

Researchers need more knowledge in intellectual property law

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A new doctoral thesis recommends increased awareness of intellectual property issues in the academic world in order to promote future research, says Caroline Pamp, researcher at the Department of Law, School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Swedish universities are in the middle of a transformation process where science is privatised and subject to a commercial logic. Hence, a need arises to become more knowledgeable about intellectual property issues, such as patenting, in order to avoid the risk of some research areas disappearing from the universities. This is one conclusion reached by Caroline Pamp, researcher at the Department of [Law](#), School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, in her recently presented thesis on intellectual property and research. One way of responding to this situation could be to provide more mandatory doctoral courses on intellectual property issues.

The thesis *Intellectual Property in Science* addresses a range of intellectual property issues in early stages of research, with a focus on bioscience and biotechnology. The author, Caroline Pamp from the School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg, refers to the transformation process in the academic world as the 'privatisation process'. This process is evident not only in the context of commercialisation of research results, but also in research programmes at large. This makes the issue of access to research results highly relevant since the technical development, in combination with

increased possibilities to patent early-stage research findings, is making access to research tools increasingly important for the ability of university researchers to conduct continued research.

'The universities can't be left without access to research results. As the law is changing, and legal concepts are reinterpreted, the accessibility and openness in the field must be safeguarded through intellectual property contracts,' says Pamp.

Pamp does not recommend legal change; instead she suggests that the issues be handled through contracts. What she means is that, in response to the new situation at hand, the universities should use strategies based on contracts in order to gain access to patented research results. In return, the university research groups should agree to develop similar contracts for their own research, all for the sake of openness.

Yet, development of effective strategies requires knowledge in intellectual property law, something Pamp says is often lacking in the university world.

'My ambition is to help researchers become better aware of the new situation they are in and of what they are up against, for example how patenting is relevant to them. I also feel that measures need to be taken to reduce the knowledge gap so that researchers will be able to make informed decisions with respect to these issues. More mandatory doctoral courses on [intellectual property](#) would be one way to go', says Pamp.

Provided by University of Gothenburg

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