

Intro to Innovation & Commercialization (I&C) and Intellectual Property (IP)

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Innovation & Commercialization at UNT

Empowering Innovation, Advancing Society

UNT's Innovation & Commercialization team works with faculty and students to transform discoveries into products, services, and companies. From navigating patent processes to supporting licensing and startup creation, we forge paths from academic innovation to real-world application, turning University innovations into market and societal impact.

Education & Resources

Through workshops, department meetings, lecture series, one-on-one meetings, and regular newsletters, the I&C team uses a range of tools to engage faculty and students to learn more about entrepreneurship, innovating, and commercializing technologies.

Innovation & Commercialization Process

The I&C team protects and assesses Intellectual Property through a defined and efficient process, from invention disclosure, to patent evaluation, and ultimately to commercialization plan.

Commercialization

Working collaboratively with faculty and/or student innovators, the I&C team identifies and partners with groups to commercialize UNT innovations.



Have questions? Contact us.
Innovation@unt.edu

I&C Focus Moving Forward

Improve Customer Service

Providing timely responses, supporting faculty-industry collaborations, and being both responsive and intentional in our outreach to faculty and students.

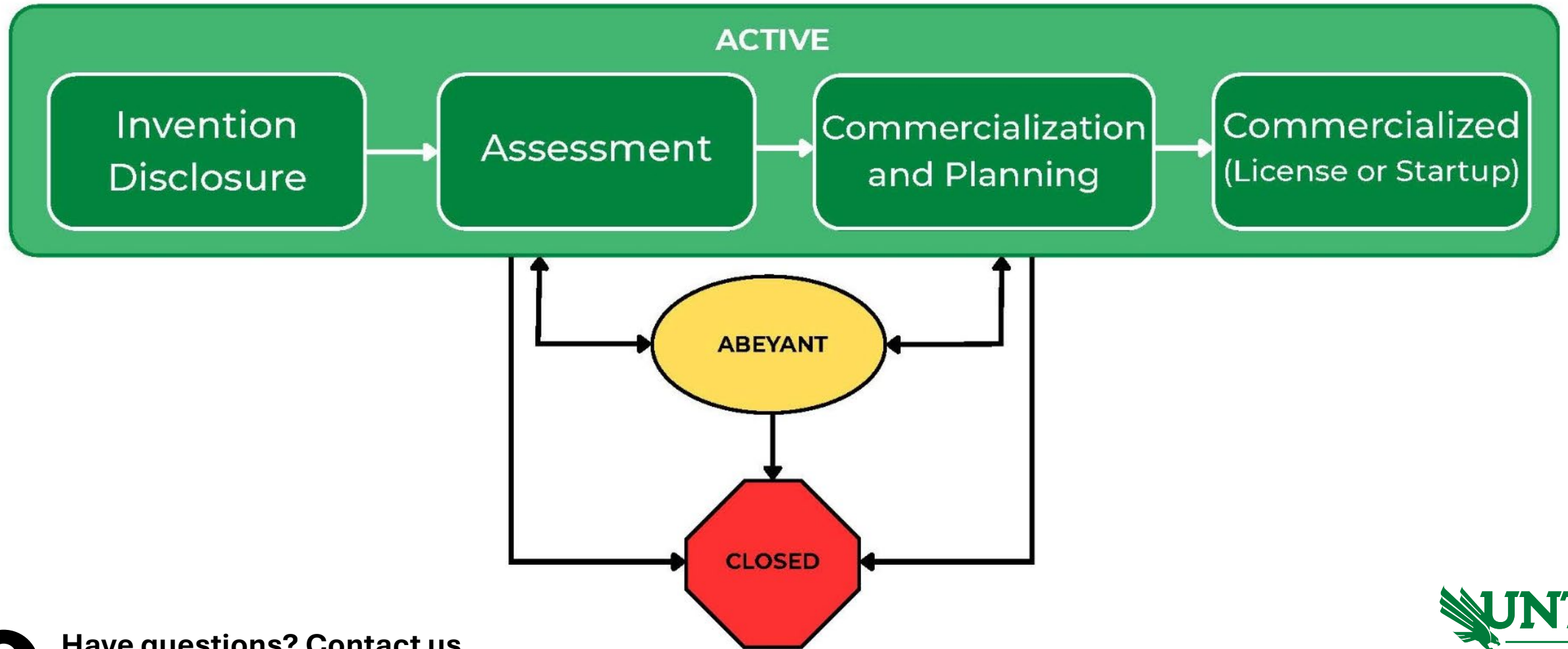
Cultivate an Innovative and Entrepreneurial Culture

Outline our evaluation process and provide guidance on steps needed to commercialize a technology. Setting up a newsletter, recognizing entrepreneurial faculty.

