# How the Commercialization Support Process Works (Faculty Overview)

*Informational overview for discussion purposes. Not a proposal, contract, or commitment.*

This document explains how commercialization support is typically approached when faculty research begins moving toward real-world use. The goal is **clarity and optionality**, not pressure or pre-decided outcomes.

## 1. The Starting Point: No Assumptions

Commercialization support **does not start with a decision to form a company**.

It starts with a simple question:

*What options make sense for this research, and what risks should we understand before committing to anything?*

At this stage:

- There is **no expectation** of a startup
- There is **no requirement** for faculty to take on operational roles
- There is **no change** to existing research or disclosure processes

## 2. Step One: Commercialization Readiness Review (Exploratory)

The first step is a short, structured **readiness review**.

**What this does:**

- Looks at where the research actually sits today
- Identifies where commercialization gets harder or riskier
- Compares possible paths (licensing, spinout, partnership, or waiting)

- Surfaces decisions that are hard to undo later

**What this does NOT do:**

- It does not push a specific outcome
- It does not negotiate IP or licensing terms
- It does not require faculty to become founders
- It does not involve investors or fundraising

Think of this as a **thinking and clarity phase**, not an execution phase.

## 3. Technology Transfer Office (TTO) Involvement

When the Technology Transfer Office needs to be involved (which is often), the process is explicitly aligned with TTO policies and authority.

This means:

- The TTO is **not bypassed**
- IP ownership and governance are **fully preserved**
- No terms, valuation, or deal structure are discussed outside TTO processes

The goal is to make future TTO engagement **easier**, not harder.

## 4. What Happens If a Spinout Is *Not* the Right Path

In many cases, the readiness review concludes that a spinout is **not** the best option — at least not yet.

Common alternatives include:

- Licensing to an existing company
- Partnering with an industry or government entity
- Continuing research until readiness improves
- Deliberately waiting to preserve options

Choosing *not* to spin out is considered a **valid and often wise outcome**.

## 5. What Happens *Only If* a Spinout Is Actively Considered

A spinout is discussed **only if**:

- Leadership believes it is a viable option
- The TTO is engaged
- Faculty interest and constraints are understood

Even then:

- Faculty are **not required** to take operational roles
- Governance, conflicts of interest, and time commitments are addressed early
- The focus is on structure and risk, not pressure or speed

Nothing moves forward without institutional approval.

## 6. Faculty Control and Autonomy

Throughout the process:

- Faculty remain in control of how involved they want to be
- Research priorities are respected
- Academic roles, promotion, and tenure considerations are taken seriously
- No one is pushed into a "startup founder" identity

Commercialization is treated as **one possible extension of research impact**, not an obligation.

## 7. The Guiding Principle

**The objective is not to create companies.**
**The objective is to make informed decisions that protect faculty, the institution, and the long-term value of the research.**

Speed is never prioritized over clarity.

## 8. What This Process Is Meant to Feel Like

Faculty who use this process should feel:

- Informed, not rushed
- Supported, not evaluated
- Free to say “not now” or “not ever”
- Confident that institutional safeguards remain in place

If at any point the process feels misaligned, it pauses.

### Bottom Line for Faculty

- You are **not being recruited** into a startup.
- You are **not being asked** to make early commitments.
- You are being offered a structured way to **think clearly about options** — nothing more.