Advancing Small Business Innovation

NCATS SBIR and STTR Programs

NCATS works to transform the translational science process so that new prevention, detection and treatment technologies can be delivered to patients faster. Through its Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, NCATS fosters small business participation in research and development as well as private-sector technology commercialization. These programs are engines of innovation, offering grants, contracts and technical assistance to small businesses and research organizations.

Funding Benefits

- **Stable and predictable**: one of the largest funding sources of early-stage life sciences
- **IP rights** are retained by the small business
- **Not a loan**: non-dilutive capital
- Projects undergo rigorous peer review, which awardees leverage to attract other funding and collaborations

Funding Types

- **Omnibus Grant Solicitation**
  Applications due January 5, April 5 and September 5
- **Contracts**
  Applications typically due in October/November
- **Grants in Targeted Areas**
  Application deadlines vary
- **Direct to Phase II**
  Application deadlines vary

Have Questions? Need Help?

Schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss a project idea. E-mail NCATS-SBIRSTTR@mail.nih.gov to get started.

**Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)**

supports early-stage research and development projects at small businesses

**SBIR & STTR Programs**

support entrepreneurial researchers as they engage in research and development and seek to commercialize new products that will have public benefit

**Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR)**

helps small businesses formally collaborate with a research institution in Phase I and Phase II

SBIR and STTR Program Structure

**Phase I**

- Establish technical merit, feasibility and potential for commercialization.
- Support: Usually $150,000 over six months. With proper justification, you can propose more time and funding to establish the technical merit and feasibility of the project.

**Phase II**

- Continue research and R&D efforts initiated in Phase I.
- Commercialization plan required.
- Support: Usually $1 million over two years for SBIR and $750,000 over two years for STTR.

  **Note:** Small businesses can apply for SBIR Direct to Phase II if they have performed Phase I research using other funding.

**Phase III**

- Commercialization stage using non-STTR/SBIR funds to pursue Phase I and II goals.

**Fast Track**

Apply for Fast Track consideration by submitting one application for Phase I and Phase II for a combined application review.
Is My Small Business Eligible?

Small Business Innovation Research

The NIH SBIR program is a set-aside program for domestic small businesses to engage in biomedical R&D that has the potential for commercialization.

Under the SBIR program, the PI’s primary employment must be with the small business. However, if multiple PIs are applying for funding, the second PI need not be primarily employed by the small business.

To be eligible for the SBIR program:

- The small business must be an organized for-profit U.S. business.

- The small business must be an individual proprietorship, partnership, limited liability company, corporation, joint venture, association, trust or cooperative, except that where the form is a joint venture, there must be less than 50 percent participation by foreign business entities in the joint venture:
  - (i) The small business must be more than 50 percent directly owned and controlled by one or more individuals (who are citizens of or permanent resident aliens in the U.S.), other business concerns (each of which is more than 50 percent directly owned and controlled by individuals who are citizens or permanent resident aliens of the U.S.), or any combination of these;
  - OR
  - (ii) SBIR only: The small business must be more than 50 percent owned by multiple venture capital operating companies, hedge funds, private equity firms or any combination of these. No single venture capital operating company, hedge fund or private equity firm may own more than 50 percent of the concern;
  - OR
  - (iii) The small business must be a joint venture in which each entity to the joint venture meets the requirements above.

- The small business must have, including its affiliates, no more than 500 employees.

Small Business Technology Transfer

The NIH STTR program is a set-aside program to facilitate cooperative R&D between small businesses and U.S. research institutions, with the potential for commercialization.

Under the STTR program, primary employment is not stipulated. The STTR program requires research partners at universities and other nonprofit research institutions to have a formal collaborative relationship with the small business.

To be eligible for the STTR program:

- The small business must be a for-profit U.S. business.

- The U.S. research institution must be a nonprofit.

- An agreement must identify the allocation of intellectual property rights.

- A formal cooperative R&D arrangement must exist with a 40 percent minimum effort by small business and a minimum 30 percent effort by a U.S. research institution.

- The Principal Investigator’s (PI) primary employment may be with either the small business or the research institution.