



# **Webinar:** **COVID-19 Flexibilities for NSF SBIR/STTR Awardees**

**Hosted by:**  
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**April 3, 2020**

<https://seedfund.nsf.gov/>



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# **New COVID-19 funding opportunity**

# Dear Colleague Letter: Request for SBIR/STTR Phase I Proposals Addressing COVID-19



The screenshot shows the NSF website header with the logo and tagline "WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN". A search bar is located in the top right. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: NSB, Research Areas, Funding, Awards, Document Library, News, and About NSF. The main content area displays the title "NSF 20-065 Dear Colleague Letter: Request for SBIR/STTR Phase I Proposals Addressing COVID-19" with a date of "March 25, 2020". The text of the letter begins with "Dear Colleagues:" and describes the invitation for US-based small businesses to submit Phase I proposals focused on the development and deployment of new technologies, products, processes, and services with the potential to positively impact the nation's and world's ability to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. Areas of research that might be considered include, but are not limited to: artificial intelligence, digital health, diagnostics, distributed ledger, environmental technologies, medical devices, pharmaceutical technologies, disinfection and sterilization, and filtration and separations. Interested proposers are invited to submit to the NSF Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Phase I Program. The page also includes sections for "ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION" and "PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS".

**NSF 20-065**  
**Dear Colleague Letter: Request for SBIR/STTR Phase I Proposals Addressing COVID-19**

March 25, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

The Division of Innovation and Industrial Partnerships (IIP) of the Engineering Directorate invites US-based small businesses to submit Phase I proposals focused on the development and deployment of new technologies, products, processes, and services with the potential to positively impact the nation's and world's ability to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. Areas of research that might be considered include, but are not limited to: artificial intelligence, digital health, diagnostics, distributed ledger, environmental technologies, medical devices, pharmaceutical technologies, disinfection and sterilization, and filtration and separations. Interested proposers are invited to submit to the NSF Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Phase I Program.

**ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

All active NSF SBIR/STTR awardees, and other interested US-based small businesses are eligible to submit a Phase I proposal. Please reference the [NSF SBIR and STTR Phase I solicitations](#) for more details regarding eligibility.

**PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Small businesses who are interested in submitting NSF SBIR or STTR Phase I proposals in response to this DCL must follow the guidelines outlined in the [NSF SBIR and STTR Phase I solicitations](#), including the submission of a required Project Pitch. Companies who already have an active SBIR/STTR award with NSF may submit a new Phase I

<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2020/nsf20065/nsf20065.jsp>

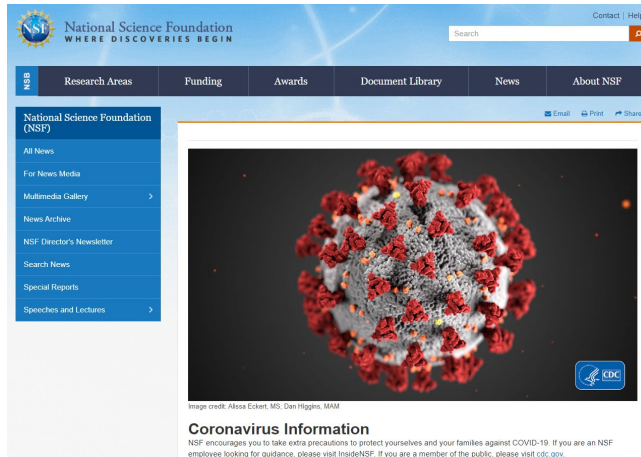
### New funding process for expedited Phase I SBIR/STTR proposals:

- NSF 20-065 Request for SBIR/STTR Phase I Proposals Addressing COVID-19
- Proposals must directly focus on an urgent requirement related to the COVID-19 crisis
- Requires a Project Pitch to be submitted first (5-day turnaround)
- Normal Phase I SBIR/STTR solicitation guidance applies
- Funding available within **6 weeks** (estimated) of proposal receipt
- Having a current Phase I proposal under review or invited Pitch does NOT preclude participation



# **NSF flexibilities related to COVID-19**

## NSF coronavirus info/links



[https://www.nsf.gov/news/special\\_reports/coronavirus/](https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/coronavirus/)

## SBA resources



<https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources>

- No-cost extension requests for SBIR/STTR awards will be evaluated *very liberally* over the next year!
- (Ignore the normal guidance for PI to request NCE at least 45 days before award end)

