



EAB

RESEARCH BRIEF

Corporate and Industry Engagement Functions

Strategies to Increase Corporate Engagement

Advancement Forum

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1) Executive Overview

Key Observations

Corporate relations offices provide corporations with direct access to institutional talent, research, and campus-born technologies, and facilitate communication across institutional departments and units. Most profiled institutions maintain dedicated corporate relations offices that direct initial contact with corporations to offices or departments of interest. Corporate relations offices employ between two and seven staff members to liaise with embedded corporate relations staff in offices of advancement, sponsored research, technology transfer, career services, and academic departments. One profiled institution fully integrates all corporate sponsored research and technology transfer into one office of 35 dedicated staff; two profiled institutions operate fully decentralized models with corporate relations staff embedded across the institution.

Embedded corporate relations staff meet regularly to craft and coordinate development, research, and technology transfer strategies. Corporate relations staff embedded in academic departments and administrative units possess specialized knowledge related to intellectual property (IP) licensing, contractual agreements, and patent and copyright issues. Monthly meetings and informal communication channels allow corporate relations staff to better understand corporate footprints at profiled institutions and identify potential areas for further investment. Most profiled institutions struggle to implement and maintain an effective Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool due to budgetary restrictions, limitations on cross-system information sharing, and IP confidentiality concerns.

Employ Network of Academic Corporate Relations Officers (NACRO) tiers and objective metrics to track corporate relations throughout the engagement lifecycle. Corporate relations staff at most profiled institutions measure corporate relations on the tiered NACRO system based on the complexity, timeline, and breadth of corporate interest. Administrators design targeted metrics to evaluate the level of corporate engagement from initial outreach to relationship cultivation to close out and stewardship. Contacts affirm that assigning metrics to each stage of the relationship cycle allows corporate relations staff to deepen engagement at all levels of the value chain. All profiled institutions benchmark total corporate philanthropy, total corporate sponsored research, total technology transfer agreements, and number of start-up companies launched each year.

Selectively contact and follow-up with corporations with vested strategic interests in institutional research and technological strengths. Dedicated corporate relations staff conduct in-depth institutional research to better understand university-wide strengths, innovative technologies, and campus-born research projects. Administrators then determine appropriate outreach strategies that target corporations with strong academic profiles and an interest in campus strengths. After finalizing agreements, corporate relations staff identify corporations with the potential for further investment, engagement, and opportunity based on an analysis of compiled metrics. One profiled institution delivers a post-engagement survey to all corporate partners to measure service quality.

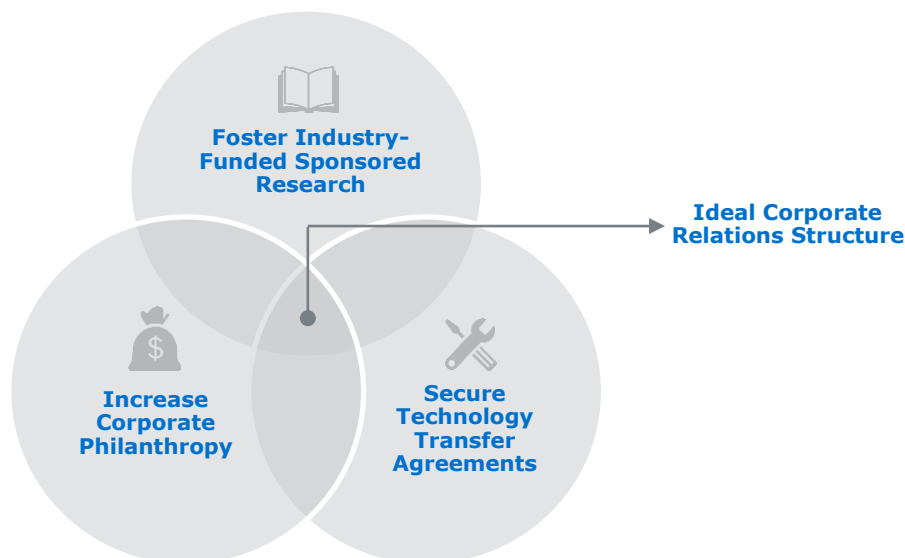
2) Models and Organizational Structures

Background

Improved Corporate Engagement Increases Institutional Revenue Streams

In the wake of financial strains and reduced government funding, profiled institutions increasingly emphasize strong partnerships and collaboration with corporations and industry leaders to fund research, offer in-kind gifts, and support technological developments. Traditionally, institutions create joint staff dedicated to both corporate and foundation relations. However, most profiled institutions now separate corporate relations from foundation relations to develop targeted strategies that directly address corporate needs, interests, and strategic plans. While **Institution B** still maintains dedicated corporate and foundations staff, the institution plans to further develop the corporate engagement side to match the breadth of the foundation side.

