

Small Business Innovation Research
Small Business Technology Transfer



A Defense Innovation Strategy for 2025

Office of Small Business Programs
Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, & Logistics)
Office of the Secretary of Defense

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SBIR/STTR: A Defense Innovation Strategy for 2025

Introduction from the Program Administrator

I am honored to present the first Department of Defense Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR)/Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Strategic Plan. Our strategy is focused on making quantum improvements to these programs that will shape and strengthen the “*innovation capability*” of the Department. These programs are well suited to this endeavor because they are the only DoD research programs focused on innovation, leveraging the extraordinary talent inherent in our small business industrial base and research institutions, and resourced at over one billion dollars per year.

Though representing just a little more than 3% of the total DoD extramural R&D budget, it provides about 3,000 awards each year, each with the potential to develop innovations to win the next war, and help rebuild our economy.



Programs like SBIR/STTR are patently unique and wholly understated in importance. It is the only billion-dollar defense program providing small businesses risk-free, non-dilutive seed stage capital. To make it even better, the SBIR/STTR awardee retains full rights to all intellectual property resulting from the government -sponsored research, and an opportunity to receive follow-on sole-source contracts. Merit dictates whether the innovations resulting from the research flourish or die. The ones that flourish become the focus of investments from large companies, investment firms, and the government. Yet, with all these positive attributes, the program attracts only moderate participation from industry, with largely a repeat audience. Since capacity can limit capability, we must do a better job of infusing new and diverse participants into the program.

Over the past decade, innovation has become a panacea for bolstering our economy and strengthening our military. Historically, military capability has evolved through a pattern of sustaining and disruptive innovations, and we can expect this cycle to continue. The obvious corollary is that the ability to innovate is the most important factor - the one who innovates the most, the fastest, and the best will maintain a comparative advantage over any adversary. This is the power behind “capability surprise” and “asymmetric warfare.” Building this “*innovation capability*” is the key outcome to be achieved by any innovation strategy. The SBIR/STTR programs have had a good track record of creating innovations; however, we must refine our existing innovation system -- infrastructure, workforce, business processes -- so that it can develop innovations more quickly to address specific mission needs.

My vision is simple: make SBIR/STTR the best innovation programs in the world. How? By tackling real issues in the value stream, from requirements to commercialization. We must create a more robust innovation program, where there is unparalleled focus on customer success. The Department as a whole must strive for continuous improvements, driven by common goals, and customer priorities. This plan is a call to action for all leadership levels within the DoD SBIR/STTR enterprise. I look forward to working with all customers and stakeholders to implement this plan and make SBIR/STTR the best innovation programs in the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Steven Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Steven Sullivan

Associate Director for Technology & Innovation

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An Urgent Call to Action for the SBIR/STTR Community

There is widespread sense of urgency within the Department and Congress to improve defense acquisition performance. The existing system is comprised of the physical organizations – the OSD, Military Departments, and other Defense Agencies/Organizations – all operating within the three main operational models – the Defense Acquisition System, the JCIDS, and the PPBE.

The size and complexity of this system is unique and unparalleled, yet it has enabled the United States to retain its military superpower status and preserve its national security interests in the global theater. But the increasing pace of technological advancements, and challenges brought about by globalization are threatening this superiority. Asymmetric threats and capability surprises specifically target the weaknesses inherent in a bureaucratic system. The prescription for retaining our nation’s leadership position is clear – we must change the system design - the way we are organized and how we operate - to be more agile and innovative to enable us to respond quickly, efficiently, and effectively to any new threat to our national interests.

Unfortunately, agility and innovation are the attributes most difficult for a system as large and as complex as the Department of Defense and the solution has remained elusive. Congress has demanded and the Department has pursued many changes aimed at “acquisition reform” with unsatisfactory results. The Department is now seeking remedies from the commercial sector, in places such as Silicon Valley, where agility and innovation are commonplace, to see if it can adopt ideas and practices that might bring about the desired change. However, the success of this endeavor will require time and patience, combined with a well-defined strategy and implementation plan that focuses on unity of effort. This thrust is the first step towards building the Department’s Innovation Strategy.

