

INDUSTRY QUICK GUIDE

SPONSORED PROJECTS

Companies play an integral role in supporting an array of diverse research projects at the University of Washington. Sponsored projects offer an innovative way for companies to tap UW research expertise and explore new areas while tackling complex issues. Industry sponsors work directly with faculty to define custom projects that align with their needs and interests. In fiscal year 2017, the UW received \$92 million in research awards from industrial sponsors, ranking us among the top schools in the US in industry sponsorship. Our industry relations officers can help connect you to the right UW experts for your project.



DEFINING YOUR PROJECT

The first step in creating an industry-sponsored program is to define the terms of the research that will be carried out. A UW principal investigator will work directly with your company's representative to create a project plan that will identify these terms. This document should clearly specify the following:

- Project Scope – A description of the work that will be done, including specific deliverables and milestones
- Schedule – A timeline for completing the project
- Resources required – A detailed budget for the project, including costs for labor, materials, equipment, travel, etc.
- Collaborative efforts – A description of how the work will be divided (needed only if the project will involve joint effort between the UW and the sponsor company)

Once this document has been completed, the UW principal investigator can begin the internal proposal review and approval process. The department chair and dean will review the project and verify that it is appropriate for the department, that the necessary resources are available, and that the budget is adequate. Once this recommendation for approval has been obtained, the project moves to the UW's Office of Sponsored Programs, which manages all research grants and contracts for the University.

INS AND OUTS OF RESEARCH AGREEMENTS

The Office of Sponsored Programs works with the company to create a sponsored research agreement for the project. UW research agreements are based upon several underlying principles:

- Reasonable efforts – Research is inherently unpredictable and outcomes cannot be guaranteed. Work is conducted on a reasonable-efforts basis at a standard consistent with research done at comparable US academic institutions.
- Intellectual property (IP) – The UW generally retains full ownership of inventions and discoveries (whether patentable or not) that arise from research conducted solely at the university. Sponsors are routinely granted a first right to negotiate with the UW to obtain a fee-bearing exclusive or nonexclusive commercial license to project IP on commercially reasonable terms. Industry sponsors can also take advantage of our new Washington Innovation Advantage Program, which allows companies to pay a modest fee up front to fix financial terms for a commercial license to project IP. Finally, if the industry sponsor is collaborating with the University on the project, it is possible that joint inventions may arise; such joint intellectual property would be jointly owned.
- Publications – The UW is a public education and research institution, and as such it is expected that research results can be published within a reasonable period of time. We can defer publication for a short period in order to protect IP and to provide time for the company to review and redact any company confidential information.
- Funding and pricing – The pricing of research agreements is typically based on full reimbursement of actual costs plus overhead at the UW's current federally negotiated rate. Such agreements often have a not-to-exceed maximum price. In some cases, where research objectives and costs are well understood, the parties may agree to fixed price terms. The UW requires a payment schedule that is sufficient to assure payments keep pace with planned project expenditures.
- Warranty and liability – The UW does not provide any warranty related to research results or IP. In addition, per the Office of Sponsored Research, under Washington law, the UW is precluded from indemnifying anyone, including the sponsor, for any form of deliberate misconduct.

CONTACTS

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