The REACH Hubs will provide the initial investment and resources to nurture innovators to develop high-priority early-stage technologies within the NIH’s mission by providing:

1. Infrastructure for identifying the most promising technologies;
2. Funding for product definition studies (e.g., feasibility studies, prototype development, or proof-of-concept studies);
3. Coordinated access to expertise in areas required for early stage technology development (including scientific, regulatory, reimbursement, business, legal, and project management);
4. Skills development and hands-on experience in entrepreneurship;
5. Sustainability methods leaving a legacy of skills and cultural transformation necessary to continue these advances long into the future;
6. Foster teamwork and long-term collaboration(s);
7. Establish marketing and outreach among local, national and world industries.

Purpose of the NIH REACH Program

Highly competitive – only three REACH proposals were funded
MN-REACH Leadership Team

Charles Muscoplat, PhD
PI/Co-Director

Vadim Gurvich, PhD, MBA
PI/Co-Director

Bin He, PhD
PI/Co-Director

Allison Hubel, PhD
PI/Co-Director

Kevin Peterson, MD, MPH
Co-I/Medical Advisor

MN-REACH Organizational Structure

- Vice President for Research
- Leadership Board
  - Operational Committee
  - moral Board
  - Therapeutic Development - Technical Development - Software, apps, and others
  - Medical Advisor

Project Funding Structure and Allocation

- UM Matching: $3,030,000
- NIH U01: $3,000,000
- $1,026,316
- $7,973,833
- Program Duration: 3 years

Matching funds contributors:
- Office of Vice President for Research
- Academic Health Center
- Masonic Cancer Center
- MN-Drive
- College of Science and Engineering
- Institute for Engineering in Medicine

Project Funding Eligibility

Projects addressing important unmet medical needs:
- Devices
- Therapeutics
- Diagnostics
- Software, apps, and others

Examples:
- Cancer therapies, which can be brought rapidly into clinical trials
- Medical devices related to treatments of brain conditions - neuromodulation
- Therapeutics which are closer to commercialization

Investigators can apply for multiple funding sources meeting the specific designated use of each funding source.
Types of Awards

- Typical awards range from $50,000 to $150,000
- Use of the UMN research infrastructure, if available, is required; use of external infrastructure requires approval from MN-REACH
- Awards are milestone-based in 2-3 tranches linked to success points
  - Money for performance model: do not pass go - do not collect milestone dollars.
  - Evaluation for success, mid-course correction or failure and try again
  - Goal is to ‘ Coaching to success’. We will work hard to provide successful coaching
- Potential for matching funds with other programs for maximum leverage
  - Example: CTM provides in-kind support such as animal testing, tox testing, etc.
- Duration variable; typical duration is 6 to 12 months
  - First milestone should be early to prove viability

Use of Technology Coaches

- Internal and external technology and industrial coaches will be integral part of the program;
- The goal is providing support to faculty investigators and help to maximize the commercialization potential of their projects;
- Each project will be assigned 2-3 coaches with technology, development and/or commercialization expertise meeting the project’s specific needs;
- The coaches will assist faculty investigators in preparing the full proposal (provided the pre-proposal is accepted) and will be part of the development team for the life time of the project;
- The coaches will be assigned by MN-REACH at the stage of pre-proposals approval;
- The cost associated with the use of coaches will be covered by MN-REACH and not by the project funds.

Proposals Review Process and Timeline

- 3 RFA per year will be issued
How MN-REACH is Different from Other UMN Internal Translational Funding Programs?

- Focus on commercialization of translational research as opposed to translation alone;
- Focus on UMN initiated discoveries;
- Use of external and internal technology coaches as part of project teams;
- Review of projects by NIH SBIR programs in addition to ERB review;
- Integrated commercialization and entrepreneurship training program in partnership with existing programs such as NSF-funded I-CORPS.

Sustainability Goals

- Historically, money alone has not created sustainable pathways for commercialization
- Lacking in commercial skills, knowledge of the marketplace and developmental milestones
- Needs teamwork & human and social capital to collaborate inside and outside of the academic institution
- Human capital and the understanding how to apply the complex skills necessary for transforming academic discoveries into commercial products.
- Money will work best when applied upon a well developed and trained human capital base
- MN-REACH will provide a sustainable program base of skills-development and teamwork models.
- MN-REACH will provide opportunities for undergraduates, graduate students, staff and faculty to become familiar with the challenges & skills of commercialization.
- MN-REACH hopes to work with coaches to provide monitoring, mentoring, and necessary discipline to redirect, modify or abandon projects that are no longer commercially viable.
- Work with NIH and federal partners who share common goals

Further Information on MN-REACH Program

- Website www.mn-reach.umn.edu (site is currently under construction)
- Email: vadimg@umn.edu