

# Conversation with a Certified Licensing Professional (CLP) – Pooja Bhatia, MBA, CLP, RTP



Pooja Bhatia, MBA, CLP, RTP, is Chief Manager, Innovation-Technology Transfer Office (i-TTO) of the Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT) in New Delhi, India. Ms. Bhatia heads the i-TTO, a regional tech transfer office set up at FITT with support from National Biopharma Mission, a joint project of Government of India and World Bank, with the mandate to cater to academia, startups and incubation centres. Her work entails innovation management, technology transfer, marketing, strategic partnership, industry engagement and policy development. Ms. Bhatia serves on the CLP Exam Development and Maintenance committee.

While she has over 14 years of professional experience in intellectual property, licensing, collaborations, and policy framing, Ms. Bhatia honed her negotiation skills well before the start of her career as the middle child sandwiched between two sisters.

***In what stage of your licensing career did you earn the CLP certification? What motivated your decision to pursue the designation?***

I earned the CLP credential in 2018 at the mid-stage of my career. I always wanted to add on a certification endorsing my expertise and knowledge and had been looking for the right credential to pursue. During my interaction with tech transfer professionals in tech transfer offices in the US and Europe, their signatures showcased CLP and RTP (Registered Technology Transfer Professional) credentials, which intrigued me. I did more research about the CLP credential, realizing that at the time there were only two to three CLP credential holders in India. The designation was already commonly accepted in other countries, and I decided to pursue CLP certification to distinguish myself within India and internationally.

***In your experience, what role does professional certification play in the industry?***

Any professional certification helps to establish oneself or move to a higher professional standing. Specifically, CLP is a standard which attests to the experience, expertise and knowledge I have, and it definitely helps in finding a common ground while connecting with colleagues and clients.

***You will complete the CLP recertification process in 2021. What value do you see in maintaining the CLP credential?***

CLP is a trademark certifying your capability. The CLP credential once earned is thus very valuable. One has to put in efforts to obtain and maintain it. CLP increases your marketability quotient, gives you and others a confidence while dealing with you and offers entry into an elite club of professionals. One of the key requirements for re-certification is to earn credits in a number of ways, including attending workshops and courses or writing articles, which gives a chance to keep abreast in your field. Thereby, I see a value in maintaining the credential.

Earning the CLP credential can also help in earning other credentials. I pursued the RTP after I earned the CLP certification. Since I hold the CLP designation, which RTP considers equivalent to 60 points, I did not have to attend more workshops to meet the RTP key skills criteria.

***What is your advice for others considering pursuing CLP certification, and how did you prepare for the CLP exam?***

Go for it! It makes a huge difference when you are interacting with companies and other professionals in this field. More than books, you will find information and learn more through articles, publications and connecting with peers. I read all the resource material available with LES and AUTM, articles and papers published on these topics and the reference material cited by CLP.

***What role does your employer play in your certification and professional development goals?***

FITT encourages employees to stay active in the field and keep up to date by engaging in professional development activities. I share information and guide my team members in seeking certifications, work with them on writing papers and identifying the right workshops and courses. FITT does not require, but prefers, professional certification. I encourage employers to nudge staff to invest time in updating their knowledge by reading and writing articles, collaborating with peers and taking part in committees of various forums to learn and stay active in this field.



***“CLP IS A STANDARD WHICH ATTESTS TO THE EXPERIENCE, EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE I HAVE, AND IT DEFINITELY HELPS IN FINDING A COMMON GROUND WHILE CONNECTING WITH COLLEAGUES AND CLIENTS.”***