

# DRIVE-ing Innovation



*“Accelerators are part of a new business-friendly approach,” said Deputy Secretary for Health and Human Services Eric Hargan. “This approach will help startups and other businesses shape the next generation of lifesaving technology and transform health security. That innovation is crucial to protecting Americans and saving lives.”*

*- Deputy Secretary Eric Hargan*

## What is DRIVE?

DRIVE is a transformative, business-friendly approach to identifying, capturing, nurturing and accelerating lifesaving innovation to solve tough health challenges that span health security and daily healthcare. DRIVE is named after the office that oversees it, the Division of Research, Innovation, and Ventures, part of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

## Why did ASPR/BARDA create DRIVE?

At a time when synthetic biology and personalized medicine are not just conceivable but attainable, the time is uniquely now to solve some of the most daunting, far-reaching health security problems. Through DRIVE, individual innovators, startups and other businesses have a new pathway to bring ideas together, nurture them with experienced partners, and direct them to BARDA's experts who have demonstrated success in partnering with private industry to take new ideas to regulatory approval.

## How is DRIVE changing the way government does business?

DRIVE leverages the flexibilities provided under the 21st Century Cures Act to accelerate healthcare innovation allowing BARDA to partner with a nonprofit organization that can work with private investors to fund innovative technologies and products to solve systemic health security challenges. DRIVE also can invest in the projects using quick, streamlined funding methods. Central to the new DRIVE approach is a nationwide network of accelerators.

## What are accelerators and how will they help innovators?

The accelerator network will assist individual innovators, startups and other businesses in developing their

technologies and products, connecting innovators with essential product development and business support services. This support could position innovative technologies and products for follow-on investment from the public or private sectors.

The first accelerator partners announced are:

- First Flight Venture Center, Research Triangle Park, NC, \$98,313
- MedTech Innovator, Los Angeles, \$100,000
- New Orleans BioInnovation Center, New Orleans, \$88,405
- SUNY Research Foundation, Stony Brook, NY, \$100,000
- Texas Medical Center Innovation Institute, Houston, \$96,500
- University City Science Center, Philadelphia, \$100,000
- Massachusetts Medical Device Development Center, Lowell, MA, \$99,999
- Life Science Washington Institute, Seattle, \$99,998

## What problems is DRIVE trying to solve?

One of the first challenging problems DRIVE will tackle is the need for earlier detection of infection, creating technology that can alert people when they have been infected with a bacteria or virus even before they begin to feel sick. The second is the urgent need to solve sepsis, the body's life-threatening response to infection or traumatic injury. Sepsis is a top cause of hospitalization in America, leads to 250,000 deaths annually and costs approximately \$24 billion a year to treat. The number of sepsis cases could skyrocket after a bioterrorism attack or pandemic.

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