SBIR 101
Introduction to SBIR/STTR Funding

University of Pittsburgh Innovation Institute Introduction

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My Background …

- SBIR Consultant
- Consulted with over 80 participant companies, with successful awards in excess of $25 million
- 2006 National Tibbetts Awardee
- Assistant Director, Enterprise Development
- Certified Public Accountant; Member, AICPA and PICPA
- Prior Chair - Pennsylvania Innovation Partnership Funding Committee
Today’s Key Takeaways:

- **SBIR is just one funding option**
  - Can mix/synergize with other funding options
- **Know your customer (agency)!**
  - Significant agency differences
- **Plan for the long term (don’t chase short-term $)**
  - Plan for Phase III and commercialization/transition
- **Build successful collaborations & partnerships**
  - Don’t do it alone
- **Read the instructions!**
  - Then read them again!
SBIR / STTR – Why Bother?

• Over $2 BILLION in new funding is awarded each year

• Significant risk reduction:
  • Funds projects that are too early to attract investment capital

• Review process adds credibility to your company in the commercial marketplace:
  • Technology validation
SBIR – in the beginning …

• SBIR was created by Federal legislation in 1982.
  • SBIR was created to provide funding for some of the best early-stage innovation ideas, ideas that, however promising, are too high risk for private investment.

• Envisioned as “Economic Stimulus”
  • SBIR is not an allocation to help needy small companies. It is strong signal to Federal Agencies to make more effective use of the innovative scientists and engineers employed by aggressive small companies that have the potential to convert R&D funds into new products and create new jobs – to optimize return on taxpayers’ dollars.

Largest and most important source of early-stage technology R&D financing for America’s Entrepreneurs !!!!
Legislative History

• **1992 Reauthorization:**
  - Greater emphasis on increasing private sector commercialization;
  - Creation of STTR program

• **2000 Reauthorization:**
  - Expanded Phase II program; larger grants & commercialization plan
  - Phase III follow-on funding agreements

• **2011 Reauthorization:**
  - Extends Program to 2017
  - Increases SBIR set-aside from 2.5% to 3.2% by 2017
  - Increases STTR set-aside from .3% to .45% by 2016
  - Authorizes Phase I Awards up to $150,000 (50% increase) & Phase II Awards up to $1M (33% increase)
  - Crossover Flexibility – Allows Ph II Awards to be funded by different agency
  - Allows STTR Ph II follow-on to SBIR Ph I and visa-versa
SBIR/STTR Overview

- FY14 Budgets:
  - SBIR: ~$2.7 Billion
    - 2.7% of extramural R/R&D for agencies >$100M (3.2% by FY17)
  - STTR: ~$300 Million
    - 0.35% of extramural R/R&D for agencies >$1B (0.45% by FY16)

- Goal is commercialization of new innovations from U.S. small businesses
SBIR/STTR Overview

3-Phase Program:

- **Phase I: Feasibility Study**
  - “Typically” 6-month, $80K - $150K ($225K)

- **Phase II: Proof of Principal/Prototype**
  - “Typically” 2-year, up to $1M ($1.5M)

- **Phase III: Commercialization**
  - No SBIR/STTR funding
  - May be government contract/procurement
  - No contract size limit
  - Possible Phase II “Enhancement” to get there
## A Mature Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total SBIR-STTR Awardees</td>
<td>21,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently Active Awardees</td>
<td>5,615</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total SBIR Dollars to date</td>
<td>$39,255,043,681</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated FY 14 SBIR Budget</td>
<td>$2.75B</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBIR Firms with issued US Patents</td>
<td>7,825</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total SBIR Companies Publicly Traded</td>
<td>753</td>
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<tr>
<td>VC Funded SBIR-STTR Awardees</td>
<td>2,472</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total VC SBIR Investment</td>
<td>$73.66 Billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extent of VC SBIR Involvement</td>
<td>1 of every 7-8 VC invested dollar in US to an SBIR firm</td>
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- Largest source of early-stage technology financing and the Nation’s most successful program in moving cutting-edge technology into the marketplace
- Results meet important societal and/or government and Defense mission needs
SBIR/STTR Advantages:

- Provides very early stage high-risk (high-payoff) R&D product development funding
- Not a loan – no repayment required;
- No loss of equity ownership
- No royalty payback
- Provides leverage for follow on funding
- Intellectual property rights remain with the small business
- Preferences, including sole source contracts, for follow-on Phase III government funding or procurement possible
While SBIR/STTR funds the highest risk projects, the cost of obtaining that money is the lowest of all sources of cash.
SBIR/STTR Disadvantages:

- Government contracts and accounting can be onerous
- Slow process (3-5 years through Phase II)
  - Not appropriate for short windows of opportunity
- Requires R&D capability and writing skills
- Must propose what agencies ask for
  - Very specific for contracting agencies (e.g. NASA, DoD)
  - Much more leeway for granting agencies (e.g. NSF, NIH)
The Reality

- Highly competitive -- requires excellence in all aspects of competition process
- Funding generally NOT CONTINUOUS between Phase I and Phase II
- A credible project team must be assembled
- A viable commercialization plan is critical
- You need to submit an excellent and compelling proposal that:
  - Excites reviewers - compelling
  - Is innovative
  - Meets a need and provides a solution
SBIR/STTR Model

**Solicitations for Government Needs**

- Company Proposal for PHASE I Feasibility Research

**Private Sector Investment**

- Company Proposal for PHASE II Research towards Prototype

**PHASE III Product Development for Gov’t or Commercial Market**

- $1M R&D Investment
- $150K R&D Investment
- Federal Investment
- Recoupment through Tax System
- Tax Revenue
### SBIR/STTR Eligibility Requirements

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SBIR/STTR</th>
<th>STTR</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Applicant is a small business (500 employees or less) organized for-profit</td>
<td>• <strong>Formal cooperative R&amp;D effort:</strong> Minimum 40% by small business; Minimum 30% by U.S. research institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>• At least 51% owned and controlled by US individuals</td>
<td>• <strong>Intellectual property agreement</strong> Allocation of rights in IP and rights to carry out follow-on R&amp;D and commercialization</td>
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SBIR Participation & VC Funded Company

- **For SBIR only** – agencies may make a portion of their awards to companies that are majority-owned by VC operating companies, hedge funds, or private equity firms.
  - Up to 25% for NIH, DOE, & NSF
  - Up to 15% for all others

- Provided that no one Group holds more than 50% of the stock.

- Agency must submit a written determination to SBA indicating how allowing participation will induce additional VC funding & contribute to agency’s mission:
  - HHS & DOE have opted to allow VC Participation
  - Between the two, 12 SBIR awards totaling $7.9M were awarded during fiscal years 2013 & 2014.
Basic Elements of the Program

› **SBIR Program:**
  • The Principal Investigator must be a more than 51% employee of the small business
  • Spend ~ 10% or more of time on project

› **STTR Program:**
  • The Principal Investigator may be from either the small business or the partnering institution
  • If from institution may have to reduce faculty time
  • Check with institution
Basic Elements of the Program

‣ **SBIR Program:**
  • Small Business MAY subcontract with a non-profit research institute
  • Must perform up 2/3 of the work based on budget in Phase I. Phase II – 50%
  • Intellectual Property rights remain with the small business
  • Average success rate varies by agency. Overall agencies:
    - 15% Phase I
    - 54% Phase II
Basic Elements of the Program

› STTR Program:
  • Small Business MUST partner with a non-profit research institution
  • Must perform 40% of the effort
  • Research Institution must perform 30% of the effort
  • Balance of effort for either or additional parties
  • IP rights must be negotiated between parties
  • Average success rate varies by agency. Overall agencies:
    - 20% Phase I
    - 48% Phase II

Small business is ALWAYS the applicant & awardee!
Typical SBIR/STTR Award Winner Profile

- Proposed solution meets agency need

- Understands the current state of the art and can relate it to their innovation

- Proposal
  Adequately communicates path to market
  Adequately describes qualifications & experience for research & commercialization
  Demonstrates adequate support staff, facilities & equipment
Who Participates?

