



EPA Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Informational Webinar Sept. 28, 2017

Questions & Answers

General

Can we download a copy of today's presentation?

Today's presentation and questions & answers (Q&As) from the webinar discussions will be posted on the EPA SBIR website at www.epa.gov/sbir.

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-10/documents/epa_sbir_webinar_2017-18_solicitation_0.pdf

Where can I get more information on EPA's SBIR Program?

www.epa.gov/sbir

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-08/documents/epa_sbir_trifold_v9_508_0.pdf

Where can I get more information on the SBIR Program in general?

www.epa.gov/sbir

www.sbir.gov/faqs/general-questions

Does the EPA also fund STTRs?

No, the EPA does not have an STTR program. Only the five largest SBIR programs have STTRs. (The STTR program is another program that requires the small business to formally collaborate with a research institution.)

Does EPA have a Phase 0 program?

No EPA does not. But other agencies and some state programs do. You can search SBIR.gov for more information.

Can you define the "proof of concept" and when a technology is too far along to qualify for Phase 1?

Phase I of the SBIR Program is designed for "proof of concept" of the proposed technology. The technology should be beyond a literature search, should have some data to demonstrate its performance but should not be commercially viable yet. For more general information on the SBIR program, see <https://www.sbir.gov/about/about-sbir#sbir-program>.

Does EPA fund new businesses, or are business accomplishments & history an important part of the application?

EPA makes funding decisions based on the peer and relevancy review criteria provided in the solicitation. If a company is a new business, then they need to demonstrate that they are capable of responding to the commercialization criteria as part of the peer review. On the flip side, if the company is an experienced company, then they must demonstrate that they've been able to commercialize past



technologies (within and outside of the SBIR program).

Phase I winners are the only teams capable of applying for phase II, correct?

Yes, for EPA SBIR, only Phase I awardees are eligible to submit for Phase II.

Is a copy of last year's solicitation available anywhere? Not to submit this year, but to use as a template to prepare in advance of the official announcement later this month.

Previous solicitations can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/sbir/past-sbir-solicitations>. This approach should be used in caution since each solicitation is unique. Please use the official 2017-18 EPA SBIR Solicitation to prepare your proposal.

If a small business applies and is rejected, how can they find out why?

All small businesses that apply will receive a copy of their peer review comments whether they are selected for funding or not. EPA often has more quality proposals than it can afford to fund.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply for the SBIR program?

Only small businesses are eligible for the SBIR Program. For more information on eligibility, please see <https://www.sbir.gov/faqs/eligibility-requirements>.

When is eligibility determined?

Eligibility is determined at time of award, BUT in order to apply to EPA SBIR, a small business must have completed the 4 registrations listed below and described in the webinar slides.

- DUNS #
- SBA Company Registry
- SAM
- FedConnect

Topics

What are the proposed solicitation topics for 2017-2018 again?

The Draft Topics for this year are listed below. They are most likely to be the final topics, but the official solicitation includes the finalized topics. Please note, the topics are fairly focused and we would like only proposals responsive to this year's topics.

Clean and Safe Water

- Removal of Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)/Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS) from Drinking Water
- Removal of PFOA/PFOS from Wastewater
- Replacements for Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) and Polyethylene (PE) Water Pipes

Air Quality

- Capturing Carbon Dioxide from Vehicles
- Converting Carbon Dioxide from Vehicles
- Product Loss Prevention and/or Mitigation in the Oil and Natural Gas Sector
- Developing More Stable Metal Alloy Tubes for Use in High Temperature Processes



Land Revitalization

- Remediation of PFAS-Contaminated Soil and Sediment

Homeland Security

- Decontamination of Category A Viruses on Porous Surfaces and Sensitive Equipment
- Packaging Materials for On-Site Fumigation and Transport of Category A Virus Contaminated Materials

Manufacturing

- Greener Manufacturing of Plastics
- Greener Plastic Materials and Products

Building Construction Materials

- Greener Interior Construction Materials
- Greener Exterior Construction Materials

Will there be more information on the topics provided in the solicitation?

Yes, the solicitation will provide more detailed descriptions of the topics and typically a reference document to provide background on the topic.

Does EPA accept unsolicited proposals?

No, proposals should be responsive to the topics listed in the solicitation.

Does EPA take suggestions for topics?

EPA topics are generated from ideas and input from across the Agency.

Because this slide says "Draft," does that mean they might change?

These are very likely to be the final topics, but please check the official solicitation for finalized topics.