Provide guidance and education on commercialization

Host in-person and online info sessions on IP, disclosing your innovation, licensing, startups, etc.

Innovation Process



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Multiple ways to submit an invention disclosure

Submitting an Invention Disclosure

Guide to Submitting an Invention Disclosure

Submit Invention Disclosure through UNT's Inventor Portal

To access the UNT Inventor Portal from off campus, you must first connect to the UNT VPN, approve the Duo push notification on your phone (EUID & password login), and then navigate to the UNT Inventor's Portal webpage.

[FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LOGGING INTO THE VPN >](#)

Download Invention Disclosure Form

If you are unable to utilize UNT's Inventor's portal, submit the form below.

Email patents@unt.edu.

[INVENTION DISCLOSURE FORM >](#)



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Elements of the Invention Disclosure Form (IDF)

Complete the form to the best of your knowledge, you do not need to answer every question if you are unsure. Include manuscripts, drafts, posters, or any related attachments

1. Technology Description

- Title, Problem or unmet need, Solution, Stage of Development

2. Market Considerations

- Competing products, uniqueness of your technology

3. Public Disclosures, Export Control, and other details

- Abstracts, Presentations, posters, seminars, publications, discussions, etc.

4. Funding

- Internal and external resources, including federal funding

5. Inventorship

- Identify individuals that conceived the unique features of the disclosed technology (list both UNT and non-UNT)



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Paths to commercialization

Commercialization

Options for Commercializing a University Technology

Commercialization is the process of turning an idea or service into a product sold on the market to generate profit

License

License technology to an existing company

Lower time commitment and less personal risk

Minimal influence on development

Startup

License technology to create a new venture

Great time commitment and personal risk

More influence on development

Further Product Development

Leverages existing company funding with university expertise

Increases commercial readiness towards a future license or startup

More influence on development



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Contact Us

If you think you have an invention or have questions about inventing, please contact our office.

MEET THE I&C TEAM



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Director



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Licensing & Contracts



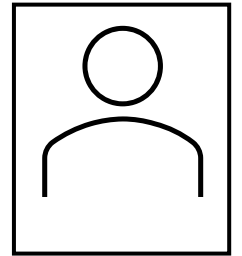
Mackenzie Sanders
Senior Admin Coordinator



