

Guidelines for Participating in Case Study or Testing Activities with For-Profit Entities

The Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) uses a variety of vendors, services and products. As a leading technology university, representatives from these various sectors often approach Institute personnel to participate in the following:

- Case studies
- Profiles featuring Georgia Tech and the products or services that have been tested by the Institute
- News releases announcing Georgia Tech's usage of a particular product, vendor or service
- Video interviews requesting comments by Georgia Tech personnel
- Company newsletters, online websites

Georgia Tech has determined that in some cases, it may be in its best interest to participate in these activities since it gives Georgia Tech the opportunity to share common experiences and leverage the experience gained to the advantage of Georgia Tech. It is important that Georgia Tech avoid any appearance of having a conflict of interest or to ensure that any procurement process meets state requirements.

As a public university, neither the Institute nor its employees are permitted to endorse private/commercial/for-profit companies, services, vendors or products. This practice/policy is based on Georgia constitutional interpretations advising that providing an endorsement can appear as something of value (many companies and individuals get consideration for this) and as such can be considered a gratuity. In addition, it may give the appearance that providing direct or implied endorsements can be viewed as a particular legal relationship with a company. State agencies are not permitted to enter into joint ventures and partnerships and as such, Georgia Tech must avoid these relationships. Further, the Institute is often required to bid out many contracts and for this reason, it should avoid appearing to act in a biased manner or in a manner that would create a conflict of interest.

Allowed:

- Statements of fact that the product or service is used but no statements or quotes expressing an opinion regarding a product or service.
- Reports stating the results of a product or service tested by the Institute.

Not Allowed:

- Statements or direct quotes from Georgia Tech employees stating an opinion or a review about a product or service used by the Institute.
- Usage of the Georgia Tech logo or official mark or image of a campus icon such as the Tech Tower, Ramblin Wreck, Buzz, Campanile, entrance sign, etc.

Each request should be evaluated on an individual basis. Just because the Institute is asked to participate in these activities, does not mean that it is mandated to do so. The benefits to the Institute's reputation should be weighed in each case, as well as the time/availability required by individuals who are asked to be a part of the activity.

All requests of this nature should be directed to Institute Communications for review by News & Campus Communications and Licensing. In addition, any required release forms should be reviewed by the Office of Legal Affairs. Legal may be consulted for advice at any time during a review of the case study. The CIO/CTO should also review the material if the case study or other information involves technology, software or a related service.

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