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Well-connected and experienced – Technologie-Lizenz-Büro (TLB) GmbH celebrates 15 years of technology transfer

Germany's Baden-Württemberg is rightly known as the "Land" (state) of inventors and of excellent universities and other tertiary institutions. Innovation is of prime importance both in public research institutes and in private enterprises. To allow excellence in research and development to develop into successful innovations which can succeed in the market place in the form of new products or services, competence and know-how are needed at the intersection of science and industry.

For the past 15 years, the Technologie-Lizenz-Büro (TLB) GmbH has shaped the technology transfer out of universities and tertiary institutions of Baden-Württemberg. This experience over many years makes TLB a leader amongst the patent commercialization agencies for universities and tertiary institutions. The Technologie-Lizenz-Büro (TLB) der Baden-Württembergischen Hochschulen GmbH, founded in 1998, had its origins in a pilot project of the University of Karlsruhe which dates back to 1987. Incorporated for 15 years, TLB is one of the German patent commercialization agencies which has been the longest in the market and was founded well before the BMBF Commercialisation Offensive initiated by the German Ministry for Education and Research. The setting up of the TLB as a private sector incorporated entity (GmbH) showed the way for later patent commercialisation agencies towards a professional commercialization effort.

And the successes are very pleasing: more than 17 million Euros of income from licenses and commercialization over the past 15 years as well as numerous successfully commercialized patents illustrate TLB's long-term experience. In terms of commercialization successes, the TLB has for many years been the leader among the German patent commercialization agencies dealing with tertiary education inventions.

The main asset of the Technologie-Lizenz-Büro GmbH is its staff who contribute their extensive knowledge from a wide range of technical and scientific fields to TLB's consolidated knowledge base. This group of co-workers has been strategically expanded and consolidated over the years. At present, eight innovation managers with scientific credentials work at TLB. This means that experts across all fields, with many years of experience, good connections and working interdisciplinary, are available. Our scientific staff are being trained extensively and on an ongoing basis, so that they can interact with scientists from diverse fields in a knowledgeable and informed manner.

Thanks to the low staff turn-over, TLB as one of the original patent commercialisation agencies offers a great depth of experience in patent management, and the assessment and commercialisation of patents. Currently TLB has a portfolio of approximately 300 inventions and manages some 80 active commercialization agreements. Over the past 15 years, more than 2000

inventions have been evaluated and managed.