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Member Newsletter

A service to the members of American Grant Writers' Association, Inc.

WINTER 2018 | QUARTERLY E-NEWSLETTER | VOLUME 12 ISSUE 1

Table of Contents

Special Interest Groups

Economic Development - 2
Grant Management – 4
Healthcare - 7
Justice – 8
Research – 9

Next AGWA Grant Conference will be Summer 2019

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From the Executive Director

Member Services

Some members work in an office where no other staff or supervisor has grant writing experience. So, the association has created the following Grant Coaching services that are available to AGWA Members only.

- **Review Coach for a Foundation Grant**
  The coach will provide a professional review of one letter or proposal for a Foundation or Corporate Grant including the Budget and Budget Narrative for program support, general operating support, or capital support.
- **Review Coach for a Government Grant**
  The coach will provide a professional review of one Grant Application for a Federal, State, or Local Government grant. The application review includes the project narrative, budget, budget narrative, and attachments.
- **Grant Writing Coach for a Foundation Program Grant or General Operating Grant**
  The coach will guide the member in the process of writing one Letter of Inquiry, Proposal, or Application for a Foundation or Corporate Grant for program support or general operating support.
- **Grant Writing Coach for a Government Grant**
  The coach will guide the member to prepare the application template, project narrative, budget, budget narrative, and attachments.

To learn more, login to Members Only, then click on "Grant Coaching for Members Only.

Submitted by John G. Porter, Ph.D., CG
Executive Director

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Congratulations Certified Grant Writers®

The following members earned the Certified Grant Writer® professional credential in Dallas, TX on October 20, 2017 or Atlanta, GA on December 5, 2017:

Walter Ryan Adams, Certified Grant Writer®
Jared Aragona, Ph.D., Certified Grant Writer®
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Mark Dutter, Certified Grant Writer®
Anne Eling, Certified Grant Writer®
J. Yvette Gardner, Ph.D., Certified Grant Writer®
Kristin Garrison, Certified Grant Writer®
Tami Herndon, Certified Grant Writer®
Suzanne Hibbard, Certified Grant Writer®
Megan Mitchell, Certified Grant Writer®
Anisa Palmer, Certified Grant Writer®
Sara Rossi Statis, Certified Grant Write

Congratulations Certified Grant Writers®

The following members have renewed his/her Certified Grant Writer® credential:
Pauline Benning, Certified Grant Writer®
Maria Cabrera, Certified Grant Writer®
Laura Horsley, Certified Grant Writer®
Cindy Theiler, Certified Grant Writer®
Tara Thomas, Certified Grant Writer®

Grant Awards

Yarnell Fire District was awarded $23,000 from Firehouse Public Safety Foundation to procure self-contained breathing apparatus. Congratulations to Denise Roggio, CGW, who was the sole grant writer.

Economic Development SIG

Revitalizing Rural America

Communities are stronger when more farms and businesses are owned by the people who live there. While quality jobs are assets to the community, self-employment cannot be overlooked. It has been proven time and time again that local owners who have "skin in the game" are more invested and committed to the community than larger corporations that have headquarters located in other states, or countries. Communities that invest in themselves with quality schools, recreation, etc. will end

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Welcome Business Members

Astute Virtual Assistants LLC
Camille Bryant

City of Trimont, MN
Brenda Nielson

dba Geertje Fereday
Geertje Fereday, CGW

Fort Myers Police Department
Khandyce Mosely

Hill Place Grant Consulting LLC
Catherine Sperry

Joy Ranch, Inc.
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KHL Grant Services, LLC
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North Berge Housing Authority
Sandra Gonzales, CGW
(renewal)

North Miami Police Department
Carin Varela Cabral, CGW
(renewal)

Priceless Dreams
Pamela Price

up attracting young couples and families that will provide for increased economic growth. Agriculture and non-farm rural development must be integrated for the community to thrive, as one cannot carry the entire burden of growth.

A rural economic strategy that has proven to be effective is small entrepreneurship based on locally owned and owner-operated small businesses. Commonly known as "micro enterprise development", this strategy has proven to be effective in rural communities where attracting manufacturers and large employers has been difficult. For example, in Nebraska's farm and ranch communities over 70 percent of new jobs are coming from non-farm self-employment. Another benefit that lends itself to this strategy is the opportunity for consumer spending to occur right in the local community, providing for new wealth that enhances the tax base.

