



# Commercialization Mandate Statement

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## 1. Brock's Commitment to Managing and Protecting Intellectual Property

Brock University is committed to the management and protection of researcher-generated intellectual property, in a manner that maximizes commercialization opportunities, protects Ontario interests, and strengthens the Ontario economy. One of the four priorities of Brock University's Strategic Plan, 2018-2025, "Niagara Roots – Global Reach" (<https://brocku.ca/strategic-plan/>), is to, "Enhance the life and vitality of our local region and beyond" with a specific goal to, "support regional economic, social, and cultural vitality." (<https://brocku.ca/strategic-plan/priority-community/>). This Commercialization Mandate Policy Framework describes the structures at Brock University that align with our strategic plan to support and facilitate the development, curation, and commercialization of intellectual property (IP) created at Brock University to maximize the impact of university research, scholarship, and creative activity, while serving societal needs and the interests of IP creators, the University and its research partners.

Brock University policies and practices represent a strong culture of incentivizing and fostering the creation and mobilization of intellectual property. Brock's IP ownership policy for faculty members is detailed Brock University Faculty Association (BUFA) Collective Agreement (<https://brocku.ca/human-resources/collective-agreements/>) and provides that ownership of inventions and copyright materials developed or created by faculty and professional librarians shall rest with them, subject to certain exceptions specified in the Collective Agreement:

With the exception of contract research or research covered by Article 38.04, and subject to the special rights hereinafter reserved in this paragraph, the University waives any claim to the ownership of, or beneficial interest in, any invention developed by a member (notwithstanding that such invention might be intellectually conceived in the course of University work)

Student IP ownership is detailed in the Faculty Handbook (<https://brocku.ca/university-secretariat/faculty-handbook/section-3/#4. Ownership of Student-Created Intellectual Property>)

As a strongly 'creator-owned' institution, Brock University is committed to managing and protecting IP in a manner that maximizes research impact, including commercialization opportunities, advances Ontario interests, and strengthens the Ontario economy. In support of the Institutional Strategic Plan, Brock University research aspires to empower the economic, social and cultural health of the Niagara community, our province, Canada, and beyond.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities at Brock

Roles and responsibilities for relevant stakeholders within Brock University help us to achieve our commitments regarding intellectual property, and its mobilization and commercialization. The Office of the Vice-President, Research through Office of Research Services (ORS) - Partnerships, Innovation, and IP Advancement (PIIPA) and Brock LINC support Brock's faculty from across all disciplines to explore new research and scholarship opportunities and strengthen existing ones. This mandate is supported by a range of units with expertise in aspects of the research creation and commercial mobilization chain, including the Library and the Goodman Group Venture Development unit.

### *Office of Research Services (ORS) - Partnerships, Innovation, and IP Advancement (PIIPA)*

The sourcing, evaluation, development, and commercialization of IP is managed by the PIIPA unit in the Office of Research Services (<https://brocku.ca/research-at-brock/brock-innovation/>) The PIIPA team connects with all departments and faculties of the University to discover new IP and devise the best ways to support the development of the IP. Successful commercialization of IP is achieved through a productive partnership between the University and the creator(s). PIIPA does this through its three main functions:

- i) **Managing Intellectual Property.** Sourcing, protecting, commercializing, and facilitating the transfer of Brock research and Intellectual Property (IP) to industry partners and other receptors is the core function of PIIPAs IP management. PIIPA evaluates the invention or idea for commercial potential and then develops a

- commercialization strategy, which may include protecting the IP, licensing the IP, establishing a collaborative partnership for additional development, or creating a start-up company;
- ii) **Facilitating Research Partnerships:** Often new research or IP has the potential to drive additional collaborations and partnerships. PIIPA works to establish and facilitate collaborative partnerships, targeted research opportunities, research contracts, and formal relationships between Brock and partners. Formalization may include establishing legal agreements like Non-Disclosure Agreements and Material Transfer Agreements; and
  - iii) **Acting as a Resource for the Innovation Ecosystem:** Brock and PIIPA are active members of the regional/provincial/national/international innovation community focussed on entrepreneurship and commercialization and can advise creators about available resources to make necessary connections to support innovation.

