

RECORD OF INVENTION GUIDELINES

These guidelines will assist you in completing the invention disclosure form. For further assistance, contact the Associate Dean for Academic Administration and Planning at ext. 7212.

VMI DOCKET NUMBER

Leave blank; Associate Dean for Academic Administration and Planning will assign.

TITLE OF INVENTION

The title should be as distinctively descriptive as possible without being unreasonably long.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF INVENTION

A patent should explain how to make the best-known form of the invention, as well as explaining how to best use it. Describe the invention generally with those requirements in mind, and point out the major advantages relative to existing competitive machines, processes or compositions. Explain the structure of the machine, or the formula, or the steps of the process and how they interact to carry out desired function of the invention. When possible include a detailed sketch of the invention.

Discuss any inherent problems with the invention and how they may be handled. If solutions to such problems are obvious only briefly mention them, but where finding such solutions involves inventive effort, disclose them in detail.

The disclosure should include information on how to make and use the invention when this is not obvious.

The answers to these questions will assist in providing an adequate description of the invention:

If pertinent, attach illustrations and refer to them in the description. Please address the following issues:

- i. What is the problem to be solved?
- ii. What are the disadvantages or shortcomings of previous attempts to solve the problem?
- iii. How does the invention work?
- iv. Give a detailed description of the invention.
- v. What further development remains to be accomplished?

NOVEL FEATURES:

Identify those features that were not known to be in existence before the invention. There may be several such features in a given invention. If there are unique advantages in operation or use of the invention, also list them. Highlight novelty by including a description of how the invention is different from what is currently in use.

NON-CONFIDENTIAL SUMMARY

Please provide a non-confidential summary of your invention. This summary should be approximately one to three paragraphs in length. It should not contain any proprietary information. It should describe the advantages of your invention as related to prior technology, if any, e.g., faster, cheaper, stronger. This summary may be used in correspondence to potential licensees, and will most likely be read by people without a great deal of technical/scientific acumen (businessmen vs. scientists/engineers), so the summary should be written in a manner that will be understandable to a layperson.

Date and place invention was first conceived?

The date and the location should be listed.

Date and place of first sketch, drawing or photo. date, place and identification of first written description

The date and the location should be listed.

DISCLOSURE OF INVENTION TO OTHERS

The best way to prove a date of invention is to have a written disclosure witnessed by two non-inventors who have read and understood it. The form of the disclosure can be oral or written, i.e. report, email, letter.

Date and place of completion of first sample, operating model or full-sized device

The sample should be a sample of the complete invention not just a component

Date and place of first test

This should be a test of the complete invention, not just a component.

Extent of use: past, present and contemplated

Two things are of importance. It is important to know about past and present uses since an application must be filed with the U.S. Patent Office within one year from date of public use.

Second, the extent to which further work will be funded and the commercial significance are major criteria in deciding if an application will be filed; so if you would like to see your invention patented, it should be "sold" here.

Related or referenced publications, patents or patent applications (Please attach copies of relevant research articles or other referenced publications)

Identify all materials of which you are aware that describe closely related prior work, by you or by others. This should include different ways of carrying out the function of your invention, as well as other uses of the principles of your invention for different purposes. For chemical cases materials which describe analogous compounds should also be included. Give pertinent pages of multi-pages citations.

Is publication of details of this invention contemplated? If so, in what form and when?

Give best estimate of date of contemplated publication. Generally applications for foreign patents must be filed prior to publication of the invention. It is important that the Dean's office be informed now and in the future of plans for publication or other public disclosure of the invention.

Was the invention made during the course of work sponsored by an organization other than VMI? If so, identify the sponsor.

Self-explanatory; only applicable if work was funded through a sponsored research agreement/grant.

Sketch illustrating the invention (if applicable). Use separate sheet, if necessary.

An illustration can very helpful in describing the invention. Plots of data may be useful for a description.

PREPARER OF RECORD OF INVENTION:

This should be the person preparing this disclosure, who should also be one of the inventors.

CONTRIBUTING COLLABORATORS

Identify your collaborators and describe their contribution to the conception or experimental development of the invention. It is not necessary that all contributions to the conception or development be of equal importance, even relatively minor contributions should be listed. A careful listing of the contributions will assist in identifying the true inventors.

Estimated percentage share in creation

A number should be assigned, and agreed to by all the inventors, to provide a percentage value of each inventor's relative contribution to the overall invention. The value assigned is important, as it will determine each inventor's relative share in any royalty income the invention may generate. If the inventors contributed equally to the invention, or they cannot agree on values, then this item shall be left blank, and royalties will be equally shared by all inventors.

Describe your contribution to the conception or experimental development of the invention

A patent that includes or excludes an inventor may cause the patent to be invalid. An assistant, technician, engineer may work hard and skillfully perform experiments or tests or construct models, but so long as they work under the supervision of an inventor and does not made a contribution to the conception of the invention they are not an inventor. Conversely, a supervisor is not an inventor unless they contribute to the inventive concept even though they may specify certain desired results or suggest promising areas of research.

Signature

The Record of Invention must be signed exactly as the names appear in Items No.1 and 9. Do not use initials only. The signature should be the full first name, middle initial and last name.

Witness

The witness must be a non-inventor who has read and understands the disclosure. A witness who does not understand the invention as described in the Invention would be of little value in any legal proceeding.