

**BIOSCIENCES ALLIANCE STATUS REPORT**

**Action Requested:**

Receive the report .

**Executive Summary:**

Regent Robert Downer will provide an oral update on the work of the Biosciences Alliance.

**Background:**

The Biosciences Alliance is an advisory committee to the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED). The Biosciences Alliance is the first of three working groups to be formed by IDED to focus on key industry clusters. IDED plans similar working groups for information solutions/financial services, and advanced manufacturing.

The Biosciences Alliance includes representation from the Regent enterprise, other Iowa postsecondary institutions, agriculture, industry, government, and associations. The purposes of the alliance include:

- to provide guidance to the IDED for the development of Iowa's biosciences industry;
- to provide guidance to the IDED for state funding of university bioscience initiatives, i.e.: capital projects, commercialization projects;
- to assist in coordinating university and industry approaches to the development of the biosciences specific to economic opportunities.

In September, 2005, the Biosciences Alliance's Executive Committee agreed to allocate \$1 million over two years for the implementation of a Technology Development Organization or TDO. The structure and precise functions for such a TDO have not yet been determined. The attached document, "Commercializing University IP: An Idea for Discussion," has served as an initial framework for the Alliance's planning for a TDO.

**Commercializing University IP  
An Idea for Discussion**

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**The Need**

- A novel approach to deploy Regent's institution intellectual property (RIIP) in economic development in Iowa
- A mechanism to leverage public funds (10:1)
- A new organizational approach, built upon existing university infrastructure, to fund, manage, develop, and commercialize RIIP.
- A method to maximize ROI on RIIP.

**The Idea**

*Technology Development Organization (TDO)*

- State-wide not-for-profit organization
- Develops some but not all technology within the university system to the point at which it can be used in economic development in some way
- Would be integrated into each university and be part of the Regent's system

*Venture Services Corporation (VSC)*

- For-profit corporation to commercialize appropriate technologies which can stimulate economic development in Iowa
- Initial funding from IDED, University Foundation, and private investment
- Would contract with TDO to develop ideas, patents and other IP into commercial opportunities
- Hires "Silicon Valley Iowans" to start and spin the startup companies

**Benefits and Challenges**

- Builds upon existing strengths and facilities
- Universities and state share in profitability of RIIP
- Leverage state resources with private investment
- Coordinated effort across institutions
- Provides a way to fund development work at universities and research parks
- Culture shift for the universities
- Universities and state share in the risk
- Leveraging public funds with private investment can be complicated from many points of view.
- Strategic and operational direction from outside the university
- The funding would essentially direct the development strategy within public institutions

**Your Thoughts?**

- How crazy is this?
- Is it politically possible to do even if it turns out to be a good idea?
- What is the development path and timeline for the idea if implemented?
- Yes or no----should we pursue this?