

## **SBTDC Interview with the US Army Program**

**Ujvari:** Provide an overview or intro of your agency.

**US Army:** The Army SBIR program is designed to provide small, high-tech businesses the opportunity to propose innovative Research and Development solutions in response to critical Army needs.

**Ujvari:** Does your agency mainly offer grants or contracts?

**US Army:** The Army only offers contracts.

**Ujvari:** What is the 2004 budget for SBIR (and STTR if applicable)?

**US Army:** The Army SBIR FY 2004 budget is \$228M and STTR is \$27M.

**Ujvari:** How many awards were made in 2003?

**US Army:** The Army awarded 352 Phase I and 228 Phase II contracts.

**Ujvari:** What are the general win rates?

**US Army:** Historically, the Army has selected 1 in 10 Phase I proposals and 1 in 2 Phase II proposals for funding.

**Ujvari:** How many awards are generally made per solicitation for a Phase 1 and Phase 2?

**US Army:** The Army awards approximately 350 Phase I and over 200 Phase II contracts annually.

**Ujvari:** Who reviews your contract proposal/grant application (agency staff – outside peer reviewers – combination)?

**US Army:** The Army uses a two-tier evaluation process to review proposals. The laboratories and centers that wrote the topics perform the first tier evaluation and recommend the most highly innovative topics to the second tier. A board of senior scientists and technologists perform the second tier evaluation of proposals and make the final selections based on available funding and Army requirements.

**Ujvari:** How are reviewers selected?

**US Army:** The topic author selects evaluators from lab and center experts in the technical area of the topics for the first tier.

The Army selects evaluators who are experts within a specific technology area for the second tier.

**Ujvari:** Are the review criteria “weighted?”

**US Army:** Yes.

**Ujvari:** How much “weight” is assigned to the credentials of the PI and his/her “team?”

**US Army:** The Phase I team credentials are weighted less than soundness and technical merit, but greater than commercialization potential. Phase II team credential are weighted less than soundness and technical merit and equal to commercialization potential.

**Ujvari:** How much “weight” is assigned to the soundness and technical merit of the project?

**US Army:** The criterion for soundness and technical merit are weighted heavier than team credentials and commercialization potential for both Phase I and Phase II projects.

**Ujvari:** How much “weight” is assigned to commercialization?

**US Army:** The criterion for commercialization potential is weighted less than team credentials and soundness and technical merit for Phase I and equal to commercialization potential for Phase II projects.

**Ujvari:** Does your agency require a “succinct Commercialization Plan” in your current Phase II solicitation?

**US Army:** The Army does not have a Phase II solicitation. All Phase IIs are by individual invitation based upon the results of the Phase I work. We do require that a commercialization strategy be included in all Phase II proposals.

**Ujvari:** Are there separate reviewers for the technical and commercialization sections of the applications for Phase I? For Phase II? If so, what are the backgrounds, generally, of the commercialization reviewers?

**US Army:** No.

**Ujvari:** At what point are the reviewers of a proposal known to the applicant organization?

**US Army:** The Army does not release the names of the evaluators.

**Ujvari:** How are debriefings requested?

**US Army:** Debriefings must be requested in writing within 30 days of notification of non-selection.

**Ujvari:** If provided – are debriefings oral or written?

**US Army:** The debriefings are provided both written and oral.

**Ujvari:** What is the general period of time between proposal submission and announcement of selection or non-selection?

**US Army:** The Army’s Phase I selection process takes approximately three months from the solicitation closing date. The Phase II selection process takes approximately two months from the date proposals were due.

**Ujvari:** What is the general time gap between the time an award is chosen for funding and actual distribution of funding

**US Army:** The Army goal it to complete Phase I awards within four months of proposal receipt and within six months for Phase II awards.

**Ujvari:** Does your agency have a Fast Track or Quick Response offering? If so, please explain.

**US Army:** The Army participates in the DoD Fast Track program.

**Ujvari:** What is your agency’s dollar cap on phase 1 and phase 2 funding?

**US Army:** The Army normally limits for Phase I to \$70K with a \$50K option if selected for Phase II and \$730K for Phase II awards.

**Ujvari:** Does the agency provide any follow-on funding beyond the phase 2 or to carry on additional phase 2 work?

**US Army:** The Army implemented the Phase II Plus program to facilitate the rapid transition of SBIR technologies, products, and services into acquisition programs. Under *Phase II Plus*, the Army provides matching SBIR funds to expand an existing Phase II project that attracts investment funds from a DoD acquisition program or private sector investments. Consistent with the expectation for Phase I and II work, *Phase II Plus* – sponsored work must also involve innovation and a degree of technical risk. The matching rate is 1 SBIR dollar for every non-SBIR dollar up to \$250,000.

**Ujvari:** How is the applicant organization informed of selection or non-selection?

**US Army:** The Army notifies small businesses of selections and non-selections by letter.

**Ujvari:** If not selected, may applicant organization resubmit – Phase I? - Phase 2?

**US Army:** A company may resubmit a Phase I proposal if there is an applicable topic in the next solicitation. A company may resubmit a Phase II proposal if invited by the agency a second time.

**Ujvari:** Is a Phase 2 proposal to be submitted only by invitation?

**US Army:** Yes.

**Ujvari:** Does a separate final report need to be submitted for Phase 1 and Phase 2?

**US Army:** Yes.

**Ujvari:** Is your agency typically a consumer of the final commercial product? (While we tend to think of contract agencies as looking for deliverables, it might be helpful to know if an agency is a potential customer or can provide sole-source assistance to begin a product launch).

**US Army:** The Army is typically the consumer of the final commercial product through an Army Acquisition program or a prime contractor.