In many small towns, community development is economic development. Community development is considered to include a broader set of activities aimed at building the capacity of the community rather than a focus on a certain sector. Communities that include economic and broader, longer-term, community development goals stand to gain more than communities that approach growth piece by piece. As an example, a community that considers redevelopment in a more comprehensive way such as including blighted properties in its strategy will identify the larger barrier and overcome barriers to growth that will pay off for years.

Being proactive, as opposed to reactive, can be measured by a rural town's willingness and ability to act on a particular challenge before it becomes a problem. When tackling a number of small scale challenges in the community and seeding the roots for teamwork, rural communities find themselves in an excellent position to act when an opportunity comes along such as a relocation of a production facility to the local community. Rural communities must be open to embracing chance, and assuming risk. Local leaders must be ready to dismiss the "well, this is just the way it's been done" attitude. As an example, in the face of growing tourism economy downtown merchants must be ready to embrace change and adapt their business models to the shifting needs and wants of the consumers.

Smaller communities must also embrace the importance of establishing and maintaining a broadly held vision, including goals for all manner of development activities. A wise strategy would be to include representatives from local government, community organizations, for-profit and non-profit interests, resource providers and community residents to open door meetings to share thoughts and ideas related to community economic development. In small rural towns, people are the most important resource and communities with limited resources cannot afford to exclude anyone from planning or development efforts. A committed group of residents who are willing to "put in the time" for the community can change the fate that once seemed cemented.

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Welcome New Members

Laurie Allen
Tracey Ash
Linda Barnes
Sandie Barrie
Monet Becker
Gretchen Bender
Kenyatta Bishop
Charlotte Boettcher
Tzu-Pei Chang
Preslaire Charles
Leilani Chow
Ronnie Cox
Erica Crouch
Jennifer Daniel
Lisa Davis-Smith
Christopher Dennis
Daniel DeSantis
Sandra Dietmeir
Francina Dubose
Sharon Edwards
Tracy Farhan
Sharalyn Fichtl
Pamela Genung
Sharon Gesser
Jagdish Goswami
Alexis Grenner
Kristy Griffin
Judith Guest
Jay Hall
Tiffany Hart
Elizabeth Haynes
Sarah Hewitt
Karen Hewitt
Lacie Hickey
Kimberly Holmes
Robin Hopkins
Deborah Hughes

With most small and rural towns, there also needs to include an innovative element of either organization or governance. Innovative local governance, in a variety of forms, can strengthen a community's development strategy. As an example, a town's ability to design an alternative arrangement for generating tax revenues on protected lands helped turn a potential obstacle into a local innovation. The key is to think creatively, but always keep the community's overall net benefit in mind.

Public-private partnerships are also emerging as the prominent organizational model for small town revitalization. This type of partnerships can result in the establishment of business incubators, community marketing and branding, and community recovery efforts after an economic disaster, etc.

Additional Resources:

- Hassebrook, Chuck. (2003). Strategies to Revitalize Rural America. Center for Rural Affairs.

Grant Opportunities:

- Walmart Community Grant Program: http://giving.walmart.com/apply-for-grants/local-giving
- Home Depot Community Impact Grants: https://corporate.homedepot.com/grants/community-impact-grants
- USDA Rural Business Development Grants: https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants

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Grant Management SIG

Corrective Action Plans

There comes a time during grant management that you may receive a financial or program audit finding. These findings may not be severe, but will require corrective actions be taken and documented to prevent repeat findings in the future. When findings are noted by either an audit firm or a program manager, the Grant Manager will be expected to create and document a correction action plan.

To create a corrective action plan, the following key items will be needed:

- **Understand of Root Cause Analysis:** A class of problem solving methods used to identify the root causes of problems and events.

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Welcome New Members

Robyn Jacobs
Brittany James
Warren Jamis
Ragina Jenkins
Joni Johnson
Kay Johnson
Jordan Kaiser
Alan Keaton
Margaret Koch
Donna LaPerle
Patricia Mabin
Jennifer Millar
Dan Miller
Courtney Morrow
Khandyce Mosely
Tiffany Mott-Smith
Ellen O'Cnnell
Laura Parise
Donna Parker
Claire Poh
Anita Ramjit
Ashley Range
Melissa Rayworth
Joey Marie Reynolds
Lauren Riepl
Carrie Saylor
Lisa Schwartz-Barry
David Shulimson
Amy Sickler
Susan Silverman
Dana Sneesby
Thomas Spears
Julia Taylor-Brown
Stephanie Tizel
Shannon Tyson
Lydia Van Slyke
Joel Vasquez

- **Correction Action:** Immediate action to a problem that has already occurred or has been identified.
- **Preventive Action:** Taken to eliminate the root cause of the potential problem including the detection and identification of the problem(s).

