

Martin Williams

Healthtech Executive

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I'm a healthtech developer with experience building diagnostics and therapeutics for huge companies and tiny startups. I am deeply passionate about developing novel tools that improve the quality of life. I started as a medical device engineer then transitioned to M&A, strategy, and product management.

Most recently, I helped with all stages of new venture creation at Cognito Therapeutics, where we took a novel preclinical finding from MIT, built a therapeutic platform for Alzheimer's disease and ushered it through Ph1 and 2 studies. The pivotal study began in 2023 and is still ongoing. Across my career I have contributed to companies that have raised more than \$340M in venture capital, spanning neuromodulation, genomics, respiratory and dermatology.

I work with early-stage life science companies as an advisor, board director and fractional executive, covering commercialization, regulatory and clinical strategy.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CEO & Co-Founder

2024 – Present

ImmunoFlare Biosciences · immunoflare.com

Inflammation insights powered by human flare biology. Co-founded with Prof. Tony Merriman, PhD (CSO), a world-leading authority on the genetic basis of inflammasome activation.

Pharma Services

- Built a partnered services business around a proprietary human Flare-in-a-Dish inflammasome assay, giving pharma partners translation-ready readouts that de-risk crystal disease programs.
- Head-to-head mechanism-of-action profiling of candidate compounds in human inflammasome models.
- Biomarker discovery and responder stratification from multi-omics analysis of patient samples.

Therapeutics & Diagnostics Discovery

- Directing internal discovery programs in gout and CPPD toward new therapeutics and diagnostics, built on the same human flare biology platform.

Company Building

- Authored the company's commercial thesis and strategy: fee-for-service pharma work funding an internal inflammasome-modulator discovery pipeline, with expansion from gout into CPPD.
- Stood the company up operationally: entity formation, EIN, facilities-use license with a regional research institute, incubator bench space, LIMS selection, independent IRB engagement.
- Built and run the business development process across hundreds of tracked pharma and biotech targets in gout, CPPD and inflammasome programs.

CEO & Founder

2023 – Present

Flarebreak (Seneca Health, Inc.) · flarebreak.com

I am developing solutions to address unmet needs in inflammatory arthritis, with a primary focus on gout. Flarebreak will become the world's most trusted provider of patient-centered products for this widely misunderstood and stigmatized disease. Through partnering with gout experts around the globe, and pharmaceutical companies developing breakthrough medicines, we are enabling gout patients to break free from flares forever.

Direct-to-Consumer Solutions

- Mobile App — personally developed React Native app architecture
- Home-based In Vitro Diagnostic Medical Device — personally developed regulatory and production strategy for novel IVD device

- TikTok Education Channel — online education and spokesperson

Advanced Discovery Research

- Proteomics & Genomics analysis to identify novel drug targets and diagnostic tools (partnership with three universities)
- Prediction risk factor analysis to develop novel precision medicine analysis tool (partnered with Emory University faculty)

Clinical & Product Platform

- Participated in the development of the G-CAN 2024 international gout remission consensus criteria as a computed clinical engine that scores remission from patient-logged data.
- Designed the Flarebreak Gout Food Index, an original food-scoring algorithm and pipeline turning 436,708 rows of USDA nutrient data into 1,528 individually scored, citation-linked foods, released only after passing an 84-case calibration gate built from the published literature.
- Architected an AI gout coach to sit outside FDA medical device territory under the 2022 clinical decision support guidance — a corpus-only educational assistant trained on authoritative gout expert publications and findings.

Independent Consultant

2020 – Present

Freelance

Advising companies on development of a business model and strategy for various areas including:

Fractional Advisory / Independent Board Director Roles

- Board director for novel neuromodulation approach for intra-sleep delivery of closed-loop stimulation
- Regulatory advisory and FDA strategy for digital health company in neurological care management and behavioral intervention
- Commercialization and corporate strategy for novel physical assistive device academic spin-out
- Strategic advisor for novel pediatric epilepsy remote monitoring solution
- Fractional product marketing and commercialization for a venture-backed neurovascular device maker through a US stroke-catheter launch — Medicare coding and billing strategy, portfolio packaging, and product labeling.
- Venture building and first-in-human clinical strategy for a university synthetic biology spinout developing an engineered live biotherapeutic for Parkinson's disease — IND and IRB feasibility, and an investigator-initiated Phase 1 design with an academic movement disorder PI. Ran a physician KOL research program across 7 academic centers.

