

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Subcontract Agreement between the University of Michigan and HygraTek 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 Anish Tuteja is an employee of the University of Michigan (“University”), and a partial owner of HygraTek 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. Anish Tuteja, an Associate Professor in the Departments of Materials Science and Engineering, and Macromolecular Science and Engineering, is the partial owner of a for-profit company called HygraTek LLC (the “Company”). The Company wishes to fund a Department of Defense-Air Force (prime) STTR Phase I project entitled “Hygro-Responsive Membranes for Highly Energy Efficient Removal of Fluorosurfactants from ATFF” (ORSP #17-PAF08125) in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering, under the direction of Dr. Anish Tuteja. The purpose of this project is to test and characterize the separation efficiency of hygro-responsive membranes, and develop insights into the design and development of more effective and durable hygro-responsive membranes.

Agreement Terms:

The terms of the Agreement conform to University policy. The period of performance for the project is approximately nine (9) months. The amount of funding support will not exceed \$45,000. 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. Tuteja to use his expertise and University laboratory, as well as other University resources, to further test and characterize the separation efficiency of hygro-responsive membranes, and develop insights into the design and development of more effective and durable hygro-responsive membranes that may be applied to various watercraft substrates.

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 HygraTek LLC.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Jack Hu', is positioned above the printed name.

S. Jack Hu
Vice President for Research

September 2017