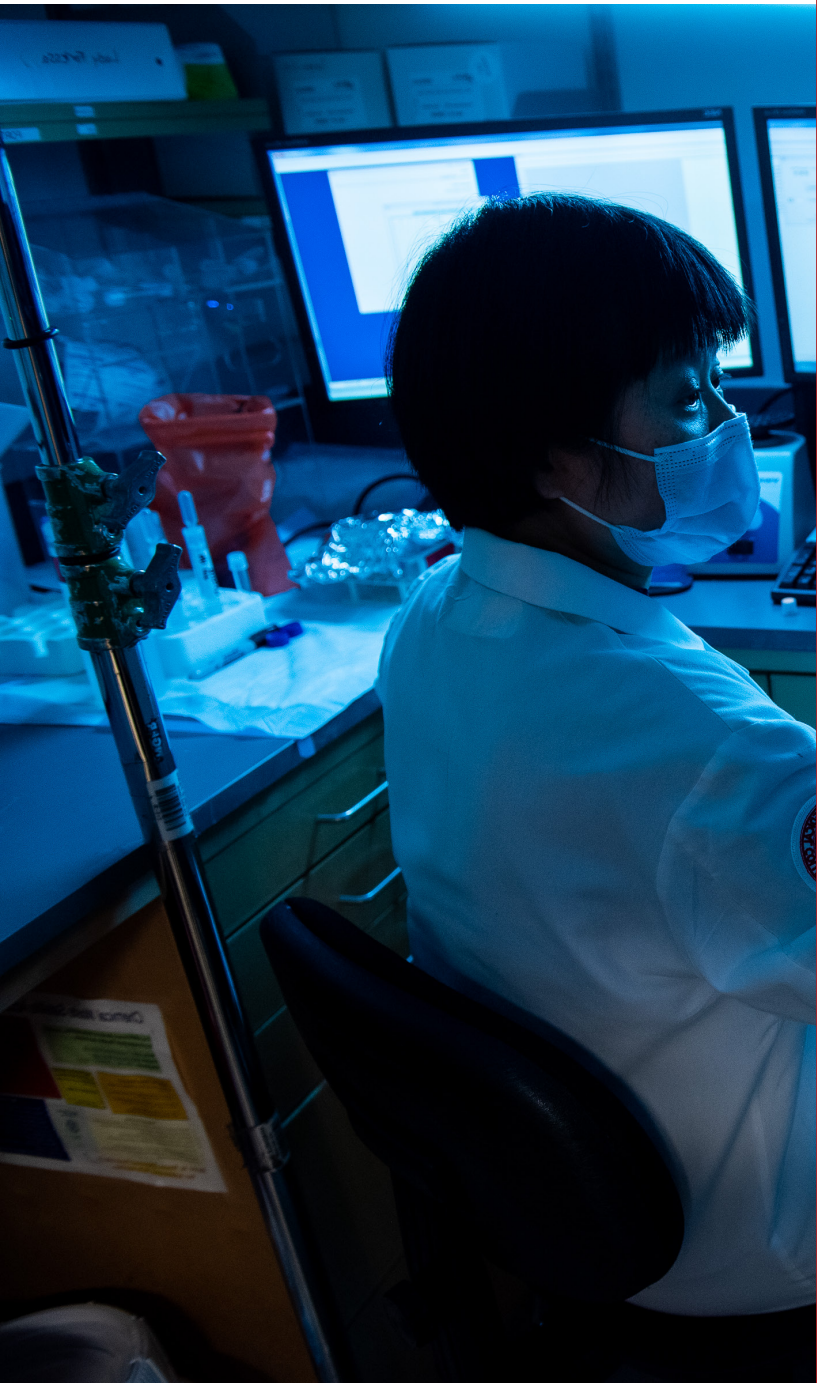




**Weill Cornell
Medicine**
Enterprise
Innovation

ANNUAL REPORT

**Fiscal Year
2023**



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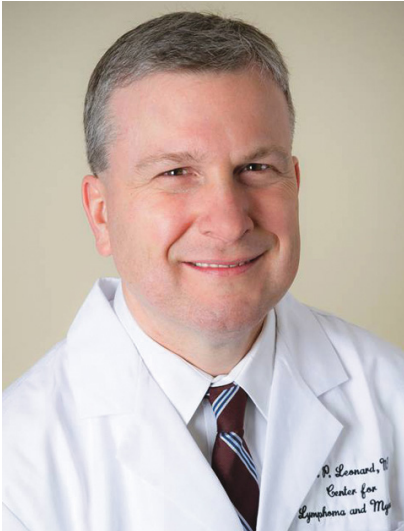
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Message from Leadership



John P. Leonard, M.D.

**Senior Associate Dean for
Innovation and Initiatives**

Welcome to Enterprise Innovation's inaugural Annual Report highlighting FY2023 activities and achievements. In 2021, Weill Cornell Medicine formally launched Enterprise Innovation to integrate the many innovation and entrepreneurship resources at the institution under one unified umbrella. Our mission is to accelerate the best of biomedical innovation to market and translate groundbreaking research into revolutionary care through collaboration.

Our team of dedicated business development professionals and other domain experts guides Weill Cornell Medicine innovators by nurturing their discoveries into patentable technologies with commercial potential. We also develop intellectual property protection strategies and secure commercial development partners across all technology verticals including therapeutics, diagnostics, medical devices and a growing digital health/AI portfolio.

In the past year, we offered virtual office hours, workshops and webinars that addressed not only the basics of commercialization, intellectual property protection and entrepreneurship, but also trending topics including healthcare data commercialization, health equity and artificial intelligence. Enterprise Innovation organized conferences that brought thought leaders in biotech and potential investors and partners to campus. In November 2022, we held our sixth annual Symposium on Entrepreneurship and Academic Drug Development, where we celebrated Weill Cornell Medicine faculty/trainee innovators and facilitated conversations on entrepreneurship and industry collaboration.