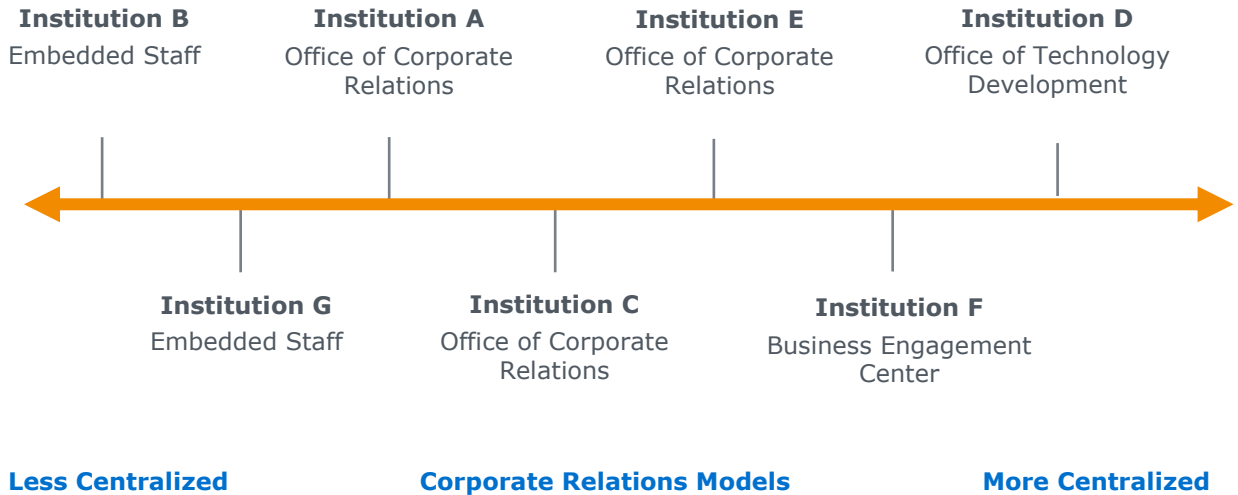
Goals of Improved Corporate and Industry Relations



Identify Areas of Mutual Interest to Market Campus-Born Technologies and Research

Corporate engagement staff conduct institutional and corporate research to pinpoint similarities in strategic goals. To prevent a broad and superficial attempt to attract corporate partners, dedicated staff selectively outreach to industries and corporations that possess a vested interest in an institutional strength. **Institution C** promotes interdisciplinary research that spans the institution's academic departments, signature institutes, and subject-based initiatives (e.g., energy, data analytics, innovation and entrepreneurship, global health). Contacts report that targeted initial outreach successfully introduces corporations to institutional initiatives and encourages broader engagement across multiple administrative and academic areas.

Degree of Corporate Relations Centralization



Integrated Offices

No Profiled Institution Fully Integrates All Aspects of Corporate Interest in a Centralized Office

Institution D maintains the most integrated model of corporate engagement functions, where the Office of Technology Development manages all sponsored research and technology transfer for corporate and industry partners; the institution also maintains a separate sponsored research unit for non-corporate related research endeavors. Contacts that combining technology transfer and sponsored research greatly facilitates communication and outreach to corporations. In addition, contacts recommend separating corporate development because corporate gifts do not require the contracts and agreements associated with corporate research and technology transfer.

Office of Technology Development Service Portfolio at *Institution D*

For Faculty, Students, and Inventors

- Protect and realize the value of faculty research
- Promote commercial maturity of faculty research
- Commercialize and license faculty inventions and start-up companies

For Corporations, Entrepreneurs, and Industries

- Offer access to university innovators and innovations
- License technologies with commercial potential and reduced investment risk
- Catalyze start-up companies

Corporate Relations Office Models

Industry Partners Easily Navigate Institutions through Dedicated Corporate Relations Offices

Most profiled institutions organize corporate engagement offices that facilitate communication between external corporate partners and internal administrative offices, faculty, and academic departments. Corporate relations offices at profiled institutions vary in the scope of service offerings.

