The journey starts here: turning ideas into action and impact

For University of Washington faculty, researchers, graduate, and postdoctoral entrepreneurs
#1
Most Innovative Public University in the World
(Reuters Top 100: The world’s most innovative universities, 2019)

#2
Number of Licenses Granted by a University in the USA
(Association of University Technology Managers, 2019)

#7
Best Global University
(U.S. News & World Report, 2021)
As has always been the case, the world continues to challenge us in myriad ways. But in the most turbulent times, successful innovators plan for a better future.

The UW receives more federal research dollars than any other U.S. public university. In FY20, the UW won $1.63 billion in total research awards. As we are called upon to face new and momentous tests, CoMotion is committed to leading by putting this valuable research and discovery to work.

Combining innovation, support for startups, and partnerships with diverse communities, CoMotion helps bring disruptive ideas to market as efficiently as possible—to inspire meaningful change, improve lives, and powerfully compete in global markets.

Our team works alongside innovators who are ready to see their ideas take flight, sometimes on a global scale. We provide, or will connect you to, the resources required to support your most ambitious goals. And, we offer the array of services most often cited by successful startups—training, mentoring, networking, funding opportunities, as well as industry-specific space and infrastructure to grow your company into a smart, sustainable enterprise.

The technology ecosystem changes quickly and constantly. But it’s the pace of change that now seems to accelerate exponentially, fundamentally transforming the way businesses come to life. CoMotion can help you navigate this dynamic process and nurture your startup toward success.

Innovators often thrive in times of uncertainty—using it as an opportunity to build on what’s worked before, certainly, but also to look at problems and their potential solutions in new ways. To re-evaluate what prospective customers need and want. And to re-imagine ways forward that may not have been evident before.

It is with that in mind that we created this CoMotion Startup Handbook: not just to help you throughout the startup process, but to inspire and empower your journey ahead.
Greetings friends and supporters of CoMotion,

Since you’re consulting this guide, you’ve likely had an “Aha!” moment that most innovators dream of.

And whether it’s an epiphany about real-world applications of a research project or a non-obvious solution to an obvious problem, you want to share your innovation with the world.

Our passion is to assist UW researchers, faculty, and staff on their journey to a spinoff, license, or taking their product directly to users. We guide maturation of both the team and the innovation with an array of support and services, including access to expertise, resources, and opportunities.

We can help answer questions about marketability, funding, partnerships, intellectual property, policies, best practices, and other topics that may not have occurred to you—yet.

In short, we’re here to think just as deeply about your innovation journey as you did about the innovation itself when the “aha” moment happened.

There is a proverb which states: “If you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together.” CoMotion is ready to help you succeed.

Sincerely,

François Baneyx

Director, CoMotion
Vice Provost for Innovation
Common Paths to Uncommon Success

Are You Ready?

Is Your Innovation Ready?

Managing Dual Roles – University Employee and Startup Founder

Steps to Success
Exploring the Opportunities
Safeguarding Intellectual Property Rights—IP Advising and Protection
Forming Your Startup
Building Your Team
Finding Funding
Licensing the IP for Your Startup
Incubating Your Startup

More Resources
CoMotion supports a culture of innovation at UW by providing the infrastructure that helps transfer new discoveries from the University to the world. To support the breadth of ideas moving through the UW pipeline, we offer multiple paths to impact.

CoMotion Innovation Managers work with you to identify the path that’s ideal for you, your innovation, and your prospective market.

**Startup:** CoMotion will work to support your success with training, IP protection, advice, mentoring, networking, and space suitable for a variety of industries. We will negotiate a license with the startup company to use the technology and offer access to talent and funding opportunities.

**License:** Licensing your technology to an existing company, small or large, is another common path to commercialization. CoMotion will negotiate a license that suits the needs of the licensee, the creators, and the University.

We offer five different licensing products—our team will help determine the product that best fits your business plan.

**Direct-to-User:** Through direct-to-user licensing, the UW provides products and services directly to end-users—rather than licensing to others the rights to develop and sell those products.

While all the paths are viable and there is no one-size-fits-all, this handbook focuses on the startup path.
Is now the right time for you to be starting a new business? After all, you have your research, your teaching, your busy weekends, and other commitments, and yet… you can’t get the idea out of your head.

Some indicators that you are indeed ready:

1) This is a passion project. You lie awake thinking about it, and you don’t mind losing that sleep.

2) Your innovation is somehow greater than the sum of your skills and experience – you recognize there might be a steep learning curve and are eager to work with a diverse team of talent.

3) You are willing to invest a significant amount of time to make it happen and are obsessed with getting market input to develop your ideas.

4) You have seen your colleagues or students launch a company, and you are excited to get involved with the startup ecosystem.

