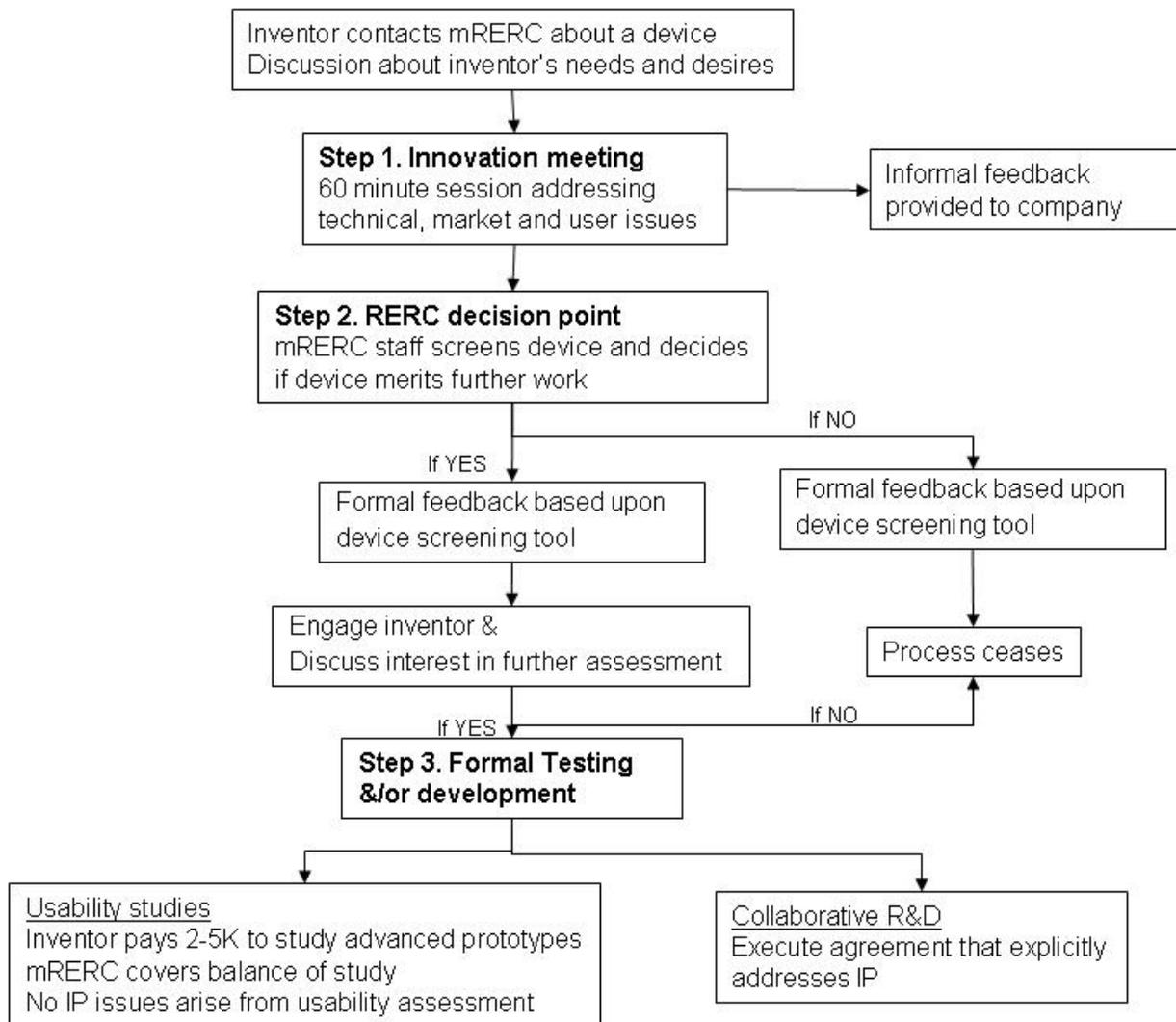


Process for inventor engagement with mobility RERC

This project is designed to formalize engagement of inventors/small companies. It will establish a process through which the mobilityRERC will provide a basic level of support and guidance as well as more advanced development and testing to those with promising mobility products. Specifically, the process will include: 1) an informal brainstorming session addressing technical, market and user issues; 2) formal screening of device potential and RERC capacity to assist in development; 3) invitation to engage inventors/companies with promising technologies; and 4) product testing and/or development of promising technologies. Below is a flow chart describing the process:



Step 1: Innovation meeting. A 60 minute meeting will be held with RERC staff and students. The RERC team will review the product and assess its potential from three perspectives: technical, market and user. In the past, inventors/companies have either attended the Innovation Meeting to present their technologies or a device and/or information was sent for review. The Innovation Meeting ends with *informal comments* provided to the inventors/companies. Typically, Intellectual Property is managed using an Invention Disclosure between Georgia Tech and the inventor/small company.

Step 2: RERC decision point. Formal screening will generate additional written feedback for the inventor/company. This feedback is a more formal follow-up to that following the Innovation Meeting. A significant aspect of this review will be determining if the product has potential and if the mobilityRERC has the capacity and expertise to positively impact its development. In other words, the RERC team will pose the question: Does the invention have potential and can we help? If the answer is NO, device screening information will be compiled and sent to the inventor/company. If the answer is YES, the screening information and an invitation to continue collaboration with the RERC will be sent to the inventor/company. Over the past few years, some inventors/companies have been satisfied with the review provided and chose to continue independently while others have sought additional RERC collaboration. For those inventors/companies that seek additional mobilityRERC collaboration, the process moves to Step 3.

Step 3: Formal product testing and/or development. For those inventors/companies that engage the mobilityRERC, two basic options will be available: stakeholder engagement and collaborative development.

Stakeholder engagement in clinical evaluation. Most small companies and inventors have little or no capacity to perform user trials or stakeholder assessments. The mobilityRERC can organize different levels of user input to better inform the inventor about the design. User trials are appropriate for devices that have been developed to a point of a testable prototype. In cases when only a model or a conceptual design is available, other stakeholder assessment methods can be used, including surveys or focus groups of potential users, caregivers, and/or clinicians.

Stakeholder engagement does not impact the Intellectual Property of the device, and the previously executed NDA will protect the inventor. To ensure that the inventors/small businesses are truly vested in the product and its development, the RERC will require that they underwrite 20-25% of evaluation costs (company costs would range from approximately \$2000-\$5000 depending on the scope of work).

Collaborative development. In some instances, technical development is necessary to improve or optimize device design. While many inventors and small companies lack R&D capability, the mobilityRERC has the engineering capacity to technically develop the products as well as the clinical expertise to perform iterative testing and evaluation. As a result, the collaborative development model enables inventors to engage in joint product development.

The RERC team will work with the inventor/company to define an R&D agreement. These agreements will address both the scope of collaboration and IP issues. This will ensure equitable division of intellectual property between the company and the RERC. The IP of the company will always be the IP of the company. IP developed solely by Georgia Tech will remain Georgia Tech's IP, and IP jointly developed will be shared.