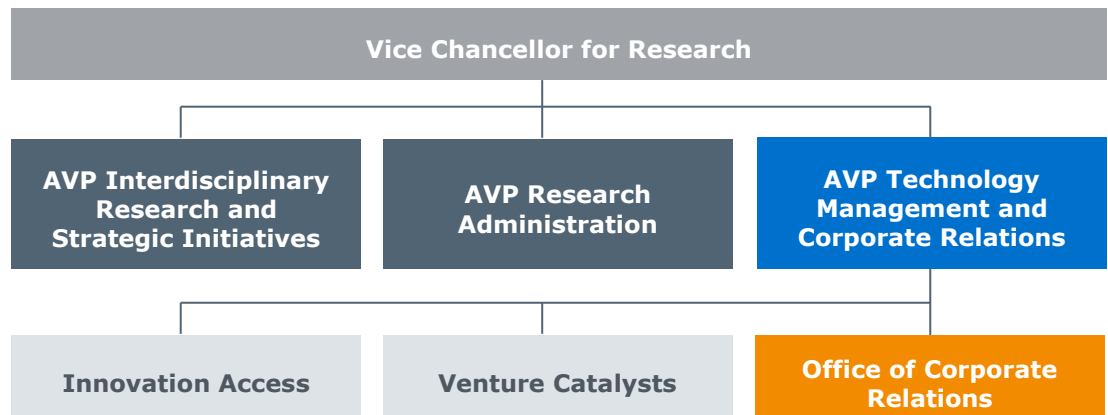
Institution A operates primarily as a concierge service to direct corporations to institutional departments and offices of interest. Corporate relations staff at **Institution C** and **Institution E** coordinate corporate engagement by identifying areas of mutual interest, conducting relationship management activities, and demonstrating institutional strengths. The Business Engagement Center at **Institution F** expanded its service portfolio from a basic concierge model to a more comprehensive unit that actively aligns faculty and corporate interest, orchestrates timely meetings and follow-up outreach, writes research proposals, and directly liaises with staff members in the gifts, research, and contracts offices.

Most Directors of Corporate Relations Report to Vice Provosts for Research

The director of corporate relations at **Institution A** reports to the Associate Vice President of Development within the Office of Advancement. The current director of corporate relations at Institution A originally developed the institution’s corporate engagement function within advancement when the office split from foundation relations. While the office is housed within advancement, contacts report that the office focuses on strategies outside of the realm of philanthropy including corporate research and technology transfer.

Corporate relations staff at **Institution C** and **Institution E** report through Vice Provosts of Research. To facilitate communication of corporate relations across departments, the Business Engagement Center at **Institution F** reports both to Offices of Development and Research. Administrators at Institution C may alter the reporting structure to better reflect the complexity and breadth of corporate relations at the institution.

Reporting Structure at *Institution E*



Dual Reporting Structure Coordinates Corporate Engagement

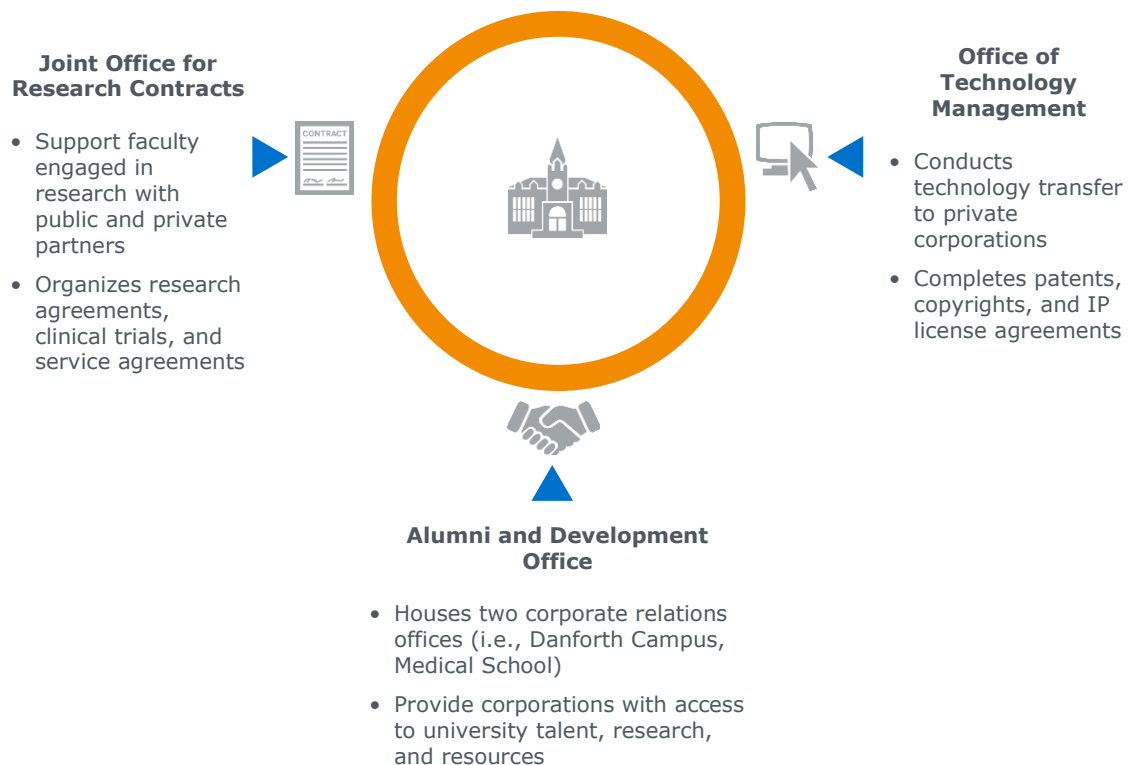
The Director of the Business Engagement Center at **Institution F** reports directly to the Office of the Development and the Vice Provost for Research. This dual reporting structure ensures effective communication of the status of current and future partnerships and allows staff to assess the scope and magnitude of corporate engagement across the institution.

