



National Institute of Food and Agriculture

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

BIOENERGY, CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT
FOOD PRODUCTION AND SUSTAINABILITY
YOUTH, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY
FOOD SAFETY AND NUTRITION
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

NIFA

Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs Phase II (FY 2024) RFA Announcement and Technical Assistance Webinar

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Meeting Logistics

- This webinar will be recorded. Please be sure your microphone is muted.
- **Zoom Tech Support** = 1-888-799-0125, Option 2
- Throughout the presentation, you may type questions in the Q&A box.
- Slides and the recording from this webinar will be posted to <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/events/technical-assistance-webinar-sbirsttr-fy24-phase-ii-request-applications>



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SBIR/STTR Staff Introductions

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Topics We Will Cover

- NIFA Overview
- SBIR/STTR Program Overview
- Request for Application (RFA) Details
- Application Details and Documents
- Proposal Evaluation Process
- Additional Information/Resources



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NIFA Overview

NIFA Overview

- **National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)** is the extramural science-funding agency within USDA's Research, Education and Economics mission area.
- NIFA **invests in and supports** initiatives that ensure the long-term viability of agriculture.
- NIFA provides **funding and strategic leadership** for programs that ensure groundbreaking discoveries in agriculture-related sciences and technologies reach the people who can put them into practice.

Topics Covered by NIFA Programs



Advanced Technologies

Bioenergy; Biotechnology;
Nanotechnology



Animals

Animal Breeding; Animal Health;
Animal Production; Aquaculture



Business and Economy

Markets and Trade; Natural Resource
Economics; Small Business



Natural Resources

Forests; Grassland and Rangeland; Soil,
Water, and Air



Education

Minority Serving Institutions; Teaching
and Learning; Workforce Development



Environment

Climate Change; Ecosystems; Invasive
Pests and Diseases



Farming and Ranching

Agriculture Safety & Technology; Farmer
Education; Organic & Family Farms



Human Sciences

Community Vitality; Family Well-Being;
Youth



Food Science

Food Quality; Food Safety



Food and Nutrition Security

Nutrition; Obesity; Wellness



International

Global Engagement; Global
Food Security



Plants

Crop Production; Pest
Management; Plant
Breeding; Plant Health



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Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs Overview

Purpose and Priorities

RFA Page # 8

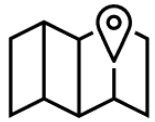
SBIR/STTR is intended to stimulate **technological innovation** and increase private sector commercialization among small business concerns to build a strong national economy

- Transforming scientific discovery and innovation for both social and economic benefit
- Emphasizing private sector commercialization
- Foster and encourage participation by historically underserved and women-owned small businesses
- STTR objective: stimulate formal cooperative partnerships of ideas and technologies between small businesses and nonprofit research institutions (e.g., Universities, Federal Laboratories)

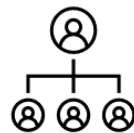
Applicant Eligibility

RFA Page # 17-18

- Only previous SBIR/STTR Phase I awardees who have not previously applied for Phase II are eligible to apply through this RFA
- Each applicant must qualify as a small business concern (SBC) through registration with the SBA for R/R&D purposes at the time of award
- An SBIR/STTR awardee must be:



For-profit company
operating in the U.S.
+ Research performed
in the U.S.



More than 50% owned
and controlled by U.S.
citizen(s) or permanent
resident(s)



No more than 500
employees
(including affiliates)

Program Eligibilities

RFA Page # 18-19

Applicants can choose from **SBIR only**, **STTR only**, or **Both** (SBIR & STTR in a single submission)

Elements	SBIR	STTR	BOTH
Applicant	Small Business	Small Business	Small Business
Nonprofit research institution or federally funded R&D center participation	May	Must	Must
% participation of nonprofit research institution or federally funded R&D center	<50%	30 to 60%	30 to <50%
Primary employment of the principal investigator	Must be employed with small business	May be employed with either small business or non-profit research inst.	Must be employed with small business
Formal cooperative agreement required outlining intellectual property rights	Not required	Required	Required

Project and Grant Types

RFA Page # 15

Project Types

Research

Grant Types

Standard

Phase I Award Size and Duration

RFA Page # 15

Award Duration

SBIR/STTR/Both: 24 months

9/1/24 through 8/31/26

Award Size

\$600,000 (not including TABA)

\$650,000 (including TABA)

TABA: \$50,000

TABA: Technical and Business Assistance

Cost Sharing or Matching

RFA Page # 20

- No matching is required
- Matching resources will not be factored into the review process as an evaluation criteria



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Application Details and Documents



Application Details

RFA Page # 1

- **RFA is available online at:**

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities/small-business-innovation-research-small-business-technology>

- **Application Deadline:** 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) Tuesday, March 26, 2024
 - Submitted through Grants.gov
- **Total funding available for FY2024**
 - SBIR: \$19,500,000
 - STTR: \$2,600,000
- **Program Code:** 8.1/8.2/8.3/8.4/8.5/8.6/8.7/8.8/8.12/8.13
- **Maximum funding per award:** \$600,000 - \$650,000 (including TABA)

