

office of science and technology. Reportedly William Waldegrave, the official in charge of this review, sees a case for "direct support for 'strategic' research in key areas, that is, work somewhere between completely unfocused 'blue sky' investigation and product development."⁵⁹ Those consortia that are formed in the UK up until now are predominantly private sector initiatives. There is one program called "LINK" which defrays up to 50% of the costs associated with joint industry-academic projects.

Germany

Among the better known institutions which engage in R&D for transfer to industry and which receive public support are:

- A) AIF - Arbeitsgemeinschaft Industrieller Forschung: a private sector organisation which promotes industrial R&D on behalf of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- B) RKW - Rationalisierungs Kuratorium Der Deutschen Wirtschaft: a large organisation offering a broad range of services to industry, including the facilitation of company management of technology and manufacturing problems among others.
- C) FHG - Fraunhofer Gesellschaft for Applied Research: a series of institutes established to bridge the gap between industry and universities. Founded in Bavaria in 1949, the FHG's mission is market oriented, the main focus of which is the translation of research results into innovation.

Italy

Funds to support the formation of consortia in order to lower R&D costs are available to Italian companies through the Fund for Applied Research (FRA) which was instituted in 1968. The fund was created to "promote R&D integration of SMEs in order to obtain necessary critical mass", but it has also benefited larger industrial groups conducting R&D in pursuit of specific technologies.

Several consortia formed under the FRA have achieved commercial success, including Technomare, a group of large engineering firms which exploits opportunities in the off-shore marine market. Together, they employ some 220 persons and

⁵⁹ Tim Beardsley, "Keeping the Sun Shining on British Technology", *Scientific American* (July 1993), p. 107.