Corvida Medical Awarded Phase II

Iowa City-based Corvida Medical has been awarded a multi-million dollar Phase II SBIR grant from the National Cancer Institute for their project titled an Innovative Device to Improve Safety of Preparing and Administering Chemotherapy.

The NCI funding will be used to support the company's development of an innovative, disposable closed system transfer device (CSTD) for the preparation and administration of highly toxic pharmaceuticals such as chemotherapeutics used to treat cancer patients. The grant will help offset the costs of moving the company's product through the U.S. Food and Drug Administration clearance process and to conduct a multi-pharmacy practice trial with several leading U.S. cancer centers formally collaborating with the company on the promising SBIR project.

While it has been well documented that significant occupational hazards confront healthcare workers that are responsible for compounding and administering drugs used in chemotherapy, CSTDs currently used to mitigate these risks suffer from drawbacks such as leakage, needle sticks, inaccuracies, inefficiencies, and repetitive stress injuries. As a result, long-term, occupational exposure to these highly toxic drugs causes serious health problems in healthcare personnel, including cancers, infertility, miscarriages, birth defects, and congenital malformations. The innovative, disposable CSTD device being developed by Corvida will provide superior drug containment capabilities while at the same time improving the accuracy of chemotherapy treatment, increasing efficiencies and lowering costs.

For more information about Corvida Medical, contact John Slump, john.slump@corvidamedical.com.

Register for Fall SBIR/STTR Conference

Registration has opened for the Fall National SBIR/STTR Conference, to be held November 13-15 in Portland, OR.

The conference will feature critical updates on programmatic changes, overviews of the participating agencies' SBIR/STTR programs, one-on-one sessions with program managers, federal laboratory representatives, and large companies, and ample opportunities for networking with researchers, entrepreneurs, and potential investors or partners. General conference registration is $595 and includes all sessions (except pre-conference workshops), receptions, materials and some meals. More information is available here.
NASA Phase I Solicitation

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) opened its 2012 Phase I SBIR and STTR solicitations September 17, 2012. There are a number of changes in these offerings compared to previous years, including a decrease in the number of allowable pages (20 for SBIR and 19 for STTR applications), firm certifications, and electronic endorsements. Also note that while the SBIR and STTR offerings are combined into a single solicitation, research topics, rules and procedures are typically distinct for each.

SBIR research topics align with NASA’s three Mission Directorates—Aeronautics Research, Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate, and Science—and there are a number of topics and subtopics for each. STTR research topics correspond to strategic technology research areas of interest at the NASA Centers. The application deadline is November 29 at 5:00 pm ET. Proposals must be submitted using NASA’s Electronic Handbook, which requires registration prior to submission. Samples of proposals and required forms, as well as contract deliverables needed by the NASA SBIR/STTR programs can be viewed at NASA’s SBIR/STTR Firms Library. NASA also provides a Participation Guide with information on how to prepare a Phase I proposal as well as key contact information. For more information about NASA’s SBIR/STTR programs, visit http://sbir.gsfc.nasa.gov/SBIR.html.

Fraud, Waste and Abuse

You may have noticed information regarding the reporting of fraud, waste and abuse popping up on the SBIR/STTR websites for agencies participating in the programs. This is a result of programmatic changes stemming from last year’s reauthorization. Agencies must now include on their website, and in each solicitation, a telephone hotline number or web-based method for reporting fraud, waste and abuse; include on the agency's website successful prosecutions of fraud, waste and abuse in the SBIR Program; designate at least one individual to serve as liaison for the SBIR/STTR Program to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the agency’s Suspension and Debarment Official (SDO); and maintain procedures to enforce accountability (e.g., creating templates for referrals to the OIG or SDO).

You can read more about the SBA’s plan for implementing additional program changes on Sean Greene’s blog. Mr. Greene is Associate Administrator for Investment and the Special Advisor for Innovation at SBA.

NIH FOA

The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently released a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) inviting SBIR applications for New Technologies for the Study of Lymphatics in the Digestive and Urinary Systems. Under PA-12-258, NIDDK is seeking applications for the development of reagents, tools and technologies that will accelerate research into aspects of lymphatic vessel physiology and pathophysiology related to health and disease of digestive system and urinary tract organs. Standard application deadlines apply, and proposals must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov. Applicants must also be registered in the eRA Commons.

