FAQs

2020-2021 Innovation Fellows Program

1. Who can I contact with specific questions?
   Please refer to our Program website http://www.mdc.umn.edu/fellows.html and this FAQ page. If your question is not addressed, please email Trisha Huntoosh (Program Coordinator, Earl Bakken Medical Devices Center). johnson@umn.edu

2. How many positions in the Fellows Programs are available for the next cohort of Fellows?
   Up to five positions.

3. Is this a paid position?
   Yes, first-year Fellows are compensated. Additionally, Fellows also receive full fringe benefits including medical, dental and life insurance. As members of the University community, fellows will have subsidized access to a state of the art fitness center, golf course, arts performances, veterinary care, and other perks.

4. When does the Fellows Program begin, and what is the length of the program?
   The Innovations Fellows class is scheduled to start on July, 2020 and is a 10.5 month program. Fellows who demonstrate excellence in the realm of medical device innovation may be invited to extend their position. This depends on the availability of outside grants & funds allocated by the University of Minnesota.

5. How many projects result in patent applications each year?
   Each cohort typically works together on several projects each year that lead to preparation and filing of patent applications. This is done with the support of the U’s Technology Commercialization Office and outside patent attorneys.

6. Can I continue with my project after the Fellowship year?
   Absolutely! Our Fellows have secured funding from a variety of grant organizations to continue their projects, including NIH, NSF, and several UMN funding programs. In recent years, it has been common for them to enter option or license agreements with the UMN to their patent applications, and then join accelerators or raise funding from private investors.

7. What do the Fellows pursue after their Fellowship?
   They pursue a variety of careers, including start-ups, academic engineering (including PhD programs), clinical medicine (including Fellowship training programs), and working with one of the large international medical device companies. Additionally our Fellows have joined consulting firms, government agencies, and design engineering firms.

8. How many applications does the Innovation Fellows Program receive each year? How many are selected for the interview and Fellows Program?
   In past years we have received 50-100 applicants. We interview a subset of the candidates.

9. In the application, are References and Letters of Recommendation different?
   Yes. We ask for a list of references as one of the four attachments for the online application and Letters of Recommendation are optional. However, you may ask individuals on your list of references to write your letters if you wish.

10. Do I need to have a project in mind to propose in order to become a Fellow?
    No, in fact this is discouraged. You will work together on new projects with your team. We hope you are excited to apply what you learn here to many other projects over the course of your career.

11. Besides formal education and experience, what other factors does the selection committee use as criteria for acceptance?
    Above all, we value motivated, creative, team-players. If you have life experiences that demonstrate these traits, we’d like to hear about it!