



THE  
**2029**  
PROJECT



## **INTRODUCTION**

The next 25 years will see large-scale changes across the spectrum of biomedical research and development activities. Dramatic advances are likely to include fundamental knowledge of disease processes, as well as a variety of new research tools. These are early days for genomics, proteomics, nanotechnology and bioinformatics. What might this research and development achieve over 25 years? This question is important because answers can chart the future path of science and help the public understand the crucial need for support.

The Institute for Alternative Futures (IAF) with funding from Pfizer will study the future of research and development with selected science leaders across many disciplines, sectors and institutions. IAF will publish a major report based on R&D forecasts for key scientific advances. IAF will then attract public attention to the potential contributions science can make to health in the years that lie ahead. In developing this report, IAF will engage a network of scientists to think 25 years into the future. Together, they will identify promising opportunities for progress over the next few years. After producing the report, IAF will hold an invitational meeting designed to entice leading scientists into discussions focused on the future and what it means for near-term opportunities.

## **PROJECT STEPS AND DELIVERABLES**

IAF will create an initial map of R&D areas, which will guide IAF research and serve as a visual reference throughout the project. The scan will investigate scientific and social science literature to identify developments that portend significant change. The research will address the role of intellectual property, characterize the process flow within R&D, and distinguish key roles and functions.

### **CREATE INITIAL FORECAST SET**

IAF will take the first step using its map to collect, update and draft forecasts for key areas identified on the R&D map. IAF will distribute these forecasts internally and to key advisors before preparing a final draft as a starting point for discussions with thought leaders.

### **HOLD INTERVIEWS**

IAF will use its extensive network of thought leaders, as well as research into the scientific literature to identify people who can most knowledgeably challenge and reshape forecasts. The IAF team will conduct at least 50 interviews to confirm or challenge thinking about the future of R&D. IAF will then analyze the results to discover new ideas, sources of knowledge, and potential innovations in biomedical research. IAF will disseminate the forecasts to key networks in academic, government, and private-sector scientific endeavors, as well as to science advocacy groups.

### **PREPARE & DISSEMINATE LEARNING**

IAF will draft a report designed to capture and disseminate the learning derived from the project, which will be circulated both internally and externally for review before publishing online. IAF will also develop articles for publication in leading journals.

Throughout the project, IAF will also identify venues and partners who share a vision for the future of biomedical research. IAF will contact these visionary leaders and invite them to an invitational meeting or a series of smaller meetings that combines people from different fields and sectors to share their vision of both future directions and near-term opportunities for science that can most improve health.



## **CONCLUSION**

The project will create a big picture outlook of R&D, supported by the views of critical scientists. Information showing the potential for R&D will provide a useful context for scientific planning, as well as for public debates over research funding and the cost of innovation to healthcare. The value that the biomedical research community can derive from this project will come in many forms: such as the learning that is published in reports and articles; the networks established through meetings where links get formed between people from different fields and institutions; and the shared vision that communicates to the public how noble and important science can be for public health.