

Science & Technology Accelerator Program FAQ

In May 2012, the American Heart Association formally announced the first innovation to be funded by its Science & Technology Accelerator Program. This marks a significant step forward in achieving our mission as the Accelerator Program will speed innovations to market that will help build healthier lives free of cardiovascular disease and stroke. But the program may also raise concerns including the American Heart Association's role as an investor, income generated from the investments, and whether the investments will influence our scientific guidelines. This document is intended to address these, and other, concerns.

What is the Science & Technology Accelerator Program?

It is an initiative created by the American Heart Association to bring together scientific innovators with investors and clinical development experts who can quickly move revolutionary, potentially life-saving, advances to the market, where they can directly impact outcomes in line with the American Heart Association's mission and its 2020 goals. It was created in 2010 with a \$1 million donation.

Why is the Science & Technology Accelerator program important?

Heart disease and stroke are the No.1 and No. 4 causes of death in the United States. Someone has a coronary event every 25 seconds, and someone has a stroke every 40 seconds. Scientists are working to develop treatments, but research funding in the U.S. is declining. Many potentially life-saving innovations or treatments often fall into the "Valley of Death" — the funding void between the early stages of research and the point when private sources of funding perceive the risk low enough and return high enough to propel such innovations to the market. The Science & Technology Accelerator Program is designed to bridge that gap by assisting with development, from lab validation through successful proof of concept, where innovations can be handed off to private funding sources to propel them the rest of the way to patients and healthcare providers.

How is it funded?

All investment money comes from donors whose gifts are designated specifically for the Science & Technology Accelerator. All revenue generated through the program is reinvested to propel more innovations to market. Thus, a single donation becomes a "gift that keeps on giving."

Will donations through Heart Walk and other American heart Association fundraising events go toward the Science & Technology Accelerator?

No. Donations collected for the American Heart Association's general operating budget will not fund the Science & Technology Accelerator, which is an independently operating subsidiary of the American heart Association. The Accelerator is funded solely by philanthropic gifts restricted to the program.

How are investments selected?

Candidates for investment are gathered from many sources. Innovations undergo screening by American Heart Association volunteer experts for their scientific and commercial potential. Those innovations surviving screening are then subjected to full due diligence review and presented to the Science & Technology Accelerator Committee. This committee, comprised of volunteer experts from multiple disciplines, then selects those innovations to receive investment funding.