

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Subcontract Agreement between the University of Michigan and Tulip Make Me Move Desk, 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 Medical School Conflict of Interest Board. A plan for management of the possible risks associated with the conflict of interest was then developed and approved by the Board and agreed to by the parties involved.

This proposed subcontract agreement (“Agreement”) falls under the State of Michigan Conflict of Interest Statute because Professors Nicolaas Bohnen and Martijn Muller are employees of the University of Michigan (“University”), and partial owners of Tulip Make Me Move Desk, 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. Nicolaas Bohnen, a Professor in the Departments of Radiology, and Dr. Martijn Muller, a Research Associate Professor in the Department of Radiology, are partial owners of a for-profit company called Tulip Make Me Move Desk, LLC (the “Company”). The Company wishes to fund a National Institutes of Health (prime) STTR Phase I project entitled, “STTR Ph I Resub Bohnen/Muller: Development of the Make Me Move Desk rehabilitation standing desk for older adults with motoric cognitive risk syndrome” (ORSP #21-PAF00815) in the Department of Radiology under the direction of Drs. Bohnen and Muller. The purpose of the project is to develop a novel “Dynamic Standing Desk” prototype that allows for multidirectional stepping movements to improve mobility and prevent falls in older subjects with motoric cognitive risk syndrome.

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 \$78,410. 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 Drs. Bohnen and Muller to use their expertise and University laboratory, as well as other University resources, to develop a novel “Dynamic Standing Desk” prototype that allows for multidirectional stepping movements to improve mobility and prevent falls in older subjects with motoric cognitive risk syndrome.

Recommendations:

This matter has been reviewed and approved by the Medical School Conflict of Interest Board. 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 Tulip Make Me Move Desk, LLC.

Respectfully submitted,



Rebecca Cunningham  
Vice President for Research

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