This SBIR/STTR Strategic Plan is aligned with the Department’s Innovation Initiative, and seeks to bring about the required changes within the domain of the SBIR/STTR programs. Maintaining the status-quo is no longer an option. Though the SBIR/STTR programs have generated significant innovations in research and development, it must do much better. The challenges we face are the same as the overall Department – overcoming the bureaucracy imbued in our existing ways of doing business, and disrupting the operational paradigms that prevent us from being agile in addressing the national security needs of the Department. The SBIR/STTR community must rise to the challenges of the new Defense Innovation Strategy and demonstrate our support by embracing the mandate for change.

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Vision and Mission

Vision: To make SBIR/STTR the best innovation programs in the world.

Mission: To help SBIR/STTR companies quickly create and deliver cost-effective innovations that will sustain America's technological superiority over adversaries.

The OSBP mission to implement the SBIR/STTR programs in DoD is unique. Upholding this mission requires us to:

- Be the staunchest SBIR/STTR advocate and voice within the Department.
- Conduct and attend outreach in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Provide tailored assistance.
- Be the Department's subject matter expert and single voice to customers and stakeholders.
- Perform leadership and oversight to ensure the program operates in the most cost-effective manner.

The Purpose of the SBIR/STTR Programs

Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program. The statutory purpose of the SBIR Program is to strengthen the role of innovative small business concerns (SBCs) in Federally-funded research or research and development (R/R&D). Specific program purposes are to: (1) Stimulate technological innovation; (2) use small business to meet Federal R/R&D needs; (3) foster and encourage participation by socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses (SDBs), and by women-owned small businesses (WOSBs), in technological innovation; and (4) increase private sector commercialization of innovations derived from Federal R/R&D, thereby increasing competition, productivity and economic growth. (Learn more at <https://sbir.defensebusiness.org>).

Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Program. The statutory purpose of the STTR Program is to stimulate a partnership of ideas and technologies between innovative small business concerns (SBCs) and Research Institutions through Federally-funded research or research and development (R/R&D). By providing awards to SBCs for cooperative R/R&D efforts with Research Institutions, the STTR Program assists the small business and research communities by commercializing innovative technologies. (Learn more at <https://sbir.defensebusiness.org>).

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Core Values

Core Values: At the heart of any program or organization are its people. The SBIR/STTR programs can only achieve success through the individuals that influence or control its destiny. Individual behavior is defined by motive, and motive is defined by core values. Individual leadership, unity of effort, and personal accountability are all key behaviors required for the successful execution of this strategy. Sometimes the “normal way of doing business” can evolve to become a barrier to progress, and in these instances we must apply critical and reflective thinking to overcome it. We must operate in a way that allows us to break through existing operational paradigms. Cross-purposes, when they arise, should be examined using the lens of the customer and common goals. We must use data to identify trends and causal relationships between our activities and desired outcomes and define the optimum way forward. We must take a systems view of the program and avoid the urge to sub-optimize at the local level. We must apply these core values to guide our decisions and actions if we are to succeed in our strategy:

- Act in the best interests of small businesses, the taxpayer, and DoD.
- Uphold highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and ethics.
- Create a climate and culture that fosters collaboration.
- Take personal responsibility and deliver on commitments.
- Apply a systems perspective and strive for unity of effort.

