

Assessing the Impact of University-Firm Collaboration on Firm Performance and Regional Development



The Role of
Universities in
Innovation and
Regional Development

Sergio Manrique
✉ SergioAndres.Manrique@uab.cat
🐦 @sergioman90

UAB
Universitat Autònoma
de Barcelona

Objective

This PhD thesis aims at assessing the impact of the collaboration between universities and firms. The study focuses on the drivers and types of university – firm collaboration, and examines how it can aid the survival of firms in a global and competitive market and how it translates into regional development.

Methodology

Multiple case study is used to analyse the development of university-firm collaboration in different contexts

Literature review and conceptual framework of motivations, types and impacts of university-firm collaboration

Empirical study is conducted in order to analyse the impact of university-firm collaboration on firm performance in quantitative terms

Working Hypothesis

Firstly, collaboration with university should facilitate the innovation and development of products, practices and governance at the firm level, which would in turn lead to a higher performance. Additionally, this collaboration with university should facilitate the economic growth and social development of the regions where the interaction takes place.

Research Questions

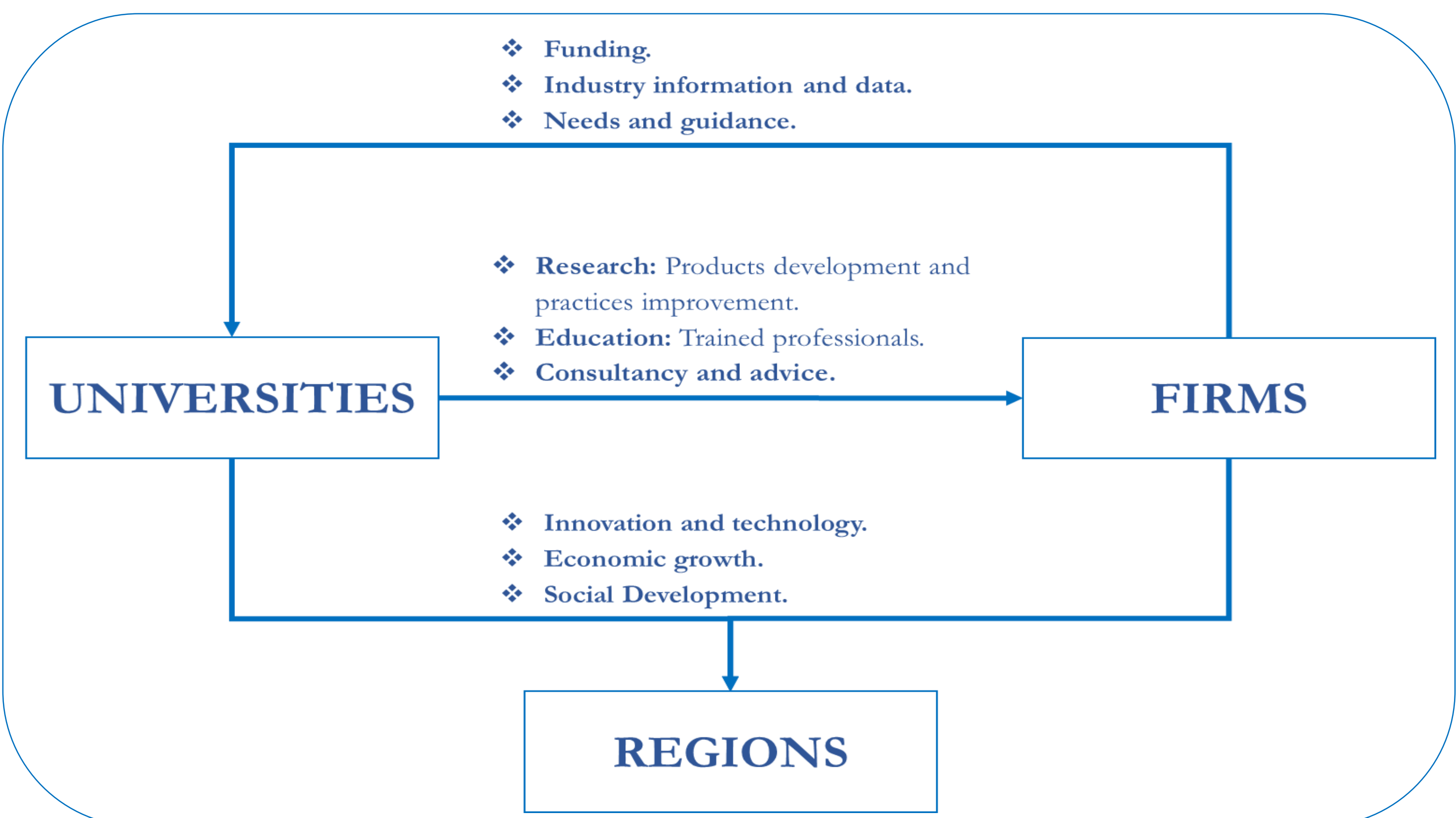
- ❖ What are the causes or motivations of university-firm collaboration?
- ❖ What are the types of university-firm collaboration? And what mechanisms does this collaboration take place through?
- ❖ What are the impacts of university-firm collaboration on firm performance?
- ❖ What set(s) of motivations and mechanisms lead to better impacts?
- ❖ How does university-firm collaboration enhance regional development?

