

December 6, 2018

Dear Colleague:

The U.S. Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) today announced the release of a Draft Green Paper detailing steps to modernize the U.S. system of technology transfer and innovation for the 21st century.

The United States spends more than any other nation on research and development (R&D) each year, investing over \$150 billion in federally funded R&D alone. To ensure that investment reaps the largest commercial, economic, and national security returns possible, the President's Management Agenda (PMA) directed NIST to work with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to speed the transfer of federally funded R&D to the private sector. As part of the PMA's Lab-to-Market Cross Agency Priority (CAP) Goal, NIST launched the Return on Investment (ROI) Initiative for Unleashing American Innovation, which led to the draft green paper.

The draft green paper identifies 15 actions intended to stimulate the commercialization of federally funded R&D. Implementing these actions will increase the impact of federal R&D investment through agile partnerships that can create tremendous value for our society and economy. For example, granting reliable and predictable intellectual property rights for licensing and commercial development of federal research will also encourage innovation and more private sector investment in R&D. The actions are aligned with the five strategies in the PMA's Lab-To-Market CAP Goal: 1) identifying regulatory impediments and administrative improvements; 2) increasing engagement with private sector experts and investors; 3) building a more entrepreneurial R&D workforce; 4) supporting innovative tools and services for technology transfer; and 5) improving understanding of global science and technology.

The draft green paper was developed based on broad inputs from the public in response to a Request for Information published in the Federal Register, public meetings and multiple stakeholder engagement sessions, and extensive review of prior reports and studies related to federal R&D technology transfer. The green paper also incorporates input from key federal stakeholders, including the National Science and Technology Council's Lab-to-Market Subcommittee. The green paper is a discussion document, not a policy commitment or decision by the federal government. Implementation of actions that require specific policy, legislative or regulatory changes will be advanced through the appropriate formal process, including interagency review and public comment.

The draft green paper as well as the public comments received in response to the Request for Information and background information about the initiative are available on the NIST ROI website. NIST will consider additional feedback on the green paper received by January 9, 2019, via [roi@nist.gov](mailto:roi@nist.gov). A final version is expected in early 2019.

I am grateful to all stakeholders, especially those who submitted oral and written comments in response to the RFI and at ROI public forums throughout 2018, to the outstanding, dedicated team at NIST and the Office of Science and Technology Policy, to all the U.S. federal science and technology agencies represented in the National Science and Technology Council and its Lab-to-Market Subcommittee, and to the Science and Technology Policy Institute (STPI) for your many contributions thus far.

Thank you for your continuing engagement in helping to chart this important course of action for the Nation.

Sincerely,

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Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology  
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology