WE CREATE
social and economic impact through bringing the inventions of the UA from the lab to the world.

WE BUILD
connections between the talents of our faculty and researchers and the experience of entrepreneurs and investors.

WE CULTIVATE
conversations to refine ideas that start as UA research and grow them into new products and thriving businesses that benefit society.

Welcome 3
By the Numbers 5
Inventions 7
Asset Development 13
Venture Development 15
Making it Happen 17
Our mission:

TECH LAUNCH ARIZONA WILL COLLABORATE INTERNALLY WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA COMMUNITY AND EXTERNALLY WITH REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCE THE IMPACT OF UA RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION THROUGH LICENSING, CREATING STARTUPS AND GROWING THE REGIONAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM.

Welcome.

When TLA was launched in FY13, we laid out a roadmap to set our direction and measure our progress. Through hard work and a results-oriented focus, we accomplished our goals, with many metrics increasing faster than anticipated. We’ve grown technology commercialization throughout the University of Arizona. We’ve expanded from patent management and licensing and now provide expertise and support for copyright and software protection, startup formation, asset development funding, innovation and ecosystem support. With a two-pronged focus on commercializing UA inventions and fostering the growth and development of our ecosystem, we are looking for new ways to engage with the UA community and the region to expand our impact.

As we consider new programs and work closely with our advisory board, we are developing new ways to expand faculty engagement and more effectively bring students into our processes. We are investigating new investment models and how we can form stronger bonds with our external communities. We have an incredible team and seemingly endless ideas, but our focus is always impact—not activity.

Whatever we undertake, our goals will be based on generating measurable, impactful results.

So what’s next? Where do we want to be in five years? Like any startup, our first five years focused on rapid growth. In many respects, we have reached a level among the top of our peers when normalized by research expenditures. Since maintaining that level of growth is likely to be unsustainable, we are taking this moment to consider our goals and aspirations, and refocus our programs and strategies to deliver sustainable levels of output and growth, all while maintaining the highest quality outcomes. At the same time, we are considering new ways to grow the innovation ecosystem and spur greater levels of impact.

Finally, on behalf of the entire TLA team, I want to recognize and thank David Allen, who retired this year from his position as TLA Vice President. We can’t say enough about the vision, education and leadership that he brought to the project of building one of the leading public university technology commercialization programs in the nation. I am humbled and honored to be working with UA President Bobby Robbins and the entire University of Arizona community as we take our vision forward.

Our vision:

For Tech Launch Arizona is to be recognized among the top universities for its best practices & success in creating impact through the commercialization of intellectual property.

UA President Robert C. Robbins

There is so much incredible work being done at the UA that can enrich and improve the lives of people in our region, across the nation, and around the world. Tech Launch Arizona provides a crucial link that delivers those ideas and advancements to those who most need it.

After a year as President of the University of Arizona, I am even more impressed with TLA’s ability to translate the incredible discoveries of the UA’s outstanding faculty and researchers into innovations that will benefit the many communities we serve. In 2018, TLA continued its strong record of commercializing vital new inventions, and it is an important reason why the UA is well on our way to realizing our vision of becoming a leading university in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

2018 also brought the retirement of David Allen. David’s leadership was transformational, and I thank him for his far-reaching vision and leadership. He leaves a strong legacy for Doug Hockstad to build upon. I look forward to seeing all that TLA can accomplish in the years to come, and to seeing how the inventions, technologies and products created at the UA can improve the social, cultural, and physical health of communities around the world.

Doug Hockstad, Assistant Vice President, Tech Launch Arizona

UA President Robert C. Robbins
By the Numbers

EVERY YEAR, UA RESEARCH YIELDS INVENTIONS WITH COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL.

TLA shepherds ideas from the lab to the marketplace – from evaluating and protecting discoveries to commercializing the inventions through new and existing companies.
Inventions

IN FY2018, UA INVENTORS REPORTED THESE 275 INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR A BETTER WORLD.

LICENSING MANAGERS: HELPING RESEARCHERS EXPAND THE IMPACT OF THEIR WORK.

Under the leadership of Licensing Director Rakhi Gibbons, our team of licensing managers (LMs) – with specialized expertise in scientific domains, IP law and business – collaborate with UA faculty, researchers, graduate students and staff to identify inventions stemming from their investigations and innovative work. LMs advise these UA colleagues through the intellectual property protection process, and work with them to map out the most impactful commercial pathway for each technology.

WHAT DO THE INVENTORS THINK?

While our results show progress, what do our constituents think of our work? This year initiated an annual survey of UA inventors to get perspective on what we’re doing well and where we need to improve. Based on a 20% response rate, here’s what we learned.

ACTUAL COMMENTS FROM THE ANNUAL SURVEY

78% said they would recommend TLA to their colleagues.

75% said they were extremely or very satisfied with TLA on our responsiveness, helpfulness, quality of communications and expertise.

68% are extremely satisfied or very satisfied with the overall TLA experience.

The staff were extremely professional and were able to deal with a high level of complexity. “Wow – TLA is amazing!”

“I have found TLA staff to be wonderful to work with and very helpful.”

“I appreciated the support of TLA!”

“Edgeable with advice. Great!”

“My experience was superb. TLA got over the last five years. Going!”

“I’m extremely satisfied or very satisfied with the overall TLA experience. TLA has something I consider to be a strength at UA.”

