"ResearchLandscaping" brings together science and industry experts

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Research collaborations and related networks are becoming increasingly important in developing new technologies, particularly since more and more of these activities are interdisciplinary. Fraunhofer IAO's new "ResearchLandscaping" method makes it easier to find suitable partners.

Developing new technologies might be the mainstay of many organizations, but that doesn't make it any less complex. A single organization developing products entirely on its own is the exception rather than the rule; development takes place more often within open, loosely connected networks. But who are the experts in any given technology area and how good a match are their skills for your company? Fraunhofer IAO developed "ResearchLandscaping" to help

you find the right partner.

This structured method fleshes out a map of experts that identifies potential partners and partner networks, analyzes their skills profile and visualizes the findings. Organizations find out, for example, which networks (also known as expert hubs) exist in the relevant research areas, which technology areas they excel in and which level of competence they achieved as well as to what extent they are open to collaborating. The visual landscape helps organizations find the right experts to help set up the technology development networks they need. To find the relevant information, Fraunhofer IAO uses specially developed semantic search tools to trawl what is known as smart data: comprehensive technology and science databases as well as selected areas of social media.

How "ResearchLandscaping" works

Using "ResearchLandscaping" to work up such an overview is a three-stage process. Based on the company's request, the first stage determines the selection criteria and the corresponding relevant data sources for the desired expert networks. This is followed by a gap analysis – which indicates how the company's own network can be augmented by bringing in additional experts – and then the technology networks are determined using smart data. Finally, a "force fit" helps identify and evaluate interesting partners, then aids in visualizing the results and defining specific recommendations for how to proceed.

The "ResearchLandscaping" method offers a valuable overview of the expert landscape in a relevant technology field, and in doing provides companies with a sustainable way of building and expanding highly effective technology networks with the right experts.

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