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Title: Federal Intellectual Property Licensing Opportunity Assessment

Partner: Shadow Ridge Analytics LLC



Background

Federally funded research centers and federal laboratories conduct billions of dollars' worth of research and development annually on behalf of the US Government, generating significant amounts of equipment, data, materials, technologies, intellectual property (IP), and technical expertise. Because these organizations are funded by taxpayers, they are obliged to provide as many resources as possible to the private sector to ensure that society fully benefits from their taxpayer investments through commercialization.



Problem Statement

The primary role of federal laboratories is to develop new inventions that could lead to scientific and engineering breakthroughs, maintain the nation's position as a leading innovator, and enhance national security. Rather than mass-producing, marketing, distributing, and selling their inventions, US federal laboratories seek private sector collaborators willing and able to further develop and market these discoveries.

One common mechanism for technology transfer is licensing, where certain IP rights are transferred from the licensor (the federal laboratory) to the licensee (the private sector partner). Technology transfer offices (TTOs) within federal research organizations facilitate these relationships with private sector partners.



Objectives

The objective of this study was to understand the private sector's motivations and key drivers for licensing federal technology. The information and metrics that the private sector evaluates, or would like to evaluate, when assessing new business opportunities can be utilized to enhance MilTech products and services and improve technology transfer capabilities.



Findings

The assessment provides findings and recommendations to further commercialize solutions, with TTOs using the tool to prioritize their commercialization and licensing activities. Ultimately, the licensed technology must align with the company's core business model and capabilities, enhance existing intellectual property portfolios and products, and, most importantly, address customer needs.