

THE CONCEPT

Small Business Innovation Research & Small Business Technology Transfer

HELLO INNOVATORS



First and foremost, I would like to thank all the small businesses and research institutions that submitted proposals in response to our 2018 SBIR/STTR Program Solicitation. We received a total of 1,653 proposals: 1,502 proposals for SBIR and 150 proposals for STTR. Our team has been working diligently since mid-March to thoroughly review and evaluate proposals. We are announcing the

awardees on May 25th, moving forward to contract negotiations in the summer, and the start of Phase I shortly thereafter.

We are staying busy! Not only are the 2017 Program awardees progressing towards Phase II but we are also beginning preparations

for the 2019 Program cycle. To that end, you'll find articles in this newsletter regarding our upcoming Request for Information (RFI), asking for your feedback on the 2018 Solicitation to help us develop the next Solicitation, and upcoming events where you can meet our program representatives in person. I urge you to take about 15 minutes to respond. This feedback is one of the first elements we review to help improve our Solicitation year after year.

It is an exciting time for our Program as we continue to modernize and see successes from our alums! I am deeply grateful for the continued participation of small businesses like you and research institutions across the U.S. I feel great satisfaction seeing collaboration at its finest through the SBIR/STTR Program and look forward to seeing how we will accomplish NASA's many missions together!

Carlos Torrez
Program Manager

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KEY PROGRAM MILESTONES

- SBIR 2017 Phase II – Selections Announced on March 7th
- STTR 2017 Phase II – Proposals Due June 8th
- SBIR 2018 Phase I – Selection Announcement on May 25th
- STTR 2018 Phase I – Selection Announcement on May 25th
- I-Corps Proposals – Due June 18th



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

NASA SBIR/STTR

The NASA SBIR/STTR Program utilizes an annual Request for Information (RFI) to gather your feedback on the Solicitation. This year we are focused on getting your feedback on the subtopics in last year's solicitation as well as the submissions experience itself for those that applied.

This year's RFI will be released through FedBizOps and the Electronic Handbook (EHB), open from May 14th through June 4th.

Who is Encouraged to Submit Feedback?

- » If you submitted a proposal between January and March 2018, we are looking to understand your experience and suggestions regarding the Solicitation.
- » If you started a proposal, but did not complete it, we are also looking for your feedback to find out why you did not submit if relevant to the process.
- » If you were thinking of, but did not submit a proposal.

The information you provide is critical for our Solicitation development, which begins to take shape in late Summer.

SYSTEM MODERNIZATION UPDATES

Many of you are aware that the Electronic Handbook (EHB) went through modernization for this year's proposal submissions. Thank you for your ongoing feedback. We use your valuable input to continuously enhance the system. Please keep it coming!

MODERNIZATION FOR EXISTING AWARDEES

If you are an existing awardee, you will experience the modernized system in June when we are releasing the new interface. While the processes will stay the same, your interface will be new and you'll have access to additional helpful features. Stay tuned for communications regarding these system changes, opportunities for training, and tips.

FEATURED GRADUATE SUCCESS

"Just wanted to let you know we are having an incredible Market response on X57 Battery Technology we pioneered around lightweight containment & thermal management [through the SBIR Program]...To us it is very clear that had NASA not chosen to work through these integration issues on the X57 that the industry would not be where it is today. We still obviously have some ways to go to help mature Battery technology to ensure safety and operability, but it is very exciting to see our concept have such incredible commercial response!"

Nathan Millecam
CEO, EP Systems
North Logan, UT

MORE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

NASA wants small businesses to succeed. There are several initiatives emphasizing commercialization provided by the Program. We encourage you to maximize your opportunities by learning more and considering these initiatives.

I-CORPS

The NASA I-Corps Program enables small businesses to increase the odds of accelerating the process of developing their SBIR/STTR technologies into a repeatable and scalable business model. This competitive program helps develop your business model hypotheses using the Business Model Canvas and testing those hypotheses through the Customer Development Interview process.

This year, NASA will fund up to \$10,000 for each SBIR team participation and \$25,000 for each STTR team participation. If you are announced as a Phase I awardee on May 25th and previously opted-in to the I-Corps Training Program during the Solicitation Period, you must submit a Proposal by June 18th.

For more information, including submission guidelines: sbir.nasa.gov/content/I-Corps.