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Licensing Analyst



Ayeman Mahbub
Student Assistant



Vacant
Sr. Licensing Analyst

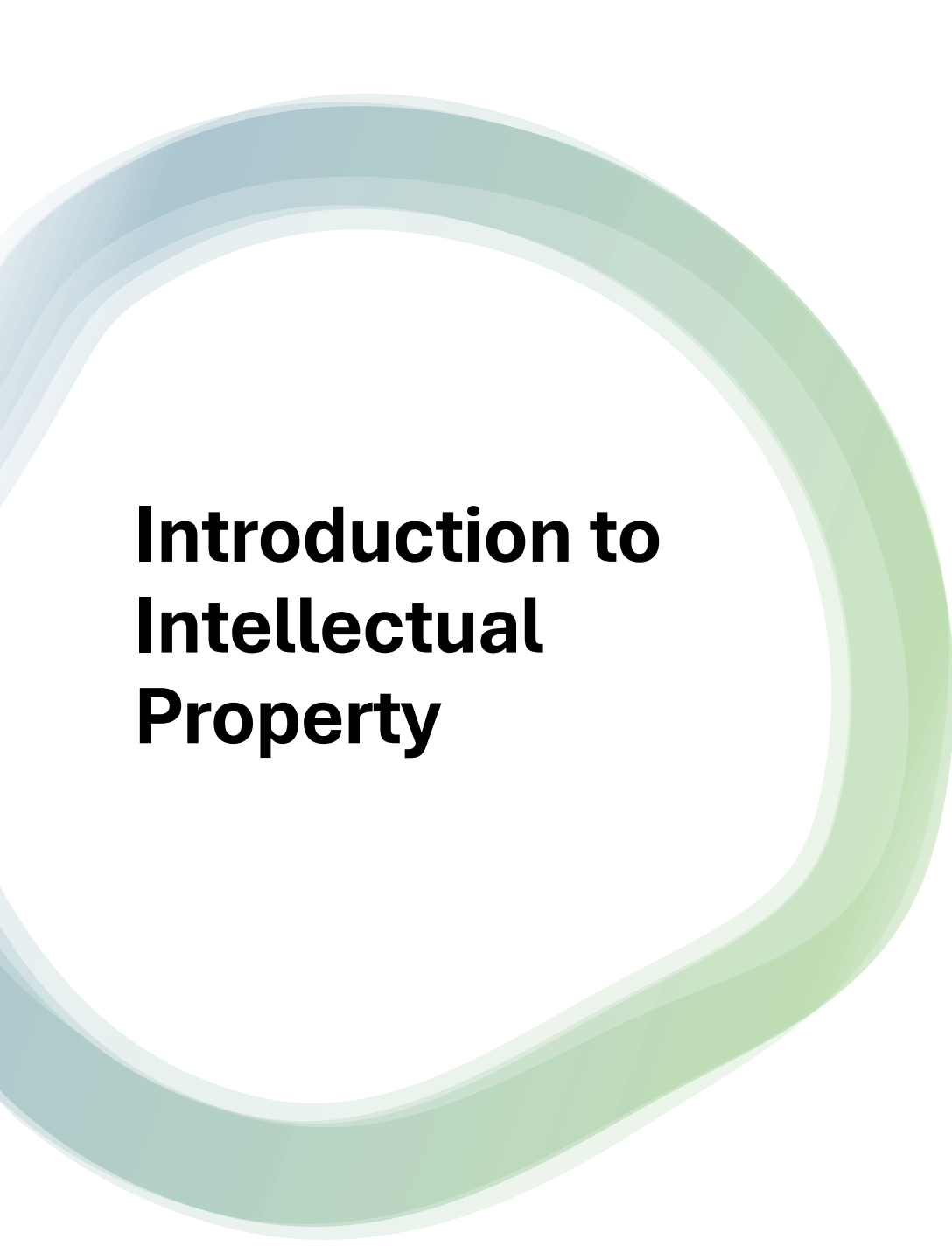
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or

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Upcoming Events

- **University Research Day- October 1, 2026**
Panel Session: Bridging University Research and the Marketplace
Union 332, 10:00 AM
- **Fall 2026 Session 1- *“What is Intellectual Property and How Can I Protect It?”***
Tuesday, September 22, 2026
Senate Chambers, Union Rm. 332
- **Departmental Meetings: Intro to I&C**
September thru November



