

MEMORANDUM

To: USC Faculty

From: Randolph W. Hall, Vice President of Research

Date: March 21, 2016

Regarding: Commercializing Intellectual Property



In the course of their research, faculty and their research staff (including students and postdocs) often produce intellectual property that can be protected through patents or copyright and commercialized for public benefit. Examples at USC include technologies and software used in mobile phone displays, joint replacement surgeries, digital modeling of human faces, and language translation.

Beyond the hard work entailed in creating intellectual property, the commercialization process includes these steps:

- Disclosures of inventions, so that an assessment can be made as to the potential for commercialization and commercialization pathways.
- Protection of invention, through patent or copyright.
- Identifying commercialization partners, and executing licenses that give the partners rights to the intellectual property in exchange for payments to USC, which are distributed according to USC's Intellectual Property Policy (including a portion of revenues to inventors).

Please keep this in mind:

- Invention Disclosures are submitted through a simple form on USC Stevens' online disclosure tool Sophia: <https://stevens.usc.edu/researchers/what-is-sophia/>. They should be submitted prior to any public lecture, poster, abstract, presentation or paper. Disclosures can be submitted by all inventors at USC, including students and staff as well as faculty.
- The patent process occurs in stages. Provisional patent applications are filed for a high percentage of disclosures. USC Stevens, with inventor input, makes filing decisions within 30 days of receipt of complete disclosures, providing immediate protection in the United States and internationally under the "first to file" system. Utility patent applications must subsequently be filed within one year. Because of their much larger filing cost, commercialization partners (established companies or start-ups who will pay these costs) will normally be secured prior to USC filing a utility patent.

- Patenting does not prevent inventors from publishing or presenting their research. However, failing to disclose an invention may prevent the invention from being protected and commercialized. Nevertheless, do file an invention disclosure even if you have published or presented the research to see if protection is possible.
- Commercialization partners can be found at many stages, and are often known prior to the start of a research project. USC Stevens' Corporate Collaborations group can help identify research sponsors that lead to commercialization. USC Stevens' licensing team can help identify licensees for already developed inventions.

There are many pathways and benefits to commercializing intellectual property. Please contact your department's Licensing Associate for assistance (<https://stevens.usc.edu/contact-us/>), or Michael Arciero, Director of Licensing, at arciero@stevens.usc.edu or Vasiliki Anest, Director of Corporate Collaborations (anest@stevens.usc.edu).

Also, please consider attending the Center for Excellence in Research's session on "Funding to Commercialize Innovation Technologies" (April 27, 12-2 in UPC VPD 203: rsvp at usccer@usc.edu)

File your invention disclosure here:

<https://stevens.usc.edu/researchers/what-is-sophia/>

For information on innovation programs at USC, see:

<http://incubate.usc.edu>

For information on USC's Intellectual Property Policy, see:

http://policy.usc.edu/files/2014/02/intellectual_property.pdf