While our primary motivation is to help people with acute needs, QoLT’s will impact broader markets of consumers who want more control over their health, their homes and their lives.

The Center has launched the “QoLT Foundry,” a pilot program whose goal is the commercialization of QoLT’s through licensing and creation of new companies.

Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh’s Quality of Life Technology (QoLT) Center is an inter-institutional center with a common vision:

‘Significantly improve and sustain the quality of life for all people through integration of medical, engineering and information technologies and innovations to prevent and compensate for reduced functional capabilities due to aging, disease or disability.’

QoLT addresses these issues with technology to enhance the capabilities needed to independently perform normal and valued functions of daily living and to actively participate in society.

Within the center, we are developing new approaches for early detection of disease and disability, technologies to help manage and maintain physical and mental health, and devices and systems that both restore and enhance natural human ability. Many quality of life technologies will directly impact individual end-users: they will understand the user’s intentions and provide assistance by compensating and substituting for diminished capabilities -- safely, reliably, graciously and intuitively. Other technologies aimed at both self-maintenance and caregivers will gather and interpret data that provides insights about subtle changes in health, physical abilities and cognitive function so that interventions can be made earlier to delay or avoid debilitating conditions.

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QoLT Foundry Goals:

- Accelerate commercialization of QoLT research
- Identify and qualify technology that can be readily developed into products to support the needs of QoLT constituency
- Establish strongly fortified local companies that successfully commercialize and market the products
- Provide ongoing assistance to these companies to help ensure success

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There are many product concepts that are direct consequences or are derivative of the Center’s research. Also, through conversations with potential end-users and care-providers, we continually become aware of product ideas. Both suggest that opportunities for near-term commercialization of QoLT’s exist, though it is not clear which among the many possibilities are most lucrative. The first objective of the QoLT Foundry, therefore, is to qualify such new product concepts in terms of their genuine market need and potential. A team explores these concepts in terms of technical feasibility, development time, potential market size, and competition, time-to-market, regulatory constraints, and other factors.

An advisory group comprised of the Center’s Industry/Practitioner Advisory Board, executives in industry, entrepreneurs, and representatives of local technology-based economic development organizations will evaluate the most promising concepts. Ideas that survive are given further due diligence: intellectual property evaluation and market analysis, price point analysis, and preliminary business model development by MBA students.

The goal for technologies that pass these filters will have two outcomes:
- Successful transfer to an existing company
- Formation of a spin-off company

The QoLT Foundry’s role continues with the formation of companies, identification and recruitment of experienced entrepreneurial senior management, assistance in securing initial capital, and maintenance of ongoing relationships to increase the opportunity for success. Among the goals and strategies for a successful venture are to attract and retain, in the region, the intellectual capital in the form of our outstanding students. Working for for the start-ups, they will gain progressive experience and skills to become serial entrepreneurs for future spinoffs from the Universities.