



National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
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NSF 10-045

Dear Colleague Letter: Supplemental Opportunity for SBIR/STTR - Technology Enhancement for Commercial Partnerships

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 1, 2010
To: NSF Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) Grantees
From: Kesh Narayanan, Division Director
Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP)
Re: Supplemental Opportunity for SBIR/STTR - Technology Enhancement for Commercial Partnerships (TECP)

The Directorate for Engineering's Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs invites all active SBIR/STTR Phase II grantees to participate in the Technology Enhancement for Commercial Partnerships (TECP) program, a new supplemental funding opportunity. TECP supplements to SBIR/STTR grantees are intended to pave the way for partnerships between strategic corporate partners and investors and SBIR/STTR companies as a means to increase the potential for SBIR/STTR grantees to commercialize successfully their technology. Partnerships are recognized as a critical success factor for commercializing technology developed by small business. Potential partners, however, frequently demand technical specifications and require proof-of-concept data as a prerequisite for partnership that is beyond the scope of the Phase II project objectives. This supplemental funding will enable small businesses to conduct additional research to meet the requirements of a corporate partner that could lead to commercial products and services and a successful partnership. This supplemental funding program is intended to challenge small businesses to begin to develop an outward focus and to more rigorously evaluate their strategic business and commercialization options. It is anticipated that this research will not only benefit the small business enterprise but also provide a mechanism for large and mid-sized corporations and investors to have input into the commercial development of new technology, products and services.

OVERVIEW OF WORK TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

The Technology Enhancement for Commercial Partnerships Program will award research supplements to active SBIR/STTR Phase II grantees that are currently conducting research projects. This supplement opportunity is intended to provide funding for additional research that goes beyond the Phase II project's objectives to meet the technical specifications or additional proof-of-concept requirements of the potential commercialization partner. It is anticipated that the additional research will enhance the commercial potential of the technology and lead to partnerships with industrial partners and venture and angel investors.

DEADLINE DATES

TECP proposals must be submitted within 18 months of the effective start date of their Phase II grant. SBIR/STTR grants must be active at the time of the supplement.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Organization Limit: Only currently active SBIR/STTR Phase II grantees are eligible to submit proposals for supplemental funding under the TECP program.

PI Eligibility Limit: The Principal Investigator must be the PI of an active SBIR/STTR Phase II award.

Limit on Number of TECP Proposals: One per active Phase II grant. A TECP award does not limit your eligibility for a Phase IIB award or other Supplemental Opportunities. Also, a Phase IIB or other Supplemental award does not limit your eligibility for a TECP award.

AWARD INFORMATION

- Awards will be made as supplements to active SBIR/STTR Phase II awards.
- The maximum supplemental award is 20% of the Phase II award: Currently, for Phase II, up to \$100,000 subject to the availability of funds and the quality of the proposals.
- The TECP supplement project will run for a duration of up to 6 months; a TECP award may extend the Phase II award for up to 6 months.
- The TECP award also extends the date for initiating a Phase IIB supplement request. However, please note that the request to start the Phase IIB process must be received within 30 days prior to the extended expiration date of the Phase II award.
- Approximately 70 awards are anticipated in Fiscal Year 2010 and it is expected that \$7,000,000 will be available in Fiscal Year 2010 for this supplemental funding, pending availability of funds.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposal Preparation Instructions: Proposals must be submitted according to the instructions for submitting supplemental funding requests found on the SBIR/STTR home page <http://www.nsf.gov/eng/iip/sbir> under *Supplemental Funding Opportunities*.

A company, that has identified a commercial partner and desires to submit a proposal, would initiate the process by first contacting their cognizant Program Officer for the purpose of obtaining authorization to submit a TECP proposal. The TECP proposal will describe the commercial opportunity including a description of the partner, the ultimate commercial application of the technology, the proposed research and the commercial potential. The potential commercial partner is required to document its commercial interest in the technology and its desire to enter a relationship with the small business in the form of a letter of support.

Proposal Review Information: Proposals for supplemental funding submitted in response to this Dear Colleague Letter will be reviewed by a National Science Foundation program officer. The review will focus on both the technical objectives and the commercial plan and strategy in the proposal as well as the commercial potential of the future partnership.

CONTACT PERSONNEL

Questions about this letter should be directed to Ruth M. Shuman (703-292-2160, rshuman@nsf.gov), Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships, Directorate for Engineering.

OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES OF INTEREST

All active SBIR/STTR Phase II grantees are invited to participate in another supplement opportunity related to strategic partners and outside investors, the Phase IIB program.

Supplemental Requests. Through these supplements, NSF seeks to broaden participation of strategic commercial partners and outside investors working with grantees to successfully commercialize new products.

Kesh Narayanan
Director
Industrial Innovation and Partnerships
IIP/ENG