Working With Industry:
Strategies, Perspectives and Resources to Support Industry Sponsored Projects at Kansas State University
In 2006, Kansas State University’s Vice President for Research established a priority of increasing K-State’s corporate research funding and authorized K-State’s membership in the University-Industry Demonstration Partnership. Kansas State University (K-State) has developed K-State2025, a strategic visionary plan that places high priority on increasing corporate engagement from a more holistic approach across its Six Thematic Goals (see http://www.k-state.edu/2025/).

Thematic Goals:
• Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities, and Discovery
• Undergraduate Educational Experience
• Graduate Scholarly Experience
• Engagement, Extension, Outreach, and Service
• Faculty and Staff
• Facilities and Infrastructure
• Athletics
Responding to the emphasis placed on increased corporate relations, K-State has developed innovative approaches for industry sponsored research in an effort to be responsive to the business needs of companies while ensuring compliance with the myriad of public policy mandates, including IRS regulations that govern public universities.

There are several options for industry sponsors to consider that will assist them in maximizing the potential of commercially viable outcomes resulting from industry sponsored research at K-State. This list of options is a non-exhaustive set of examples and the options are not mutually exclusive. K-State is committed to working with industry to customize agreements to meet both parties’ needs for specific projects and long term business goals.

Testing and evaluation projects that do not involve original creative research and development on the part of the university researchers are also important projects for our industrial partners and are also important aspects of the University-Industry relationship.
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Differences in Institutional Missions

- Non-Profit
- Open Environment
- Freedom to Publish
- Benefit the Public
- Teaching / Research / Outreach
- Public Funding

- For Profit
- Protect Competitive Advantage
- Need for Confidentiality
- Maintain Freedom to Operate
- Maximize Shareholder Value
- Must Generate Economic Benefit
Mission Differences Impacting SOW

• Industry research is driven by business needs
  – Focused on solving a problem or meeting an objective

• University research is curiosity driven and open-ended
  – Focused on creating knowledge
University Perspective

University investigators live predominantly in a grant-funded environment. This environment allows considerable freedom for the faculty to pursue their own scientific interests and to control the direction, progress, conduct, timing and dissemination of their results.

Contracts require almost a paradigm shift from this norm into a realm of definition, expectation, control and consequences that is unfamiliar to many university investigators and possibly uncomfortable.

Clear definition of what the contract requires the investigators to do; arrived at after discussion of needs, interests and capabilities with an industry partner goes a long way to achieving the necessary gentle paradigm shift need for mutual success.
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**Industry Perspective**

A sponsored research project is usually just one component of a larger research program at the company. Collaboration with a faculty member is proposed for one or more of these reasons:

- Gain access to expertise, equipment, or facilities that are otherwise not available within the company for the project
- Explore an alternate path to the desired outcome
- Acquire supporting information about the technology, often of a more fundamental or theoretical nature

The sponsor usually makes a significant contribution to the content of the SOW, especially regarding desired outcomes, milestones, and deliverables (i.e., what will be done).

The sponsored project content, timeline, and budget must fit within the objectives and constraints of the company’s larger research and business objectives.
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Project Mapping Diagram

High Relative Investment -- University
High Invention Probability

Applied Research

Fundamental Research

Low Invention Probability

High Relative Investment -- Sponsor
Quick Words of Wisdom

Issues To Be Ready For:

What overhead will my company be required to pay?
What is your IP policy?

Issues To Be Aware Of:

Scope Creep
Realistic Timelines and Milestones
Listing of Resources Provided Today

- Researcher Handbook
- Researcher Quick Guide
- UIDP Perspective – Why Work Together?
- UIDP Perspective – The Costs & Value of Sponsored Research
- UIDP Perspective – The Role of IP In University-Industry Relationships
- Researcher Collaborative Visits
- UIDP Intellectual Property Quick Guide
- UIDP Working with National Laboratories Quick Guide
- Sample Fully Burdened Line Item Budget
- A Guide to Facilities and Administration Costs
Questions

Proposal and Budget Development:
Effie Swanson, Grant and Contract Administrator (Primary Contact for Engineering Faculty)
effies@ksu.edu or 532-6804
Or
De Bratton, Grant and Contract Administrator; bratton@ksu.edu or 532-6804
Or
Anita Fahrny, Assistant Director; afahrny@ksu.edu or 532-6804

Contract Negotiation/Contract Terms and Related Policies:
Katie Small, Manager, Contract Negotiations
ksmall@ksu.edu or 532-6804

Paul Lowe, Asst. Vice President/ Director
plowe@ksu.edu or 532-6804