Decentralized Offices

Institutions Embed Corporate and Industry Engagement Staff in Offices of Technology Transfer, Advancement, and Sponsored Research

Institution B and **Institution G** do not locate dedicated corporate relations staff in a central administrative office. Instead, corporate relations staff operate within offices of development, sponsored research, technology transfer, and career services. Institution G maintains two corporate relations offices for the medical school and the Danforth campus, both of which are housed in the Alumni and Development Office. Contacts recommend establishing regular meetings and communication channels to facilitate the coordination of corporate interest across diverse strategic areas.

Organizational Structure at *Institution G*







3) Staffing and Communication

Staffing Levels

Corporate Relations Offices Maintain Between Two and Seven Staff

Central corporate relations staff at profiled institutions typically manage distinct portfolios of corporations across a variety of institutional channels (e.g., research, technology transfer, development, career services, gifts). **Institution E** hires one dedicated analyst with a patent license, which allows them to directly liaise with technology transfer staff and better understand contractual, IP, and copyright issues. **Institution B** and **Institution G** do not employ any centralized corporate relations staff.

Central Corporate Relations Staff at *Institution A*

	Responsibilities	Staffing Requirements
 Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains a portfolio of corporate partners • Communicates corporate relations strategy with university leaders • Supervises all corporate relations staff 	<p>One Director</p>
 Associate Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a portfolio of corporate partners • Organize meetings, write research proposals, and draft technology transfer agreements • Coordinate internal and external communication between stakeholders 	<p>Two Associate Directors</p>
 Senior Researcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design executive profiles of corporations to identify areas of mutual interest • Create corporate footprints to monitor corporate involvement on campus 	<p>One Part-Time Senior Researcher</p>
 Program Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive assistant to the Director • Manage event logistics • Process corporate inquiries and direct requests to appropriate institutional departments 	<p>One Program Coordinator</p>

Embed Corporate Relations Staff in Administrative Offices and Academic Departments

In addition to centralized staff, most profiled institutions locate corporate relations staff in administrative offices (e.g., development, technology transfer, sponsored research, career services, contracts). **Institution B** embeds four corporate and foundation relations FTE within the development office and between six and eight FTE in sponsored research and technology transfer. Some academic institutes and departments (e.g., College of Business, College of Engineering) hire dedicated corporate relations staff depending on the disciplinary area and maturity level of the department. After initial outreach to corporations, central corporate relations staff transfer corporate partners to staff within institutional offices and departments for further investigation and engagement.

Integrated Offices Employ More Staff Due to Larger Service Portfolios

The Office of Technology Development at **Institution D** hires 35 FTE and seven graduate students to conduct corporate engagement activities across four major academic fields: life sciences, engineering, physical sciences, and medicine. Contacts recommend hiring staff with extensive experience in contracts, IP licensing, research proposal writing, and copyright and patent policies.

Office of Technology Development Staff at *Institution D*

- Chief Technology Development Officer: 1 FTE
- Business Development: 8 FTE and 7 Graduate-level students
- Corporate Alliances: 2 FTE
- Financial Operations: 4 FTE
- Intellectual Property: 8 FTE
- Technology Transactions: 8 FTE
- Administration: 3 FTE
- Administrative Assistant: 1 FTE

External Communication

Industry Partners Approach and Easily Navigate Institutions through Central Corporate Relations Offices

Maintaining an office dedicated to corporate relations and communication increases the visibility of corporate engagement functions at profiled institutions. While corporations and industry partners preserve long-standing relationships with individual faculty members or academic units, new corporations can readily approach and access campus-born technologies and research through corporate relations offices. Contacts at **Institution F** strongly promote the value of having an office wholly committed to corporate engagement and relationships.

