

Tech Transfer Office Streamlines System to Generate Business with Higher Ed

Makes it easier for University of Nevada, Reno and DRI researchers to license, commercialize inventions

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Submitted by Mike Wolterbeek, Media Relations Officer, University of Nevada Reno

RENO, Nev. – A new streamlined system to enable University of Nevada, Reno and DRI faculty to begin start-up companies based on their research and development, and to seek entrepreneurial partners from the business community to encourage economic development, has been put in place by the institutions' Technology Transfer Office. This system is based primarily on a new standard license agreement, the "NSHE Express," available to faculty-based start-up companies.

"The Tech Transfer Office is committed to facilitating and encouraging our faculty who want to engage in entrepreneurial activities, and to encouraging economic development and diversification that benefits the State of Nevada," Ryan Heck, patent counsel and director of the TTO, said. "This opens the door even wider for Nevada companies to develop new technologies in partnership with the University and DRI."

The TTO is finalizing the first NSHE Express license agreement with IBUCS, a DRI start-up company based on a faculty's work on "smart meter" technology that breaks down power used by a home or business into power consumed by individual appliances, in order to help monitor and control energy costs. The TTO is also working with a UNR faculty start-up company on a license to a wastewater sludge drying technology, which also may be used for energy production.

"We're creating ways to help our faculty find funds to translate their research into the marketplace," says Heck. "This license opens up new funding sources to our faculty."

The Tech Transfer Office has more than 30 technologies available for licensing at the University in a variety of commercialization categories, including renewable energy, life sciences, physical sciences and environmental sciences, as well as in the medical field.

"There are many research projects where faculty may decide to take advantage of the agreement," Heck said. "In fact, that's the whole point of the NSHE Express – to get more faculty thinking about start-up activity."

"We want to remove any barriers to start-up potential, the lack of a standard, clearly posted policy by itself was a significant barrier," Heck said. "The terms of the agreement, the 'NSHE Express,' are very favorable for the start-up company, and we believe more appropriate for NSHE institutions than agreements from other progressive institutions who have adopted standardized agreements for faculty start-ups, such as Carnegie Mellon University and the University of North Carolina. It will make it easier for interested companies in Nevada to collaborate with researchers to commercialize new technologies."

In addition to the NSHE Express License, the TTO will provide faculty the opportunity to take an option on intellectual property based on their technologies, unless the TTO is engaged in active external marketing efforts. This option will allow faculty to seek investment to fund their new company. If they are successful, the faculty can start the company using the NSHE Express License.

"In the past three years, we've licensed several successful technologies from the University and from DRI for

everything from a potential treatment for muscular dystrophy to an instrument that can monitor air quality,” Heck said. “We look forward to working with our faculty and the investment/entrepreneurial community to build more new businesses in Nevada.”

Mano Misra, a University professor in the Materials Engineering Division and director of the University’s Renewable Energy Center, holds nine patents. His technology has been the basis of several licensing agreements, including one for a material for removing arsenic from water that has recently been introduced as a product by EP Minerals, a company headquartered in Reno.

“The TTO has been hugely helpful to faculty members to get their technologies out into the commercial world,” Misra said.

For more information about the Technology Transfer Office, visit <http://tto.nevada.edu/>

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