



National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22230

June 22, 2004

Subject: Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) Supplemental Funding for Diversity Collaborations

Dear Colleague:

The Directorate for Engineering's Division of Design, Manufacture, and Industrial Innovation (DMII) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs in collaboration with the Directorate for Education and Human Resources' Division of Human Resource Development (HRD) Centers for Research Excellence in Science and Technology (CREST) invites all active SBIR/STTR Phase II (reference: <http://www.nsf.gov/eng/sbir>) and CREST (reference: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=6668) grantees to participate in a new supplemental funding opportunity to foster partnership between academic and small business communities. NSF is seeking to increase the participation of underrepresented groups in both academic and small business research, encouraging careers in science and engineering.

The Small Business Minority Academic Research Partnership Supplement (hence to be referred to as SBIR/STTR Phase IIA) will award a research supplement to an existing SBIR/STTR Phase II grantee that is able to partner with CREST institutions. The supplemental research is to further the understanding of Phase II research and facilitate the completion of a stronger technology base. The goal of this pilot supplemental program is to encourage researchers from CREST institutions to conduct academic research that has a direct consequence on meeting the needs of the SBIR/STTR grantee. The total amount of the supplemental SBIR/STTR Phase IIA funding will be up to \$150,000 with at least 70% available as sub-award to the partnered CREST institution. This supplemental award will be used primarily for additional research to be conducted at the partnered CREST institution. The SBIR/STTR firm may charge up to 30% of total supplemental award, including overhead, to manage the partnership. The SBIR/STTR firms will be required to subcontract the remaining 70% to the CREST institutions. Awards will be subject to the availability of funds. It is anticipated that approximately four (4) award supplements will be anticipated awarded for Fiscal Year 2005.

The small business typically retains the intellectual property rights of SBIR/STTR projects supported by the Federal Government. It is strongly suggested that an agreement between the small business and the CREST institution be in place at the time of the submission of the supplemental proposal to ensure that all parties understand the ownership of the technology supported by the grant. An example of a cooperative agreement can be found at: http://www.nsf.gov/eng/sbir/cooperative_agreement.jsp.

Many benefits could come from this collaboration. The small businesses will have the opportunity to have access to CREST faculty and students and the CREST will gain exposure of working on research projects that lead to commercial products and processes. It is anticipated that this research collaboration will lead to continued partnership between the academic institutions and small business firms, which represent the largest employer of scientists and engineers.

The SBIR/STTR Phase IIA supplemental funding proposals submitted to NSF will be reviewed by at least three other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular field represented by the proposal. Phase IIA supplemental proposals will be reviewed by Ad Hoc and/or panel review. The two National Science Board approved merit review criteria (listed below) will be used.

What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative and original concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

Proposals should be submitted according to the instructions for submitting supplemental funding requests found on the SBIR/STTR home page (<http://www.nsf.gov/eng/sbir>). There will be no deadlines for supplemental requests, but requests should be made as early as possible in the fiscal year to assure availability of funding.

Sincerely,

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DMII/ENG

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