

The Bayh-Dole Act: How USU Research Commercialization Became Possible

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USU and many other universities have successfully commercialized many inventions that faculty and staff have created during their research; however, this wasn't always the case.

In the past, by default, any university-created inventions using federal research dollars belonged to the government. Seeing the resulting stagnation, several federal agencies created ways to assign inventions to their academic creators, resulting in a checkered boondoggle of red tape, if the inventions were accessible.

It was an untenable situation. However, in 1980 Indiana Senator Evan Bayh, along with Kansas Senator Bob Dole, created uniform legislation that gave ownership of federally funded inventions to their academic creators as long as certain requirements were met.

The Bayh-Dole Act allowed universities to enjoy the financial and societal fruits of their labors. It caused a "transformative" and "exponential" increase in innovation and societal impact (National Institutes of Health). What's more, with generous revenue sharing in place, USU researchers personally benefit from inventions they create as part of their jobs. Contact USU Technology Transfer Services for more information.