

# Avant-Garde Technology Transfer at a Midsize, Private University

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*When there is overt public acceptance of what is still only an idea in the mind of leadership, it means truthfulness has hit its mark.<sup>1</sup>*

Over the last twenty years, interest in academic technology transfer has grown dramatically. The financial returns, jobs, and product success stories have attracted the attention of government, business, and academia. Many metrics are collected, but it is safe to say that no two technology transfer programs are alike. It's probably even safe to say that no two technology transfer programs are close to similar, even though many of the underlying policies, standard agreements, and operating philosophies are shared.

The reasons for these discrepancies are no mystery. Like any other department in a university or a company, the organization and regional stakeholders have a lot to say about which needs come first. In cases where venture investments are made in university technology, the venture interests may dictate where resources are focused and which efforts take precedent. In addition, staff requirements and administration turnover result in different dynamics within the community. All these factors result in unique offices that are changing to meet the demands of the moment.

The budgetary requirements of an office are unique to the individual programs—whether the office exists within a public or a private university. Even though a university may derive large sums from royalties and other financial considerations, the budgets of the

technology transfer programs typically are set year by year. Most programs don't get to capitalize on the windfalls and reinvest funds into future technology.