

# FME HighEFF

## Centre for an Energy Efficient and Competitive Industry for the Future



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Centre Innovation

**Duelling or dancing? Firms' influencing strategies in university-industry research centres**

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<b>Abstract</b>
<p>Using longitudinal case studies of five university-industry research centres, this paper examines the power and dependence relations between firms and university partners. Drawing on the resource dependency theory, I develop a typology showing how variations in power imbalance and mutual dependence likely affect the type of R&amp;D conducted in university industry collaborations. I further operationalize firms' influencing strategies at the activity level, i.e., in terms of the specific actions' firms take, providing insight into how firms impose their interests on university partners. I find that firms' non-coercive influencing strategies – that is, “influencing and suggesting” and “providing perspectives and data” – shift the power imbalance slightly in favour of firm partners, yielding slightly more applied research that is more relevant for the firms while still granting academic merit to the university partners. The coercive influencing strategy – that is, “forcing change” – is found to cause a large shift in the power balance in favour of the firms and to lower mutual dependence. This large shift yields a higher extent of applied research, which may grant larger benefits for the single firm, while lowering the academic merit and the benefits for the industry.</p> <p>The paper is not published yet.</p>