



**PROJECT TITLE:** BRC Innovation Symposium

**PROJECT TAGLINE/CAPTION** (160 characters): A forum to connect the researchers of the BRC to each other, the med center, Rice main campus, alumni, and the general public.

**IMAGE:**



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Primary Contact Department: Bioengineering

Name of Group/Organization: BioE-GSA / Ideas that go viral series

#### **PROJECT DETAILS**

Provide a description of the project.

The Rice BioScience Research Collaborative (BRC) is a hub of remarkable science and innovation. Yet, the building's inhabitants often don't know their neighbor's projects and their potential impacts. We aim to improve not only the communication and collaboration within the BRC, but also with Rice's main campus, the TMC, and the general public. To improve our communication with these audiences, we will host a forum highlighting the innovation occurring in the building but with each talk geared to a general audience, with the talks approved for

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posting on youtube. The subsequent poster session will provide a way for individuals to dig deeper into the research, connecting new students with current students and recruiting faculty members, as well as BRC researches with their counterparts. The event will finish with a talk about current innovative projects from a selected alumnus from one of the departments housed in the BRC, followed by an alumni panel and networking breakout. Finally, graduate student awards and grants will be given. Participating students will improve their communication skills, particularly as they pertain to the public, of which there are fewer forums for development than research talks. This event provides a much-demanded space for communication of research amongst BRC residents and the public, particularly graduate alumni.

**Timeline:** If the project will take place at a specific time and place, please give details. Is it a one-time event or a series?

The event will take place September 11, 2015 in the BRC event space. It is part of a series that we hope to continue in the fall of subsequent years. We have previously hosted the two events separately, the graduate student symposium and the Ideas that go viral series. This year, we are combining the two concepts and trying to open the forum to the rest of the BRC, our alumni, and the public. We have approval to put the talks on youtube. In subsequent years, we hope to improve our A/V quality and involvement from alumni and the general public.

Here is our current agenda of activities:

9-9:30 Coffee and networking

9:30-10:30 Grad students and post-doc talks (from all depts in BRC- will be a general overview of their field and briefly how their research is advancing/innovating in that field; 5-10 minute duration each)

10:30-10:45 Coffee and networking

10:45-11:45 Ideas that go viral (5 minute talks geared to be accessible to the general public- will be trained by Junghae Suh on presentation style and avoiding jargon)

12-1 Poster session and lunch (a chance for individuals to talk more specifically about research in the building- geared toward new students and to connect grad students/ post docs to each other)

1-1:30 Alumni innovation talk (an alumnus talks about their current work innovating in their respective field)

1:30-2:30 Alumni Panel (3-5 alumni representing different fields will talk about their current innovations, advice for current grad students and post-docs, and answer questions from the audience)

2:30-3:30 Networking with alumni (includes refreshments)

3:30-4 Graduate student awards

**Audience:** Who is your target audience? (e.g. program-specific, interdisciplinary, or university-wide? Will undergraduates, faculty, staff, or postdocs be involved? Any off campus participants?)

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Speakers will be selected from graduate students and post-docs in the BRC from multiple departments. All residents from the building will be encouraged to attend, including undergraduates, grad students, post docs, faculty, and staff. The symposium will be marketed as a showcase of ideas from the BRC that are accessible to the public. We will market the symposium to the BRC residents, rice main campus, the medical center, and the general public.

How many people do you anticipate will participate?

We anticipate having 200 guests attend the event. These include 100 graduate students in the BRC, 20 faculty members, 20 post-docs, 10 alumni, 10 BRC staff, 40 undergraduates, and 50 from the general public including collaborators from the medical center.

