



Dear Postdocs,

The MIT Innovation Initiative is introducing a one-day-a-week postdoc program called the Translational Fellows Program (TFP). The primary goals of the TFP are to accelerate the transfer of research-derived technologies into commercial products and create professional development opportunities and jobs for postdoctoral associates.

Program Essentials

The TFP is a competitive, nomination-based postdoc program that funds its fellows for a-day-a-week, providing them the opportunity to pursue commercialization of a technology that originated in MIT research. The program provides mentoring resources, integrated conflict-of-interest (COI) management and other support to help contain risk and maximize the opportunity to create a new venture. The TFP empowers postdocs to lead commercialization planning efforts, facilitating the launch of a successful commercial venture. The TFP aligns resources available through MIT's rich entrepreneurial ecosystem to bridge the gap in the chain of research-based innovation and accelerate the pace of technology translation, thus increasing the impact of MIT's research-derived innovations.

This program, which is in a pilot phase, builds on the RLE TFP which was introduced as a seed program in 2013. With the support of the MIT Innovation Initiative, the 2014-2015 program will scale to a target of 20 TFP fellows from a variety of departments and labs including CSAIL, DMSE, EECS, MechE, MTL, Physics and RLE.

Specific goals and expectations of the fellows:

1. Study the commercial opportunity and potential markets of a specific body of IP generated through research
2. Connect with mentors and the MIT entrepreneurship ecosystem
3. Assess the level of technical risk and the path to a "working" prototype
4. Assemble a team and identify a business leader
5. Write a business plan assessing risks and opportunities
6. Engage the TLO on options for licensing the technology
7. Meet prospective investors and begin fundraising

As the time of incorporation approaches, plans are developed to assure smooth transitions and minimize any exposure to COI issues.

To qualify, applicants must:

- ✓ Be a current postdoctoral associate or research scientist at MIT in one of the affiliated departments/labs
- ✓ Have support of their research advisor
- ✓ Have a project that is primed for commercialization
- ✓ Be a significant contributor to the technology proposed
- ✓ Be highly motivated and have a strong interest in leading entrepreneurial activities
- ✓ Commit to a 20% (a-day-a-week) effort

Application and Selection Process: The TFP application has two components:

Nomination Letter:

Applicants (postdoctoral associates) and their projects must be nominated by their research advisor via a nomination letter. It is expected that the research advisor will address the selection criteria points (below) in the letter.

Presentation:

The postdoctoral applicant must provide a PowerPoint presentation that provides an explanation of the idea/technology, addresses the selection criteria, and includes information about the applicant and why they are the right person to take this idea to market.

Guidelines for Presentation, 6 – 8 slides

1. **About You.** Your background and what motivates your involvement in entrepreneurship and the TFP program. 1 slide
2. **Context.** What problem does your technology address? Who is going to care about this? Why is this problem important? 1 slide
3. **Technology.** Solution to the problem. What's your big idea? Include the scientific background, technology status, references to IP, and publications. 2 – 3 slides
4. **Path to Market.** What is your path to the market? Please include any prototypes, proof of principle, and the technology-readiness status. How far are you from a commercial product? What are the current barriers or risks to commercialization? 1 – 2 slides
5. **Plan.** What do you want to accomplish, including expectations and value building in the year-long Translational Fellows Program? 1 slide

The nomination letter and presentation must be emailed by the research advisor to RLE Director Yoel Fink (yoel@mit.edu) and cc'd to Tina Gilman (tgilman@mit.edu) by the **deadline of October 10, 2014.**

Selection Criteria:

Applications will be reviewed by the TFP Selection Committee which is comprised of MIT faculty, alumni and industry experts. Postdocs and their venture proposals are evaluated on the following:

- Support of the research advisor
- MIT research-derived technology
- Market potential and impact
- Likelihood of commercialization
- Alignment of research group
- Presentation
- Interested, mature, competent & engaged postdoc
- Absence of competing mechanisms for commercializing IP

Timeline and Deadline:

1. **October 10: DEADLINE** for applications
2. **Mid October:** Selection Committee meets
3. **October 31:** Fellows announced; program launches

Program Coordinator: Elizabeth Cook: egcook@mit.edu

With regards,

Yoel Fink

Director, Research Laboratory of Electronics