

# TUTORIAL #10

## Where can I receive assistance in proposal preparation?

### HURDLES IN PREPARING AN SBIR/STTR APPLICATION

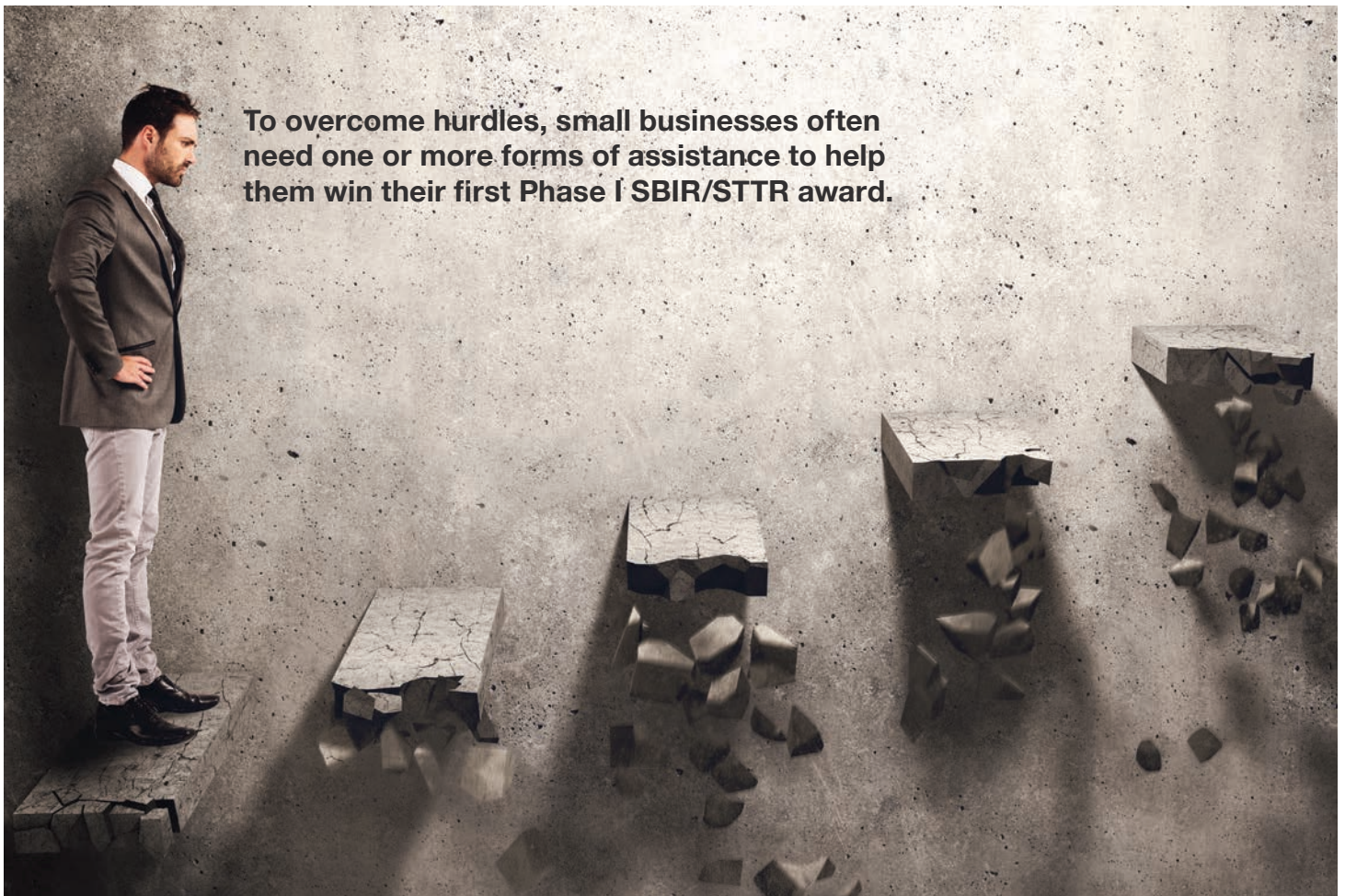
Preparing to write a Phase I SBIR or STTR proposal can be a daunting task for a small business, especially if this is the first attempt. As discussed in previous tutorials, there are many steps involved with preparing a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) or Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) application to submit to the Department of Energy (DOE). Here's a partial list of recurring hurdles:

- » Starting the preparation of the application package early enough.
- » Navigating the numerous registrations such as PAMS, SAM, grants.gov, etc.
- » Translating your innovative solution into a compelling work plan.
- » Properly assessing the market need and developing an appropriate commercialization strategy.
- » Assembling a winning team that will strengthen both the technical and commercial aspects of the proposal.
- » Building relationships with potential strategic partners, customers, or investors, and
- » Understanding how to develop a budget.

### OVERCOMING HURDLES - PHASE 0 ASSISTANCE

To overcome these hurdles, small businesses often need assistance to help develop a responsive and compelling Phase I SBIR or STTR application. This early assistance at the proposal preparation stage is referred to as Phase 0. The DOE Phase 0 program is a unique agency-funded initiative. Assistance is available twice a year and coincides with the release of the DOE Topics in July and again in November. If you register for the DOE Phase 0 program as soon as the topics are released, you receive the benefit of 10 full weeks of support, which will provide you, the applicant, with sufficient time to do a good job.

The goal of the DOE SBIR/STTR Phase 0 program is to increase the number of responsive, high-quality proposals submitted to the DOE—within targeted states with historically low SBIR/STTR submissions to the DOE, and amongst women- and minority-owned businesses nationally. However, any small business, which has not participated in the DOE Phase 0 program in the past and has never submitted a proposal to the DOE SBIR/STTR program, may register for the Phase 0 program when it is offered. Participants in the



**To overcome hurdles, small businesses often need one or more forms of assistance to help them win their first Phase I SBIR/STTR award.**

DOE Phase 0 program receive a set of core services, as well as one or more optional services. Both the Core and Optional services are listed here. During the initial discussion with the DOE Phase 0 Project Director, the specific needs of the Phase 0 registrant will be assessed, and both will jointly decide on the services that best meet the registrants needs.

**Core services include:**

- » Letter of Intent (LOI) Review
- » Phase 1 Proposal Preparation Assistance
- » Registration Overview
- » Market Research
- » Phase I Proposal Review

**Optional services include:**

- » Small Business Training/Mentoring
- » Technology Advice & Consultation
- » Intellectual Property Consultation
- » Indirect Rate and Financial Assistance
- » Travel Assistance

The DOE Phase 0 program also provides education and training in the form of this series of online tutorials, as well as webinars on topics pertinent to the application process.

**STATE SERVICES PROVIDERS**

As every provider has budgetary constraints that limit how much service it can provide, it is recommended that small businesses also leverage the assistance offered by state organizations in their vicinity. For assistance with registering for the [System for Awards Management \(SAM\)](#), it is recommended that small businesses contact the [Procurement Technical Assistance Center \(PTAC\)](#) in their area. At no charge, a PTAC counselor will walk you through the SAM registration process, which can be complex and difficult if tackled alone. Failure to register for SAM in a timely fashion can cause companies to miss the DOE SBIR/STTR submission deadline – so taking advantage of this service is very important to do early in the proposal preparation process.

July 13, 2020: Topics Released for SBIR/STTR Phase I

**DOE PHASE 0**  
SBIR/STTR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM[About the Program](#)[Services](#)[Eligibility](#)[Apply](#)[Resources](#)[Tutorials](#)

# PHASE 0

**Do you need help preparing a  
DOE SBIR/STTR Application?**

[Check Eligibility](#)**FREE TO ELIGIBLE ENTREPRENEURS** 

For additional support with preparing financials, it is recommended that a small business contact a [Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\)](#), or the [Senior Corps of Retired Executives \(SCORE\)](#) in their area. These organizations also provide assistance at no charge. Links to these networks, with information on how to locate the organizations that serve you area, are readily found on these sites. In addition, the Small Business Administration has a tool on the [SBIR.gov](#) website, which enables a small business to find service providers offering free assistance in their region. From time to time, state organizations also provide Phase 0 services. To locate these providers, it is recommended that you consult the SBIR.gov website.

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