

# Technology Transfer Historical Overview & Legal Authorities

## Federal Laboratory Consortium

### Technology Transfer Defined

Technology Transfer is the process where existing knowledge, facilities or capabilities are developed with federal research & development (R&D) funding to support an agency's mission and fulfill public and private needs.

Technology transfer can occur between federal agencies, although most transfers occur with all types of non-federal organizations. Technology transfer mechanisms can also be used by a federal laboratory to bring in outside technologies or knowledge that can assist the laboratory with achieving its mission goals.

### Technology Transfer Legal Origins

In 1980, Congress began enacting legislation aimed at ensuring that the country benefited to the maximum extent possible from national investment in R&D, legislating that:

"It is the continuing responsibility of the Federal Government to ensure the full use of the results of the Nation's Federal investment in research and development. To this end the Federal Government shall strive where appropriate to transfer federally owned or originated technology to state and local governments and to the private sector."\* As Congress further noted: "Technology transfer, consistent with mission responsibilities, is a responsibility of each laboratory science and engineering professional."

The congressional mandate to implement the transfer of technology and innovation to the private sector, is to utilize that technology created

for mission-use to develop better products for the marketplace to improve national security and benefit the nation and economy.

With this initial legislation, as revised and amended over the years, Congress began the process of providing the means and mechanisms by which the nation would gain the full benefit of this annual R&D expenditure. Consistent with this legislation, the overarching goals of federal technology transfer programs are to:

- fully utilize the expertise of federal laboratory scientists and engineers;
- increase the return on investment of the federal R&D budget;
- assist federal agencies meet mission requirements; and
- enhance U.S. competitiveness in the world economy.

### Technology Transfer Legal Authorities

- [Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980](#)
- [Bayh-Dole Act of 1980](#)
- [Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982](#)
- [Federal Technology Transfer Act of 1986](#)
- [Executive Order 12591 \(1987\)](#)

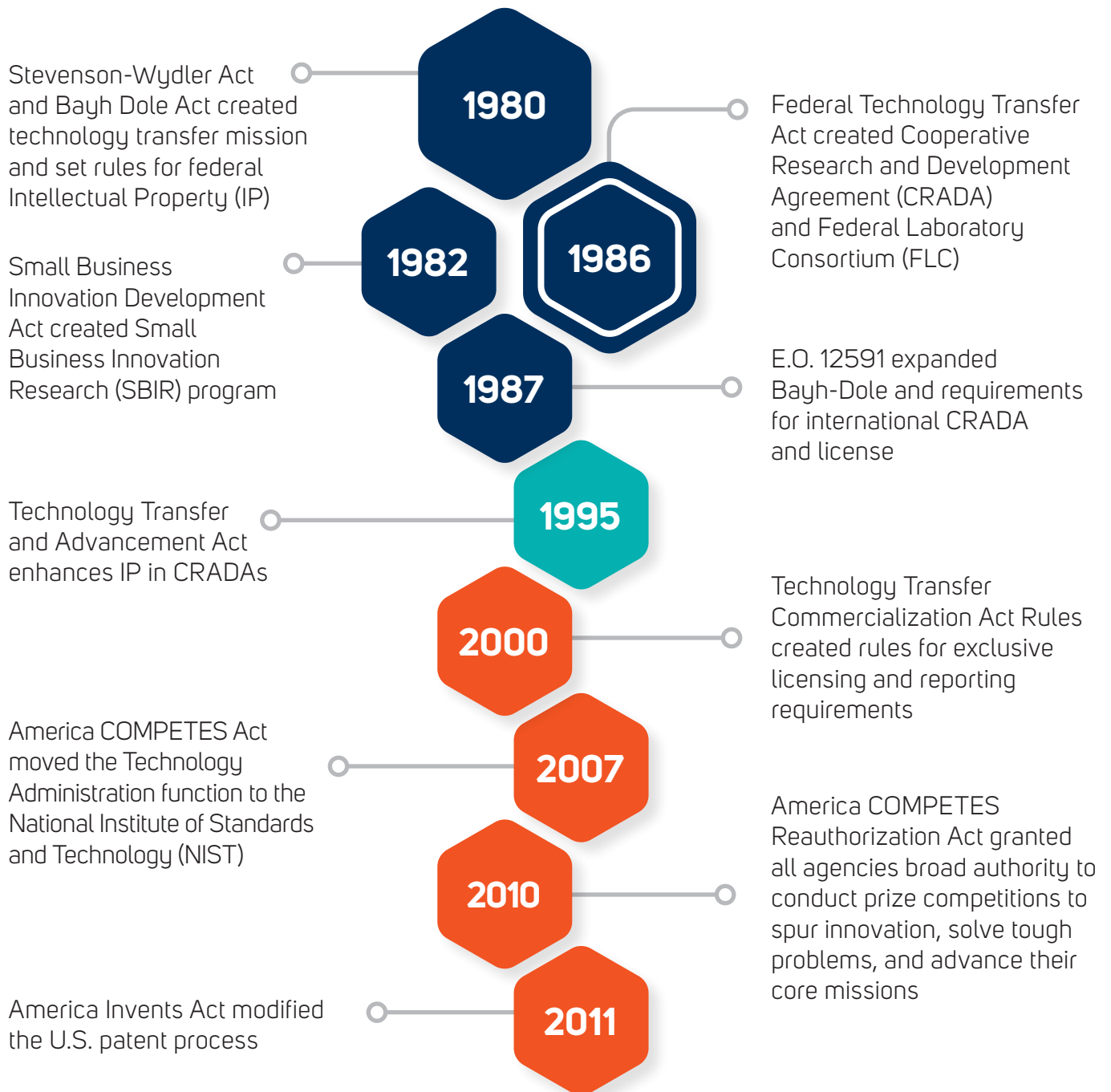
\*15 U.S. Code Section 3710 Utilization of Federal Technology

For more information on the benefits of Federal Technology Transfer, visit:

[www.federallabs.org](http://www.federallabs.org)

# Technology Transfer Legal Authorities Timeline

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Order a copy of the Federal Technology Transfer Legislation and Policy (The Green Book) at:

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