

Professor Thomas Milner Awarded UTAustin Innovation Grant to advance UT's spectrally-encoded polarization microscope, thanks to a gift from the Sunshine Charitable Foundation.

[Tom Milner](#), Professor of Biomedical Engineering in the Cockrell School of Engineering at The University of Texas at Austin was a recent recipient of UT's Inventor of the Year Award.

The team of Dr. Milner, molecular bioscience professor Dr. Martin Poenie and Dr. Jeff Kuhn has developed a prototype of a microscope called SpectraPol that allows users to see structures in cells and viruses that have previously been invisible. The technology is called spectrally-encoded modulated polarization microscopy and allows users to view in real time details in structures that have not been seen before. In addition, because the technology is noninvasive, it allows samples to be viewed and imaged over long periods of time. In addition to a wide range of uses in life sciences, the microscope will also be used in the field of nanotechnology.

One stunning example of what the microscope lets users see is how the internal cell structure responds when the immune system attacks a cancer cell.

The \$48,200 Innovation Grant follows the University's award of \$400,000 that the team used to develop the microscope. The initial goal of this commercialization grant is to have the microscope at one of UTAustin's microscope service centers where scientists from UT and around the world can access its unique capabilities.

The Innovation Center's Innovation Grants program bridges the funding gap between research and commercialization. Specifically, it enables UTAustin professors to assess and advance the commercializability of their successful research.

If you are interested in learning more or in making a tax-deductible gift so that what starts here CAN change the world, contact Louise Epstein, Managing Director, Innovation Center at the Cockrell School of Engineering. Louise.Epstein@utexas.edu or 512-567-1849. www.engr.utexas.edu/innovation.