M-Cubed 2.0 Bicentennial Incentive Program

The Bicentennial: In 2017, the University of Michigan will celebrate two centuries of aspiration and accomplishment since its founding in Detroit in 1817. Michigan’s impact has been large, and after two hundred years, we will commemorate a distinguished past and look forward to creating an exciting future.

Bicentennial Cubes: The mission of the Bicentennial includes institutional deliberation and understanding as well as celebration and commemoration. In order to foster well-grounded thinking and understanding of the University's past and future, and of the themes outlined above, we wish to stimulate formation of cubes and mini-cubes around the Bicentennial themes discussed below.

Teams interested in possibly forming Bicentennial cubes should contact Gary Krenz, the director of Bicentennial planning, to discuss their ideas (gdkrenz@umich.edu).

To be selected for Bicentennial support, cubes must treat one or more of the Bicentennial themes in a way likely to significantly enhance understanding of that theme with respect to the University of Michigan’s history, present, or future. In addition, cubes must report out during the Bicentennial year in a manner supportive of the Bicentennial mission — e.g., through connection to particular Bicentennial festivals or other events and activities. More information about mission, goals, and more can be found on the bicentennial website, http://bicentennial.umich.edu, or by contacting the Bicentennial Office.

Bicentennial Support for Cubes: Cubes accepted by the Bicentennial and its Grants Working Group will receive supplemental funding from the Bicentennial, to be used in support of the project. Cubes will receive $6000 in funding and Mini-Cubes will receive $1500 from the Bicentennial Office. In addition, the Bicentennial Office will promote information about the projects, as “branded” Bicentennial activities, through various means.

Bicentennial Themes: The University of Michigan story is the story of an institution and community of faculty, staff and students inventing and re-inventing itself. Michigan’s legacy is that of a pioneering institution that has played a central role in shaping the modern American university and the modern order of knowledge. It is an institution of many accomplishments — and of wrestling with many challenges along the way. The challenges facing Michigan and universities today are no less great than those of the past, and as we look to enter our third century, we seek to better understand our past as a way of grounding a strong future. We want the Bicentennial to illuminate the following themes:

- Serving People: The Public University — For 200 years and in partnership with the public, the University of Michigan has created and re-created the American public university, with a principled dedication to education as a democratizing endeavor, to broad and equal access, and to advancement of knowledge and creativity in service to society. The struggle to define and capture the public ideal is a
continuing story of American higher education, and Michigan has been in the vanguard. Michigan has pursued the standard of the American university as a place of inquiry and expression that serves a democratic public. “Education,” said Michigan’s first president, Henry Philip Tappan, “levels all artificial distinctions, and creates only that aristocracy which all men acknowledge … the aristocracy of intellectual and moral worth.”

- **Pursuing Ideas: The Research University** — Beginning with an observatory on a hill, Michigan was one of the pioneering intellectual powerhouses that shaped the landscape of learning and defined the American university as one dedicated to knowledge, technological development, and creativity. Intellectual pursuits and scientific inquiry have been at the forefront and without borders, driven by the desire to improve the quality of life. The University has been a leader in global research and technology: from transmitting inherited culture and advancing knowledge and truth, to sharing the human endeavor of science and delivering potent treatments and cures.

- **Creating and Inventing: The Creative University** — With its early establishing of engineering and an embracing of the arts — beginning in particular with music — U-M has long upheld creativity as a core endeavor. The making of both the useful and the beautiful occurs throughout the campus and the world. Whether ethereal or practical, the intellectual activities of the University shape, and are shaped by, intriguing sights, sounds, language and technologies that have the power to inspire, transform and heal.

- **Teaching Powerfully: The Intellectual University** — From early, experimental curricula in the 19th century to 1960s teach-ins, and more recently field courses, unique research opportunities, engaged learning and international experiences, the University values itself as a place where students can “burrow in” and “broaden out” — a vital combination. The teaching environment bristles with difficult questions, unique ideas and diverse viewpoints, shared by faculty and students alike and all contributing to academic excellence.

- **Challenging Society: The Activist University** — Michigan has a heritage of activism of many forms: protest, global engagement, political action, public service, legal pursuits, philanthropy. Students, staff and faculty have long engaged with issues of social justice, both on and off campus, toward the betterment of communities. Their actions are grounded by the University’s commitments to academic freedom, free speech, and the idea that the university is one of society’s primary sites for critical self-reflection.

- **Forever Hailing: The Spirited University** — The spirit of Michigan is both intangible and palpable and has been since students first converged on campus. Both the energy of youth and the pride of alumni infuse the classrooms, athletic venues and performance halls, the Diag and beyond. Regardless of the decade or location, spirit is expressed in many ways, be it philanthropy and fandom or service and community. With an alumni chapter on the moon and supporters across the globe, Michigan is universally known for its school pride.