“Very pleased with TLA. It’s high functioning as compared to similar groups at all of my previous institutions.”

Helping researchers expand the impact of their work.

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Asset Development

FUNDING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF INVENTIONS.

This past year, TLA provided $646,072 in new awards for 16 projects, with an additional $160,668 going toward ongoing projects from the previous year. Through Asset Development funds, we provide resources to move early-stage inventions toward being licensable, market-ready projects.

NEW PROJECT AWARDS FUNDED

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$646k PROVIDED BY TLA TO BRING TECHNOLOGIES CLOSER TO MARKET-READINESS

$160k PROVIDED FOR ONGOING PROJECTS FROM FY17

16 NEW PROJECT AWARDS

NEW IDEAS BECOMING NEW REALITIES.
VENTURE DEVELOPMENT

MAKING SUCCESS POSSIBLE.

Led by Senior Director Joann MacMaster, the Venture Development team consists of our Mentors-in-Residence and Commercialization Network teams, all of whom collaborate closely to maximize the success of UA startups.

STARTUP COHORT 2018

QUANTUM THERAPEUTICS CORP.
Developing a therapeutic antibody to reduce inflammation in acute and chronic lung diseases.
College of Medicine - Tucson
BIO5 Institute | UA Cancer Center

BOTANISOL ANALYTICS
Develops molecular detection instrumentation for use in forensic, pharmaceutical, agricultural, manufacturing, threat detection, bioproduction and clinical diagnostic applications.
College of Optical Sciences

NORCON TECHNOLOGIES
Commercializing techniques and elements for flexible curved reflectors.
College of Optical Sciences

REGULONIX
Developing non-opioid based small molecule therapeutics for chronic pain relief.
College of Medicine - Tucson
BIO5 Institute

INTUITIVE MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS
Offering a portable device to automate and standardize the collection of respiratory rates in sedated laboratory animals.
College of Medicine — Tucson
College of Science

FREEFALL AEROSPACE
Developing revolutionary antenna systems for 5G, satellite and ground based communications.
College of Science

OMNISCIENT
Creating small molecule approaches for the treatment of Alzheimer’s disease and other neurodegenerative and cognitive diseases.
College of Pharmacy | BIO5 Institute

REGALGENE
Applying quadruplex master switch technology to discover new medicines that control gene expression to address diseases like cancer.
College of Pharmacy | BIO5 Institute

D3SCIENCES, INC.
Developing tools for improved tissue sampling to expand cancer diagnosis, therapy specificity and research.
College of Medicine - Tucson
Banner — University Medical Center Tucson

TRIANGLE BIOTECHNOLOGY, INC.
Developing a nanodroplet technology with applications in medical imaging, diagnostics and clinical therapy.
College of Medicine - Tucson

At the University of Arizona, the Venture Development team is dedicated to ensuring that UA inventions go forward to create meaningful impact on people's lives.

NSF I-CORPS
As an NSF I-Corps Site, TLA offers individual project grants up to $3,000 to university-related entrepreneurial teams looking to bring innovative technologies to market, with those funds going towards customer discovery. Teams typically consist of an inventor/academic lead, an entrepreneurial lead, and a business mentor.

COMMERCIALIZATION NETWORK

Through volunteering their expertise, TLA Commercialization Network members play a vital role in helping to ensure that UA inventions go forward to create meaningful impact on people's lives.

1,500 COMMERCIALIZATION NETWORK MEMBERS
WHO VOLUNTEER THEIR EXPERTISE TO HELP COMMERCIALIZE UA INVENTIONS

30 COMMERCIALIZATION PARTNERS WHO’VE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN INCREASING THEIR ENGAGEMENT WITH TLA AND UA STARTUPS

4 MENTORS-IN-RESIDENCE, ALL SEASONED TECHNOLOGY ENTREPRENEURS, HELP STARTUP TEAMS GROW TECHNOLOGIES INTO SUCCESSFUL VENTURES

12 NETWORK MEMBERS HAVE BEEN PLACED INTO STARTUP LEADERSHIP POSITIONS THIS YEAR AS A RESULT OF THEIR ENGAGEMENT WITH TLA

56 SHORT-TERM ENGAGEMENTS (2 MONTHS OR LESS)
Making It Happen

AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO FY2019, OUR FOCUS STAYS THE SAME: TO BRING THE GREAT INVENTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA TO THE PUBLIC FOR A BETTER WORLD.

Last year, we set continued growth of the UA’s IP and license portfolios in accordance with the ABOR metrics and TLA targets as a primary goal. As we begin FY2019 and the UA Strategic Plan takes shape under the leadership of President Robbins, we will continue to develop and align the TLA strategic plan to support the greater UA vision, setting the highest standards of performance and excellence for ourselves and for the entire UA technology commercialization ecosystem.

INVENTORS
We will continue to more effectively engage inventors, maximize their participation, and ensure their satisfaction.

SERVICE
We will establish responsive structures and processes to make it easier for all parties — from inventors to advisors to ecosystem members — to make impactful contributions through working with TLA.

ENGAGEMENT
We will increase engagement among students, faculty and constituents across the ecosystem.

MARKETING
We will focus on technology marketing to broaden our pool of licensees.

STARTUPS
We will grow our programs to position startups for success, both pre- and post-license.

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