



The Atmospheric Pressure Plasma Jet produces a high-flux gas stream of reactive chemical species that can clean, decontaminate, etch, or coat surfaces at atmospheric pressure and low temperature. A Laboratory spinoff business has been established based on this technology.

Is it only about money?

No, the Laboratory's reputation for excellence—earned with nearly 60 years of scientific contributions—is really our most important asset. Our reputation helps ensure trust in our ability to continue generating exceptional work and meeting the challenges of a rapidly changing world. It also allows us to attract new employees, program sponsors, and collaborators.

Patents and copyrights ensure that we get credit for our work and they assure sponsors and collaborators that we are responsible for the careful handling of knowledge—ours and theirs!

Contacts:

**Industrial Business
Development Division**

665-9091

Lab notebooks
Disclosures
Patents
Copyrights
Commercialization
Licensing

**Laboratory Counsel-
Intellectual Property Office**

665-3112

Patent Applications

General information:

<http://www.lanl.gov/partnerships>

The background graphic represents SOLVE, a new software for creating 3-D images of protein molecules. These images are in high demand in the biotech and pharmaceutical fields. Royalties for SOLVE are averaging over a quarter of a million dollars annually.

An affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, operated by the University of California for the US Department of Energy under contract W-7405-ENG-36.



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Industrial Business
Development Division
2237 Trinity Dr. MS C334
Los Alamos, NM 87545

Intellectual Property: A Laboratory Asset

Protecting Los Alamos National Laboratory's Intellectual Property



How can my ideas produce value for the Laboratory beyond my programmatic contribution?

As researchers employed by Los Alamos National Laboratory, we create technologies that have inherent scientific value, but they can also have financial value. Our intellectual property is attractive to industry and can be licensed for commercial development. In fact, technology transfer between the Laboratory and the private sector is a federal mandate. But technology transfer cannot happen unless we properly *protect* our intellectual property.

A company will not invest the time or money to develop a technology into a product unless it can expect a protected position in a market. Our patents and copyrights mean money to a company. They also mean money to the Laboratory and to the innovators!

The patents and copyrights that fuel technology transfer provide an inflow of royalties and research funds from industrial partnerships. They can also preserve a technology base for our further research without our having to pay royalties for something invented here but patented by someone else!

Doesn't the Laboratory's intellectual property belong to the Department of Energy and the University of California?

Yes, it does, however, DOE and UC have agreed that income received from patented inventions and copyrighted works will be returned to the Laboratory. A portion of the royalties is distributed to the innovator as well as to the Division in which the technology was developed. Royalty fees are determined during licensing negotiations.

See Royalty Distribution Policy on the Web at: <http://int.lanl.gov/orgs/ibd/patents/royaltypol.htm>

How do patents and copyrights help my Division?

Patents and copyrights can lead to commercial value for a division's technology when outside parties license inventions and software. A technology portfolio can help a technical Division expand its research opportunities, engage its staff, and enhance its reputation.

For descriptions of some Laboratory successes visit: <http://www.lanl.gov/orgs/ibdnew/success.htm#licensing>



SCORR, winner of a 2001 R&D 100 Award and a 2002 Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge award, can help the global integrated circuit industry produce increasingly higher density computer chips. It is currently licensed to industry.

As a researcher, how can I protect my work?

Keep a laboratory notebook! Professionally record and track the progress of your research. Document what you have done and intend to do. This is the first step in the intellectual property protection process. A hardbound, page-numbered, notebook is the only universally accepted medium for invention record keeping. The notebook must include dates and witness signatures.

For detailed instructions on keeping a notebook visit: <http://int.lanl.gov/orgs/ibd/patents/notebooks.htm>

As a manager, how can I help my employees protect their work?

Managers must ensure that their employees properly protect the Laboratory's intellectual property. Managers can help employees identify *potential* inventions, which may be

- a new or improved machine, material, or process;
- a nonobvious solution to a problem; or
- a novel combination of existing technology to obtain a better, faster, cheaper result.

Possible inventions must be disclosed to the Laboratory as required by the UC-DOE Prime Contract and the employment contract. When managers review, sign, and approve invention and copyright disclosures submitted by their staff, they are ensuring

- completeness and clarity of the submittal;
- *timeliness* of the disclosure;
- an opportunity for the group to build and grow a patent portfolio; and
- commitment of group resources to pursue a patent application.

For information about the patent and copyright process visit: <http://int.lanl.gov/orgs/ibd/patents2.htm>

Who decides whether an invention will receive a patent?

A Laboratory patent committee reviews invention disclosures and selects inventions for patenting within the scope of available resources:

- the Industrial Business Development (IBD) Division assesses commercial potential;
- the Laboratory Counsel's Intellectual Property (LC-IP) office provides a patentability assessment; and
- committee members provide the scientific and programmatic assessment of the disclosed invention.

Once a decision is made to file a patent request, LC-IP files a patent application with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office. The USPTO determines what submissions receive patents. Copyrighted software is not reviewed by the committee.

Who can help me with this process?

IBD staff are available to assist with disclosures, technology and market assessments, patent searches, and industry inquiries. IBD can guide you through the process from invention concept through technology commercialization.