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**A Process-Oriented Tool Development in the Open Innovation Paradigm**

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Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) often lack the competences to engage in open innovation projects. Especially in the field of life sciences, cooperative knowledge and resource development and sharing practices have proven to be crucial. Therefore, the application orientated research project “Open Innovation in Life Sciences” aims to support SME at managing their innovation process successfully, including open innovation projects. As part of the research, two university partners and three pharmaceutical SME develop together a holistic concept and a tool which support SME to engage in open innovation. This paper discusses the issues of how different SME-specific innovation processes can be conceptualized in a way that can be transferred to other SME while balancing specific requirements and generalizations.