Introduction to Intellectual Property

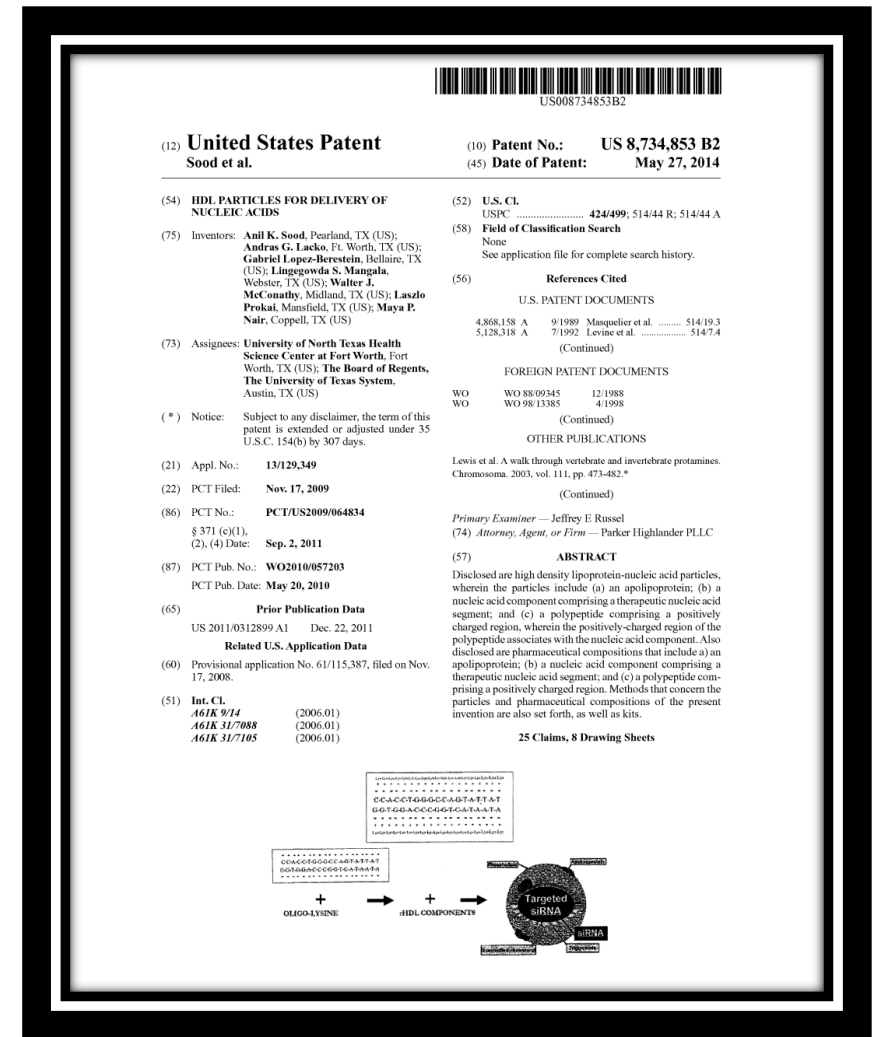
- “Intangible rights protecting commercially valuable products of the human intellect”
- **Patents:** Most of what we protect, will discuss in detail.
- **Know-how:** Will discuss in detail.
- **Copyright:**
 - creative and literary works like books, music, art, and computer code,
 - “The Fountainhead”, “Harry Potter”.
- **Trademark:**
 - brand elements like logos, names, slogans, and symbols,
 - Apple, Coke.
- **Trade Secret:**
 - confidential, commercially valuable business information or formulas protected by strict secrecy measures,
 - Recipe for Coke.

What is a Patent

- Established in the US Constitution:
 - “To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries”
- Encourages public disclosure of invention, in exchange for temporary monopoly to exploit invention,
 - Encourages innovative society.
- Right to exclude others from practicing your patented rights,
 - Not a right to practice.

Elements of a Patent

- Cover page: Abstract, filing information
- References
- Drawings
- Background
- Summary and description of the invention
- **Claims**
 - Patent infringement = infringe at least 1 claim
- Google Patents good search tool



Not a Right to Practice

- An issued patent can infringe other issued patents
- Patent 1 has claim elements A+B+C
- Patent 2 has claim elements A+B+C+D
 - Patent 2 infringes patent 1, because it contains A+B+C
 - Example: Gillette (3 blades) vs Schick (4 blades)
- Patent 3 has claim elements A+B+D:
 - Patent 3 does not infringe either Patent 1 or Patent 2
- Patentability
- Freedom to Operate