Strategic Goals

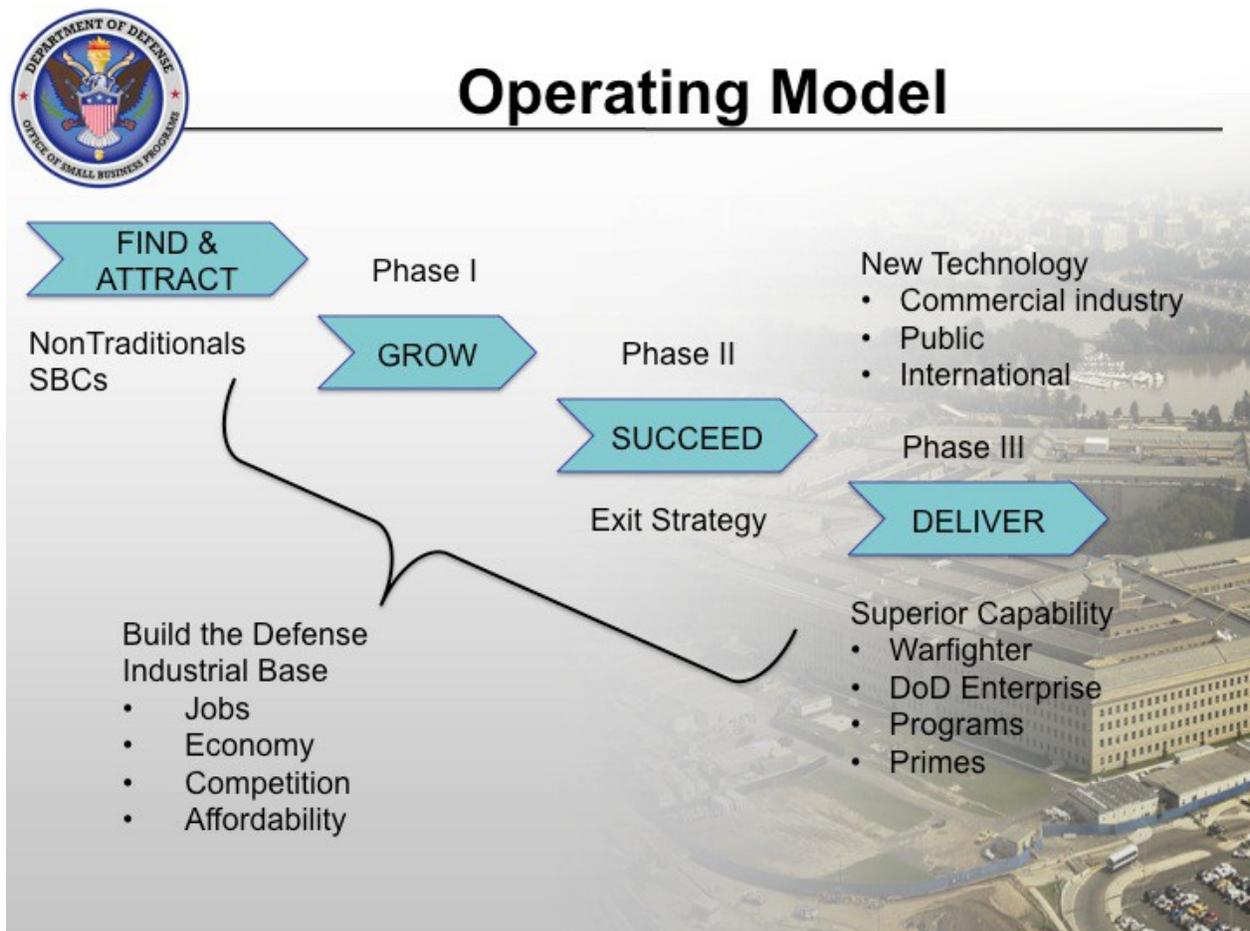
Strategic Goals: These are the outcomes that deliver value to our customers, and that we seek as an enterprise over the next 5 years. When achieved, these outcomes will reflect an “*innovation capability*” within the SBIR/STTR programs that will offer a strategic and tactical advantage over future adversaries.

1. DoD acquisition workforce proactively seeks SBIR/STTR solutions.
2. Improved participation demographics.
3. Simple and easy for customers.
4. Agile and responsive to DoD needs.
5. Optimized Phase III results for each DoD organization.
6. Decisions driven by data analytics capability.

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SBIR/STTR Operating Model

Figure 1 depicts an Operating Model of the basic value chain associated with the SBIR/STTR programs, organized into four general phases: Find and Attract, Grow, Succeed, and Deliver. A brief description of each phase is provided below. This operating model and descriptions are intended only to provide a common point of reference to facilitate analysis and collaboration.



