From Our Executive Director

On August 18, we announced plans to build an accelerator at 1801 Maple to support science-driven startups. This transformative initiative will provide a robust intellectual community for early-stage startups. The construction will be funded by Illinois grants and State appropriations. Kimberly Querrey, Chair of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Committee of the Board of Trustees, made a generous gift to advance this initiative's vision, programming, and overall community support. This accelerator will focus on “deep science” startups, will be highly integrated with the overall ecosystem, and will have shared spaces to help the startups accelerate product validation, development, and optimization.

However, INVO’s translational growth is not limited to scientific innovations. We have also expanded into the social sciences. This summer, INVO’s N.XT Fund selected four teams from the humanities and social sciences to receive funds and mentors to support the translation of their innovations to the public. You can read more about the selected teams (below).

Upward and forward!
Alicia Löffler
Associate Provost for Innovation and New Ventures
Associate Vice President for Research
Executive Director, INVO

INNOVATION HIGHLIGHTS

Prof. James Rondinelli (McC): New AI-based tools to accelerate functional electronic materials discovery. [Read more]

Prof. John Rogers (McC): A dissolving pacemaker that is thin, flexible, wireless, fully implantable. [Read more]
Watch PBS News Hour segment

Prof. John Torkelson (McC): Chemical recycling of materials that are typically non-recyclable. [Read more]

Prof. Angelo-Therese Akono (McC): Smart cement for more durable roads and cities. [Read more]

Prof. Vinayak Dravid (McC): Sponge for clean up extends beyond oil applications. [Read more]

Prof. John Rogers (McC): Medical device that monitors pregnant

NORTHWESTERN STARTUP NEWS

NEW FY21 STARTUPS

To date, fourteen FY21 Northwestern startups executed options or licenses with the University. Earlier this fiscal year, these included HemoRhythmic (John Rogers, MFNS Vinayak Dravid), NuSera (John Rogers), Syenex (Joshua Leonard), Threps (Greg Smith), and Zylem Biosciences (Shah Thakore). Since the last newsletter, the following companies became NU startups: SAFCell (Sawalha Halle), Emkey Omsys (Neill Kelley), Akava Therapeutics (Richard Silverman), Sughero (Nathan Gianneschi), Actinia (Mecoueri Kanatzidis), and several others.
STARTUP MILESTONES

**NuBaltic Tech** (Omer Farha, Xiangning Huang) is partnering with Honeywell to create a portable device that extracts drinking water from air. Read more

**Epicycle (John Rogers)** is expanding the users of its sweat patch beyond athletes. It is being tested as a potential diagnostic tool for cystic fibrosis. Read paper. Through an agreement with Chevron USA, the patches will also help monitor and manage the hydration of their workforce. Read more

**MENS** (Vinayak Davids) collected key data on their Oleophilic, Hydrophobic and Multifunctional (OHM)-Sponge for characteristics around oil adsorption capacity, hydrophobicity and durability using standard test methods for sorbent performance and Ohmsatt field scale testing protocols. Read more

STARTUP HIGHLIGHTS

**Activate Therapeutics** received FDA Fast Track Designation for 9-ING-41 to treat pancreatic cancer. Read more

**Exigere (Chad Mirkin)** received $20M upfront in $13B deal with Ipsen for rare neurological disorders. Read more

**bioKront Labs** (Aleksandar Kuzmanovic) and **Actualize Therapy** (David Mohr) were named Top 10 Best Tech Startups in Chicago

The 2022 Spinoff Prize: Ones to Watch was awarded to **Volexion** (Mark Hersam).

**Fast Company's World Changing Ideas Awards 2021**: On the Rise was awarded to Julius Lucks and Michael Jevett's (McC) startup, **Stemino**.

STARTUP FUNDRAISING

**Ora Sound** (StanBinh Nguyen) closed $3M seed round. Read more

**Grove Biopharma** (Nathan Gianneschi) raised $4M and moved to Portal Innovations. Read more

**Minute Molecules** (David Kelso) was awarded $21.3M from NIH RADx to support scaleup of DASH 15 min PCR COVID-19 test. Read more

**Volexion** (Mark Hersam) closed $2.3M Seed Round to commercialize their graphene coating for Li ion battery cathodes that dramatically improves energy and power density while reducing costs.

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Lakeside Discovery announced it will support Prof. Paul DeCaen (Feinberg) in a multi-year partnership to advance new therapies for the treatment of genetically driven polycystic kidney disease. Prof. DeCaen joins Profs. Elizabeth McChlery (Feinberg) and Alexis Demoulireaux (Feinberg) in the Lakeside translator, which is designed to support investigators from early stages of drug discovery and development to the clinic through targeted funding and dedicated development expertise.

