

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Subcontract Agreement between the University of Michigan and Theia Scientific, 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 Kevin Field is an employee of the University of Michigan (“University”), and a partial owner of Theia Scientific, 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. Kevin Field, an Associate Professor in the Department of Nuclear Engineering and Radiological Sciences, is a partial owner of a for-profit company called Theia Scientific, LLC (the “Company”). The Company wishes to fund a Department of Energy (prime) SBIR Phase I project entitled, “An Open Analysis Platform with In-Situ Machine Vision for Electron Microscopy” (ORSP #21-PAF02179) in the Department of Nuclear Engineering and Radiological Sciences under the direction of Dr. Field. The purpose of this project is to take the Company’s proof-of-concept open in-situ machine vision platform towards commercialization through targeted software and hardware optimization tasks that will culminate in a final feasibility demonstration at the Michigan Center for Materials Characterization and the Michigan Ion Beam Laboratory.

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 \$60,000. 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. Field to use his expertise and University laboratory, as well as other University resources, to use targeted software and hardware optimization tasks that will culminate in a final feasibility demonstration at the Michigan Center for Materials Characterization and the Michigan Ion Beam Laboratory through a targeted in-situ experiment that relies on the Company's platform for real-time detection of irradiated microstructures.

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 Theia Scientific, LLC.

Respectfully submitted,



Rebecca Cunningham
Vice President for Research

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