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FOR RELEASE AT WILL:

AUTM Launches New External Website and E-magazine To Advance Understanding of Technology Transfer

The Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM) has launched two new communications products to advance understanding of the role technology transfer plays as a driver of the modern-day knowledge economy. The initiatives are a new external website—www.AUTMvisitors.net—designed to meet the information needs of individuals in government, business, public policy and the media, and an e-magazine named BRIDGES—AUTMvisitors.net/bridges—a journal of reports, analysis and commentary on the technology management industry.

AUTM, widely recognized as a leader of technology management, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing research to life by supporting and enhancing the global academic technology transfer profession through education, professional development, partnering and advocacy. AUTM's more than 3,200 members represent managers of intellectual property at more than 300 universities, research institutions and teaching hospitals around the world, as well as numerous businesses and government organizations.

Fred Reinhart, the 2015 president of AUTM's Board of Directors, explains that in 2014 his predecessor as board president, Jane Muir, led the initiative to strengthen the organization's outreach to its external constituencies in order to create greater understanding of, and more support for, academic technology transfer. Muir, who is immediate past-president of AUTM and the associate director of the University of Florida Office of Technology Licensing, says in the introduction to BRIDGES, "Our goal is to make sure that business executives, government officials and public policy experts recognize that moving new technologies into the modern-day marketplace is an important and significant driver of the global knowledge economy."

Reinhart, who is a senior advisor in the Technology Transfer Office at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, says, "We've all recognized for a long time the importance of telling the story of technology transfer's contributions to a better world and a stronger economy. A communications strategy evolves with an organization, and we reached a stage of development where we decided to go up two levels in our strategy. With these two new communications tools, we've brought our messaging to a substantially higher, more effective level."

Part of the goal for AUTMvisitors.net and BRIDGES is to provide useful information and data for the diverse interests of stakeholders in the tech transfer space. Reinhart explains that AUTM is involved with a comprehensive range of activities and initiatives, “and we can’t assume that the external audience knows what we’re doing. Each category of stakeholder has different needs, and therefore our external messaging should address each of these distinctive needs.”

For example, he says, “Washington policymakers who are promoting legislative changes that will benefit academic technology transfer need to be able to quickly access metrics and stories that are relevant and can build a case for supporting what AUTM members do. Our new initiative creates compelling, efficient communications tools that will inform and educate all stakeholders who care about innovations that arise from university and nonprofit institution research.”

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