The Office of Technology Commercialization

The Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC) operates one of the most comprehensive technology transfer programs among leading research universities in the United States.

Side bar: (http://www.prf.org/otc/index.asp)

The OTC, located within the Purdue Research Park of West Lafayette, is part of the Purdue Research Foundation and is, one of four such business incubator facilities across Indiana.

Sidebar: (http://www.purdueresearchpark.com/).

Services provided by OTC support the technological and economic development initiatives of Purdue University faculty and researchers while providing entrepreneurial scholarship opportunities for Purdue students. OTC is solely responsible for protecting and licensing Purdue’s intellectual property assets including patents, copyrights, trademarks and tangible research property. The OTC professional staff work closely with Purdue faculty, staff and student innovators to provide critical resources needed to shepherd an innovation from the lab to realization. OTC endeavors to perform its functions efficiently, effectively and to the maximum benefit of the Purdue community, the State of Indiana and the Nation.

Moving an Idea to the Market

The work of Purdue faculty, staff and students often leads to new ideas, discoveries or improvements to existing solutions. In order to realize the potential impact of those ideas, these innovators disclose the innovation to the OTC, providing a sufficient description of the innovation and all relevant supporting empirical data, results and other material information.

Once an Invention Record and Disclosure Form (IRD) is received by OTC, a professional project manager performs an assessment on the following basis:

- Protectable under applicable intellectual property law
- Public disclosures
- Novelty and originality
- Relationship to existing commercial products/services, if any
- Stage of development
- Current market potential

In its assessment and consultation with both the innovators and legal counsel, OTC also identifies inventorship, ownership and other legal encumbrances to chart a legal landscape for the innovation. For example, joint ownership may result from a co-inventor being employed by a non-Purdue organization, or under provisions of an applicable sponsored research agreement. The results of these assessments enable OTC to develop a commercialization strategy tailored to the relevant innovation.
Once a decision has been made that patent rights are desired or necessary for successful commercialization, Purdue Research Foundation covers the costs of preparing and filing the patent application. For example, OTC may file a U.S. provisional patent application to increase the potential time frame for development. This step constitutes only the first of many necessary to commercialize an innovation. Potential commercial applications must be understood and articulated to provide for a commercialization strategy tailored to the specific innovation.

**IP Strategy, Business Development and Licensing**

Not all innovations require a patent for commercialization. However, if the commercialization strategy provides that patent rights will increase the commercial viability of a patentable invention, Purdue Research Foundation advances the costs of preparing and filing the patent application. OTC works with the innovators to identify and target appropriate and committed development partners and, once engaged, negotiates a business and legal contract (a license) to enable the development partner to bring the innovation to market.

In fiscal year 2010, OTC reported 257 invention disclosures, 99 deals finalized, 52 issued U.S patents, the formation of 11 start-up companies founded on Purdue University innovations, and gross royalty income at $3.93 million USD.

**Side bar:** For a detailed guide to OTC processes and procedures download their booklet, *Technology Transfer at Purdue University* at: [http://www.prf.org/otc/processes.asp](http://www.prf.org/otc/processes.asp)

**Funding Mechanisms Provided by PRF and OTC**

The path from discovery to delivery poses many challenges, not the least of which is the need for well-timed investments in development as innovations advance toward successful commercialization. In an effort to supply Purdue innovators and Purdue Research Park companies with stage-appropriate capital, the Purdue Research Foundation has established specific funding opportunities.

**Trask Innovation Fund**

**SIDE BAR:** ([http://www.prf.org/otc/trask_fund.asp](http://www.prf.org/otc/trask_fund.asp))

Established in 1974 by a gift from Verne A. and Ramouth H. Trask, the Trask Innovation Fund offers a development mechanism to assist Purdue University innovators with resources to advance his/her innovation by increasing the commercial value. The strict objective is to support short-term translational projects that enhance commercial value while reducing the risk profile of commercializing the innovation.

All applications are competitively reviewed and selected by an advisory council that consists of business executives, Purdue and PRF leadership, and experienced faculty innovators. The review includes evaluation of the technical merits, market needs, and the reasonableness of the proposed project adding value to the commercial viability. All proposed work must be completed in six
months from date of award. Allocated funds must be repaid, in full, from any revenue received by OTC for the funded innovation. Indirect costs and/or F&A are not paid by or recovered for the Trask Innovation Fund.

Emerging Innovations Fund

**SIDEBAR:** ([http://emerginginnovationsfund.org/index.php](http://emerginginnovationsfund.org/index.php))

In 2008, Purdue Research Foundation introduced the Emerging Innovations Fund, an integrated approach to research, development and commercialization. The Emerging Innovations Fund offers a mechanism to provide financial resources to new ventures founded on Purdue-owned intellectual property and to eligible Purdue Research Park-based companies. Investments aim to fill a critical funding gap in the nascent stages of new venture development. Eligible applicants may apply for funding up to a maximum of $150,000 in exchange for convertible debt.

The EIF portfolio companies include:

- BioScience Vaccine, Inc. [www.biosciencevaccines.com](http://www.biosciencevaccines.com)

**P3 Alliance**

**SIDEBAR:** ([http://www.purdueresearchpark.com/investors.asp](http://www.purdueresearchpark.com/investors.asp))

In 2009, the Purdue Research Foundation originated the P3 Alliance: Purdue, People, Performance. The P3 Alliance facilitates introduction of pre-screened angel investors to new ventures founded on Purdue-owned intellectual property and to Purdue Research Park-based companies statewide. Applicable companies seeking equity investment are featured through an online portal as well as through live presentations before the P3 Alliance participants. Due diligence and negotiations are the sole responsibility of the prospective investor. Investments normally range from $25,000 to $250,000.