

# Companies Receive \$1.3 M in MA-Israeli Collaboration Grants

Four Massachusetts-Israeli business collaborations have received a total of \$1.3M in grant funding under the Massachusetts-Israel Innovation Partnership (MIIP)—a formal collaboration between the State of Israel and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to encourage and support innovation and entrepreneurship between Massachusetts' and Israel's life sciences, clean energy and technology sectors.

The grants were announced yesterday at the 2012 BIO International Convention in Boston by Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick and Israeli Chief Scientist Avi Hasson, of MATIMOP, the Israel Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor.

The four winning projects are:

- SBH Sciences (Natick) and Improdia (Israel) will work together toward the development and manufacture of a chronic inflammation-dependent immunosuppression prognostic kit. SBH will receive \$184,000 from the Center and Improdia will receive \$202,000 from Israel's OCS. SBH Sciences is a discovery and preclinical contract research organization with expertise in production and analysis of cytokines and biomarkers. Improdia is a life science start-up focused on implementing novel biomarkers for immune system modulating therapies—using simple blood tests for patients with chronic disease.
- Automated Medical Instruments (AMI – Needham) and STI Lasers (Israel) will develop new technology involving radio frequency energy to perform circumferential ablation of the pulmonary veins. AMI will receive

\$116,000 from the Center and STI Lasers will receive \$110,000 from OCS. AMI is a start-up medical device company developing novel technology to perform atrial fibrillation treatment. STI Lasers is a medical device company specializing in laser cutting, micromachining and finishing of miniature metal components. "AMI is developing the CircumBlator™, to offer a reliable and curative, minimally invasive treatment for millions of patients with atrial fibrillation, a disease that causes over 20 percent of strokes and untold misery," said Martin Sklar, President and CEO of Automated Medical Instruments.

- Lantheus Medical Imaging, Inc. (North Billerica) and Check-Cap (Israel) will develop a novel 3-D imaging capsule that can be used to screen for polyps and lesions associated with colorectal cancer. Lantheus will receive \$300,000 from MTC and Check-Cap has been selected to receive at least an equal amount from OCS. Lantheus develops, manufactures and distributes innovative diagnostic imaging agents. Check Cap is a medical device company located in Mount Carmel, Israel with a "breakthrough" solution for Colorectal Cancer Screening. "As a global leader in diagnostic imaging, Lantheus is dedicated to providing physicians with breakthrough new tools to enhance patient care. Teaming up with Check-Cap to develop and manufacture a cutting-edge imaging capsule further advances this ongoing commitment," said Don Kiepert, President and CEO, Lantheus Medical Imaging.
- FloDesign Sonics (Wilbraham) and Transbiodiesel (Israel) will use FloDesign's acoustic molecule separation technology to separate oil that can be used to create fuel from Transbiodiesel's oil-generating algae. FloDesign Sonics will receive \$55,000 from MassCEC and Transbiodiesel will receive \$20,958 from

OCS. FloDesign Sonics uses a novel ultrasonic acoustophoretic separation technology developed at Western New England University for a more efficient approach to wastewater treatment and micro-algae harvesting for biofuels. Transbiodiesel is a start-up company with a novel technology for producing biodiesel fuels from a variety of oils

The MIIP program was first announced in June 2011 at the BIO International Convention in Washington, D.C. and the first joint solicitation for proposals was launched in September 2011 by MATIMOP on the Israeli side and by the three participating Massachusetts agencies: the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC). Total funding for the current projects is approximately \$3m.

The partnership came as a result of a 2011 trade mission in which Governor Patrick and a coalition of Massachusetts business executives and senior government officials explored growth opportunities of common interest for Massachusetts' and Israel's innovation industries. During that mission Governor Patrick and Shalom Simhon, Israeli Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor, signing on behalf of their respective states, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Jerusalem. MIIP was established to implement the MOU's framework.

Massachusetts is the first U.S. state to establish a significant industrial R&D program with the State of Israel, according to a press release issued yesterday by Patrick's office.

Today there are nearly 100 companies with Israeli founders or Israeli-licensed technologies in Massachusetts, according to the release. In 2009, these companies employed nearly 6,000 people and generated \$2.4 billion in direct revenue for the state. Local firms exported over \$180 million worth of goods to Israel in 2009. Home to 377 hospitals and 37,000 practicing

physicians, Israel is an important market for health-related technologies.

The New England-Israel Business Council, the US-Israel Science and Technology Foundation, the Government of Israel Economic Mission to North America, the Consulate General of Israel to New England and MOITI have all played an important role in promoting the program, according to the release.

—Anita M. Harris

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