Proportion of NASA Phase I SBIR Awards by Size of Company (2011)

About 1/3 are 1st-time Phase I Awardees
• 11 different agencies participate in SBIR
  • 5 of these also have STTR programs
• Each agency manages its own programs
• SBA sets general rules (SBIR & STTR Program Policy Directives)
  • per law set by Congress (SBIR/STTR Reauthorization Act of 2011, in NDAA of FY2012, Public Law 112-81)
• Agencies report as required to SBA
## Participating Agencies

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Award Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DoD</td>
<td>SBIR/STTR</td>
<td>$1.2 B / $154 M</td>
<td>Contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>HHS/NIH</td>
<td>SBIR/STTR</td>
<td>$617 M / $80 M</td>
<td>Grants + Contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOE</td>
<td>SBIR/STTR</td>
<td>$166 M / $22 M</td>
<td>Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>NASA</td>
<td>SBIR/STTR</td>
<td>$145 M / $19 M</td>
<td>Contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>SBIR/STTR</td>
<td>$133 M / $18 M</td>
<td>Grants</td>
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<td>USDA</td>
<td>SBIR</td>
<td>$19.3 M</td>
<td>Grants</td>
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<td>ED</td>
<td>SBIR</td>
<td>$13.7 M</td>
<td>IES: Contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>(IES &amp; NIDRR)</td>
<td>NIDRR: Grants</td>
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<td>External</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>SBIR/ -</td>
<td>$12.6 M / -</td>
<td>Contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOT</td>
<td>SBIR</td>
<td>$8.6 M</td>
<td>Contracts</td>
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<td>EPA</td>
<td>SBIR</td>
<td>$4.8 M</td>
<td>Contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOC</td>
<td>SBIR</td>
<td>$4.7 M</td>
<td>Contracts</td>
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(NOAA & NIST)
Agency Differences

- Agency mission and success metrics
  - Never judge an agency by its title!
    - Wide variety of topic areas
    - Dual-use technologies
- Number and timing of Solicitations, proposal (budget) preparation instructions, receipt dates, and review process.
- Award type, size and structure – contract vs. grant; base-and-options, etc.
- R&D Topic areas -- broad vs. specific, commercial market vs. acquisition focus
- Assistance available to awardees for commercialization
## Grants vs. Contracts:

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<tr>
<th>Contracting Agencies</th>
<th>Granting Agencies</th>
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<tr>
<td>Highly focused topics</td>
<td>Less-specific topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agency establishes plans, protocols, requirements</td>
<td>Investigator initiates approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More fiscal requirements</td>
<td>Assistance mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject to FARs, DFARs</td>
<td>More flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted communications</td>
<td>More open communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency may be buyer – procurement mechanism for DoD, NASA</td>
<td>Usually peer-reviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually line-reviewed</td>
<td></td>
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### Contracting Agencies
- DOD
- HHS/NIH NASA
- ED
- DOT

### Granting Agencies
- HHS/NIH
- NSF
- ED
- USDA
- DOE
Know Your Customer!

- Significant agency differences in proposal requirements, technical focus, evaluation processes
- For “peer review” agencies (e.g. NSF, NIH), reviewers are typically subject matter experts at universities – consider what they might want to see
- For “line review” agencies (e.g. DoD, NASA), personal knowledge, interaction, & relationships are much more important
  - Talk to TPOC before solicitation opens, if at all possible
  - Do in-depth background research before talking to TPOC, to leave a good impression
Agency Perspectives: DoD

General DoD Descriptions

- Primary focus is on the warfighter
  - Additional Service requirements also
- Topics may cover nearly any technology area
  - Many medical topics in Army solicitation
- DARPA seeks most advanced technologies
  - Moving back to longer-range insertion
  - Applicants should show strong connections to Service users
  - DARPA PMs often “adopt” other Phase II proposals
- SOCOM wants quick deployment of practical technology
- Navy has had most successful Phase III program
  - Other Services modifying programs to improve transition
### Agency Perspectives: DoD

