

Conflict of Interest Information for Funding from Private Companies

The State of Maryland and the University of Maryland System encourage faculty to network and create relationships with private industry to further the interests of the University and private industry in business ventures. In concert with this, authority for managing conflict of interest 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 Universities to improve their facilities and for faculty members to partake in research that has the potential to lead to new products and processes, while assisting Maryland companies to research and develop new technologies with leading experts in their field.

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

When a University of Maryland (UM) faculty member has an ownership position or financial relationship with a company that submits a proposal for a MIPS project [**the company**], the faculty member should make a clear and detailed statement to the Conflict of Interest Committee¹ regarding the nature of his/her relationship with the company including his/her responsibilities for the company. This information should also include the percent ownership and/or the number of shares owned by the faculty member and the current share value, and/or other financial arrangements.

Some general guidelines are provided below regarding MIPS projects sponsored by companies in which a faculty member has an ownership position or financial relationship.

The faculty owner should indicate¹ if he/she is expecting to be involved in the MIPS project, either representing the company or the University. A faculty member will generally not be permitted to act as Principal Investigator or co-PI on behalf of UM in a MIPS project for the company; however, this will depend on whether the ownership position or financial relationship is minimal or substantial.

Students and Post Docs who are supervised by a faculty member who has an ownership position or financial relationship with the company generally may not participate in a MIPS project with the company unless the faculty member cedes advising of students and supervision of Post Docs for research on the MIPS project to another faculty member of equal or higher rank to that of the faculty owner¹.

Any University laboratory and/or equipment controlled by the faculty member who has an ownership position or financial relationship with the company that is needed to carry out a MIPS project for the company should be disclosed¹ in detail, and generally, the use of this laboratory and/or equipment for the MIPS project should be supervised by the PI, as discussed above.

The Conflict of Interest Committee may consider exceptions to the above guidelines; however, compelling justifications would be necessary¹.

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.