

**Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program
2026 Phase I Solicitation Informational Webinar
September 16, 2026
Questions and Answers**

Background

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program supports small businesses to develop and commercialize innovative environmental technologies that support the Agency's mission of protecting human health and the environment. EPA is one of 11 Federal agencies that participate in this program. SBIR projects are funded in two phases, with Phase I being "proof of concept" and Phase II being "development and commercialization" of the technology. Commercialization of the developed technology is stressed in both phases.

EPA issues annual solicitations for research proposals for specific topics. For Phase I, EPA awards firm-fixed-price contracts of up to \$100,000 for 6 months for "proof of concept" of the proposed technology. Companies who have received a Phase I can submit a proposal for a Phase II award of \$400,000 to further develop and commercialize the technology. Phase II contracts are limited to small businesses that have successfully completed their Phase I projects.

****Please note that while this information is intended to be helpful in applying to the EPA SBIR program, the solicitation is the official word on all program requirements.****

For more information on EPA's SBIR program application requirements, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/sbir/how-apply-sbir-contract>.

For more information about the SBIR program, please visit epa.gov/sbir.
Sign up for the [EPA SBIR Listserv](#) to receive notifications of new funding opportunities.

Eligibility

Do you require preliminary data for Phase I? If a small business has designed and developed a bench-scale technology but Phase I would generate the first formal data, can the proposed technology still be competitive and responsive, or does EPA expect applicants to already have results before submission?

The objective of the SBIR Phase I program is to fund "proof-of-concept" technologies. The proposed technology should be beyond a literature search, should have some data to demonstrate its performance, but should not yet be commercially viable. The proposed technology could be a new application for existing technology, but not solely for effectiveness testing of an existing technology. For more general information on the SBIR program, see sbir.gov/about/about-sbir#sbir-program.

Can two small businesses collaborate to submit a proposal?

Yes, joint ventures and limited partnerships are eligible provided the entity created qualifies as a small business concern. Please refer to the solicitation for details.

Topics

Will there be more information on the topics provided in the solicitation?

Yes, the solicitation will provide more detailed descriptions of the topics and, in some cases, will include links to references that provide background information on the topic and why it's important to EPA.

Schedule

When will the solicitation open and close?

The solicitation is scheduled to open September 24, 2026, and close November 8th, 2026. Please check the solicitation for the official close date and time.

What is the project period for the 2026 Phase II awards?

The project period will start when the review cycle is completed and all contracts are awarded. EPA anticipates making awards in February 2027. The project period will end 6 months following the start date.

Funding Rates

"Does EPA SBIR allow the billing of overhead rates?"

Yes, billing of overhead rates is allowed and must be included in the proposed budget for review. Details on overhead are included in the solicitation.

Applying

Is there a limit to the number of proposal submissions?

Yes, a small business can only submit one proposal per solicitation. If a proposed technology is responsive to two subtopics, the small business must select the one they think is the best fit. If the small business decides to revise and resubmit their proposal before the closing date, the most recent submission will be the one considered for review.

Is there a proposal page limit? Is there a page limit on the project narrative?

Yes, the proposal is limited to 36 pages, which includes the required forms found on the “Required Forms” page after the solicitation opens. The solicitation checklist has a recommended number of pages for the project narrative, shown below:

Page Count for Required Sections	# of Pages
Proposal Cover Sheet	2
Project Summary	1
Technical Proposal and Commercialization Plan (which contains each of the following sections: Technical Approach, Company/Team (technical), Impact/Relevance to topic, Similar or Closely Related SBIR Awards, Duplicate or Equivalent SBIR Proposals, Prior SBIR Phase II Awards, Innovation/Intellectual Property (IP), Market Opportunity, Company/Team (commercial), Commercialization Approach)	27 (max)
Summary Budget	1
Representations and Certifications	4
TABA Summary and Budget (if applicable)	1
TOTAL	36 (max)

Can a company apply directly to Phase II?

No, EPA does not allow applications that are direct to Phase II. Only Phase I award recipients are eligible to apply for Phase II awards.

What are the requirements for EPA SBIR company pitches?

EPA does not require a company pitch, but it does require a project summary. The project summary is limited to 400 words. The proposal summary is intended for publication and should not contain confidential information.

<https://www.epa.gov/sbir/how-apply-sbir-contract>

Review Process

What evidence makes commercialization claims most credible?

The commercial review includes evaluation of innovation/IP, market opportunity, company/team (commercial) and commercialization approach. Specific criteria for each of these areas will be detailed in the solicitation. Strong commercial viability and potential can be reflected in customer validation, such as letters of support for the proposed technology, or evidence of customer demand. This can also be reflected through the commercial experience of the PI and/or key personnel.

Do letters of support from industry and/or educational institutions make an application more attractive?

Letters of support can strengthen a proposal and may improve scores on the commercialization evaluation. However, letters of support count toward the limit of 36 pages for proposals. Because the goal of the SBIR Program is the commercialization of technologies, a letter of support from a potential buyer/end user would likely be more impactful than an academic review. The small business should determine how best a letter of support might help them address the evaluation criteria.

Technical and Business Assistance (TABA)

How can TABA support my small business?

TABA funds can be used to hire a third-party vendor. These vendors can provide advice and resources related to:

- Market analysis
- IP strategy, development, and management
- Marketing and online presence
- Commercialization and Phase II application preparation.

Third-party vendors and resources can be found through the small business's local [Federal and State Technology \(FAST\) Partnership Program](#) or the [Small Business Development Center](#).

Would a success fee for a consultant fall under eligible use of TABA funds?

No, TABA funds cannot be used for contributions to the SBIR/STTR fee nor for contingency costs or costs associated with the research and development activities of the award. Refer to [S.3971 - Small Business Innovation and Economic Security Act](#) as well as the solicitation for specifics.

Can TABA funds be used for filing IPs for accounting work?

No, TABA funds cannot be used for accounting work. TABA funds can be used for intellectual property protections. Refer to [S.3971 - Small Business Innovation and Economic Security Act](#) as well as the solicitation for specifics.

Programmatic Questions

Does EPA's SBIR program provide environmental research grants?

No, EPA's SBIR Phase I and Phase II program funds small businesses in the form of contracts. Other federal agencies have funded SBIR projects through grants. Please visit <http://www.SBIR.gov> to find out more about SBIR grants in other participating agencies or visit <https://www.epa.gov/research-grants> to find out more about EPA grant-related opportunities.

Contacts

Who do I contact about the EPA SBIR's program?

- **EPA SBIR Program contacts:**
Sneha Hoysala: hoysala.sneha@epa.gov
Deborah Segal: segal.deborah@epa.gov
- **EPA SBIR Contracts Office contact:**
Paige Long: long.paige@epa.gov

Given that we cannot contact EPA's SBIR Program team after the solicitation opens, who do we contact about solicitation-related questions?

The SBIR Program contacts can be contacted until the solicitation opens on September 24, 2026. After this date, for the following two weeks, questions can be sent to the contracting officer, [Paige Long](#). Questions will be redirected to the appropriate parties for answers.