



## Submit your Fast-Track Project Pitch!

Are you interested in applying for R&D funding for your small business from the National Science Foundation (NSF). If so, we encourage you to submit a Project Pitch so that we can assess the potential appropriateness and fit of your project with the mandate of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. Project Pitches are accepted anytime and are reviewed in no more than one month. You do not need to have registered your company in any other governmental systems to submit your Project Pitch, nor do you need to have legally formed your small business.

Rather than spending days to prepare a full proposal and waiting up to a month to obtain the required registrations, startups or entrepreneurs who submit a Project Pitch will know within approximately a month if they meet the program's minimum requirements. They will also get additional guidance and feedback from NSF staff.

NSF offers two options for new projects: the Phase I program and the Fast-Track program. Both programs feature the same general questions for the Project Pitch and the same criteria that are used to gauge fit with the program, but Fast-Track proposals have additional criteria that must be met to be eligible. Please see the relevant solicitation for more details.

If your Project Pitch is a good fit for the program, you will receive an official invitation from NSF to submit a full proposal. If you are not invited to submit, you'll be told why your project is not appropriate for the program. We hope this process provides you with timely, useful feedback, and saves your small business time and effort.

More details about the NSF process and eligibility requirements can be found at our program website. We encourage you to review this information before submitting your Project Pitch.

Please note: Any small business with a pending Project Pitch must wait for a response from NSF before submitting another Project Pitch.

*Information from this data collection system will be retained by the National Science Foundation (NSF), a Federal agency, and will be an integral part of its Privacy Act System or Records In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974. All individually identifiable information supplied by individuals or institutions to a Federal agency may be used only for the purposes outlined in the system of records notice and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose, unless otherwise compelled by law. These are confidential files accessible only to appropriate NSF officials, their staffs, and their contractors responsible for monitoring, assessing, and evaluating NSF programs. Only data in highly aggregated form or data explicitly requested "for general use" will be made available to anyone outside of NSF for research purposes. Data submitted will be used in accordance with criteria established by NSF for monitoring research and education grants, and in response to Public Law 99-383 and 42 U.S.C. 1885c.*

*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-XXXX. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours 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 H. Plimpton*

*Reports Clearance Officer  
Policy Office, Division of Institution and Award Support  
Office of Budget, Finance, and Award Management  
National Science Foundation Alexandria, VA 22314  
Email: [splimpto@nsf.gov](mailto:splimpto@nsf.gov)*

**Contact Information of submitting company officer and/or prospective project principal investigator/technical lead:**

Email:

Name (Last Name, First Name):

Phone Number (10 digits, no special characters):

**Basic details of applicant small business:**

Company Name:

Company State (drop-down menu offered):

Company Zip Code:

Company website (if available):

Please pick the SBIR/STTR topic that best fits your project's technology area (*select one*).

- Advanced Manufacturing (M)
- Advanced Materials (AM)
- Advanced Systems for Scalable Analytics (AA)
- Agricultural Technologies (AG)
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Augmented and Virtual Reality (AV)
- Biological Technologies (BT)
- Biomedical Technologies (BM)
- Chemical Technologies (CT)
- Cloud and High-Performance Computing (CH)
- Cybersecurity and Authentication (CA)
- Digital Health (DH)
- Distributed Ledger (DL)
- Energy Technologies (EN)
- Environmental Technologies (ET)
- Human-Computer Interaction (HC)
- Instrumentation and Hardware Systems (IH)
- Internet of Things (I)
- Learning and Cognition Technologies (LC)
- Medical Devices (MD)
- Mobility (MO)
- Nanotechnology (N)
- Other Topics (OT)
- Pharmaceutical Technologies (PT)

- Photonics (PH)
- Power Management (PM)
- Quantum Information Technologies (QT)
- Robotics (R)
- Semiconductors (S)
- Space (SP)
- Wireless Technologies (W)

Are you eligible and interested in being considered for the NSF Fast-Track program?

