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About Us

The Special Populations Acceleration, Research and Knowledge (SPARK) for Innovations in Pediatrics, a [BARDA Accelerator Network hub](#), supports the development of innovations that address challenges around the development and availability of medical countermeasures for [pediatric populations](#).

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About BARDA

Mission: to develop medical countermeasures that address the public health and medical consequences of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) accidents, incidents and attacks, pandemic influenza, and emerging infectious diseases

BARDA develops and makes available medical countermeasures (MCMs) by forming unique public-private partnerships to drive innovation off the bench to the patient to save lives.



Flexible, nimble authorities

Multi-year funding

Cutting edge expertise

Facilitate partnerships

Promote innovation

BARDA Accelerator Network 2.0



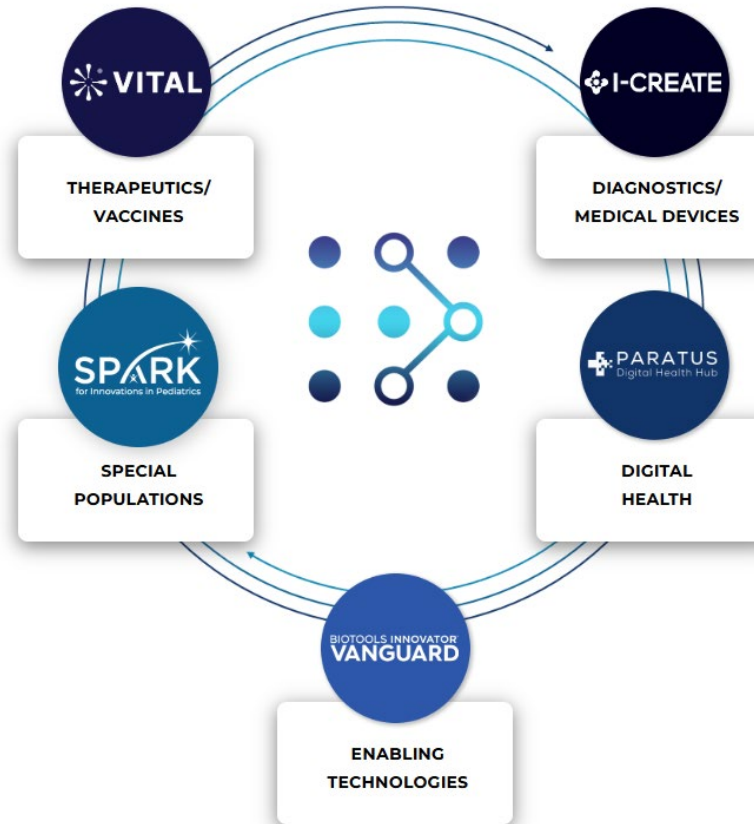
Wraparound Accelerator Support Services



Development, Evaluation, and Validation Funding



Rapid Response Capability



The SPARK Hub

The SPARK hub supports the development of innovations that address challenges around the development and availability of medical countermeasures for pediatric populations.



Let's drive innovation together
for the most vulnerable among
us —

our children.

Our Services

SPARK Hub for Pediatric Innovations provides Wraparound Accelerator Services (WAS) and funding for Development, Evaluation, and Validation (DEV) of pediatric-focused MCM innovations. These services are tailored to support MCM innovators through each phase of development, from ideation to FDA-regulated product validation.



Wraparound Accelerator Services (WAS)

Comprehensive cohort-based, and personalized advisory and mentorship programs for startups and BARDA-funded partners.



Development, Evaluation & Validation (DEV)

Providing pediatrics-focused MCM projects with critical capital needed for FDA-regulated product development and validation.

Key Focus Areas

Specific technology/product development areas include, but are not limited to:

Diagnostics

- Kid-friendly sample collection approaches
- At-home diagnostic technologies focused on pediatric populations
- Technologies to distinguish viral vs. bacterial infections in children

Medical Devices

- New devices or modifications to approved adult devices for pediatric use

Therapeutics & Vaccines

- Therapeutics and vaccines for health security threats for which approved products do not exist for pediatric populations
- Kid-friendly vaccine and drug delivery approaches

Digital Health Tools

- Models to predict recommended drug dosages or outcomes for pediatric populations during a public health emergency

Enabling Technologies

- In support of the development of pediatric products in any of the aforementioned technology areas

Open Solicitations

SPARK Hub Prize Challenge 2024

- Total of \$50,000 in non-dilutive funding for up to three winners.
- Finalists to pitch in a live competition at SPARK hub launch event.

SPARK DEV Funding Opportunity 2025

- Up to \$200,000 total in non-dilutive funding for development, evaluation, and validation of pediatrics-focused medical countermeasures.
- Milestone-based payments over 6-months, with option to extend the project period.
- Each project team will be matched to a STAR (**S**tartup **A**dvisory & **R**esources) team of mentors.

SPARK Accelerator 2025

- Comprehensive 6-month accelerator program with cohort-based, personalized advisory and mentorship services.

Eligibility

- Academic innovators and companies developing technologies aimed at improving health security for pediatric populations.
- Proposals should align with BARDA's mission and focus on innovative solutions in specified technology areas.
- Funding opportunity is open to both U.S. and non-U.S. entities that meet the eligibility criteria.
- All technology readiness level (TRL) countermeasures will be considered.
- Applicants are allowed to apply to multiple SPARK solicitations at the same time. Applications and proposals will be reviewed independently.

Scoring Criteria

- Alignment with BARDA's mission
- Solid Understanding of Special Populations
- Innovation and Differentiation
- Plan for Execution
- Technical Expertise
- Regulatory Knowledge and Readiness

Use of Funds

- Allowable expenses include direct costs for development, evaluation, or validation activities, as well as labor costs for personnel or contract research organizations (CROs) directly engaged in “doing the work.”
- Project milestones will be completed in 6 months from the start of the project, and the funds will be spent during this period.
- There will be reporting requirements based on milestone achievement, and a final report at the end of the project.

Key Dates

SPARK Hub Prize Challenge 2024

- Release Date –November 19, 2024
- Submission Deadline – [11:59pm EST on December 16, 2024](#)
- Finalists Announced – January 6, 2025
- Live Competition – January 28, 2025

SPARK DEV Funding Opportunity 2025

- Release Date –November 25, 2024
- Submission Deadline – [11:59pm EST on January 6, 2025](#)
- Finalists Selected – February 10, 2025
- Winners Announced– March 10, 2025

SPARK Accelerator 2025

- Release Date –December 9, 2024
- Submission Deadline – [11:59pm EST on January 27, 2025](#)
- Teams Selected – February 24, 2025
- Accelerator Start Date– March 2025



Contact Us



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Children's National Innovation Ventures



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