

Collaborations for Mutual Benefit between Graduate Students in Entrepreneurship and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL)

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LLNL is enthusiastic about having graduate students in entrepreneurial programs develop business plans based on LLNL technologies. A “win-win” situation clearly exists: students benefit by gaining access to real-world technologies with the potential for competing successfully in regional, national and international business plan competitions and for having significant economic impact; and the students’ business insight will assist LLNL to more effectively transfer technology to the private sector.

The Collaboration for Mutual Benefit

In this collaboration, LLNL provides technologies that have the following characteristics:

- The technologies have the potential to be applied “disruptively”;
- They are potentially capable of being in the market within 2 – 3 years, i.e. they are not too futuristic; and
- Fairness of Opportunity requirements have been satisfied through an announcement that the technologies are available for licensing.

LLNL also offers access to additional information of a non-proprietary nature on these technologies, and access to LLNL inventors and other scientific/technical staff who can better explain how these technologies work, how they’re different from current approaches, and what they might require for commercial development and production.

In return, participating schools and the graduate student teams developing the business plans agree to submit to LLNL a completed business plan for the subject technology. The business plans will be used by LLNL to assist in assessing, marketing, and commercializing the technology.

A representative of LLNL’s Industrial Partnerships Office should review presentation slides prior to any business plan competition, VC pitch, etc., to ensure that the materials appropriately cite the team’s relationship with LLNL.

The Conditions

Teams do not have formal options or other commitments from LLNL to license the technology for which the team is developing a business plan. However, during the term of the business plan preparation LLNL agrees to notify the team before selecting a company for negotiation of a license or license option to the technology.

Commercialization by Business Plan Teams

In general, LLNL will entertain requests for a license to any particular technology if it is available and Fairness of Opportunity requirements have been fulfilled. The factors used to assess the qualifications of a potential licensee include the following:

- Commercialization Plan: Consideration of the company's business model and business plan; the qualifications of the management team, and the company's prospects for obtaining adequate capital to execute on the plan,
- U.S. Preference: The company's agreement to manufacture the technology substantially in the United States to ensure maximum benefit to American taxpayers' investment in R&D, and
- Small Business preference: LLNL gives special consideration to small business firms, as in our experience such companies are often more willing than their larger competitors to innovate and take on market risks. As a result small companies have equal or greater likelihood than other applicants to bring LLNL technology to practical application within a reasonable time.

A student team wishing to form a company to commercialize the business plan technology should notify the cognizant Business Development Executive to discuss the process.

LLNL Contact for Additional Information

For any questions please contact the Business Development Executive responsible for the technology.