

Start your application →

Deadline: June 17, 2017

Equity-free seed funding to help transform your innovative idea into a scalable product or service.

- About the seed fund
- How to apply

Already submitted your application? [Check for updates on FastLane](#).

Up to \$225,000 for early-stage product development.

- We offer seed-stage startups with the funding they need to commercialize — up to \$225k for proof-of-concept product development or research.
- We take no equity in exchange for funding. You retain full control over your team and the direction of your work.
- You'll get access to year-round events and join a prestigious network of scientific innovators and founders.

Upcoming events

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM ET

Webinar NSF seed funding Q&A

Program Director Pete Atherton will answer your questions about the NSF seed fund and what you need to apply for the upcoming deadline.

REGISTER

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM ET

Webinar NSF seed funding Q&A

Program Director Ruth Shuman will answer your questions about the NSF seed fund and what you need to apply for the upcoming deadline.

REGISTER

→ [View more upcoming events](#)

We provide funding for the high-risk, early product development stage

Portfolio

Since 1977, the NSF seed fund (powered by SBIR/STTR) has helped startups develop their ideas and bring them to market. We support tech innovation — not just in traditional scientific fields — but [across all tech sectors](#), including edtech, IoT, big data, smart health, hardware, even social networks. Between 2007 and 2016 alone, we funded roughly 400 companies each year.

We're diverse

Great ideas aren't limited by geography, and we seek to fund companies both inside and outside of the major tech hotbeds. We also have a mission to promote the innovations of women, people of color, and other folks from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in tech.

Are you a good fit?

We're always looking to support innovative, high-risk work that needs a bit more research and development. As we review applications, we also consider your company's potential for commercial and social impact — your technology needs to have a good market fit and the potential to meaningfully benefit society.

→ [Am I a good fit?](#)

Events / All

April 19, 2007
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM ET

Online webinar

NSF Seed Fund Q&A Webinar: Pete Atherton

Program Director Pete Atherton will answer your questions about the NSF seed fund and what you need to apply for the upcoming deadline.


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May 2, 2007

Boise State University
Hatch Ballroom
1700 University Dr.
Boise, ID 83725

SBIR Road Tour: Boise, ID

SBIR Road Tour stop offers a chance to meet directly with NSF seed fund program managers who fund a wide spectrum of innovative ideas, while learning about your state sponsored innovation support infrastructure.


 [View event details](#)

May 3, 2007

Salt Lake Community College
Miller Campus
9750 South 300 West
Sandy, UT 84070

SBIR Road Tour: Sandy, UT

SBIR Road Tour stop offers a chance to meet directly with NSF seed fund program managers who fund a wide spectrum of innovative ideas, while learning about your state sponsored innovation support infrastructure.

 [View event details](#)

May 4, 2007
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM ET

Online webinar

NSF Seed Fund Q&A Webinar: Ruth Shuman

Program Director Ruth Shuman will host this Q&A. She will take questions from participants and answer questions about the NSF seed fund and what you need to apply for the upcoming application deadline: June 17, 2017.

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May 19, 2007
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM ET

Online webinar

NSF Seed Fund Q&A Webinar: Rajesh Mehta

Program Director Rajesh Mehta will host this Q&A. He will take questions from participants and answer questions about the NSF seed fund and what you need to apply for the upcoming application deadline: June 17, 2017.

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May 30, 2007
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM ET

Online webinar

NSF Seed Fund Q&A Webinar: Jesus Soriano

Program Director Jesus Soriano will host this **final Q&A session before the June 17 application deadline**. He will take questions from participants and answer questions about the NSF seed fund and what you need to apply.

REGISTER

May 3, 2007

McNamara Alumni Center
University of Minnesota
200 SE Oak St.
Minneapolis, MN 55455

SBIR Road Tour: Minneapolis, MN

SBIR Road Tour stop offers a chance to meet directly with NSF seed fund program managers who fund a wide spectrum of innovative ideas, while learning about your state sponsored innovation support infrastructure.

 [View event details](#)

How to apply

^ Determine your eligibility

Interested in applying for funding? First make sure your company meets these requirements.

- Your company must be a legal entity at the time you apply for funding.
- At least 50% of your company's equity must be owned by U.S. citizens or permanent residents, and all funded works needs to take place in the United States (including work done by consultants and contractors).
- The project's tech lead (Principal Investigator) must be legally employed at least 20 hours a week by the company seeking funding. The tech lead doesn't need any advanced degrees.
- The tech lead needs to commit to at least one month (173 hours) of work on a funded project.
- Finally, you can designate a university faculty member as your tech lead only if they can commit to the 50% employment requirement.

^ Find out if you're a good fit

90 Days
Before deadline

Before starting your application, you'll want to figure out whether your company is a good fit for the NSF seed fund.

- Seed stage: Early-stage company in the research or prototyping phase
- Pre-traction: Has validated the market and undertaken customer development efforts but has not yet reached product-market fit
- High-risk: Product is based on unproven technology for which the funding will be used to validate
- Scale: If validated, the product could have massive societal impact and/or venture scale

^ Submit your executive summary

(Optional)

30-60 Days
Before deadline

Submitting an executive summary is a great way to receive feedback from a program director.

- [How to do i submit my executive summary?](#)

^ Register your company

30-60 Days
Before deadline

Once you've decided to apply, you'll need to register your company with four different systems. You can complete these registrations at any time — in fact, we encourage you to do before the solicitation period opens so you can save time down the road.

→ [Dun and Bradstreet](#)

A DUNS number is a unique, nine-digit number that identifies each physical location of your company. You'll need one in order to receive government funding. Because you're applying for a DUNS number for government funding, processing time should take about five business days.

→ [FastLane](#)

Before applying, you need to register your tech lead and company in FastLane. Within 48 hours, you'll get a confirmation email with login instructions. We recommend you explore FastLane before submitting your application.

→ [System for Award Management](#)

Any company that does business with the government needs a SAM account. When you register, you'll have to share EFT information.

→ [SBIR Company Registry](#)

Any company that does business with the government needs a SAM account. When you register, you'll have to share EFT information.

> Review the solicitation

Solicitation: December 2016 (Expired)

> Submit your application

FastLane: Due by December 7, 2016 (Currently closed)