12 participating DoD Components

- Each with its own culture, needs, requirements, and SBIR solicitation (6 with STTR)
- Organizations within Services may vary as well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>FY10 SBIR ($STTR) $</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Ph I proposals</th>
<th>Ph I awards</th>
<th>Award Rates</th>
<th>Ph II awards</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>$343M ($41M)</td>
<td>232 (50)</td>
<td>4,098 (804)</td>
<td>666 (151)</td>
<td>16.3% (18.8%)</td>
<td>310 (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>$331M ($40M)</td>
<td>181 (37)</td>
<td>2,494 (309)</td>
<td>501 (125)</td>
<td>20.1% (40.5%)</td>
<td>282 (59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>$244M ($29M)</td>
<td>176 (29)</td>
<td>3,240 (446)</td>
<td>434 (64)</td>
<td>13.4% (14.3%)</td>
<td>202 (22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDA</td>
<td>$90M ($11M)</td>
<td>35 (4)</td>
<td>553 (33)</td>
<td>126 (25)</td>
<td>22.8% (75.8%)</td>
<td>77 (12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSD</td>
<td>$86M ($6M)</td>
<td>64 (6)</td>
<td>915 (54)</td>
<td>143 (9)</td>
<td>15.6% (16.7%)</td>
<td>41 (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DARPA</td>
<td>$67M ($8M)</td>
<td>27 (0)</td>
<td>833 (0)</td>
<td>107 (9)</td>
<td>12.8% (N/A)</td>
<td>127 (16)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>$15M</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCOM</td>
<td>$10M</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>DTRA</td>
<td>$8M</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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Agency Perspectives: NIH

- Largest part of HHS (NIH, CDC, FDA, ACF)
- 24 Institutes & Centers
- “Parent” SBIR & STTR FOAs releases January
  - The next SBIR/STTR Omnibus Solicitation Deadline for non-AIDS applications is April 5, 2015. There will not be an August 5, 2015 due date. From then on, SBIR/STTR due dates will fall on September 5, January 5, and April 5
- NIH SBIR Contract Solicitation (CDC) releases in August
  - Closes November
- Additional FOAs (PAs, RFAs) released periodically
- Budgets (2012)

  NIH SBIR: $632M  
  NIH STTR: $85M  
  CDC SBIR: $8.3M  
  FDA SBIR: $1M  
  ACF SBIR: $350K
Agency Perspectives: DOE

• “Granting agency that acts like a contracting agency”

• Program undergoing major changes
  • Now two solicitations per year (S&T Program Topics, Applied Program Topics)
  • Now providing Technical Points of Contact for pre-solicitation period
  • Requires Letter of Intent

• DOE Program focus includes:
  • Defense nuclear nonproliferation, fossil fuels, nuclear clean-up, as well as renewable energy and energy conservation
DOE Program Offices Participating in SBIR/STTR

Goal 1: Clean Energy Technologies
Goal 2: Science and Engineering Leadership
Goal 3: Nuclear Security
Agency Perspectives: NSF

- National Science Foundation wants to see transformational, game-changing technology based upon good science, real innovation, real risk
  - Peer reviews typically by university faculty in relevant fields
  - Your team should have recognized experts, published scientists in relevant fields of science or technology, doing real research
  - NSF values strong industry/university collaborations
  - Likes to see commercialization of prior NSF-funded research
  - Especially values university spin-outs
- NSF has very strong focus on commercialization
  - Need to show significant market opportunity, ability to address it (e.g. partner/customer support, incl. relevant letters of support)
  - NSF has led other agencies in support for, emphasis on commercialization planning and broader impacts
Taking the long-term view...

There Should Be a Significant Market Awaiting Your New Product or Process, and a Realistic Plan for Getting There
SBIR/STTR is a Process

- It can be considered Patient Capital!
  - Submit a proposal
  - 4 to 6 month review process by either internal or external panel of reviewers (goal 90 days)
  - 1 - 2 month award process
  - 6 - 12 month period of performance for Phase I
  - Submit Phase II proposal
  - 4 month review process
  - 2 year period of performance for Phase II
  - Commercialization

On average a 3-4 year program – but uses OPM (other people’s money!!)
Timeline: SBIR to Commercialization

**Ideal Case:**

- **Year 1:**
  - “Perfect Match” SBIR topic posted

- **Year 2:**
  - Phase I Award

- **Year 3:**
  - Phase II Award

- **Year 4:**
  - Phase II Enhancement

**Company:**
- Experienced, Competent, Capable, Focused, Aggressive

**Prime Contractor / Commercial Partner:**
- Relevant Contract, Technical Need, Eager to Partner, Willing to work with small business

**Initial Product Introduction (Maybe? Software – YES?)**
Plan Ahead for SBIR Success:

- **Phase I is Required Step, Not Objective**
  - Most companies actually lose money in Phase I
  - Phase I required before Phase II

- **Phase II Much More $$ - Still Just a Step**
  - Strong Commercialization Plan is one key to winning
  - Need to show intent and ability to develop the product or service and get it to the customer (market).