Find and attract

- The viability of the SBIR/STTR programs depends on its ability to infuse new talent into the program. Finding and attracting non-traditionals, STEM-entrepreneurs, and socio-economically diversified small business concerns is critical to the success of the program. The desired outcome is to maximize the participation rate of these new-entrants, at the national and regional levels. Business analytics should investigate and identify the

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factors, both within and without our control, that influence participation rates and use that information to shape strategic initiatives. Areas of potential analysis include:

- Customer: Develop participation metrics for analysis; raise awareness through targeted outreach; apply marketing techniques to influence participation rates (e.g. make the program exciting by creating a buzz); make it easier to apply for the program.
- Workforce: How are we training the SBIR/STTR workforce to help recruit new entrants and be experts in the SBIR/STTR process?
- Business processes: Do our business processes facilitate participation by the types of new talent we are seeking? Have we tailored outreach and marketing activities to the targeted audience?
- Financial: Ensure resources required for initiatives are identified.

Grow: Phase I

- Though the focus of a Phase I award is typically demonstrating feasibility, the final success metric is the transition of the new innovation into Phase III within DoD or in the commercial market. This requires the Phase I awardee, with the support of all stakeholders, to develop a detailed path-to-market plan during the execution of the Phase I effort.
- Each innovation has a finite probability of transitioning into Phase III. These factors must be assessed during the execution of the Phase I and II contracts. The major elements influencing this probability include:
 - Requirements. Each SBIR topic represents a valid need within the DoD. However, requirements can change, thereby affecting the probability of transition to Phase III. The need must be validated at regular program milestones.
 - Technical maturity. The maturity of the technology can be assessed in several ways such as Technology Readiness Level, Manufacturing Readiness Level, and readiness for integration into larger systems and programs of record. The required readiness of the innovation at various program milestones must be established and assessed to determine potential impact on transition and commercialization.
 - Business capability maturity. Phase I awardees are very diverse in company profile and character. The business capability maturity may range from a newly established business with one employee, to a mature small business with 500 employees. Path-to-market challenges are much greater for companies that are in their infancy, and must be addressed during Phase I.
- Areas of potential analysis for factors influencing success during Phase I include:

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- Customer: Assess the probability of transition (requirement/demand/market survey, technology/innovation readiness, business capability maturity) for the next program phase.
- Workforce: Train the workforce to be an expert in the SBIR success process and to have a common understanding of Phase I success factors so they can facilitate the SBIR awardees' path-to-market planning. Providing assistance to SBIR awardees is a critical job performance function for anyone involved in the program.
- Business processes: Business processes critical to the success of an SBIR program, such as contracting, must be streamlined through standardization and simplification.
- Financial: Small businesses are extremely sensitive to cash flow, especially in instances where the SBIR contract may be the only source of subsistence. The SBIR program and stakeholders must ensure timely release of SBIR funding.

Succeed: Phase II

- Phase II success for every SBIR awardee is uniquely defined, but in most cases involves delivering a technology or an innovation that satisfies a stated need. Many SBIR awardees seek transition of their innovation to a program of record or other Phase III path. The method of transition, such as manufacturing, licensing, partnering, or selling intellectual property all require different path-to-market plans. These plans must also anticipate the need for a “pivot,” or change in the original strategy and plan caused by changing business environment conditions. At the end of the day, small businesses are responsible for defining their vision and plan for success, and the stakeholders must be cognizant of their role in facilitating that success.
- Areas of potential analysis for factors influencing success during Phase II include:
 - Customer: Assess the overall probability of transition and provide assistance where necessary. Update and execute path-to-market plan.
 - Workforce: Train the workforce to understand Phase II success factors and be experts in the process. Get Program Managers, PEOs, and prime contractors engaged in helping SBCs succeed.
 - Business processes: Develop business processes to assist in technology maturity, business capability maturity, and market research/demand. Technology matching to prime/PM needs.
 - Financial: Establish, track and report relevant benchmarks.