### Phase I

<https://seedfund.nsf.gov/resources/awardees/phase-1/no-cost-extension/>

### Phase II

<https://seedfund.nsf.gov/resources/awardees/phase-2/no-cost-extension/>

### Phase I

- Phase I awardees are normally asked to expend/obligate all Phase I funds before submitting their final report (and receiving the final \$25,000 payment)
- If the \$25,000 cash shortfall is expected to create significant issues, we encourage Phase I awardees to contact their PD in the last months of award to discuss final payment flexibility

### Phase II

- Progress reports for Phase II awards can be submitted any time
- Phase II awardees are encouraged to submit interim reports at least 1-2 months before expected project spending exhausts funds that have already been released



### **Any request for additional funds to be released requires:**

- A technical narrative detailing project outcomes and activities (the suggest length is 3-5 pages)
- A completed, signed cover page:

[https://seedfund.nsf.gov/assets/files/awardees/SBIR-STTR\\_Revised\\_Report\\_Cover.pdf](https://seedfund.nsf.gov/assets/files/awardees/SBIR-STTR_Revised_Report_Cover.pdf)

- (Phase II awards only) An updated milestone chart including actual levels of effort and expenditures per the normal format:

[https://seedfund.nsf.gov/assets/files/awardees/Blank\\_Milestone\\_Chart.xlsx](https://seedfund.nsf.gov/assets/files/awardees/Blank_Milestone_Chart.xlsx)

More information is available here:

<https://seedfund.nsf.gov/resources/awardees/phase-1/reporting/>

<https://seedfund.nsf.gov/resources/awardees/phase-2/reporting/>

### Reminders

- NSF SBIR/STTR awardees have the authority to rebudget and to shift resources as needed
- Increasing the level-of-effort on certain tasks or of certain participants is permitted without NSF approval as long as the acceleration does not compromise project effectiveness

If you have incurred costs related to COVID-19 related to activities that were part of the award...

“Recipients who incur costs related to the cancellation of events, travel, or other activities necessary and reasonable for the performance of the award, or the pausing and restarting of grant funded activities due to the public health emergency, are authorized to charge these costs to their award...”

[https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19faqs\\_proposerandawardee.pdf](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19faqs_proposerandawardee.pdf)

If members of your team cannot continue to perform work (or if they can at a reduced level-of-effort):

“Recipients are authorized to continue to charge salaries, stipends, and benefits to currently active NSF awards consistent with the recipients’ policy of paying salaries (under unexpected or extraordinary circumstances) from all funding sources, Federal and non-Federal. The recipient also is authorized to charge other costs to NSF awards that are necessary to resume activities supported by the award, consistent with applicable Federal cost principles and the benefit to the project. **Recipients must not assume that supplemental funding will be available should the charging of such costs or other fees result in a shortage of funds to eventually carry out the project. ”**

[https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19\\_nsfombimplementation.pdf](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19_nsfombimplementation.pdf)

- NSF remains open and is conducting business as usual.
- We currently anticipate little effect on our normal deadlines, processing times, etc.
- Any award made by NSF cannot be cancelled or otherwise taken back (unless the awardee is found to have committed significant violations of law or award terms/conditions). The entire amount of your award is set aside when the award letter is issued.
- Let us know how we can help!

### Serve as a reviewer:

- If you have science/engineering expertise, commercial experience (especially in startups and deep-technology areas), we can use your expertise. Please send a resume/CV/LinkedIn link to [sbir@nsf.gov](mailto:sbir@nsf.gov)

### Test the replacement for FastLane:

- We're looking for a few volunteers who are willing to volunteer an hour to test-drive the new proposal submission system (to replace Fastlane); please email [sbir@nsf.gov](mailto:sbir@nsf.gov)

### Share information:

- Please continue to get the word out about the NSF funding for startups (and the information in this presentation).

### **SBIR-wide Community Listserv:**

[https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USSBA/subscriber/new?topic\\_id=USSBA\\_10&pop=t](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USSBA/subscriber/new?topic_id=USSBA_10&pop=t)

### **NSF-specific policy flexibilities:**

[https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19faqs\\_proposerandawardee.pdf](https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/covid19/covid19faqs_proposerandawardee.pdf)



# Questions?

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