

Texas A&M University System Office of Technology Commercialization

Our Mission

It is the mission of the OTC to encourage broad practical application of System research for public benefit; to encourage and assist those associated with the System in the protection, licensing and commercialization of their discoveries; to ensure the equitable distribution of royalties and other monetary benefits resulting from the commercial application of intellectual property; and to see that commercialization activities benefit the research, education and outreach missions of the System into the future.

Our History

In 1992, Herb Richardson, as the Chancellor for The Texas A&M University System, spearheaded an effort to create an office of technology transfer, mirroring what he knew to be so successful at his alma mater, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He pulled together several fledgling efforts in technology transfer and created the Technology Licensing Office, a centralized office to manage the intellectual property of eighteen universities and state agencies that made up the A&M System.

In the four years following the creation of the Technology Licensing Office, royalties exceeded three million dollars. Ten years later, this number would triple. In 2004 and 2005, the office was moved to Texas A&M University under the direction of the Vice President for Research, where it expanded its scope of services to include the formation of start-up companies around A&M technologies. Two such companies were formed in 2005. The A&M System renamed the group as the Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC) and moved responsibility to the Chancellor in 2006.

The office now manages more than 900 patents and 1500 patent applications relating to a portfolio of some 2600 inventions. On average, the OTC files a patent every week and closes a license agreement every other week.

Intellectual Property Policy

Introduction

On May 25, 2006 the Board of Regents issued a new Texas A&M University System Intellectual Property Commercialization and Management Policy. The purpose for changing and consolidating the pre-existing System Policies 17.01 and 17.02 into a [new System Policy 17.01 entitled Intellectual Property Management and Commercialization](#), is to 1)

respond to the establishment of the Office of Technology Commercialization by the Board of Regents in December, 2005, 2) clarify the role and responsibility of the Office of Technology Commercialization at the System level, and 3) simplify and restructure System policy as it relates to ownership, management and commercialization of intellectual property.

Who was involved in creating the Intellectual Property Commercialization and Management Policy?

The effort to create the new policy was led by the Chancellor and the Office of Technology Commercialization and involved the Vice Chancellor for Technology Commercialization, CEOs from each System member, the Council of Principal Investigators, the Texas A&M University Research Counsel, the Vice President for Research and many individual researchers from across the A&M System who are actively involved in technology commercialization.

What are the Objectives of the new Policy?

The Texas A&M University System (System) is committed to teaching, research and public service. Research is one of the most important and rewarding aspects of the educational process, regularly leading to the development of new ideas, discoveries and technologies with the potential to benefit the public at large. It was, therefore, determined that a new intellectual property policy be written to better assure that the new ideas, discoveries and technologies arising from research conducted as a part of the educational process be used to the best interest of the System's constituents and the public it serves.

The new policy is based on three fundamental principles: enhancing academic freedom, providing a clear pathway for pursuing technology commercialization, and protecting all interested parties. To that end, the specific objectives of this policy are to:

1. ensure that the commercial development of research results enhances the System's education, research and public service missions; and
2. protect the academic freedom of faculty with respect to the publication of their research findings; and
3. foster an entrepreneurial environment, through incentives and protections, that encourages the creation, discovery, development, and rapid transfer of new knowledge for the public benefit; and
4. educate and assist faculty, staff and others in the use of the patent system with respect to their discoveries and inventions; and
5. establish the principles for determining and protecting the interests of the System, creator, and sponsor with respect to discoveries and inventions created by faculty, staff and others in a manner that is equitable to all parties.

Facts about the OTC

The OTC is a relatively young technology transfer office, founded in 1992.

Since its founding, the OTC has:

- Processed more than 2,400 inventions created by A&M System faculty and staff
- Filed more than 2,700 patent applications
- Closed more than 1,700 License Agreements and Material Transfer Agreements
- Generated revenues exceeding \$60 million related to intellectual property rights

Revenues have gone to support:

- More than \$20 million in sponsored research
- Retention of important faculty
- Support for more than 800 faculty and staff inventors
- Sharing arrangements with co-developers like USDA

Steeped in the traditions of A&M, the OTC:

- Became the youngest technology transfer office in the top 25 in North America in revenues
- Is in the top ten in the number of license agreements producing income
- Does two-thirds of its license agreements with small businesses-more than 50 startup companies have been formed around A&M technologies
- Provides services to assist entrepreneurial ventures