

**SUBMITTED BY:**

**STEPHEN M. LANIER, PH.D.  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH**

**CONSORTIUM RESEARCH AGREEMENT TO WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY  
FROM ADVAITA CORPORATION, A COMPANY OWNED BY  
A WSU EMPLOYEE**

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of the Vice President for Research recommends that the Board of Governors authorize the President or his designee to enter into a consortium research agreement with Advaita Corporation, a company located at 8703 Brookville Rd., Plymouth, MI and founded by Dr. Sorin Draghici on “Cloud services for the analysis of gene signaling pathways.”

**BACKGROUND**

Sorin Draghici, Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Computer Science in the College of Engineering. Dr. Draghici has developed a novel technology for the analysis of biological networks with significant transformative potential for a number of life-science related disciplines.

In order to further develop and commercialize this technology, Dr. Draghici founded Advaita Corporation. Wayne State applied for patent protection for this technology in July 2008, and patent number 8068994 was issued for this technology on Nov 29, 2011. Advaita licensed the technology from Wayne State University.

WSU’s College of Engineering seeks to enter into a consortium agreement on this project with Advaita Corporation for a project totaling \$43,531 to implement a cloud strategy that is aimed at taking advantage of the state of the art tools provided by Amazon Web Services (AWS) infrastructure. The AWS is a collection of products and services that provide companies with a scalable environment to meet their growing needs, thus allowing them to focus on their business and product specific development. The funding will cover salary and fringes for research assistant, Fabio Hiquera. Hiquera will work on downloading the pathway data from various sources, as well as experiments necessary for statistical validation. Hiquera will devote 100% of his efforts to this project from June 1, 2015 through October 31, 2015.

Michigan Conflict of Interest law requires specific sunshine procedures in order for a university employee, or a company owned by a university employee, to contract directly or indirectly with the university:

1. The employee must disclose any pecuniary interest in the contract to the Board of Governors and the disclosure must be made a matter of record in the Board’s proceedings.
2. The contract must be approved by a vote of not less than two-thirds of the full members of

the Board in open session.

3. The Board's minutes must report:
  - i. The name of each party in the contract.
  - ii. The terms of the contract, including duration, financial consideration between parties, facilities or services of the public entity included in the contract and the nature and degree of assignment of employees of the public entity for fulfillment of the contract.
  - iii. The nature of any pecuniary interest.

If the Board approves this recommendation, the minutes will report as follows:

The Board of Governors authorized the President, or his designee, to contract with Advaita Corporation for a research agreement totaling \$43,531.

- i. The parties involved in the contract are Wayne State University and Advaita Corporation.
- ii. The contract will provide that Advaita will contract to Wayne State University \$43,351 for implementing a cloud strategy that is aimed at taking advantage of the state of the art tools provided by Amazon Web Services (AWS) infrastructure. The funding will cover salary and fringes for research assistant, Fabio Hiquera. Hiquera will work on downloading the pathway data from various sources, as well as experiments necessary for statistical validation. Hiquera will devote 100% of his efforts to this project and will work under the direction of Dr. Loren Schwiebert, chair of the Department of Computer Science in the College of Engineering. The research agreement will also be subject to any required conflict of interest management plans developed by the Conflict of Interest committee.
  - The contract will have a term of five months, with an estimated start date of June 1, 2015.
  - Wayne State University facilities and personnel will be utilized during the project.
- iii. Dr. Sorin Draghici's pecuniary interest consists of 50 percent (50%) ownership of Advaita Corporation and he will therefore have the potential to financially benefit from the commercial success of the company, including the commercialization of the University's intellectual property known as "Method for Analyzing Biological Networks" and "Methods and Software for the Identification of Coherent Signaling Cascades in Biological Pathways."