

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

REGENTS COMMUNICATION

Approved by the Regents

September 18, 2008

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Subcontract Agreement between the University of Michigan and Soar Technology, Inc.

Action Requested: Authorization to enter into the Agreements

Preamble:

A statutory conflict of interest situation was identified by the Division of Research Development and Administration while reviewing the Proposal Approval Form. This triggered a review of the project by the OVPR Conflict of Interest Review Committee. A plan for management of the possible risks associated with the conflicts of interest was then developed by the Committee and agreed to by the parties involved.

The proposed agreement ("Agreement") falls under the State of Michigan Conflict of Interest Statute because Dr. Laird is both an employee of the University of Michigan ("University") and an owner and Director of Soar Technology, Inc. ("Company"). The law permits such an Agreement provided it is disclosed to the executive officers and approved in advance by a 2/3 vote of the Regents of the University of Michigan.

Background:

Dr. John Laird is a Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science in the College of Engineering and an owner and Director of Soar Technology, Inc. The Company desires to fund a project at the College of Engineering with Dr. Laird acting as Principal Investigator for the portion of the work subcontracted to the University. Robert Wray, an employee of Soar Technology, Inc., who has no role at the University of Michigan, will act as the overall Principal Investigator and technical lead.

Nature of the Agreement :

The Company has applied for an award from the Air Force Research Laboratory for the purpose of investigating psychologically realistic cognition in virtual environments. If awarded, Soar Technology, Inc. wishes to enter into a subcontract with the Regents of the University of Michigan to enable Dr. Laird to assist in the performance of this funded research.

Agreement Terms:

The terms of the Agreement will be negotiated so as to conform to University policy. The period of performance for the project is anticipated to be twenty-four (24) months and the amount of funding support is anticipated to be \$ 225,000.

Impact of the Agreement:

The Agreement will support an effort by Dr. Laird to further develop work in the area of the psychological constraints in virtual environments relating to spatial reasoning in cognitive architectures and interfacing models to computer games, allowing Soar Technology, Inc. to address these issues affecting the government prime sponsor.

Recommendation:

This matter has been reviewed and approved by the Offices of the Dean of the College of Engineering, and by the OVPR Conflict of Interest Review Committee. In light of the disclosure made in this document and our finding that the agreement will be negotiated in conformance with standard University practices, I recommend that the Board of Regents approve of the University's entering into this subcontract with Soar Technology, Inc.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen R. Forrest  
Vice President for Research

September 2008