Deliver: Phase III

- Phase III can be viewed as funding of an innovation beyond SBIR-funded Phase II activities. This can involve further maturation of the technology, repurposing the

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innovation for new applications, or entering a “production and deployment” phase. The optimal end game is a transition of the innovation or technology to a DoD program of record or fielded system, to a commercial market, or both. This transition is the strategic outcome we seek, as new warfighting capability is introduced, as the defense small business industrial base gets stronger, and our economy and global competitive posture grow.

- Areas of potential analysis for factors influencing success during Phase III include:
 - Customer: Continued business maturity, requirement/demand/market survey
 - Workforce: Train the workforce to understand Phase III success factors and be experts in the process. Ensure workforce understands SBIR statutes and policy with respect to Phase III.
 - Business processes: Assist SBIR companies in adapting innovations to new programs and requirements. Make it easy for government organizations to access SBIR-developed innovations. Seek synergy with other federal, state, and local programs for commercial path-to-market opportunities.
 - Financial: Ensure Phase III funding activities are properly recorded and reported at both the prime and sub-tier levels.

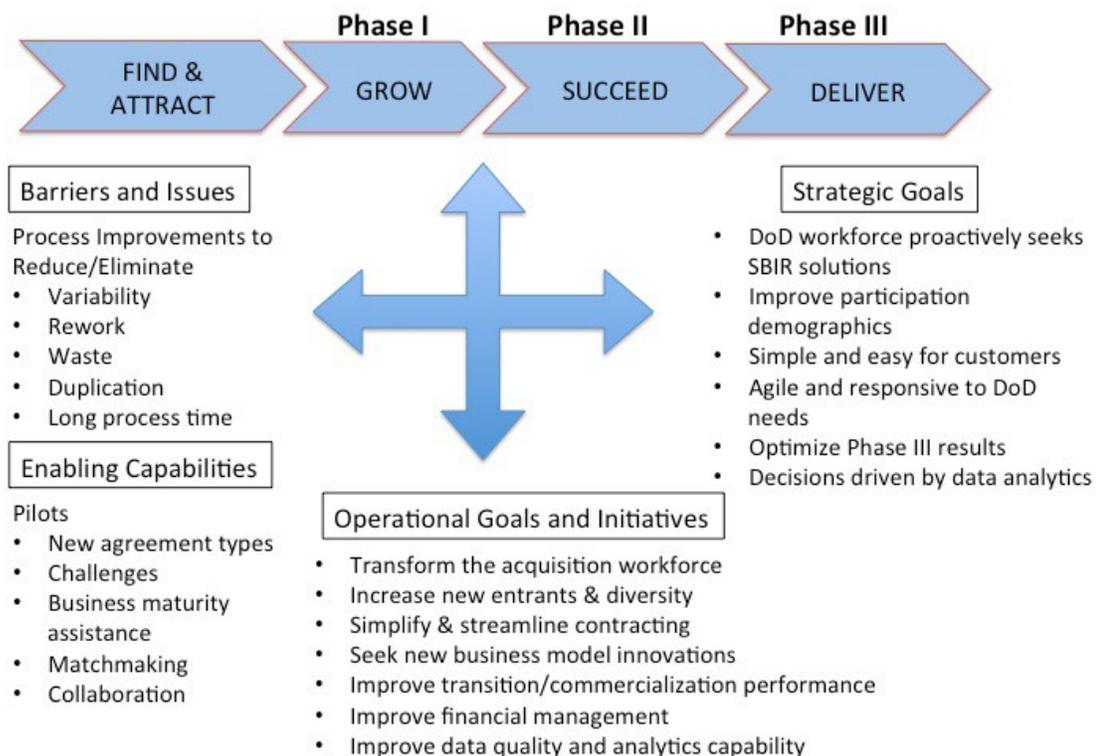
Our strategy focuses on making the most impactful improvements to the DoD SBIR/STTR programs in the shortest possible time. The intended outcome is to effectively transform the DoD SBIR/STTR programs to a level of world-class performance, with consequent benefits to military capability, economic growth, job creation and global competitiveness. This strategy is comprised of operational goals and initiatives that will foster the development of a more responsive and agile DoD SBIR program, by providing a turnkey solution to help SBIR/STTR companies succeed.