Application Changes from FY 2023

RFA Page # 7, 19-20

- Requirements of the SBIR and STTR Extension Act of 2022, [Public Law No. 117–183](#)
 - Disclosure of Foreign Relationships
 - <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/application-support-templates>
 - New Benchmark Documentation
- Project Summary/Abstract must be 250 words or less

Key Documents

RFA Page # 23-31

Key Components of Application:

- Project Summary/Abstract
- Project Narrative
- Bibliography & Cited References
- Budget and Justification
- Commercialization Plan
- Disclosure of Foreign Relationships Form

Other Required Documents:

(RFA and [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#))

- Key Personnel Bio sketches
- Conflict of Interest (COI)
- Current and Pending Support (C&P)
- Company Commercialization Report
- TABA Plan
- Facilities & Other Resources
- Equipment Documentation
- Letters of Support (if applicable)

Application Details (Project Summary)

RFA Page # 23

- Must be 250 words or less
 - NIFA will not review applications that exceed the required 250-word limit.
- 12-point Times New Roman font
- The Project Summary must show how the project goals align with the project goals of the SBIR/STTR Phase II Program
- Project Summary should not contain proprietary information
- Must be attached as PDF
- Template available:

<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/application-support-templates>

Application Details (Project Narrative)

RFA Page # 23-25

- **Project Narrative (PN):**
 - 20-page limit and will be strictly enforced
 - 1.5 line spacing and at least 1-inch margins
 - 12-point Times New Roman font
 - Includes text, figures and tables
 - Tables and figures: no smaller than 11-point Times New Roman
 - Tables may be single spaced
- Must be attached as PDF
- Applications exceeding the page limits will be returned without review

Application Details (Project Narrative Items)

RFA Page # 24-25

Project Narrative must include:

- a. Responsiveness to USDA SBIR/STTR Program Priorities
- b. Prior USDA Support
- c. Identification and Significance of the Problem or Opportunity
- d. Background and Rationale
- e. Relationship with Research or Research and Development
- f. Technical Objectives
- g. Work Plan
- h. Related Research or Research and Development
- i. Potential Post Application (Commercialization Plan)

Application Details (Commercialization Plan)

RFA Page # 31-32

All Phase II projects requires an extensive Commercialization Plan.

- 10-page limit and will be strictly enforced
- 1.5 line spacing, at least 1-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font
 - o Tables and figures: no smaller than 11-point Times New Roman
- Must be attached as PDF

Commercialization Plan must include:

1. Introduction of the SBIR/STTR Project and Expected Outcomes
2. Company Information
3. The Market, Customer, and Competition
4. Intellectual Property
5. Revenue Stream
6. Financing

Application Submission

RFA Page # 21-22

- NIFA only accepts **electronic** submission of applications.
- NIFA Grants Application Guide available:
nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-grantsgov-application-guide
- Application documents **must be in Portable Document Format (PDF)** to be accepted by NIFA, including your narrative and budget justifications.
 - Grants.gov may allow other formats, but NIFA does ***not***
 - Do not use third-party PDF builders



Application Submission Check

RFA Page # 21-22

Key Application Instructions

All references are to the [NIFA Grants Application Guide](#)

- Attachments must be in a portable document format (PDF) format
- Check the manifest of submitted files to verify attachments are in the correct format
- Follow the submission instructions
- Provide an accurate email address, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R
- Contact the [Grants.gov helpdesk](#) for technical support and keep a record of the correspondence
- Contact NIFA if applicant does not receive correspondence from NIFA regarding an application within 30 days of the application deadline



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Proposal Evaluation Process

Initial Screening Criteria

RFA Page # 37

Applications will be excluded from the competitive review process for the following reasons (list is not all inclusive):

- Application is submitted after the 5:00 p.m. Eastern deadline.
- Format requirements
 - Summary/Abstract exceeds 250 words and/or is not in PDF format
 - Project Narrative exceeds 20 pages of written text and/or is not in PDF format
 - Commercialization Plan exceeds 10 pages of written text and/or is not in PDF format
- Budget requests that exceed the ceiling of \$600,000 or \$650,000, including TABA
- The proposed project must fall within one of the USDA SBIR/STTR topic areas
- Projects seeking funding solely for product development where no research is involved will be excluded

Evaluation Criteria

RFA Page # 38 - 39

1. Degree to Which Phase I Objectives were Met and Technical Feasibility Established
2. Phase II Scientific and Technical Feasibility
3. Commercial Potential
4. Importance of the Problem
5. Investigator and Resource Qualifications
6. Budget
7. Duplication

Additional factors:

- Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA)
CRADA with an Agricultural Research Service (ARS) lab: arp@usda.gov
ARS available technologies: <https://www.ars.usda.gov/ott/available-technologies/>
- Follow-on funding commitment for Phase III