Private Equity Diligence and Operating Partnership

- Diligence and US-market entry strategy for private equity transaction of European healthcare entities in the neurological and rehabilitation space

VP, Business Development and Strategic Partnerships

2016 – 2022

Cognito Therapeutics

Cognito was formed in July 2016 out of research from founders at MIT who discovered a profound treatment response in Alzheimer's mouse models using a novel neurostimulation paradigm. These scientific discoveries were published in Nature, Cell and Neuron. We developed a therapy, designed clinical studies and successfully showed improvement in Alzheimer's disease clinical outcomes. Cognito is now conducting a pivotal study in the US.

- Founding team member and major participation in all company building aspects since day one including product development, strategic direction, operations, hiring, clinical strategy, KOL management and BOD management.
- Co-led initial device concept selection, design and generation of IP for world-first neurostimulation device targeting neurodegenerative disorders. Issued patents: 10,279,192, 10,293,177, 10,307,611, 10,702,705, 10,843,006, 11,141,604, 12,383,759, 12,434,072 including 30+ additional provisional patents.
- Developed advisory board of clinical, scientific and business KOLs and nurtured relationships with academic centers.
- Designed and executed Phase 1 human studies to prove safety and feasibility of device therapy concepts.
- Designed two Phase 2 multi-site clinical studies and participated in investigator selection, protocol design, site negotiations and enrollment ramp-up. (Etude Study, Overture Study). Studies resulted in significant clinically relevant outcomes including cognitive and functional benefits in Alzheimer's patients as well as a reduction in brain volume loss. Studies also showed improvement in white matter and myelin loss.

- Facilitated investigator-initiated study with PIs at Emory University and Georgia Tech to form a collaborative research program with the Emory Brain Health Center. (Flicker Study) Results published in 2021 showed significant engagement of cytokine and neuroimmunological proteins.
- Supported the preparation of registrational pivotal study including FDA discussions and clinical strategy.
- Supported the FDA interactions leading to Breakthrough Device Designation for the gamma sensory stimulation therapy, January 2021.
- Led the development of portfolio opportunities and the early-stage operations to pursue new indications in Acute Ischemic Stroke, Parkinson's disease, Lewy Body Dementia and Multiple Sclerosis.
- Established relationships with multiple pharmaceutical and medical device companies to explore strategic collaborations including out-licensing as well as co-development of new indication areas.

Global Product Manager II

2014 – 2016

Stryker Neurovascular

Full global franchise responsibility for endovascular therapy that treats intracranial atherosclerosis (ICAD), involved in 5 clinical trials worldwide; upstream and downstream focus, from immersive engagement with KOLs on developing new concepts to broad hands-on training to physicians around the world.

- Worked with global country leaders, leading ICAD KOLs and internal colleagues to spearhead the development of a 5 year plan to grow ICAD product franchise from \$25M to \$65M with support from Executive Team and global business leaders.
- Won funding from Executive Team for fundamentally new ICAD therapy concept with >\$15M budget.
- Managed the cross-functional effort to design new ICAD devices and the subsequent clinical trial strategy in the US and Greater China.
- Managed relationships with six global PIs for five unique clinical trials in the US, Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong.
- Identified new BD opportunities and brought new partnerships/acquisitions to internal investment committee.
- Developed and nurtured productive relationships with the top 25 KOLs in the world on the subject of intracranial atherosclerosis, including the leading US, Chinese, Taiwanese, Hong Kong and European subject matter experts.

Senior Associate, Strategy and BD

2013 – 2014

Bard Medical

- Led the marketing due diligence on the \$262M acquisition of NASDAQ:ROCM through an international VOC and secondary research effort; led international integration summit with European marketing directors post-acquisition.
- Chosen to research and present to Chris Holland, corporate CFO, on question from Board of Directors: Should BCR vertically integrate into DME space? Resulted in shift in understanding for BOD, culminating in acquisition of NASDAQ:LBMH for \$181M (Nov 2015).
- Managed the entire diligence process for acquiring a novel urological diagnostic device being developed by start-up; recommended not to buy company (May 2014) – advised startup company through new funding round (Oct 2014).
- Managed the ongoing process to create semi-annual presentation for CEO, COO and CFO on new global product pipeline working with over 40 engineering and marketing VPs and directors across 4 franchises and \$850M business.
- Working with VP, Marketing, created C-Suite level three year strategic plan for \$535M US division.
- Designed multiple international market VOC assessments for the entire \$850M global division to identify unmet needs and market trends in China, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, and Colombia.

