**2011 Microbusiness Innovation Science and Technology Survey**

Dear Small Business Owner,

You are part of a vital but often unrecognized part of the economy – the small business community – and the National Science Foundation (NSF) wants to hear from you.

NSF, an independent government agency, is surveying all types of businesses in the U.S. to measure the extent of innovation and R&D activities in our nation. At NSF, we are tasked with examining U.S. competitiveness in science, engineering, technology, and research and development. This survey focuses on the smallest businesses in the U.S. Your answers will help policymakers address issues such as how small businesses are affected by the rapid changes in our economy and what the smallest businesses are doing to be competitive.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it to the address below. A postage-paid envelope is provided for your convenience.

National Science Foundation

c/o Westat, Room xx

1600 Research Blvd

Rockville, MD 20850

Your responses are confidential under law. See the statement at the bottom of this page for more details.

Contact us at xxx-xxx-xxxx OR by e-mail at xxxxxxx.xxx.

Thank you for contributing to our study of our nation’s smallest businesses.

**A. Overall Company Information**

1. Did your company have any revenues in 2011?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Yes 🡪 Go to Question 2. |
|  | No 🡪 **Stop here and return the survey form.** |

2. Did another company own more than 50 percent of your company at any time during 2011?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Yes 🡪**Stop here and return the survey form.** |
|  | No 🡪 Go to Question 3. |

3. How important to you are each of the following reasons for owning your company?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Very important** | **Somewhat important** | **Not important** |
| a. Wanted to be my own boss |  |  |  |
| b. Flexible hours |  |  |  |
| c. Opportunity for greater income |  |  |  |
| d. Best avenue for my ideas/products/services |  |  |  |
| e. Had to start company to find work |  |  |  |

f. Please list any other important reasons

4. For the pay period including March 12, 2011, how many people worked for your company?

Include both full-time and part-time workers as well as yourself.

Please count each person only once.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of people** | |
| **Owners** | |  |
| 1. Owners who received a W-2 issued by our company for salary or wages 2. Other owners (paid or unpaid) | | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | | |  | | |  | | --- | |  | |  | | | |  | |  | | |
| **Non-owners** | |  |
| 1. Employees who received a W-2 issued by our company for salary or wages | | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | | |  | |  | | |
| 1. Individuals who received payment in other ways (e.g., contractors/consultants/ temporary workers who received a 1099 or payment from another company) | | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | | |  | |  | | |
| 1. Unpaid individuals who worked for our company (e.g., interns, friends, family members) | | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | | |  | |  | | |

5. Not counting those listed in question 4, which of the following were key people you used as advisors for your company during the past year?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| a. Scientist or technical expert |  |  |
| b. Financial expert |  |  |
| c. Business expert |  |  |
| d. Marketing expert |  |  |
| e. Individual who offered general advice |  |  |
| f. Regulatory or compliance expert |  |  |
| g. Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |  |

6. During the last three years how would you best describe the skills of the last full time or part time person your company hired?

*(Mark the answer that best applies.)*

Does not apply: have not hired employees

Broad or general skills

Marketing or sales expertise

Finance or business expertise

Researcher or scientist

Software or programming expertise

Information technology or hardware expertise

Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. What year did your company start?

Give the year your company first obtained an EIN (Employer Identification Number) or first filed a tax return, whichever is earlier.

Please answer for the firm identified.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year company started |  | | | |
|  |  |  |
|  | | | |

**B. Financial Information**

8. What were your company’s 2011 revenues, excluding income from grants?

(*Enter number.*)

|  |
| --- |
| **$** |

9. Approximately what share of your company’s 2011 revenues came from the following?

(*Enter percentage; total should equal 100%; if none, enter zero.*)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Source of revenues** | | | **Percent** | | |
|  | | |  | | |
| a. Selling goods to customers, including other companies | | |  | % | |
|  | | |  |  | |
| b. Selling services to customers, including other companies | | |  | % | |
| c. Other (please specify) | | |  |  | |
|  | % | |
|  |  | |
| TOTAL | **100%** | | |

10. Approximately what percent of your revenues for 2011 were domestic (sold to customers in the United States and its territories)?

