Don’t Miss EPA-USDA SBIR Workshop

Are you interested in agricultural or environmental innovation? Are you seeking funding to develop new agricultural or environmental technologies? Well, there is still time to register for the EPA-SBIR Workshop scheduled for March 24, 2010 in W.H. Thompson Alumni Center on the University of Nebraska-Omaha campus from 12:30 pm to 5:00 pm.

Don’t miss this chance to meet on-one-one with EPA SBIR Program Manager Dr. Jim Gallup or USDA National Program Leader Richard Hegg to get feedback on your research idea and find out more about how to tap into these agencies' SBIR programs. Get firsthand information about this year’s solicitations and research topics. Learn from SBIR awardees and find out what local support services are available to help you prepare a competitive proposal. Entrepreneurs, university researchers, small technology-based companies, small manufacturers and service providers are encouraged to attend.

There is no charge to participate in the workshop, but advance registration is required and space is filling up fast!

Attendees may also register for a fee for an optional grant writing workshop to be held on March 25.

For more information or to register, see: http://nbdc.unomaha.edu/SBIR/.

Tibbetts Awards to Return

After a two year absence due in part to SBIR reauthorization efforts, the National Tibbetts Awards are coming back. Named for Roland Tibbetts, the father of the SBIR program, these prestigious awards recognize small business, individuals, and organizations that represent outstanding SBIR achievement.

In previous years, nominations could be made by current and past SBIR awardees, elected officials, support organizations, service providers or others involved with SBIR funded projects. Nomination packages in the past have included a cover sheet, nomination statement, supporting documentation, photographs, Congressional and media contacts.

More information should be available soon at http://www.tibbettsawards.org.
Grant Writing Tip: Letters of Support

One of the keys for a successful SBIR or STTR application is to establish the credibility of the company. Letters of support for the proposed technology can go far in helping to demonstrate the company has what it takes to complete the project and get a product or service on the market, and are a must if collaborators or subcontractors are involved. Letters of support or interest from a potential customer or strategic partner can indicate that there will be a market for the product once it is developed. (Note though, that letters of support may count towards page limits.)

A good letter of support should be written on letterhead, indicate the enthusiasm for the technology or product or service, detail the expertise a collaborator or consultant brings to the project, and describe what they will contribute to the effort. Letters from customers or partners should identify how the technology will help them solve a need in the market or reach end-users. You can draft letters of support for your collaborators or other partners, but be sure letters from different groups that may be involved in the project are not simply “clones”, since this can suggest the other parties involved may not have a serious commitment to your company and can undermine the letters’ effectiveness.

Also make sure the support letter has a current date and addresses the right technology since letters that appear old or recycled can actually undercut support for the project in the eyes of reviewers because they may question whether there is still active engagement between the company and the author of the support letter.

Upcoming EPA SBIR Solicitation

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to release its FY2010 Phase I SBIR solicitation on March 15, 2010. Research topic areas for this opportunity will include Green Building; Innovation in Manufacturing; Nanotechnology; Greenhouse Gases; Drinking Water and Water Monitoring; Water Infrastructure; Monitoring and Control of Air Pollution; Biofuels and Vehicle Emission Reduction; Waste Management and Monitoring; and Homeland Security.

Funding of up to $80,000 for Phase I projects up to 6 months in duration will be available under this solicitation.

The EPA’s FY2010 Phase I SBIR solicitation will be released on March 15, 2010

Applications will be due on or about May 1, 2010. EPA does not use electronic proposal submission: hard copies must be submitted in time for receipt by the proposal deadline.

More information is available on the EPA’s SBIR website: http://epa.gov/ncerqa/sbir/index.html

NSF Solicitation to be Released Later this Month

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has indicated that its next Phase I solicitation will be released in mid to late March.