IS THE MARKET READY?

Here are some questions to ask to determine if the market is ready:

- What is the market you will be entering?
- How big is it?
- Is it growing?
- Who will you be competing against? Can any of those competitors be collaborators?
- How will your solution be differentiated and compelling to users and buyers?
- Is the technology scalable and can it evolve to address future market conditions?

CoMotion will guide you along the journey and help you find answers to these questions and more.

FUNDING RAISED OVER TIME

Since 1990, UW spinoffs raised more than $7.9 billion in funding. More than half that amount, $4.7 billion, was raised over the last five years.

\(^1\)CoMotion, July 2021
IS YOUR INNOVATION READY?

The first criteria to consider is whether the product or service envisioned meets an unmet need in the market. That’s true whether it’s a medical device, a new material with useful properties, or technology for wastewater recovery.

While you and your team are driving ideas to action, you’ll want to find the gaps that may exist between your innovation and what customers want and need, and between your vision and what investors are willing to fund.

Does your innovation stand up to this kind of scrutiny? A CoMotion Innovation Manager will guide you on how to find out.

CONNECT WITH A COMOTION INNOVATION MANAGER

The first steps toward bringing your innovation to the marketplace are critical. That’s why connecting with a CoMotion Innovation Manager is so important.

As a group and individually, CoMotion Innovation Managers bring deep industry expertise and business acumen to support your endeavor.

Your Innovation Manager will be knowledgeable about your area of research and will guide you to needed resources, advise you on important intellectual property decisions, and help negotiate material transfer agreements.

They will also collaborate with you to explore possibilities, tell you what to expect in the licensing process, and determine next steps along the commercialization journey—looking after your best interests in translating your research into real-world impact.

SPINOFFS BY SECTOR (FY 17–21)
- Therapeutics
- Research tools
- Cleantech
- Device
- Diagnostics
- Other
- Software
- Hardware
MANAGING DUAL ROLES – UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEE AND STARTUP FOUNDER

If you're considering creating a startup, there will be unavoidable but manageable conflicts of interest that arise. It is thus important to adhere to the relevant ethics policies. CoMotion and the Office of Research will help you understand how to stay in an ethics safe harbor.

Washington State law prohibits state employees, including University employees, from using their positions and/or access to state resources inappropriately or for personal gain. It is therefore important to know if you are acting with your “UW hat” or your “company hat” on. The University has developed procedures and processes to take you to an ethics “safe harbor,” and employees who have received approval to conduct outside work are permitted to manage certain conflicts of interest while staying within that safe harbor.

You will, however, need to delegate certain activities to individuals who do not work for UW. For example, UW employees cannot negotiate or sign a startup's license agreement with the University. CoMotion is here to manage the transfer of intellectual property, confidential information, and offer know-how to the startup.

Learn more on the Managing Dual Roles webpage.

IN WASHINGTON, AS OF JULY 2021

104 active UW spinoffs with over 1,029 employees
ADVANCING INNOVATION
COMOTION BY THE NUMBERS (FY17 -21)

1,455 disclosures

2,184 licenses

2,079 innovation trainings

$4.79M gap funds awarded

711 US patents filed

487 US patents issued
To support your goals and help you succeed, CoMotion offers resources that range from innovation training, IP strategy and IP protection to mentoring, funding opportunities, and licensing. CoMotion will also help you launch and incubate your startup.

Whatever your objectives, these important steps can help your startup thrive.

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<th>STEPS TO SUCCESS</th>
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Validating your idea—that is, looking beyond the details of your innovation toward building it into a successful business—is an important part of the process.

CoMotion innovation training activities and other learning opportunities can help. We offer early entrepreneurs a range of programs to help move their idea from the lab to the real world. Online and in-person training events are scheduled throughout the year. Examples include:

**IDEA TO PLAN WORKSHOPS**

These hands-on workshops help teams build skills and develop tools to lead their commercialization projects to fruition. CoMotion facilitators teach innovators how to think like business people, guiding and mentoring them as they learn concepts and tools to develop their new ventures.

Throughout the eight-hour training, teams of undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members work through a series of exercises that prime them for the challenges faced by many young companies.

Experienced industry experts and seasoned entrepreneurs volunteer as mentors for the event, serving as a sounding board and connector to resources. Teams leave the training better equipped to conduct market research and to answer fundamental questions about the value their innovation will bring to the world.

“The workshop was a great way for me to think deeply about who my customer is and what my value proposition is. I feel like I’m really well positioned to take the next step now.”

