

Axiom Space comes to IQ to partner with Winston-Salem groups with goal of biomanufacturing in space

By [Lillian Johnson](#) – Reporter, Triad Business Journal, Apr 18, 2022

Regenerative medicine aims to improve the lives of patients around the world. To help with that goal, regenerative medicine will go out of this world.

Axiom Space, a private company that is building the world's first commercial space station, has come to Winston-Salem to establish its presence in the Regenerative Medicine Hub, which is based in Innovation Quarter. The Houston-based space company will partner with the RegenMed Development Organization (ReMDO) and the Wake Forest Institute of Regenerative Medicine (WFIRM).

“This partnership paves the way for an entire commercial industry on board Axiom’s space station that will enable our scientific research teams to advance biomanufacturing to bring new treatments that cannot be developed on Earth and treatments for conditions that affect the human body when exposed to the harsh environment of space travel,” Anthony Atala, director of WFIRM, said. “We can literally take the regenerative medicine field to a whole new level.”



Anthony Atala, director of the Wake Forest Institute of Regenerative Medicine, announces that WFIRM and the RegenMed Organization will partner with Axiom Space.

The goal of the partnership is to leverage the regenerative medicine expertise of WFIRM and the leadership in commercial space infrastructure of Axiom to advance in-space regenerative medicine biomanufacturing.

Axiom officially signed on as a tenant in ReMDO's Innovation Accelerator on Monday morning. The Innovation Accelerator – previously known as the Business Incubator – is part of [ReMDO and WFIRM's RegeneratOR initiative](#).

ReMDO, which is the first organization dedicated to advancing manufacturing in regenerative medicine, established the initiative last year. RegeneratOR encompasses a multipronged approach to developing a sustainable regenerative medicine ecosystem, including the RegeneratOR Test Bed, RegeneratOR Innovation Accelerator and RegeneratOR Workforce Development.

As a member of the Innovation Accelerator, Axiom will have access to the Test Bed, a laboratory and small-scale production space designed with the latest technologies that external regenerative medicine companies can use to advance their own work, with an initial \$50 million investment for the project. Companies using the Test Bed also have access to other resources within WFIRM's research environment.

In WFIRM's building within Innovation Quarter, Axiom will have access to roughly 1,500 square feet, including lab space, according to Jason Kaplan, associate vice president of Innovation Quarter operations and Wake Forest School of Medicine.

Jana Stoudemire, commercial innovation strategy lead for Axiom, said the company plans to begin with one full-time person in Winston-Salem.



Jana Stoudemire, commercial innovation strategy lead of Axiom Space, announces the company's partnership with WFIRM and ReMDO.

Axiom Space made headlines earlier this month for its Axiom Mission 1, launching the first private mission to the International Space Station from Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Also known as Ax-1, it is the first of several missions to the space station as

Axiom works to construct its own space station to serve as a global research and commercial hub.

Operating 250 miles above Earth, Axiom's space station will initially be attached to the ISS and will separate from it before NASA decommissions the ISS at the end of the decade.

"We are very pleased to establish this collaboration and look forward to working together with this world-renowned team to build and expand the commercial space economy for biomedical applications in low Earth orbit," said Christian Maender, director of in-space manufacturing and research at Axiom Space. "Regenerative medicine has been identified as important focus area for commercial space initiatives that has the opportunity to provide new hope for breakthrough treatments and aligns with our mission to improve life on Earth and foster possibilities beyond it."

Axiom is the second company to announce its tenancy in the Innovation Accelerator, which launched earlier this month, in RegenMed Hub.

The first tenant to sign was BioMedInnovations (BMI), a company that focuses on technologies for tissues and organ perfusion and preservation. Moving from Research Triangle Park's First Flight Center in Raleigh, the company's scale mobile platform, known as recove, will help the medical field transport donor organs further and for longer to help more patients.