Enterprise Innovation is always seeking the best talent to further strengthen our team and continues to grow. Since 2021, we've welcomed 11 new members who brought their expertise and experience across many areas including business development, academic collaborations, intellectual property strategy, operations and communications. We hope you will look inside this report to get to know our expanded team of experts and connect with us.

To engage more effectively and efficiently with all our stakeholders, Enterprise Innovation launched a comprehensive **website** that offers a central point of entry for everything related to innovation at Weill Cornell Medicine. Whether you are a Weill Cornell Medicine innovator or an industry partner, you can learn about programs, resources, collaboration opportunities, available technologies, and the latest news and events on our website. In addition, we initiated a quarterly newsletter and a **social media** presence to connect directly with our target audiences.

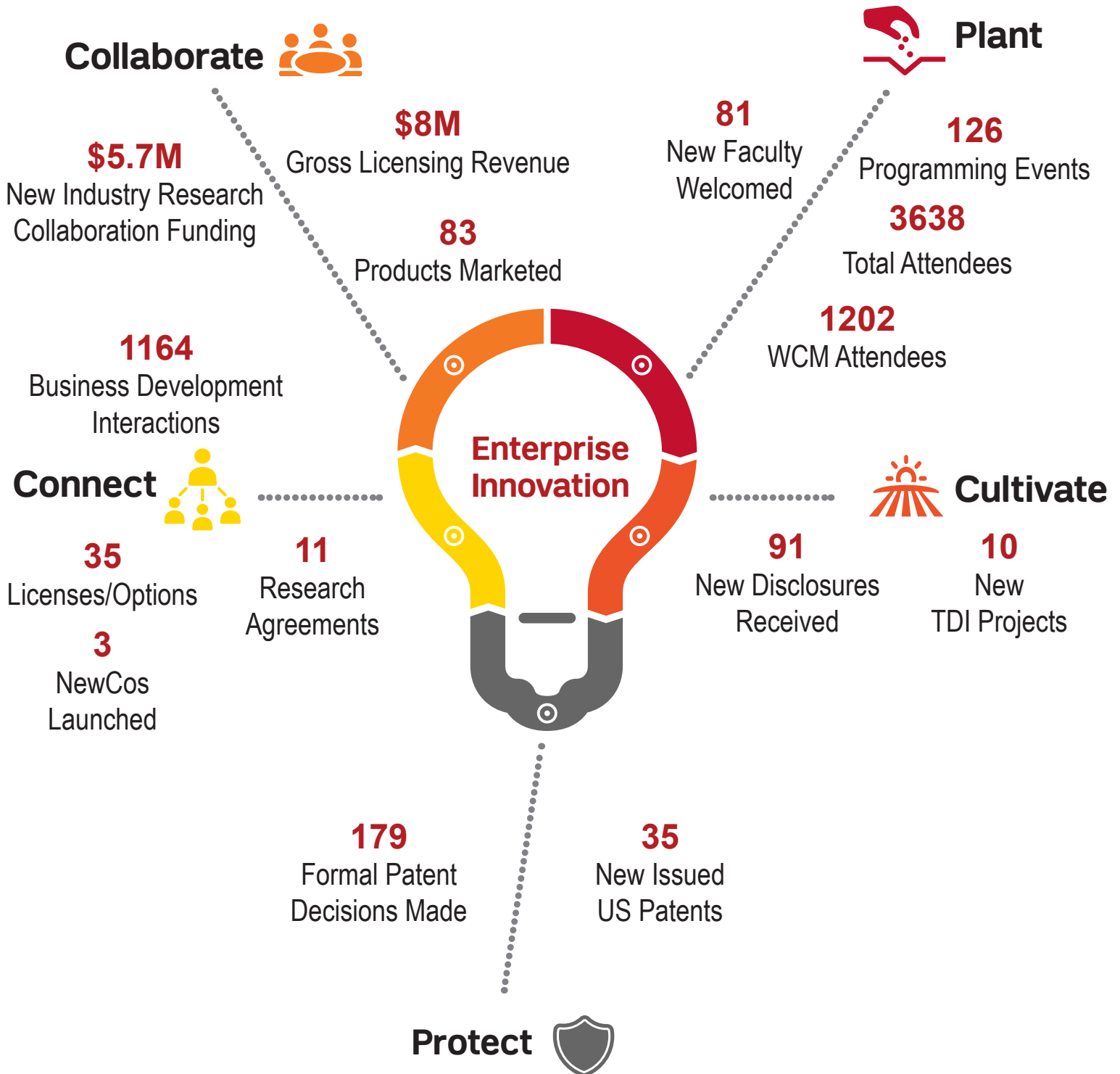
There is a lot happening at Enterprise Innovation, and we are on a positive trajectory. We couldn't have accomplished all this without the support of our Dean's Office and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation (OVPRI) at Cornell University. We look forward to taking this entity to the next stage of its evolution and collaborating more closely with key players in the Cornell entrepreneurial ecosystem under the leadership of our new dean, **Dr. Robert Harrington** and Dr. Krystyn Van Vliet, Vice President for Research and Innovation.



Lisa Placanica, Ph.D., CLP

**Senior Managing Director
Center for Technology Licensing
at Weill Cornell Medicine**

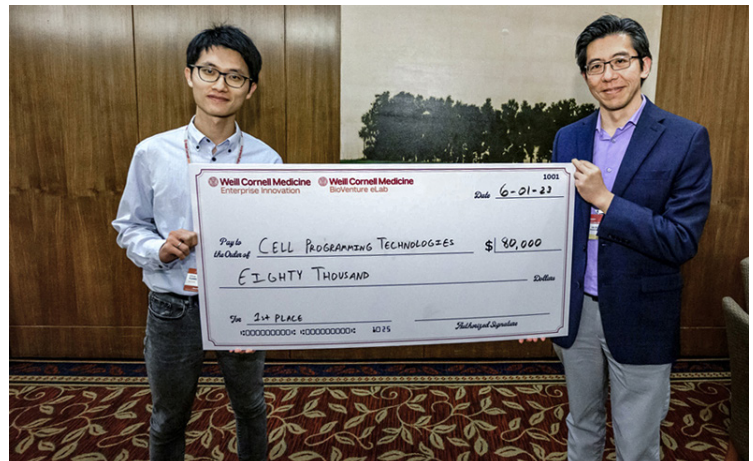
Enterprise Innovation FY2023 By the Numbers



Planting Seeds



Enterprise Innovation fosters an innovative and entrepreneurial culture at Weill Cornell through programming, education, and faculty/trainee engagement and mentorship.



We created experiential courses that introduce faculty/trainees to the concepts of intellectual property, technology transfer, business development and startup formation, venture capital and consulting. These courses allow faculty/trainees to explore the possibilities of bridging their academic training with industry and to view their own research efforts with a commercial translation lens.

In FY23, the **Fundamentals of Academic Business Development** Course, which is open to Weill Cornell graduate students, enrolled 11 participants. The **Accelerating BioVenture Innovation (ABI)** course, geared toward both graduate students and postdoctoral researchers, attracted 78 participants who formed 13 teams to develop business plans around patent-pending institutional technologies. The **Biomedical Business Plan Challenge**, a version for faculty, enrolled 25 participants.



Cultivating Innovations

Two Teams of Innovators Won Prizes at the BioVenture eLab \$100K Biomedical Business Plan Challenge Pitch Day Competition

This intense, hands-on program works directly with entrepreneurial scientists to develop business plans around their Cornell-patented intellectual property. The program culminates in a final pitch competition with venture capitalist judges who award up to \$100K in cash prizes to the winning teams. The 2023 Business Plan Challenge was enhanced by providing faculty and trainee participants with access to seven industry and academic lecturers, 27 industry mentors, six industry judges and six venture capitalist judges.

In June, participants pitched their business plans in teams to a panel of biomedical venture investors. The presentations exemplified the diverse innovations fostered by Weill Cornell Medicine, from utilizing microRNA technology to treat obesity and high cholesterol, to harnessing novel small molecules to treat metabolic diseases and cancer.

Dr. Joe Zhou, an associate professor in regenerative medicine in medicine, and postdoctoral fellow **Dr. Xiaofeng Steve Huang** won first place, which came with \$80,000 for research and development. Dr. Zhou's innovation was a cell therapy that creates insulin-producing pancreatic islet-like cell clusters, or organoids, that derive from an individual's own stomach cells to treat diabetes. In pre-clinical studies, transplantation of these human organoids stabilized blood sugar for as long as the grafts were in place. This cell therapy approach has the potential to eliminate constant glucose monitoring and insulin injection and, by providing precise dosing, may reduce the risk of debilitating long-term complications brought on by diabetes. EpiStemyx, led by **Dr. Steven Josefowicz**, an associate professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, and **Dr. Franck Barrat**, a professor of microbiology and immunology and a senior scientist at Hospital for Special Surgery, won the second-place prize of \$20,000. EpiStemyx plans to create a platform to isolate and characterize rare circulating blood stem cells from a regular blood draw. Dr. Josefowicz and Dr. Barrat planned to generate a blood stem cell atlas to map changes in blood cell production and in a type of gene regulation called epigenetics in stem cells in health and disease.

Three PIs Awarded Selma and Lawrence Ruben Science to Industry Bridge Fund for Early-Stage Projects

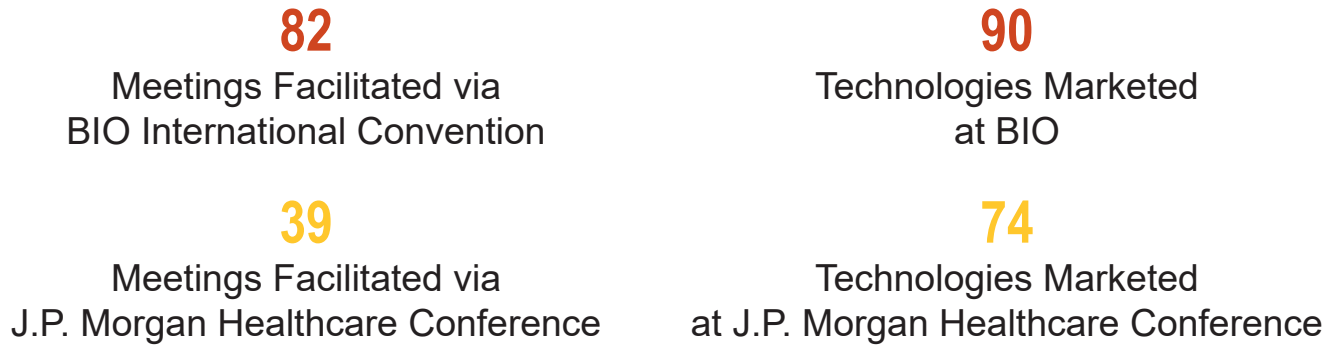
Three PIs with experience translating their discoveries and innovations into potential new therapies or devices for unmet medical needs were recipients of the Selma and Lawrence Ruben Science to Industry Bridge Fund. **Dr. Ronald Crystal**, chair of the Department of Genetic Medicine and the Bruce Webster Professor of Internal Medicine, and **Dr. Jason Spector**, chief of the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, are developing a novel, potent, single-administration gene therapy to enhance the survival of fat transplants. **Dr. Sallie Permar**, chair of the Department of Pediatrics and the Nancy C. Paduano Professor in Pediatrics, is developing a viral Fc Receptor Targeting Vaccines for Prevention of Congenital Cytomegalovirus (CMV). Organized under the Daedalus Fund for Innovation, the Selma and Lawrence Ruben Science to Industry Bridge Fund provides funding to span the development gap between promising research ideas and partnership with industry to develop clinical treatments. The Selma and Lawrence Ruben Science to Industry Bridge Fund was established by longstanding benefactors Lenore Ruben, Board of Fellows member Richard and wife Amy Ruben, and Shelly and Dr. Howard Kivell, in honor of their parents, the late Selma and Lawrence Ruben.

