

October 2023

NIAID Image Stars as 'October' in 2024 FLC Planner

Richelle Holnick, OTT



A NIAID image has been selected for the Federal Laboratory Consortium's (FLC) 2024 planner for the month of October. The planner selection process is very competitive, this year seeing a record 88 submissions. NIH is honored to be one of the 14 images selected.

The image is of scientists at the Laboratory of Virology in NIAID's Division of Intramural Research, Rocky Mountain Laboratories in positive pressure personnel suits working with live virus as part of the vaccine development work for Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever Virus (CCHFV). CCHFV causes fatal hemorrhagic disease in up to 30% of infected people. Without an approved treatment or vaccine, NIAID scientists in collaboration with HDT Bio developed a CCHFV vaccine, using HDT Bio's self-amplifying RNA platform to present CCHFV proteins to the immune system. NIAID currently collaborates with HDT Bio and the University of Texas Medical Branch with funding from the Department of Defense to achieve a clinical trial of the vaccine, demonstrating successful partnerships between departments of the Government, academia, and industry to benefit public health and military readiness.

You can order yourself a free copy of the 2024 FLC planner [here](#) to see NIAID's image in person!

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An archive of all past Tips & Tricks emails are available on the ETT SharePoint site! Just click this graphic!

DID YOU KNOW?



NIH Inventors Profiled in *NIH Record*

Richelle Holnick, OTT

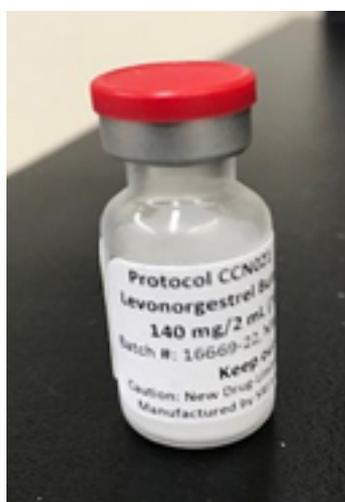
The *NIH Record* has started an ongoing ‘Meeting Our Makers’ series profiling IRP inventors. The first article covered two inventors from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) who have invented new contraceptives.

Dr. Diana Blithe and her team have developed a new contraceptive for men named NES/T. It is a transdermal gel that users apply daily to their back and shoulders to suppress sperm production. Blithe decided to combine Nestorone®, which is a progestin made by the Population Council, with replacement testosterone gel as pill forms of testosterone have been found to not absorb well. NES/T is in phase 2B of clinical trials to evaluate NES/T’s ability to prevent pregnancy.



NES/T gel
Credit: Diana Blithe

Dr. Min Lee is another inventor from NICHD’s Contraceptive Development Program that was profiled. His focus has been on researching levonorgestrel butanoate (LB), an injectable prodrug. Currently, the only injectable birth control for women is Depo-Provera®. Lee’s research would provide an alternative option, which is greatly needed as Depo-Provera can cause weight gain, bone mineral loss, mood swings, and has been found to be less effective in obese women. Lee’s research has found that LB is most effective as a subcutaneous shot, meaning that women could self-administer the drug once every three to five months. If you are interested in learning more about this safer, longer-lasting, self-administrable contraceptive, you can [watch this webinar](#) featuring Dr. Blithe and Dr. Lee discuss the technology. You can read the full profile in the [NIH Record’s Meeting Our Makers](#) series.



LB contraceptive injection.
Credit: Min Lee

Most recently, the *NIH Record* met with Dr. Niraj Tolia, a senior investigator at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to discuss his computer algorithm. Tolia has been studying how to improve the body’s immune response to vaccines for 20 years. After joining the NIH, he wrote a computer algorithm using Rosetta, a protein manipulation and design program, to code all known structural data of a virus or parasite to create new protein sequences. This algorithm has been used with many antigens to very quickly improve them.

Tolia’s research mainly focuses on malaria. Born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya, malaria has affected him throughout his life. From contracting the disease himself to knowing those who died from it, malaria has continued to be both a devastating disease and a complex scientific problem of great personal interest. He has studied malaria since his Ph.D. graduate work, researching vaccine design approaches.

Through the algorithm, he created new protein sequences which were developed in an NIH lab built specifically for his research. They work by circumventing the virus or parasite’s ability



to evade immune response because they are not natural. The algorithm is supported by preclinical data and NIAID has filed provisional patent applications on multiple antigens and the method. It all runs on the NIH Biowulf supercomputer.

When the world’s attention turned to Covid-19, it was only natural that Tolia would try his algorithm on the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein. Tolia was able to improve the receptor-binding domain (RBD) of the spike protein. An engineered RBD was expressed at greater yield, had increased temperature stability, and improved the immune response upon immunization of animals.

Tolia joined NIH in 2018, allowing him to greatly expand his research. “I could only really develop these multiple inventions once I relocated to the NIH because of the resources and support. I am very grateful to be here.”

You can read the full profile titled [Tolia Creates Algorithm to Improve Vaccines](#) from the *NIH Record* or [check out other recent profiles](#).

Tech Toon: Testimonials

Wayne Poreanu, OTT



Licensee Welcome Package Helps Drive 90% Collection Rate at NIH

Technology Transfer Tactics

The National Institutes of Health Office of Technology Transfer is achieving a 90% collection rate on average from licensees, and they attribute much of their success to a “welcome package” that provides everything the licensee needs to make required payments.

Critical to the strategy’s success is establishing a strong connection between the OTT compliance team and the people who physically pay out royalties and other license fees at the licensee’s company, says Karen Rogers, the chief of License Compliance and Administration for the NIH OTT in Bethesda, MD.



Karen Rogers

“Here at NIH, we deal with a range of companies -- from very small one- to two-person organizations to global enterprises,” points out Rogers. “Every company has a different style, so being able to pinpoint who at the company is paying and then ensure that they have the actual payment information that they need is critical to collection success.”

However, the different goals -- and key contacts -- of a TTO’s license negotiators vs. its license compliance staff can cause a disconnect, adds Rogers. “The negotiators may have dealt with, for example, the licensee’s legal team to set up the license agreement, but they may not have interacted with the accounts payable staff at the company to establish a connection point, and the licensee’s own negotiators may not have either. The result often is that the TTO’s invoices can come as a total surprise to the licensee’s accounts payable staff.”

How it works

To obtain the necessary connection quickly and efficiently, Rogers implemented a welcome package to be used with each NIH license upon execution. Highlights of the process include the following:

*** The license compliance team helps review model contract deviations prior to execution.** “The NIH’s license negotiators have learned that they can reach out to our department before they execute a license so that we can clear any changes to the model license agreement,” says Rogers. “Working very closely with the license negotiators to vet different language and terms helps ensure that what is in the license agreement is actually something that we can administer and do. In addition, it alerts us that we need to sync the welcome package with those changes, and it also prompts the negotiators to kick inquiries from the licensee about invoicing, shipping materials, and other license compliance issues to our department because they know our team so well.”

*** License negotiators obtain relevant contact information.** “Before NIH license negotiators send our office a license agreement, part of their procedure is to identify who is the royalty contact at the licensee and to get a good e-mail address and phone number for them,” explains Rogers. “Sometimes, companies want to provide a generic accounts payable e-mail and

phone number, but we ask our negotiators to also get us the name of a real person who we could call if a problem occurs.”

*** The welcome package goes out.** “When a license is executed, it comes through our centralized Enterprise Technology Transfer (ETT) data system,” says Rogers. “At that point, we assign the license to a royalties coordinator who sends out the welcome package.”

Package components

This welcome package, which typically goes out as an e-mail, includes the following resources:

***An e-mail cover page.** “This basically informs the licensee’s staff that the e-mail is from the royalties coordinator and provides the coordinator’s contact information,” says Rogers.

***A cover letter.** “This is a more detailed letter stating that this license has been executed, and it is the coordinator’s understanding that the recipient is our contact at the company,” she notes. “We explain what progress and sales reports are due, if applicable, and how to submit them. In addition, we review the attachments included with the e-mail and discuss where the recipient can get information on how to make payments.”

*** A copy of the license agreement.** “Often, license agreements haven’t previously been shared with the licensee’s accounts payable staff,” says Rogers. “If these staff members don’t understand what a license agreement is, they may get confused and think that they



Credit: istock.com/Nadia Bormotova

should treat the execution of the license like any other transaction procurement where the company is buying services or goods. Including the license agreement in the welcome package helps give the accounts payable staff some background on why this process is different.”

*** Invoicing for the royalties and other license fees that are due over the first few months of the executed license.** “This is part of making payment as clear and easy as possible so that

the licensee’s staff can create internal systems to pay us timely on an ongoing basis,” says Rogers.

Why it works -- even 15 years later

Keys to ensuring that the welcome package has remained a relevant, useful tool for the 15 years since it was implemented include the following, according to Rogers:

*** Speedy implementation.** “Once a license is negotiated, we are very quick to get those welcome packages out,” says Rogers. “Our usual turnaround time once the license comes to us through the ETT system is 24 to 48 hours, so we strike while the iron is hot.”

*** Routine follow-up.** “Thirty days after providing the welcome package to the licensee’s contact, the royalties coordinator sends a follow-up e-mail if we have not been paid to remind them about the payments that are due,” says Rogers. “Then the royalties coordinator will e-mail a final notice -- and begin making phone calls -- if the licensee remains non-compliant. This is when having the contact information for an actual person

Tech Transfer at the NIH Research Festival

Richelle Holnick, OTT

The Tech Transfer Community was involved with a variety of activities at this year's NIH Research Festival. Kicking off the week, Laura Prestia (NCI), Steve Ferguson (OTT), and Richelle Holnick (OTT) held a booth at the Resource Fair on Monday. We had the chance to talk with inventors or other researchers who might not yet know they are inventors – Steve's most successful hook was to ask folks walking by if they were inventors. Most said no, but everyone was intrigued! For anyone who didn't realize they were an inventor, or those that did but could use a refresher on where to find resources, we were able to provide fun handouts with links to the royalties resources and general inventor resources available on the NIH Tech Transfer website. Laura was also able to advertise the Technology Transfer Ambassadors Program, whose application deadline is looming! Many people were interested, with one person even bringing a friend back for further info!



Richelle Holnick and Laura Prestia at the Tech Transfer booth

Later in the day, Steve held two poster sessions. One focused on the NIH's relationship with the Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer (FLC), giving a brief background on federal technology transfer, key legislation, and products that have come out of NIH's tech transfer program. The poster then detailed who the FLC is, resources they provide, FLC awards NIH has won, and who the HHS FLC representatives are.

Careers for Scientists in Technology Transfer & Business Development

Steven M. Ferguson, CLP
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that background, the poster details different types of roles in tech transfer, the skills needed for a successful tech transfer career, and how to receive additional training if interested in making the transition.

The other poster session with Jeff Thomas (NCI) focused on careers for scientists in technology transfer and business development. The poster detailed what tech transfer is, how scientists are already doing it, and where tech transfer fits in to the bigger picture. After giving

FLC

NIH and the Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer (FLC)

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FEDERALLABS.ORG

To round out Monday, the Patent, Technology, and Industry Scientific Interest Group held a workshop titled ‘Bench to Boardroom: How NIH Intramural Scientists Transitioned to Biotech Leadership’ that featured three previous NIHers, Sherry Dadgar, Randall Ribaud, and Elizabeth Rikoyan, who all started their own companies after leaving NIH. They discussed how they made the transition and what it was like to go from the lab to leadership roles in a biotech company.



Bench to Boardroom workshop, pictured left to right: Ulisses Santamaria, Steve Ferguson, Elizabeth Rikoyan, Sherry Dadgar, and Randall Ribaud

On Friday, the 16th Annual Philip S. Chen, Jr., Ph.D. Distinguished Lecture on Innovation and Technology Transfer was held virtually and in the Lipsett Auditorium. This year’s lecturer was Dr. Carlos Zarate, Distinguished Investigator, Chief, Section on the Neurobiology and Treatment of Mood Disorders and Chief of Experiment Therapeutics and Pathophysiology Branch at the National Institute of Mental Health. He lectured on developing novel medications for treatment-resistant depression and bipolar disorder. You can view a recording of his lecture, and all past lectures, on the [Chen Lecture Video page](#).

The Bayh-Dole Documents Virtual Library Available

Steve Ferguson, OTT

The Bayh-Dole Coalition has made all of the key documents in the Bayh-Dole legislation public and virtually accessible through a new online library. Previously, these documents were inaccessible and not housed together. Now, these documents have been compiled and annotated with the intent of providing the story of how this law came to be. You can find the [Bayh-Dole Coalition Online Library through this link](#).

A timeline of the Bayh-Dole Act summarizing examples of the library’s content is to the right. Each of these timeline points have accompanying documents available in the library. This is an important reference for one of the very key laws in technology transfer.



How Many Marketing Abstracts Are Missing on Your Docket?

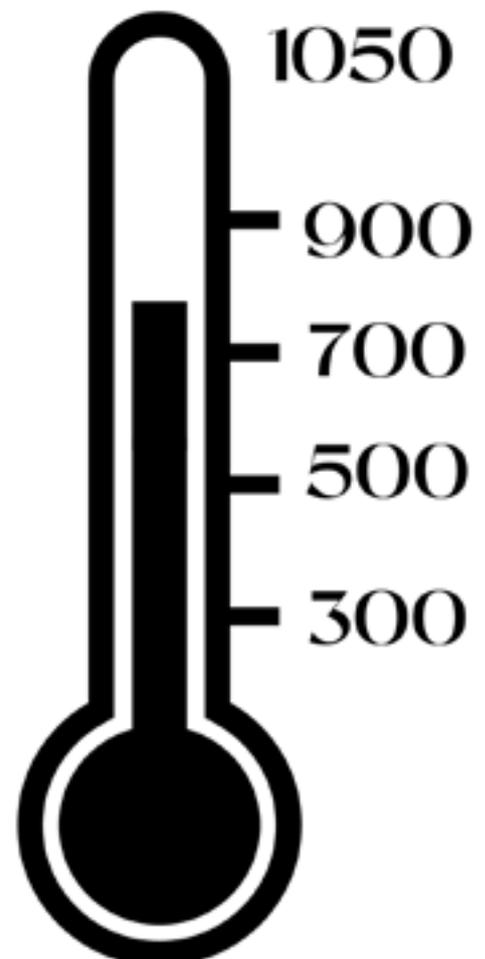
Richelle Holnick, OTT

If you are an inquiring mind and want to know how many technologies on your docket are missing marketing abstracts, we can help you find out! The ETT team has created a new custom query grid that lets anyone check how many abstracts have not been written. You can filter by lead IC, date the EIR was filed for the technology, and by the licensing manager.

TechID	Title	Status	Disclosure Date	Licensing Manager	*Lead IC	Inventors
E-006-2013-2	New Vectors For Over-expression Of LncRN Proteins (Lnc28A, Lnc28B), Or Suppression Of Let-7 MicroRNA For Treatment Of Sickle Cell Disease Or Beta Thalassemia In Humans	Filing authorized	9/30/2013	Agnes B Rooks	NIDDK	Colleen Byrnes, Yuesuo Lee, Jeffrey Miles, Stefan Mujic, Jaina Vasconcelos
E-009-2014-0	Soluble Brugia Malay Adult Antigen For Use In Immunoassays	Research Material	10/1/2013	Theodore Aaron Haines	NIADD	Thomas Nutman
E-005-2014-0	Identification Of HSP7 Of A Novel Malaria Transmission Blocking Vaccine Candidate	Filing authorized	10/1/2013	David (Po-Lung) Yang	NIADD	Joan Aebig, Nicholas Macdonald, David Narum
E-529-2013-2	Discovery Of Proteasome Inhibition As A Means To Down Regulate Pmg22 Gene Expression	Filing authorized	10/17/2013	Suryanarayana Vepa	NCATS	James Ingston, Sung-Hoek Jang, Lars Jakob Knutzen, Mark Schreiber, John Swann
E-003-2014-0	Treatment Of Disorders Of D-glycosylation By Modulating Protease Levels/activity	Closed	10/18/2013	Vladimir Knezevic	NIDDK	Kelly Tan Hagan, Liping Zhang
E-007-2014-0	PYRRESICINE AS AN EARLY BIOMARKER OF ACETAMINOPHEN INDUCED LIVER INJURY	Filing authorized	10/21/2013	Kenneth M Millburne	FDA	Richard Berger, Laura James, Gae Pence
E-021-2014-0	The Influenza A/H9N Virus Real-Time RT-PCR Assay Is Designed For Detection And Characterization Of Influenza A/H9N Viruses	Filing authorized	10/23/2013	Jonathan Robert Hattley	CDC	Lalithendra Berman, Stephen Lindstrom, Bo Shu, Christine Barnes, Kai-hui Wu
E-023-2014-0	The North American Lineage H7 (N.A. H7) Real-time RT-PCR Assay Is Designed For Detection And Characterization Of North American Lineage Of A/H7 Avian Influenza Viruses	Filing authorized	10/24/2013	Jonathan Robert Hattley	CDC	Lalithendra Berman, Stephen Lindstrom, Bo Shu, Christine Barnes, Kai-hui Wu
E-023-2014-0	Breast-Like Growth Factor Mimetics For Use In Therapy	Filing authorized	10/24/2013	Admin, Licensing Specialist (ALS)	NIHDS	Kenneth Fischbeck, David Glass
E-024-2014-0	Methods For Delivery Of Bacteriophage To Lung For Reducing Bacterial Colonization	Filing authorized	10/29/2013	Jeremiah David Mizelfeit	CDC	Rodney Donlan

Realizing that IC TTOs are busy with a variety of duties and not always able to prepare their abstracts on a timely basis, OTT hired an abstract writer to help fill in the gaps. The abstract writer, Wayne Pereanu, has written over 700 abstracts over the past two years. Wayne can even take “special requests”. If you have a case that would benefit from a new marketing abstract, just let us know and we will move it to the front of the abstract queue! For any abstract requests, please reach out to [Wayne Pereanu](#), [Steve Ferguson](#), and/or [Richelle Holnick](#).

For any help accessing or using the custom ‘Missing Abstract’ query grid (located with the other query grids and dashboards in the ‘Analytics’ module), please reach out to ETT_Support@mail.nih.gov.



Credit: iStock.com/Bakhtiar Zein

PitchBook Available for Marketing and Company Research

Tara Kirby, OTT

The Office of Technology Transfer is pleased to announce that it has partnered with the NIH SEED office to ensure that [PitchBook](#) will remain available to the intramural technology transfer community through the end of FY 2024.



For those who don't know about this valuable resource, PitchBook is a business intelligence and market research database that includes venture capital investments, private equity funding, deals, mergers, acquisitions, news, and analysis. PitchBook is owned by Morningstar, and obtains information from SEC, state & local filings, investor reports, press releases, web scraping, and surveys of deal participants.

