Technology Transfer, Its Importance and PlaTCOM’s National Role

Dr Viraj Perera is the CEO of PlaTCOM Ventures Sdn Bhd – the national technology commercialisation platform of Malaysia which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Agensi Inovasi Malaysia (AIM) formed in collaboration with SME Corp Malaysia.

PlaTCOM Ventures’ Role in Supporting National Technology Transfer

PlaTCOM Ventures Sdn Bhd is the national technology commercialisation platform of Malaysia. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary company of Agensi Inovasi Malaysia (AIM) formed in collaboration with SME Corporation Malaysia under one of its six High Impact Programmes (HIPs) in SME Master Plan 2012-2020. PlaTCOM Ventures’ model is designed to discover and support innovations wherever they may be, assess ideas very critically, explore them systematically, and turn the best ones into successful products and services. Rather than following traditional technology transfer models, PlaTCOM Ventures has designed a model that facilitates any segment of the entire commercialisation process (end-to-end facilitation) from idea to products and services. The whole approach is market driven in supporting industrial innovation and competitiveness. The model is more suited to the innovation environment in the South East Asia region in providing commercialisation support for the fledgling businesses, innovators and entrepreneurs including those from academia and public research institutes.

PlaTCOM has helped a number of Malaysian universities and research institutes transfer their innovations to industry either via direct licence deals or via spin off companies. Since its inception in April 2014, PlaTCOM has facilitated nearly 100 licence deals with approximately 61 of these deals made between Malaysian research organisations and Malaysian SMEs. This is a remarkable achievement given the inherent difficulties encountered in transfer of technology from research organisations to industry. A part of the aforementioned success is attributable to the Innovation Business Opportunities (IBO) initiative originally developed and implemented by Agensi Inovasi Malaysia (AIM). IBO is an online platform established to turn inventions into innovations. Facilitating the connection between technology push and market pull is at the core of what this platform does. IBO consolidates all economically viable inventions residing in universities, research institutes and sometimes backyard-turned-labs in one central user-friendly interface. It provides an easy access for entrepreneurs, businesses and investors (such as Business Angels and Venture Capitalists) to step forward and work towards creating value from these inventions. Each invention has been screened for its commercial viability, its technical jargon translated into simple value propositions and presented in a way appreciated by investors and industries. Researchers and inventors are great at the ideation and creation of inventions while businesses and entrepreneurs are great at creating and capitalising on the opportunities. Neither party can work alone, inventors need industry to help them derive benefits from their work, while industry needs the inventors to continue pushing the boundaries and develop products and services that will help to make an industry more competitive on the international market. IBO offers a unique opportunity for both parties to interact and form sustainable business relationships.

IBO deals with commercialisation processes in a holistic approach. PlaTCOM’s team of skilled technology transfer managers that actively facilitate the interactions between technology providers and technology seekers supports this online platform. These managers provide the human element to this online platform that add value and bridge gaps in the commercialisation process. Their core activity is to proactively facilitate the transfer of technology across the academia-industry barrier by liaising with key stakeholders while maintaining commercial neutrality, strict ethical and confidential rigour to protect the benefits of all parties.

For accessing IBO online platform, please visit www.platcomventures.com and go to Discover Technologies.