Chapter 5.3: Corporate and Industry Research

Context – Starting Points

The College of Engineering at Colorado State University is strategically pursuing economic development opportunities using co-dependent relationships for linking private sector (i.e., companies) with engineering faculty members and their laboratories.

![Figure 1: “Co-dependent” Model for Private Sector Interaction](image)

The COE Dean’s Advisory Board (DAB) has adopted recommendations from the Industry Subcommittee to “engage the private sector in our technology transfer process, realizing technological solutions that truly have a global impact.”

Corporate and Industry Research Program

Objective: Grow research and development activities with corporate and industry partners to increase value-added engagement and economic development.

Goal: Provide support for growth in funded activities from corporations and industry-related contracts recognizing that a different set of skills, processes and risks come with serving the private sector.

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Strategies

- Establish industry relationships by capitalizing on alumni and other relationships (DAB recommendation).
- Expand industry relationships by providing enhanced visibility on campus (DAB recommendation).
- Develop an innovation emphasis to enhance bringing new technologies to market (DAB recommendation).
- Create an administrative structure (Industry Office) within the College of Engineering that provides for growth in corporate and industrial research and development (DAB recommendation). The Industry Office will provide:
  - Pre-award process management from initial contact through contract signing that includes engagement documents (i.e. NDAs), contract mechanisms, contract terms, contracts negotiation, resource awareness, resource identification, resource qualification, project execution capability, understanding standing of resource needs/wants, and engagement as a solution provider.
  - Project management support for the duration of a project through the final deliverables on a scope of work.
  - Relationship management and coordination of internal units interested in the company/industry relationship.
  - A mechanism to recover all direct costs including risk pool (bad debt and loss coverage), program management, space accommodation, billing operations, relationship management, etc.
  - Post-award process management to provide a seamless interface for customers for accounts receivable, contract modifications, identification of IP, project closure and follow on projects.

Goal: Create a common “face-to-the-customer” experience for industry partners to the College of Engineering so that the many contact points will be unified into a great customer experience.

Strategies

- Create a welcoming “front door” (and not a revolving door) process to assist in corporate relations, corporate development, project identification, intern and employee hiring, and meeting workforce development needs.
  - Project, need or interest identification
  - Expectation management
  - Responsiveness
  - Connection to the “best available” resource
  - Relationship management responsibility
  - Engage in process that leads to execution on project, need, or interest.
- Develop a business model that attracts industry to support research (DAB recommendation – See Chapter 6D – Faculty Consulting).
• Provide for opportunities for companies to link to laboratories and faculty to provide for co-dependent relationships and commercialization of research.

**Metrics**

• Private sector research and development funding/faculty.
• Number of private sector research contracts.
• Establish the Industry Office.
• Develop an “innovation center” model.
• Reduce the number of bad debt accounts or percentage (now 58%).

**Targets**

• Private sector research funding (including research expenditures, gifts and grants) will increase to an average of $90K/faculty-year, consistent with peers
• Launch an “innovation center” supported by a long-term industry commitment.
• Industry Office established in FY’12
• Reduce the number of industry related bad debt accounts to less than 50% by the end of FY’14