To request an account, contact Kevin McLam at kevin.mclam@pitchbook.com. There is not currently a cap on how many accounts we can have, so please request one if you would benefit from the resource! Online training and tutorials are available on the website.

Tech Toon: Newest IP

Wayne Perea, OTT



ALWAYS CRAFT YOUR MESSAGING FOR
YOUR INTENDED MARKET

VR-Based Therapy May Help Reduce Anxiety

Suna Gulay French, NCI

Emotional distress has recently emerged as the “sixth vital sign” for the wellbeing of patients. In particular, many cancer patients experience “scanxiety” – a term coined in 2011 to describe the anxiety and the stress patients experience in the period surrounding any imaging studies. Patients diagnosed with brain tumors are thought to experience notably higher levels of distress and scanxiety compared to other solid tumor patients. The current resources to support these patients, such as referrals to mental health professionals, are not adequately utilized.

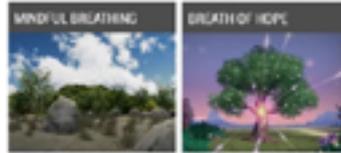
The NCI’s Neuro-Oncology Branch (NOB, CCR, NCI) and AppliedVR are in an ongoing collaboration to develop and evaluate the use of an immersive environment virtual reality (VR) system to address scanxiety. This system facilitates patient-directed essential skills and techniques to reduce scanxiety, including breathing techniques, mindfulness and positive thinking.

The system can walk the users through 41 different scenarios that are characterized as AppliedVR™ virtual scenarios on Pico G2 4K headset dynamic breathing, guided relaxation and instant escape. The dynamic breathing scenarios guide the user to take slow, deep breaths in order to slow their heart rate and induce feeling of calmness, while the guided relaxation scenarios focus on promoting mindfulness and bringing attention to the unhelpful thoughts and emotions that participants might be experiencing. The instant escape scenarios facilitate distraction through exploration of immersive environments, including trips to the beach and other locations around the world.

The system is currently being evaluated in a Phase II clinical trial at the NCI (NCT04301089). Under this study, the VR program is introduced to the patients during a scheduled in-person visit to allow the patient to practice with the various modules. Following this initial VR intervention, study participants self-administer the program for one month. Patients do not engage with VR during the imaging session itself.

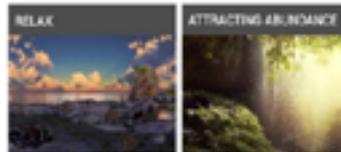
According to the [published interim results](#), 90% of the participants deemed the VR intervention worthwhile. 95% would recommend VR use to other patients prior to their clinic appointments, which also indicates high acceptability of the intervention. Lastly, 60% reported an improvement to their quality-of-life following use of VR during their time on study.

Dynamic Breathing



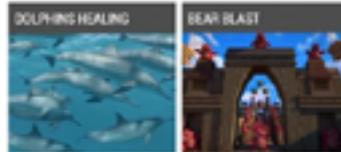
Experiences that teach patients breath awareness & slow, diaphragmatic breathing techniques in order to manage stress & lower heart rate

Guided Relaxation



Experiences with meditative, calming environments that allow patients to practice mindfulness strategies & awareness of streams of thought

Instant Escape



Experiences that are designed to provide multisensory distraction from unpleasant symptoms in order to alleviate stress

