

***Gaps and roadblocks in the cooperation between science / research and industry - An investment in the Group's sustainability***

**Authors:** Pilar Morais<sup>1</sup>, M. Helena Gomes<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>,Frulact S.A., Maia, Portugal, Email: [Pilar.Morais@frulact.com](mailto:Pilar.Morais@frulact.com)

<sup>2</sup>,Frulact S.A., Maia, Portugal, Email: [Helena.Gomes@frulact.com](mailto:Helena.Gomes@frulact.com)

Frulact has exhibited unprecedented growth in the last decade. This is due to several factors and we would like to highlight one which can be described as the fruitful cooperation of the business with academia and research centers. With Innovation leading the group's vision it became clear that we needed to be close to the sources of "new" knowledge. The challenge is related to building effective bridges between emergent technological and scientific breakthroughs and the business's growth axis and market opportunities.

We acknowledge that academia/business timings are different, ambitions are different, even language can potentially be a barrier to successful collaboration. Our experience has shown us that it is possible to connect each other's deliverables and to make correct use of each partner's expertise and complementarity. The model for success usually involves identifying "pivots" – people who work across the imaginary boundaries between **science / research and industry** and can "push and pull" teams in effective ways.

Frulact's group is constantly experimenting novel cooperation models under its "Frulact Academy" program. Some examples include i) projects managed under EU funding dedicated to new technologies, ingredients, innovative education models, emergent trends; ii) lectures, visits and talks at Frulact; iii) student's ideation challenges leading to internships; iv) Frulact Founder's scholarship and mentoring program; v) open innovation challenges; vi) supporting PhD Programmes of collaborators.

We believe that this continuous reinforcement in Science and Technology will make us lead.