



Editorial – Issue 24 – April 2016

The new law for science and technology (S&T) has recently been sanctioned, which promises to be a tangible way for the establishment of a new culture focused on science and technology-based innovation activities, because it addresses issues that had not been properly dealt with since the promulgation of the first laws related to innovation. In particular, the new law emphasizes the integration between agents of the public sector and the private sector, which will enable the establishment of more effective partnerships. Another key point of the new law is flexibility with regard to entrepreneurship from the point of view of human resources, significantly facilitating the participation of researchers in projects in partnership with companies.

Upon addressing the gaps left by the first incentive laws, the new code throws a new light on the complex web of inter-relationships, which is a particular characteristic of innovation enterprises and initiatives. The aim is therefore to create opportunities for a better access to scientific infrastructure by companies, as well as to make the use of existing stock of knowledge in academia more flexible, especially when it comes to public institutions, which were usually subject to a number of legal restrictions, necessary to contain abuse and fraud. The resolution of these well known conflicts of legal order regarding the use of infrastructure and intellectual capital makes of the S&T code a major step towards the consolidation of a new approach to science and technology-based innovation in the country.

Now it remains for us to know if this door which has been opened will take effect also in the way in which institutions and companies operate. In addition to establishing partnerships, we must achieve a new way of working, in whose context the research institution would cease to think only of its natural vocation, but would also acquire an enterprise vision in the process, and, similarly, the company would not think just as a company any longer but would also acquire a vision towards the future by investing in expertise, in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, which far surpasses the immediate results usually obtained.

The very well renowned R&D programme of the national electric energy agency, “Agência Nacional de Energia Elétrica” (ANEEL), whose methodology has evolved a lot throughout its existence, provide the opening necessary for the creation of innovative enterprises in the sector. However, in practice, we can still notice the segregation between the “business side” and the “academic side” in the way the projects are conducted, which tends to hamper the effectiveness of its results. In projects of this nature, a new attitude on the part of entrepreneurs still appears to be necessary, so that these two sides can approach each other, allowing for an interaction capable of providing a new innovation dynamics in the sector.

Science and technology-based innovation projects can even comply with the current business model, where there are two very well-characterized roles, the client and the supplier, but they will surely be able to produce much better results by adopting a model based on a real and effective interaction between players. The new law will certainly promote formal partnerships, but only a new mentality where there is a kind of symbiosis between the participants will be able to produce the desired results, namely those which constitute the necessary ingredients to make the country emerge as a potential source of innovation in the global context.

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