

Commercializing a Cancer Microfluidic Biochip – My Experience as an Academic Entrepreneur

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Abstract

The roles and responsibilities of a professor are many and these include teaching, research and service. Yet to some, the desire to translate what they do in the lab into useful products that will be sold in the market has led to what we called "Academic Entrepreneurship". However, this raises the question, "Is it possible for an academic to break out of the ivory tower into the market without really leaving?" Here, I will share with the audience my own experience of how I commercialize the technologies developed in my lab as well as how I manage my role as an academic and entrepreneur. In particular, I will share my experience on my ongoing journey in bringing a cancer microfluidic biochip developed in our lab from bench to bedside and market through our university startup, Clearbridge Biomedics. I will also share about the successes and failures that I have experienced and some of the important and life-altering lessons learnt.

Biography

Prof Lim is a Provost's Chair Professor at the Department of Biomedical Engineering and a Principal Investigator of the Mechanobiology Institute at the National University of Singapore. His research interests include biomechanics of human diseases and the development of microfluidic technology for disease detection and diagnosis. Prof Lim has authored more than 275 peer-reviewed papers and delivered more than 280 invited talks. He is currently on the editorial boards of 14 international journals. He co-founded four startups and a technology incubator. Prof Lim and his team have won more than 50 research awards and honours including the Zworykin Award 2015, University's Outstanding Researcher Award and Outstanding Innovator Award in 2014, Credit Suisse Technopreneur of the Year Award, Wall Street Journal Asian Innovation Award (Gold), Asian Entrepreneurship Award (First Prize) in 2012, President's Technology Award the TechVenture Rising Star Innovator Award in 2011 and the IES Prestigious Engineering Achievement Award in 2010. His research was cited by the MIT Technology Review magazine as one of the top ten emerging technologies of 2006 that will "have a significant impact on business, medicine or culture".