Cultivating Innovations

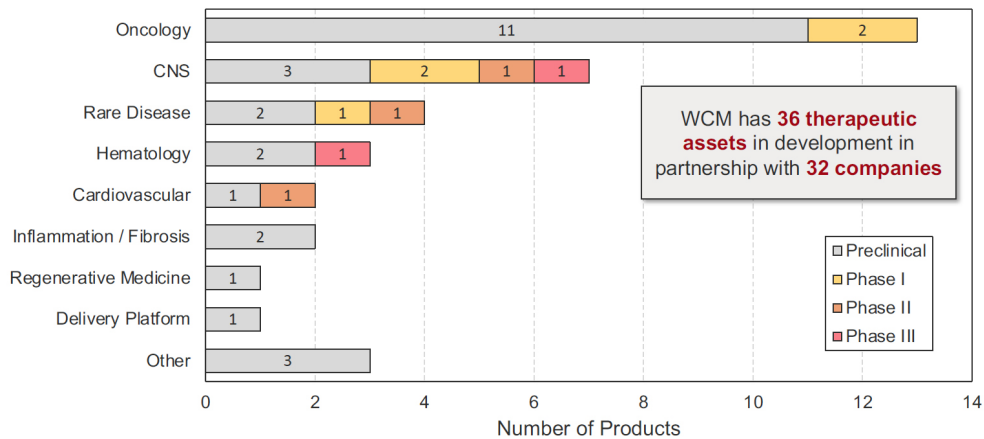
Enterprise Innovation proactively seeks collaboration opportunities and diligently markets our robust pipeline of therapeutics and products to accelerate the commercialization of Weill Cornell innovations.

Last year, we engaged with **610** unique commercial entities in our outreach efforts, initiated **48** license/option negotiations and marketed **215** technologies through multiple platforms.

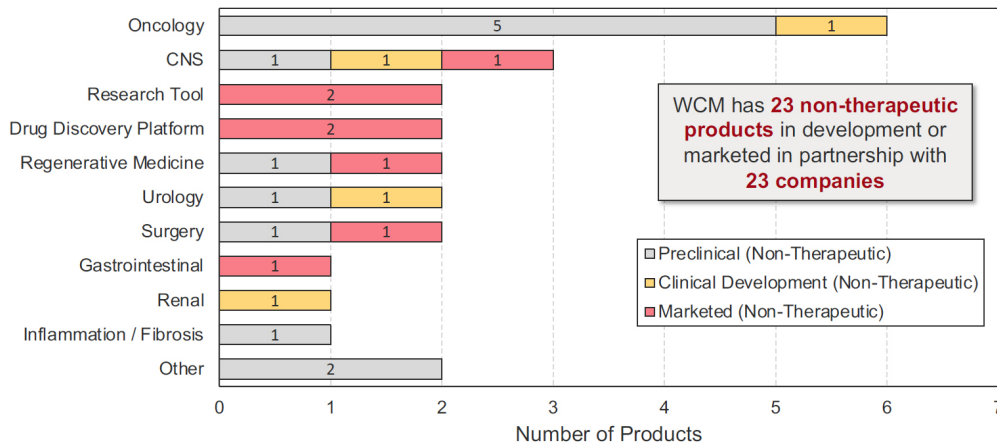
EI also showcased our innovations at major partnering conferences:



WCM Partnered Pipeline: Therapeutics



WCM Partnered Pipeline: Non-Therapeutics



Launching NewCos

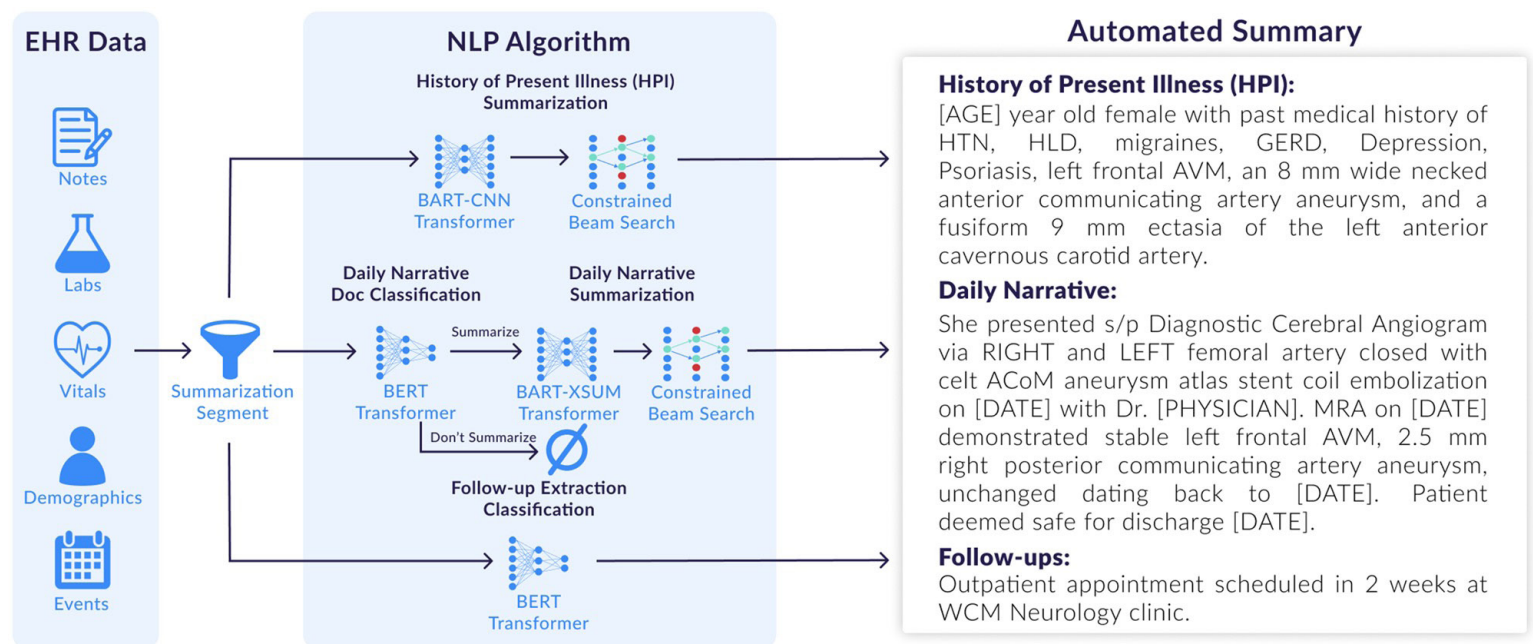
Nurturing and launching new ventures is a key component of Enterprise Innovation's business development strategies. As of FY2023, we have 44 active startups that raised \$1.5 billion in equity investment cumulatively. We welcomed these three newcos to the Weill Cornell new venture family in FY2023.