(*Enter number; if none, enter zero.*)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **%** |

11. During the last three years, did your company earn any revenue from customers in the following locations?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| a. Within our state |  |  |
| b. Other states or U.S. territories |  |  |
| c. Canada or Mexico |  |  |
| d. Other countries besides Canada or Mexico |  |  |

12. During the last three years, did you use any of your personal funds (e.g., credit cards, home equity loan, personal savings) for your company?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Yes |
|  | No |

13. During the last three years, did your company try to get any funding (e.g., loans, investments, or gifts) from the sources in the list below?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes,  got funding** | **Yes, tried but did not get funding** | **No,  did not try** |
| 1. Banks or credit unions |  |  |  |
| 1. Other companies as investors |  |  |  |
| 1. Family and friends |  |  |  |
| 1. Angel or venture capital funding (financial support in return for equity or stock in our company) |  |  |  |
| 1. Federal government’s Small Business Technology Transfer Program (STTR) or Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR) |  |  |  |
| 1. You may add other sources here.   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | |

**C. Innovation**

14. Did your company have any products (goods and services) on the market during the last three years?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Yes 🡪 Continue to Question 15. |
|  | No 🡪 Go to Question 18. |

15. During the last three years, did your company do any of the following regarding the products (goods and services) your company offers?

* Do not include adaptation or customization of your product for a specific client’s needs.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** | **Does not apply** |
| 1. Put a new product on the market that no company has ever offered before |  |  |  |
| 1. Put a new product on the market that our company has never offered before |  |  |  |
| 1. Improved our product’s performance by making changes in materials, equipment, components, or software |  |  |  |
| 1. Developed a new use for our product |  |  |  |
| 1. Added a new feature to our product |  |  |  |
| 1. Made it easier for customers to use our product ( e.g., easier access, more user friendly) |  |  |  |

16. During the last three years, did your company do any of the following regarding products (goods and services) your company offers?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Yes** | | **No** | | **Does not apply** | |
| 1. Used a new way of purchasing, accounting, computing, maintenance, inventory control, or other support activities | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Reduced our costs by changing the way we distribute the product we offer | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Upgraded our techniques, equipment, or software to significantly improve the services we offer | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Made significant improvements in our techniques or processes by increasing automation, decreasing energy consumption, or using software | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Decreased our production costs by improving the materials, components, or software | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Changed our methods to deliver our product faster or more reliably | |  | |  | |  | |

17. During the last three years, did your company do any of the following related to marketing or design?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Yes** | | **No** | | **Does not apply** | |
| 1. Made significant changes to the design or packaging of a good or service other than changes that alter how the product is used | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Promoted our product in a new way (e.g., the first time use of a new type of advertising, a new brand image, introduction of loyalty cards) | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Used new ways to sell our product (e.g., first time use of franchising or distribution licenses, direct selling, exclusive retailing, new concepts for product presentation) | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Used new pricing methods (e.g., first-time use of pricing by demand, discount system) | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Created or opened up a new market for our company’s goods or services | |  | |  | |  | |
| 1. Told our customers about a new way they can use our goods or services | |  | |  | |  | |

18. During the last three years, did your company do any of the following related to your organization?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** | **Does not apply** |
| 1. Implemented new methods to improve internal processes or deliver products (e.g., introduce supply chain management systems or business re-engineering, lean production and quality management systems ) |  |  |  |
| 1. Applied new methods or processes to improve workplace organization (e.g., education and training systems improve learning and sharing, implement changes in workplace responsibilities or authority of managers and employees) |  |  |  |
| 1. Started a new way of interacting with other firms or organizations  (e.g., alliances, partnerships, outsourcing, subcontracting) |  |  |  |

**Intellectual Property**

19. How many U.S. patent applications, if any, does your company currently have pending? (*Enter number; if none, enter zero*)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Patent applications currently pending |  |

20. How many U.S. patents does your company currently own? (*Enter number; if none, enter zero*)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of patents |  |

21. Please indicate whether or not your company did any of the following during the last three years. (*Mark one for each row.*)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** | **Does not apply** |
| 1. Transferred intellectual property (IP) to others not owned by our company through participation in technical assistance or "know how" agreements |  |  |  |
| 1. Received IP from others not owned by our company through participation in technical assistance or "know how" agreements |  |  |  |
| 1. Participated in cross-licensing agreements—the agreements in which two or more parties grant a license to each other for the use of the subject matter claimed in one or more of the patents owned by each party |  |  |  |
| 1. Allowed free use of patents or other IP owned by our company (e.g., allowing free use of software patents by the open source community) |  |  |  |
| 1. Made use of open source patents or other freely available IP not owned by our company |  |  |  |

