



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 **distinguishable** from your U-M research, lab, or intellectual property

- Do not use the block “M” or other U-M trademarks

3 Disclose in M-Inform!

Involvement with a start-up company is an outside activity. Disclose in M-Inform:

- 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 from:

- Your unit - to establish the start-up
- [Innovation Partnerships](#) - to use U-M IP
- Your [COI Office](#) - for management of agreements and student/trainees
- [U-M Real Estate Office](#) - for facility or equipment use

APPROVALS ARE REQUIRED **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

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

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

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Visit our webpages for details!

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

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