

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Subcontract Agreement between the University of Michigan and May Mobility, Inc.

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 Edwin Olson is an employee of the University of Michigan (“University”), and a partial owner of May Mobility, Inc. 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. Edwin Olson, a Professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, is a partial owner of a for-profit company called May Mobility, Inc. (the “Company”). The Company wishes to fund a Department of Transportation (prime) Phase I Inclusive Design Challenge project entitled, “Inclusive Design Challenge-Phase I” (ORSP #21-PAF02421) in the University’s Transportation Research Institute-Biosciences Group (UMTRI) under the direction of Dr. Kathleen Klinich. The purpose of this project is to implement an automated wheelchair tiedown and occupant restraint system (AWTORS) in a converted hybrid electric vehicle to demonstrate system viability for using the system in an automated shuttle.

Agreement Terms:

The terms of the Agreement conform to University policy. The period of performance for the project is approximately thirteen (13) months. The amount of funding support will not exceed \$116,000. 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. Klinich to use her expertise and University laboratory, as well as other University resources, to implement an AWTORS in a converted hybrid electric vehicle to demonstrate system viability for using the system in an automated shuttle.

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 May Mobility, Inc.

Respectfully submitted,



Rebecca Cunningham  
Vice President for Research

December 2020