22. During the last three years, how important were the following for protecting your company’s intellectual property? (*Mark one for each row.*)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Very important** | **Moderately important** | **A little important** | **Not at all important** | **Does not apply** |
| a. Utility patents (patents for inventions) |  |  |  |  |  |
| b. Design patents (patents for appearance) |  |  |  |  |  |
| c. Trademark |  |  |  |  |  |
| d. Copyrights |  |  |  |  |  |
| e. Trade secrets |  |  |  |  |  |
| f. Nondisclosure agreements |  |  |  |  |  |
| g. Please list other important ways you protected your company’s intellectual property. | | | | | |

**D. Scientific and Engineering Research and Development (R&D)**

23. During 2011**,** did your company do any of the following?

Include activities that:

* You performed
* Others paid you to do
* You paid others to do.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| 1. Conducted work that might lead to a patent. |  |  |
| 1. Developed and tested prototypes that were derived from scientific research or technical findings |  |  |
| 1. Produced findings that could be published in academic journals or presented at scientific conferences |  |  |
| 1. Applied scientific or technical knowledge in a way that has never been done before |  |  |
| 1. Created new scientific or technical solutions that can be generalized to other situations |  |  |
| 1. Conducted work to discover previously unknown scientific facts, structures, or relationships |  |  |
| 1. Conducted work to extend the understanding of scientific facts, relationships or principles in ways that could be useful to others |  |  |

**If you answered “yes” to any activities in Question 23, these are your 2011 R&D activities for the following questions.**

**🡪Continue with Question 24.**

**If you answered “No” to all activities in Question 23**

**🡪 Go to Question 30.**

24. What was the total cost in 2011 for the activities you reported in Question 23? Please include all costs:

* Salaries, wages, fringe benefits
* Equipment, materials, supplies, software
* Rent, utilities
* Consultants, contractors

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **This is your total R&D cost for 2011.** |  |
| $ |
|  |

25. How much of the amount in Question 24 was for purchasing R&D services from others?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **This is the cost of R&D you paid others to do in 2011.** |  |
| $ |
|  |

26. Please subtract Question 25 from Question 24 and enter the amount here.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **This is your cost for the R&D you performed in 2011.** |  |
| $ |
|  |

27. Of the total R&D amount you reported in Question 26, what percent was for each of the following types of costs?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| a. Salaries, wages, and fringe benefits for company’s employees | |  |  | |
| % |
|  |
| b. Equipment | |  |  | |
| % |
|  |
| c. Software purchases and licenses | |  |  | |
| % |
|  |
| d. Other costs (e.g., consultants, contractors, travel, rent) | |  |  | |
| % |
|  |
| TOTAL | | **100%** | | |

28. Of the total R&D amount you reported in Question 26, how much was paid for by the following sources?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Percent** | | |
|  | |  | | |
| a. Our company | | % |  | |
|  | |  |  | |
| b. Another U.S. company | | % |  | |
|  | |  | | |
| c. U.S. university or college | | % |  | |
|  | |  |  | |
| d. U.S. non-profit organization | | % |  | |
|  | |  | | |
| e. U.S. federal government (including R&D grants) | | % |  | |
|  | |  |  | |
| f. U.S. state or local government (not including state universities) | |  |  | |
| % |
|  |
| g. Other (please specify)  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |  |  | |
| % |
|  |
|  | |  |  | |
| TOTAL | **100%** | |

29. How many people worked on the R&D activities you reported in Question 23 for the pay period that included March 12, 2011?