Summer Associate

2012

The Innovation Factory / Accuitive Medical Ventures

- Created turnaround strategy and pitch deck for a turnaround acquisition for Portaero, a homogeneous emphysema therapy suffering from poor clinical trial results. Delivered pitch to Versant, Aberdare, and NEA Ventures.
- Analyzed clinical trial results and device performance for Sebacia, a novel, laser-based dermatology therapy.
- Developed a commercialization strategy model for introducing a venture-backed start-up medical device in Germany.

Manufacturing Engineer

2008 – 2011

Medtronic

- Spearheaded the mechanical design, testing, and validation for robotic production equipment for a high-volume, disposable brain monitoring sensor producing more than 7 million units per year.
- Designed and built a semi-automated production factory for a disposable brain-monitoring sensor resulting in a system capable of producing 350,000 units per year.
- Led all complaint resolution and cross-functional Six Sigma production engineering tasks for Shingo prize-winning factory producing 7M sensors annually with sales of \$85M.

Mechanical Design Engineer

2007 – 2008

U.S. Genomics

- Managed cross-functional team of five engineers and scientists to design custom bioagent-sample preparation robot.

CLINICAL STUDIES

STUDY	REGISTRY	SPONSOR	ROLE
OVERTURE	NCT03556280	Cognito Therapeutics	Study design · investigator and site selection · budget negotiation · enrollment ramp · results analysis · first author and presenting author, AAIC 2021
ETUDE	NCT03661034	Cognito Therapeutics	Study design · dose-level design · investigator and site selection · budget negotiation · co-author, study design abstract
FLICKER	NCT03543878	Emory University with Georgia Tech; Cognito-funded	Facilitated the investigator-initiated study · KOL and PI relationships · aims and budget negotiation · study kickoff · results analysis
HOPE	NCT05637801	Cognito Therapeutics	Registrational study preparation · FDA discussions · clinical strategy
WEAVE	NCT02034058	Stryker Neurovascular	Franchise ownership · PI relationships · enrollment period
CASSISS	NCT01763320	Xuanwu Hospital, Beijing; Stryker-funded	Clinical trial strategy in Greater China · PI relationships
Phase 1 feasibility	Unregistered	Cognito Therapeutics	Study design · execution · safety and feasibility readout

EDUCATION

MBA · 2013

Emory University

- Goetz Scholar (for Entrepreneurship)
- Beta Gamma Sigma Honors · Dean's List
- Winner, Emory Venture Capital Investment Competition 2012 (1st of 15 teams)
- President, Entrepreneurship and Venture Capital Club

B.S. Manufacturing Engineering · 2003–2007

Boston University

- Arthur G. B. Metcalf Scholarship
- Dean's List
- Winner, "Most Outstanding Senior Project" in Manufacturing Engineering

PUBLICATIONS

- **Safety, feasibility, and adherence of a daily, in-home gamma sensory stimulation therapy with the Cognito Sensory Stimulation System in Alzheimer's subjects.** *Alzheimer's & Dementia* 2021;17(S9):e056480. **Williams M**, Cimenser A, Hempel E, et al. — first author and presenting author, AAIC 2021.
- **Study design of gamma sensory stimulation at multiple dose levels in MCI patients.** *Alzheimer's & Dementia* 2021;17(S9):e056614. Hempel E, Hajós M, **Williams M**, Malchano Z.

- **Feasibility, Safety, and Efficacy of Gamma Sensory Stimulation as a Novel Therapeutic Intervention for Alzheimer's Disease (N1.001).** *Neurology* 2022;98(18 Suppl):1936 — AAN 2022 platform presentation. Megerian JT, Hajós M, Hempel E, Cimenser A, Boasso A, Cotter C, **Williams M**, et al.
- **Gamma stimulation improves sleep in Alzheimer's patients as assessed by continuous actigraphy recordings over six months.** *Alzheimer's & Dementia* 2020;16(S6):e044355. Cimenser A, Hempel E, Travers T, **Williams M**, Hajós M, Malchano Z.

PATENTS

Ten issued US patents. Three further applications published since 2025 remain pending.

10,279,192	Neural stimulation via visual stimulation	10,293,177	Neural stimulation via auditory stimulation
10,307,611	Neural stimulation via visual, auditory and peripheral nerve stimulations	10,702,705	Neural stimulation via visual, auditory and peripheral nerve stimulations
10,843,006	Neural stimulation via auditory stimulation	11,141,604	Neural stimulation via visual stimulation
12,383,759	Neural stimulation via visual, auditory and peripheral nerve stimulations (2025)	12,434,072	Neural stimulation via visual, auditory and peripheral nerve stimulations (2025)
10,391,275	Draining and analyzing bodily fluids	11,357,951	Draining and analyzing bodily fluids