Contact info@northwestern.edu with questions or...
The **NXT Fund** held a focused solicitation to support commercialization of Education Technology (EdTech) developed by Northwestern researchers and entrepreneurs.

The following four projects were selected as finalists:

- **Cities Learn** democratizes access to afterschool activities by offering a unified data system to track youth participation, achievement and activity outside the classroom. | Prof. Nichole Pinkard (DESP)
- **Voice Savvy** trains singers and heavy voice users to avoid vocal fatigue and injury through a web-based app that interfaces with a wearable patch which collects data. | Theresa Brancaccio (Illinois)
- **Tunefit** offers an online platform for creating music using the Python programming language with a goal towards broadening participation in computing. | Prof. Michael Horn (McC & SESP)
- **History Adventures** leverages interactive digital devices to bring engaging history lessons to K-12 students and inspire interest-driven learning. | Prof. Spencer Striker (NU/Gator)

The size of NXT EdTech awards are up to $100K, based on proposed milestones.

**FY21 INVENTIVE ACTIVITY**

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**INVO UPDATES**

**Welcome 2 New INVO Colleagues | Min Choi and Michael Fiske**

Min Choi, PhD joined the INVO team in March 2021 as an Invention Associate, primarily managing technology portfolios in electrical engineering, computer engineering, computer science, physical science, and biomedical devices. Prior to INVO, Dr. Choi was an IP manager and principal patent agent at a startup and a patent search analyst at Cardinal IP. He completed his postdoctoral fellowship in biophysics at the University at Buffalo. Dr. Choi received his PhD in Electrical and Computer Engineering at University of Illinois at Chicago and a bachelor’s degree in Engineering Physics and Business Administration at University of Colorado Boulder. Dr. Choi is a registered patent agent.
INVO Practicum Internship | Applications for the 2021-2022 Cohort are being accepted. The deadline for applications is September 3, 2021. The next cohort is set to begin remotely in October 2021. For more information, please visit the INVO Practicum website.

Feinberg Virtual Office Hours | INVO is offering virtual office hours for all Feinberg inventors, including faculty, postdocs and graduate students. Join our drop-in sessions to meet members of the INVO Invention Management and New Ventures Teams who will be available to answer general or specific questions about the invention disclosure process, new venture creation, or other opportunities related innovation and entrepreneurship. Office hours will take place on the 3rd Tuesday every month from 12-1pm, starting on October 19, 2021. Visit the INVO Events page for Zoom links.

Job Opportunities at Northwestern Startups | INVO is now posting job openings at Northwestern startups on the INVO website to help attract Northwestern talent to companies that are commercializing University technologies. Visit HERE.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jumpstart: Technology Commercialization Workshop | September 24, October 8 & 22, November 5 and 19, 11:12:30 pm
Hosted by the Midwest i-CORPS Node, this online workshop helps you to explore the commercial viability of your innovation. The program uses the Lean Startup approach to help participants systematically test key assumptions about your technology and your customer’s problems. Application deadline is Sept 17, 2021. APPLY HERE

Medical Jumpstart: Technology Commercialization Workshop | September 24, October 8 & 22, November 5 and 19, 9-10:30 am
Hosted by the Midwest i-CORPS Node, this online workshop helps you to explore the commercial viability of your medical innovation. The program uses the Lean Startup approach to help participants systematically test key assumptions about your technology and your customer’s problems. Application deadline is Sept 17, 2021. APPLY HERE

Feinberg Virtual Office Hours | October 19, 2021, 12-1pm
Open to all Feinberg faculty, postdocs and graduate students are invited to drop in to meet members of the Invention Management and New Ventures teams at INVO.

NSF SBIR Seminar on Tips for Presenting Your Project Pitch | October 26, 2021, 1-2pm
For companies who plan to apply for NSF SBIR funding, a required first step is the submission of your project pitch. Join this seminar to learn how to best present your project pitch to the NSF. Details will be posted on the INVO Events page.

SBIR Sprint focused on NSF | January 19, 26, February 2, 9, 2022, 12-1pm
INVO and Polisy are offering its second joint workshop hosted by the FAST Center of Illinois. The 4-week virtual SBIR Sprint workshop supports teams in increasing their success for future SBIR/STTR proposals. The next Sprint will focus on the NSF program. Details will be posted on the INVO Events page.

INVO Forward Therapeutics (Anticipated Winter 2022)