**Number of people**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. Owners |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| b. Employees |  |  |
|  |  | |
| c. Other paid workers  (e.g., contractors, consultants, temporary workers) |  |  |
|  |
|  |
|  |  |  |
| d. Unpaid workers |  |  |
|  |  | |
| e. Total |  |  |

**E. Your Company Strategies**

30. How important is each of the following in how your company seeks a competitive advantage?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Very important** | **Moderately important** | **A little important** | **Not at all important** | **Does not apply** |
| a. Our low prices |  |  |  |  |  |
| b. The quality of our goods/services |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| c. Our unique goods/services |  |  |  |  |  |
| d. The convenience we offer |  |  |  |  |  |
| e. Our reputation |  |  |  |  |  |
| f. Other *(please specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* |  |  |  |  |  |

31. How important is each of the following to your company’s strategy?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Very important** | **Moderately important** | **A little important** | **Not at all important** | **Does not apply** |
| a. Updating or improving an existing good or service |  |  |  |  |  |
| b. Developing a good or service that will save customers money |  |  |  |  |  |
| c. Developing a good or service that will improve current customers’ experience |  |  |  |  |  |
| d. Having a formal business strategic plan in writing |  |  |  |  |  |
| e. Partnerships with other businesses |  |  |  |  |  |
| f. Partnerships with one or more universities |  |  |  |  |  |

32. During 2011, how important was each of the following in moving your company forward?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Very important** | **Moderately important** | **A little important** | **Not at all important** | **Does not apply** |
| a. Cutting costs enough to make a profit |  |  |  |  |  |
| b. Keeping up with demands for our products |  |  |  |  |  |
| c. Finding new customers |  |  |  |  |  |
| d. Keeping current customers |  |  |  |  |  |
| e. Finding people with the right job skills |  |  |  |  |  |
| f. Getting access to funds |  |  |  |  |  |
| g. Getting access to facilities and equipment |  |  |  |  |  |

33. Where would you like your company to be in five years?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Company will have a larger number of employees |
|  | Company will have about the same number of employees as it has currently |
|  | Company will be purchased by another company |
|  | Uncertain |
|  | Other (please specify) |
|  |  |

**F. About the Owner**

If your company has more than one owner, answer for the owner with the most responsibility for the direction of the company.

34. Is this the first company you started?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | *Not applicable: I did not start this company* 🡪 Go to Question 36. |
|  | Yes 🡪 Go to Question 36. |
|  | No 🡪 Go to Question 35. |

35. What is the status of the **previous** company you started?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| 1. Company is still in business and I still own it |  |  |
| 1. Company is no longer in business |  |  |
| 1. Company was purchased by another company |  |  |
| 1. Company was purchased by another individual |  |  |
| 1. Other (please specify)   \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | |

36. Approximately, how many hours each week do you work at this company? Include all hours whether paid or unpaid.

(*Enter number.*)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of hours |  |

37. What is the highest level of education you completed?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Less than high school |
|  | High school graduate |
|  | Some college |
|  | Bachelor’s degree |
|  | Master’s degree |
|  | Professional degree (e.g., JD, LLB, MD, DDS, DVN) |
|  | Research doctorate (e.g., PhD, DSc, EdD) |
|  | Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

38. What was the major field of study for your highest degree?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Business management/ administration |
|  | Communication |
|  | Computer science |
|  | Education (includes research and administration, and teaching) |
|  | Engineering |
|  | Humanities (includes history, foreign languages and literature, and letters) |
|  | Life Sciences (includes agricultural sciences/natural resources, biological/biomedical sciences and health sciences) |
|  | Mathematics |
|  | Physical sciences (includes astronomy, atmospheric science and meteorology, chemistry, geological and earth sciences, ocean/marine sciences, and physics) |
|  | Psychology |
|  | Social sciences |
|  | Other (please specify)  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

39. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Yes |
|  | No |

40. What is your race?

*(Please select one or more.)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | American Indian or Alaska Native |
|  | Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander |
|  | Asian |
|  | Black or African-American |
|  | White |

41. Are you male or female?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Female |
|  | Male |

42. Where were you born?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Inside the U.S. |
|  | Outside the U.S. |

43. Are you a U.S. citizen?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Yes |
|  | No |

44. Please give a brief description of your company’s industry.

**G. Contact Information**

45. Please provide the following information for the person we may contact regarding the answers to this survey.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | | | |
|  | | | |
| **Title** | | | |
|  | | | |
| **Telephone** |  | | **Extension** |
|  | |  |  |
| **Fax** |  | | **Extension** |
|  | |  |  |
| **E-mail address** | | | |
|  | | | |

46. Enter any comments below.

**Thank you for your participation in this survey.**

Please return your completed questionnaire to Westat, Room xx, 1600 Research Blvd, Rockville, MD 20850.