January Deadlines

With the new year will come a number of deadlines for solicitations from a variety of agencies. Applications for solicitations from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS; see page 3 of this newsletter for more details) and the National Institutes of Health (for AIDS-related research) will be due on January 6 and 7. The Department of Defense (DoD) has a deadline of January 12 for its FY2011.1 SBIR solicitation. Remember that proposers can directly contact the Topic Point of Contact through December 12, 2010. When the solicitation opens to proposal submission, however, applications will need to submit technical questions through the DoD’s SBIR/STTR Interactive Topic Information System. The Department of Education (ED) has deadlines for two Fast-Track solicitations in later in January (January 18 and 20). More details on these recently released solicitations are on page 2 of this newsletter. Finally, the National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST) has a deadline of January 28 for its FY2011 Phase I SBIR solicitation. Make sure you register early on all the required websites to ensure you can submit your application on time. The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) and Grants.gov are good places to start if you have not submitted an SBIR or STTR application before. Note, however, that applications to DoD and DHS must be submitted through the respective agency’s submission portal. For previous applicants, keep in mind that your CCR registration must be renewed or updated at least every 12 months. Also keep in mind that the recent Grants.gov security build may require you to set new passwords and provide other updates.

SBIR Hall of Fame Announced

The Small Business Administration has announced that 2011 will be the first year for SBIR Hall of Fame Awards. These honorary awards will be made to those small firms judged to exemplify notable lifetime achievement in innovation research and that have achieved extraordinary success as a result of the SBIR program. Nominations are due December 15, 2010, and SBIR Hall of Fame honorees will be recognized February 15, 2011, along with 2011 Tibbetts Award recipients (see p. 3 of this newsletter) at a national ceremony to be held in Washington, DC.

For more information, visit: http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/programs/sbir/tibbetts/index.html.
Department of Education FastTrack Solicitation

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the Department of Education (ED) has released two solicitations for FY2011 in early December. These solicitations will use the Fast-Track mechanism, where proposals will cover both the Phase I and Phase II periods. Fast Track projects include full-scale development of an education technology product or tool, evaluation of the product or tool in an education delivery or research settings, and plans for the private sector commercialization of the product or tool.

Awards of up to $150,000 will be provided for Phase I projects up to six months in duration, with a Phase II option of up to $900,000 for two year projects that can begin as soon as the Phase I portion ends—potentially eliminating the gap between Phase I and Phase II. Note that IES will not be releasing a solicitation that is solely for Phase I applications during FY2011. Two priority areas are being offered under Solicitation #ED-IES-11-0009: (1) the development of products to improve student learning or teaching efficiency, and (2) the development of tools to facilitate education research.

Solicitation #ED-IES-11-R-0014 includes a single priority area: to develop products to improve infant, toddler, or student outcomes in special education.

For more information, visit: http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sbir/applicant.html.

SBIR.gov Upgrade

Visitors to the SBIR.gov website have probably noticed in recent days that the site is undergoing some changes. As part of SBIR 2.0, the site is being upgraded to provide a more entrepreneur-friendly web portal that makes it easier to find currently open solicitations and news regarding the programs. Site maintenance and the upgrade are scheduled to be completed during the first quarter of 2011.

In the meantime, each of the websites for the 11 participating federal agencies can still be accessed for obtaining program-specific information. The SBIR Gateway is also a great resource for information related to the SBIR/STTR programs, with a search engine to search currently open solicitations, events calendar, and news and other information as well as links to each of the individual agencies’ websites.

Spring National Conference to be Held in Madison

Make plans now to attend the Spring National SBIR/STTR Conference in Madison, WI. The conference will be held April 10-13 at the Monana Terrace Community and Convention Center. The conference will provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs and researchers to learn more about the program nuances of the eleven federal agencies that participate in the SBIR/STTR programs and to meet one-on-one with agency representatives. Attendees will also have an opportunity to more about partnering opportunities with large companies and will be able to network with other technology-based entrepreneurs, researchers and innovators. Preconference workshops on SBIR 101 and Licensing and Commercialization Boot Camp will also be held.

