

# NWU inventor guide

---

## All about patents

The Technology Transfer Office of the NWU is responsible for identifying, protecting and commercialising intellectual property (IP) arising from NWU research.

For those who want to learn more about patents, patent registration and intellectual property in general, an excellent website to visit is the following: <http://www.oppedahl.com/patents>

Those who want to go beyond the 'Reader's Digest version' and wish to understand more about IP may visit the following website: <http://www.wipo.int/portal/index.html.en> (World Intellectual Property Organisation [WIPO]).

## Disclosure of intellectual property

In order to ensure maximum utilisation of new intellectual property, its existence must be identified and disclosed to the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office. This should happen as soon as possible after a new and potentially useful product or process has been conceptualised, or a new plant variety has been developed, or when an unusual, unexpected or non-obvious research result, which has the potential of being commercially or otherwise applied, is obtained.

In terms of the new legislation, disclosures must be made within 90 days and the University is obliged to report the disclosures to the National Intellectual Property Management Office (NIPMO). The Technology Transfer Office is responsible for performing this duty on behalf of staff members, who are expected to cooperate with the office in order to comply with the stipulations of the relevant act. More specifically, it is expected of staff to make disclosures to the Technology Transfer Office within 30 days of discovery.

After disclosure, services that are set out in the general guidelines are rendered. All researchers must apply a proper system of laboratory management in order to claim the uniqueness and date of an invention.

The following [NWU Disclosure Form](#) must be completed as comprehensively as possible.

## Patent searches

An invention is only new if nobody has mentioned it in any written form or in public before. The first step towards finding out more about the patentability of your idea is to do a patent search. You could do it on your own at any of the following websites, or you could contact the Technology Transfer and Innovation Support Office, providing you are a staff member or student of the NWU.

Interesting self-help prior art search websites are the following:

1. <http://www.freepatentsonline.com>
2. <http://www.uspto.gov/patft>
3. <http://www.espacenet.com>
4. [http://www.ipdl.inpit.go.jp/homepg\\_e.ipdl](http://www.ipdl.inpit.go.jp/homepg_e.ipdl)

## NWU intellectual property rights management guidelines

The following policies and guidelines are in place to assist with the management of IP at the NWU:

1. [Research and Innovation Policy](#)
2. [Policy on the Management of Intellectual Property at the NWU](#)
3. [Policy for the Management of Research and Innovation Contracts and External Investment](#)
4. [Policy on Delegations and Schedule of Authorisation Levels](#)
5. [NWU Policies and Rules](#)

## Useful links

1. [AUTM \(The Association of University Technology Managers\)](#)
2. [DM Kisch Inc \(Patent Attorneys\)](#)
3. [LES \(Licensing Executive Society\)](#)
4. [SAVCA \(South African Venture Capital Association\)](#)
5. [TIA \(Technology Innovation Agency\)](#)
6. [SARIMA \(South African Research & Innovation Association\)](#)