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Technology >

Patents in action

FAPESP does the first licensing of a product generated in a program for technological innovation

Dental drills with a synthetic diamond tip, which works with ultrasound apparatuses, have just been launched onto the market and are going to earn royalties for FAPESP and for the National Institute for Space Research (Inpe). The company that makes them is Clorovale Diamantes, of São José dos Campos, which received funding from the Foundation, under the Small Business Innovation Research Program (PIPE), to develop the product. This is the first licensing contract to be carried out by FAPESP's Nucleus for the Patenting and Licensing of Technology (Nuplitech), which also financed the filling of the patent in Brazil, the United States, Canada, Europe and Japan.

The company was set up by researchers from Inpe, who took advantage of their mastery of the technique of producing CVD (*Chemical Vapor Deposition*) diamonds, to incorporate them into dental drills (see **Pesquisa FAPESP** issue 52 and issue 78). "Each drill costs R\$ 200.00, some 20 times more than the conventional drills. However, they do away with an anesthetic in over 70% of cases, are more precise, and do not have the traditional noise of the rotating motor. Moreover, they are 20 to 30 times more durable", explains physicist Vladimir Jesus Trava Airoldi, one of the company's founders.

He calculates that gross revenues from sales in the first two years will reach R\$ 28 million. On these sales, less taxes, there will be royalties of 4% in the first two years and 5% for another three, in accordance with the exclusivity contract with Clorovale. The prospects are for getting over R\$ 1 million a year, which will be split between the inventors, FAPESP and Inpe.

"This case shows that the funding models of the PIPE and Nuplitech have been consolidated", comments Professor Edgar Dutra Zanotto, from the Federal University of São Carlos and Nuplitech's coordinator. "With this licensing, we have inaugurated a new and effective mechanism for increasing FAPESP's income, redirecting the earnings from royalties to other research".

For Airoldi, the investment will revert to society. He and his team are preparing courses for dentists to learn to use the new drills, while they are calling for this technique to be approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the American agency that controls food and drugs. When this approval is obtained, exporting the drills will be easier. "Several companies have already contacted us in order to sell our product in other countries", says Airoldi. Exporting is going to complete the list of good news for Clorovale.

THE PROJECT

CVD Diamond Drills for Ultrasound Equipment Used in Dentistry

Modality

Intellectual Property Support Program (PAPI)

Coordinator

Vladimir Jesus Trava Airoldi - Inpe

Investment

R\$ 11,000.00 and US\$ 30,000.00