



What Happens to My Time and Role?

A Faculty Guide to Commercialization Support

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

This document explains how faculty time, responsibilities, and roles are treated when commercialization support is explored. The goal is to **protect research priorities, academic roles, and personal boundaries** at every stage.

1. Your Research Comes First — Always

Participation in commercialization support:

- **Does not change** your research agenda
- **Does not create new obligations**
- **Does not shift expectations** around teaching, grants, or service

If commercialization activities ever conflict with research priorities, the process pauses or adjusts.

2. Time Commitment Is Limited and Optional

At the early stages, involvement typically means:

- One or two short conversations
- Sharing existing context or documents (no new prep)
- Answering questions at your discretion

There are **no standing meetings**, no recurring time blocks, and no expectation of ongoing involvement unless *you* choose to continue.

3. You Are Not Expected to “Become a Founder”

Commercialization support **does not assume**:

Intended audience: Faculty and research leadership · Codispoti Group — Independent Advisory Services



- You will start a company
- You will take on an executive role
- You will manage people, operations, or fundraising

Many faculty prefer to remain research-focused. That preference is respected and planned for explicitly.

4. Your Role Is Defined *Only If Needed* — and Only With Consent

If a spinout or new entity is eventually considered:

- Roles are discussed **early and transparently**
- Faculty can choose:
 - Technical advisor
 - Scientific founder (non-operational)
 - No formal role at all
- Time expectations are aligned with your preferences and institutional policies

Nothing is assumed. Nothing is assigned without agreement.

5. Institutional Safeguards Stay in Place

Throughout the process:

- The Technology Transfer Office (TTO) remains involved where required
- Conflict-of-interest, promotion, and tenure considerations are respected
- No decisions are made outside institutional governance

Commercialization support is designed to **work within** existing safeguards, not around them.

6. You Can Step Back at Any Time

At any point, you can:



- Pause the conversation
- Decline further involvement
- Decide that commercialization is not a priority right now

There is **no penalty** for opting out and no expectation to justify the decision.

7. What This Process Is *Not*

It is not:

- A recruitment pipeline for startups
- A sales process
- A requirement tied to funding or evaluation
- A commitment to pursue commercialization

It is simply a structured way to think through options.

8. The Guiding Principle

Commercialization should expand options — not narrow them.

Faculty time, autonomy, and academic roles come first.

If at any point the process feels misaligned with that principle, it stops.

Bottom Line

- Your time is respected
- Your role is voluntary and defined by you
- Your research priorities remain unchanged
- Your participation is optional at every step

Commercialization support exists to help you **think clearly**, not to change who you are or how you work.



Faculty Commercialization Support — Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is commercialization expected of me if my research has potential applications?

No. Commercialization is **optional**, not an expectation or requirement. Many valuable research programs never pursue commercialization, and that is entirely appropriate. This support exists only to help clarify options if and when questions arise.

2. Will participating affect my research time or priorities?

No. Research priorities remain primary. Early conversations are limited in scope and time, and participation can be paused or stopped at any point if it conflicts with research, teaching, or service responsibilities.

3. Do I need to prepare materials or presentations?

No. There is no requirement to prepare decks, pitches, or new documentation. Discussions typically rely on existing contexts and materials you are already familiar with.

4. Am I being evaluated or assessed in any way?

No. This is not an evaluation of you, your lab, or your research. The focus is on understanding **commercialization pathways and risks**, not judging merit or readiness.

5. Does this mean I'm being asked to start a company?

No. Commercialization support does **not assume** a startup or spinout. In many cases, the outcome is licensing, partnership, or a decision to wait. Starting a company is only discussed if it appears appropriate and only with faculty consent.



6. What if I don't want an operational or leadership role in a company?

That preference is both common and respected. Faculty are never required to take on executive, operational, or fundraising roles. Advisory or technical roles — or no role at all — are valid options.

7. How is the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) involved?

The TTO remains the institutional authority on IP, licensing, and governance. Commercialization support is designed to **complement**, not bypass, TTO processes. No IP terms, valuation, or deals are discussed outside TTO review.

8. Will this affect IP ownership or inventorship?

No. IP ownership, inventorship, and institutional rights are unchanged by exploratory discussions. All formal decisions remain subject to existing university policies and TTO processes.

9. Is there pressure to move quickly or meet external timelines?

No. Speed is not the objective. The emphasis is on **clarity and risk awareness**, especially for decisions that are difficult to reverse later. Deliberate pacing is encouraged.

10. Who else will know about these conversations?

Participation is handled discreetly and appropriately. Discussions typically involve only those already responsible for commercialization oversight (e.g., research leadership, TTO) and only to the extent necessary.

11. What happens if we decide not to pursue commercialization?

That is a valid and often appropriate outcome. The process is considered successful if it helps clarify that commercialization is not the right path — or not the right time.



12. Can I stop participating after starting the process?

Yes. You can step back, pause, or disengage at any point without consequence or explanation.

13. Is this connected to funding, evaluation, or performance review?

No. Participation is not tied to funding decisions, performance evaluation, promotion, or tenure considerations.

14. Why involve an external advisor at all?

External perspective can be helpful when navigating unfamiliar market, regulatory, or structural questions. The role is advisory and independent, intended to supplement — not replace — internal expertise.

15. Who should I contact if I have concerns?

You are always encouraged to raise questions or concerns with your Dean, department leadership, or the TTO. Commercialization support exists to **reduce uncertainty**, not create it.

Final Reassurance

- **You are not committing to anything by asking questions.**
- **You are not giving up control.**
- **You are not changing your role unless you choose to.**

This process exists to help faculty **think clearly and safely** about research impact — nothing more.