Is it necessary to have an organization like WARF to successfully develop inventions out of the University?

The inventions which emanate from the University are generally in a very early stage of development at the time they are brought to the Foundation. The odds against the successful commercial development of these inventions are great because generally they will be either unpatentable or not commercially feasible. Commercial companies which have their own development programs directed toward obviously marketable products cannot take the time to screen all these ideas in the University in the face of the great odds against success.

The Foundation has an important function because it bridges the gap between invention and commercial marketing of the product or process which might come out of the invention. The Foundation's role is to screen all these inventions which are brought to it and sift out those which are not economically or technically feasible on commercial scale. Also, the Foundation sifts out those developments which are obviously unpatentable or with respect to which a worth-while patent position probably cannot be secured. If an idea is feasible but in such an early stage of development that it would not be attractive to industry, the Foundation will conduct development studies to raise the invention to a higher degree of perfection and make its values more obviously recognizable.

Thus, when the Foundation approaches industry it offers a product or process:

a. with good commercial prospects;

b. supported by a patent position which in turn will provide a preferred marketing position for the prospective licensee;

c. which will have the endorsement of a highly respected Foundation.

WGH:rw