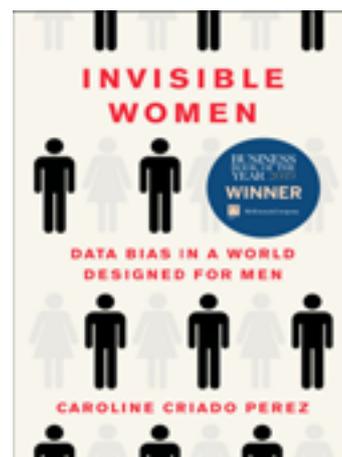
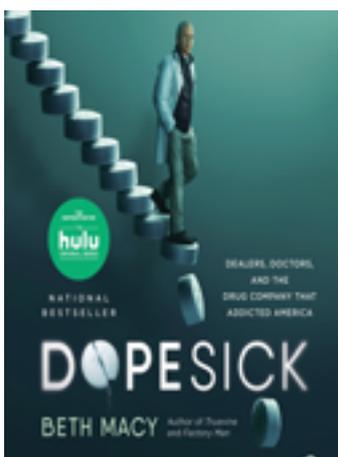
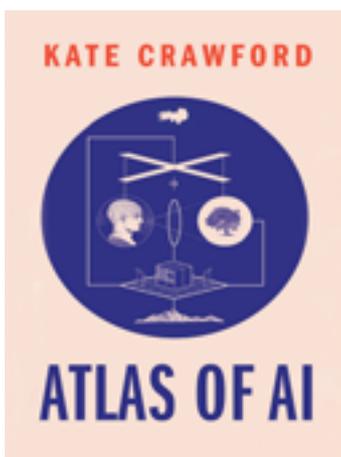
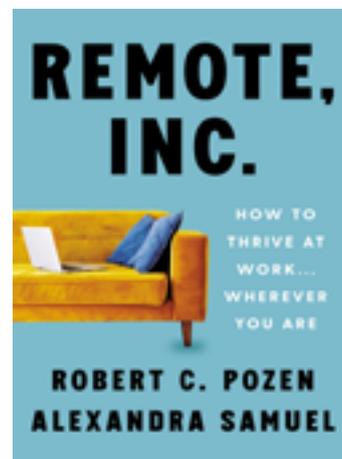
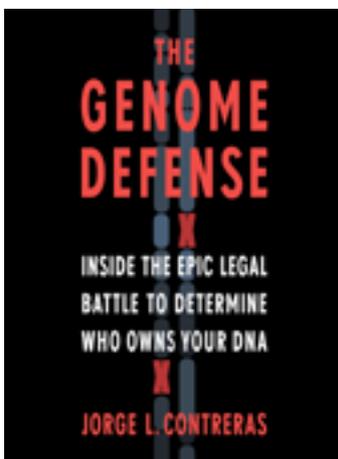
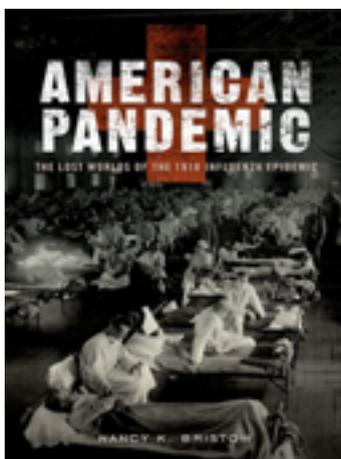


This collaboration is taking place under a Collaboration Agreement between NOB and AppliedVR. Terri Armstrong, C.R.N.P. is the principal investigator of the collaboration and the clinical study. Michael Pollack, Ph.D., Supervisory Technology Transfer Manager, TTC negotiated the Collaboration Agreement.

E-Books at the NIH Library

Richelle Holnick, OTT

The NIH Library is a wonderful resource for accessing a variety of databases, journals, and equipment. Did you know that the NIH Library also offers e-books and audiobooks? Shown below is just a sample of the books available! Click on any title to be taken directly to it or check out the whole catalogue of available books [here](#).



Borrow a book that the community might find interesting? Let us know! We would love to have you write a book review for the newsletter.



NCI and FNL 2023 Technology Showcase

Victoria Brun, FNL

The following is an excerpt from [The Poster](#), a newsletter of the NCI at Frederick recapping the 7th annual Technology Showcase which took place on September 6th. The event is led by NCI TTC's Technology Analysis and Marketing Unit and the Center for Innovation and Strategic Partnerships at the Frederick National Laboratory.



National Cancer Institute and Frederick National Laboratory TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

“With 100 online attendees, 180 in-person participants, 15 posters, 16 technologies, and 45 speakers, the 2023 Technology Showcase offered a whirlwind look into biotechnology innovation happening at the Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research (FNL) and National Cancer Institute (NCI).

“This is a valuable event for showing potential partners what we can do and making connections,” Maggie Scully, Ph.D., director of the FNL Partnership Development Office said. “We met many interested partners at the event. In fact, we have already started working on agreements with two local biotech companies we met at this year’s event.”

“This event has become not just a conference, but a celebration and recognition of all the great research and clinical work being done to address a terrible disease impacting so many,” said Michael Salgaller, Ph.D., a supervisory specialist at the NCI Technology Transfer Center. “We are in the midst of follow-up with various stakeholders to build upon the agreement discussions already underway.”

A Need for Partners

The event highlighted how partners are critical to enabling NCI and FNL to achieve their mission of helping cancer patients. “We don’t take on a [drug] project unless we intend on moving it into patients or dropping it off to collaborators,” James Hodge, Ph.D., of the NCI Center for Immunology. “NCI is not going to take a drug to market... we have to partner with somebody.”

In his keynote address, NCI Center for Cancer Research (CCR) Director Tom Misteli, Ph.D., stressed the importance of partners to CCR. He explained that CCR produces a patent nearly every week, but those patents would languish without industry collaborators to bring them to the market and to patients. “Commercial partnerships are incredibly important to us for our mission... but what’s actually even more important for us to make progress is our patients,” Misteli said as he introduced patient advocate Jamie Troil Goldfarb.



Exhibitors connecting with showcase attendees.

Goldfarb is a stage IV melanoma cancer survivor thanks to a NCI clinical trial using tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes (TIL) pioneered by NCI's Steven Rosenberg, M.D., Ph.D. She stressed that her story is a success not just because she is now cancer free, but because a company has licensed the TIL therapy that saved her life, and it is now working to bring the therapy to the market so it can save more lives.

