Managing a Small Technology Transfer Office

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History

- Faculty demanded a TTO; 1998
  - Gave back a disclosure, faculty took it public
- Few disclosures, STEM of ~$30mm
- Focused on protecting, not commercializing
- Everyone wanted a piece of $
- IP Policies
- Staffing
- Luck
Current

• Royalties FY $600k
• Licenses FY 27
• Start-ups 14
• Disclosures 54
• CRADAs 15
• CDAs 70
• FTEs 2.5
  • 1 Licensing Officer
  • .5 Director (Research advancement)
  • 1 Admin Support (split over 2 people)
  • 0 Compliance Support

What Went Right

• Management
  • Supports TTO when faculty complain
  • Understands TTO is not a cure to financial ails
• Philosophy
  • Fast deals
  • Don’t lose deals trying to get the BEST deal; as long as it is reasonable
  • Patent to get grants
  • Flexible sponsored research for proof of concept
  • Back-end compensation/start-up needs
What Went Right

- Copyrights
  - cCHUG-like
  - Lifestyle companies
- Build a track record of success to give something to point to
  (impacted 1mm lives, saved 10k lives a year)
- Faculty
  - Wanted us to succeed
  - Went to bat for TTO
  - Understand our limitations
- CONNECT

What Went Wrong

- Budget:
  - Patents
  - Staffing
    - Back office
    - Licensing
- Bad deals/patent infringement/legacy
- Faculty
Lesson Learned for Small TTOs

- Management makes or breaks it
- Focus on deals
- Work with sponsored research
- Build a core of faculty
  - Serve their needs
  - Identify future superstars; how will TT help?
  - Help them figure out long-term strategy
  - Be their go-to for any help with grants or other issues with the Foundation
  - Be genuine
  - Support the faculty; without them, the patent is just an expense
  - Budget appropriately; patents and people
  - License fast and easy; time kills deals
  - Use CDAs as a litmus test; if takes 3 rounds to approve, that outside will be more trouble than good
  - Prepare for long time horizons; educate the faculty about spin outs, etc.