To assist with developing a correction action plan, I would like to suggest a six-step process. The first step will be to "Clearly State the Problem or Weakness, Including the Root Cause". We need to first define the problem itself, what is happening, and what the effect is. As stated by Celestine Chua, "For every effect, there is a root cause. Find the root cause rather than try to fix the effect, as there is no end to the latter". To define the root cause, we can use a simple technique called the 5 Whys. The 5 Whys strategy involves looking at any problem and asking "Why?" repeatedly to determine what caused the area of compliance. Many times, the answer to the first "why" will prompt another "why" and the answer to the second "why" will prompt another and so.

As an example, a program audit is completed, and it is discovered there are missing signed disclosure forms from the Board of Directors. The first question might be "Why is this happening"? The answer might be "the staff member collecting the documents was aware but did not follow up". This would lead to "Why is that"? The answer to this question could be "the person was extremely busy and forgot". This response would then lead to another "Why is that"? In turn, the response might be there is no official process for collecting the signed forms or a checklist was not available. This last comment would constitute your root cause for the problem.

Now that we have a clearly defined root cause, the second step of the correction action plan is to "List the Individuals Who Will Be Accountable for the Results of the Corrective Action". Who will be ultimately responsible and accountable for the implementation of the improved process or change? If needed, how will staff be trained to carry out the newly revised duties? What reporting system will be used to report issues and problems? Who should they report these issues to and when?

The third step in the process will be to "Create Simple, Measurable Solutions That Address the Root Cause". For each solution that is provided in the plan, the following should be addressed:

- Who is responsible for the correction action? Who is conduction the training if needed?
- What is the correction action(s), including supporting documentation?
- When (date) is the correction action completed or projected to be completed?

When creating measurable solutions, make sure to keep the "SMART" principle in mind. Each solution needs to be simple, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time sensitive.

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Welcome New Members

Mollie Wallace
Joseph Waters
Jocelyn Winkler
Allyson Woodward

We Appreciate Renewing Members

Erik Abernathy, CGW
Wanda Back, CGW
Barry Bloom, CGW
Gaillyn Bowman, CGW
Pat Brill
Susie Brown, CGW
David Cawley
Trisha Doering, CGW
Kim Dunster, CGW
Laura Frank, CW
Abby Grossman
Cheryl Guthrie, CGW
Bernadette Hicks, CGW
Jonathan Howells, CGW
Jane Lilliston, CGW
Lanna Nations, CGW
Kim Nicholas, CGW
Debbie Philpott, CGW
David Plake,
Gary Rapelje, CGW
Denise Roggio, CGW
Amanda Sharp, CGW
Donna Sofsky
Denise Spence, CGW
Victoria Webb, CGW
Dianna Winstead, CGW
Faye Wright-Simpson, CGW

The fourth step is to "Ensure Each Solution Has a Person(s) that is Accountable for it". Will the solution require one person or a group of persons to implement the solution? If a group is needed, who will lead the group and be responsible for implementation and status reporting? Will the person responsible for the implementation also be expected to submit a budget for costs related to the solution?

The fifth step is to "Set Achievable Deadlines". Some items to consider are:

- Will any outside entities need to approve the action plan prior to implementation?
- Will the organization need to secure the services of an outside entity to assist with implementation?
- Will training of staff need to be completed before or after implementation?
- What is the current capacity of the staff? What is a reasonable timeline for staff to complete?

The six and final step is to "Monitor the Progress of Your Plan" throughout the entire implementation process and for ongoing compliance. Some items to consider are:

- How often will progress and compliance need to be reviewed?
- Will supporting documentation be needed? If so, when and how often should it be reviewed, and changes be considered?
- Is the plan working? Are new preventative measures needed to prevent reoccurrences?

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Healthcare - Clinics SIG

Advocating Rare Disease Funding Among Private Foundations

Rare diseases may be less common than other types of illness, but they are no less of a problem. In fact, efforts to develop treatments for rare diseases are expensive and often produce little to no return for investors, proving to be a severe barrier for patients, loved ones, and advocates. It is an unfortunate situation, but the reality remains that funding agencies are more interested in supporting a project that will produce an exponential and measurable impact rather than one that may or may not be successful. Therefore, identifying potential sources of funding and requesting support for rare disease initiatives can be a challenge that requires creativity and determination.

