# National Science Foundation

## DOE Laboratories of the Future Workshop Series

Ruth Shuman, Ph.D.
I-Corps and SBIR/STTR Program Director
rshuman@nsf.gov

Andre Marshall, Ph.D.
I-Corps Program Director
awmarsha@nsf.gov

https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/i-corps/teams

# I-Corps Program Vision

*Reducing risk associated with translating technologies from the laboratory to the marketplace*

# What is I-Corps?

7-week entrepreneurial training program to

**GET YOU "OUT OF THE LAB"**

**NOW "OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE"**

to learn how to actually

**EVALUATE MARKET OPPORTUNITY**

You will "travel" (now virtually) to meet with
**OVER 100 POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS,**
Partners, and other stakeholders

# I-Corps Program Aims

- **Support commercialization of "Deep Technologies"**
  - **Primarily technologies resulting from fundamental discoveries in science and engineering at universities and research institutions**

- **Address skill and knowledge gap associated with transforming basic research into deep technology commercial *ventures***

  - **Identify customer segments and value proposition; i.e., someone that cares and why**

Most companies fail because they develop something **NO ONE CARES ABOUT**

# I-Corps Program Basics

- Real-world, hands-on experiential learning through customer and industry discovery

- Based on Steve Blank's Lean LaunchPad course at Stanford

- A process to quickly assess commercial interest and feasibility

**The Customer Discovery Method developed by Steve Blank**
**&**
**The Business Model Canvas popularized by Alex Osterwalder**

# National I-Corps Eligibility

➢ Two Eligibility Pathways:

- Have received a prior research award from NSF in a related science or engineering field that has been active within the past 5 years
  - o Lineage extends to PI, Co-PIs, Senior Personnel, Post-Docs, Grad Students and Professional Staff

- Have participated in an I-Corps Node or Site Regional Program and receive a recommendation to a National Cohort

➢ Other Requirements:

- Must have a technology connection to a university, research institution

- Current agreements with other federal agencies: NASA, DHS, DoD

- Diversity and inclusion is a priority for NSF

# I-Corps Success Story*

- **Teams:  >1900**
- **Participants:  >5500**
- **Startups formed:  1036**
- **Startup funding:  $760M**
  - **Public funding $425M**
  - **Private funding $335M**

o Program launched in 2011
o Now recognized widely as an effective training program in the US and internationally

* From 2012 – 2020 Summer Cohorts

# Submission Mechanics

- **Form a Team:  Entrepreneurial Lead (EL), Technical Lead (TL), Industry Mentor (IM)**

- **Participate in a Regional I-Corps Program**
  - **Receive letter of recommendation**

- **Submit an application through the National I-Corps portal:  https://nsfgov.secure.force.com/icorps**

- **Schedule an interview with I-Corps staff**

- **Select a National I-Corps training Program**
  - **At least 3 per quarter:  Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall**

# Recent Program Changes Due to COVID-19

- **All 2021 Cohorts will be held virtually**
  - **Winter Cohorts filled – All Spring Cohorts available**

- **No Travel Required**

- **Customer Discovery Interviews will be conducted by phone or video conference**

# NSF National I-Corps Program

## Thank You!
## Questions?

**I-Corps Teams Website:** https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/i-corps/teams.jsp