

July 30, 2018

CCN 243155

NIST- RFI Response

SUBJECT: RFI Response: Federal Technology Transfer Authorities and Processes-
Battelle Commercialization Council (BCC) Response to Return on Investment
(ROI) Initiative

To whom it may concern:

Thank you for the invitation to provide input on the Return on Investment Initiative. What Thomas Edison stated more than a hundred years ago is still true today, “The value of an idea lies in the using of it.” Regardless of the amount of innovation created by federal funding, the impact cannot be realized if the innovation is not put to productive use. As a result, the Battelle Commercialization Council expresses strong support for NIST’s efforts to identify needed improvements to federal technology transfer policies, practices and efforts.

The Battelle Commercialization Council (BCC) is comprised of Battelle’s leaders in Technology Transfer across all Battelle managed national laboratories (Brookhaven, Idaho, Lawrence Livermore, National Renewable Energy, Oak Ridge and Pacific Northwest National Laboratories). The BCC’s mission is to continually improve the effectiveness of technology transfer. The members of BCC are also members of the DOE Technology Transfer Working Group (TTWG) and the National Laboratory Technology Transfer (NLTT) committee, which advises the National Laboratory Director’s Council (NLDC). The BCC has provided its input and comments directly to the TTWG and NLDC and endorses the content of the letters submitted by these groups. Additionally, the BCC would like to express support for efforts to improve technology transfer in the following areas (*What are the core Federal technology transfer principles and practices that should be protected, and those which should be adapted or changed*):

- 1) R&D Investments: For success in technology transfer, funding for applied research must be focused on solutions that: a) address validated market needs, b) have target markets of sufficient size, c) are cost competitive, d) achieve significant quantifiable benefits over competing solutions, and e) can attract private investment.
- 2) Incentives, rewards and measures of success: Incentives, rewards and, measures of success are tools that should be employed to incentive our researchers to achieve the ultimate goal of ensuring that technologies are deployed and used at every level - from agency funding decisions to transferring to the private sector.
- 3) Optimizing funding across the entire technology advancement scale to achieve greater deployment and use of government funded technologies: Too often impactful technologies are considered too advanced to access government funding, and too under-developed for private funding. Funding levels should be balanced across technology readiness levels to enable promising technologies to be matured in order to reach a level of development where private funding is willing and able to commercialize the technology.

- 4) Reducing and eliminating barriers to technology transfer: Reducing and eliminating laws, policies, and practices that add complexity to the technology transfer process or lessen the value of intellectual property rights of government funded inventions is encouraged. Such efforts improve the effectiveness of technology transfer.
- 5) Enabling entrepreneurial cultures that create spin-outs, start-ups and new products: Programs such as Energy I-Corp and DOE's Technology Commercialization Fund have shown great promise in developing cultures that can lead to spin-outs, start-ups, and new products for existing businesses. The advancement of these and other promising programs is important to moving technology transfer to the next level.

The impact that government funded research and development has had on United States' economic competitiveness is profound. However, as the world becomes more advanced and competitive our investments in research must also become more effective at producing outcomes. A critical part of this is increasing our effectiveness at transferring research for economic benefit. We therefore express our appreciation and support to NIST and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy department for this effort.

Sincerely,



Jason C. Stolworthy
Chair, Battelle Commercialization Council

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