



UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
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Spotlight on: Don Taylor, PhD, MBA, MS



Dr. Donald P. Taylor, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Commercial Translation in the Health Sciences, Associate Professor of Biomedical Informatics, Bioengineering, and Clinical &

Translational Science, Co-Director of the Center for Commercial Applications of Healthcare Data, and Executive Director of sciVelo, is charged with leading commercial translation across Pitt's Schools of the Health Sciences.

Our Center's Associate Director, Julia Holber, recently interviewed him about sciVelo and his perspectives on Pittsburgh's rise as a global innovation city.

See a preview of their conversation below, and visit our website to read the full interview!



Julia: Let's talk a bit about sciVelo. What is it? What does it aim to achieve?

Don: The sciVelo name is a contraction of "science" and "velocity." We're trying to speed up the science toward commercial application areas and across our seven focus areas in a staged, practical approach. sciVelo is the vehicle through which we help to support the "top of the funnel" academic medical commercial translation.

I was hired about 20 months ago to help activate commercial translation. So, under the vision and leadership of [Dr. Arthur Levine](#), our Senior Vice Chancellor for the Health Sciences and Dean of the School of Medicine, we created sciVelo which is now coordinated under his office and that of [Dr. Rob Rutenbar](#), Senior Vice Chancellor for Research. sciVelo was also formed by the vision of [Dr. Mike Becich](#) of the [Department of Biomedical Informatics](#) and [Dr. Steve Reis](#) of the [Clinical and Translational Science Institute](#). Our sciVelo team is highly transdisciplinary, with about 25 team members now, who cut across so many different disciplines that are strategically aligned with our thematic areas.

When you think about commercialization to the outside world, there's quite a continuum of things to do and expertise required. Many investigators have active research projects in flight that may be wonderfully successful in terms of a peer review publication and traditional grant funding, but they haven't framed their research to an unmet market need. sciVelo's broad purpose to achieve is to answer such questions as: how do we increase the number and quality of Pitt invention disclosures? How do we strategically coordinate across campus to ensure that our translational science will yield a competitive portfolio of potential intellectual property? How do we strategically involve industry to inform our translational research perspectives? How do we bring in non-traditional funding to expand the impact of our research? One person can't do all that alone. So sciVelo links translational research projects to such other stakeholders as the Clinical & Translational Science Institute, the Center for Medical Innovation, and Innovation Institute, and the Offices of Economic Partnerships and Corporate Engagement.





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