"This is ultimately the goal of these partnerships," Scully said, "to expedite hope for patients."

NCI Efforts Support Projects Utilizing UK Biobank Data

Michaela McCrary, NCI

[UK Biobank](#) is a large-scale biomedical database and research resource containing in-depth genetic and health information from half a million UK participants. This database serves as an important source of human data for NCI scientists. TTC executed 34 agreements with UK Biobank since 2015. NCI used Data from UK Biobank in a variety of research projects ranging from investigations of the association of genetic susceptibility and environmental risk in cancer, to associations of shift work and sleep disorders with the risk of cancer and chronic kidney disease, to research into correlating dietary factors and supplement use to risk of COVID-19, chronic disease, and mortality, and many more.

Two specific recent projects

Researchers in NCI Division of Cancer Epidemiology & Genetics' Metabolic Epidemiology Branch (MEB) recently published their results from a comprehensive analysis of UK Biobank data showing the potential benefits of drinking black tea. They found that people who consumed two or more cups of tea per day had a 9-13% lower risk of death from any cause than people who did not drink tea. [Popular news outlets like CNN highlighted these interesting findings.](#)

Another MEB study leveraged UK Biobank data to investigate how physical activity level is associated with many common health conditions. Their results demonstrated that individuals with higher levels of physical activity had decreased risk of hospitalization from nine different common conditions (ex. Colon polyps, iron deficiency anemia, and urinary tract infections). Further, just a 20-minute increase in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity per day was sufficient to cause a significant reduction in hospitalization. Read more about this study and its findings [here!](#)



SharePoint Modernization

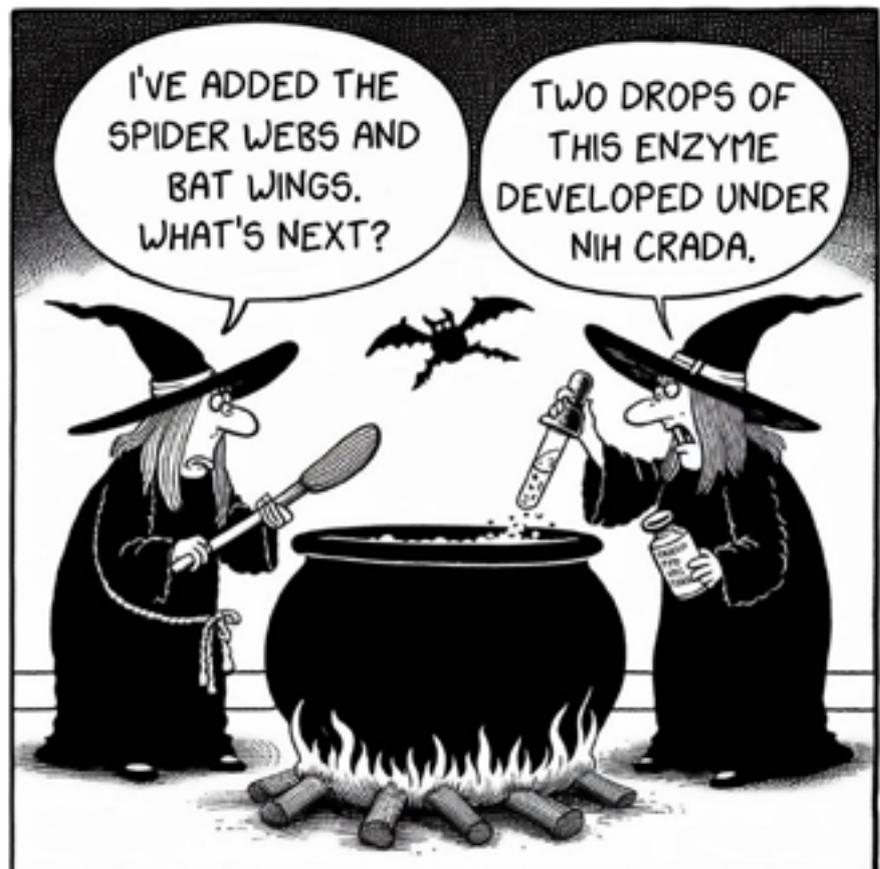
Looking for guidance on how to navigate SharePoint post-modernization? Helpful tips on how common workflows have changed are available on SharePoint.

Just click this graphic!



Tech Toon: Tech Transfer Witchcraft

Wayne Peraanu, OTT



MODERN WITCHCRAFT
WHERE ANCIENT MEETS TECH TRANSFER

Comings & Goings



Krishna (Balki) Balakrishnan, Ph.D., M.B.A., has been selected as the Director of the NCATS Office of Strategic Alliances (OSA), which oversees the NCATS small business programs, intellectual property, and strategic collaboration agreements. Before joining NCATS in 2011, Balki was executive director at the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences—NIH’s nonprofit arm—where he established certificate programs in technology transfer and public health. Congratulations Balki!



