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DAYTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

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UD rounds up \$100M for grant proposal

Money to help chase grant to create sensor technology hub

Dayton Business Journal - July 14, 2006 by [Suzelle Tempero](#) DBJ Staff Reporter

Led by the University of Dayton, a slew of government, businesses and industry organizations have assembled \$100 million to chase a \$28 million state grant that would create a regional sensor technology hub in Dayton.

If approved, the grant proposal is projected to have a \$238.3 million economic impact in Ohio and create 364 high-paying jobs within eight years with the funds it's requesting from Ohio's Third Frontier Program.

The grant money would be used to establish the **Institute for Development and Commercialization of Advanced Sensor Technology**, which will be a research facility housing academic, industry and federal labs. Its purpose is to facilitate partnerships between government, industry and academia, and boost the research and development happening locally in sensor technology.

"It would be like creating a miniature version of Silicon Valley and its innovation right here in Dayton, all around sensor technology," said Larrell Walters, director of technology partnerships at **University of Dayton Research Institute**.

The location and staff size for the facility have not yet been determined, though **Woolpert Inc.** has offered to host the IDCAST facility at its new location in the Miami Valley Research Park in Beavercreek. The proposal outlines a 12,000-square-foot space, which would likely employ at least 20 initially, Walters said.

The key to the proposal's success is that it plans to build on the already existing infrastructure centered on sensor technology, participants said. Ohio not only houses the **U.S. Air Force Research Lab** sensor directorate at **Wright-Patterson Air Force Base**, but also two of the top three fund-winning universities in materials research -- UD is No. 2 and The Ohio State University is No. 3 -- as well as variety of key industry players including Dayton-based Woolpert Inc., Yellow Springs-based **YSI Inc.** and Mason-based **L-3 Communications Cincinnati Electronics**. All of those powerhouses were involved when the proposal was submitted at the end of June, with participation expected to grow in coming weeks.

Walters, along with Jay Johnson, a senior research scientist and group leader of chemical and biological sensors, and Joseph Haus, chair of the electro-optics department, headed up the proposal.

The proposal is competing against eight others from across the state and the final decision is expected in November.

The more than \$100 million that UD has rounded up splits into two cost-sharing parts: about \$30 million in cash and \$70 million of in-kind support. The \$28 million grant the consortium is chasing would provide \$20 million in capital and \$8 million in operating funds, \$2 million of which would go to a research assistance program and \$6 million to a commercialization program. And the money will be used to focus on four arenas of sensor technology -- environmental monitoring, transportation and security, military aerospace and medical -- that represent more than half the \$12.4 billion industry, according to 2004 statistics from The **Freedonia Group**, a Cleveland-based industry research firm. Sensors are devices used to collect information about an environment, either remotely or by being located in the area being studied.

The commercialization segment of the proposal was integral in bringing on board a variety of industry organizations and technology companies, participants agree. It also will ensure the longevity of the program while driving development in the state.

"That will help IDCAST look for technologies that are ripe to transition into the marketplace," said John Devitt, manager of system analysis for L3-Cincinnati Electronics.

But another important part of the proposal was securing AFRL, which will lend its name for support and actively participate in research and development opportunities, Walters said.

Without AFRL signing on, a key part of the sensor technology industry in Ohio would have been missing. And incredibly, the entire proposal came together in less than eight weeks.

"Quite frankly, Ohio Third Frontier created this opportunity," said Rob Williams, a technical



John Samples

Grand plan: Peter Powers, right, a group leader in chemical and biological sensors with UDRI and assistant professor in chemical engineering at UD, works with graduate student Anup Pandey. Powers is working on a frequency converter sensor.

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adviser for the AF Sensors Directorate. "It has brought together the diversity of talent to advance the technology, which is what the academics and government are interested in, while creating a conduit into commercialization, which is what industry is interested in."

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Proposal's projected payoff

Timeframe Jobs Created Economic Impact

3 years 51 \$10.67 million

8 years 364 \$238.3 million

12 years 688 \$732.8 million

Participating institutions, organizations and companies

University of Dayton - Lead Organization

University of Cincinnati

The Ohio State University

Wright State University

Miami University

University of Toledo

AFRL Sensors Directorate

AFRL Materials and Manufacturing Directorate

Wright Brothers Institute

Boeing Co.

Breakthrough Technology Development Inc.

Edison Material Technology Center

Faraday Technology Inc.

Fused Multimodality Imaging Ltd.

General Dynamics Corp.

Inventis Group Ltd.

L3 Communications Cincinnati Electronics

Nova Engineering Inc.

AeroFlex

Qbase LLC

SET Corp.

UES Inc.

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