Wellspring Helps Guilford College Maximize IP Impact

Background

Founded in 1835, Guilford College's mission is to educate students in spirit, mind, and body for leadership in service to others by building on a foundation of the college's Quaker values, academic excellence, service, and student success. The private liberal arts college has a foundation of academic excellence and a rich athletic heritage, and many of its programs of distinction reach well beyond academic achievement.

Guilford was awarded the US Economic Development Administration Build to Scale Ignite award in late 2023 to begin the process to enhance its innovation ecosystem with a focus on social entrepreneurship.

Problem

As a small liberal arts college, they did not have internal technology transfer expertise, so they were looking for a consultancy to complete an inventory of on-campus assets as well as a gap analysis of the support needed to deliver wider external impact from their teaching and research. They wanted to understand the breadth of intellectual assets they had, and if creating an Office of Technology Transfer would benefit the college and the surrounding community.

> "We had a wonderful experience with Wellspring. The team was so attentive and professional and went beyond our expectations. They understood the unique opportunities and challenges we face at a small liberal arts college. We would highly recommend their services to anyone."

Samantha Roth
Project Manager,
Economic Development Admin

GUILFORD COLLEGE

Interviews

Wellspring consultants conducted extensive interviews and engaged with many on the Guilford staff to determine a list of over 50 potential IP opportunities. This list included everything from books, training courses, and interactive experiences, to building on the local history of the Underground Railway, and more.

Asset inventory and Recommendations

The Wellspring team took all the knowledge gained in the interviews to provide a comprehensive asset inventory. Wellspring created a bespoke categorization system to identify trends in asset generation across the College and an asset evaluation system to group and prioritize opportunities based on commercial readiness and resource needs. Wellspring made high-level recommendations on the potential for commercialization from these assets for the benefit of students, faculty, the College and the wider community and on the infrastructure and resources required.

Best practices

Finally, the Wellspring team shared best practices for successful Tech Transfer that are relevant for an organization like Guilford. This drew on Wellspring's global experience of successful ways to achieve lasting external impacts from liberal arts subjects.

Result

Within a few months, Wellspring was able to present a comprehensive inventory and best practice report that will enable Guilford to create a collaboration team to implement the recommendations. By working together, Wellspring and Guilford have identified areas for growth and expansion. Guilford appointed two new managers to the project, who will look at both on-campus and community-based opportunities.

Wellspring has helped Guilford create a structured environment in which the college can maximize the impact of their IP and institutional strengths. Rather than an afterthought, intellectual property is becoming a normal part of the academic process and a touchstone for the college's relationship with the community. This will allow them specific leverage with which to expand on their unique strengths, such as their ethical leadership model and their commitment to social entrepreneurship.

Wellspring's IP Commercialization

Wellspring's Technology Commercialization Services are designed to help you drive efficient commercialization and maximize the impact of your research. The team has over 100 years of combined tech transfer experience serving small and large academic clients throughout North America, the UK, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and beyond. Services include Invention Disclosure Form Reviews, Market Assessments and Strategies, Licensing and Transaction Support and more.