



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 20-070

Dear Colleague Letter: Technical and Business Assistance (TABAs) supplement for active SBIR/STTR Phase II Awards

March 28, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)/Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program is offering a Technical and Business Assistance (TABAs) supplement to all active NSF Phase II awardees. The TABAs supplement is intended to assist current small businesses in their technology commercialization efforts pursuant to the guidance in the [2019 SBIR/STTR Policy Directive](#) (reference page 114) and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019.

Specifically, TABAs supplemental funding enables the awardee business to secure the services of one or more third-party service providers that will assist with one or more of the following commercialization activities:

- A. the identification and development of customers for the NSF-funded technology;
- B. providing advice on financing strategy and fundraising from the private sector;
- C. establishing strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders;
- D. the evaluation and protection of intellectual property;
- E. the evaluation and establishment of regulatory and reimbursement strategy; and/or
- F. other activities that will accelerate or strengthen the commercialization case for the underlying technology.

ELIGIBILITY AND FUNDING INFORMATION

- **Eligibility:** Active NSF SBIR and STTR Phase II awardees are eligible for this supplement, only if their Phase II project started between August 13, 2018 and July 31, 2020. Awardees under a no-cost extension are not eligible for the TABAs supplemental funding unless the awardee has prior written approval from their cognizant SBIR/STTR Program Director to submit the TABAs supplement request.
- **Maximum Supplement Amount:** If the Phase II award to be supplemented has

received supplemental funding under the Commercialization Assistance Program (CAP) Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) [NSF 14-072](#), the maximum request is \$40,000. Otherwise, the maximum request is \$50,000.

- **Duration:** TABA supplemental funding may be expended throughout the duration of the Phase II award. The TABA supplement does not extend the original award expiration date.
- **Consultant Costs:** Per-hour consulting costs requested under the TABA opportunity are exempt from any limits listed in the Phase I solicitation to which the base Phase II award was submitted. Such costs will be evaluated based on the consultant's qualifications and the scope of work to be completed.
- **Limit on Number of TABA Supplemental Funding Requests:** One request per active Phase II grant. A TABA supplement does not limit the eligibility for a Phase IIB award or other supplemental funding opportunities. The receipt of other supplemental funding does not limit the eligibility for the TABA supplement.

PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Supplemental funding requests submitted in response to this DCL must be prepared and submitted according to the instructions for submitting supplemental funding requests (reference: <https://seedfund.nsf.gov/resources/awardees/phase-2/instructions/>).

TABA funds are required to be spent with a third-party service provider (individual or institution) and cannot be spent on company employee salaries, travel for company personnel, or other internal company expenses. Company employees, officers, owners, or directors, or close relatives of these (or institutions owned or controlled by such persons), are not permitted to receive TABA funds as service providers through this opportunity.

The awardee company's principal investigator is encouraged to contact his/her cognizant Program Director and obtain written permission prior to submitting a supplemental request for TABA funding.

The supplemental request for TABA funds should place all funds on line G.6 of the budget ("Other Direct Costs"). TABA supplemental funding is subject to the availability of funds and the quality of the supplemental funding requests.

The TABA request must include the following information for each requested TABA activity:

- The proposed commercialization-related activities to be undertaken with support from the service provider. These activities should be consistent with the Phase II commercialization plan submitted in the Phase II proposal.
- The expected outcomes of the proposed activities.
- A brief profile of the service provider, including a discussion of the provider's qualifications and track record.

- Letter of commitment or statement of work from the service provider describing the services to be provided, cost for the services, and clearly defined, agreed-upon deliverables with measurable success metrics.

If a proposer is not able to identify what commercial assistance may be required at the time of submission, the proposing small business may request funds on Line G.6 (“Other”) with the understanding that prior to each expenditure of funds for these purposes, the awardee will be required to submit all of the above documentation for written approval from their cognizant SBIR/STTR Program Director. In such cases, the budget justification should consist of only the following certification: “Specific uses of the TABA funds will be submitted to NSF in writing, along with pricing documentation, for prior approval of the cognizant SBIR/STTR Program Director, as they are identified.”

Submission Deadlines: Only active Phase II awards are eligible to receive a TABA supplement and only if the Phase II project started between August 13, 2018 and July 31, 2020. Phase II awardees are strongly encouraged to submit their TABA supplemental funding requests as early in the award as possible and at least three months prior to the expiration date of the Phase II award. However, a Program Director may, at his or her discretion, accept TABA supplemental requests at any time during the award duration.

REVIEW INFORMATION

Requests for supplemental funding submitted in response to this DCL will be reviewed internally by the cognizant SBIR/STTR Program Director. The review will focus on the commercialization objectives in the supplemental funding request as well as the qualifications of the listed service provider(s), if known at the time of the request submission.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The activities undertaken and results obtained under the TABA supplement must be reported in the interim and final reports for the Phase II award. Funds expended on TABA activities shall be tracked separately and reported in each interim report and in the Phase II final report.

CONTACT PERSONNEL

Questions about this letter should be directed to the cognizant SBIR/STTR Program Director in the Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships, Directorate for Engineering.

OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES OF INTEREST

All active SBIR/STTR Phase II awardees are invited to participate in other supplemental opportunities related to strategic partners and outside investors, the Phase II Technology

Enhancement for Commercial Partnerships (TECP) and the Phase IIB funding opportunities (reference: <https://seedfund.nsf.gov/resources/awardees/supplement/overview/>). Through these supplements, NSF seeks to stimulate strategic partnerships between small businesses and potential commercial partners and/or private sector investors to enable NSF SBIR/STTR awardees to successfully commercialize their technologies.

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