

Call for “SPARK Proposals” to enhance Translation

SPARK Finland supports development of **novel therapeutics, diagnostics, health technologies and health IT solutions** for unmet medical needs with its proven **two-year program**. Any clinical indication will be considered. SPARK projects receive

- mentorship from industry experts
- education in workshops on “how to develop a solution” and “what you need to understand about business and finance”, and
- access to global network of SPARK programs and their affiliates.

Program is able to provide small financial support based on the accomplishment of milestones. We accept also applicants that have own financial resources (TUTLI or local innovation grants) that cover the costs of development work.

In exchange team needs to commit to the program and participate in our mentoring and educational events.

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of:

- Scope of unmet need in area of life science, medicine or health
- Novelty of approach
- Feasibility (point of maturity to be achieved within the time frame)

Some examples of past projects in global SPARK programs include unmet needs in pediatric, neglected or orphan diseases, cardiovascular, oncology, inflammatory, respiratory, neurological, autoimmune indications and infectious disease.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY

Are you investigating basic mechanisms of disease? Are you sitting on a new technology or potential pharmacotherapy with clinical potential, yet the developmental know-how is lacking? Why not let the SPARK Finland program (<https://sparkfinland.fi>) enhance the translatability of your innovative technology! **We accept projects already in the idea phase, not only those that are more advanced.**

OUR CONCEPT

The current success rate of translating novel scientific finding into new diagnostics, medical devices or therapies is disappointingly low at academic institution across the globe (less than <5%). The reasons for this are numerous, including the erratic selection of promising projects, the high degree of project risk, and minimal attention to intellectual property.

The “SPARK Finland” program is designed to de-risk projects with high potential impact, addressing critical unmet medical needs for any indication. **We focus on supporting idea-owners in increasing the maturity of ideas towards a working and meaningful solutions.**

Program is based on the highly successful “SPARK” program developed at Stanford University (<http://sparkmed.stanford.edu/>), which has achieved a translational success rate of > 60%, through education, mentorship, advising and small milestone-based funding.

As a SPARKEE you will get:

- **Mentoring and advice** from national and international industry leaders who will help you to develop your idea towards working commercial or clinical solution
- **Support and experiences** from SPARK managers and other SPARKEEs
- **Access to international institutions and networks** as a member of SPARK Global network
- **Opportunities to participate and pitch your idea** in international industrial events such as BioEurope, Bioinvestor Forum etc. SPARK will support financially travels to international events
- **Education** on R&D and Business development in drug, medical device and diagnostics or health IT
- **Small financial contribution** to de-risk your project e.g. travel grants to international events.
- **Access to investors and experts** on commercialization

As a SPARKEE you need to:

- **Make two year development plan** with milestones for your idea/project
- **Meet the SPARK managers** regularly during the program (once a month or two months)
- **Present your project** development 2-3 times per year in mentoring sessions
- **Participate actively in mentoring sessions** held every second Tuesday from 5-7pm even you are not presenting your own case
- Select and **participate 1-2 international business/commercial** events annually
- **Participate the education** and follow the lectures and materials actively
- **Be committed** to take your idea to next level

ELIGIBILITY

Any Helsinki metropolitan area, Turku or Tampere region team (faculty, clinician, postdoctoral fellow, or graduate student team) from our affiliated institutions* is welcome to apply. The application must be co-signed by the project team or research group leader.

* Institutions that are members and/or associated to SPARK Finland are University of Helsinki, Aalto University, Helsinki University Hospital & The Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa – HUS, City of Helsinki, University of Tampere, Tampere University of Technology, Tampere University Hospital – TaYS, The Pirkanmaa Hospital District, City of Tampere, Tampere University of Applied sciences, University of Turku, Abo Academi, Turku University Hospital, Turku University of Applied Science



HOW TO APPLY

Step 1: In case you have an idea contact the SPARK managers for discussion as soon as possible about your idea and it's suitability to SPARK program.

Step 2: Use the application form available at the [SPARK Finland website](#) and submit a two-page application of your proposed therapy, medical device, diagnostic or health IT solution that addresses an unmet medical need or utilizes a novel approach for any indication. Apply by **January 14th 2019** by sending your proposal in pdf format to apply@sparkfinland.fi . Please note that applications must be submitted before the call **deadline at 16:00**.

Step 3: Be selected by our SPARK Team and get an invitation to pitch your project to our external SPARK Advisory Team

Step 4: Selected projects will receive mentoring, education, guidance, access to global SPARK network and travel grants to international life science business events.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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