**Request for Information**

**Federal Technology Transfer Authorities and Processes**

**Last day to submit the responses: July 30, 2018**

### Introduction

In order to advance the President's Management Agenda to modernize government for the 21st century, including the associated Lab-to-Market CAP Goal in coordination with the White House's OSTP, NIST is initiating a Return on Investment (ROI) Initiative [4] with the intent of conducting a comprehensive assessment of the Federal technology transfer system that will identify opportunities to improve Federal technology transfer efforts, policies, and practices. The goal of this effort is to, where appropriate, streamline and accelerate transfer of technology from Federal R&D investments to attract greater private-sector investment for innovative products, processes, and services, as well as new businesses and industries that will create jobs, grow the economy, and enhance national security.

NIST is seeking broad input and participation from stakeholders in Federal R&D, intellectual property, and technology transfer to assist in identifying and prioritizing issues and proposed solutions. This assessment will address: (a) Core Federal technology transfer principles and practices that should be protected, and those which should be adapted or changed; (b) approaches to improve efficiency and reduce regulatory burdens for technology transfer to attract private sector investment in later-stage R&D, commercialization, and advanced manufacturing; (c) new partnering models and technology transfer mechanisms with the private sector, academia, other Federal agencies, state, and other public-sector entities to support technology development and maturation; (d) new approaches that will reduce or remove barriers, and enable accelerated technology transfer, with a focus on areas of strategic national importance; (e) better metrics and methods to evaluate the ROI outcomes and impacts arising from Federal R&D investment; and (f) new approaches to motivate significantly increased technology transfer outcomes from the Federal sector, universities, and research organizations.

This information will only be used as input to the Return on Investment initiative. All submissions, including attachments and other supporting materials, will become part of the public record and subject to public disclosure. Sensitive personal information, such as account numbers or Social Security numbers, or names of other individuals, should not be included. Submissions will not be edited to remove any identifying or contact information. Do not submit confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive or protected information. Comments that contain profanity, vulgarity, threats, or other inappropriate language or content will not be considered.

### Instructions

This template is designed to facilitate responses to the RFI. Use of this form is optional.

It is not required to fill out all of the sections, for example a participant may elect to only provide input on one question.

Save and email it to [roi@nist.gov](mailto:roi@nist.gov).

# Contact Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Full Name | Nish Acharya |
| Email address | nish@equalinnovation.com |
| Organization Name | Equal Innovation |
| Organization Type | Innovation Consulting Firm |

Questions

1. What are the core Federal technology transfer principles and practices that should be protected, and those which should be adapted or changed?

|  |
| --- |
| Today, organizations are developing technology for two purposes - to commercialize profitably or to rapidly share with the world for societal impact. Unlike the past, today the latter category makes up 10-30% of innovations, depending on how you calculate. On the profitable side, federal tech transfer should encourage tools, such as online platforms, that can share federal technology more rapidly with entrepreneurs and investors. For the non-profit side, more effort should be made to connect those technologies with foundations, impact investors, NGOs and universities.  The current process of managing tech transfer in-house should be reduced. Tech transfer professionals have limited personal networks with industry, and often are based in cities without entrepreneurs, investors or corporate partners. Tech transfer offices must adopt an "inbound marketing" approach that draws external partners rather than pushing it out or trying to manage remotely. |

1. What are the issues that pose systemic challenges to the effective transfer of technology, knowledge, and capabilities resulting from Federal R&D? Please consider those identified in the RFI as well as others that may have inhibited collaborations with Federal laboratories, access to other federally funded R&D, or commercialization of technologies resulting from Federal R&D?

|  |
| --- |
| The biggest systemic challenge is that, no matter how much people have tried, commercialization still occurs primarily on the East and West coasts. Therefore, efforts to create accelerators and other on-site programs are, by nature, going to be limited in their success. In addition, the lack of investment in federal lab tech transfer offices - in personnel with industry experience and networks, is a systemic problem across federal labs. |

1. What is the proposed solution for each issue that poses a systemic challenge to the effective transfer of technology, knowledge, and capabilities resulting from Federal R&D? Please consider the approaches identified in the RFI.

|  |
| --- |
| One important solution is to solve the challenges of geography by using existing platforms to promote federally funded research to private investors and corporate partners. Perhaps a federal platform needs to be created too. For example, each agency can replicate the NIH's PubMed portal. This site is critical to the health care and life sciences industry to stay abreast of research developments in the field. In addition, federal labs must be more open to working with outside partners to further their technology transfer and source partnerships, investors and grant funding. |

1. What are other ways to significantly improve the transfer of technology, knowledge, and capabilities resulting from Federal R&D to benefit U.S. innovation and the economy? What changes would these proposed improvements require to Federal technology transfer practices, policies, regulations, and legislation?

|  |
| --- |
| Many organizations, including companies, and large NGOs, don't have the personnel to manage innovation, even if they license it. Regulatory change to make it easier for federal employees to work with private companies to ensure that research is not just commercialized, but actually reaches customers would be useful  Also, transparency about who serves on the Interagency Committees would be useful. |

## Thank you for your time and participation.