Katie Davis, 
Associate Professor, UW Information School, 
Idea to Plan participant

**THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION I-CORPS SITE PROGRAM AT THE UW (NSF I-CORPS)**

This training and mentorship program teaches entrepreneurs to test the value of their idea by engaging with prospective customers. It benefits anyone who wants to participate in business plan competitions, seek gap funding, or apply for federal funding. Highlights include:

- Learning skills required to test your business assumptions
- Weekly boot camps on selected topics
- Weekly networking with industry mentors
- Pitching your idea to mentors and investors
- Applying for an I-Corps Site grant to help fund further customer discovery efforts
- Expanding your network of industry mentors, investors and peers to build solid collaborations beyond the program
STUDENT COMPETITIONS OFFERED BY THE UW BUERK CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Founded in 1991, the Buerk Center in the Foster School of Business offers an exceptional curriculum, real-world experiences, and connections to the Seattle entrepreneurial community to inspire students from all majors and disciplines across campus to pursue their entrepreneurial passions. The following competitions are open to degree-seeking graduate and undergraduate students in good standing at colleges and universities across the Cascadia Corridor (WA, OR, ID, AK, and British Columbia) and offer prize money.

The **Dempsey Startup Competition** provides a real-world experience for student entrepreneurs and innovators interested in venture creation. Students showcase their developed ideas, team makeup, business plan, and market awareness to more than 300 entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, angel investors, and alumni from the region.

The **Alaska Airlines Environmental Innovation Challenge** (EIC) mobilizes students to apply their knowledge and ingenuity to solve environmental problems.

The **Hollomon Health Innovation Challenge** (HIC) provides a platform for interdisciplinary student teams to work on new solutions to existing health/healthcare problems.

The **Science & Technology Showcase** (STS) allows UW students to explore the commercialization potential of their science- and technology-based product or idea.
**FUNDAMENTALS FOR STARTUPS**
The Fundamentals for Startups lecture series is open to the public and designed for anyone interested in creating a startup. The sessions take place weekly during the academic year over the lunch hour, in person and via YouTube live stream. Experienced entrepreneurs, investors, and industry experts are featured, helping broaden startup knowledge. These sessions are also archived and searchable here.

**SELF-PACED INNOVATION TRAINING VIDEO LIBRARY**
From commercialization training to startup advice to tips from entrepreneurs, past Fundamentals for Startups lectures tackle an array of pertinent topics, including:

- Commercial Paths for UW Innovations
- Building a Solid IP Strategy
- How Leaders Build Diverse Teams
- Setting up HR - Getting it Right from the Earliest Stage
- Ten Key Elements of a Great Pitch
- And many more

**STARTUP SPOTLIGHT: OPTICYTE**
The Opticyte Cell O₂ Monitor is designed to reduce organ failure and death associated with sepsis. The technology, first developed at UW, empowers clinicians to detect warning signs that a patient is heading toward oxygen deficiency. With this early data, physicians can administer the appropriate therapies to avert organ failure. Opticyte was spun out of the University of Washington in 2016 by co-founder and CEO Lori Arakaki. Opticyte has secured more than $4.0 million in federal grants and seed funding.
Contact CoMotion before disclosing confidential or proprietary information about an innovation that you plan to commercialize.

Intellectual Property (IP) refers to property rights for ideas that are protected through federal and state laws governing patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade secrets. Know-how may also be included in intellectual property licenses and covers ideas and information not protected by patent, copyright, trademark, or trade secrets.

The value of IP is not just in the original idea, but also in how it is protected. CoMotion works closely with innovators to appropriately protect IP created at UW. Once a license is executed, CoMotion also works with startups to meet their strategic business needs.

CoMotion has world-class expertise in IP protection in fields spanning life sciences, engineering, technology, social sciences and more. We align with innovators to create, maximize, and sustain commercial value from IP assets. Our network of external intellectual property law firms ensures the right expertise is available to increase and protect the commercial value of your IP.

### TYPES OF IP PROTECTION

CoMotion IP staff includes patent portfolio managers, a copyright and trademark manager, and patent paralegals. We provide the following forms of IP protection and tailor the strategy to your individual goals.

#### Patents

Determining what is, and is not, patentable is a complex process. While it’s best to consult with a CoMotion Innovation Manager to determine if your innovation is patentable, the following information is a useful starting point.

**Probably Patentable**

A utility patent, the type of patent most common for inventions, may be obtained in the United States if the subject matter of the invention includes:

- A composition of matter (e.g., a new chemical or biological compound)
- A process
- A machine
- Software (i.e. computer-implemented novel process)
- A product of manufacture
- A published article
- Some computer programs
- A method
- A new and useful improvement of any of the above

**Not Patentable**

Within these categories, some inventions are NOT patentable, such as:

- Abstract ideas
- Theories
- Laws of nature
- Products of nature
- Scientific principles

Learn more on the Patents webpage.

