At the turn of the 21st century, a new cluster of technologies have emerged as a new frontline in biotechnology. Synthetic biology, systems biology, nanotechnology, as well as improved sequencing, more sophisticated recombinant DNA technologies and bioinformatics are all part of this cluster constituting the next generation of biotechnology. The CRISPR genome editing technology exemplifies many of the challenges that can be expected in future technological development. A broad investigation of this technology and its embedment in legal, institutional and technological frameworks thus may serve to form some initial outline of what the future may bring.

Legal discourse increasingly finds itself intertwined in complex social and technological perspectives. The implications of the increased speed of technological development and the acknowledgement of the broad impact of technological development highlights the need to consider how law may adapt or be adapted in order to keep abreast with socio-epistemic issues emerging at the forefront of interdisciplinary discourse and technological development.

This thesis will address these questions by developing a theoretical framework suitable to host and accommodate interdisciplinary discourses of law, technology and society. Secondly, the thesis will explore the landscape evolving around the coupling of openness and patents.