### *Brock LINC*

<https://brocku.ca/linc/>

The Brock LINC is the University's centre for creativity, innovation, research, and entrepreneurship where spaces are themed around helping creative ideas come to life and supporting research and innovation projects with community and industry partners. Brock LINC includes the home for student entrepreneurship on campus, space for the Kickstarting Entrepreneurship program, and for Entrepreneurship Co-op students as well as dedicated space for the Brock University community startup incubation program, the LINCubator (<https://brocku.ca/linc/lincubator/>), an 8-month intensive program designed to help early-stage businesses grow.

### *Goodman Group – Venture Development*

<https://brocku.ca/goodman-group/venture-development/about-venture-development/>

The Goodman School of Business's Venture development is committed to providing entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs with advice, service and innovative solutions based on a thorough understanding of their business idea and objectives. Programs and services include:

- **The Kick-Starting Entrepreneurship program:** targets Niagara's entrepreneurs and encourages them to explore their innovative ideas and advance their early-stage entrepreneurial aspirations. This program is delivered in collaboration with Brock LINC to provide youth with seminars and events, plus mentorship and advisory services from Venture Development, Brock LINC and Innovate Niagara.
  - <https://brocku.ca/goodman-group/venture-development/programs/kick-starting-entrepreneurship-program/>
- **Monster Pitch:** is an annual pitch competition held by the Brock Innovation Group (BIG) in collaboration with Goodman Group – Venture Development and the Goodman School of Business at Brock University. The pitch competition allows motivated Brock University students to pitch their business ideas to a panel of judges. The winner is awarded a cash prize and in-kind support services to help them kick-start their business venture.
  - <https://brocku.ca/goodman-group/venture-development/programs/monster-pitch/>

## 3. IP Education and Resources

Brock's commitment to supporting and increasing IP capacity through programming and related activities includes the provision of education and awareness resources for all relevant stakeholders within the institution. Brock delivers and continually enhances intellectual property education for students, faculty, and staff through programming and related activities. Brock currently offers the following resources:

- Workshops and training sessions focussed on developing IP awareness, IP protection, collaborations with industry and community partners, and commercialization skills. These sessions are offered in-person or are available virtually. An example includes the Building Better Research Series, offered as a partnership between the Office of Research Services (ORS) and the Brock Library, which is geared to faculty members, graduate students and researchers across campus. <https://brocku.ca/library/workshops/building-better-research/>

- Through the Office of Research Services newsletter and web site, the promotion and dissemination of information for opportunities, and alerts for collaboration and funding opportunities.
- One-on-one consultation with researchers, staff, students, and faculty members with advice, guidance, and encouragement in IP and commercialization matters.
- Brock's Institute for Lifespan Development Research delivers a 7-week knowledge mobilization (KMb) workshop series for Institute members and their students. The series provides a high-level introduction to KMb and the associated concepts/practices. IP and commercialization education is an integral module in the workshop. With the growing demand for this education series, Lifespan and ORS intends to offer it to more members of the Brock community
- Brock LINC offers workshops and direct service delivery to staff, faculty and Niagara community for entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and research through extensive programming: <https://brocku.ca/linc/programs/>
- Pitch competitions, workshops, and events promoting entrepreneurial skills and start-up support to Brock students, faculty, staff and the community.
- The Goodman School of Business's Venture development is committed to providing entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs with advice, service and innovative solutions based on a thorough understanding of their business idea and objectives. <https://brocku.ca/goodman-group/venture-development/about-venture-development/>.
- Support for innovators in understanding the value of protecting their intellectual property by increasing access to digital education modules.

Brock continues to expand these offerings to reach more members of the Brock community from across the disciplines.

#### 4. IP Disclosure, Development and Advancement

Invention management and disclosure policies and practices at Brock enable the PIIPA team to provide advice regarding IP protection and commercialization opportunities. Brock's IP ownership and invention disclosure policy for faculty members is detailed Brock University Faculty Association (BUFA) Collective Agreement (<https://brocku.ca/human-resources/collective-agreements/>). Section 38 of the Agreement states:

In the case of any invention developed in the course of, or as a result of, research involving University support and/or facilities and/or equipment, the inventor shall disclose to the appropriate Dean or University Librarian, as appropriate, and the Vice-President Research, the member's intention to file a patent application in Canada or elsewhere and the prosecution thereof.