In addition, patent law limits what is patentable based on when it is shared with others on a non-confidential basis – this is referred to as
a public disclosure. We can advise on whether a presentation or discussion has already publicly disclosed an invention, and on how to protect your invention before you share it with others.

**Trademarks**
A trademark is a distinctive combination of words, phrases, symbols, designs, numerals, logos, drawings, and even sounds or smells that identify and distinguish the source of your goods or services from that of another party.

This can include the “look and feel” of a good or service (also known as “trade dress”).

A trademark can’t be a generic name and typically can’t be merely a descriptive name/phrase. A trademark doesn’t protect an idea or the product/service itself.

A trademark is not a trade name, though it can include the same text (e.g., Coca-Cola Company sells Coca-Cola soft drinks). A carefully selected trademark can be a valuable asset. It can generate goodwill and instill confidence among customers as to the quality and source of your products/services while preventing copycats, thereby reducing competition.

**Copyrights**
Copyright is a form of protection granted by law for original works of authorship fixed in a tangible medium of expression (e.g., words on a page). To be an “original” work, the work must have a minimum level of creativity (facts and data are not typically protected by copyright law). A copyright owner has exclusive rights to the work. Only the owner, or those authorized by the owner, may copy, distribute, display, or perform the work and create derivative works (modifications). Copyright covers both published and unpublished works.

**Confidentiality Agreements**
A confidential disclosure agreement (CDA), sometimes called a non-disclosure agreement (NDA), is a legal document for protecting proprietary information.

Such a document is necessary before transferring proprietary information from one party (such as a university researcher) to another (such as a corporate representative).

Without the protection of a CDA or NDA, the transfer of proprietary information could legally be considered a public disclosure even if this happens during a casual conversation. Moreover, such disclosure could allow the individual or company to whom the information was disclosed to use or transmit to others your confidential information, placing the invention or trade secret in the public domain.

This would preclude the possibility of obtaining intellectual property protection.

For more information about confidential disclosure agreements, please contact your CoMotion Innovation Manager.
When starting a new business venture, entrepreneurs need to make sure they comply with a range of legal requirements including financial regulations, tax obligations, and employment laws. By making sure your new company has its legal bases covered, you can focus on growing your business.

We compiled a list of resources with the help of the UW School of Law Entrepreneurial Law Clinic to point you in the right direction. These include: federal resources and information on planning, launching, managing, and growing your small business; information about forming and licensing your business; and advice, workshops and free resources for entrepreneurs. Your CoMotion Innovation Manager will also be a valuable resource in these efforts.

Learn more on the Form Your Startup webpage.
“Having the right team” is consistently cited as the main reason why startups succeed—that team is often more important than the technology at the core of the company.

Initially, the team may only consist of the UW innovators. These same researchers may continue participating in the startup, perhaps as scientific advisors. They may also take a leave of absence from the University and have a management role in the company. However, a successful startup will require additional team members as the project matures.

Building the right team for your startup is more than hiring people with required skills and competencies. It's also about diversity.

Racial, ethnic, age, and/or gender diversity matter, but the ideas, perspectives, and expertise of people whose life experience is different than your own can make a world of difference, too.

Diverse perspectives on a team provide broader and deeper insights into customers, users, and influencers. This can lead to better products and open new market segments.

Coachability is also frequently cited as a differentiator between successful teams and those that do not respond quickly enough (or at all) to market needs and information.

Startups often pivot multiple times before making it to market and teams need to listen to diverse opinions, coalesce information into useful market data, then modify their strategy appropriately.

Market conditions will change, technology will evolve, but a great team will work together to adapt to new challenges.

NETWORK TO FIND NEEDED EXPERTISE

When startups are just beginning, identifying and recruiting the right mix of talent and expertise can be daunting. Fortunately, the UW and its connections to the business and entrepreneurial communities

STARTUP SPOTLIGHT: NEOLEUKIN

Neoleukin Therapeutics is a biopharmaceutical company creating next-generation immunotherapies for cancer, inflammation, and autoimmunity using de novo protein design technology. The company uses sophisticated computational methods to design proteins that demonstrate specific pharmaceutical properties which provide potentially superior therapeutic benefit over native proteins. Co-founded by Daniel-Adriano Silva, Neoleukin emerged in January 2019 based on his inventions at the UW Institute for Protein Design and efforts as a UW translational investigator. In December of that year, Neoleukin debuted on the Nasdaq stock exchange.
provide vast networking opportunities and a deep pool of educated, motivated candidates. Your CoMotion Innovation Manager can help you identify the right people for your startup by connecting you with other UW, local, and state resources and groups.

