



UNIVERSITY OF  
MICHIGAN

# Thinking of forming or joining a **start-up company**?

## Tip sheet for U-M Employees

### 1 Name your company

Select a company name that is different from your:

- U-M lab/group name
- Intellectual Property (IP)

### 3 Disclose in M-Inform!

*Involvement with a start-up company is an outside activity. Disclose:*

- Your **ownership** of (equity or financial stake in) the company
- Your **leadership role** with the company (e.g., President, Board of Directors member, CEO, CTO, CSO)
- Any **U-M intellectual property** (IP) *you've invented* that is licensed, optioned, or open-sourced to the company
- Any **consulting or advisory** services you provide to the company

### 2 Get U-M approvals!

Obtain the appropriate agreements and approvals **BEFORE** your start-up company:

- Uses U-M IP or designated U-M space in the [Startup Incubator](#)
- Uses U-M facilities, equipment, hardware, or software
- Invites U-M students or trainees to join the company
- Does financial business with U-M through sponsored research grants, contracts, or subcontracts

FOR APPROVALS WORK  
WITH:

[INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS](#) (FOR IP);  
YOUR UNIT & THE [REAL ESTATE OFFICE](#) (FOR  
FACILITY USE); AND YOUR **COI OFFICE** (FOR  
MANAGEMENT OF AGREEMENTS AND  
STUDENT/TRAINEES)

## Once you've formed / joined the Start-up Company...

### Will the company be involved in your U-M research?

You **must answer "Yes" to the COI questions** on Proposal Approval Forms (PAFs), Awards, IRB applications (HUMs), and Unfunded Agreements (UFAs) **when the:**

- Research uses U-M IP licensed, optioned, or open-sourced to the company, or
- Company funds the research (including SBIR/STTR subcontracts to U-M), or
- Company may benefit in any way from the research.



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### Regulations to Remember

#### *State of Michigan Law*

- Financial contracts between the company and U-M require **Regental approval** before execution.
- You **May Not** represent the start-up company or U-M in financial contract negotiations or approvals (i.e., signing the contract).

The **COI Offices** prepare the requests for the Regental approval of technology transfer agreements and incoming research contracts.

[COI.Support@umich.edu](mailto:COI.Support@umich.edu)

#### *U-M SPG*

- You may not use your U-M position for the benefit of yourself, family members, or business associates to the detriment of U-M or its students.
- You may not make more than incidental use of U-M resources (e.g. facilities, personnel, students, equipment, etc.) to pursue or fulfill your outside interests/obligations.
- The use of U-M marks (e.g., U-M name, logo, and block M) is generally prohibited for outside entities.

### Questions? *The U-M COI Offices are here to help you!*

**Email us at:** [COI.Support@umich.edu](mailto:COI.Support@umich.edu)

U-M Office of Research (UMOR)  
COI Director: April Pepperdine  
[apecperd@umich.edu](mailto:apecperd@umich.edu)  
(734) 764-3224

U-M Medical School Regulatory Affairs  
Assistant Director: David Mulder  
[davemuld@umich.edu](mailto:davemuld@umich.edu)  
(734) 647-1358

**Visit our webpages for details!**

[U-M Start-up Disclosure Process](#)

[Outside Interest Disclosure Process](#) (general information)