

Non-Disclosure Agreements

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While USU encourages and promotes open communication with collaborators, there are some instances where proprietary information (usually a technology the university is in the process of patenting) should not be shared until a non-disclosure agreement is in place.

In a non-disclosure agreement, or NDA, the signatories agree not to disclose to third parties confidential information shared between them. This protects certain rights USU has related to confidential information that could otherwise be lost — usually patent rights, but sometimes trade secrets as well.

If you are working with USU Technology Transfer Services (TTS) on commercializing an aspect of your research, you can often freely share much of that research with collaborators outside USU but should have an NDA in place before sharing any proprietary content. **When in doubt, check with TTS** to help determine whether an NDA is needed. When an NDA is necessary, TTS will work with the partner institution to complete the agreement. It's usually a quick process: **NDAs are common and relatively simple**, and universities and industry members are familiar with them.

Be sure to **mark confidential information accordingly** when sharing it under an NDA. Also note that you are always free to share all aspects of your research within USU, as long as your interlocutors are aware of any proprietary information that should not be shared outside USU.