Exploring options for the treatment of rare disease is essential while assisting patients suffering from those diseases range from educational and outreach initiatives to financial and emotional support. Identifying grant opportunities available to fund projects specific to rare disease can be challenging especially if there is little to no awareness of the need.

Foundation and corporate grantmakers often fund within a specific priority area. Although funding priorities may shift slightly with the needs of the social environment, they usually remain within the main priority category. For example, a foundation whose interests lie in community outreach may be primarily interested in helping women however the organization may fund a project to help men if a need exists. There are many examples of grant-making entities that highlight a concern for a specific population but will fund outside of that special focus if the need is high enough. If you are approaching a grantmaker whose focus is slightly different from that or your organization, you will need to generate even more interest in your project.

When performing grant research for a rare disease program, begin by exploring each prospective funder in-depth. Read the grant maker's 990-PF form to get an idea of the types of projects they fund. You can also view their website and the websites of their grantees. You will notice that Grantmakers tend to favor specific areas of giving. As an example, a foundation's website might state that they are interested in funding healthcare projects, but after going through their 990's, it becomes clear that they only fund cancer outreach projects. On the other hand, a foundation's website might state that they are primarily interested in funding projects for at-risk youth, but you discover that they have been giving grants to a handful of organizations that raise awareness of a rare disease.

Once you have chosen a suitable funder to approach with your grant request, it is essential that you state the problem that exists within the social environment and emphasize how the absence of funding for your project means that the problem will persist or even worsen over time. The most effective way to develop a statement of need is with credible data. You can do this by finding research and statistics relevant to the problem and showing any trends in the data that support your argument. The statement of need is one of the most critical components of any grant proposal, and although it should aim to convince the prospective donor that the grant is essential, it should avoid language that implies the project would be unsustainable without the grant award.

Also, it is advisable to select a model project and let the grant maker know that you will be designing your project with a similar plan of action used with your successful model project. When choosing a model project, it is best not to select a local organization that works with the same population because,

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in most cases, it will be difficult to prove that the need exists. In the case of rare disease projects, it is not likely there will be two organizations in the same geographic area that are working toward the same goal only because of the exceptional nature of the problem. It should be easy enough to find an organization in another part of the country; they may even be willing to guide you through the process of designing your project to be as successful.

Stay a step ahead of your competition by inviting grantmakers to spend a day with your organization or to get involved with your project in other ways outside the scope of a monetary commitment. If you are genuinely invested in seeing your project make an impact, take any opportunity to collaborate with an interested foundation. Understanding that rare disease initiatives face limited funding is the first step in learning how to navigate the pool of prospective donors. Performing due diligence throughout the entire grants process will undoubtedly yield more funding opportunities. Proper research is the key to efficiency and effectiveness in project design but also the competitive edge that you will need when preparing your proposals.

Grant Opportunities:

- Pfizer, Rare Disease Grants and Contributions, https://www.pfizer.com/
- Global Genes, Rare Patient Impact Grant, https://globalgenes.org/
- UltraGenyx, Rare Disease Grants, http://www.ultragenyx.com/

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Justice SIG

Community Orientated Policing Services

Over the past 20 years, an extension of the Department of Justice (DOJ), known as the Community Orientated Policing Services (COPS), has established numerous initiatives to build mutual trust between law enforcement and the community. Much of the focus has been on supporting programs that develop effective strategies, train community policing professionals, hire qualified staff, and provide technical assistance to law enforcement agencies. The information and assistance provided by the DOJ have been invaluable in advancing all facets of law enforcement and community relations. It is evident that adequate research and proper planning significantly contribute to successful outcomes for society.

If there is one step that you absolutely must take when developing a justice or law enforcement project, it is ensuring that you invest adequate resources into the planning process. Many organizations fail to prepare for every possible situation that may arise.

COPS is notable for its efforts to improve community and police relations since this has been a complicated social problem for decades. Although they are committed to advancing their mission by providing solutions to problems that persist within society, COPS is not the only service dedicated to building safer neighborhoods. Although justice and law enforcement responsibilities are primarily placed in the hands of state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies, stakeholders include

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community residents, other organizations, funding agencies, and many other interested parties. The DOJ has invested so many resources into understanding problems between law enforcement and the community. Therefore, funding opportunites are competitive and often align with the goals of the department.

