What are the SBIR and STTR Programs?

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program is a set-aside program (2.5% of an agency's extramural budget) for domestic small business concerns to engage in Research/Research and Development (R/R&D) that has the potential for commercialization.

The SBIR program was established under the Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982 (P.L. 97-219), and has helped thousands of small businesses compete for federal research and development awards that help drive innovation and economic development.

The STTR program was established by the Small Business Technology Transfer Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-564, Title II), and differs from the SBIR program in several ways. Most notably, the STTR program requires a public/private partnership and combines the research strengths of nonprofit laboratories or universities with the entrepreneurial skills of small businesses to transfer innovative technologies from the laboratory to the marketplace.

Federal agencies with extramural R&D budgets over $1 billion are required to administer STTR programs using an annual set-aside of 0.30%. Currently, five Federal agencies participate in the STTR program: DOD, DOE, DHHS (NIH), NASA and NSF.

Participation in the SBIR/STTR programs can help small business fund high risk R&D projects, as well as create visibility and credibility.

For more information go to: www.sba.gov/sbir/

NIH SBIR/STTR Applicants: Get Ready for On-line Submission

Electronic submission is coming! NIH SBIR/STTR applicants will be required to submit their proposal electronically, effective December 1, 2005.

To facilitate the electronic submission process, companies are encouraged to register now, as it can take several weeks to complete the registration process.

Go to: www.grants.gov/GetStarted and follow the step-by-step instructions. NIH applicants must also complete a one-time registration in the eRA Commons: https://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/

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Up-Coming Events

• Iowa Venture Capital & Entrepreneur Conference, September 15, 2005, Des Moines, IA

• Growing Biotechnology in Iowa Conference, September 21, Ames, IA

• Small Towns and Economic Shocks: Business Networks and Entrepreneurial Communities, September 28, Ames, IA
The Fall 2005 National SBIR/STTR Conference will be held November 14-17 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Albany City Center, Albany, NY. This is a great opportunity to learn more about this $2 billion resource for small businesses.

Representatives from the various federal agencies will provide a program overview and updates. Informational sessions will be presented on: Homeland Security, Valuation of Intellectual Property, Basic Proposal Preparation, Patents and Licensing, Business Incubators, Accounting for SBIR/STTR, Universities as a Resource, Commercializing, and many others.

Special pre-conference workshops and sessions are also being offered. A nanotech briefing and orientation session for new participants will be held on November 14. A full-day Phase I proposal writing workshop will also be held on that date.

Additional information on the conference, including the program agenda, hotel information and online registration forms, can be found at: www.sbirworld.com/Albany/

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**PHS/NIH Releases Its 2006-1 Contracts Solicitation**

PHS/NIH has released its 2006-1 contracts solicitation. Proposals will be accepted starting August 3, and must be received by November 4, 2005. This offering is distinct from the currently open 2005-2 Omnibus SBIR/STTR solicitation. Topics are much more specific in the Contracts solicitation compared to the broad offerings in the Grants solicitation and include subjects from the National Cancer Institute, the National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention, the National Immunization Program, the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, the National Institute for Mental Health, the National Institutes of Drug Abuse, and the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

The PHS/NIH 2006-2 Contracts solicitation can be downloaded at: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/sbir.htm

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**NSF Releases Its FY 2006 Solicitation**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has released its FY 2006 SBIR solicitation. Proposals will be accepted beginning November 8, 2005 and the solicitation will close December 8, 2005.

This announcement has three major proposals topics, each with number of subtopics. The main topic areas include: Biotechnology, Chemical-based Technology, and Emerging Opportunities.

Note that all proposals will be screened administratively and technically for their adherence to certain guidelines. Proposals that do not meet these requirements will be rejected as inappropriate. Pay close attention to the guidelines to ensure that your proposal gets reviewed.

The solicitation and proposal preparation instructions can be viewed at: www.nsf.gov/eng/sbir/
Successful vaccination often requires multiple immunization shots or boosters to offer complete protection. In addition, generation of the appropriate type of immune response is also critical for developing immunity, and may be dependent on the type of adjuvant used in the vaccine preparation. ISU researchers have developed a single-dose, controlled release vaccine formulation based on polyanhydride microspheres.

The microspheres can be loaded with antigenic proteins for immunization, and the microsphere composition controls the release of the antigen. The need for alum-based adjuvants that tend to induce Th2 immunity is obviated. Additionally, preferential Th1 versus Th2 immune responses can be induced based on how the microspheres are loaded with antigen. This type of vaccination strategy may improve protection against intracellular pathogens, and be especially useful for the development of vaccines against certain cancers and viruses. These single dose controlled release vaccine formulations have the potential to simplify vaccination schedules and facilitate mass immunization campaigns.

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

Proposal Writing Tip

Proposal writing is hard work! Make the most of your efforts by allowing ample time to prepare. Most SBIR/STTR proposal preparation experts suggest taking eight to ten weeks to complete your proposal. During this time, the applicants should choose a proposal topic, consider the various agencies’ solicitation topics, and select which one to respond to. When responding to a solicitation, the applicant should identify how their research and development capabilities fits the agency’s needs. The small business should also spend time identifying the project director, lining up consultants or subcontractors, and developing a detailed outline or white paper.

Follow the solicitation instructions carefully, as these can vary from agency to agency. Failure to adhere to page limitations or font requirements can cause your proposal to be rejected without review!
Upcoming Department of Energy FY 2006 Phase I Funding Opportunities

The Department of Energy anticipates publishing its FY2006 solicitation for Phase I SBIR and STTR applications on September 21, 2005. A detailed Funding Opportunity Announcement, Opportunity Number DE-FG01-05ER05-28, describing research areas in which applications are sought will be available at http://e-center.doe.gov. Small businesses with strong research capabilities in science or engineering in any of the approximately 49 research areas sought are encouraged to apply. The deadline for submission of Phase I grant applications is December 2, 2005, at 8:00 p.m. EST. Applications will only be accepted electronically using the Department’s Industry Interactive Procurement System (IIPS).

The DOE expects to make approximately 260 SBIR and 30 STTR Phase I awards of up to $100,000 for a period of up to nine months for demonstrate the feasibility of an idea. Phase I grant recipients may apply for Phase II awards of up to $750,000 for a period of up to two years.

For more information relating to the DOE’s SBIR and STTR programs, including a list of the research areas, go to www.science.doe.gov/sbir or call 301-903-1414.

Applicants must have a Dunn and Bradstreet Universal Number (DUNS) and be registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). A DUNS number is free by calling 1-866-705-5711.