SBIR Satisfaction Survey for New Phase I Solicitation - Reviewers

Pursuant to 5 CFR 1320.5(b), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to an information collection unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0215.   Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding this burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, Office of the General Counsel, National Science Foundation, 2415 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria, VA 22314.

Survey Overview

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)/Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) proposal submission process recently changed. We would like to hear from you about this pilot process, which was created to reduce burden on small businesses, reviewers, and NSF program staff.   The *newly-added* **Project Pitch** requires small businesses to outline the technical innovation, commercialization potential, and broader impact of their project before submitting a full proposal to NSF. Only proposals that were determined to be a good fit for the program's objectives of supporting innovative technologies **that show promise of commercial and/or societal impact, and involve a level of technical risk** were invited to submit a full proposal. This survey is designed to be completed by reviewers who are familiar with the merit review process. Your responses will help us evaluate the new pre-proposal submission process, understand your experience as an NSF reviewer, and help NSF improve its service to the community of reviewers. Thank you for your participation!

Please note:

1. Your participation is voluntary.
2. Your individual responses will remain confidential and will be compiled with those of other reviewers to improve our program.
3. When filling out this survey, **only consider the most recent panel/ad-hoc reviews** that were assigned to you on or after March 2019.

Section 1. Respondent Characteristics

1-1.   For this application cycle, which type of reviewer are you?
- o **Ad-hoc reviewer** - someone who submits one or more written proposal reviews but does not participate in a discussion of the proposal with other reviewers
- o **Panel reviewer** - someone who prepares written reviews, and participates in a discussion of a proposal (usually more than one proposal) with other reviewers

1-2.   [If *Panel Reviewer* were selected in Question 1-1] Which type of panelist were you?
- o **In-person panelist** - someone who gathers with other reviewers at NSF to discuss proposals
- o **Virtual panelist** - someone who participates in the panel discussion via telephone, video-conference, web-based virtual meeting technology, or similar

1-3. **Have you served as a Reviewer for the NSF SBIR/STTR Program before?**
- o   Yes
- o   No

1-4. [If Yes to Question 1-3] **Including this current cycle, how many times have you served as a reviewer for the NSF SBIR/STTR Program?**
- o   < 3 times
- o   3 to 5 times
- o   5 to 10 times
- o   > 10 times

1-5. [If Yes to Question 1-3] **Which type of reviewer have you been in previous application cycle(s)?**
- o   Ad-hoc reviewer
- o   Panel reviewer
- o   Both

1-6. **For this application cycle, which NSF SBIR/STTR Program Director led the panel review and/or requested the submission of ad-hoc reviews?**
- o   Henry Ahn
- o   Peter Atherton
- o   Anna Brady-Estevez
- o   Nancy Kamei
- o   Steve Konsek
- o   Rajesh Mehta
- o   Linda Molnar
- o   Murali Nair
- o   Ben Schrag
- o   Rick Schwerdtfeger
- o   Ruth Shuman

Section 2 – Review Satisfaction

This section asks about your experience as a reviewer.

Communication

2-1. **How would you rate the availability of the review process and guidelines information on the website? [https://seedfund.nsf.gov/resources/review/]**
- o   Excellent
- o   Very good
- o   Good
- o   Fair
- o   Poor

2-2. **How would you rate the clarity of the review process and guidelines information on the website? [https://seedfund.nsf.gov/resources/review/]**
- o Excellent
- o Very good
- o Good
- o Fair
- o Poor

Workload

2-3. **How many proposals were assigned to you for review in this application cycle?**

Number of proposals: [   ]

2-4. **What do you think about the number of proposals assigned to you?**
- o I received too many proposals to review.
- o The number of proposals assigned to me was about right.
- o I received too few proposals to review.

2-5. [If Yes to Question 1-3] **Compared to your last SBIR/STTR review(s) [those that occurred before March 2019], how many proposals were assigned to you in this cycle?**
- o I received fewer proposals in this cycle.
- o I received about the same number of proposals in this cycle.
- o I received more proposals in this cycle.

2-6. **On average, how much time did you spend reviewing each proposal and writing up the response?** Exclude time spent on panel discussion or travel time to/from the panel, if applicable.

Time (minutes): [   ]

2-7. [If Yes to Question 1-3] **Compared to your last SBIR/STTR review(s) [those that occurred before March 2019], how much time did you spend reviewing proposals?**
- o I spent less time reviewing proposals in this cycle.
- o I spent about the same amount of time reviewing proposals in this cycle.
- o I spent more time reviewing proposals in this cycle.

2-8. **Given the amount of time and work you had put in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you as a reviewer for the NSF SBIR/STTR Program?**
- o Very dissatisfied
- o Dissatisfied
- o Neutral
- o Satisfied
- o Very satisfied

Proposal Quality

2-9.   [If Yes to Question 1-3] **Thinking of the *Intellectual Merit criterion,* did you think the proposals in this cycle were *better*, *worse*, or *about the same* as in previous cycle(s)?**
- o   Proposals were better than in previous cycle(s).
- o   Proposals were about the same as in previous cycle(s).
- o   Proposals were worse than in previous cycle(s).

2-10.   [If Yes to Question 1-3] **Thinking of the *Broader Impacts criterion,* did you think the proposals in this cycle were *better*, *worse*, or *about the same* as in previous cycle(s)?**
- o   Proposals were better than in previous cycle(s).
- o   Proposals were about the same as in previous cycle(s).
- o   Proposals were worse than in previous cycle(s).

2-11.   [If Yes to Question 1-3] **Thinking of the *Commercial Impact criterion,* did you think the proposals in this cycle were *better*, *worse*, or *about the same* as in previous cycle(s)?**
- o   Proposals were better than in previous cycle(s).
- o   Proposals were about the same as in previous cycle(s).
- o   Proposals were worse than in previous cycle(s).

2-12.   **Of the proposals that you reviewed in this current cycle, approximately what percentage did you find to be not a good fit or not appropriate for the NSF SBIR/STTR program?**
- o   Less than 25 %
- o   Between 25 % and 50 %
- o   Between 51 % and 75 %
- o   More than 75 %

2-13.   **Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the quality of proposals you have reviewed in this current cycle?**
- o   Very dissatisfied
- o   Dissatisfied
- o   Neutral
- o   Satisfied
- o   Very satisfied

Section 3 – Time Commitment & Other Comments

This section asks for burden and additional feedback/concerns that you would like to share with us.

3-1. **Approximately how long did it take you to complete this survey?**

Time (minutes): _____

3-2. **Do you have any suggestions for improving the NSF SBIR/STTR review process?**
- o No
- o Yes – specify

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3-3. **How can NSF better meet your needs? Please describe other comments and/or concerns that were not addressed in this survey.**

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