Patentability Tests

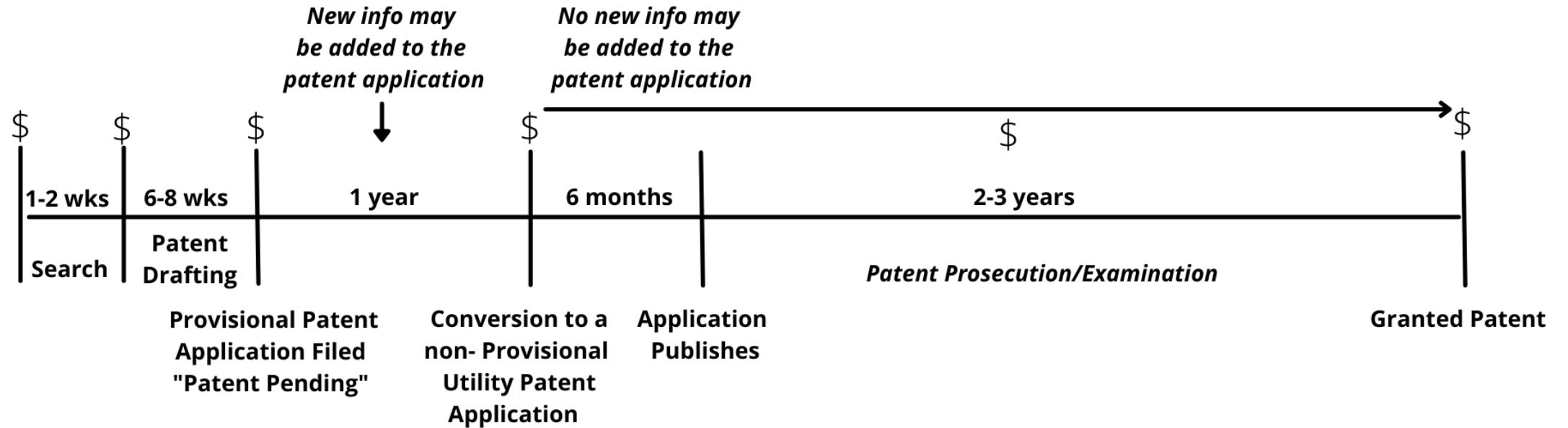
- Novelty,
 - The invention must be completely new and not identical to any existing "prior art".
- Utility,
 - The invention must have a real, practical application.
- Non-Obviousness,
 - The innovation cannot be an obvious modification or combination to a person having ordinary skill in that specific technical field.

Inventorship – Authorship – Revenue Distribution

- Inventorship: based in patent law.
- Everyone, and only those, who contributed to the Claims of the patent must be included as a named inventor.
- The most common reason to invalidate a patent is inventorship:
 - Naming inventors who did not contribute to a claim.
 - Excluding inventors who did contribute to a claim.
- No “% inventorship”. All inventors are equal inventors.
- Revenue distribution %: Institution policy.
 - Determined by group of inventors.