When preparing a proposal for any grant opportunity, it is strongly advised that you take the time to understand the outcomes expected by the grant maker. If you are applying for a DOJ initiative, the amount of data available for reference is bountiful and easily accessible in most cases. However, if you are applying for an opportunity through a foundation or corporation, you may find it difficult to locate or access the information needed to develop a project that meets their expectations unless the grant-maker's mission is in line with present DOJ initiatives. In either case, the research performed by the DOJ can be an asset in developing a practical project and successful grant proposal.

A rigid project schedule should include a monitoring and evaluation plan that aligns with your goals and objectives. The monitoring and evaluation planning will mirror goal setting in many ways because it will focus on measured results and outcomes with a plan of action to implement further activities upon the achievement of those outcomes. The monitoring and evaluation plan is a tool that is instrumental in the continuation of a project after the first year because it helps the organization identify mistakes and understand where to improve the project moving forward.

Grant Opportunities:

- Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Safe Neighborhood Grants, http://www.lisc.org
- The Chicago Community Trust, Safe and Peaceful Communities Grants, http://cct.org
- The Columbus Foundation, Crime Prevention and Safety Grants, https://columbusfoundation.org/

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Medical and Scientific Research SIGs

Proposal Preparation Nuances for SBIR/STTR Funding Applications to U. S. Federal Agencies: National Institutes of Health, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Energy, and the National Science Foundation

The U. S. Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Program are two Federal funding programs that are established under the Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1982 (P.L. 97-219) and through subsequent amendments.

Federal agencies must participate in the SBIR/STTR Program if an agency meets the eligibility criteria.

As mandated, the criteria for Federal agency eligibility in the SBIR and STTR Programs is based on the dollar amount of appropriations received for the agency's extramural research or research and development (R/R&D) budget. If an agency's extramural R/R&D budget exceeds $100 million, then the agency is eligible for the SBIR Program and must reserve 3.2% of that budget for the SBIR Program. If an

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agency's extramural R/R&D budget exceeds $1 billion, then the agency is eligible for the STTR Program and must reserve 0.3% of that budget for the STTR Program. Currently, 11 Federal agencies are required to participate in the SBIR Program. Five of these agencies are also required to participate in the STTR program: Health and Human Services (HHS), Department of Energy (DOE), National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Defense (DOD), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Within the HHS, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) participates in both the SBIR and STTR Programs, while the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) participate in the SBIR Program only. More than 90 percent of HHS's budget for the SBIR/STTR Program is allocated to the NIH, where 23 of the 27 Institutes and Centers (ICs) participate in the Programs.

Also mandated is the Federal Small Business Administration's (SBA) statutory authority to manage these Programs and to provide coordinating organizational structures and tracking systems for use by participating Federal agencies, awardees, and the general public. The SBA is required to submit reports to Congress on the progress of each participating agency's SBIR and STTR Programs. The SBA is also required to prepare and publish Policy Directives for both the SBIR and STTR Programs that will govern the framework of how these programs will be conducted, and provides guidance for agencies, awardees, and the general public. The current edition of the Policy Directives for both the SBIR and STTR Programs is dated February 24, 2014.

The overall goal of the U. S. government's SBIR and STTR Programs is to provide Federal funds and resources towards strengthening the role of innovative small business concerns (SBCs) within R/R&D projects that are intended to benefit the public and stimulate economic growth. Federal agencies issue competitive SBIR/STTR funding awards in the form of grants and/or contracts to eligible U. S. SBCs (as noted below and specified in the Policy Directives).

Key similarities of the SBIR/STTR Programs' structure, funding limits, and Benchmark requirements
Both the SBIR and STTR Programs are comprised of three distinct sequential phases that pertain to the SBC's stage of project innovation development: Phase I work establishes scientific and technical merit, feasibility, and commercial potential of the proposed project; Phase II work advances progress made from Phase I work, and expands development of attempts towards commercialization of the proposed project; and Phase III work focuses on commercialization activities (eg, direct sales, partnerships, licensing deals, mergers and acquisitions).

The funding awards from SBIR/STTR Programs are used to support the SBC's Phase I and Phase II work. Phase III support is awarded via funding from non-SBIR/STTR agency budgets and/or other commercial investment sources. Generally, Federal agencies are permitted to issue Phase I awards of up to $150,000 for a period of 6 months, and Phase II awards of up to $1 million for period of 24 months—exceptions to this rule are noted below for individual agencies (NIH, DOE, and NSF) and within agency solicitations.