Corporate Relations Staff Proactively Outreach to Industries with Shared Strategic Interests

Both embedded and central corporate relations staff at profiled institutions engage in extensive institutional research to identify campus strengths, innovative technologies, and promising research initiatives. Once identifying institutional strengths, corporate relations staff engage in targeted outreach and marketing strategies to corporations with mutual strategic interests. Corporate relations staff at **Institution C** design a formal strategic challenge in collaboration with a selected corporation to identify the short and long-term strategic goals of the determined initiative. Corporate relations staff then direct the request to embedded staff within institutes, schools, and departments for development and implementation. Contacts at **Institution B** recommend contacting alumni in corporate leadership positions for initial outreach.

Corporate Relations Strategic Questions for Outreach



- 1 What is this corporation's strategic plan and approach to academic partnerships?
- 2 Where do institutional strategic goals and research strengths overlap with corporate interests?
- 3 How can corporate relations staff maximize and expand relations with new and existing corporate partners?

Allow Faculty and Staff to Foster Personal Relationships with Industry Partners

Faculty often engage in technology transfer agreements and sponsored research projects separate from corporate relations offices. Contacts affirm that these interactions allow faculty to cultivate opportunities for increased corporate philanthropy, sponsored research, and contractual agreements independently from corporate relations offices. Administrators at **Institution B** recommend speaking with faculty about current and past corporate interactions to advance and expand those relationships.

Internal Communication

Embedded Corporate and Industry Engagement Staff Meet Regularly to Discuss Current Initiatives

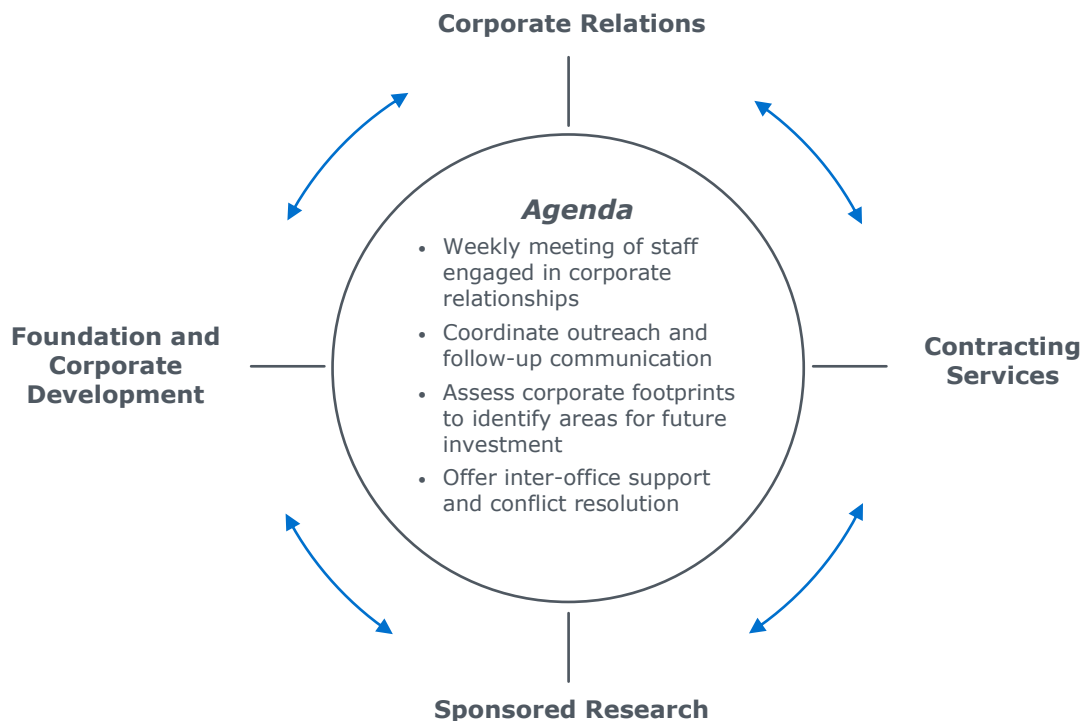
Corporate relations staff at **Institution B**, **Institution C**, **Institution E**, and **Institution F** convene at least once a month to discuss and coordinate corporate engagement strategy for development, research, and technology transfer. Institution C also organizes administrators and faculty members in teams based on involvement with a single corporation that meet regularly. **Institution A** and **Institution G** currently communicate more informally but hope to establish regular meetings to facilitate cooperation across institutional offices and departments.