PHASE II-E

The objective of the Phase II-E option is to further encourage the advancement of innovations developed under Phase II via an option to further R/R&D efforts underway on active Phase II contracts that are in good standing with NASA. Eligible small businesses must secure a non-SBIR/STTR investor to contribute funding towards further enhancing the research to qualify for this option. The investor may be a non-SBIR/STTR NASA or NASA Program; or may be an investor external to NASA, from another government agency or the private sector, depending on the strategy being pursued for enhancing the technology for further research, infusion, and/or commercialization.

Small business who are interested must submit a Phase II-E application through the NASA SBIR/STTR EHB during Phase II.

For more information, visit: sbir.nasa.gov/content/post-phase-ii-initiatives.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Federal and State Technology (FAST) Partnership Program

The funding opportunity announcements for FAST s open May 4, 2018 through June 20, 2018. See www.grants.gov for full announcement information.:

The FAST Partnership Program provides one-year funding for organizations to execute state/regional programs to increase the number of SBIR/STTR proposals (through outreach and financial support); increase the number of SBIR/STTR awards (through technical assistance and mentoring); and better prepare SBIR/STTR awardees for commercialization success (through technical assistance and mentoring).

Read more information on FAST at www.sbir.gov/about-fast or write fast@sba.gov.

See the full announcement at www.grants.gov.

In 2018, NASA I-CORPS will fund up to \$10,000 for each SBIR team participation and \$25,000 for each STTR team participation.

NATIONAL SBIR/STTR SPRING INNOVATION CONFERENCE

May 13-16, 2018 - Anaheim, CA

techconnectworld.com/SBIRSpring2018

Interact with representatives from all 11 SBIR/STTR programs, industry leaders and veteran SBIR/STTR awardees to learn how to access SBIR/STTR, build partnerships, and create successful commercialization strategies. Opportunities include Roundtable discussions, 1-on-1 meetings, and Conference sessions. SBIR Conference attendees receive online access to 1-on-1 SBIR Meeting Site.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

November 2018 - Colorado

Look out for emails and check our website for future updates:

sbir.nasa.gov

We are in early stages of planning our annual event. This year, our focus will be 1) getting started with our Program and 2) featuring opportunities to commercialize or infuse with a NASA Mission. We are not hosting this event, but rather partnering with a variety of regional government agencies and national associations to host an exciting and valuable event.

SBIR ROAD TOUR

Eastern, June 18-22, 2018

Pacific Northwest, July 17-19, 2018

New England, August 20-24, 2018

The SBIR Road Tour is a national outreach effort to convey the non-dilutive technology funding opportunity provided through the SBIR/STTR Program. The Road Tour involves representatives from all 11 SBIR agencies (including NASA) and seeks to reach out to small businesses across the country.

Come see if we are visiting near your location: sbirroadtour.com



NASA's interest in DMs was a critical moment for fledgling optics technology. SBIR funding gave our company a significant boost in R&D so we could refine the first production of our DMs.

Michael Helmbrecht
President, Iris AO
Berkeley, CA

FEATURED SUCCESS STORY

Challenge

Stars are brighter than the planets they orbit. As a result, starlight can lower the contrast in images sent back to Earth from a telescope traveling in space, making it harder to detect planets light years away. To solve this problem, NASA sought to build a telescope that can filter out direct light from stars that limit the visibility of exoplanets.

Solution

NASA enlisted the private sector to develop deformable mirror (DM) technology as a key component of starlight blocking instruments such as the Visible Nulling Coronagraph (VNC). The DM is used to correct optical aberrations that otherwise reduce the resolution of an image. By altering the shape of the DM surface, NASA scientists have more control to adjust the VNC with increased precision to block the starlight. For NASA's purposes, these DMs needed to meet strict requirements for stability, resolution, and accuracy levels for high-contrast astrophysical imaging.

Iris AO's innovative approach for the telescope's VNC was to develop a small DM made up of many tiny mirrors. Iris AO's mirror technology consists of hexagonal segments closely packed together to form the surface of the DM, which enables advanced control when paired with other optics. The traditional DM consisting of a single, continuous surface does not afford the same control.

Iris AO's products derived from SBIR funding are now available for world-wide distribution by Edmund Optics – approximately \$2 Million in revenue is generated annually from this technology.

Read the full story and many others: sbir.nasa.gov/success-stories.