What is I-Corps?
I-Corps (Innovation Corps) is a program within the National Science Foundation to help catalyze teams whose technology concepts are likely candidates for commercialization.

I-Corps and Brandeis:
In February, 2017, Brandeis was awarded a five-year grant to become an I-Corps Site that will provide training, resources and funding for innovative startups and technologies developed by Brandeis students, faculty and staff. Brandeis is one of only six new sites nationally designated by NSF.

I-Corps Roles:
- **Entrepreneurial Lead:** Typically a postdoctoral researcher, graduate student, or other student that has the relevant technical knowledge and a deep commitment to investigate the commercial landscape surrounding the innovation.
- **Mentor:** An outside professional that brings entrepreneurial experience and serves as the principal guide in determining the technology disposition.
- **Principal Investigator:** University staff or faculty member that serves as the technical lead and project manager.

Benefits:
- **Support:** The Office of Technology Licensing and the Hassenfeld Family Innovation Center, as grant recipient, will provide support in the form of mentor introductions, training sessions and curriculum management.
- **Customer Discovery Funding:** Funding up to $3,000 is provided to each team for expenses related to customer discovery and modest amounts of equipment or materials.
- **Eligibility for Future NSF Funding:** Teams that successfully complete the I-Corps training then become eligible to apply to the NSF I-Corps Teams Program to receive additional support - in the form of mentoring and funding (up to $50,000) - to accelerate the translation of knowledge derived from fundamental research into emerging products and services that can attract subsequent third-party funding.

Expectations:
- Participate in Business Model Canvas workshop or submit an already developed Business Model Canvas.
- Have regular interactions with mentor and OTL/HFIC team.
- Complete and document at least 25 customer interviews.
- Participate in summer event (July 27th) and present progress and lessons learned through program.
- Present final outcomes and learnings.
Timeline:
- *By May 26:* meet with OTL/HFIC team, submit budget. Meeting time slots will be sent the week of May 15.
- *May 31st, 4pm - 6pm:* Participate in Business Model Canvas + Value Proposition Canvas workshop or submit most updated canvas.
- *Week of June 5th:* Present a list of potential customers to be contacted + reach out plan, read the *Mom Test* by Rob Fitzpatrick.
- *Week of June 12th:* Meet Mentors + start first customer interviews.
- *June 19th - June 30th:* document at least 5 customer interviews.
- *June 27th, 4 - 5.30pm:* check-in with OTL/HFIC team + present learnings.
- *July:* document at least 10 customer interviews + regular mentor check-ins
- *July 27th, 9am - 5pm:* Hack My PhD, *information on event will be provided additionally.*
- *August:* document at least 10 customer interviews.
- *August 15th, 4pm - 6pm:* final presentation + certificates award.

Budget:
Teams will be asked to submit a budget for up to $3000 for expenses related to modest amounts of equipment or materials needed to fabricate prototypes; travel expenses to consult with potential clients or experts; training for education related to entrepreneurial immersion; and/or other resources needed to directly advance the goals of transitioning a team’s project into the marketplace.