**Marketing Plan:** How do you plan to publicize the project?

We first plan a targeted approach for selecting speakers. We will attend lab meetings where we will explain the talk formats and solicit nominations for speakers. Once the schedule has been set, we will post flyers on the BRC message board, elevators, and main doors, send emails to the BRC list-serv. By having the event coincide with the arrival of new students, we anticipate that current grad students and faculty will be interested in actively participating in the event to impress and get to know the incoming students. In addition, the recruitment of young alumni to be involved in the event will certainly increase our attendance as the grad students in our building have been routinely requesting more opportunities to interact with alumni. To recruit alumni, we will be using the resources of the contact lists held by the departments to reach out to young alumni, beginning with those who have stayed local or who have ties to Houston such as family that would encourage them to visit. In order to reach other audiences, we will distribute flyers to main campus and to the representatives from the medical center using contacts from the department offices. Of the general public, friends and family will be our most likely attendees, but our approval to post the videos on youtube will improve our potential to share the discussions with the general public.

## **ADVANCEMENT**

What are the goals of the project?

The goals of this project include:

- 1) Provide a forum for graduate students and post docs to give more general talks about their work that are accessible to the public
- 2) Bring together the residents of the BRC to know what work is happening in the building to foster collaboration
- 3) Provide a forum for incoming graduate students to talk with current students about their research all in the same place
- 4) Connect current students with alumni to provide an increased opportunity for connections that both sides are looking to foster
- 5) Post the talks to youtube to increase visibility of the work done at Rice BRC



Briefly explain the need for the project and how it will promote excellence in scholarship, training, and/or development?

There are many small research symposiums that take place in the BRC. However, none focuses on highlighting the strengths of a building as a whole and none focus on making the talks accessible to the general public. We believe that this symposium will encourage students to work on how they communicate their ideas to a general audience. Graduate student awards and a small grant in the field of systems biology will be administered to noteworthy students during the symposium, encouraging their above-and-beyond efforts publically. We also believe that this symposium will provide a forum for discussion across departments in the BRC to foster collaborative efforts.

If this is an existing project/event or a similar one exists, describe how the project/event is being expanded or enhanced.

We have previously hosted the two events separately: the graduate student symposium and the Ideas that go viral series. This year, we are combining the two concepts and trying to open the forum to the rest of the BRC, our alumni, and the public. We have approval to put the talks on youtube.

If your proposal is for a pilot project, suggest how it might develop over a three-year period.

In subsequent years, we hope to improve our A/V quality and involvement from alumni and the general public. In the future, we hope to publish high-quality, accessible talks on youtube to get the word out there about the innovation that is happening at Rice. We also hope to continue to engage others from the med-center and main campus in collaborative efforts.

Describe how you will measure the success and impact of this project. Please, provide quantitative targets, if possible.

The success of this project will be measured by student involvement, subsequent collaborations resulting from the symposium, and alumni involvement. We hope to increase the number of students that speak every year by 5%. We also aim to increase alumni attendance each year by 10%. We will also measure success by shares and views of the youtube videos posted for the ideas that go viral series, aiming to increase both the quantity of posts as well as the quantities

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of views each year. We will also follow up with the speakers 1 year after the event to determine the impact of their training in speaking to a general audience.



## BUDGET

### ***Itemized Budget***

Please, provide an itemized budget. List each item, a description, and the anticipated cost.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Event Space	Rent auditorium and event space	\$400
Boxed lunches	200 boxed lunches for participants	\$1200
Cookies, brownies, coffee, tea, plates, napkins	Supplied by Hollywood Café (BRC)	\$200
Veggie Platter, other appetizers	Snacks for networking events with alumni	\$400
Drinks and bartenders	Purchase at cost from Valhalla	\$300
Total Expenses		\$2500

### ***Funds from other sources***

Please, provide any information on funds from other sources that you have secured or potential funds that you plan to apply for.

<b>Source</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Amount</b>
IBB	Secured	\$250
BIOE	Secured	\$250
Bioe-GSA	Potential	\$500
BIOE	Potential	\$500
Total Amount		\$1500

If the project/event has been offered in the past, how was it supported?

In the past, the event was supported by the Bioe-GSA with help from the BIOE department.