Considerations on What Industry Expects From Universities

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Abstract

Top-level knowledge

The fundamental expectation that industry has towards universities is that the research conducted in universities, and the resulting knowledge of the scientific field are at top level.

Innovativeness

An atmosphere of innovativeness, a capability to generate new innovations from the research results, is one of the central expectations.

Broad, cross-disciplinary understanding

The source of innovation is most often a matter of combining things in a new and unexpected way. To be able to do this, a cross-disciplinary understanding and ability to draw broader perspectives is underlined. This capability is underlined, as industries increasingly focus on developing end-to-end solutions. This also means that collaborative research projects will increasingly be such that the results may feed a range of cross-disciplinary projects. There is also a need for ‘generalist doctors’, people that have gone through the process of highest academic education with a broader scope than the traditional model usually expects.

Being international, global

The ongoing globalization process touches first the most knowledge-intensive areas. Increasingly, competition is global also for universities. The research, the knowledge, and the education must be at top level also internationally in order for the university to be a relevant player.

Excellent education

A key source of renewal for both universities and industry is new talent. To nurture this, the education of a university must be relevant and excellent. International competition also calls for this, as the most talented students and researchers restrict themselves less and less to their home country when selecting their university.

Although the primary focus of education obviously must be on the particular scientific field, the education must be able to incorporate training in ‘human issues’, interaction, people management, and so forth.