Send Formal Reports to Institutional Offices

The Joint Office for Research Contracts at **Institution G** delivers formal contract spreadsheets to the Office of Technology Management each month. The spreadsheet includes contract timelines, leads, current opportunities, and questions. Technology Management staff offer timely feedback responses to facilitate interoffice communication.

Negotiation Team Meeting at *Institution E*



Customer Relationship Management

Contacts Struggle to Develop Effective CRM Software Systems and Processes

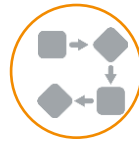
Corporate relations staff at **Institution B**, **Institution D**, and **Institution G** do not currently operate customer relationships management systems. Contacts at **Institution A** plan to improve and standardize departmental CRMs to increase information sharing capability and improve planning functionality. **Institution F** operates on the same CRM as the development office. Contacts report that the tool's focus on individual donors rather than corporations limits its usability.

Common Challenges with CRM Systems



Lack of Institutional Resources

Institution B does not license a CRM due to budgetary restrictions.



Limited Information Sharing

Departments and offices at **Institution A** operate individual CRM systems, which restrict transferring and viewing information.



Confidentiality Concerns

Contacts at **Institution E** report difficulty in integrating the CRM due to concerns regarding IP and confidentiality.

Allow Corporate Relations Staff Access to CRMs



Since departments and office at **Institution A** typically operate distinct CRM tools, eight institutional offices allow the Office of Corporate Relations to access information pulled from CRMs. The Senior Researcher employs this information to develop corporate footprints and identify potential investment areas. However, contacts report that maintaining a variety of CRM tools limits cross-campus communication and information sharing. The institution is currently planning to improve and standardize the CRM tool.

