

Lab-Corps and the Berkeley Lab Innovation Collaborative

POC

Robin Johnston, Innovation and Partnerships Office
rjohnston@lbl.gov, 510-486-5947

Fostering Intrapreneurship and Entrepreneurship at the Lab

The Innovation and Partnerships Office (IPO) is committed to supporting and expanding Berkeley Lab's innovation ecosystem and integrating it with regional and national activity. While not every researcher may want to participate in a startup (*entrepreneurship*), engaging with the private sector from within the Lab can help researchers move their ideas to the marketplace and create a greater impact on society (a form of *intrapreneurship*).

To develop both intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship, IPO is introducing the **Berkeley Lab Innovation Collaborative (BLIC)**. This initiative will expose Lab researchers to commercialization principles and practices and increase private sector interaction. BLIC activities will include commercialization workshops, seminars, and mixers with technology leaders in industry, successful scientist innovators and entrepreneurs, and investors.

BLIC and Lab-Corps

The first BLIC initiative is Berkeley Lab's participation in **DOE's Lab-Corps** pilot program. Lab-Corps is based on the National Science Foundation's Innovation Corps (I-Corps™) model, but is tailored for the unique DOE Lab environment. Lab-Corps immerses scientists in a business culture and facilitates the transition of researchers' energy-related technologies into products that benefit society and the national economy. DOE selected Berkeley Lab to field two teams for the Lab-Corps pilot. Other opportunities may arise for teams to participate in similar programs, so IPO encourages all interested Lab researchers who meet the requirements outlined below to apply.

All Lab-Corps applicants are eligible to become founding members of BLIC and participate in BLIC programs. A BLIC kick-off event will be held later this year with other events to follow.

Lab-Corps Overview

The Lab-Corps curriculum provides hands-on, real world learning about what it takes to move ideas to market. . During the eight week program, Berkeley Lab's selected teams will identify the most appropriate market application(s) and commercialization pathway(s) for an energy-related Berkeley Lab technology by talking to at least 100 potential customers* and capturing their insights on a

Business Model Canvas. The Business Model Canvas, developed by Alexander Osterwalder, is a flexible and streamlined one-page tool for describing, analyzing and designing business or commercialization models. Successful entrepreneurs and other commercialization experts will provide intensive feedback to the teams week-to-week.

**Customers, whether business customers or private customers, are specific people (not entire companies or institutions) who would obtain value from the anticipated product, i.e., they would use the product, make the decision to purchase it, advocate for it, etc.*

From the Canvas, the teams will develop a commercialization plan to present at the end of the training. As part of the plan, each team will work with IPO to reach a go/no-go decision about commercializing the technology and will identify opportunities where further development could lead to commercial value. The plan may involve licensing the technology to an existing company, starting a new company, or in the case of a no-go decision, dropping the technology all together. No matter what the outcome, applicants do not need to commit to participating in a start-up.

After the training session is complete, each team will deliver a final summary of its commercialization plan and findings to IPO and DOE, including a justification of its go or no-go commercialization decision. Each team must also complete a pre- and post-training survey.

IPO will provide support to the teams throughout the program, helping them identify customers to interview, providing general feedback on presentations and business model canvases, and monitoring metrics.

Lab-Corps Requirements

The team technology must be

- within the EERE mission space¹ (not necessarily EERE-funded)
- owned by the Lab or jointly owned by the Lab and another research institution
- disclosed to IPO before the application due date
- not already licensed, optioned, or obligated to a company

Team members must participate in all of the Lab-Corps activities and be *eager and willing* to

- learn from the Lab-Corps trainers in a fast-paced environment

¹ “EERE mission space” is broadly defined to include any technology with potential application in the energy efficiency, renewable energy, or sustainable transportation sectors

- call potential customers and conduct face-to-face interviews
- change course away from failed commercialization hypotheses
- be interviewed periodically on video during their Lab-Corps experience (Videos will be shared broadly within the Lab, with other participating Labs, and with DOE.)

