



INVENTOR GUIDE

Step-by-step information to
guide you through the
technology transfer process.



OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

Transferring innovation from university labs to the commercial marketplace is an exciting, but often complicated, process. The following guide will help as you navigate this technology transfer journey. We also welcome you to contact our office if you have any questions or require additional guidance with any of the following steps. Please note that steps may vary depending on the nature of the technology, industry, steps for IP protection and licensing type.

STEP 1: RESEARCH

If you are an OU faculty member or graduate student and have completed research that has led to a unique discovery, you are encouraged to disclose this discovery to begin discussions related to intellectual property (IP) protection and commercialization. An invention can include a useful process, tool, software, composition of matter or any new or useful improvement. Multiple researchers may contribute to the invention.

STEP 2: TECHNOLOGY DISCLOSURE

(est. completion time: 30 min)

OTC highly encourages disclosing your invention as early as possible. Disclosing after public communication of the invention may restrict or minimize its potential for patent protection. Examples of public disclosure include (but are not limited to) online or hard-copy publications, posters, private emails not subject to a confidentiality agreement, and oral presentations. This step is mandatory for any further action to be taken in the commercialization and IP protection process. For detailed information on the disclosure process, visit ou.edu/otc/inventor to view our disclosure guide. After the form is submitted, you'll participate in an in-person meeting to further explore the invention and potential patent and licensing.

STEP 3: ASSESSMENT

(est. completion time: 3 months)

During this time, our office will review the disclosure, conduct patent searches (if applicable), and analyze the market and competition to assess the invention's potential for commercialization.

STEP 4: PROTECTION

(est. completion time: 2-4 years)

After assessment, OTC will take any necessary steps to protect the intellectual property of your invention. IP protection is often in the form of a patent, a legal protection method that begins with filing a patent application with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. In addition, foreign patent applications will take place if appropriate. Issuing a patent is often a lengthy process. The amount of time this process will take depends on the invention and patent strategy.

STEP 5: PATHWAYS TO MARKET

(completed simultaneously with step 4)

There are two commercialization paths: form a new startup business or license your invention to an existing company. OTC will help to guide this process and decision making based on technology and market analysis.

If your technology is being licensed to an existing business, see step 6A. If you are planning to form a startup, see step 6B.

STEP 6A: EXISTING BUSINESS

If the invention will best be commercialized by one or more existing companies, the technology licensing officer will seek potential licensees and work to identify mutual interests, goals, and plans to fully commercialize this technology.

STEP 6B: STARTUP

If creating a new startup is feasible and the inventor is interested in participating, our office can assist you by connecting you to valuable startup resources.

STEP 7: LICENSING

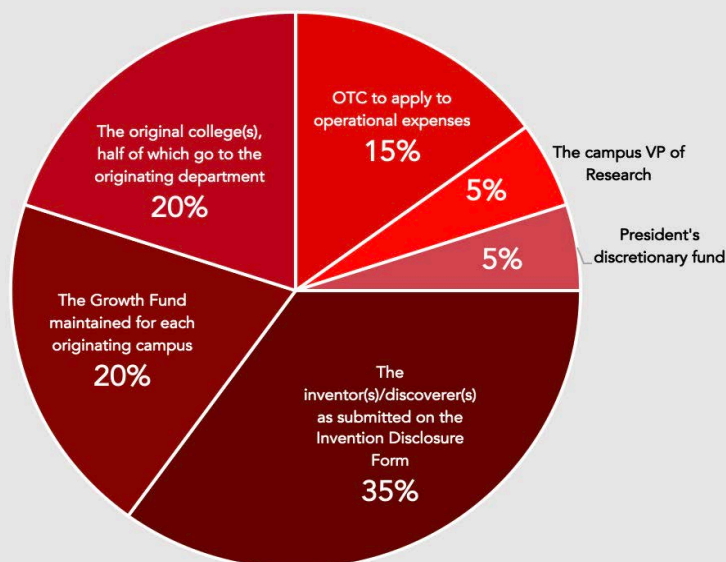
A license agreement is a contract between OU and a third party (either an existing company or a startup) in which OU's commercial rights to a technology are transferred for financial and other benefits.

STEP 8: COMMERCIALIZATION

The licensee (startup or existing company) continues to advance the technology and makes other business investments to develop it. This step may entail further development, regulatory approvals, sales and marketing, support, training, and other activities.

STEP 9: REVENUE

The revenue from the invention will be distributed as the graph below displays:



STEP 10: REINVESTMENT

A portion of the revenue generated from commercialization is reinvested to further current campus research. The Growth Fund, for example, strengthens the commercial potential of OU innovations, providing support for future technologies to reach the marketplace. Commercialization activity can also lead to new opportunities for sponsored research and internships and jobs for students.