BUSINESS EXPERIENCE
Connecting and partnering with appropriate business experts is essential for your startup success. CoMotion can help you find the right points of contact and increase your networking capabilities. Other excellent resources for networking include the CoMotion mentor community, CoMotion Labs, the Foster School of Business, the Buerk Center for Entrepreneurship, and the various business plan competitions held there—the Dempsey Startup Competition, Alaska Airlines Environmental Innovation Challenge, Holloman Health Innovation Challenge, and more.

SCIENTIFIC AND SPECIALTY RESOURCES
The more specialized your innovation and startup, the more your team will need uncommon skills and experience. Healthcare (pharma, biotech, medical devices, et al.) and other science-based endeavors require specific expertise to navigate the regulatory environment. The Drug and Device Advisory Committee and other resources at the Institute of Translational Health Sciences can help. Let your CoMotion Innovation Manager be your guide.

STARTUP SPOTLIGHT: ALTPEP
AltPep was spun off from Professor Valerie Daggett’s research group to address a critical need: Alzheimer’s detection and treatment. Fueled by Idea to Plan training, an Innovation Gap Fund award, and a postdoctoral Commercialization Fellowship, AltPep launched in CoMotion Labs’ incubator, working toward a day where no one has to live with Alzheimer’s disease.
As your idea grows, so will your need for funding. CoMotion will help you identify different sources of capital. When basic research funding is no longer available, but before you have started a company, your project may need financial resources to achieve key developments. The CoMotion Innovation Gap Fund competition can provide funds for developing prototypes, completing software coding or user interface development, beta testing, evaluating customer demand, or validating markets.

We'll also provide guidance on pitching your idea when applying for critical funding — whether in the form of grants or early equity investments. We can connect you with experienced business mentors to help you develop your business model and address key questions investors will ask.

### I-Corps by the Numbers

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<th>Year established</th>
<th>Teams</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>695</td>
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Total funding raised (last five years)

- $386M
- Non-dilutive $9.9M
- Dilutive $377.5M

The I-Corps program increases by more than threefold the chance of being awarded SBIR or STTR grant funding.

### An Array of Funding Options

**National Science Foundation Innovation Corps program offered [locally and nationally](https://www.nsf.gov/iip/innovation/ics/ics.cfm) (NSF I-Corps)**

The NSF I-Corps is a federally funded program to reduce the time and risk associated with translating promising ideas and technologies from the laboratory to the marketplace. I-Corps uses experiential learning of customer and industry discovery, coupled with first-hand investigation of industrial processes, to quickly assess the translational potential of inventions.

The inclusive, data-driven I-Corps model helps innovators validate market interest in their technology, gain entrepreneurship skills, and develop a mentor network of seasoned business leaders.

The local program is designed for faculty, researchers, postdocs, students, or staff members who want to participate in business plan competitions, seek gap funding, or apply for further federal funding. Grants of $2,500 are available to innovators who successfully complete the program.

CoMotion has an I-Corps Site on campus, making approximately 40 awards each year. With two cohorts per year, I-Corps participants learn the skills necessary to move a promising idea into the marketplace, thereby enabling the transformation of innovation to impact.

We help qualified innovators move on from the local program to the national program, which can provide $50,000 of funding and additional training. Participation in the I-Corps program also increases by more than threefold the chance of being awarded SBIR or STTR grant funding. (See page 22 for more information on those grants).
CoMotion Commercialization Fellows Program (CFP)
As one of CoMotion’s most well-received programs, the CFP helps UW graduate students and postdocs continue to explore the commercial potential of innovations they helped create through their UW research. Successful CFP innovators have leveraged the program to build their teams, optimize technology, develop the business, and enable outreach to potential customers and investors.

This one-year fellowship gives UW entrepreneurs time to focus on critical next steps in the commercialization journey under the supervision of their scientific advisor, CoMotion mentor, and CoMotion Innovation Manager. Fellows are selected based on their contributions to an ongoing UW commercialization project. They work with their supervisory team to assess market opportunities, complete proof of concept or prototyping, pursue funding, file patents, and develop IP strategies as they move from one milestone to the next.

CoMotion Innovation Gap Fund
The CoMotion Innovation Gap Fund is a partnership between CoMotion and the Washington Research Foundation awarding funds via a competitive grant process, with application cycles in the spring and fall. Funding projects that have a high chance of success but need support to make the leap from academic research grants to the seed-investment stage, the grants target important development rungs such as market research, building prototypes, and creating business plans.

STARTUP SPOTLIGHT: WiBotic
WiBotic is developing wireless power solutions and fleet energy management software for robotic systems based on technology from Professor Josh Smith’s lab. Led by CEO Ben Waters, propelled by two Innovation Gap Fund awards, and incubated at CoMotion Labs, WiBotic de-risked their technology, identified target markets, and raised capital to grow their company. WiBotic is now poised to lead the charge in powering autonomous systems.

