

Technology Licensing Office

The mission of the [Technology Licensing Office](#) (TLO) is to facilitate the transfer to industry of technology developed at MIT in order to benefit the public good through the development and sale of commercial products. A secondary goal is to generate royalties to motivate inventors and to support research and education at MIT. The TLO staff of 42 (24 licensing professionals and 18 administrative and support personnel) are responsible for identifying marketable technologies, managing the patenting and copyrighting of these technologies, finding licensees to develop the technologies, and negotiating licenses, including licenses granted to start-up companies founded to develop technologies developed at MIT. An additional major responsibility is aiding the Office of Sponsored Programs in the negotiation of intellectual property terms in non-federal research sponsorship agreements. The TLO also manages the protection and licensing of MIT's trademarks and use of the MIT name.

In fiscal year 2015, TLO completed 91 new technology licenses and 33 option agreements. Twenty-eight of these were to new start-up companies. The TLO's efforts resulted in 314 US patents being issued this year, along with the issuance of similar rights in many other countries.

Total income to TLO was \$45.8 million. A net amount of \$21 million was distributed to MIT inventors, departments, centers, and the general fund, and \$0.4 million went to the Whitehead Institute. As always, most of this income resulted from patents that had been filed and licensing agreements that had been signed 5 to 10 years earlier. There was \$850,000 in revenue from liquidated equity from start-ups from previous years.

With more than 600 active technology licenses in house, including equity in more than 50 start-up companies, royalty streams will continue to mature and companies will reach equity liquidity—but the timing is unpredictable. The stream of new inventions continues to refill the pipeline, with 795 invention disclosures this year.

TLO staff are also active contributors to student activities at MIT. These include judging in the "100K" student business plan contest, guest lectures on patents and licensing in a number of engineering, Health Sciences and Technology, and Sloan School courses, both undergraduate and graduate, and "open door coaching" for students who are thinking of starting a business, whether through an MIT license or not. TLO staff also participate actively as Deshpande Center advisors and in the Venture Mentoring Service.

Members of the TLO are actively involved in disseminating MIT's technology transfer and entrepreneurship policies and practices to other universities, research institutes, and governments throughout the world. The office's senior staff members have served, usually pro bono, as advisors to more than a dozen university or governmental technology transfer offices in a number of countries. The TLO also hosts literally dozens of visits from other such organizations, government agencies, other universities, and corresponding company departments. Senior TLO staff also served pro bono on the boards or senior committees of a number of national, state, and local entrepreneurial and technology transfer organizations.

Lita Nelsen
Director