

LIFE TECH FLORIDA

Memorandum of Understanding

Parties to the Agreement:

Florida International University, Beacon Council, Florida Atlantic University, University of Miami, Florida Gulf Coast University, Nova Southeastern University, Miami Dade College, Broward College, Palm Beach State College, Indian River State College, Florida Network of Research, Science and Technology Parks; University of Miami Life Science and Technology Park, Research Park at Florida Atlantic University, Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, Business Development Board of Palm Beach County, Max Planck Florida Institute, Merck, and Scripps Florida.

As members of the Life Tech Florida Executive Committee and on behalf of our respective institutions and organizations, we commit to a collaborative partnership to establish **Life Tech Florida**, a regional economic development cluster on life sciences and information technology.

Life Tech Florida's Aim and Mission:

The aim of Life Tech Florida is to develop an industry cluster in South Florida focused on biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, and information technology. Biotechnology is defined simply as “any technological application that uses biological systems, living organisms, or derivatives thereof, to make or modify products or processes for specific use (United Nations Convention on Biologic Diversity, 1992).”

The mission of Life Tech Florida is as follows: Educational institutions including universities and state colleges, and research institutes will utilize our collective assets and facilitate collaborations with regional, state, national, and international industries, governments, and communities to promote innovation, investment, entrepreneurship and economic growth in biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, and information technology to promote high-technology and high-paying employment.

As members of Life Tech Florida, we commit to work together to achieve the following strategic priorities and goals:

1. *Establish a shared communication portal, technology platform, research core facilities, and institute of commercialization*
 - a. Create a distinctive brand, encompassing:
 - unified vision for Life Tech Florida from a cohesive region
 - common definition understood and shared by everyone and widely communicated inside and outside the region
 - strong message about the region's assets
 - summary of our collective strengths, weaknesses, focal areas, products or services
 - b. Develop a shared platform for technology & research infrastructure and central technology transfer office
 - Assess research infrastructure, technology, resources, facilities, and programs
 - Build cost-effectiveness and efficiency by sharing research infrastructure, resources, facilities, best practices and programs
 - Provide seamless access to a wide array of technologies across the region for researchers applying for R01 grants

LIFE TECH FLORIDA

- Tap into “unused capacity”: institutions with technologies that are not used to full capacity and can be shared with others to maximize overall research productivity
- Create a shared technology transfer office with branches at different institutions
- c. Create a financial, legal, and administrative model to enable shared platform and communication
 - Draft a cross-institutional MOU to enable sharing to occur
 - Develop a three-tiered financial structure with internal price; collaborative price (for Life Tech Florida members, without IDC); and an external price (for institutions outside of LTF, full costs including IDC)
- 2 *Conduct an extensive asset map and cluster analysis*
 - Identify strengths and synergies with member institutions
 - Scrutinize three important domains: neuroscience, metabolic disorders, and cancer
 - Identify and analyze gaps: for example, gaps in computational approaches, bioinformatics, and other areas
 - Identify research and industry clusters in the region
- 3 *Recruit, develop, and retain talent in the region*
 - Use the strengths of universities and institutions to recruit the best students in Medicine, Engineering, Arts and Sciences, and other areas
 - Make available to students and investigators the combined expertise and assets of the region
 - Apply a regional approach which significantly increases opportunities for students to find specific resources, technology, or expertise in their scientific area
 - Develop a region-wide internship program with opportunities for cross-fertilization of talent.
- 4 *Create, develop and strengthen programs designed to increase STEM student and workforce development within the region*
 - a. Strengthen K-20 STEM career pathway
 - Develop and implement STEM pipeline programs beginning in elementary and middle school, leveraging assets of universities/colleges and research institutes
 - Define what jobs are in the pathway, starting early pipelines in advance of college years.
 - b. Enhance workforce development throughout the continuum
 - Build programs from one-year certificate to postdoctoral
 - Survey industry and determine gaps in curricular programs and skill sets of graduates
 - Leverage public and private funding to fill gaps in workforce training.
 - Create “one stop” internship application process.