Recent State and Federal Government grants add millions of dollars to MSU bio-based research and development projects

College of Engineering research will benefit from recent State and Federal grant funding for bio-based research. The U.S. Department of Energy recently renewed $125 million in funding for the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center. In addition, the Michigan Strategic Fund, together with matching funds from MSU, has granted $2.4 million to fast-track several bio-based MSU research projects for commercial development.

$125 million DOE funding renewed for biofuels research partnership

The U.S. Department of Energy has awarded the University of Wisconsin and Michigan State University $125 million to continue their work on advanced biofuels.

The Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center, housed at UW-Madison and includes a major partnership with MSU, will use the five-year grant to continue its work providing the basic scientific foundation for the sustainable, large-scale production of advanced cellulosic biofuels technologies to help meet the nation's growing energy needs.

Since its 2007 launch, the GLBRC has coordinated 60 invention disclosures and 58 patent applications, and is working with outside companies on 17 potential licenses or options. In 2012, the center celebrated two significant milestones: the first U.S. patent and the licensing of GLBRC technology to Hyrax Energy – the first company to emerge from the center.

“MSU is proud of the expertise and experience we bring to this effort, from our world-renowned plant research to our faculty in engineering, agricultural economics and education, as well as the scientists at the scale-up facilities at MBI,” said MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon. “The GLBRC has provided unprecedented opportunities for us to collaborate across campuses and disciplines, and we know that this integrated approach will drive the most powerful solutions to our energy challenges.”
$2.4M fund to develop products from bio-based feedstocks

Thanks to a $1.09 million grant from the Michigan Strategic Fund, plus matching funds from Michigan State University (MSU), several bio-based MSU research projects will be fast-tracked for commercial development over the next three years.

MSU recently received the funding from the Michigan Translational Research and Commercialization (“M-TRAC”) program as part of a state-wide initiative to invest in research areas that have shown promise in the laboratory, but need further development in order to become successful in a competitive market. With MSU’s matching funds, a total of $2.44 million will be focused on MSU biotechnology and bioprocessing innovations that have the potential to create superior value-added products and materials from agricultural-based feedstocks.

Over the next three years MSU researchers will be able to apply for funding to help drive laboratory technology toward commercialization, including support for scale-up services in fermentation technology, biochemical synthesis, separations and purification offered through MSU’s affiliated process and scale-up facilities: MBI in Lansing, Mich., and the MSU Bioeconomy Institute in Holland, Mich.

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