For more information, visit the conference website.
Key Solicitation Dates

- The deadline for NSF’s FY2011 SBIR solicitation is December 3, 2010.
- The deadline for non-AIDS related topics for NIH SBIR/STTR grant applications is December 5, 2010.
- The deadline for the Department of Transportation’s FY11.1 SBIR solicitation is December 13, 2010.
- The deadline for the joint NIH, NSF, DHS, DARPA and USDA robotics Phase I SBIR solicitation is December 20, 2010.
- The deadline for NIH SBIR/STTR Phase II solicitations is February 1, 2011.
- The deadline for the Department of Homeland Security’s FY2011 1 Phase I SBIR solicitation is January 6, 2011.
- The deadline for AIDS-related topics for NIH SBIR/STTR grant applications is January 7, 2011.
- The deadline for the DoD’s 2011.1 SBIR solicitation is January 12, 2011 at 6 am ET.
- The deadlines for the Department of Education’s FastTrack SBIR solicitations will January 18 (ED-JES-11-0009) and January 20 (ED-JES-11-R-0014), 2011.
- The deadline for NIST’s FY2011 Phase I SBIR solicitation is January 28, 2011.

For more information on these solicitations, visit: www.sbir.gov.

Tibbetts Awards Nominations

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2011 Tibbetts Awards. Named for Roland Tibbetts, the father of the SBIR program, these prestigious awards recognize small business, individuals, and organizations that represent outstanding SBIR achievement. Nominations can be made by current and past SBIR awardees, elected officials, support organizations, service providers or others involved with SBIR funded projects.

Nomination packages must include a cover sheet, nomination statement, supporting documentation, photographs, Congressional and media contacts. The national award ceremony will be held in Washington DC on February 15, 2011.

Nomination packages are due December 15, 2010 in PDF format. For more information, visit: http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/sbir/tibbetts/index.html.

Department of Homeland Security FY11.1 Solicitation

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently released its FY11.1 Phase I SBIR solicitation. Under this announcement, DHS will award Phase I contracts of up to $100,000 for projects up to six months in duration.

Six technical topics are available under this solicitation: Vessel Identification and Tracking Technologies; Preparation of Environmental Samples for Biological Detection; Public Safety Broadband Mobile Application for Mission Critical Voice; Monolithic, Electronically and Widely Tunable Semiconductor-based Infrared Laser Sources; Mitigation of Contact Lens, Eye Surgery, Pupil Dilation, and Other Challenges on Iris Recognition; and Improved Firefighter Face Piece Lenses for Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus.

The deadline for proposal submission is 2:00 pm ET on January 6, 2011, and proposals must be submitted electronically through the DHS proposal submission portal.

For more information, visit: https://www.sbir.dhs.gov/index.aspx.
Technology Spotlight

Facile Preparation of Nanoparticles for Biomedical and Chemical Applications (ISURF #3743)

Many potential drug candidates identified through high throughput screening have limited water solubility and thus are not advanced further in the drug development process. Surfactant micelles can be used to solubilize hydrophobic agents in water; however, their utility for drug delivery is limited by the requirement for high critical micelle concentration (CMC), low thermodynamic stability, and because micelle assembly is highly variable. Polymeric micelles have several advantages over surfactant micelles, including the tendency to aggregate at much lower concentrations, better thermodynamic stability and the ability to entrap or covalently attach a drug or other cargo with subsequent controlled release. Unfortunately, physically trapped drugs can leak out the micelles prematurely but covalent attachment between the drug and delivery vessel places severe limits on their structures and also adds complexity to the formulation and production of the ultimate therapeutic package. To overcome these drawbacks, an ISU researcher has developed a method for simple preparation of nanoparticles for biomedical and chemical applications. This method produces surface-crosslinked micelles (SCMs) that have numerous residual alkynes on the surface; multivalent modification can be accomplished easily by adding azide-functionalized polymers or ligands after crosslinking through “click” chemistry. The surface charge may be simply tuned by the cross-linked surfactants or through post-modification. The SCMs have been shown experimentally to be able to release entrapped cargo very rapidly and may have utility for drug delivery and other biomedical and chemical applications.

For more information on this and other technologies available for licensing, go to: www.techtransfer.iastate.edu.

About OIPTT:

OIPTT was formed in 1990 to provide support services to the university community in matters related to intellectual property, to be the first contact related to new innovations, and to market the innovations and negotiate the agreements for transfer of the technology for the Iowa State University Research Foundation’s signature. OIPTT reports to the office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

OIPTT’s mission is to serve the university as the primary resource for intellectual property and related matters and facilitate the disclosure and utilization of university innovations for the benefit of society, the university and its faculty and staff, and contribute to economic development in Iowa when possible.

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