Request for Information Regarding the Interagency Edison System for Reporting Federally Funded Inventions

As part of the Lab-to-Market CAP goal [7] to "support innovative tools and services for technology transfer", NIST and OSTP have identified a rebuild of the iEdison system as a strategic priority. The rebuild will address transferring the management of iEdison operations from NIH to NIST, implementing Recommendation 10.1 of the 2016 National Academies report. NIST, to which the Secretary of Commerce has delegated responsibility for promulgating regulations implementing the Bayh-Dole Act pertaining to the management and licensing of federally funded inventions, is well-positioned to manage the iEdison platform and to implement changes on an on-going basis. The objectives for the rebuild of the system are [documented in StratML format below]

Comments received in response to prior Requests for Information on related topics such as rights to federally funded inventions and licensing of government owned inventions [5] as well as federal technology transfer authorities and processes,[6] have noted similar concerns from the public. Addressing these challenges by modernizing the iEdison system to create a secure, interoperable platform that is easy to access, analyze, and use will help reduce administrative burdens on awardees, while further protecting public investment in extramural research and development.

Contents

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

Stakeholder(s):

Secretary of Commerce :
The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has been delegated responsibility by the Secretary of Commerce to promulgate regulations concerning the management and licensing of federally funded inventions.

Office of Science and Technology Policy :
Under the Lab-to-Market Cross Agency Priority (CAP) goal co-led with the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), NIST is initiating an effort to advance the President's Management Agenda and modernize government for the 21st century by assuming the responsibility for and rebuilding the Interagency Edison (iEdison) system for reporting extramural inventions created with federal funding.

The Public :
NIST requests information from the public regarding the current state of the iEdison system, including, but not limited to, specific challenges and recommended improvements. The information received in response to this RFI will inform NIST in developing a redesigned iEdison.

Dr. Courtney Silverthorn :
To respond to this RFI, please submit written comments by email to Dr. Courtney Silverthorn at courtney.silverthorn@nist.gov in any of the following formats: ASCII; Word; Start Printed Page 68129RTF; or PDF. Please include your name, organization's name (if any), and cite "iEdison RFI" in the subject line of all correspondence.

Federal Government :
The Federal Government invests approximately $100B each year in extramural research and development at universities, non-profits, and small and large businesses.[1] This results in the creation of thousands of inventions annually, which are required to be reported to the funding agency.[2]

Universities

Nonprofits

Businesses

Federal Agencies :
Many agencies use the Interagency Edison (iEdison) system,[3] a web-based platform that allows awardees to report federally funded subject inventions, elect rights, request extensions of time requirements, request waivers, demonstrate progress, inform the government of its limited use rights, upload requested documents, and perform other reporting tasks as required by their funding agency.

National Institutes of Health :
First developed in 1995, the platform is currently used by 32 funding agencies and is hosted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

National Academies of Science :
A 2016 report from the National Academies of Science [4] highlighted a number of systemic challenges inherent in the current iEdison platform that have impeded data entry and reporting compliance. The challenges described in the report include the following topics paraphrased below:

- *Inadequate staffing and funding*
- *Cumbersome reporting procedures due to (i) gated features preventing further action if certain requirements are left incomplete, (ii) requiring greater data specificity than that which is required by law, (iii) frequent reporting over the life of even unlicensed patents, and (iv) a complicated document uploading process*
- *Inconsistent use and reporting requirements amongst funding agencies*

Mission

To rebuild of the iEdison system

Values

Security

Interoperability

Access

Analysis

Ease of Use

1. Technology

Modernize the technology stack and provide increased system security

2. System

Re-examine and streamline the system to align with regulatory requirements

3. Experience & Compliance

Improve user experience and facilitate user compliance with reporting requirements

Stakeholder(s)
iEdison Users

4. Information

Improve the presentation of pertinent information requiring user action