FOSTERING INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

DR. CHANTAL BASSETT - RESEARCH FACILITATOR

Transforming Partnerships – Dr. Darren Fast, Director, TTO
Canada’s R&D budget (% GDP) is second highest in the world

- Grant funds are increasing slightly or maintained
  - Not keeping up with the cost of research
  - ↑ Applicants ↑ Competition

- Industry is perceived as not contributing enough to R&D partnerships with public or private partners

  - NSERC launched an ambitious strategy to support industrial innovation in 2009 - NSERC Partnership program
    - budget now equals the Discovery Grant budget

**Working with industry is a PART of research, but no one is expecting researchers to give up basic research**
BENEFITS OF COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

INDUSTRY
• Access to specialized expertise and equipment
• ↑ innovation
• Improved products and/or processes
• ↑ competitiveness & profitability
• Future staff

UNIVERSITY
• ↑ research base
• ↑ local relevance & goodwill
• Opportunities for students
NSERC PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM
INTERIM REPORT CARD

• # of businesses that NSERC works with ↑ 40% (2,400)
  • enabled 1,700 new projects between companies & academic researchers through Engage

• Trainee funding ↑ 20%
  • 44% were hired by the company they interned with
  • 87% were interested in hiring another fellow

• 94% of businesses involved described the project as a success
  • 93% found their project was a worthwhile investment

75% of companies reported an ongoing collaboration with the researcher
ATTRACTION INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

• Get out there – attend events, present findings, conference booths
• Find out which companies have partnered with colleagues
• Find out who are your end users, who has cited you
• NSERC Partnership websites
• Contact industry associations (LSAM, ICTAM, TRTech), NRC-IRAP, NSERC-RPP, Innovate MB
• Approach companies – Interaction Grant if needed
  • tell them about your research interests
  • ask them about their research challenges, what skills they hope graduates will have
  • Discuss leveraging industry contributions - NSERC partnership programs

⇒ Don’t know where to start? Enlist the help of new UofM resources
FOSTERING COLLABORATION

- Research Facilitators
- Associate Vice President, Partnerships
- Technology Transfer Office
- ORS, International Relations, External Relations
- New IP policy

TRANSFORMATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS - bringing research to life
What is a Research Facilitator?

- Grant writer
- Admin/Support staff
- Help with grant review
- Help foster research collaborations

→ **Review of grants** – Tri-Councils, CFI, CRC, Industry partnership
→ Internal peer review system

→ **Strategic planning** – funding opportunities, fit with infrastructure/Strategic Research Plan, partnerships

→ **Finding industry partners** – matching companies to researchers
*Expertise in MRT – fill it out!

→ **Liaison** – other faculties, VP-R, ORS, TTO, industry partners, government, funders, NSERC regional and national
1. Internal IP protection and licensing
   • Capture value of research

2. Collaborative partnerships with industry
   • ↑ research base
   • ↑ impact of U of M

3. Education
   • Ensuring common expectations
A NEW APPROACH TO COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

New IP policy – how does it impact partnerships?

- No up front signing payments
- No milestone payments
- Royalty paid if revenue stream is created
  - New Product
  - New Service
  - Improved Yield
- Simplified agreements and allow private sector to lead
- IP managed and controlled by industry partner
FOUND A PARTNER? DISCUSS EXPECTATIONS UP FRONT

• Start small, but always discuss the big picture
  • what industry problems you hope to solve together in LT
  • how to leverage industry funds - $18K contribution can generate over $100K in research funds

• Collaborative project – always discuss and outline expectations
  • different language & research culture
  • important to ensure common expectations in partnerships
  • working relationship – want to ensure everyone benefits
LETTER OF SUPPORT – Key Points

• Support for and agreement with the proposal
• Reasons for being involved in the proposed collaboration
• Anticipated benefits from project outcomes
• Effort required to exploit results
• Benefits to Canadian economy and the relevant timeframe
• Anticipated interaction of personnel with the University
• Company’s contribution to the project
• Company profile (if SME or start-up)

*Request letters be submitted 2 weeks before the deadline - allow time for revisions
*Offer points to include to strengthen the letter
POURANG IRANI  
COMPUTER SCIENCE

• Strategic grants with:
  • Local IT firms, national IT firms, non-profit organizations, private organizations
    
    C3A
    WAG
    IMRIS
    St. Vital Shopping Centre

    Oculus (Toronto)
    SMT-Research (Vancouver)
    Purelink (Montreal)

• Highlights/Challenges:

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<th>Support for your lab</th>
<th>Relocation / Distance</th>
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<td>Technology for ‘real’ problems</td>
<td>‘Parallel’ goals</td>
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<td>New problem solving methods</td>
<td>Limited on-site resources to advance project goals</td>
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Fostering Collaboration Strategy

- Case-by-case basis: laying groundwork to foster collaborations
- Targeted partnering
  - Understand industry needs and research capabilities
- Industry/academia mixers
  - Focused by sector
- Workshops – researchers
- Leveraging community resources
  - Innovate MB
  - NRC-IRAP
  - Granting agencies (NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC)
  - Network Centres of Excellence
  - Industry Associations
  - Other research institutions
QUESTIONS??

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