Scientists at Vanderbilt University Medical Center work in teams each day to conduct valuable medical research. The Sci-Tech Research Project encourages middle or high school students to assume the role of various types of medical research scientists working in research teams at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Students participate in this classroom project by establishing teams of four and choosing to be Primary Investigator (Ph. D. or M. D.), Lab Director (Master Degree), Lab Technician (Bachelor Degree) or Fellow/Graduate Student (Ph. D. or M. D.) within their team. Only one Ph. D. and one M. D. is on each team. Students must determine which position they want to hold within the team, recognizing the qualifications and responsibilities of each position.

Vanderbilt medical researchers present hypotheses to each team. Students work in teams to test the hypotheses within a designate period. Vanderbilt research scientists will use videoconferencing technology in order to communicate with the Sci-Tech Research Teams answering questions and providing guidance. Each group will use a Compaq IPAQ handheld to record findings and create a presentation based on these findings. The culminating activity includes team members of the Sci-Tech Research Project visiting a science lab in the Vanderbilt University Medical Center, presenting their findings to the researchers who posed the hypotheses and meeting their research scientist counterpart.

Participating in this project incorporates skills related to understanding the scientific method process, utilizing technology to collect and record data, team building, speaking to a group, utilizing technology to present findings, and skills related to the hypotheses, which are curriculum connected. This teaching strategy combines project-based learning, technology and reality-based teaching in an effort to increase student interest not only in science and technology but also in pursuing careers in the health sciences.