The University in keeping with its objectives of encouraging inventions by members, both within and outside the framework of the University operations, invites any member, as an alternative to private (or privately sponsored) patent proceedings, to submit the subject matter of any invention to the University for financial and developmental assistance. The decision as to whether or not such submissions should be made to the University is at the sole option of the inventor. The acceptance of such voluntary submission by the University is conditional upon the University being satisfied that the provision of such assistance is feasible under the particular circumstances. If the inventor chooses to avail themselves of any such assistance offered by the University, then they accept the conditions under which these services are offered.

BUFA members are encouraged to disclosure inventions to the PIIPA team. By facilitating the disclosure of inventions, Brock continues to build its awareness of IP developed through the University, can provide advice regarding IP protection, commercialization, IP development, or collaboration opportunities to inventors, whether or not the IP is eventually assigned to Brock. ORS and PIIPA are developing outreach systems to make invention disclosure simpler still, in order to increase disclosures and enable further supports.

## 5. IP Creation and Net Benefits

The mobilization of IP generated with Brock's resources provides a net benefit to Ontarians. In keeping with Brock's Institutional Strategic Plan, the University seeks to, "...support regional economic, social, and cultural vitality" in our community, the Niagara Region, Ontario, Canada, and the world by maximizing the impact of IP created at the University. Brock makes reasonable efforts to maximize the economic or social benefit to Ontario resulting from university-owned Intellectual Property through avenues such as commercialization, securing funding through grant and contract research to develop the IP, knowledge mobilization, supporting and incubating start-up businesses, and providing valuable training and experience for students.

Where there are no preferable opportunities for commercialization or utilization of university-owned intellectual property within Ontario, Brock aims to take reasonable steps to mobilize the intellectual property in such a way that benefits Ontario, through such outcomes as the development of highly qualified personnel (HQP), training and improving the experiences of students, creating collaborations, or commercial licenses that generate revenue for the University through royalties.

## 6. Brock's Engagement with our Innovation Ecosystem

Institutional engagement with the regional, provincial, national and international innovation ecosystems enables Brock to offer guidance to stakeholders on engaging with those communities and processes, and works to expand Brock's capacity to achieve its IP development and mobilization goals. Brock University is a key member of the innovation ecosystem in the Niagara region. To expand institutional capacity, Brock engages with its partners for collaborations, provision of funding support, advancement and development of IP, support of excellence in research and innovation, and provision of valuable first-hand experience and training for students. The staff at Brock provide guidance for faculty, staff, and students with IP and other innovations, in engaging with the region's innovation ecosystem including industry, funding agencies, public sector institutions, other post-secondaries, not-for-profit organizations, and the broader Niagara community. Connecting through PIIPA, Brock LINC, and the Goodman School of Business, some of our partners include:

- Innovate Niagara Regional Innovation Centre (RIC)
- Niagara Region Economic Development
- Small Business Enterprise Centre (St. Catharines and Niagara Falls)
- Venture Niagara
- Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce
- South Niagara Chamber of Commerce
- Niagara Angel Network
- Haltech RIC
- Vineland Research and Innovation Centre
- Niagara College
- Niagara Industrial Association (NIA)
- Tri-agency partners: NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC
- Ontario Research Fund
- The Ontario Centres of Innovation (OCI)
- Mitacs
- National Research Council-IRAP (NRC-IRAP)
- FedDev

As an essential member of the innovation ecosystem, Brock University strives to mobilize research for the benefit of Ontario and society by promoting opportunities for maximizing the impact of university research, scholarship, and creative activity through commercialization of IP, building constructive relationships with industry, entrepreneurs, and the community, and to cement the University's role as a leader in the Niagara region. Brock's Commercialization Mandate Policy Framework will serve as a guide for the continued development of goals for the creation, implementation, and evaluation of the Annual Commercialization Plan.