For more information about NIH’s SBIR program, see http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/sbir.htm.
NSF Phase I SBIR Solicitation

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has released its FY2013 Phase I SBIR solicitation. Four broad research topic areas, each with several subtopics, are available under this solicitation, including: Biological and Chemical Technologies (BC); Education Applications (EA); Electronics, Information and Communication Technologies (EI); and Nanotechnology, Advanced Materials, and Manufacturing (NM).

NSF anticipates making approximately 200 awards of up to $150,000 for projects up to six months in duration under this solicitation. Proposals should be for projects that are high-risk and have high potential for commercial payback. 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, and letters of support for the technology (no more than three) are also strongly encouraged. Organizations may submit only two proposals for this solicitation; in addition the project principal investigator (PI) or co-PIs may participate in only one submitted proposal. New requirements include SBIR/STTR Funding Agreement Certification, Fraud, Waste and Abuse Notification, and registration in the System for Award Management.

Proposals will be accepted beginning November 3 and the application deadline is December 3, 2012 at 5:00 pm proposer’s time. Applications must be submitted electronically through NSF’s FastLane System.

NCI Bridge Awards

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has announced the availability of bridge funding to support the next stage of development in NIH-supported Phase II projects in the areas of cancer therapeutics, interventional devices, imaging technologies, or diagnostics or prognostics. Up to 10 awards will be made in FY13 under RFA-CA-12-023, and this opportunity is available to small companies with current or recently expired SBIR Phase II grants or contracts. Application deadlines are November 6, 2012 and March 6, 2013, and applicants must contact the SBIR Development Center prior to submission so that NCI can arrange for applications to be accepted.

For more information, visit: http://sbir.cancer.gov/funding/phase2bridgeaward.asp.

Key Solicitation Dates

- The deadline for NIH’s 2013 Phase I SBIR contract solicitation is November 13, 2012.
- The due date for letters of intent for NSF’s FY2013 Phase I STTR solicitation is November 20, 2012. The application deadline is December 20, 2012.
- The deadline for NASA’s 2012 Phase I SBIR/STTR solicitation is November 29, 2012.
- The deadline for NSF’s FY2013 Phase I SBIR solicitation is December 3, 2012.
- The deadline for non AIDS-related topics for NIH SBIR/STTR grant applications is December 5, 2012.

For more information on these solicitations, visit: www.sbir.gov
Contemporary Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) Viruses for Improved Vaccines (ISURF #4007)

Bovine viral diarrhea is disease that affects cattle and other ruminants which is caused by bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDV). BVDV infection may be mild to very severe with death of the afflicted animal, and infection may lead to respiratory and reproductive problems. The disease primarily affects young cattle and usually results in mucosal lesions; infection by BVDV must be differentiated from infections caused by other viruses that produce diarrhea and mucosal lesions. The disease also results in significant economic losses to producers globally each year. BVDV is found worldwide, and cattle that are persistently infected can serve as reservoirs for the disease. Treatment for BVDV is usually supportive therapy, while control is through management practices (e.g., good biosecurity), elimination of persistently infected animals, and vaccination. While there are a number of BVDV vaccines available, vaccination programs do not provide complete herd protection in preventing BVDV, which may be due to antigenic diversity of strains found in the field compared to those used for vaccination. For example, most commercially available modified live vaccines do not appear to provide protection against BVDV-1b, a strain that emerged in the 1990s in persistently infected cattle. An ISU investigator has purified a set of contemporary BVD virus isolates from disease cases that comprise various genotypes (e.g., type 1a, 1b or 2) and biotypes (cytopathic or non-cytopathic strains); some of these isolates came from diseased animals vaccinated with one of the available commercial BVD vaccine products, suggesting that currently circulating viruses are different from the vaccine viruses. These isolates may thus have utility for the development of improved vaccines could provide better protection against contemporary strains, as well as for diagnostics and as challenge strains to evaluate the efficacy of vaccines.

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