- **Commercialization is Goal – Phase III!**
  - Commercial or other sales
  - Follow-on gov’t contracts for DoD, NASA, others
Requirements for SBIR Success:

- **Innovation**
  - New Product or Technology
  - New Application of Existing Technology

- **Research**
  - Research of the Feasibility of the Project
  - Not Market Research
  - Not Strictly Product Development

- **Commercial Applications**
  - Societal Need and Commercial Potential and/or
  - Specific Agency Need and “Dual Use”
Keys to Long-Term Success:

• **Focus Strategically**
  - Don’t chase money opportunities “just ‘cause we can”
  - Focus on opportunities that take you towards goals
    - Work with customers (agencies) to create new opportunities

• **Network, Collaborate, Partner!**
  - Work with university researchers wherever possible
    - Biggest single factor in winning Phase I SBIR
  - Partner with fed. labs, esp. if agency is target customer
    - Cooperative R&D Agreements (CRADAs), Test Service Agreements may be paid for with SBIR/STTR funds
  - Work with Prime Contractors where relevant
    - Can be subcontractor on SBIR/STTR
  - Other partners for design, mfg., dist., service, etc.
University Partnership:

The single greatest factor for SBIR success is partnering with a research institution (esp. a university).

- Observation noted by top SBIR experts and Program Managers

- Recognized scientific expertise adds credibility
- University labs are significant sources of innovation
- University laboratory research facilities may be needed
- University scientists have lots of technical proposal experience. *Lack commercialization strategy.*
Fundamental Elements of Ph I & Ph II Proposals

- Detailed Research Plan
- Vision for commercialization, and detailed commercialization plan for Phase II
- PI and Team—Including Business Expertise
- Facilities and Resources
- Credible budget and justification
- Consultant and commitment letters
Writing for SBIR/STTR

• Solve *their* problem (not *a* problem, or *your* problem)
• Never educate them on their problem, or tell them they are off-base
• Be *innovative* but also *practical*
• The proposal is a *selling document*, not a scientific paper
• Demonstrate a clear understanding of the problem
• Provide a clear, concise and compelling central idea/concept as your approach to solving the problem
• Show benefits and demonstrate ability (proof)

Guide the reviewer to a clear, believable solution
Additional Needs for Winning SBIR:

• Proposal Writing Skills
  • Blending of business & technical/scientific proposal
    • Tip: Start with the Commercialization Plan
  • Hiring a proposal writer *usually* not a good choice
    • Having a reviewer and/or technical editor is very helpful

• Know Your Customer!
  • Significant agency differences in proposal requirements, technical focus, evaluation process

• Build a Team to Fill in Gaps
  • Use allowed subcontracts, consultants, collaborators to build research capabilities, path to commercialization
Getting Started in SBIR/STTR

- Attend SBIR conferences and workshops
  - Network at relevant industry/technology conferences
  - For Defense, check out NDIA (http://www.ndia.org/)

- Other relevant SBIR resources:
    - Links to all 11 SBIR/STTR agencies
    - Key word search on topics – search both open and closed solicitations
    - Past award information
    - Agency solicitation release/proposal due dates agency
    - SBIR/STTR Conference information

- Greenwood Consulting Group, proposal writing tips:
  - http://www.g-jgreenwood.com/sbir_proposal_writing_articles.htm
# Plan Ahead: Registration Requirements

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DoD</th>
<th>HHS/NIH</th>
<th>DOE</th>
<th>NASA</th>
<th>NSF</th>
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Advice from Awardees

✓ Don’t judge an agency’s interests by its “name”
✓ Understand agency’s mission & needs
✓ Get to know your agency Program Manager
✓ Read solicitation and follow instructions
✓ Don’t depend solely on SBIR funding
✓ Don’t go it alone - use support systems
✓ Have an outcome
✓ Win or lose - get and review evaluations
✓ Be PERSISTENT
Summary

• SBIR/STTR is a great program that we as a community need to be more successfully exploiting
• Use SBIR/STTR as a Product Development Tool
• Write a good proposal to an appropriate topic
• Involve help early and often
• Pay attention to the problem and don’t forget about key personnel and commercialization

Make an Economic and Societal Contribution to America! SBIR/STTR provides a perfect mechanism to do R&D and generate $
Questions?

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