Conflict of Interest Information for Funding from MIPS

The State of Maryland and the University of Maryland System encourage faculty to network and create relationships with private industry to further the economic development of the State. In concert with this, authority for managing conflict of interest (COI) issues was delegated from the State Ethics Commission to the Presidents of the University System of Maryland campuses, and at College Park, the Conflict of Interest Committee was established to review issues and make recommendations to the President for final decisions.

The Maryland Industrial Partnerships (MIPS) Program, authorized by the state of Maryland in 1987, is designed to facilitate developing and establishing university-industry relationships in order for state university faculty members and their students, in partnership with Maryland companies, to engage in research that has the potential to lead to new and improved products and processes with strong commercial potential.

Due to the close relationship forged through the MIPS program, it is particularly important for participants to be aware of the Maryland State Ethics Law and potential conflict of interest issues that may arise through participation in the program.

When a University of Maryland (UM) faculty member applies for a MIPS grant, in partnership with a company, any potential conflict of interest on the part of the faculty member or any other university employee, due a relationship with that company, must be disclosed in the MIPS application. If in doubt as to whether a particular situation would give the appearance of a Conflict of Interest, the potential COI must be disclosed.

If the proposed MIPS project is awarded by MIPS, the faculty member or other university employee who has the conflict must submit a formal Conflict of Interest Disclosure to the UMD COI Office. The resulting Conflict of Interest Management Plan/Resolution must be approved by the UM President prior to the start of the MIPS project.

Examples of potential conflicts of interest include but are not limited to: the university P.I. a family member, another project researcher, or any other university employee holding an equity ownership or equity option interest in the partner company (even if of no value), holding a company board membership (even if unpaid), is an employee of, officer of, or consultant to the company (even if unpaid), or has any other contractual or financial relationship with the company. Principal Investigators of MIPS applications are encouraged to contact the COI Administrator in the COI Office [coi@umd.edu] to discuss the disclosure before submitting the disclosure formally to avoid needless delay in the approval of management plans.

1. A “University of Maryland Research or Development Interest Disclosure Forms” was developed as the instrument by which faculty and staff disclose real or potential conflicts of interest to the Committee.