Mckenzie Crist, Ph.D. has joined NCI TTC as an Innovation/Negotiation Fellow. She will be working on special projects with Laura Prestia and Ricquita Pollard’s Unit. She received her Ph.D. in Pathobiology and Molecular Medicine from University of Cincinnati where she studied natural killer cell immunology in the context of head and neck cancer. Upon graduation in January 2023, Kenzie was a T32 funded post-doc in the Leukemia and Drug Development lab under the direction of UC’s head of internal medicine, Dr. Byrd. Kenzie is excited to explore the intellectual property world and work towards getting new technologies to patients.



Suzanne Frisbie, Ph.D. has been selected as the new Director of NCI’s Technology Transfer Center. She has been serving as the Acting TTC Director since June. The first part of her career at NCI began in 1997 as a Technology Transfer Fellow and ended in 2010, as a Unit Supervisor. In 2010, Suzanne left NCI to join NIAID TTIPO until 2019 as the first Deputy Director. In 2019, she returned to NCI, this time as an Associate Director in TTC. She has contributed to TTC’s success by expanding the Paralegal Team, creating a new Operations Unit, collaborating with NIH and NCI financial offices to set up a process for managing patent legal contracts and associated finances, and managing NCI’s transition to ETT.



Sabrina Hafiz, Ph.D., has joined NIAID TTIPO as a Technology Transfer Fellow. Sabrina earned her doctorate in Green Chemistry at University of Massachusetts Boston, where she studied liquid nanoparticle based targeted drug delivery for cancer therapy. She pursued a postdoctoral fellow at Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology Research, where she studied antibody-antigen binding mechanism through infrared spectroscopic measurements. Sabrina now joins TTIPO to expand her career in the field of technology transfer.



Becky Koperna joined OTT in July 2023 as the Senior Data Manager. Her current project is reviewing licenses for benchmark accuracy and compliance. Prior to this position, Becky has worked in various legal capacities including Courtroom Clerk for the Circuit Court for Baltimore City and as a paralegal in family law. She has a B.A. in Political Science and completed her Paralegal Certificate at Widener University Delaware Law School.



Anne Lyons has joined NIAID TTIPO as a Technology Transfer Communications Editor. Anne has 19 years of experience working in technology transfer, business development, and intellectual property management at TreMonti Consulting. While at TreMonti, she managed the marketing and commercialization teams, representing both universities and government agencies. In her spare time, she volunteers for therapeutic horseback riding lessons and occasionally competes in Irish Dance Cellis.



Jazmon McNair has started as the Administrative Assistant to the Director and Deputy Director of NIAID TTIPO. Jazmon is a seasoned professional with a strong academic foundation, having earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration in 2017. Her career journey commenced in 2019 at the National Institutes of Health at the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS). Jazmon has demonstrated a remarkable proficiency in orchestrating administrative functions.



Sarwat Naz has left her position at NCI TTC as a Technology Transfer Manager to join the George Washington University Technology Commercialization office as the Licensing Manager for Life Sciences. Sarwat was part of the inaugural Technology Transfer Ambassador Program (TTAP) cohort in 2017. Sarwat really appreciated the excellent training and experience she received at TTC.



Justin 'Jay' Ricks has joined NCI TTC's Operations Unit as a Records Manager. Previously, Jay worked as an FDA contractor for five years, first as a Quality Assurance Specialist, then a Senior Task Lead. His team specialized in Radiological Health and proprietary records management. A relevant highlight during his time at FDA, he helped to create new and efficient workflows, and helped develop information management systems for his office.



Karen T. Surabian, J.D., M.B.A. has joined NHGRI as a Senior Licensing and Patenting Manager in the TTO. Prior to joining she was at the NHLBI OTTAD. She has previously worked in other NIH tech transfer offices. She was at NIAID TTIPO as part of the CDC team. Prior to joining NIAID TTIPO in 2015 Karen worked as a licensing and patenting manager as part of the CDC Unit at NIH OTT. After completing her J.D., she was a technology transfer specialist at NCI TTC as a Cancer Research Training Award fellow.



Shana Watson, Ph.D., has joined NCI TTC as a Technology Transfer Manager. Shana was most recently an Assistant Professor of Anatomy at Life University in Marietta, Georgia. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences from Clemson University. Subsequently, she received her Ph.D. in Biomedical Science from the University of South Carolina where she studied vascular biology with a focus on the biomechanics of atherosclerosis.



Jasmine Yang, Ph.D., is leaving her position as a Senior Technology Transfer Manager at NCI TTC. Jasmine is leaving after 10 years at NIH to join AZ as an Alliance Manager. Best wishes Jasmine!

