This thesis addresses the present relationship between academia and industry from the academics' viewpoint. The main aim was to illuminate academics' responses toward commercialisation of research and research collaboration with industry. The thesis provides an analysis of the responses of Finnish academics towards commercialising of the research and collaboration with companies. The thesis is based on survey and interviews with Finnish academics who participated in the Second and Third European Union Framework Programmes. Of 410 questionnaires mailed to university and government research institute participants, 271 were returned (66 per cent). The data from interviews with 32 participants were combined to give a total sample of 303. The survey questionnaire and the interview schema contained both open-ended and structured questions with predetermined alternatives.

The thesis revealed significant diversity in the attitudes of academics toward the commercialisation of research. Three types of academics were identified in this study: traditionalists, pragmatists and entrepreneurs. These three types of academics represent different kind of actors in the academic community who have different concepts of science and, in particular, the role of science in industrial innovation. The findings in the thesis suggest not only that the academic community may be ignorant of opportunities in the commercialisation of research and its underlying rationale, but that academics may have quite divergent views on the appropriateness of taking part in the exploitation of research. One of the main findings, however, was that European Union framework programmes play an important role in enhancing entrepreneurial activities, such as the social and technical competency to patent and exploit academic research, among academics. However, many academics still lack the necessary skills for entrepreneurial activities, and by the same token, inefficient institutional settings and confusing regulations and rules are significant obstacles to successful academic entrepreneurship. The main references were as follows: Robert Merton, The normative structure of science (1942); John Ziman, Prometheus Bound, Science in a dynamic steady state (1994); Donald Stokes, Pasteur's Quadrant. Basic Science and Technological Innovation(1997) and Henry Etzkowitz et al.Capitalizing knowledge. New Intersections of Industry and Academia (1998).