

## **Table 14: Academic Connections and Collaborations to Accelerate Drug Development**

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### **Scope:**

Acceleration of drug development can make a difference to the lives of our patients needing new and better medicines. Reducing development time may additionally reduce the cost of new therapies. To meet the demands of shortening timelines, lowering price and delivering quality products, biopharmaceutical companies must look to new technologies and ways of working. Academic institutions are rich with creative ideas, future talent, and novel technologies. In this table session, we will discuss ways to leverage academic connections and collaborations to accelerate drug development. We will also provide networking opportunities that may lead to collaborations or future career opportunities.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

1. Have you led an academic collaboration? What was your measure of success? What would you do again next time? What would you do differently?
2. How are you funding academic collaborations? How are you negotiating IP?
3. How can consortia stretch your collaborations budget?
4. How can academic connections fill the resource gap left by the great resignation?
5. Are you interested in starting a collaboration? What do you want to know?

### **Discussion Notes:**

Very few academic collaborators at this table.

- Collaborations in the US has been a bit difficult and not really focused on industry topics.
- 3-way collaborations might be most interesting.
- Industry more customer focused and more about the product and not about the knowledge. Therefore a 3-way collaboration also with a vender.
- Sometimes money flows are very difficult. Funding students is very different from the technology development. Funding for students is more of an internal employee development.
- Academic collaborations are often for a recruiting tool.
- Consulting with University incubators and start up companies.
- Working with start-up labs to try to develop novel technologies.
- NSF I-CORPS program looking for industry mentors. Not related to SPIR grants but some of these agencies to go to this program.
- DARPA also Governmental Grants.

- Small companies trying to build out a value proposition and build a value chain. Trying to find out what companies are working with industry. How do we connect to experts to make sure technology is focusing on the key gaps. Can you get connected to member companies and experts? Etconsortium might be able to help. Submit through the website.
- E.M. and M.S. -consultant to support putting academics and small companies together with larger companies. CASSS starting a discussion group to support start-ups. Board approved at the last meeting. Discussion group being started.
- Can consortiums stretch the collaboration budget?
- Innovation consortium born from IQ Consortium → <https://www.etconsortium.org>
- Niimble Grants → US Department of congress NIST → <https://niimbl.force.com/s/>
- Nucleate Bio is a student driven organization to put students together across multiple life-sciences area to form teams to compete with their ideas. Winning teams get grants to start-up their own companies.
- WCBP is a bit academic light but many other CASSS meetings are significantly more academic focused.

How do you measure success in an academic collaboration?

- Filling technology gaps. Problem statement has to be very clear and the vision of what the solution looks like.
- Regular meetings are critical, data review and consistent direction orientation. Close collaboration is really critical. Academic collaborators lack a feel for the needs of industry. Frequency is much more than yearly. Even weekly depending on data generation.
- Collaboration don't always but should be well-defined. New applications that can truly fill a gap.
- Very broad area and large grants do help knowledge but are not always resulting in very specific technologies but can move science forward. Then companies have access to new research.
- There has to be a good connection between interests and what the company wants. Faculty research areas should have a good foundation to leverage what they already have.
- Start a collaboration with a significant literature search.
- Do not rely on business development group, need to lead the science.

How do we deal with IP

- Sometimes the right of first refusal.
- Clear ownership... who gets what.

How do you set milestones? Incentives.

- Opened collaborations are time based.
- Interactions and number of interactions help.

How do know an academic lab is a good collaborator or not.

- Look at the publications with industry