MOVING INNOVATIONS FROM LAB TO MARKET:
CoMotion provides a continuum of programs to move innovations from lab to market. These include gap funding, commercialization fellowships, incubation spaces, mentoring, networking, and more.

302
CoMotion Innovation Gap Fund awards totaling over $14M made across 69 departments since 2005.

55 Commercialization Fellowships awarded since 2010

WE-REACH
The Washington Entrepreneurial Research Evaluation & Commercialization Hub (WE-REACH) provides teaching and funding tools to accelerate the development of therapeutic, device, and diagnostic products to address significant challenges in health. With support from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), WE-REACH is a partnership of the Institute of Translational Health Sciences (ITHS), CoMotion, UW Institute for
Protein Design (IPD), the UW Office of Research, and the UW School of Pharmacy, it provides an array of services designed to bridge early-stage products into health impact. It offers four to six annual WE-REACH Awards of up to $186,000 in direct costs for activity- and time-based, stage-gated, and milestone-driven projects.

DubPitch
DubPitch is a twice-yearly program for CoMotion-supported startups to directly pitch their ideas and innovations to prospective investors.

Ten-minute presentations allow investors to learn more about UW spinoffs and CoMotion Labs startups, allowing them to gain exposure, build relationships, and potentially secure investor backing.

The startups and projects may be in various stages of development—from pre-seed funding to Series A and beyond—pursuing multiple paths toward commercialization.

CoMotion mentors provide support ahead of the event by offering guidance and recommendations as the teams refine their presentations.

After the pitches, there is time for informal discussion where investors can learn more about the team, vision, and path to market behind each business.

Check the More Resources section at the end of this handbook for other commercialization funding that is available before you spin out your company.

FUNDING YOUR STARTUP
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Grants
These two programs are powered by the U.S. Small Business Administration and provide more than $2.5 billion in grants and contracts each year to small businesses and startup companies developing new products and services based on advanced technologies.

The SBIR and STTR programs encourage U.S. small businesses to engage in research and development with the potential for commercialization. Through a competitive awards-based program, SBIR and STTR grants enable small businesses to perform critical experimental work necessary to de-risk the technology.

Central to the STTR program is the partnership between small businesses and nonprofit research institutions, like UW. The STTR program requires the small business to formally collaborate with a research institution.

CoMotion provides assistance in applying for these programs as part of the commercialization strategy for UW researchers. SBIR and STTR grants are particularly valuable for UW startups in supporting product development, translational research, and applied projects.

SBIR Phase I awards start at $150,000, and Phase II awards start at $1 million and increase to as much as $2 million.

Angel Investors
Angel investors are typically high-net-worth individuals who invest in early-stage startups. Angel investments are usually smaller than venture capital firm investments.

STARTUP SPOTLIGHT: BELLWETHER BIO
Bellwether Bio is a UW spinoff that developed next-generation cancer diagnostics using a pipeline of noninvasive, cell-free DNA-based screening technologies. Bellwether Bio sprang from the genome sciences lab of Professor Jay Shendure. Bellwether Bio was acquired by Guardant Health, an oncology diagnostics company, in April 2019.
Because there are terms with significant financial impact negotiated as part of any equity-based investment, innovators should have legal representation. CoMotion does not provide legal representation.

**Bootstrapping**
When a founder or founding team can start and grow a company without relying on money from outside investors, they are said to be bootstrapping the company.

**Venture Capital**
Venture capital (VC) is a common way to finance a startup by accepting money from outside investors. A VC (or VC syndicate) will typically provide funding in exchange for an equity stake in the company. The more money sought by the startup, the more equity and influence on the business a VC will require.

As with angel investors, you should have legal representation as you navigate the VC process.

**Corporate Partnerships**
Established companies may be interested in partnering with you to support your innovation journey. In addition to financial support, such partnerships can help identify talent, aid in R&D, facilitate manufacturing, and more. Most often, these companies will expect a financial return on their investment, or may include the right to buy your startup at some future date to bring into their own product line.

**Venture Debt**
Venture debt is usually a short-term loan that carries a higher-than-average interest rate. It typically serves as a bridge to future venture-backed financings or an initial public offering (IPO). This type of funding can help create value in your startup before seeking future dilutive funding.
HUSKY FAST START™
CoMotion created Husky FAST Start, a process and accompanying set of documents designed to demystify and streamline startup licensing, to facilitate discussions with UW spinoffs.

These specialized terms are available to spinoffs founded by UW graduate students, postdoctoral associates, staff, and professors who developed the innovation.

The simplified and standardized templates for startup term sheets and license agreements have been vetted by a panel of attorneys from several local law firms. In addition, our Innovation Managers provide startup teams with guidance and background information on the various aspects of the license agreement throughout the process.

