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January 7, 2019

RE: RFI Response: ROI Green Paper

Dear NIST Administrator:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the December 2018 Draft Green Paper, "Return on Investment Initiative for Unleashing American Innovation" (NIST Special Publication 1234).

I currently serve as the Director of the Center for Military Medicine Research (CMMR) at the University of Pittsburgh. CMMR carries out research in regenerative medicine, reconstructive surgery, tissue engineering, and acute lung injury in support of the Department of Defense and Veterans Administration missions. At CMMR, we have established a successful network of partnerships and collaborations among scientists, clinicians, industry, the DoD and VA. Before coming to Pitt, I was on active duty in the U.S. Army for 30 years with extended assignments at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, MD and at the US Army Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC), Fort Detrick, MD where I served as the Deputy Director of the Telemedicine and Advanced Technology Research Center (TATRC) from 2006-2012. There I managed large medical research programs and developed novel research programs and technologies in medical informatics and telemedicine. I am acutely interested in issues raised in the Green Paper, since I understand how essential the successful translation of medical technology from lab to market is if research is to impact mission. I offer the following two comments, which I believe can make implementation of the Green Paper's recommendations more effective.

[1] Regarding the intended action for technology maturation funding (Strategy 2.D), I echo the previous respondents concerns about ensuring that adequate funding is available to support the transition of the basic science and technology research efforts through advanced development processes that lead to commercial products and solutions. Although the Green Paper provides examples of several agency-specific technology maturation programs (p 65-66), more than modifications to the SBIR/STTR program is required (Intended Action 10). OSTP working with OMB should undertake a more in-depth review of funding mechanisms on an agency-by-agency basis to assess where there are programmatic gaps and make recommendations how resources allocations can be optimized to facilitate commercialization of promising technologies and solutions.

[2] Many of the recommendations in the R&D ROI Green Paper have strong resonance with the work done through the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation (aka, Manufacturing USA). However, success requires more than just policy changes or increased levels of training; active



efforts at coordination are necessary. OSTP and NIST should seek to leverage existing networks built through prior investments in the 17 Manufacturing USA Institutes the successful model promulgated under the Manufacturing USA program. These Institutes are currently sponsored by either DoD or DOE, so other agencies should investigate whether there are appropriate opportunities to bring their programs and performers into those existing Manufacturing USA networks. Where that is not practical, other agencies should look to the Manufacturing USA Institute model for establishing a limited number of high-priority technology transfer networks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Poropatich', written in a cursive style.

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