300 inventions: Tech Launch Arizona sets its sights on a record-breaking year

Tech Launch Arizona
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Tech Launch Arizona [1], the office that commercializes inventions stemming from University research, invites faculty and staff to submit ideas for inventions as part of its goal to have **300 invention disclosures** [2] by June 30. If successful, the "A Problem Needs You" campaign would set a University record for the most invention disclosures in a fiscal year.

"Invention is an essential result of research," said **Elizabeth "Betsy" Cantwell** [3], senior vice president for research and innovation. "As a leading research institution with a commitment to generating social and economic impact, we need our research community – our faculty, graduate students and staff – to always have an eye on leveraging their work for the public good. Social impact happens when we identify innovations in research and bring them to the world in the form of new products and services like cancer therapies, cures for disease, devices, software solutions and more."

An invention disclosure occurs when a University innovator, such as a faculty member who leads a research lab, identifies a novel innovation that can solve a real-world problem and then reports it to TLA. The office then deploys a full suite of free services to evaluate the invention's potential, protect the intellectual property, cultivate the idea and bring it to the marketplace – the latter happening when the invention is licensed to an existing company or a newly formed startup.

Since these innovations are most often in the early stages of discovery, TLA can sometimes provide funding for development, making them more attractive to industry.

That was the case with an idea for a new treatment for heart failure patients: an implantable heart tissue graft. The idea arose from research by two members of **Sarver Heart Center** [4], **Steven Goldman**, research scientist and a member of the BIO5 Institute, and **Jordan Lancaster**, assistant research scientist. As their research proceeded, they disclosed the invention to TLA, which protected the intellectual property and mentored the researchers.

TLA also provided funding to further develop the technology and helped the team better understand its business opportunities. With the support they received as a springboard, the team's members launched startup Avery Therapeutics, which has garnered various awards and is moving through pre-clinical trials.

The 300 invention goal is challenging but achievable, said **Doug Hockstad** [5], assistant vice president for Tech Launch Arizona.

Not including fiscal year 2020, the University has increased the number of invention disclosures received each year, peaking at 284 in fiscal year 2019, Hockstad said.

"Given the level of research and innovative activity among the faculty, researchers and staff of this university, we're confident we will soon break 300, he added.

Hockstad said he's confident that the goal can be reached by June 30, even though the fiscal year began – and will end – during the pandemic.

"It'll be a demonstration of, and a commitment to, the impact we know we can bring to the world," he said.

It also is a matter of principle for the office, which prides itself on providing world-class service and expertise to help University inventors through every step of the process, from identifying inventions to licensing and beyond, Hockstad said.

"It all starts with a conversation between the inventor and one of our team experts," he explained. "Just come and talk to us and we'll work with you to uncover the greater impact potential of your discoveries."

Since Tech Launch Arizona began reporting annual disclosures in July 2013 through the most recent fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, University inventors have submitted 1,878 disclosures.

Source URL:https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/300-inventions-tech-launch-arizona-sets-its-sights-record-breaking-year

Links
[1] https://techlaunch.arizona.edu/ [2] https://techlaunch.arizona.edu/300inventions [3] https://research.arizona.edu/about/leadership [4] http://heart.arizona.edu/ [5] https://techlaunch.arizona.edu/person/doug-hockstad