

## Academic Affairs Policy Manual 1.12-4, Regents' Innovator Leave of Absence

Consistent with University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents (BOR) [Policy 8.3.2.2](#), full-time tenured faculty may apply leave of absence as a Regents' Innovator to allow time away from their faculty duties to focus on beginning or growing companies that commercialize a faculty member's research. The leave arrangement must be consistent with Board of Regents' and University's policies, including the [Intellectual Property Policy](#) and the [Conflicts of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment, and Outside Activities Policy](#).

Regents' Innovator leave is unpaid and may be requested for an initial period up to three years, with the possibility of renewal for a second period up to three years. Eligible faculty may request partial leave or joint appointment with the faculty member's current or another institution, allowing the faculty member to continue to supervise students and/or serve as principal investigator or in other roles on sponsored projects, subject to the intellectual property and conflicts of interest policies noted above.

UGA's [Innovation Gateway](#) and [Office of Conflicts of Interest Review and Management](#) will work with faculty members pursuing approval for Regents' Innovator Leave of Absence on navigating the approval process, gaining access to UGA facilities under cost-center arrangements, and receiving licenses to appropriate UGA intellectual property.

### Criteria for Regents' Innovator Leave

- Strong endorsement from the unit head (or appropriate supervisor) and Dean/Vice President
- Evidence of strong effort in commercializing the faculty member's research
- Evidence of market research, and relevance and viability of commercialization and/or startup plans
- Preference for candidates who secured initial funding for the company, including SBIR, STTR, and/or venture funding.

### Application Process:

Applications for the Regents' Innovator Leave of Absence should follow the same process as for [Faculty Educational or Professional Leave Requests](#), with additional documentation as noted below:

- [Form A](#) – To be completed by requesting faculty member and unit head (selecting the leave of absence without pay option)
- [Form B](#) – To be completed by the faculty member's unit head, including teaching arrangement for courses that the faculty member usually teaches.
- Faculty member's Written Request, including summary of accomplishments demonstrating criteria noted above (not to exceed three pages)

- Letters of support from unit head (or appropriate supervisor), Dean/Vice President, and Executive Director of the UGA Innovation Gateway
- Faculty member's current CV
- Supporting documentation (as applicable, such as inter-institutional contract; memorandum of understanding, offer letter, or agreement from company, institution, or other entity; intellectual property agreement)

The Regents' Innovator title requires unanimous recommendation of the Provost, President, and USG Chancellor, and approval by the BOR Committee on Academic Affairs and the BOR. BOR policy also requires the execution of an agreement between the faculty member and the University, signed by both the faculty member and President. This agreement will be executed after approval of the Regents' Innovator leave.

All leave of absence requests must be submitted to the Office of Faculty Affairs at least six months prior to the leave's intended start date. Accordingly, any request for a leave of absence beginning fall semester must be submitted to the Office of Faculty Affairs by no later than March 1. Any request for a leave of absence beginning spring semester must be submitted to the Office of Faculty Affairs by no later than August 1. Exceptions to these deadlines may be made for good cause, in the discretion of the Provost.

### **Request Forms and Procedures**

#### **Sources:**

- [Board of Regents Policy Manual, § 8.3.2.2 Regents' Innovator Leave of Absence and Regents' Entrepreneur Designation](#)
- [UGA Academic Affairs Policy Manual 1.12 Leaves](#)