

Haruka SUZUKI

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## **SPARK Biomedical Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Course 2017,**

### **Report**

I joined and completed a course “Biomedical Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Course 2017” organized SPARK, which is a unique partnership between university and industry experts and is originated from Stanford University in the USA, from 30<sup>th</sup> July to 10<sup>th</sup> August 2017 in the University of Tokyo. This is the summary of the course and the report on it.

#### 1. Introduction

This paper will not mention the detail of SPARK, but it is a kind of program that assist the collaboration between the academia and industry side to accelerate the development and the launch of the medical drug. This course aims at training students to develop skills in design thinking, brainstorming, product development, and commercialization for unmet medical needs and to become more creative, innovative and savvy in translational research in the biomedical sciences. The students were expected to develop a project which could solve one of the existing problem related to human health care over the world in 2 weeks.

#### 2. The contents of the courses

Briefly, the 40% of the whole course was lectures and the 60% was project development. The lectures were conducted in the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup> week mainly, on the other hand, we had some time or all day for the project development almost every day because it was the main goal of the whole course.

We had chances to take the lecture about Intellectual Property, Phase 1 Unit visit & overview of clinical research, Drug development, Medical device development, Regulatory

science, Starting Business, How venture capital works, Business planning and start ups, Technology licensing organization. Each lecture was taught by each specialist or well-experienced person in the field. The lectures by non-Japanese lecturer tended to be more interactive between the lecturers and the students than by Japanese. They started the lecture from simple question or very fundamental topic to make the discussion and conversation active in the classroom. Actually, the contents in the lectures were almost same as I had learned in the class of “Entrepreneurship” by Prof. Harada in the University of Tsukuba. However, there was an expectation. the students were from over the world, Australia, Brazil, Norway, South Korea, Taiwan, the USA, so the some lectures such as regulatory system includes the explanation about their mother countries as well. I did not learn them in the class in Tsukuba, thus that was new knowledge and great to learn for me.

When we learned the intellectual property, we also signed confidentiality contract not to share or leak any information about any projects developed through the course, so I cannot talk about the projects. Some teams were formed by SPARK office with 3-4 students from different background and each team developed a project to meet unmet medical needs or human health related needs over the world. Each team needed to write a planning paper and make a short pitch presentation at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> week and got some feedback from lecturers and the other students. Then, team improved the topic based on the feedback through the 2<sup>nd</sup> week and had to present the final pitch to everyone as “investors” again at the end of the course. Through the development of project, all teams and students could ask some helps to the all lecturers and get new feedback whenever they want to do it and the lecturer is available. For example, when a team wanted to get some comments or helps with building a financial, it could ask the lecturer with business or start up experiences to help them. The lecturers not only were very critical but also were nice and had a strong passion to improve our skills and expand our points of view.

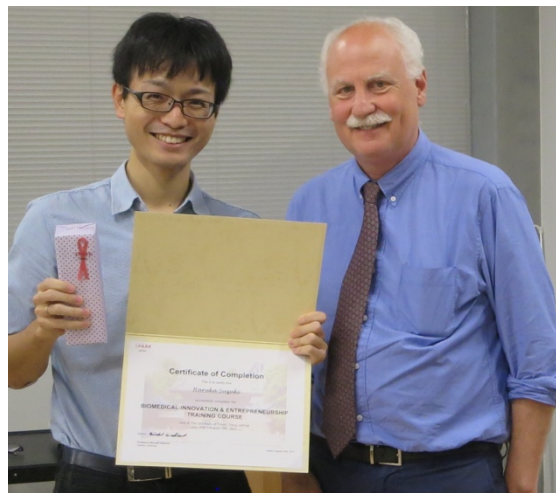
### 3. My reflection of the course

Firstly, I would like to emphasize that the course was amazing and became one of the best incitements ever in terms of my carrier development.

All lecturers were undoubtedly excited at teaching us with their experiences and had strong passions on educations and their own growth. They talked about not only the contents of lectures but also their mindsets, loved to be interactive and listen to what we wanted to say/do, and made their many efforts on developing our skills. That was supreme honor for me to have such a great experience to be educated by the people who have succeeded the development of drugs/medical device from the seeds and are still working on the frontiers of the developments.

I have submitted a presentation file as another report of this course, so please check it out as well if you get interested in.

In the end, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to T-CReDO, especially Dr. Arakawa and Dr. Noguchi, for the offer of the chance to join the course and the continuous support. Also, I would also like to express my great appreciation to the people in SPARK Japan and SPARK for their supports and advices throughout the course.



*Figure 1 The author receiving a certification from Michael Wallach, the director of this course*