



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

**NSF 20-065**

## Dear Colleague Letter: Request for SBIR/STTR Phase I Proposals Addressing COVID-19

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March 25, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

The Division of Innovation and Industrial Partnerships (IIP) of the Engineering Directorate invites US-based small businesses to submit Phase I proposals focused on the development and deployment of new technologies, products, processes, and services with the potential to positively impact the nation's and world's ability to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. Areas of research that might be considered include, but are not limited to: artificial intelligence, digital health, diagnostics, distributed ledger, environmental technologies, medical devices, pharmaceutical technologies, disinfection and sterilization, and filtration and separations. Interested proposers are invited to submit to the NSF [Small Business Innovation Research \(SBIR\)](#) and [Small Business Technology Transfer \(STTR\)](#) Phase I Program.

### ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

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All active NSF SBIR/STTR awardees, and other interested US-based small businesses are eligible to submit a Phase I proposal. Please reference the [NSF SBIR and STTR Phase I solicitations](#) for more details regarding eligibility.

### PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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Small businesses who are interested in submitting NSF SBIR or STTR Phase I proposals in response to this DCL must follow the guidelines outlined in the [NSF SBIR and STTR Phase I solicitations](#), including the submission of a required Project Pitch. Companies who already have an active SBIR/STTR award with NSF may submit a new Phase I proposal relevant to this DCL but must also submit a Project Pitch first.

When submitting a Project Pitch:

- Select "COVID-19" as the SBIR/STTR topic area on the [Project Pitch form](#)

Reference the word “COVID-19” and this Dear Colleague Letter (NSF 20-065) in the “Describe the Technology/Innovation” field.

As time is of the essence to address the global threat posed by COVID-19, companies who receive an invitation to submit a proposal (based on an invited COVID-19 Project Pitch) should then submit their NSF SBIR/STTR Phase I proposals through Fastlane. Follow the NSF SBIR and STTR Phase I solicitation guidelines *with the following additional guidance*:

- The term “COVID-19” must be in the proposal title.
- Small businesses **are encouraged** to facilitate an expedited submission and review by submitting a project description closer to the nine-page solicitation minimum (the maximum is fifteen pages).

As is the case for all NSF proposers, the proposing organization is required to have an active registration with the System for Award Management, (at [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov)) to register in [Research.gov](https://research.gov) and prepare a full proposal. SAM.gov registration is not needed to submit a Project Pitch but can take days or weeks to obtain. Interested small business should plan accordingly.

## REVIEW INFORMATION

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Proposals submitted to the NSF SBIR/STTR Phase I Program in response to this DCL will be reviewed according to the NSF and NSF SBIR/STTR merit review criteria as outlined in the solicitations ([Intellectual Merit](#), [Broader Impacts](#), and [Commercial Impact](#)). NSF is committed to expediting review, with the hope of awards within six weeks of proposal receipt.

## CONTACT PERSONNEL

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Questions about this DCL should be directed to [sbir@nsf.gov](mailto:sbir@nsf.gov) or to the cognizant SBIR/STTR Program Director on your current SBIR/STTR award.

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