



A Team Approach to Certification – Wright Brothers Institute

Meghan Sheehan, JD, CLP, René Meadors, MBA, CLP, and Robert Prosak, JD, CLP are members of the Commercialization Services team of [Wright Brothers Institute](#), a non-profit innovation institute, partnered with the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) in Dayton, Ohio. WBI facilitates the development of critical Air Force capability – from concept to reality – to reduce the risks associated with technology development.

AFRL cannot manufacture its own technology and instead must enter into agreements with third parties, utilizing an intermediary with IP and licensing expertise to help AFRL leverage its inventions. WBI's Commercialization Services team assists AFRL with exploring innovative strategies for effectively transferring AFRL technologies to the commercial marketplace; spinning-in commercial technologies for military applications; and accelerating the development of technologies through partnerships with DoD, universities, small businesses, and industry to satisfy warfighter needs.

Ms. Sheehan is Director of Commercialization Services and oversees team members and projects associated with the efforts described above.

Ms. Meadors is Industry Outreach Program Manager and focuses on market analysis and active, targeted outreach for AFRL-developed technologies that have both military and commercial applications.

Mr. Prosak is Intellectual Property Program Manager and focuses on invention disclosure mining, patent landscaping, and intellectual property protection strategy.



(L to R): Prosak, Sheehan, Meadors

Sheehan, Meadors, and Prosak each earned the Certified Licensing Professional (CLP) certification in 2020, advancing the team's mission to expedite technology development for the Air Force.

You all earned the CLP designation last year, 2020. What motivated your decisions to pursue certification?

Our team works directly with AFRL's Offices of Research and Technology Applications (also called ORTAs) to assist them with all aspects of technology transfer. Generally, the Department of the Air Force places a high value on professional certifications and demonstrated excellence. Our specific clients greatly value the CLP designation when engaging with us on projects, and it is important that the team earns and maintains CLP certification to continue to uphold our clients' expectations. It is a cornerstone of building rapport and confidence in our team.

“OUR SPECIFIC CLIENTS GREATLY VALUE THE CLP DESIGNATION WHEN ENGAGING WITH US ON PROJECTS, AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE TEAM EARNS AND MAINTAINS CLP CERTIFICATION TO CONTINUE TO UPHOLD OUR CLIENTS' EXPECTATIONS. IT IS A CORNERSTONE OF BUILDING RAPPORT AND CONFIDENCE IN OUR TEAM.”

How is your work influenced by achieving professional certification?

The fact that our full team has earned CLP certification, alongside our government knowledge and expertise, shows our clients that we have had the necessary training and professional recognition to handle any aspects of technology transfer (evaluation, valuation, patenting, marketing, licensing, negotiation strategy, etc.), while addressing the unique needs of a federal laboratory. Although we each have different roles on the team, clients are confident that no matter which member they work with, we all apply consistent and standardized best practices in

technology transfer work. Having that trust and confidence in each other's knowledge is an invaluable attribute for our clients.

Please share an example of a work project impacted by the team's CLP certification.

One of our AFRL clients reached out to us during the early stages of negotiation to source license comparables and to generate royalty and development milestone proposals for consideration to be incorporated into the license agreement. Because we learned valuation fundamentals through the CLP exam review course (offered at an AUTM Annual Meeting in conjunction with Licensing Executives Society, USA & Canada), we were also able to provide the client with valuation reports, creating a comprehensive information package and matrix of possible royalty and development milestones, so the Air Force could enter the negotiation stage with confidence.

How does Wright Brothers Institute support the ongoing professional development of the Commercialization team?

All three of us work daily to support licensing activities and regularly meet to discuss best practices and lessons learned in our work. Additionally, Wright Brothers Institute supports professional development activities that allow our team to earn professional development credits for CLP recertification, for example through attendance at LES and AUTM conferences. Finally, our attendance at the CLP exam review course was sponsored by WBI as a professional development effort.

What is your advice for other individuals who are considering pursuing specialty certification, specifically CLP certification?

Go for it. You are likely already qualified in the area – make it official!

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