Abstractive Health

Launched in August 2022, **Abstractive Health** uses novel natural language processing (NLP) approach and machine learning to summarize clinical notes and improve health care. This platform condenses hundreds of pages of medical notes into key sentences and alerts clinicians of follow-ups, which helps clinicians find important information quickly and saves them 1-2 hours per day through automating health note documentation.

Abstractive Health is a success story of Enterprise Innovation's initiative to collaborate with the Cornell Tech master's degree program. Vince Hartman, co-founder and CEO, was a graduate student at Cornell Tech when he met his co-founders. They developed and trained their algorithm on real data under a collaborative data access agreement with Weill Cornell Medicine. The Center for Technology Licensing (CTL) was conducive to establishing this agreement and connecting Abstractive Health to resources within the Cornell innovation ecosystem.

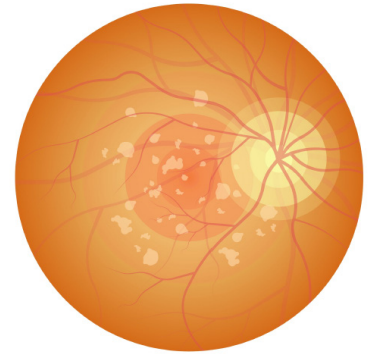
In June 2022, the company won a \$100,000 investment award from Cornell Tech and began a pilot with NewYork-Presbyterian in September 2022. They then secured a second paid pilot with the Department of Health of Abu Dhabi. In March 2023, Abstractive Health was awarded **Ignite Startup Projects** funding for a 12-month period to support the engineering and deployment of its platform. They were also selected for an Ignite Intern award, for which CTL paid a Cornell student to work during summertime at Abstractive Health.



Launching NewCos

EIR Biopharma, Inc. is an early-stage privately held biotech company developing therapeutics for the treatment of eye disease. **Dr. Marcelo Mario Nociari**, assistant professor of immunology in ophthalmology, is a co-founder of this startup. The company is focused on developing therapeutic candidates to treat the atrophic (“Dry”) form of age-related macular degeneration (AMD), for which there is no currently available treatment. These candidate compounds are a result of Dr. Nociari’s research on the development of drugs useful for the modulation of lipofuscin bisretinoid clearance in the retina and the control of chronic inflammation for the treatment of the dry form of AMD.

“DRY” MACULAR DEGENERATION



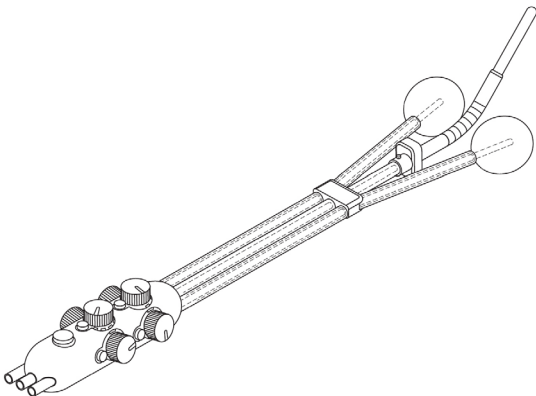
UNUSUALLY FUZZY OR DISTORTED VISION

Our business development expert from Center for Technology Licensing guided Dr. Nociari on the formulation of company concept and obtaining a worldwide exclusive license agreement granting EIR Biopharma rights to certain compounds for the treatment of the dry form of AMD. CTL also facilitated the partnership between EIR Biopharma and its President & CFO, CSO, Martin Schroeder, who is an executive seasoned in managing and creating biotechnology, pharmaceutical and biopharma companies.

Mission-Driven Tech

Enterprise Innovation has had a significant impact on the formation of Mission-Driven Tech. With a vision to change the delivery of brachytherapy, founders Dr. Onyinye Balogun, assistant professor of clinical radiation oncology, and her former patient, Eve McDavid, joined the 2022 Biomedical Business Plan Challenge accelerator run by BioVenture eLab. They worked with an Entrepreneur-in-Residence on early product designs and were supported by industry mentors who helped in the development of a business plan. After winning \$25,000 in prize money, Mission-Driven Tech was referred to legal, banking and engineering firms who could advance the company’s next steps in product development and company formation. Later, their CTL representative championed Mission-Driven Tech in obtaining a \$50,000 SAFE (simple agreement for future equity) from the Ignite Startup Program, and the startup became affiliated with the Runway Program on Cornell Tech’s campus.

Thereafter, the founders participated in Women Founders Initiative to enhance their entrepreneurial and leadership skills. The company was provided with free consulting services from a Cornell eMBA/MS in Healthcare Leadership Capstone Team, which performed customer discovery and industry research on the brachytherapy market. Most recently, Mission-Driven Tech was referred for follow-on consulting services, this time through BioVenture elab’s relationship with the Master’s Program in Biotechnology Management and Entrepreneurship at Yeshiva University. The founders continue to utilize cross-campus resources to explore a variety of government grant and fundraising programs. Mission-Driven Tech represents the many ways in which Enterprise Innovation can nurture and broaden the opportunity set for Weill Cornell startups.



