



National Science Foundation  
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## **PRESS RELEASE** **July 28, 2011**

### **I-Corps: To Strengthen the Impact of Scientific Discoveries**

Today, the National Science Foundation (NSF) announced a new effort to help develop scientific and engineering discoveries into useful technologies, products and processes. The NSF Innovation Corps (I-Corps) program, a public-private partnership, will connect NSF-funded scientific research with the technological, entrepreneurial and business communities to help create a stronger national ecosystem for innovation that couples scientific discovery with technology development and societal needs.

“The United States has a long history of investing in—and deploying—technological advances derived from a foundation of basic research,” says NSF Director Subra Suresh. “And the NSF mission connects advancing the nation’s prosperity and welfare with our passionate pursuit of scientific knowledge. I-Corps will help strengthen a national innovation ecosystem that firmly unites industry with scientific discoveries for the benefit of society.”

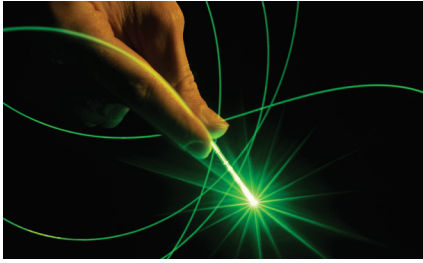
The NSF Innovation Corps follows the NSF strategic plan by “reaching out to the range of communities that play complementary roles in the innovation process and are essential to ensuring the impact of NSF investments.”\*

With the awards, the I-Corps initiative will strategically identify nascent concepts and leverage NSF’s investment in basic research for technology innovation. To do so successfully will require a public-private partnership.

“The Kauffman Foundation is pleased to collaborate with the National Science Foundation in projects that enable the advancement of science innovations to the market,” says Lesa Mitchell, vice president of advancing innovation, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

Members of the private sector will provide critical support to this NSF effort by sharing their knowledge and experience with NSF and I-Corps awardees. These technology developers, business leaders, venture capitalists, and others from private industry will act as I-Corps mentors. The I-Corps mentor volunteers will be critical nodes to the network of expertise that will enhance the I-Corps awardees’ ability to transform their scientific and engineering results into potentially successful technologies. The I-Corps program will initially support up to 100 projects per year, at \$50,000 a project.





“The Deshpande Foundation is pleased to be part of the NSF effort to bring innovators, mentors and entrepreneurs together in a meaningful way to create economic and social impact,” says Desh Deshpande, Trustee, Deshpande Foundation.

Over a period of six months, each I-Corps team, composed of the principal investigator, a mentor, and an entrepreneurial lead, will systematically identify and address knowledge gaps to ascertain the technology disposition: What resources will be required? What are the competing technologies? What value will this innovation add? The I-Corps program will also pilot innovative merit review processes through which promising discoveries emerging from NSF-funded research projects will be identified quickly and efficiently for financial support as well as for mentorship through the national network.

“While the main goal of I-Corps is to build on NSF’s investment in fundamental research, the program also seeks to offer academic researchers and students an opportunity to learn firsthand about technological innovation and entrepreneurship to fulfill the promise of their discoveries,” says Errol Arkilic, NSF program director for I-Corps.

I-Corps will also provide students with opportunities to learn about and participate in the process of transforming scientific and engineering discoveries into innovative technologies.

NSF, the Deshpande Foundation, and the Kauffman Foundation are founding members of the I-Corps public/private partnership, along with a national network of advisors and partnering institutions. NSF participation will come from the following directorates and offices: the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO), the Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE), the Directorate for Engineering (ENG), the Directorate for Geosciences (GEO), the Directorate for Mathematics and Physical Sciences (MPS), the Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE), the Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR) and the Office of Cyberinfrastructure (OCI).

**For more information on the I-Corps program and webinars, see: [www.nsf.gov/i-corps](http://www.nsf.gov/i-corps)  
The first webinar will be held on Tuesday, August 2, at 2:00 p.m. eastern.**