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INNOVATION AND COMMERCIALIZATION

May 20, 2026

OHSU Innovates



IN BRIEF

Innovation has long been part of OHSU's foundation, but it is increasingly showing up in more visible and connected ways across the institution and the state.

Recent events have brought together researchers, clinicians, founders and partners from across Oregon, reflecting growing engagement at all levels and a shared interest in how ideas can move forward.

In this issue, you'll find highlights from across that activity, along with opportunities and updates.

FEATURED STORY

Building Momentum: OHSU and Oregon's Growing Culture of Innovation



Photo: OHSU President Shereef Elnahal speaks with attendees at the 2026 OHSU Innovation Awards reception, where researchers, industry collaborators and community partners gathered to celebrate and advance innovation at OHSU.

This spring marked a turning point for innovation at OHSU and across the state.

On March 11, the [2026 OHSU Innovation Awards](#) brought together researchers, clinicians and entrepreneurs to celebrate ideas already shaping the future of health. OHSU leaders, investors, industry collaborators and community partners were also in attendance, reflecting the expanding network behind this work. The following day, OHSU President [Shereef Elnahal, M.D., M.B.A.](#), built on that energy by introducing a new institutional vision: “Elevate Oregon as the heart of health innovation.”

For OHSU Innovates, the direction is clear. Innovation is no longer a parallel effort. It is central to how OHSU will advance its mission and contribute to the future of health in Oregon.

That work has long been part of OHSU’s foundation, and it is now gaining renewed focus and energy across the institution. Innovation is increasingly visible in everyday work, extending beyond labs and startups into clinical care, education and operations. Ideas are continuing to move beyond discovery and into real-world application through new technologies, partnerships and emerging companies.

That shift is already taking shape. Innovation is becoming part of everyday work across the institution, extending beyond labs and startups into clinical care, education and operations. Ideas are moving beyond discovery and into real-world application through new technologies, partnerships and emerging companies.

That momentum is also reflected in how people are coming together around the work. On May 7, [Innovation Day](#), part of OHSU Research Week, brought researchers, clinicians, students and collaborators together to focus on how ideas progress from concept to practice. The discussions centered on translation and practical impact, underscoring a shared commitment to moving innovation forward. Alongside the Innovation Awards, the event highlighted a noticeable shift in culture—one that prioritizes connection, collaboration and momentum.

That energy carried into the [Oregon Innovation Showcase](#) on May 11 and 12. Co-produced by Oregon’s public universities through [Innovate Collaborate Oregon \(ICOregon\)](#) in partnership with [Business Oregon](#), the event connected early-stage companies with investors, industry collaborators and regional partners.



Photo: Founders, investors and collaborators engage in conversations throughout the Startup Commons Room at the Oregon Innovation Showcase, reflecting the connections driving company growth and innovation across the state.

The Showcase focused on deep tech companies that require time, capital and sustained effort to develop, but have the potential to create significant long-term impact. Across startup pitches and investor discussions, a consistent idea emerged: building a strong innovation economy requires patience, coordination and a shared commitment to growth.

Conversations throughout the event pointed to the role of universities as anchors in that effort, helping generate talent, research and new ventures. Investors highlighted growing interest in Oregon and noted increasing momentum around OHSU's renewed emphasis on innovation. At the same time, industry and community leaders stressed the importance of supporting companies as they scale and strengthening the conditions that allow them to remain and grow in the state.

These conversations reflect a broader alignment taking shape across Oregon. In April, [Oregon Life Sciences](#) and the [Oregon Business Council](#) launched the [Oregon Life Sciences Competitiveness Task Force](#). The initiative brings together leaders from industry, universities and government to define a strategy for expanding one of the state's most promising sectors. Life sciences already supports tens of thousands of jobs and billions in economic activity, with significant opportunity for continued growth.

Oregon's innovation landscape is also gaining visibility beyond the region. From May 4-5, a cross-sector delegation led by Business Oregon, including leaders from Oregon

Life Sciences, OHSU, other universities and industry partners, participated in [Swiss Biotech Day](#) in Basel, Switzerland. The group connected with global investors, researchers and companies while highlighting Oregon's strengths in research, collaboration and commercialization.



Photo: Members of the Oregon delegation gather at Swiss Biotech Day in Basel, representing universities, industry and statewide partners working to expand Oregon's presence in life sciences and innovation.

Taken together, these efforts reflect more than a series of events. They show how OHSU and its partners are beginning to work differently, with stronger connections between research, industry and investment.

