

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Subcontract Agreement between the University of Michigan and SenSigma 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 subcontract agreement (“Agreement”) falls under the State of Michigan Conflict of Interest Statute because Professor Jyotirmoy Mazumder is an employee of the University of Michigan (“University”) and a partial owner of SenSigma 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. Jyotirmoy Mazumder, a Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, is a partial owner of a for-profit company called SenSigma LLC (the “Company”). The Company wishes to fund a Department of Defense (prime) STTR Phase II project entitled, “Innovative Additive Manufacturing (AM) Process for Successful Production of 7000 Series Aluminum Alloy Components using Smart Optical Monitoring System(SOMS) Phase 2” (ORSP #19-PAF08319) in the Department of Mechanical Engineering under the direction of Dr. Margaret Wooldridge. The purpose of this project is to overcome the current porosity, thermal, and compositional control issues faced by additive manufacturing technologies when applied to the manufacture of 7xxx series aluminum components, which are advantageous for their strength, weight, and fatigue properties.

Agreement Terms:

The terms of the Agreement conform to University policy. The period of performance for the project is approximately three (3) years. The amount of funding support will not exceed \$302,206. 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. Wooldridge to use her expertise and University laboratory, as well as other University resources, to advance and expand the use of additive manufacturing as applied to 7xxx series aluminum components.

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 SenSigma LLC.

Respectfully submitted,



Rebecca Cunningham  
Vice President for Research

October 2020