

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Subcontract Agreement between the University of Michigan and Taza Aya LLC

Action Requested: Authorization to enter into Agreement

Preamble:

A statutory conflict of interest situation was identified by the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects while reviewing the Proposal Approval Form which then triggered a review by the UMOR Conflict of Interest Review Committee. A plan for management of the possible risks associated with the conflict of interest was then developed and approved by the Committee and agreed to by the parties involved.

This proposed agreement (“Agreement”) falls under the State of Michigan Conflict of Interest Statute because Professor Herek Clack and Mr. Michael Drake are employees of the University of Michigan (“University”), and partial owners of Taza Aya LLC. The law permits such an Agreement provided it is disclosed to the Board of Regents (“Regents”) of the University of Michigan and approved in advance by a 2/3 vote.

Background:

Dr. Herek Clack, a Research Associate Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and Mr. Michael Drake, the Senior Director of Research Relations in the College of Engineering, are the partial owners of a for-profit company called Taza Aya LLC (the “Company”). The Company wishes to fund a NSF (prime) STTR Phase I project entitled “Protecting Livestock from Airborne Disease Transmission Using Non-Thermal Plasma Airstream Disinfection” (ORSP #18-PAF03567) in the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering under the direction of Dr. Herek Clack. The purpose of this project is to demonstrate and assess the performance of a non-thermal plasma (NTP) as a means of preventing infectious aerosol transmission into animal confinement buildings.

Agreement Terms:

The terms of the Agreement conform to University policy. The period of performance for the project is approximately one (1) year. The amount of funding support will not exceed \$92,461. Since research projects are often amended, this agreement includes provisions for changes in time and scope. University procedures for approval of these changes will be followed and additional conflict of interest review will be done as appropriate.

Impact of the Agreement:

The Agreement will support an effort by Dr. Clack to use his expertise and University laboratory, as well as other University resources, to demonstrate and assess the performance of a non-thermal plasma (NTP) as a means of preventing infectious aerosol transmission into animal confinement buildings.

Recommendations:

This matter has been reviewed and approved by the UMOR Conflict of Interest Review Committee. In light of this disclosure and our finding that the Agreement was negotiated in conformance with standard University practices, I recommend that the Board of Regents approve the University's entering into this Agreement with Taza Aya LLC.

Respectfully submitted,



S. Jack Hu
Vice President for Research

February 2018