website	In their own words…
VINNOVA	www.vinnova.se	VINNOVA is Sweden's innovation agency and our aim is to increase the competitiveness of Swedish researchers and companies. Our task is to promote sustainable growth in Sweden by funding needs-driven research and the development of effective innovation systems. To this end, we have 220 million euro to invest in new and ongoing projects each year.
World Economic Forum	www.weforum.org	The World Economic Forum is an independent, international organization incorporated as a Swiss not-for-profit foundation. It aims to be: the foremost organization which builds and energizes leading global communities; the creative force shaping global, regional and industry strategies; the catalyst of choice for its communities when undertaking global initiatives to improve the state of the world.
Yet2.com	www.yet2.com	Yet2.com is focused on bringing buyers and sellers of technologies together so that all parties maximize the return on their investments. Whether you are working with a team of our licensing experts or using our virtual technology marketplace, yet2.com offers companies and individuals the tools and expertise to acquire, sell, license, and leverage some of the world's most valuable intellectual assets.
YourEncore	www.yourencore.com	YourEncore helps companies accelerate innovation by connecting them with retired scientists and engineers to leverage their expertise. Companies engage with YourEncore to leverage external innovation as a means to accelerate growth. YourEncore Experts specialize in the life sciences, consumer sciences, food sciences, specialty materials, and aerospace and defense industries.

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Activities

Open Innovation Forum
The Forum is a structured programme, limited to a maximum of 20 companies and run by the Institute for Manufacturing. Members share best practice, explore 'hot topics' along the FMCG Value Stream and participate in optional, accelerated open innovation collaborations.
http://bit.ly/oiforum

The author

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The Centre for Technology Management

The Centre for Technology Management (CTM) is one of several research centres within the Institute for Manufacturing (IfM). CTM focuses on helping managers to make the most appropriate use of current and future technological resources. It aims to provide comprehensive support to managers, based on an integrated understanding of science, engineering and business management. CTM disseminates its research through its annual Technology Management Symposium, through courses and workshops and through its extensive network of industrial partners and commissioned projects.

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