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Peter Lillehoj receives Grand Challenges Explorations Grant from Gates Foundation

Michigan State University will receive a Grand Challenges Explorations grant, an initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, it was announced Thursday, May 26.

Peter Lillehoj, assistant professor of mechanical engineering will pursue an innovative global health and development research project. He will receive $100,000 to develop a skin patch-based rapid diagnostic test for malaria. His research will be on campus at MSU.

Lillehoj said he is deeply humbled by the recognition. “The Gates Foundation Grand Challenges Explorations is one of the most competitive grant mechanisms and being selected as a grantee demonstrates the significance of my research in creating novel diagnostic tools and technologies to improve healthcare in the developing world,” he said.

Lillehoj joined Michigan State in the fall of 2012 and received a $400,000 NSF CAREER Award in 2014. His research interests include BioMEMS, nanotechnology, microfluidics, biosensors, and point-of-care diagnostics. He also has interests in the development of simple and low-cost technologies for sample preparation & bioprocessing and innovative approaches to manufacture disposable biosensors for global healthcare diagnostics.

He received three degrees in mechanical engineering: a B.S. from Johns Hopkins University (2006) and an M.S. (2007) and Ph.D. (2011) from the University of California, Los Angeles.
Grand Challenges Explorations (GCE) funds individuals worldwide to explore ideas that can break the mold in how we solve persistent global health and development challenges. Lillehoj’s project is one of more than 40 Grand Challenges Explorations grants announced today by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

To receive funding, Lillehoj and other Grand Challenges Explorations winners demonstrated in a two-page online application a bold idea in one of five critical global health and development topic areas.

The foundation will be accepting applications for the next GCE round in September 2016.

About Grand Challenges Explorations

Grand Challenges Explorations is a U.S. $100 million initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Launched in 2008, more than 1,186 projects in more than 61 countries have received Grand Challenges Explorations grants. The grant program is open to anyone from any discipline and from any organization. The initiative uses an agile, accelerated grant-making process with short two-page online applications and no preliminary data required. Initial grants of U.S. $100,000 are awarded two times a year. Successful projects have the opportunity to receive a follow-on grant of up to U.S. $1 million.

Related Website: Global Grand Challenges
A RDT Skin Patch for Non-Invasive Malaria Detection
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