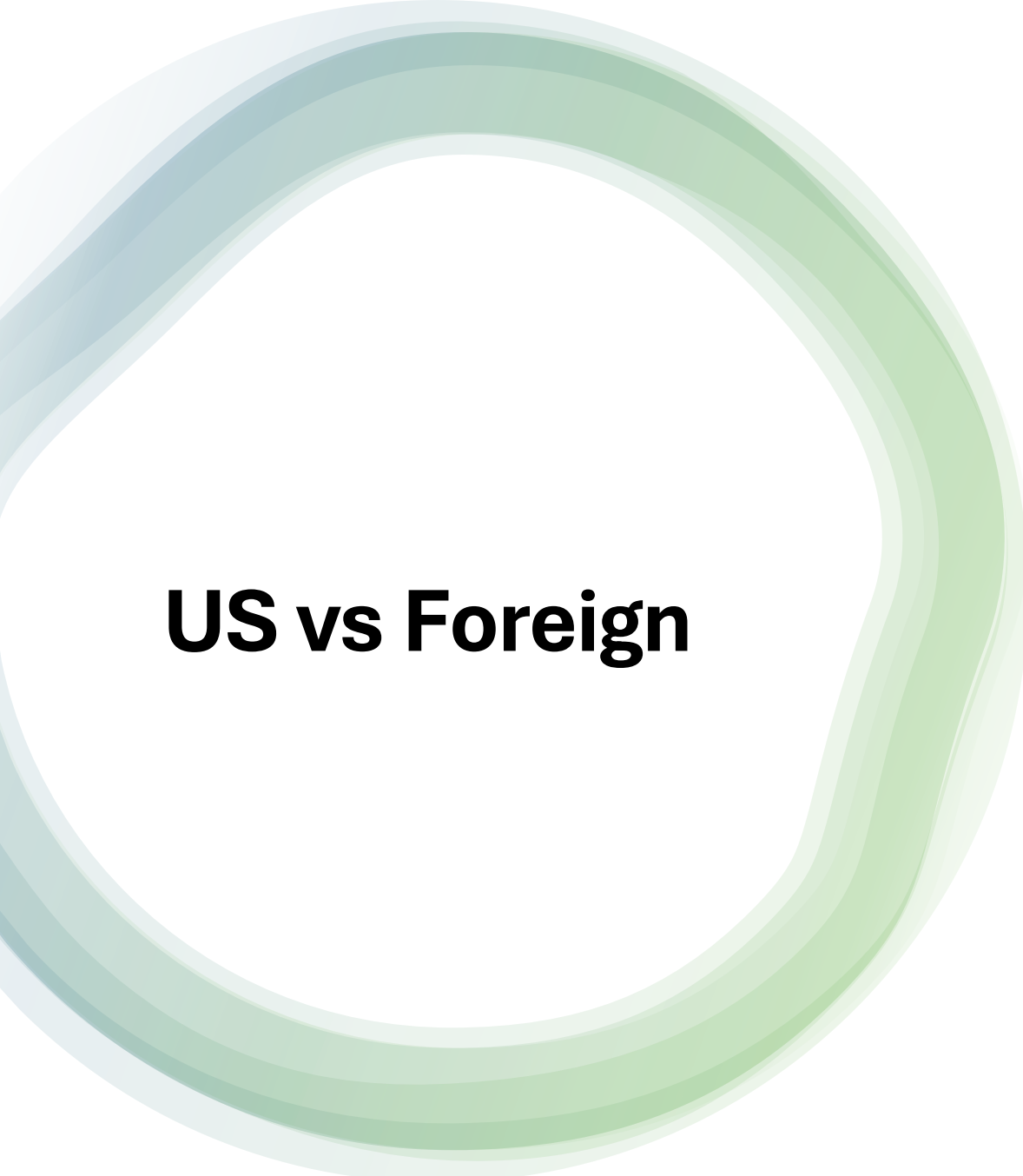
Patent Timeline

Source: Gearhart Law, LLC



Public Disclosure (not the same as Invention Disclosure)

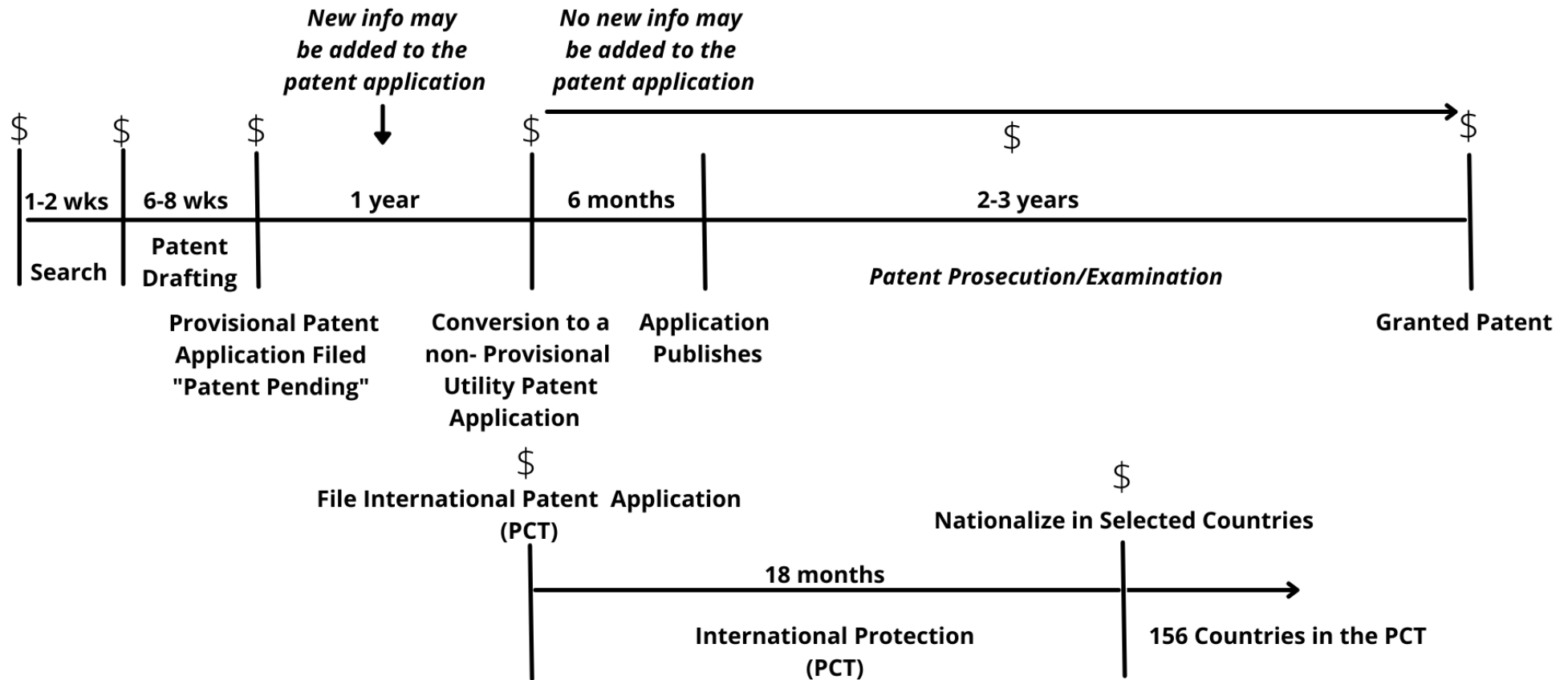
- Any unprotected disclosure of claimed information.
- Within same organization – protected.
- Under CDA/NDA – protected.
- Discuss with friends at dinner – not protected.
- Manuscript submitted for publication – need to understand rules.
- Public disclosure immediately abandons all foreign rights, and starts 12 month clock on USA rights.
- **Any doubt – Submit Invention Disclosure to I&C office so we can pursue protection for your IP**



