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Summarizing our findings and experiences, competence centers have established a sustainable new form of research institution which are very attractive both from an industry and a personal researcher's perspective. For industry partners, participating in a center offers tremendous possibilities of getting access to cutting edge research trends as well as outsourcing research topics which are of mid-term interest but cannot be dealt with due to lack of resources. For researchers at a competence center, the resulting "Research as a Service" paradigm offers the opportunity of performing their work in an application-oriented context, and thus provides an excellent occasion for developing a research profile which, after all, is equally relevant for high-level academic and industry careers. In this sense, competence centers contribute significantly to bridging the gap between academia and industry which eventually provides a clear win-win situation for basically all involved stakeholders.

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