Evaluation Process

RFA Page # 36

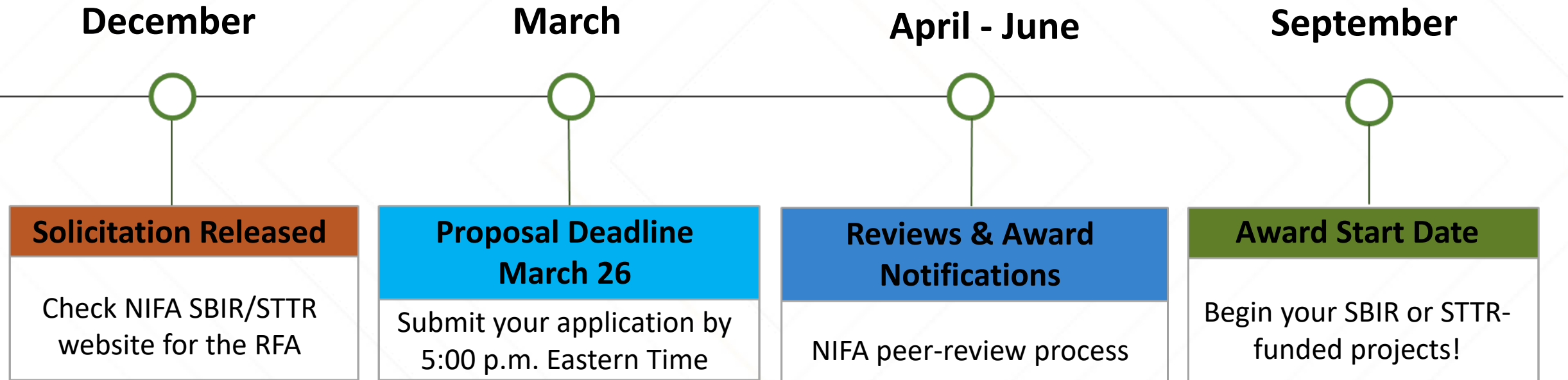
Proposals are assigned for review to at least 3 technical and 2 commercial reviewers with expertise in the proposed topic.

Reviewers will produce individual reviews of each proposal, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses.

These written reviews are used to begin panel discussions with other reviewers serving on the peer-review panel.

Through these discussions, peer-review panelists come to consensus on the final rating and ranking of proposals.

Timeline of Competitive Programs



**On average, a competitive program takes approximately 6 months from the proposal due date to final selection
We will keep you updated as much as possible. We appreciate your patience!**



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Additional Information

Use CRIS to Find Funded Awards



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Current Research Information System (CRIS). At the top left is the USDA logo and the text "United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture". A navigation bar contains links for "Home", "About CRIS", "Search Menu", "Reports", "Help", and "Contact Us". Below the navigation bar, the page is divided into three main sections. On the left is a "Search CRIS" sidebar with links for "Assisted Search", "Professional Search", "Search Pending Projects", and "Other Functions" (including "NIFA Admin Functions" and "Manual of Classification"). The center section is titled "Current Research Information System" and includes a welcome message: "Welcome to the Current Research Information System (CRIS) web site. The Current Research Information System (CRIS) provides documentation and reporting for ongoing agricultural, food science, human nutrition, and forestry research, education and extension activities for the United States Department of Agriculture; with a focus on the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) grant programs. Projects are conducted or sponsored by USDA research agencies, state agricultural experiment stations, land-grant universities, other cooperating state institutions, and participants in NIFA-administered grant programs, including Small Business Innovation Research and Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. The Planning, Accountability, & Reporting Staff office of NIFA is responsible for maintaining CRIS." Below this is a note: "Use the top 'navbar' to navigate through the CRIS web site, or click on the links in the left and right columns to search the CRIS database, to view the Manual of Classification, or to enter our Forms Assistance web site." On the right is a "What's New in CRIS ?" section with a list of topics: "Avian Influenza", "Biofuels/Bioenergy", "Food Safety (Ala-Mic)", "Food Safety (Min-Wyo)", "Mad Cow/TSE/Rltd", "Nanotechnology", "Obesity/Weight Control", "Soybean Rust", and "Tribal Education".

CRIS is located at:
cris.nifa.usda.gov/

Funded SBIR/STTR awards — broken out by topic area, phase and year — are located on the NIFA website:

- www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/small-business-innovation-research-technology-transfer-programs-sbirsttr/sbir-topic-areas

Upcoming Events

- NIFA Events Calendar for upcoming deadlines, meetings and webinars: nifa.usda.gov/events
- Upcoming Request for Applications (RFA) release calendar: nifa.usda.gov/upcoming-rfa-calendar

Grant Resources

- Funding Opportunities: nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities
- Competitive Grants Flowchart: nifa.usda.gov/competitive-grants
- NIFA Grant Resources: nifa.usda.gov/grant-training
- NIFA Policy Guide: nifa.usda.gov/policy-guide
- Indirect Costs: nifa.usda.gov/indirect-costs
- A Guide for Preparation and Submission of NIFA Applications via Grants.gov:
apply07.grants.gov/apply/opportunities/instructions/PKG00249520-instructions.pdf
- Information on Awarded Grants: cris.nifa.usda.gov



Questions?

SBIR/STTR General Mailbox: SBIR@usda.gov

Scientific/Technical Questions: Topic Area Contacts (RFA)

Thank You

Visit our website:
NIFA.USDA.GOV/SBIR

SBIR/STTR

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SMALL BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAMS**

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