For OHSU Innovates, that means continuing to open pathways for ideas to move forward, supporting innovators at every stage and building the relationships that help those ideas take hold beyond the university. Progress depends not only on discovery, but on the ability to translate, connect and sustain that work over time.

Under the leadership of Elnahal, innovation is being positioned as a core strategy across clinical care, research and education.

The goal is ambitious, but the direction is taking shape.

Across Oregon, universities, industry leaders, investors and public partners are contributing to a shared effort to strengthen the state's innovation capacity. The activity seen this spring offers a glimpse of what that coordination can look like in practice.

The pieces are coming together.

The next phase is turning that alignment into sustained progress and lasting impact.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OHSU's Katie Blise to Present at Equalize Pitch Event



Katie Blise, Ph.D., a computational biologist at the Brenden-Colson Center for Pancreatic Care, OHSU School of Medicine, is among the presenters at the Equalize Startups Virtual Culmination Pitch Event, part of the [Equalize Startups program](#), which supports women founders in academia.

Blise, a member of the 2026 cohort, is developing Nebulex, a software tool that enables researchers to more efficiently analyze complex spatial biology data and support more personalized approaches to cancer treatment. Her work is part of the digital tools track.

The Equalize pitch event brings together more than 40 women academic

entrepreneurs across medtech, therapeutics, physical sciences and digital tools. Attendees can hear from founders, engage with the innovation community, and vote for the People's Choice Award.

Blise and her Nebulex co-creator, Sam Sivagnanam, M.S., were also named New Innovators of the Year at the 2025 OHSU Innovation Awards.

The Equalize Startups Virtual Culmination Pitch Event will be held Wednesday, June 17, from 10 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

[Register for the Equalize pitch event.](#)

BIP Corp Program Open for Enrollment

Applications are now open for the Biomedical Innovation Program Commercialization Readiness Program (BIP Corp), a six-week virtual training program offered through OHSU's Oregon Clinical and Translational Research Institute (OCTRI).

Modeled on the [National Science Foundation's I-Corps™ program](#), BIP Corp supports biomedical scientists, clinician scientists and engineers who are exploring how early-stage research or ideas can translate into human or societal impact. The program is open to individuals or teams with an early-stage biomedical innovation. There is no cost to participate, and non-OHSU participants are welcome.

The program runs Fridays from Sept. 11 through Oct. 16, from 9–11 a.m., and includes sessions on customer discovery, market analysis, regulatory strategy and commercialization readiness.

[Apply for the BIP Corp program.](#) Questions or accommodation requests may be directed to Melissa Mudd, innovation alliance manager for OCTRI, at muddm@ohsu.edu.

Elevate Ideas With the ASCEND Award

The ASCEND Award supports bold, practical ideas that aim to make a real-world impact, both in the community and in the professional growth of OHSU innovators. Open to current OHSU members, this quarterly funding opportunity offers up to \$4,000 to help move innovative projects forward. Funding can be used for a wide range of activities, such as attending innovation-related training, traveling to relevant conferences, building prototypes or purchasing materials. The next proposal deadline is Wednesday, Sept. 30.

[Review the request for proposals.](#)

[Apply \(OHSU username and login required\).](#)

FEATURED NEWS

OHSU Innovation Day Highlights Research Advancing Patient Care



Innovation Day Recordings Now Available

Innovation Day 2026, held May 7 as part of OHSU Research Week, brought together the OHSU community and collaborators to explore how new ideas move from early discovery to real-world impact.

The virtual event featured presentations and discussions highlighting emerging research, translational progress and the people working to advance innovation across disciplines. Sessions reflected a shared focus on turning research into meaningful outcomes for patients and health care.

Recordings are now available, offering an opportunity to revisit key discussions and insights from the day. Highlighted sessions include:

- Early, emerging and advancing inventions, featuring research pitches from OHSU investigators at different stages of development
- A panel on the entrepreneurial mindset for scientists and how research can align with real-world needs
- A translational spotlight on the ferumoxytol research program and its path to clinical impact

[Watch the recordings.](#)

Thank you to everyone who attended, as well as to our speakers, presenters and sponsors who helped make Innovation Day 2026 possible.

FEATURED EVENTS

June Drug Discovery Seminar With Thomas Scanlan

Thomas S. Scanlan, Ph.D.

Professor of Chemical Physiology
and Biochemistry

OHSU School of Medicine



Join us June 18 for the next OHSU Innovates Drug Discovery Seminar, featuring [Thomas Scanlan, Ph.D.](#), professor of chemical physiology and biochemistry in the OHSU School of Medicine. Scanlan, co-founder and scientific advisor to [Autobahn Therapeutics, Inc.](#), an OHSU-founded biotech startup, will be in conversation with [Travis Cook, M.S., M.B.A., CLP](#), senior director of OHSU Innovates.