AcuamarkDx

Acuamark Diagnostics (“AcuamarkDx”) announced the closing of an \$11.3 million Series A round in July 2022. The round was led by the office of Claudio Del Vecchio and the Del Vecchio Family Foundation, and it was joined by Bruker Corporation as a new investor in AcuamarkDx. AcuamarkDx, co-founded by **Dr. Francis Barany**, professor of microbiology and immunology, is a molecular diagnostics company that develops ultra-sensitive, automatable technology, designed for both more reliable and more cost-effective early-cancer detection.



Convergent Therapeutics Inc., announces \$90 million Series A financing to advance clinical development of radiopharmaceuticals for solid tumors. Convergent is a clinical-stage biotechnology company focused on developing next-generation radiopharmaceutical therapies for prostate and other cancers co-founded by **Dr. Neil Bander**, professor emeritus of urology. Dr. Bander also serves as its chief scientific advisor.



Ratio Therapeutics Inc., a pharmaceutical company specializing in the development of targeted radiotherapeutics for the treatment of cancer, announced the close of its Series A financing extension in February 2023, bringing the total financing to more than \$40 million since its 2022 launch.

Co-founded by **Dr. John Babich**, professor of radiopharmaceutical sciences in radiology, Ratio emerged in June of 2022 with over \$20 million in seed financing while engaged in fully funded development alliances with Bayer and Lantheus Holdings Inc.

Startup News



Bionic Sight, a startup based on a discovery by **Dr. Sheila Nirenberg**, the Nanette Laitman Professor of Neurology and Neuroscience and a professor of physiology and biophysics, reports meaningful vision improvements for retinitis pigmentosa (RP) patients receiving its optogenetic therapy in a Phase 1/2 Trial.



LEXEO Therapeutics (LEXEO), a clinical-stage biotechnology company advancing a pipeline of adeno-associated virus (AAV)-based gene therapy candidates for genetically defined cardiovascular and central nervous system (CNS) diseases, announced in October 2022 that the European Commission has granted Orphan Drug Designation to LX1004 for the treatment of CLN2 Batten disease.

CLN2 Batten disease is a fatal autosomal recessive lysosomal storage disease caused by a mutation in the CLN2 gene, which results in cognitive impairment, blindness, seizures and loss of motor function and leads to death at a young age. Part of LEXEO's foundational science stems from partnerships and exclusive licenses with Weill Cornell Medicine, specifically the gene therapy technologies developed by **Dr. Ronald Crystal**, chair of Genetic Medicine, who also founded LEXEO and serves as chief scientific adviser.



Volastra Therapeutics announced on March 7, 2023 the completion of the in-license of Amgen's sovilnesib (AMG650), an oral, first-in-class small molecule inhibitor of KIF18A. In parallel, the company closed a \$60 million Series A financing to further advance its cancer-focused pipeline. Volastra is a clinical-stage drug discovery company pioneering novel approaches to cancer treatment by exploiting a unique tumor vulnerability known as chromosomal instability (CIN). **Dr. Olivier Elemento**, director of the Englander Institute for Precision Medicine and **Dr. Samuel Bakhoun**, assistant attending physician, Department of Radiation Oncology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK), were co-founders of this startup.

Connecting Innovators



Startup Symposium & InvestConnect Conference

This spring event is one of the myriad entrepreneurship programs offered by the BioVenture eLab. Its goal is to attract local and national investors, industry representatives, service providers and ecosystem partners to Weill Cornell Medicine for a full day of presentations, panels, one-on-one meetings and networking.

Last year's symposium featured a fireside chat with Dr. Behzad Aghazadeh, Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences alumnus, whose professional ambition carried him to different continents, scientific disciplines and career focuses. Dr. Aghazadeh pointed out the often-overlooked similarities between academic science and entrepreneurial careers. Enterprise Innovation's own Entrepreneurs-in-Residence (EiRs) encouraged academic investigators to consider them as a bridge to investors and take full advantage of the advice EiRs can offer while forming their startups.

Dr. Jason Spector, chief of Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, presented on the discovery that led to his successful startup formation and the diverse talents needed during that process. His company Fesarius Therapeutics, Inc. is working toward FDA approval of its DermiSphere™ tissue regeneration product.



Nearly 200 attendees participated in the conference either onsite or virtually. Thirty-two NewCos/spinouts and 44 investor representatives were present, and over 75 meetings between Weill Cornell Medicine investigators and investors were enabled through this platform. Two startups reached term sheet stage with investors.

Connecting Innovators



Sixth Annual Symposium on Entrepreneurship and Academic Drug Development



Last fall, in collaboration with the Dean's Office, Enterprise Innovation co-hosted the **Sixth Annual Symposium on Entrepreneurship and Academic Drug Development** in hybrid format, welcoming members of Weill Cornell Medicine and the biomedical communities back in person for this celebration of innovation and entrepreneurship at Weill Cornell. Dr. George Church, a world-renowned professor of genetics at Harvard Medical School and serial entrepreneur, delivered a keynote address about his lab's recent work and showcased many of the commercial and scientific possibilities of DNA technology.

A three-person panel comprising a Weill Cornell clinician, researcher and alumnus shared their journey to commercialize technologies that arose from their research and clinical experiences. The panelists emphasized the importance of data collection, accessing the wealth of

knowledge that Enterprise Innovation business development professionals offer and the resources within Weill Cornell's innovation ecosystem to bring their discoveries to the health care marketplace. Aspiring faculty and trainees got a chance to network with more experienced colleagues at the end of the symposium.



Innovator Awards and Recognition

National Academy of Inventors Fellow as of FY2023

The National Academy of Inventors Fellows Program is the highest distinction honoring academic inventors for creating outstanding innovations that have made a measurable impact on quality of life, economic development and the welfare of society.

