

Is SBIR a Good Fit for My Company?

An assessment tool to start the SBIR conversation with Wyoming small businesses

If you are unable to check off these boxes, contact WSSI to discuss the work you and your team need to complete before you are ready to apply for the federal SBIR programs and ask us about the Wyoming Phase 0 program

- Yes No 1. Is firm a for-profit entity, or will a for-profit entity be formed?
- Yes No 2. Does firm meets the current ownership and other SBA requirements for "small company" status:
- 500 or fewer employees including affiliates and subsidiaries
- at least 51% owned and operated by US citizen or permanent resident
- located in the US
- Yes No 3. Does firm have R&D personnel, capabilities and access to facilities needed to credibly carry out at least 2/3 of the Phase I work in-house for SBIR or at least 40% of the work in-house for STTR?
- Yes No 4. Does firm have an "eligible" Principal Investigator (PI) available during the period of performance of the SBIR/STTR contract or grant -- "eligible" being determined both by employment status with the company (51%) and credible R&D credentials?
- Yes No 5. Are the PI and the rest of the R&D team likely to be credible as researchers in the eyes of the agency reviewers? What kinds of people need to be added to the team to add the needed credibility? Is the team complete?
- Yes No 6. Does firm have a great RESEARCH idea? Is this project really about research? Are there Phase I feasibility issues to address? What research will be done in Phase I? How will Phase I success be measured? Is there any indication that a Phase I work plan exists? Does a realistic work plan fit the Phase I scope and budget?
- Yes No 7. Does research idea fit with a participating federal agency solicitation topic?
- Yes No 8. Does preliminary data (obtained by the applicant, his team members or others in the field) indicate the potential for the feasibility of the project?
- Yes No 9. Does the applicant have ACCESS to the needed facilities and equipment?

The Wyoming SBIR/STTR Initiative is sponsored by the Wyoming Business Council and administered by the University of Wyoming Office of Research and Economic Development. The mission of the partnership is to increase the number of federal SBIR awards received by Wyoming small businesses by providing funding assistance through the WSSI Phase 0 program.

The program facilitates the preparation of competitive proposals in the annual national \$2.5 billion SBIR competition for Phase I (up to \$150,000) and Phase II (up to \$1 million) awards. Phase I involves a solicitation of proposals to conduct feasibility related experimental research related to agency requirements. Phase II designed to continue Phase I research including full scale testing of the technology.

Any Wyoming tech-based, for-profit small business or individual desiring to submit a Phase I proposal to any of the eleven participating federal SBIR agencies is eligible to apply for a WSSI Phase 0 award. For further information on the WSSI and SBIR programs, go to www.uwyo.edu/sbir or email wssi@uwyo.edu, 307.766.2904 or tollfree at 1.866.703.3280.



Why YES matters:

1. SBIR legislation requires eligible small businesses to be established as for profit enterprises. Nonprofit organizations cannot apply for Phase I funding although nonprofit research institutions (federal labs and universities) can participate as partners with small businesses in SBIR & STTR projects. Phase I awards are always made to the small business.
2. The Small Business Administration (SBA) defines a small business using these criteria and the agencies follow the SBA guidelines when determining a company's eligibility for SBIR/STTR funding.
3. SBIR allows small businesses to partner with nonprofit research institutions while the STTR requires the small business to partner. With SBIR, the small business needs to do 2/3 of the Phase I work and can outsource up to 1/3. With STTR, the small business must do 40% of the Phase I work and the nonprofit research partner doing 30% of the work while the remaining 30% can be allocated as the small business determines.
4. The primary employment of the PI (Principal Investigator) must be with the small business concern at the time of award and during the conduct of the proposed project. For projects with multiple PIs, at least one must meet the primary employment requirement. Primary employment means that more than one half of the PI's time is spent in the employ of the small business concern. Primary employment with a small business concern precludes full-time employment at another organization.
5. While SBIR does not require a team approach, each agency receives hundreds of proposals and a team approach allows the small business to bring in experts and consultants to develop a competitive proposal. Small businesses must strive to build an SBIR competition team with a complete set of required capabilities to increase the chances of winning. Required skills may include (for example) science, technology, analysis, experimental methods, marketing, commercialization, business management (including legal and accounting), technical writing, proposal review and others. Each agency also has a unique culture and proposal evaluation process; it is critical for the small business to understand agency difference and build their team accordingly.
6. Not all great product ideas qualify for SBIR/STTR funding. The small business needs to have a research idea with feasibility issues. SBIR Phase I is typically a six month feasibility study while the Phase II can be for up to two years with R&D focused on prototype development.
7. It is imperative that the small business's research idea fits within the federal agencies solicitation topics. There are eleven federal agencies that participate in SBIR with the five largest (NIH, NSF, DOD, NASA, EPA) also participating in STTR. Each agency releases at least one solicitation each year. Solicitations can be found at each agencies web site, at www.sbir.gov or you can access them at www.uwyo.edu/sbir web site under participating federal agencies. Typically, agencies will only review proposals that address an agency's solicitation topics.
8. SBIR law does not require preliminary data however, most agency reviewers expect to see preliminary data as an indicator of the research feasibility and team's credibility.
9. ACCESS is highlighted here to show that the applicant does not need to own equipment and facilities but needs to show it has the access which means you can rent or lease as needed. If the small businesses is planning to use space at a nonprofit research institution, the small business should include a letter stating the access has been granted.