While the research topics being offered for this solicitation have not yet been announced, previous solicitations have included topics under the areas of Bio-tech and Chemical Technologies, Educational Applications, Information and Communications Technologies, and Nanotechnology, Advanced Materials and Manufacturing. In addition, NSF has raised the award ceiling for Phase I projects to $150,000 under earlier solicitations.

Note that Phase I proposal requirements for NSF differ from other agencies in that proposals must also include a section on commercial potential. Also, contact with the cognizant program manager is strongly encouraged prior to submitting a proposal.

Applicants must be registered in the Central Contractor Registry and in NSF’s FastLane system, and proposals must be submitted electronically. For more information, see: http://www.nsf.gov/eng/iip/sbir/.
The National Cancer Institute (NCI) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has recently issued two Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA). Under PA-10-079 and PA-10-80, NCI is seeking SBIR and STTR applications, respectively, for image-guided cancer interventions. Proposals for research & development in the integration and optimization of component systems, such as but not limited to, energy delivery and monitoring; drug and gene delivery; robotics; nanodevices and nanoparticles; real-time data registration, analysis and display; device tracking; microelectromechanical systems (MEMS) and microfluidics; physiological monitoring; and intraluminal devices, into an imaging system as a fully integrated IGI system, and clinical evaluations of the IGI systems for cancer is encouraged. Budgets of up to $150,000 per year for projects up to two years in duration may be requested for Phase I under these FOAs; budgets of up to $1,000,000 per year for projects up to three years may be requested for Phase II.

STTR Partnering Service Returns

The SBIR Gateway has recently that it will again be offering a free partnering service for the current DoD STTR FY10.A solicitation. This service, which debuted for the DoD FY09 STTR solicitations, allows universities, federally funded research and development centers (FFDRCs), and other qualifying non-profit research organizations to review the topic offerings, check topics of interest, and fill out a contact information form. Small businesses seeking research partners can in turn query their topics of interest and identify what research organizations may be interested in partnering. Completing the form and searching for partners is quick and easy. Anyone interested in this solicitation is encouraged to visit the partnering link here. Note that the SBIR Gateway is offering this service independently of the DoD.

Key Solicitation Dates

- The application deadline for NCI’s Phase II Bridge Awards is March 1, 2010.
- The application deadline for the Department of Education’s NIDRR/OSERS Phase I SBIR solicitation is March 15, 2010.
- The deadline for DoD’s FY2010A STTR solicitation is March 24, 2010 at 6:00 am ET.
- The deadline for non AIDS-related topics for NIH SBIR/STTR grant applications is April 5, 2010.
- The deadline for the EPA’s Phase I SBIR solicitation is May 1, 2010.
- The deadline for AIDS-related topics for NIH SBIR/STTR grant applications is May 7, 2010.

- The DOT’s FY2010.2 Phase I SBIR solicitation will close on or about May 15, 2010.

For more information on these solicitations, visit: www.sbir.gov.
Impact Based Odor Control System
(ISURF #3757)

Odor management for concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO) is of major concern for livestock producers and the communities in which they operate. Odor from CAFOs can be an annoyance, and approaches for odor control have included bioremediation, installation of methane digesters, and mechanical separation of manure solids from liquids. Many of these approaches are expensive to implement and require high upfront capital expenditures with a long payback period. Biofiltration—which uses microorganisms to break down odor-causing gas components in the ventilation air of a barn or animal building—is another approach to odor control. Biofilters are relatively simple to construct and operate, and are also quite effective at removing odors; however, they also require a large area for use, and may require higher capacity fans to move the ventilation air through the treatment filter. The operation time required for these fans can thus add to the expense of odor treatment. To overcome these drawbacks, ISU researchers have developed an impact-based odor control system.

The operation strategy that can be periodically implemented, and controls odor dispersion in accordance with atmospheric conditions—the controller mitigates odor only if warranted by current conditions. As a result, operation time and costs are reduced, making this an economical strategy for odor control.

For more information on this and other technologies available for licensing, go to:

www.techtransfer.iastate.edu.