Dr. Ronald Crystal	Chair of Genetic Medicine (2021)
Dr. Francis Barany	Professor of Microbiology and Immunology (2016)
Dr. Lewis Cantley	Former Sandra and Edward Meyer Cancer Center Director (2019)

Congratulations to These PIs and Their Co-Inventors Whose Technologies Were Issued Patents

Dr. David Lyden	Professor of Pediatrics
Dr. Rache Simmons	Professor of Surgery
Dr. Sheila Nirenberg	Professor of Physiology and Biophysics
Dr. Jeremy Wiygul	Assistant Professor of Clinical Urology
Dr. Samie Jaffrey	Professor of Pharmacology
Dr. Olivier Elemento	Director of the Englander Institute for Precision Medicine
Dr. Francis Barany	Professor of Microbiology and Immunology
Dr. Shuibing Chen	Professor of Chemical Biology in Surgery
Dr. Todd Evans	Professor of Cell and Developmental Biology in Surgery
Dr. Neil Bander	Professor Emeritus of Urology
Dr. John Babich	Professor of Radiopharmaceutical Sciences in Radiology

Innovator Awards and Recognition

Dr. Roger Hartl	Professor of Neurological Surgery
Dr. Randi Silver	Associate Dean, Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences
Dr. Anthony Sauve	(deceased)
Dr. Simon Scheuring	Professor of Physiology and Biophysics in Anesthesiology
Dr. Justin Wilson	Associate Professor of Chemistry in Radiology
Dr. Benedict Law	Associate Professor of Pharmacology in Radiology
Dr. Lawrence Bonassar	Professor in Biomedical Engineering, Cornell University
Dr. Gang Lin	Associate Professor of Research in Microbiology and Immunology
Dr. Moonsoo Jin	Professor of Biomedical Engineering in Radiology
Dr. Yi Wang	Professor of Physics in Radiology
Dr. Jonathan Zippin	Associate Professor of Dermatology
Dr. Peter Goldstein	Professor of Anesthesiology

**Unless otherwise specified, all faculty appointments are at Weill Cornell Medicine.*



In Memorium

Anthony A. Sauve, Ph.D.

In September 2022, the WCM community mourned the untimely passing of Professor Anthony A. Sauve – a brilliant scientist, a wonderful colleague and a dedicated educator who made innumerable contributions to Weill Cornell Medicine.

He is remembered by his Enterprise Innovation colleagues as an innovator and successful entrepreneur. Professor Sauve's pioneering discoveries in ADP-ribosyl-transferases, the biochemical principles of NAD⁺ activation, biochemical reaction mechanisms and the regulation of enzyme activity have led to his technology being licensed to ChromaDex, Inc., a global bioscience company dedicated to the research of healthy aging. Professor Sauve also co-founded Metro International Biotech, LLC, a clinical-stage pharmaceutical company that has established the most comprehensive portfolio of proprietary NAD⁺ precursors in the world and is revolutionizing the use of NAD⁺ pharmaceutical to change the way we live and age. The company is expected to enter clinical trials in 2023 with their lead drug candidate developed by Professor Sauve and targeting mitochondrial disease.



Meet Our Team

Business Development, Licensing and Entrepreneurial Programming

Lisa Placanica, Ph.D., CLP **Senior Managing Director**



Lisa is responsible for overseeing activities in technology management, marketing, licensing and outreach to support Weill Cornell's goals in commercializing technologies, promoting startups and building alliances.

Prior to joining Weill Cornell Medicine in 2020, Lisa held the position of managing director, Business Development and Licensing at Mount Sinai Innovation Partners. In this role, she was responsible for managing a team of business development professionals focused on identifying, advancing and partnering therapeutic technologies developed at the Mount Sinai Health System and acted as deal team lead for closing complex intellectual property transactions.

Iris Bica **Business Development and Licensing Associate**



Iris joined the team in 2022. In her role, she assists the CTL team with identifying, assessing and marketing their portfolio of life science technologies. Iris gained experience in business development and technology transfer at Tulane University's Office of Intellectual Property Management and at CancerTools.org, the reagent arm of Cancer Research UK.

Jamie Brisbois, Ph.D. **Manager, Business Development and Licensing**



Jamie partners with innovators from the departments of Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology, and Pharmacology. In addition, he runs the Fundamentals of Academic Business Development course, which offers graduate students hands-on experience in innovation management and academic business development.

Prior to joining the team in 2021, Jamie worked as a consultant with ClearView Healthcare Partners, a boutique health care consulting firm based in Boston. In addition, he served three years as a fellow with Columbia Technology Ventures (CTV), the technology transfer office of Columbia University.

Eric Bryant, M.S., J.D.
Intellectual Property Officer



Eric works closely with our business development and licensing team to execute on intellectual property strategy, review submitted invention disclosures, and manages domestic and foreign patent filings and patent prosecution.

Prior to joining EI, Eric practiced as an intellectual property attorney and as in-house IP counsel managing health care-focused IP portfolios. He also worked as a patent examiner at the USPTO. His expertise encompasses a variety of technologies including, but not limited to, diagnostics tools and methods, pharmaceuticals, controlled release therapeutic devices, respiratory devices, surgical tools, biological technologies and nanotechnology.

Loren A. Busby, CFA
Director



Loren is a veteran of the New York City venture capital ecosystem. Life sciences and digital technology were central themes in her 20+ year career at three early-stage venture capital funds. Over the years, Loren has served as venture investor and operator in numerous academic spinouts and health care-related companies. She delivers lectures and programming at Weill Cornell Medicine and other Cornell University schools and neighboring academic institutions. As the director of BioVenture eLab, Loren develops entrepreneurial programming for EI. She also mentors researchers and clinicians on startup formation, fundraising and team-building.

Krista Fretes
Operations Associate



Krista works directly with faculty, students and researchers by providing training and resources to help them commercialize their ideas. She helps with event programming/ marketing and facilitates relationships between the BioVenture eLab, Tri-Institutional (Weill Cornell Medicine, The Rockefeller University, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center) entrepreneurial community, eLab's mentor network, and eLab's ecosystem partners.

Krista founded Gentroma Inc. (formerly Centragen), a company that develops an innovative graphene-based DNA/RNA sequencing nanodevice, as a New York University spinout in 2017.



