

U.S. Department of Transportation

Small Business Innovation Research Program

Administered by the John A. Volpe National
Transportation Systems Center

Spurring economic
recovery through small
business innovation

Inspiring technological
innovation toward a
world-class
transportation system



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Digital imaging of pipeline damage
(Wikimedia Commons/Mazbln)

U.S. DOT SBIR

The U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program seeks to leverage the small business community to effectively meet Federal research and development objectives. Annually, U.S. DOT solicits small businesses to submit innovative research proposals that address priorities of the Department and targets research and development that advances the specific missions of the participating operating administrations: Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Transit Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and the Research and Innovative Technology Administration.

Through the SBIR Program, U.S. DOT is currently funding a broad range of technology development in the small business community. Contract awardees include teams pursuing advanced applications that will:

- Promote safer roadways through fatigue management programs for truck operators;
- Detect and count vehicle and pedestrian traffic;
- Promote safer, greener, user friendly bus and rail transit
- Develop in-field pipeline inspection tools
- Develop a dynamic non-contact 3D measurement system for rollover testing
- Enable a miniature non-contact rail temperature sensor for heavy rail vehicles

For more information, contact:

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Remote network monitoring of structural
health of bridges (Wikimedia Commons Jsmjr/John)

SBIR 2.0

SBIR is a congressionally-mandated set aside program that partners the small business R&D community with the federal research community. Eleven participating federal agencies with extramural budgets of over \$100 million set aside 2.5% of their budgets to fund their agency SBIR Program. SBIR 2.0 is an SBA-led initiative focused on implementing a targeted set of initiatives to attract more high quality entrepreneurs into the SBIR Program; leverage best practices among agencies to improve the commercialization rates of SBIR awardees; and strengthen performance measurement to ensure effective operation of the program.

SBIR 2.0 initiatives have been launched to improve the effectiveness of the program, including:

- **Streamlining and simplification:** Set a target time frame from selection to award of 2 months for every agency.
- **Greater performance management:** Create a common set of performance metrics across agencies, including output metrics such as commercialization.
- **Bridge Financing:** Expand successful “bridge financing” programs to provide supplemental funding to select Phase II awardees to accelerate commercialization
- **Technology Transfer:** Replicate and scale a very successful tech transfer model from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).
- **Launch a joint solicitation:** Enhance broader Government-wide initiatives in areas of national priorities through joint solicitations which combine agency resources and efforts.

Solicitation Schedule

The U.S. DOT SBIR solicitations are released in April and October of each year. The solicitations will be available for viewing on the U.S. DOT SBIR web site (www.volpe.dot.gov/sbir/) and as a downloadable file in Microsoft Word and PDF formats.

Semi-Annual SBIR National Conferences

Small business representatives may attend an SBIR National Conference, held in the spring and fall each year. Check for links to upcoming events in the news section at www.sbir.gov/events.



Vehicle and pedestrian traffic detection
(Wikimedia Commons/Bruno Girin)

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the small business eligibility requirements for SBIR?

A small business concern is one that at the time of contract awards meets all of the following criteria:

1. Is organized for profit, with a place of business in the U.S., which operates primarily within the U.S. or which makes significant contributions to the U.S. economy through payment of taxes or use of American products, materials or labor;
2. Is in the legal form of an individual proprietorship, partnership, limited liability company, corporation, joint venture, association, trust or cooperative, except that where the form is a joint venture, there can be no more than 49 percent participation by business entities in the joint venture;
3. (i) Is at least 51 percent U.S.-owned and controlled by one or more individuals who are citizens of the U.S. or permanent resident aliens in the United States; or
(ii) Is at least 51% owned and controlled by another business concern that is itself at least 51% owned and controlled by individuals who are citizens of, or permanent resident aliens in the United States; or
(iii) Is a joint venture in which each entity of the venture meets the requirements of either (3i) or (3ii);
4. Has, including its affiliates, not more than 500 employees.

Do I have to be a small business to be eligible for a SBIR contract?

Each concern submitting a proposal must qualify as a small business at the time of award of Phase I, Phase II and IIB contracts. In addition, the primary employment of the principal investigator must be with the small business firm at the time of contract award and during the conduct of the proposed research. Primary employment means that more than one-half of the principal investigator's time is spent with the small business, during the research period.

How is the program funded?

Each participating Operating Administration is assessed 2.5% of its extramural R&D budget annually.