Key attributes
• Rapidly moves innovations to licensing in a fair and equitable manner
• Aligns the goals of startup and University using fair, benchmarked terms rather than seeking the ‘best’ terms for one party at the expense of the other
• Fosters trust with an open, transparent, and straightforward process
• Shortens the negotiation timeline
• Minimizes negotiation costs
• Well-tested — over 35 startups have benefitted

Negotiations
CoMotion is committed to a fair and transparent process that treats all UW startup teams equally—whether they are composed of new students or award-winning professors—irrespective of their business or legal experience and resources.

CoMotion aims to ensure that each team finalizes their license agreement efficiently, with minimal legal fees and confidence that the terms they agree upon are standard for their industry sector and investable.

Husky FAST Start Term Sheet (PDF)
This document outlines financial terms for University startup licenses that have been vetted, are comparable with those of peer universities, and are based on sector-appropriate data.

Husky FAST Start Term Sheet Negotiation Process (PDF)
Because finalization of the term sheet is a data-driven process, CoMotion invites teams to bring their industry-specific data to the discussion. Learn more in our overview of the process.

Husky FAST Start License Template (PDF)
This template is tailored for spinoffs based on UW intellectual property. The template was put together with generous input from an expert advisory committee comprised of top attorneys in the Seattle-area innovation ecosystem. The pre-negotiated language aims to create an agreement that only requires technology-specific customization, simplifying and expediting the licensing process for UW innovators and entrepreneurs.
CoMotion Labs is a multi-industry incubator program for early-stage startups. We welcome startups from both inside and outside the UW community, with preference given to UW startups. With three locations on the UW Seattle campus, each incubator focuses on a particular industry sector: life sciences and hardware in Fluke Hall, and information technology/software in Startup Hall.

CoMotion Labs hosts startups in their early stages of development and helps them grow without taking equity or IP. From critical infrastructure (workbenches, wet lab space, shared equipment, and prototyping capabilities) to learning, mentoring, and networking, CoMotion Labs nurtures and enables success.

The CoMotion Labs life sciences incubator in Fluke Hall provides an on-campus wet lab and co-working space to startups focused on life sciences, biotech, and med-tech.

The hardware incubator in Fluke Hall provides members access to a full complement of tools and equipment necessary for prototyping and development, including the region’s first 5G network in a hardware incubator. The space also includes multiple workbenches, sit/stand desks, two conference rooms, four phone booths, a break area, and ample lockable storage cabinets and storage racks.

Our technology incubator in Startup Hall hosts startups focused on IT and software, as well as the BECU FinTech Incubator and startup studio Kernel Labs. In addition, the Techstars Seattle Accelerator is a founding anchor tenant of Startup Hall and brings partners such as the Filecoin Techstars Accelerator to the program.
**Sponsored Research in Your Laboratory**

As an alternative to leasing physical space, some startups may choose to keep their operations mostly virtual, and accomplish their development goals through sponsored research at the University.

Given the cutting-edge nature of the research that is transferred into University startups, it is frequently the founder’s laboratory that is in the best position to perform the initial development work needed by the company. Sponsored research allows the company to collaborate on the research design and secure the right to license the resulting intellectual property.

UW can provide the sponsored research agreement template upon request. CoMotion and UW’s Office of Sponsored Programs coordinate to ensure that intellectual property terms are aligned between the spinoff license agreement and the sponsored research agreement.

Learn more on the Sponsored Research webpage.

**OTHER INCUBATORS**

**Washington Clean Energy Testbeds**

This single-stop venue offers open access to advanced capabilities for prototyping, testing, and demonstrating novel, zero-emission technologies.

**Center for Urban Waters**

The Center for Urban Waters brings together environmental scientists, analysts, engineers, and policymakers to develop creative and sustainable solutions to restore and protect Puget Sound.

The founding partners—the City of Tacoma, the University of Washington-Tacoma, and the Puget Sound Partnership—are committed to providing a collaborative environment where the best available science, dedicated to finding solutions for urban bay communities, is the foundation for policy development and implementation. The Center for Urban Waters is the result of years of effort by community leaders who dreamed of a world-class research center on Commencement Bay.

**STEPS TO SUCCESS:** **INCUBATING YOUR STARTUP**

**MOVING INNOVATIONS FROM LAB TO MARKET:**

48,000sf of incubator space to support technology, life sciences, and hardware startups.
ACCELERATORS

**Cascadia Clean Tech Accelerator**
Cascadia CleanTech is a business accelerator program powered by the CleanTech Alliance and VertueLab. The mostly virtual 15-week program delivers mentorship, curriculum, connections, and funding opportunities designed specifically for early-stage cleantech startups.