- Yes
- No

**To submit an SBIR or STTR Fast-Track proposal, a small business must meet certain eligibility criteria as set out in the solicitation. Please respond to the three Fast-Track eligibility questions below. Additional information regarding each eligibility criterion is available by hovering over the corresponding tool-tip.**

Please provide details of the NSF research funding relied upon to meet the eligibility requirements, including: NSF research award number(s), the proposing company personnel involvement in each of the listed research awards and their roles in those research awards, and a brief description of how the cited research funding relates to the proposed Fast-Track project (up to 1050 characters).

Please provide details of the customer discovery training completed to meet the eligibility requirements. If NSF I-Corps, provide dates and award number. If not, please provide sufficient information (program name, dates, URL) so that information on the program can be reviewed. Please confirm that this program was completed for the technology contemplated in this Fast-Track proposal (up to 1750 characters).

Please indicate whether the proposing Fast-Track team will be complete at the time of the proposal submission.

- Yes
- No

Is this Project Pitch for a technology or project concept that was previously submitted as a full proposal by your company to the NSF SBIR/STTR Phase I Program and was not awarded?

- Yes
- No

(If 'Yes' to the last question) Please provide the proposal number of the previously submitted full NSF SBIR/STTR Phase I.

Have you contacted the associated NSF SBIR/STTR Program Officer, via email or phone, to discuss this prior full proposal submission?

- Yes
- No

If 'Yes', could you briefly share what was discussed? And were you satisfied with the response that you received? (Up to 3500 characters)

Has your company received a prior NSF SBIR/STTR award?

- Yes
- No

(If 'Yes' to previous question), please provide the award number of the most recent NSF SBIR/STTR award. (7 digits)

Does your company currently have a full Phase I SBIR or STTR proposal under review at NSF?

- Yes
- No

Briefly describe the technology innovation that would be the focus of a Phase 1 or Fast-Track project. Include a sentence discussing the origin(s) of the innovation as well as an explanation as to why it meets the program's mandate to focus on supporting research and development (R&D) of unproven high-impact innovation. This section should not just discuss the features and benefits of your solution, it must also clearly explain the uniqueness, innovation, and/or novelty in how your product or service is designed and functioned. (Up to 3500 characters)

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Briefly describe the technical objectives and challenges. Include the highest risk research challenges to be investigated in a Phase 1 or Fast-Track effort that are specific to your innovation. This section should also include a brief description of your unique scientific approach to solving those challenges and how this would lead to a sustainable competitive advantage for the company. Please note that challenges common to an industry or market are not responsive in this section. (Up to 3500 characters)

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Briefly describe the market opportunity. Describe the customer profile and pain point(s) that will be the near-term commercial focus related to this technical project (up to 1750 characters).

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Briefly describe the company and team. Describe the background and current status of the submitting small business, including team members related to the technical and/or commercial efforts discussed in this Project Pitch (up to 1750 characters).

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How did you first hear about our program (*Select all that apply*)?

- Accelerator/Incubator
- General web search or social media advertisement
- Corps
- My network (personal or professional contact sent information)
- NSF email, webinar, or event
- Program officer/manager
- University tech transfer, VPR, or other administrative office
- Other

## **NSF SBIR/STTR Eligibility Information**

In addition to receiving an invitation to submit a full proposal from the NSF SBIR/STTR Program based upon the review of their Project Pitch, potential proposers to the program must also qualify as a small business concern to participate in the program (see SBIR/STTR Eligibility Criteria for more information). The firm must be in compliance with the SBIR/STTR Policy Directive(s) and the Code of Federal Regulations (13 CFR 121).

- Your company must be a small business (fewer than 500 employees) located in the United States. Please note that the size limit of 500 employees includes affiliates.
- At least 50% of your company's equity must be owned by U.S. citizens or permanent residents, and all funded work needs to take place in the United States (including work done by consultants or contractors).
- The project's Principal Investigator (PI) is required to be primarily employed by the awardee small business at the start of the project and throughout the project and needs to commit at least one month (173 hours) of effort to the funded project, per six months of project duration.
- Primary employment is defined as at least 51 percent of employed by the small business. NSF normally considers a full-time work week to be 40 hours and considers employment elsewhere of greater than 19.6 hours per week to be in conflict with this requirement.

*For more detailed information, please refer to the SBIR/STTR Eligibility Guide. Please note that these requirements need to be satisfied at the time of an SBIR/STTR award is made, and not necessarily when the proposal is submitted.*