Additionally, agencies must ensure that their SBIR/STTR Programs adhere to the two Benchmark requirements that pertain to the SBC's performance through each Phase of the program (Phase I to Phase II Transition Rate of 0.25 [Benchmark I]; and Phase II to Phase III Commercialization Rate [Benchmark II]). These Benchmarks are applied to a SBC that seeks an additional Phase I award after the SBC already received more than 20 Phase I awards within a five-year time period (Benchmark I applies) and received more than 15 Phase II awards within a 10-year period (Benchmark II applies). (Time periods for Phase I and Phase II are specifically defined in the Policy Directives).

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Currently, all 11 Federal agencies (participating in the SBIR/STTR Programs) have agreed upon and have established the same minimum Benchmark requirements. (Note that the SBIR/STTR Policy Directives allow agencies to establish agency-specific benchmark rates and time periods). Refer to SBA and agency webpages and Program solicitations for additional details and updates.

While the two Programs are similar, there are some important differences.

Key differences between the SBIR and STTR Program eligibility requirements for applicants
The U. S. government's SBIR Program provides funding to eligible small businesses that are at an early stage in their development of innovative technologies, and enables them to participate in federally-funded R/R&D. Note that within the SBIR Program eligibility requirements, applicants must certify that the Program Director (PD)/Principal Investigator (PI) is primarily employed by the SBC (i.e., more than half of the PD/PI's employment time is spent at the SBC).

While the STTR Program is similar to the SBIR Program, the STTR Program requires partnership between two U. S. entities: an eligible SBC and a nonprofit research institution. Note that such partnerships are permitted and encouraged within the SBIR Program, but are not required.

The STTR Program provides funding to eligible small businesses that agree to develop their early stage innovative technologies through a formal collaboration with nonprofit research institutions during Phase I and II of the Program. Additionally, unlike the SBIR Program, the STTR Program's eligibility requirements permit the applicant's PD/PI to be primarily employed by either the SBC or the collaborating nonprofit research institution at the time of the award and for the duration of the proposed project.

Furthermore, the awarding agency must specify how the work load distribution between the SBC and a participating nonprofit research institution will be measured (e.g., total contract dollars or labor hours, etc.); however, the Policy Directives for both the SBIR and STTR programs specifies the percentages of the work load between the two entities (any deviations must be approved by the awarding agency) as follows.

SBIR program:
Phase I—SBC must perform at least 75% of the work
Phase II—SBC must perform at least 50% of the work

STTR program:
Phases I and II—SBC must perform at least 40% of the work*;* nonprofit research institute must perform at least 30% of the work

The STTR Program is intended to facilitate conversion of basic science R&D innovations into commercialization and marketplace activities that benefit the public, meet critical U.S. priorities, and strengthen the national economy.

Agency SBIR/STTR Funding Notices—aka: Request for Proposal (RFP), Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), Solicitation, Parent Announcement (PA) Omnibus
While the framework of SBIR/STTR Program solicitations must follow the Policy Directives for each Program, each participating Federal agency has established their own solicitation guidelines, including solicitation schedules and specifications regarding whether funding awards are issued as grants or

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contracts. Each participating agency prepares and releases their agency's SBIR/STTR solicitations, which are aligned with the agency's mission and goals. Since all agencies are not permitted to accept unsolicited proposals for the SBIR/STTR Programs, applicants must submit proposals directly in response to agency solicitations.

Applicants must complete the following government electronic systems registrations (some are agency-specific) before submitting proposals to the HHS (NIH, CDC), DOE, or NSF, as indicated below:

- Dun and Bradstreet
- System for Awards Management (SAM)
- SBA Company Registry
- Grants.gov Workspace
    - HHS (NIH, CDC); DOE
- eRA Commons
    - HHS (NIH, CDC)
- ASSIST
    - HHS (NIH, CDC)
- Institutional Solutions (System-to-System, S2S)
    - NIH (optional)
- NIH's electronic Contract Proposal Submission (eCPS)
    - —the only system for NIH and CDC (HHS) contracts
- Portfolio Analysis and Management System (PAMS)
    - DOE—for Letters of Intent (LOI)
- FedConnect
    - DOE
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act Subaward Reporting System (FSRS)
    - DOE
- FastLane
    - NSF

Key content sections of SBIR/STTR solicitation documents

While agency SBIR/STTR solicitation notices will contain standard sections (i.e., Proposal Preparation Instructions, Application and Submission Guidance, Evaluation Criteria, and Agency Contacts), one major section (often over 100 pages) is a list of eligible topics for a particular SBIR/STTR announcement. Topics can be searched within the pdf file and via the search engines at zyn.com and sbir.gov. As noted below, the DOE posts a list of topics ahead of its SBIR/STTR solicitation announcements.

