FAQs
2021-2022 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 Jenny rampi002@umn.edu

2. How many positions in the Fellows Programs are available for the next cohort of Fellows? Is this a paid position?
We will offer up to four paid positions. In addition, we will offer an opportunity to volunteer for individuals who wish to remain in their current positions. Volunteers allocate one day per week, participate in all educational sessions, and join project teams.

Paid positions include fringe benefits, including medical, dental, and life insurance. As members of the University community, all Fellows will have subsided access to our library system, a state of the art fitness center, golf course, arts performances, veterinary care, and other perks.

3. When does the Fellows Program begin, and what is the length of the program?
Projected start date is mid July to August. Program will take place over 9 months.

4. 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, and a plan to raise additional funds to advance each project. This is done with the support of the U’s Technology Commercialization Office and outside patent attorneys.

5. 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 our Fellows to enter option or license agreements with the UMN to their patent applications, and then join accelerators or raise funding from private investors.

6. 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 careers with one of the large international medical device companies. Additionally our Fellows have joined consulting firms, government agencies, and design engineering firms.

7. 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 nearly 100 applicants per year. We interview a subset of the candidates.

8. If I applied in a previous year, can I reapply?
Yes - In particular, we encourage you to reapply if you have been previously invited to interview for the Program.

9. In the application, are References and Letters of Recommendation different?
Yes. We ask for a list of references as one of the three 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!