Can one proposal be entered into more than one topic area?

No, a specific proposal can only be submitted under one topic area.

How much focus is put on any one topic? How many projects do you fund in each topic?

We will fund projects across all topic areas depending on how many (quality) proposals we receive in each area.

Schedule

What is the deadline to submit?

The solicitation will close approximately 45 days after it opens. It is anticipated to open in late October, which would put the closing date in December.

Do you anticipate opening another solicitation in the winter?

No, EPA only releases one solicitation per year. The next EPA SBIR solicitation will be released in 2018.

Funding Rates/Program History

What is your funding rate for each topic listed in the draft solicitation?



The Phase I funding rate has averaged 18%+ over the last three years. We fund across topic areas but it does depend on how many proposals we get in each area. For Phase II the funding rate is approximately 40%.

Do you share the titles of the previously funded proposals?

Yes, all previously funded projects are listed on our website at https://cfpub.epa.gov/ncer_abstracts/index.cfm/fuseaction/outlinks.sbir/.

Other Agencies/Opportunities

Could you please provide information on other SBIR Agencies that fund environmental technologies?

Some other agencies that support environmental technologies include:

- National Science Foundation (NSF)
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)
- Department of Energy (DOE)
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

Do the different agencies have different application processes?

Yes, each agency has their own application process. Please check the Agency's solicitation for specifics on their application process.

Where can I find information on other agencies deadlines?

More information on the program as a whole and on the 11 agencies that participate can be found at www.SBIR.gov.

Can you please provide information on the Sensors Funding Opportunities Website?

<https://www.sbir.gov/Sensor-technology-for-the-21st-century>

Can you apply to more than one agency?

You can apply to more than one Agency.

If you apply with the same project/technology, you can NOT get funded by more than one Agency for the same work. If you did apply to multiple agencies and were funded by one, you would withdraw your other proposals.

You can also apply to different agencies with different projects.

Applying

Will the solicitation be distributed via email?

No, it will be posted at the following locations:

1. www.epa.gov/sbir
2. FedConnect
3. FedBizOpps

What is the link to register at FedConnect?

<https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/Default.htm>

Does EPA require a letter of intent?



No, letters of intent are not required for Phase I or Phase II.

Can a small business submit more than one application to this solicitation?

Yes, a small business can submit multiple applications, but quality is preferred over quantity.

Can a company improve and resubmit a rejected SBIR?

A proposal from a previous round can be resubmitted as long as it is responsive to the current solicitation topics. The peer review comments from the previous year should be addressed.

Does EPA keep our information confidential?

Yes, EPA will keep your proposal confidential through all phases of the review process. The abstract is intended for publication and should not contain any confidential information.

If a small business submits a proposal well before the deadline and needs to update it, can a revision be submitted?

Yes, an updated version can be submitted prior to the closing date and time established in the solicitation.

Contacts

Who are the program managers and do we contact them?

Technical questions can be addressed to the Program Manager, April Richards (richards.april@epa.gov). Contractual questions can be addressed to the Contract Specialist, Nina Leshock (Leshock.Nina@epa.gov).

Are there specific program managers for the different topics you listed in the draft solicitation?

General questions on the topics can be directed to the EPA SBIR Program Manager, April Richards (Richards.april@epa.gov). Please note, that it is the responsibility of the small business to determine whether they think their technology is appropriate to a specific topic and whether they should submit a proposal or not.

Review Process

How are proposals reviewed at EPA?

Proposals go through a 2-stage review process. The first stage is an external peer review for technical and commercial strength. If proposals are highly recommended or recommended in this stage, they will move forward to the 2nd stage which is an internal programmatic review where proposals are evaluated for responsiveness to the topics and EPA priorities. Additionally, the official solicitation will provide detailed guidance on the EPA's evaluation process.

How many peer reviewers are there?

Peer review panels are set up around each topic area. The number of reviewers on the panel is determined by the number of proposals received. Peer review panels contain experts in both technical and commercialization aspects of the proposals.

How can I serve as a peer reviewer? Do they receive compensation?

The EPA does not permit current Phase I contractors, Phase I offerors, or Phase II offerors to participate in the peer review. Also, you cannot serve if you have any involvement with any of these proposals. If



you are interested, please send an e-mail with your resume to the EPA SBIR Program manager, April Richards (richards.april@epa.gov). She will pass your information along to another division who will contact you when there is a panel that matches your expertise. Peer reviewers do receive modest compensation and must participate in a virtual panel meeting lasting one to three days.