Additional important variations in solicitation guidelines are highlighted below for NIH, CDC, DOE, and NSF. Competitive proposal applications will address all agency-specific requested information.

Federal Agency SBIR/STTR Solicitations—HIGHLIGHTS:

—NIH and CDC, HHS

Solicitation schedule:

The HHS releases the SBIR/STTR FOA once a year (referred to as Parent Announcements [PA] or Omnibus solicitations) for interested applicants to NIH and CDC (SBIR) or other Public Health Service (PHS) agencies. Unlike other agencies that post one closing date for submission of a Phase I SBIR or STTR application, NIH's Omnibus SBIR/STTR FOA posts three standard deadlines: January 5, April 5, and

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September 5. Individual SBIR/STTR targeted solicitations are also issued with different proposal deadline dates (see open NIH FOAs referenced below).

Special Eligibility Notice for NIH and CDC FOAs issued after January 28, 2013
The NIH and CDC (and DOE's Advanced Research Projects Agency) now participate in the Majority VC Ownership Authority, which permits SBCs that are majority–owned by multiple venture capital operating companies (VCOC), hedge funds, or private equity firms to be eligible to apply to NIH/CDC's SBIR program. Note that the other Federal agencies (including NIH's STTR Program) do not participate in the Majority VC Ownership Authority, as pertains to their SBIR/STTR programs.

Application Guidelines: (accessed via NIH's SBIR/STTR Funding webpage referenced below)

- SF424 (R&R) SBIR/STTR Application Guide, Version D (keep a lookout for the release of Version E) for NIH and other Public Health Service (PHS) Agencies (includes Resubmission Applications Guidance)
- Annotated SF424 (R&R) SBIR/STTR Form Set (FORMS-D)
- Targeted grant solicitations (focused on specific research areas)
- HHS SBIR contract (requests for specific types of technologies)
- Guidance comparing grants and contracts
- NIH SBIR and STTR Application Types

Topics:
All NIH topics pertain to both the SBIR and STTR program (see funding webpage).
Search topics via:

- NIH Matchmaker
- 23017 Program Descriptions and Research Topics
- Email to sbir@od.nih.gov for a program manager referral
- SBA Approved Topics List for Budget Waivers (for proposal budgets in excess of the statutory limits)

Awards:
The NIH issues both SBIR and STTR Program awards, while the CDC issues only SBIR awards. Both the NIH and the CDC participate in the SBIR Contract Solicitation. The Reauthorization Act of 2011 permits the NIH to increase the amount of a Phase I SBIR/STTR award up to $225,000, and the amount of a Phase II up to $1.5 million. CDC's SBIR program is managed by their Office of the Associate Director for Science (OADS), Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI). A list of CDC's prior SBIR contract and grant awards since FY2013 is posted on their website and via the NIH RePORTER database.

Technical Assistance Programs for HHS awardees:
Phase I awardees may participate in the Niche Assessment Program (provided by Foresight S&T) for assistance with identifying additional potential uses of the awardee's technology, it's competitive advantage, and strategies for market entry.

Phase II awardees may participate in the Commercialization Accelerator Program (CAP) (offered by LARTA) for assistance with a variety of services, including development of strategic business plans and identification of issues related to manufacturing, patents, and licensing.

—DOE

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- ***Solicitation schedule:*** The DOE releases solicitations twice a year, in August and November. (The first solicitation period is from August through October, and the second solicitation period is from November through January). Unlike other agencies, DOE's solicitations (FOAs) combine the guidelines for both the SBIR and STTR Programs, and applicants are permitted to apply to either the SBIR or STTR Program in response to a single FOA, for most topics.

- ***Special Eligibility Notice for DOE FOAs issued after January 28, 2013*** DOE's Advanced Research Projects Agency participates in the Majority VC Ownership Authority (see above for NIH).

- ***Application Guidelines:*** Additionally, unlike other agencies participating in the SBIR/STTR Program, the DOE requires applicants to submit (via PAMS) a two-page Letter of Intent (LOI), which is due around three weeks after posting of the FOA. The DOE uses the LOIs to select appropriate reviewers (internal and external) for its proposal/application evaluation schedule. Note that applicants will be disqualified if they have not submitted a timely LOI to the DOE prior to submission of a full application (via grants.gov).

Refer to DOE's website for sample examples of LOI, Phase I SBIR/STTR Commercialization Plans, and Indirect Rate Submissions, in addition to detailed instructions for completing the grant application for Phase I SBIR/STTR.