Ivan Gando, Ph.D.

Business Development and Licensing Associate

Ivan supports EI's technology commercialization efforts. Prior to joining the team, he gained experience in technology transfer by participating in the Mount Sinai Innovation Partners internship program as a business development fellow, where he completed didactic coursework on academic technology transfer and then, as a selected participant, gained immersive, hands-on experience.



Jill Gold, J.D.

Director of Transactions

Jill manages and negotiates complex research collaboration agreements with industry on behalf of Weill Cornell Medicine faculty to facilitate research in the lab.

Prior to joining Weill Cornell Medicine, she spent 19 years at NYU Langone Health in the Office of Industrial Liaison working with faculty and senior leadership through all phases of technology transfer including negotiating research and license agreements with industry as well as research related agreements with not-for-profit organizations.



Jeffrey Anson James, Ph.D.

Associate Director, Business Development and Licensing

Jeff partners with innovators from the Weill Department of Medicine and the departments of Anesthesiology, Neurology and Psychiatry, as well as the Feil Family Brain and Mind Research Institute, the Weill Center for Metabolic Health, and the Sandra and Edward Meyer Cancer Center.

He has over 15 years of experience helping academic institutions to commercialize their early-stage inventions. He was associate director for licensing at the Penn Center for Innovation, University of Pennsylvania, where he managed commercialization activities in the life science space. He has also held positions as licensing manager at both the University of Virginia and Johns Hopkins University.

Brian Kelly, Ph.D., CLP

Director, Business Development and Licensing



Brian partners with innovators from the departments of Dermatology, Genetic Medicine and Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, as well as the Jill Roberts Institute for Research in Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

Prior to joining EI, he served as director of intellectual property for New York University's tech transfer office. He has also held positions at the University of Minnesota as a licensing associate, Heide, Hyde & O'Donnell as an associate European patent attorney and Smith, Kline & French as a research chemist.

Donna J. Rounds, Ph.D.

Associate Director, Business Development and Licensing



Donna partners with innovators from the departments of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Emergency Medicine, Neurological Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Otolaryngology (Head and Neck Surgery), Population Health Sciences, Radiation Oncology, Radiology, Rehabilitation Medicine, Surgery and Urology, as well as the Ronald O. Perelman and Claudia Cohen Center for Reproductive Medicine and the Cardiovascular Research Institute.

Donna has over 25 years of experience building value in early-stage life science technologies—from sourcing emergent technologies to developing strategies for commercialization. She specializes in managing complex scientific and business relationships and leveraging the synergy of cross-functional teams in due diligence and technology assessments, prototype development and proof-of-concept studies. She has a strong track record of successful outcomes through negotiation and transactions for licensing, startup formation, sponsored research and the creation of strategic alliances in pharma, biotech and academia.

Louise Sarup, Ph.D.

Associate Director, Business Development and Licensing



Louise partners with innovators from the departments of Cell and Developmental Biology, Ophthalmology, Pediatrics, and Physiology and Biophysics. She also supports the Ansary Stem Cell Institute and Hartman Institute for Regenerative Medicine, as well as some faculty from the Feil Family Brain and Mind Research Institute and the Department of Radiology.

Prior to joining EI, Louise was head of business development and licensing for D3 (now EDDC), a drug discovery and development group based at A*STAR. Some of her previous roles include corporate development manager at S*BIO Pte Ltd., an oncology-focused biotech, VP of Business Development at Paramount Biosciences (London), where she was responsible for in-licensing drug development assets and director (licensing) at Cytiva, a global life science company.



Jessica Tabankin
Director of Operations and Portfolio Management

Jessica manages the portfolio of collaborations with industry including contract compliance, accounting and financial operations. Prior to joining Weill Cornell Medicine, she spent 18 years at NYU Langone Health in the Office of Industrial Liaison. She also worked at Darby & Darby, P.C., an intellectual property law firm for five years.



Bruce Toman
Technology Transactions Associate and MTA Coordinator

Bruce started working at CTL at Weill Cornell in 2000 and managed a portfolio of therapeutics, diagnostics, devices, medical imaging methods and research tools, mostly in neurology, before leaving to join a startup in 2016. He later returned to EI as a consultant. Bruce currently works on a diverse range of projects for the licensing professionals and handles outgoing MTAs.

Mina W. Zion, J.D.
Associate Director for Innovation and Commercialization
Weill Cornell Medicine – Qatar



Mina partners with research faculty across Weill Cornell Medicine's location in Qatar (WCM-Q) with the mission of broadening external research impact in Genomics, Proteomics, RNA, Imaging and Metabolomics. In his role, Mina oversees the research enterprise in Doha by leading external research alliances with global partners across North America, Middle East and North Africa and the EU.

He is experienced in identifying and negotiating a portfolio of licensing, partnership and manufacturing agreements, in addition to leading corporate fundraising and overseeing multiple c-suite and board appointments.

The Administrative Team



Annie Cheng
Office Manager

Annie manages activities related to the office's daily operations. Additionally, she handles attorney invoices and patent reports. She also works closely with our inventors and innovators to complete formal papers.



Brenda J. DeWitt
Administrative Assistant

Brenda supports the team with all administrative tasks, including office operations and procedures, scheduling and correspondence. Previously, she worked at Weill Cornell Medicine as an administrative assistant in the Department of Surgery's Division of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery.



Qian Hua Ge, M.A.
Communications Specialist

Qian is dedicated to supporting Enterprise Innovation communication and branding needs. In this role, she works closely with different Enterprise Innovation teams to harmonize, integrate and amplify communications about the innovation ecosystem and oversees the Weill Cornell Medicine Enterprise Innovation website and social media channel.



Deanna Scarcella
Administrative Assistant

Deanna provides administrative assistance for research alliances and collaborations between Weill Cornell investigators and the biopharma industry. In this position, she supports organizational success through the management of daily operations, including meeting coordination and assisting with the preparation of various documents.



Weill Cornell Medicine

Enterprise Innovation