US vs Foreign

- USA is the largest market,
 - USA rights may be enough to provide effective coverage.
- Patent protection covers:
 - Manufacturing,
 - Marketing, Sales,
 - Using,
 - Importing.
- Which countries to file is a strategic, business decision.

Patent Timeline (with Foreign)



Costs

- USA:
 - Provisional: \$1K-\$5K
 - Utility to issuance: ~\$15K (range \$10K-\$25K)
- Foreign:
 - PCT: ~\$3K
 - National Phase:
 - Each country has individual costs,
 - Single patent can be more than \$100K if filed in many countries.

Purpose of a Patent

- Reminder: Patent = Temporary Monopoly
- Return on Investment for “expensive” product development:
 - Without a patent, “followers” would get benefits of learning from innovation leaders,
 - Without a patent, a “cure for cancer” would struggle to reach the market.
- Patent only needed when invention is valuable enough that “right to exclude” matters,
 - Need to make patent decisions years before we really know market impact.
- **I&C Office assess commercial potential for each invention,**
- **Pursue patent protection based on commercial potential!**

Know-how, Results, Data

- Legitimate forms of IP,
 - Not as easy to defend as a patent, so usually worth less,
 - Protect through confidentiality (can't publish).
- Examples
 - General subject matter expertise,
 - How to create the most impactful SOW/protocol.
 - Experimental results and data:
 - Published: publicly available so limited IP value,
 - Not published: could be transferrable IP.
 - Company wants UNT to be a R&D Collaborator.

Sponsored Projects

- R&D Collaboration: UNT contributes “intellectual novelty” to the project.
 - UNT’s full value difficult to capture in simple hourly budget,
 - Appropriate for UNT to receive value for our intellectual contributions,
 - Structure as a license for our know-how.
- Fee-for-Service/Work for Hire: UNT executes Sponsor’s SOW
 - Still requires UNT to perform as subject matter experts, but not contributing intellectual novelty.
 - Appropriate for sponsor to own any IP that results from sponsored work.
 - Can lead to future R&D collaborations.

Commercialize IP

- License IP rights to a collaborator who will bring to market a product that utilizes the IP rights.
 - Similar to leasing other property.
- Exclusive vs non-exclusive.
- Field – defines scope of rights:
 - Geographic,
 - Market.
- Financial terms (royalty rate, milestone payments).
- Often includes UNT sharing Risk:
 - Receive compensation in the future.

Questions?