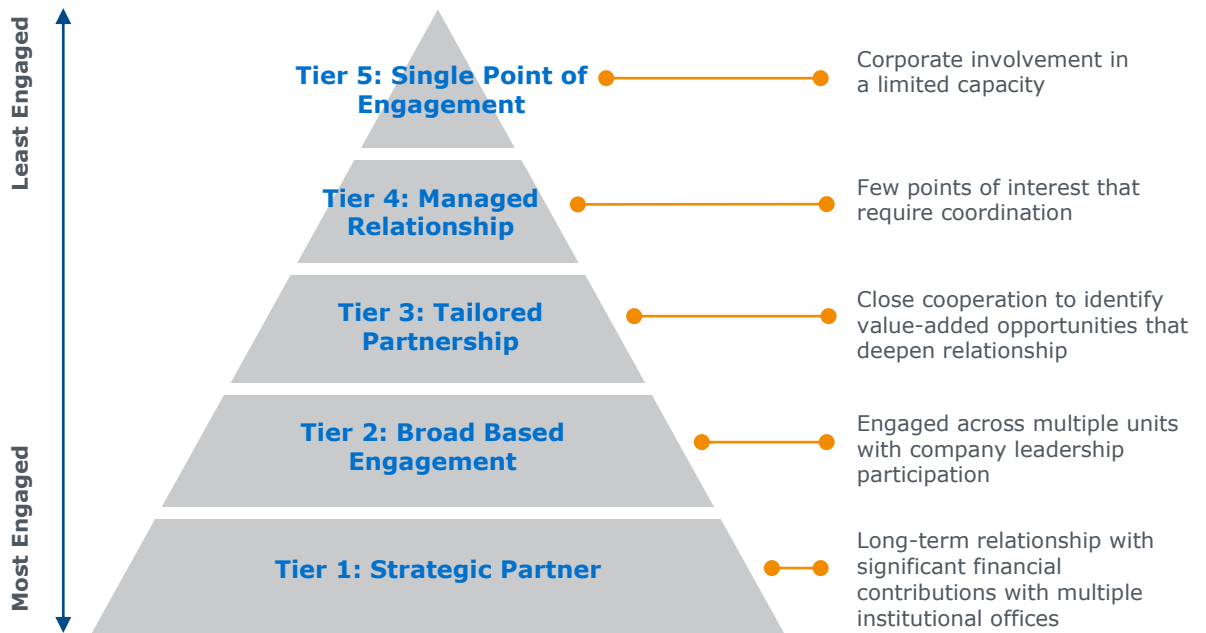
4) Evaluation and Outcomes

Evaluation and Metrics

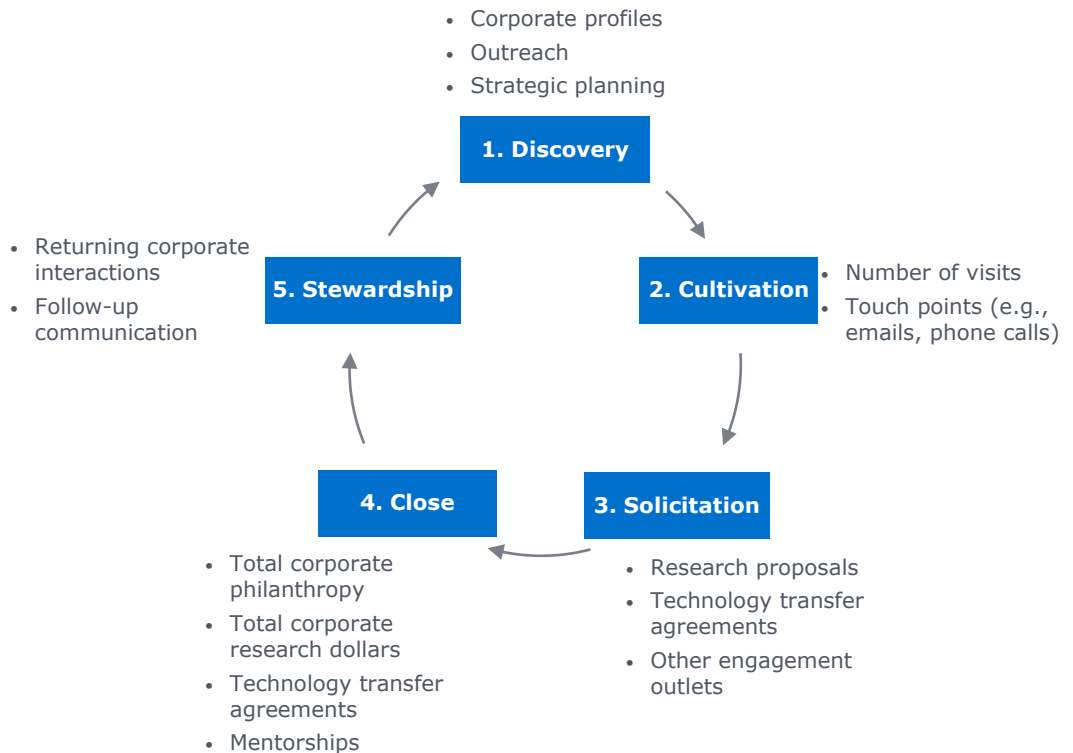
Measure Corporate Engagement According to the NACRO Scale

The Network of Academic Corporate Relations Officers (NACRO) publishes studies, organizes annual conferences, and develops standards of corporate engagement for institutions of higher education. Administrators at **Institution E** emphasize improving engagement with institutions from Tier 3 to Tier 1. In September 2014, the university's Tier 1 partnership with Mars, Incorporated announced the development of the Innovation Institute for Food and Health to address future sustainability challenges related to agriculture, food, nutrition, and biology. Mars, Incorporated pledged to invest \$40 million over 10 years with Institution E contributing \$20 million.

NACRO Tiers of Corporate Engagement



Engagement Cycle Metrics at *Institution C*



Create Clear, Objective Metrics to Measure Engagement from Initial Contact to Stewardship

Corporate relations staff at all profiled institutions track corporate relations by measuring a wide variety of metrics including visits on and off campus, completed outreach, student recruits, research requests, research agreements, closed gifts, new company engagements, and technology transfer agreements. Measuring corporate engagement through specific relationship stages allow staff to recognize areas of potential investment and strategize on how to advance and deepen corporate relationships.

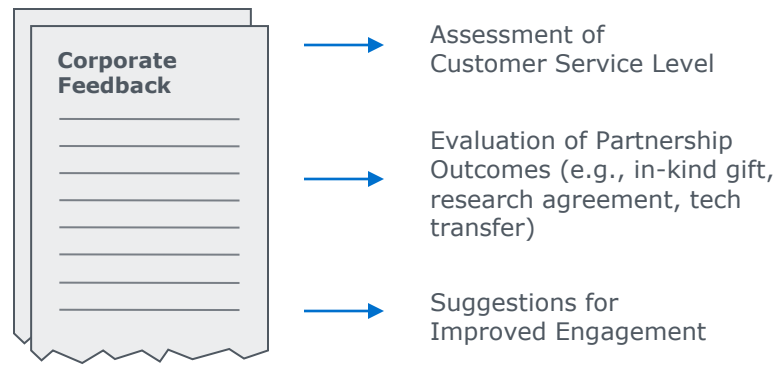
2013-2014 Corporate Engagement Outcomes at Profiled Institutions