Topics: Unlike other agencies, the DOE releases a list of topics in a separate document approximately four weeks before releasing a FOA. Keep an eye out for DOE's topic announcements (includes DOE contact information for topic managers [TM] for specific topics) around July and October (clean energy topics).

Awards:
All DOE awards are issued as grants. Like the NIH, the DOE is permitted to increase the amount of Phase I awards up to $225,000, and increase the amount of Phase II awards up to $1.5 million.

—NSF

- ***Solicitation schedule:*** The NSF posts two broad SBIR/STTR solicitations each year: one in March (June deadline), and the other in September (December deadline). Separate solicitations are posted for the SBIR and STTR programs, although the dates for FOA release and proposal submission deadlines are similar. NSF's Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP) manages the agency's SBIR/STTR Program, which places an emphasis on commercialization plans and progress.

- ***Application Guidelines:*** NSF's current Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) (NSF 17-1) specifies that only one Phase I proposal may be submitted during this SBIR/STTR cycle (December 2017 deadline). Please note the guidance section on "DOs and DON'Ts of Proposal Preparation and Submission".

- Applicants are encouraged (but not required) to submit an Executive Summary (1 – 2 pages) to the designated Program Director (Cognizant NSF Program Officer) via email (prior to a teleconference) for feedback on the proposal's competitiveness in meeting the intellectual merits (pertaining to technical risk and innovation) and commercial impact criteria that are described within the solicitation. The NSF supports high risk projects that describe a revolutionary (as opposed to evolutionary) approach that addresses a specific problem. NSF

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evaluates whether such proposals detail how the organization will position itself to competently validate market needs and pursue commercialization.

- ***Topics*** The NSF posts a list of topics as a separate document. Note that proposals are not required to specifically match the topics listed; however, they are expected to identify problems or opportunities; describe solution strategies that lead to development of competitive, feasible, and successful business commercialization plans; and describe a clear public benefit.

- ***Awards The*** NSF issues SBIR/STTR grants (instead of contracts) in broad technology fields. NSF's Phase I awards may be increased up to $225,000 for up to a period of 12 months. Phase II applicants must have received a Phase I **NSF** SBIR/STTR award.

References:

SBA. SBIR / STTR. Performance Benchmark Requirements for Phase I. Retrieved from https://www.sbir.gov/performance-benchmarks

SBA. Small Business Innovation Research (**SBIR**) Program. Policy Directive. Retrieved from https://www.sbir.gov/sites/default/files/sbir_pd_with_1-8-14_amendments_2-24-14.pdf

SBA. Small Business Innovation Research (**STTR**) Program. Policy Directive. Retrieved from https://www.sbir.gov/sites/default/files/sttr_pd_with_1-8-14_amendments_2-24-14.pdf

Additional Resources:

CDC. Office of the Associate Director for Science (OADS). SBIR. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/od/science/technology/innovation/sbir.htm

NIH. Electronic Contract Proposal Submission (eCPS). Retrieved from https://ecps.nih.gov/CustomLogin?TYPE=33554433&REALMOID=06-92c2f8ea-a392-480b-96ba-1e3b02379992&GUID=&SMAUTHREASON=0&METHOD=GET&SMAGENTNAME=-SM-rPaf2qhK%2f7sOrWBaO0XO8LXwNO9dpTql05TM8CnsVlwmP3QR6zjMV67%2bVTCE3hk83fL8P0hD24rTNuoECnsU817WGqneNAzM&TARGET=-SM-https%3a%2f%2fecps%2enih%2egov%2fSecure

NIH. SBIR/STTR. Retrieved from http://sbir.nih.gov

NIH. Manage a Small Business SBIR/STTR Award (Forms). Retrieved from https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/manage_a_small_business_award.htm

NSF. America's Seed Fund. SBIR/STTR. Retrieved from https://seedfund.nsf.gov/

Grant Opportunities:

- NIH. SBIR/STTR. Targeted SBIR/STTR Funding Announcements. Retrieved from https://sbir.nih.gov/funding/individual-announcements

- SBA. SBIR/STTR. FY 2018 Department of Energy (DOE) SBIR/STTR Phase I Release I. Retrieved from https://www.sbir.gov/node/1308571

- SBA. SBIR / STTR. HHS Solicitations Schedule. HHS Funding Opportunities. Retrieved from https://www.sbir.gov/nih-solicitation-listing/open; See also **SBIR** Omnibus FOA PA-17-302

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https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-17-302.html and **STTR** Omnibus FOA PA-17-303 https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-17-303.html

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