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UNH Innovation

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April 26, 2016

UNH Receives \$300,000 NSF Grant to Stimulate Entrepreneurship

DURHAM, N.H. - The University of New Hampshire has received a three-year, \$300,000 Innovation Corps (I-Corps) Site Grant from the National Science Foundation to foster entrepreneurship on campus and support the maturation of innovations developed at UNH from idea generation to commercialization. UNH joins just 45 other U.S. institutions to receive the designation as an I-Corps Site.

UNHInnovation (UNHI), the unit primarily responsible for entrepreneurial co-curricular activities and technology commercialization at UNH, will host the site. UNH's existing commercialization infrastructure is highly coordinated to increase the likelihood that research can be quickly exposed to the I-Corps program. Through the award, at least 30 potential I-Corps Teams will be trained each year. Faculty researchers and trainees can jump in at any point to explore the commercial potential of their discoveries through:

- (1) Exposure to a four-week Lean LaunchPad course focusing on the principles of customer discovery and value proposition;
- (2) A 10-week Lean LaunchPad course with exposure to the business model canvas, a tool that helps outline the position that ideas fit within a market, highlighted by regular interviews with potential customers;
- (3) A demo day to showcase ideas; and
- (4) Twice-yearly Sandpits, where multiple subject matter experts are invited to an open discussion on a general topic to promote interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary conversations. UNH hosted its second Sandpit, Data Day, April 6, with over 110 registrants interested in commercializing data-driven concepts.

"Execution of this program means more than simply providing resources to the current innovation ecosystem," said Marc Sedam, managing director of UNHI and associate vice provost of innovation and new ventures. "It means a redesign of the ecosystem, which will increase interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary collaboration throughout UNH's \$110MM research portfolio and connect researchers to resources that will help them reach the economic and social potential of their discoveries. We want more UNH ideas in the marketplace and more UNH startups. The I-Corps award validates UNH as a place where commercialization of big ideas is supported and encouraged."

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