**Request for Information**

**Federal Technology Transfer Authorities and Processes**

**Last day to submit the responses: May 18, 2018**

### Introduction

The Secretary of Commerce delegated responsibility to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for certain regulatory and policy issues related to the management of Federal inventions. As part of a broader initiative aimed at increasing the return on investment from technologies that result from Federal research and development (R&D), NIST requests information from the public regarding the current state of Federal technology transfer and the public’s ability to engage with Federal laboratories and access federally-funded R&D through collaborations, licensing, and other mechanisms. The information received in response to this RFI will be used by NIST to evaluate possible changes to Federal technology transfer practices, policies, regulations, and/or legislation that will (1) streamline the transfer of technology from Federal laboratories and other federally-funded R&D, and (2) accelerate the commercial development of Federal technologies by the private sector.

NIST is seeking broad input and participation from Federal R&D and intellectual property and technology transfer stakeholders to assist in identifying and prioritizing the issues and the recommended actions. The specific objectives of the assessment are to identify: (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 of 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 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 | Sita Pappu |
| Email address | spappu@wsu.edu |
| Organization Name | Washington State University |
| Organization Type | University |

Questions

1. What programmatic, regulatory, or legislative practices and/or provisions related to Federal technology transfer are currently having positive impacts for your organization?

|  |
| --- |
| 1. DOE's 6-monthly call for technology transfer opportunities from universities that could be SBIR/STTR topics has been very beneficial.  2. NSF I-Corps program for universities to train researchers and entrepreneurs in engaging industry and customers.  3. NIH BRIDGS program  4. SBIR/STTR programs from all applicable agencies |

1. What provisions related to Federal technology transfer are currently inhibiting either collaborations with Federal labs, access to other federally-funded R&D, or commercialization of Federal technologies?

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Inability to copyright software and digital products developed by government operated laboratories and transfer copyright protection for software and digital products to benefit U.S. companies  2. Bureaucratic inertia in obtaining layers of approval in moving technologies  3.Lack of commercially focused interest leads to difficulty in centering discussions around technology potential  4. Unrealistic ROI measures for very young discovers put undue burden on researchers to assume ROI drivers and undue burden on SMBs to justify ROI measures that don't fully encapsulate how the technology will be measured when it is developed  5.Over-reliance on standardized agreements |

1. What programmatic, regulatory, or legislative practices and/or provisions related to Federal technology transfer would you like to see changed and in what ways?

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Uniform application of copyright status and policy of Federal government commissioned works, particularly to software  2. Funding agency specifically partnering with universities in joint promotion and marketing and licensing of inventions.  3.Agency funding for basic research outcomes to support proof of concept and prototyping activities at universities  3.Simplification of transfer agreements to allow for more specifics regarding the usage of transferred tech but clearer ownership rights for acquirer  4.Allow for private investment in technologies as part of the transfer process thereby lessening risk for federal lab and linking resources to SMBs |

## Thank you for your time and participation.