

Work Group on Economic Development & Technology Commercialization
Summary of actions & decisions
November 18, 2010 meeting

Present: Gary Attman, chair; Cliff Kendall, Louise Gonzales, Tom McMillen (phone-in),
Linda Gooden (phone-in)
Joe Vivona, Brian Darmody, Carol Berthold, Janice Doyle
Guests: UMBC: Geoffrey Summers, Dean Drake, Wendy Martin; UMCP: Norma
Allewell, Gayatri Varma; UMB: Bruce Jarrell, Jim Hughes, David Sadowski.
Absent: Earl Hance, John Young

1. Technology transfer at USM research institutions

In order to give the work group a better idea of how technology transfer functions at USM institutions, the group asked the vice presidents for research at UMB, UMCP and UMBC to respond to a series of questions. The first area dealt with the organizational structure of and services offered by technology transfer at their institutions. The second area dealt with an assessment of the institution's current technology transfer operations: successes and areas for improvement. Finally, each vice president was asked to describe the institution's most pressing needs in technology transfer, detailing what each would do if the institution were to receive additional funding for technology transfer.

Key points to emerge from the presentations and ensuing discussion:

- Compliance and contracts present a heavy burden to the already complex undertaking that is technology transfer. The regulatory environment changes daily.
- Technology transfer staffs at USM research institutions are vastly smaller than at peer institutions. All three vice presidents stressed how shortage of resources, both staff and funding, seriously limits technology transfer services and activities.
- The patent process is very expensive; at present, applying for a foreign patent is prohibitively expensive. At the same time, protecting an intellectual property through U.S. patents alone is inadequate protection and can have a negative effect on its commercialization.
- A great opportunity and need exists for licensing compliance to protect our intellectual property. At present, we do not adequately engage in the compliance function, leaving ourselves open to theft of our intellectual properties through patent and license infringements.

2. IBBR – UMB plan

Bruce Jarrell, Executive Vice Dean of UMB School of Medicine, described how research drives economic development, showing the connection between research funding and job creation. He described the competitive advantages which UMB

brings to IBBR, of UMB's research vision and its research and economic objectives in Montgomery County through IBBR, and the steps it plans at IBBR.

To accomplish its objectives, three components are necessary: underlying recurring funding, seed money, and space.

3. Status of the strategic plan

The strategic plan will go to the Board of Regents on December 3. Joe Vivona explained the implementation planning process. Meetings are now being held with campus representatives. The goal is to complete the process by the beginning of the legislative session.

4. Consultants

Joe Vivona explained the options for hiring consultants:

- Step 1: Bring in several consultants, at the same time, who have been practitioners in technology transfer at similar institutions to discuss their experiences, successes, recommendations for a university technology transfer operation. The current model within the USM is probably what we'd find at other institution.
- Step 2: Hire individuals who specialize in analyzing tech transfer operations to make recommendations about tech transfer operations within the USM.

5. Funding strategies

Brian Darmody pointed to several possible models for funding strategies: University of Washington, University of Missouri, Ohio State University. Utah is also a possible model. Having the USM or its institutions take equity in LLCs is a potential topic for a future meeting.

6. Future meetings

The group wishes to hold a meeting before each Board meeting, when possible, and to tie work group meetings to the Board committees on Finance and Audit.