Relevance

Who will benefit from this research?

- ❖ **Firm Managers and Practitioners**, who want to understand how to improve firm competitiveness through innovation based on university-firm collaboration.
- ❖ **University Directives**, who want to address adequately the university-firm relationship and enhance the impact on regional development.
- ❖ **Regional Policy Makers**, who want to design and implement policies to enhance university-firm collaboration and translate it into economic growth and social welfare.

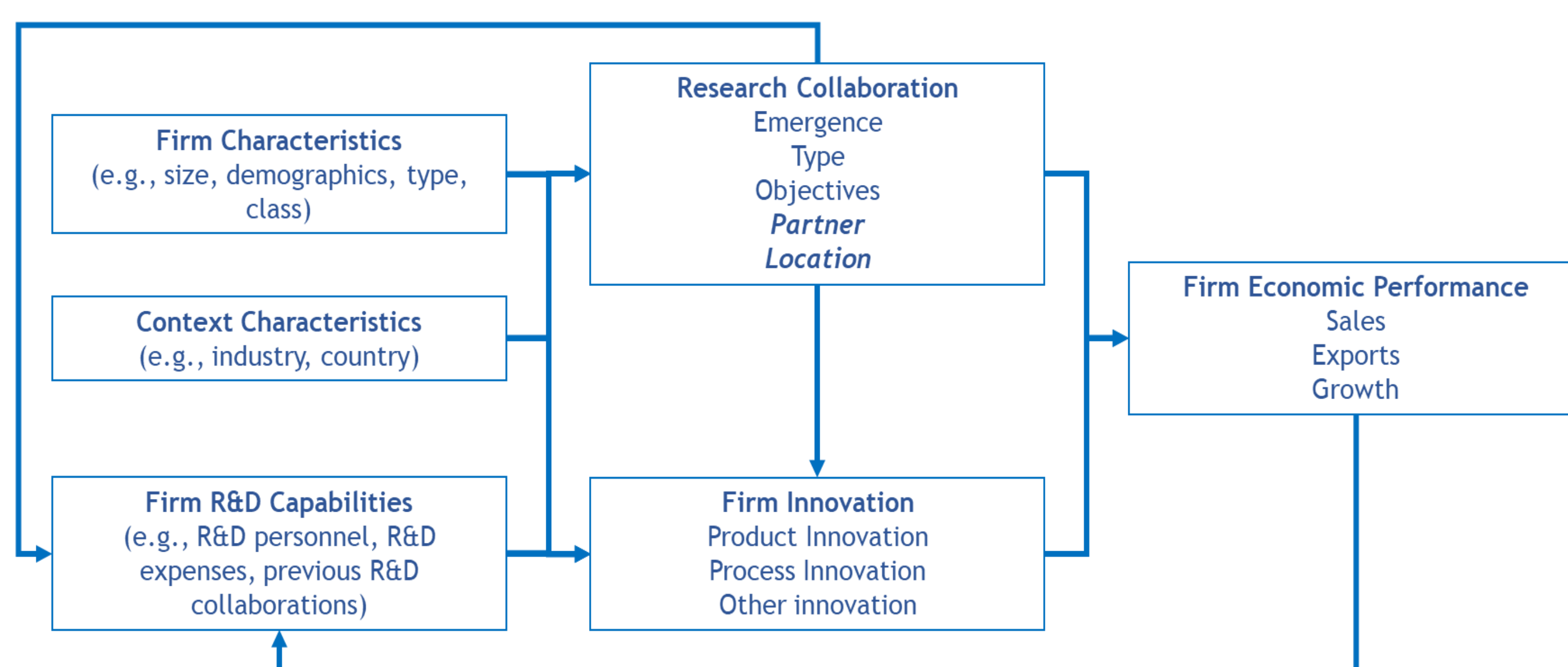
University-Firm-Region Interaction



Preliminary Results

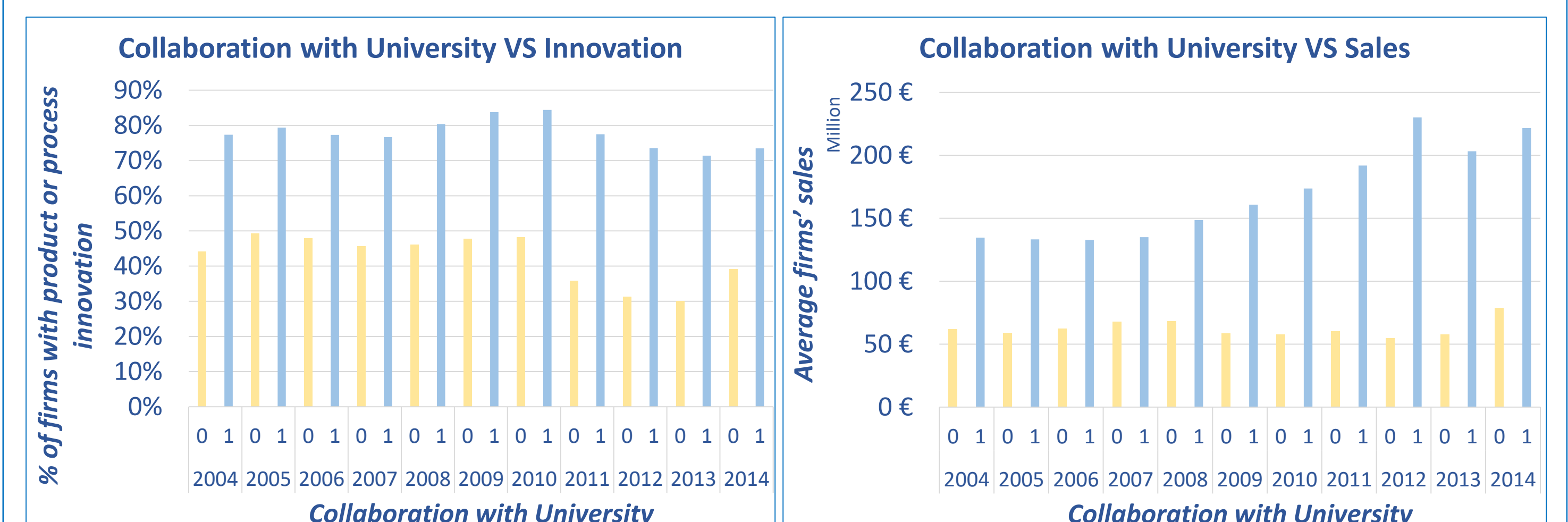
- ❖ UAB's case study shows that universities with international vision can also generate great regional impacts. UAB has a strong impact by its intensive knowledge spillovers, technology transfer, and several projects developed to solve regional public concerns. However, firms in the region of Catalonia in general do not have culture/ideas to collaborate with universities.
- ❖ A study of UAB-Henkel partnership concludes that personal relationships and trust have been determinant informal factors in the success of this R&D partnership, in addition to institutional factors. This collaboration, which serves as a representative case and pathfinder for public-private R&D partnerships and university-firm interactions, has had positive impacts on both university (pathway from basic research to innovation, industry training) and firm (product development, patents, talent detection, prestige), and is meant to have positive effects on the region (employment, economic growth), which, however, remain unclear.

Collaboration Impact Conceptual Model



Scientific Production

- ❖ Manrique, S., & Nguyen, H. (2017, October 26th-27th). *Balancing Regional Engagement and Internationalisation: The Case of Autonomous University of Barcelona**. Paper presented at the 12th Regional Innovation Policies Conference, Santiago de Compostela, Spain.
* Chapter at forthcoming RUNIN Project book.
- ❖ Manrique, S. (2018, September 5th-8th). *Personal Networks and Trust in Public-Private R&D Partnerships: A Case Study from Spain***. Paper presented at the XVI International Triple Helix Conference, Manchester, UK.
** Triple Helix Association 2018 Early-Career Researcher Best Paper Award.
- ❖ Two quantitative papers in process.



- ❖ Data from Spanish firms (PITEC) shows that research collaborations are a phenomena with relevant presence and influence in the R+D+i activities of firms in Spain. It also shows a positive relationship between university-firm collaboration and innovation/performance of firms.

