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News

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**Philadelphia University researchers receive \$200,000 grant for work on
bacteria-killing textiles that could help curb hospital infections**
*The grant from University City Science Center's QED Proof of Concept Program will
facilitate potential commercial investment in the technology*

Philadelphia, December 15, 2011—Philadelphia University researchers have been awarded \$200,000 from the University City Science Center's QED Proof of Concept Program to continue their work developing bacteria-killing textiles that could help reduce the high incidence of hospital-acquired infections.

The grant is designed to facilitate commercial investment in early-stage life science technologies with high potential in the healthcare industry. In addition to the \$200,000 award, each research team receives one year of business guidance from the Science Center's network of experienced entrepreneurs to help them bring their technologies to market.

"The QED Program's goal of linking academic research to the marketplace aligns well with Philadelphia University's aim for scientific discovery to have a positive and practical impact on people's lives," said Philadelphia University President Stephen Spinelli, Jr. "Our project demonstrates our mission of teaching innovation and encouraging integrative thinking, seeing and creating connections between different bodies of knowledge and across disciplinary boundaries. This work is integrated into Philadelphia University's innovation-focused curriculum and applied research, and builds on its 127-year history of world-leading textile engineering expertise."

The multidisciplinary Philadelphia University team includes principal investigator Alex Messinger, professor of architecture and interior design; Diana Cundell, associate professor of biology; Brian George, associate professor of textile engineering; and D.R. Widder, executive director of innovation. QED Business Advisors Ted Kirsch and Ron Rothman have supported the project team.

The PhilaU research focuses on a new biocidal textile technology that could be used in such items as lab coats to kill bacteria on contact. Previous work by PhilaU researchers has resulted in patent-pending technology for textiles that kill a broad range of dangerous bacteria.

The QED grant will fund further the development of technology to meet the market needs for killing bacteria and meeting durability and washability requirements for new clinical applications.

“The University City Science Center support will increase the opportunities for marketing the biocidal, or bacteria-killing, fabric technology developed from our research at Philadelphia University,” Messinger said. “The implementation of this technology could have a major impact on reducing the spread of infection in hospitals and other healthcare settings. This support for our research and technology will open numerous commercial opportunities in the healthcare industry, as we strive to improve public health conditions.”

Philadelphia University was one of three institutions—the others are Lehigh University and Thomas Jefferson University—to receive QED grants, all of them first-time awardees. Lehigh’s researchers are working on a portable device for delivering oxygen to critical care patients, while those at Thomas Jefferson University are developing a breakthrough diagnostic test for pancreatic cancer. The projects were selected from 10 finalists by an independent group of industry and investment professionals.

"These awards demonstrate that medical technologies of high commercial potential exist at many of our region's research institutions," said Science Center President and CEO Stephen S. Tang. "We are delighted to see Lehigh University, Philadelphia University and Thomas Jefferson University join the ranks of past QED awardees such as Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Drexel, University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers and Temple."

"Multi-institutional programs like QED are key to our region's competitiveness as a source of new medical technologies and products," said Christopher Laing, vice president of science and technology at the Science Center, who oversees commercialization programs including the QED program. "If you look at successful technology clusters, they are built on a critical mass of research infrastructure. The Greater Philadelphia region represents almost 4 percent of the nation's academic medical research output, and QED creates a mechanism for new product development that mobilizes and showcases that entire powerhouse."

The QED Program has reviewed 40 technology development projects since it was launched in 2009 and has funded 12 since then, including the latest awardees. Nineteen universities and research institutions in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware participate under a common agreement that defines matching funds and intellectual property management. Four projects to date have resulted in technology options or licenses.

“The rigorous evaluation and investment by the Science Center is validation of the commercial and social potential of our work,” said D.R. Widder, Philadelphia University’s executive director of innovation. “Their support will strengthen our strategic initiative to provide new innovations to our industry partners.”

Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is a private university with 3,600 students enrolled in more than 60 undergraduate and graduate programs. As the model for professional university education, the University prepares students to be leaders in their professions in an

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