



Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

**2012 - 2013 REQUEST FOR VT EPSCoR SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION
RESEARCH
(SBIR) PHASE (0) PROPOSALS**

**DUE DATE BY ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION – May 1, 2012 by 4:00 p.m.
WEB APPLICATION AVAILABLE – December 15, 2011**

Vermont EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) has been supporting research in Vermont's colleges and universities with funds from the National Science Foundation and local sources since 1986. The impact of the EPSCoR program includes the private sector -- particularly small, technology-based businesses.

Vermont EPSCoR once again will provide the opportunity for Vermont small businesses to compete for grants to foster research and development projects which will lead to application to the federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) programs. The following features in this solicitation should be noted:

Program Overview:

- There must be a federal SBIR program to which the work is eventually targeted. Vermont EPSCoR's intent is to identify those pre-SBIR ideas that show promise for SBIR success, and that will benefit from a review and financial support.
- One award will also be made in areas of interest to NASA using NASA-EPSCoR funds. To show that an area is of interest to NASA, the PI should identify their proposed project with a new or continuing NASA research priority or technology need. This can be done by reference to a URL on a NASA website or by including an email of support from a NASA contact. The project has to involve as a collaborator a full-time faculty researcher at a Vermont college or university. **Only NASA projects carry this requirement.**
- The maximum amount of each grant is \$15,000.

Multiple year IF or Phase (0) awardees must take a 1 year break from submission after their third consecutive successful award

- Awards contingent upon funding of the Vermont EPSCoR grant from NSF

Obligations Associated with Funding:

- It is required that successful projects compete for subsequent funding through federal SBIR programs Phase I and Phase II grants. Future applications for Phase (0) funds from Phase (0) awardees will require evidence of submission of a Phase I or II application. If you were awarded Phase (0) funding previously, you must provide a copy of your proposal cover sheet **submitted** to a federal agency for Phase 1 or 2 funding to the VT EPSCoR Office by May 1, 2012 in order to be eligible for submitting a new Phase (0) proposal in this round. The Phase 1 or 2

proposal(s) do not have to be awarded.

- A paper copy of your financial report will be due to the EPSCoR office by the end of funding period.
- Electronic annual reporting of progress, assessment surveys, demographic information, project updates and follow-on funding to the EPSCoR office as requested through 8/31/2016
- Participation in annual VT EPSCoR Conference when appropriate.
- Notification of SBIR Phase I & II funding submissions and outcomes to VT EPSCoR Office.
- Identification of in-kind funding is not required, but will be greatly appreciated. An example of in-kind matching is percent effort. For more information please contact epscor@uvm.edu

Period of Support:

The period of support: September 1, 2012 – May 30, 2013

Proposal Content:

EPSCoR's SBIR Phase (0) program is intended to be a **preliminary proof-of-concept feasibility study, not a full-blown project**. Past problems with Phase (0) proposals have included insufficient budget explanations, lack of clarity in describing the proposal and not identifying a federal agency SBIR program appropriate for the project. Non-research proposals, e.g. marketing, prototype construction, information collection from the Web, etc. are inappropriate. In cases of software development, a clear identification of a research component to the project is crucial.

- Describe in a paragraph or two your past work. Indicate if you have previously submitted a Phase (0) proposal to Vermont EPSCoR and the year(s) submitted. If previous Phase (0) support has been obtained, evidence of a Phase I submission must be included. The outcome from this submission should also be indicated.
- If you have received prior Phase (0) funding, please include results from relevant prior award(s) and the relevance of that support to the proposed activities explained.
- Specify which Federal SBIR program you intend to submit a follow-up proposal.
- Describe in 4 pages the problem and research plan in sufficient detail to allow for an evaluation.
- Identify the scientific disciplines involved.
- Describe data gathering methods, potential problems, equipment and other resources needed. Resources currently available for the project should be described.
- If your project involves research on human subjects (e.g., work with human tissue,

interviews or medical trials with human subjects, and collection or analysis of data and medical records, etc.), live vertebrate animals, or recombinant DNA, then your work must meet federal requirements for review and approval of these regulated activities. Please check details about protocol submission requirements and additional information at <http://www.uvm.edu/spa/> If you have any additional questions about regulations regarding work involving human subjects contact the Sponsored Project Administration office at (802) 656-3360.

- Include current resumes for key personnel.
- List of Suggested Reviewers (Optional). Provide the first and last name of suggested reviewers that you believe are especially well qualified to review this proposal. Alternatively, provide reviewers not to include. Designate persons you would prefer not review this proposal and indicate why.
- Include an expenditure budget and a detailed budget justification/explanation. Indirect costs are not allowed on Phase (0) awards. (2 pages)
- A letter of intent is required from all potential collaborators, and must be included in the application package.

Evaluation Criteria:

A panel of local scientists and engineers representing Vermont's business, academic and government sectors will evaluate pilot grant proposals. The review will focus on **scientific and technical merit as well as potential for federal SBIR support**, and will consider the following criteria:

- Significance
- Innovation
- Appropriateness of the Methodology
- Potential for Generation of Federal SBIR Funds
- Qualifications and Experience of the Investigators
- Suitability of Facilities
- Relevance of the Budget including any Matching Funds
- Clarity of the Proposal

How to Submit a Phase (0) Proposal to Vermont EPSCoR:

Web based submissions are the only accepted form of submission. Please go to www.uvm.edu/EPSCoR and click on the SBIR link to access the proposal form, budget form and cover page information. **Forms will be made available on the web on December 15, 2011.** You are encouraged to submit early to avoid any potential submission complications.

1. **Web submissions are due May 1, 2012 by 4:00 p.m.**
2. **Cover Page* and Letters of Intent from potential collaborators are due by mail only (no FAX), by May 1, 2012 at 4:00 p.m.** Send to Vermont EPSCoR, Cook

Building, 82 University Place, Room 528, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405.

*Note that signing the cover page will indicate your willingness to publicly share the abstract.

If you do not wish your abstract made public, do not sign the cover page. Any proprietary information will be treated with strict confidence. All results of any supported research will remain the property of the grant recipient unless there is an academic collaborator. In the case where an academic collaborator is not acting as an independent consultant paid through the company, or if the faculty member will use University/College facilities, there will need to be a Memorandum of Understanding negotiated with the appropriate institutional grants office (Office of Sponsored Program for UVM faculty). This must be done before any work on the project commences and funding is released. With respect to any invention developed with EPSCoR support, the grant recipient retains title (noting the exception described above). However, certain government use provisions and disclosures will apply due to the federal funding involved. Specifically, recipients will be required to disclose inventions to the University so that the University may make a disclosure to the federal sponsor. While the inventor retains full ownership of his/her intellectual property, the federal government retains the right to a non-exclusive license to practice inventions which result from federal funding. This requirement is rarely invoked and has never occurred in any disclosures from the University of Vermont.

Neither the State of Vermont, Vermont EPSCoR, or the University of Vermont will make any claim to any product or process developed with this funding with the possible exception of intellectual property developed by an academic collaborator.

Based on the review of the proposals, more detailed documentation may be sought for projects which show promise.

Information, including proposal writing tips, can be found on the Vermont EPSCoR website: <http://www.uvm.edu/EPSCoR> where Phase (0) is described. For information on the Federal SBIR programs visit <http://www.zyn.com> and <http://www.thinkvermont.com>

For more information about Vermont EPSCoR or the SBIR program, contact Lillian Gamache, Vermont EPSCoR Project Coordinator at epscor@uvm.edu