Institution	Total Corporate Philanthropy	Total Corporate Sponsored Research	Technology Transfer Agreements	Start-up Companies
Institution B	\$12 Million (Corporate and Foundation)	\$10 Million	60 Invention Disclosures (2012)	Not Available
Institution D	Not Available	\$50 Million; 100 new engagements	45	10-15
Institution E	Not Available	\$750 Million (2011-2012)	209 Records of Invention	14
Institution F	\$37 Million	\$67 Million	Not Available	100 new requests
Institution G	Not Available	\$532,000	142 Invention Disclosures	4

Institute Continuous Engagement Outreach to Extend, Improve, and Expand Corporate Relationships

Based on metrics and outcomes, corporate relations staff follow up with industry partners to foster communication and potentially organize new areas of mutual interest. The Associate Director of Corporate Relations charged with external communication at **Institution A** marks all corporations as either "Assessment", meaning that the corporate has potential for further investment, engagement, and opportunity, or "Bookmark", meaning that the engagement is most likely a one-time agreement. Administrators only orchestrate follow-up with "Assessment" corporations to conserve resources and focus strategic plans. The Office of Technology Management at **Institution G** delivers a post-engagement survey to all corporate partners to ensure a high and consistent service quality of agreements. Contacts report that follow-up activities successfully foster lasting and more intensive corporate relationships.

Post-Engagement Survey at *Institution G*



Challenges and Strategies

Dedicated Corporate Relations Functions Attract Corporate and Industry Interest

Corporations and industry easily navigate institutional organizational structures through centralized offices of corporate relations. Contacts at **Institution F** report that the Business Engagement Center not only fosters corporate relations but also increases collaboration between institutional offices. The BEC undermines internal competition for research dollars by assessing corporate interest and fostering partnerships in strategic areas.

Common Challenges and Strategies

Challenge

Strategies

<p>Ineffective Inter-Office Communication</p>	<p>All profiled institutions recommend developing formal and informal processes to facilitate communication between offices of development, technology transfer, and sponsored research. Regular meetings allow corporate engagement staff to better understand the institution's broad approach to industry relations and partnerships.</p>
<p>Rigid Corporate Outreach Strategy</p>	<p>Many faculty maintain long-term relationships with corporate partners that greatly benefit the institution. Contacts recommend allowing faculty to personally cultivate those relationships separately from traditional outreach strategies. Faculty members and administrators involved in partnerships with individual corporations at Institution F convene monthly to share information and current initiatives.</p>
<p>Lack of Strategic Mission</p>	<p>Corporate relations staff conduct extensive institutional research and information management activities to better understand the institutional strategic plan, university-wide strengths, and potential investment areas. Administrators then selectively outreach to corporations with overlapping interests. This practice increase resource efficiency and ensures proper alignment of institutional assets and corporate interest.</p>

5) Research Methodology

Project Challenge

Leadership at a member institution approached the Forum with the following questions:

- How do administrators at profiled institutions organize corporate and industry engagement functions within institutional organizational frameworks?
- What functions do corporate and industry engagement staff perform?
- To whom do corporate and industry engagement staff report? What is the rationale for this reporting structure?
- How do corporate and engagement administrators in different institutional offices communicate and coordinate corporate interests?
- Do corporate and industry engagement staff employ a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool? Do administrators share this software across campus offices?
- How do administrators assess the effectiveness of their corporate and industry engagement function?
- What metrics do administrators employ to evaluate changes in corporate relations, satisfaction levels, and investment?
- What changes or recommendations do administrators at profiled institutions offer for improving corporate and industry engagement across campus?

Project Sources

The Forum consulted the following sources for this report:

- EAB's internal and online research libraries (<http://eab.com>)
- The Chronicle of Higher Education (<http://chronicle.com>)
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (<http://nces.ed.gov/>)
- Network of Academic Corporate Relations Offices (NACRO) (<http://www.nacroonline.org/>)

Research Parameters

The Forum interviewed administrators responsible for corporate engagement, technology, transfer, and/or advancement at research universities.

A Guide to Institutions Profiled in this Brief

Institution	Location	Approximate Institutional Enrollment (Undergraduate/Total)	Classification
Institution A	Northeast	19,000/33,000	Research Universities (very high research activity)
Institution B	Northeast	6,000/9,000	Research Universities (very high research activity)
Institution C	South	7,000/15,000	Research Universities (very high research activity)
Institution D	Northeast	10,000/28,000	Research Universities (very high research activity)

Institution	Location	Approximate Institutional Enrollment (Undergraduate/Total)	Classification
Institution E	Pacific West	25,000/31,000	Research Universities (very high research activity)
Institution F	Midwest	27,000/42,000	Research Universities (very high research activity)
Institution G	Midwest	7,000/14,000	Research Universities (very high research activity)