[Save the date.](#)

Additional details will be announced.

When: Thursday, June 18, noon–1 p.m. PT

Where: Virtual

Who: Researchers, clinicians, industry partners, startups, academic collaborators and members of the translational research community

Cost: Free

Invent Oregon Finals Set for June 26, Featuring OHSU
Student Teams



The [Invent Oregon Finals](#) will take place Friday, June 26, at OSU-Cascades in Bend, marking the 10th anniversary of the statewide collegiate innovation competition.

Top student teams from across Oregon will pitch their innovations and compete for \$30,000 in prizes. The event highlights bold ideas, breakthrough prototypes and the next generation of Oregon innovators. Attendees can connect with emerging talent, hear directly from student innovators and engage with a statewide community supporting entrepreneurship and innovation. Attendees are also invited to cheer on the two OHSU student teams competing this year:

- EaziStep, led by Joshua Vanderpool, a Ph.D. candidate in biomedical engineering, is developing footwear designed to help people manage chronic ankle pain and stay active longer.
- Surgi-Lift, led by Tim Valuev, an M.D.-MPH candidate, is focused on reducing the physical strain clinicians experience from wearing lead vests in procedure rooms.

[Register.](#)

When: Friday, June 26, 10:30 a.m.–6 p.m.

Where: Oregon State University Cascades, Edward J. Ray Hall, Bend, Oregon

Who: Students, entrepreneurs, investors, educators, community leaders, alumni and

innovation supporters

Cost: Free

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, May 21	RAIN Tech Talk - Homepage Makeover – 5 Fixes That Turn Visitors Into Leads
Thursday, May 21	TAO Women and Allies Community - Founders and Groundbreakers: Real Talk with Founders Who Bet on Themselves
Tuesday, June 2	Capital Literacy for Women Entrepreneurs
Wednesday, June 3	TAO People & Culture Event: Human capabilities in a time of constant change
Thursday, June 4	OBI Accelerate Biotech Happy Hour
Tuesday, June 9	OBI Virtual Lunch & Learn - From Half-Baked to Fully-Baked: Getting Your Product Right for Faster Market Uptake
Wednesday, June 10	OEN June PubTalk - Ethical AI & Responsible Innovation
Thursday, June 11	Oregon Bio Women CONNECT Portland - When the Playbook Runs Out: Innovation and You 2.0
Tuesday, June 16	OEN Pitch, Please: June
Wednesday, June 17	TiE Oregon Pitch Club

Wednesday, June 17	Equalize Culmination Pitch Event
Friday, June 26	Invent Oregon Finals
Thursday, July 16	Discover the Metro Region Innovation Hub - Online Info Session
Monday, July 20	Oregon Life Sciences Membership Lunch-and-Learn
Tuesday, July 21	OEN Pitch, Please: July

TECHNOLOGIES

OHSU-developed technologies are available for licensing to industry partners. For a list of available technologies, visit the [OHSU Technology Portal](#).

Newly Licensed or Optioned OHSU Technologies

Congratulations to the inventors of the below technologies, which were recently licensed or optioned to outside partners.

[OHSU 1771](#) - Materials from the BioLibrary

OHSU 2710 - Detection of nonperfusion area from signal reduction artifacts on OCT angiography (OCTA)

OHSU 3145 - COOL Lab Optical Coherence Tomographic Angiography Reading Toolkit (COOL-ART)

[OHSU 3193](#) - Artificial Intelligence-Assisted Projection-Resolved Optical Coherence

Tomographic Angiography (aiPR-OCTA)

OHSU 3367 - Robust Vessel Density Quantification in Optical Coherence

Tomographic Angiography

[OHSU 3469](#) - Mental Health Support for Construction Crews (Supervisor Training)

U.S. Issued Patents

Congratulations to OHSU inventors of these recently issued U.S. patents.

[Patent 12,584,131](#) - Methods of gene therapy

[Patent 12,582,658](#) - Therapeutic constructs for co-delivery of anti-cancer agent(s) and immune checkpoint inhibitor(s)

[Patent 12,599,658](#) - Hepatitis B virus-specific T cell responses

[Patent 12,605,468](#) - Oxazine-based fluorophore compounds for nerve-specific imaging

SPONSORS

Thank you to our current sponsors for their support of OHSU Innovates!



Questions? Contact us at innovates@ohsu.edu

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