Establishing the readiness level of your idea reduces risk and increases your chance of success. Steps toward that goal can include proof of concept, which shows the technology can work, and prototyping, which demonstrates how it works.

**Creative Destruction Lab – CDL-Seattle**
A nonprofit organization for massively scalable, seed-stage, science- and technology-based companies, Creative Destruction Lab launched its third U.S.-based location, CDL-Seattle, in fall 2021. Based at the UW Foster School of Business, CDL-Seattle is a partnership with Microsoft Corporation, the UW College of Engineering, Paul G. Allen School of Computer Science & Engineering, and CoMotion. The initial area of focus for CDL-Seattle is computational health.

**Jones + Foster Accelerator**
The Jones + Foster Accelerator program in the Foster School of Business helps early-stage, student-led companies through the decisive first six months of their lifecycle. This opportunity is a great fit for a graduate student immediately after they have completed their PhD as they start to refine their business model and build a company. Jones + Foster Accelerator companies receive:

- Mentoring from a committee of entrepreneurs and investors
- Guidance creating a list of measurable milestones
- Workshops on a variety of topics relevant to the companies in the program (raising money, developing customers, strategic thinking/planning, business sustainability, etc.)
- Access to a new fund to assist with early-stage expenses (up to $1,000 per startup team)
- Connections to the Seattle entrepreneurial community
- Up to $25,000 in follow-on funding (if milestones are met)

**STARTUP SPOTLIGHT: MEMBRION**
Membrion is a UW spinoff whose flexible, ceramic ion-exchange membranes create options for wastewater recovery. Led by founder and CEO Greg Newbloom, the technology is used in demineralization, desalination, and dissolved metal removal processes, decreasing costs while recovering up to 98% of water. Membrion has raised $10.5 million as of September 2021.
The following list is intended to help you engage with different resources and organizations as you navigate your innovation journey. Please note the list is not comprehensive and may change over time.

**ADDITIONAL UW RESOURCES**
- BECU Fintech incubator
- Buerk Center for Entrepreneurship Startup Resources
- Buerk Center for Entrepreneurship Team Tuesday events (team formation, fall and winter quarters)
- Campus Sustainability Fund (student-run)
- CoMotion PNW Innovators Slack Channel (team formation, finding resources), contact CoMTrain@uw.edu to be added EarthLab
- Foster School of Business Entrepreneurship Certificate (for graduate and PhD students)
- Institute of Translational Health Sciences
- Population Health Initiative
- UW Policy Directory (governing activities at the UW)

**ADDITIONAL FUNDING RESOURCES**
- Institute of Translational Health Sciences
- Mistletoe Research Fellowship
- Murdock Trust
- Washington Research Foundation (WRF) grants

**ACCELERATORS**
- Creative Destruction Lab – Seattle
- Founder Institute
- Maritime Blue
- TechStars
- VertueLab

**INCUBATORS**
- Bunker Labs (for veterans)
- Fledge
- RAIN incubator (Tacoma)
- SP3NW (Spokane)

**NETWORKING**
*Note: Many training programs also include networking opportunities. Refer to Training list below.*
- Africatown Seattle Entrepreneurs meetup (for Black entrepreneurs)
- Black entrepreneurs support organizations
- Black Founders (for Black entrepreneurs)
MORE RESOURCES

NETWORKING (continued)
Digitalundivided (for Black and Latinx women entrepreneurs)
FBomb Breakfast Club (for women entrepreneurs)
Graham & Walker (for women entrepreneurs)
Latino Community Fund, WA (for Latinx entrepreneurs)
Onaben Indianpreneurship (for Native American entrepreneurs)
Seattle TiE (for Indian American entrepreneurs, Asian American entrepreneurs)
USPAACC (for Asian American entrepreneurs)

ORGANIZATIONS
CleanTech Alliance
Life Science Washington Institute
StartUp Washington (from Washington State Department of Commerce)
Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA)
Washington Research Foundation (WRF)

SELF-CARE TOOLS
Note: One of the best self-care strategies is to engage with a community of people pursuing goals similar to your own. The Networking section of this list contains a few local and national networks to plug into.

UW CareLink (for all UW employee entrepreneurs)
UW Counseling Center (for student entrepreneurs)
UW OMA&D resources (for minoritized entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs with disabilities)

TRAINING
Cambia Grove events (life science)
Foresight events (cleantech)
Life Science Washington Institute (SBIR/STTR)
One-Million Cups (pitching)
TurboSBIR (SBIR/STTR)

BOOKS
Business Model Generation and Value Proposition Design by Alexander Osterwalder
Crossing the Chasm by Geoffrey Moore
The Four Steps to the Epiphany by Steve Blank
The Innovator’s Method by Nathan Furr and Jeff Dyer
Talking to Humans by Frank Rimalovski