Applying for Lab-Corps

Team Composition

Lab-Corps teams consist of a

- Principal Investigator (PI)
- Entrepreneurial Lead (EL)
- at least one Industry Mentor (IM).

Description of Team Members

Principal Investigator (PI): Lab-based technical lead and Lab-Corps team manager

The PI has a Berkeley Lab technology that the team believes has a potential commercial application. At least 40% of the PI's time will be committed to this project during the eight-week training period. Previous commercialization experience is not required; however, the PI should be committed to pursuing potential commercialization activity.

Entrepreneurial Lead (EL): responsible for developing the commercialization plan and leading the team in customer interviews

The EL may be an entrepreneur, postdoctoral scholar, graduate student or other staff from inside or outside Berkeley Lab. The EL should have or be able to develop a thorough understanding of the technology. At least 70% of the EL's time will be committed to the project during the eight-week training period.

Industry Mentor (IM): an experienced mentor with substantial industry expertise relevant to the project

The IM may be an industry representative or entrepreneur, for example. To ensure unbiased mentorship, the IM should not have a direct interest in the team's technology or intellectual property.

Please contact IPO right away if you are a PI or EL who needs assistance in identifying team members. We anticipate being able to help complete teams before the application due date, but if this isn't possible for some reason, you can still apply. However, by March 16, each team must have at least a PI and EL.

Application Timeline

IPO will hold Lab-Corps brown bags and office hours at various Lab locations to discuss the program, help complete teams, and work with applicants on their applications.

Brown Bag — Lab-Corps overview/Q&A

Wed., Feb. 11, 11 am – noon: JBEI 978-4132

Thurs., Feb. 12, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm: 90-1099

Wed., Feb. 18, noon – 1 pm: 66-316

Fri., Feb. 20, 1 – 2 pm: 54-130 (Perseverance Hall)

IPO Office Hours around the Lab:

Wed., Feb. 25, 10 am – noon: JBEI 978-4111

Mon., Mar. 2, 10 am – noon: 90-3058

Wed., Mar. 4, 10 am – noon: 66-316

Fri., Mar. 6, 10 am – noon: 54-130 (Perseverance Hall)

March 9

Applications due

March 16

Finalists selected to advance to presentation phase

Late March

Finalists deliver 15-minute presentation to selection team, with 15 minutes of Q&A.

March 31

Two final Berkeley Lab teams and two alternates selected

Lab-Corps Program Timeline

Team 1

April-June, 2015

Team 1 meets with IPO staff for three 2-hour sessions to prepare for Lab-Corps training

June-July, 2015

8-week Lab-Corps training program

Training includes 3-4 days of off-site training, likely at University of Michigan (UM), at the beginning of the program, three 4-hour webinars once a week in between off-site sessions, and 2-3 days training at UM the end of the program.

August 2015- February 2016:

Team 1 works with IPO to pursue commercialization pathway.

February 2016

Team 1 reports metrics to NREL/EERE.

Team 2

July-September, 2015

Team 2 meets with IPO staff for three 2-hour sessions to prepare for training

September-October, 2015

8-week Lab-Corps training program

Training includes 3-4 days of off-site training, likely at National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), Golden, Colorado, at the beginning of the program, three 4-hour webinars once a week in between off-site sessions, and 2-3 days training at NREL at the end of the program.

November 2015- April 2016

Team 2 works with IPO to pursue commercialization pathway.

April 2016

Team 2 reports metrics to NREL/EERE.

Team Funds

Each team will receive \$75,000 in funding, which may be used for the following:

- Principal Investigator's salary (via a charge code)
- Compensation for the Entrepreneurial Lead, as appropriate. The IM should be a volunteer
- Travel costs to cover training program participation, meetings with potential customers (a large majority must be in-person), and industry conferences and events
- Small scale technology maturation activities, such as testing and validation
- Training materials and educational resources
- Techno-economic analysis
- Specialized commercialization support services from the Lab or another relevant organization, beyond existing support from IPO.

Funds may not be used for basic or early-stage research or for activities that are more appropriately funded by scientific programs.