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Operational Goals and Initiatives

Operational Goals

Operational goals and initiatives are the ways and means by which we will achieve the strategic goals and are aligned with the main value proposition of the SBIR/STTR program. Two key concepts are removal of barriers and issues, and enabling capabilities. Barriers and issues exist that impede the efficiency or effectiveness of key business processes. We must understand the underlying causes of these problems and implement initiatives focused on process improvement. Enabling capabilities are the new ideas and opportunities to think beyond existing structures and processes, allowing insight and invention to create new value for the program. Implementation of any new idea must be approached with caution to ensure the intended outcome is achieved without any unintended consequences. Pilot programs that allow you to “try before you buy” can mitigate these risks. Underlying all our efforts is the ability to identify the core metrics that are tied to the desired outcomes, and an ability to perform comprehensive analytics for making informed decisions.



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Operational Goal #1: Transform the DoD acquisition workforce to become SBIR/STTR advocates.

Stakeholders and consumers of SBIR/STTR innovations include government and contractor program managers, engineers, and scientists responsible for programs of record and fielded systems throughout the Department. Achieving our vision requires the DoD acquisition workforce to believe that SBIR/STTR can produce innovations quickly, affordably, and with acceptable risks. Using our sphere of influence within DoD, we can strive to create an internal climate and culture that sustains and celebrates SBIR/STTR success. This cultural transformation can only be achieved through persistent engagement such as leadership messaging, success stories, training, education, and personal experience.

Operational Initiatives
<p>Develop key policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish overarching policy for operation of the SBIR program. Consider: responsibility, authority, accountability, mission (including outreach), key business processes, financial management, CRP, workforce training. Begin with initial foundational policy. • Build details in future policy issuances.
<p>Collaborate with Components to make real changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage Components in formulating DoD-wide improvement initiatives through a Business Process Improvement Working Group.
<p>Develop training and guidance materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a guidebook to address responsibilities, procedures, resources for each stakeholder: Technical points of contact (TPOC), Program Executive Officers and Major Program Managers, prime contractors, small business professionals, and contracting officers.
<p>Conduct outreach and advocacy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize that outreach is critical to the SBIR/STR mission. • Create and employ a marketing strategy. Consider collection and publication of metrics, success stories, newsletters, e-media outlets. • Reinvigorate the Beyond Phase II conference and technology showcase.

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Operational Goal #2: Increase the diversity and number of new entrants participating in the SBIR/STTR programs.

Having a steady supply of new entrants is important to the rejuvenation of the innovation process. The President and Congress believe there exists a large body of entrepreneurs that are reluctant to engage the government bureaucracy. Better Buying Power 3.0 and this strategic plan focus specifically on initiatives to attract these non-traditional companies and individuals. STEM and entrepreneurship programs at colleges and universities are an important source of new entrants.

Diversity is another aspect contributing to innovation capability. Small business diversity has many dimensions, including: small disadvantaged business concerns, women-owned small businesses, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, and Historically Underutilized Business Zone small business concerns. We must find and engage all potential sources of these companies, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions.

Analytics must be applied to gain insight into the underlying causes of low participation rates, especially those that we can control or influence, to ensure our initiatives are both efficient and effective.

Operational Initiatives
<p>Conduct analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a baseline. • Identify centers of gravity. • Identify correlations/causal factors.
<p>Develop a marketing strategy and perform focused outreach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebrand DoD SBIR to be better aligned with operational goal #2. • Send personal invitations to targeted audience. • Extend reach to STEM and entrepreneurship programs in targeted universities. • Integrate into marketing strategy.
<p>Partner with Primes and Universities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate partnership initiatives with all minority-serving institutions. • Investigate partnership initiatives with Primes.
<p>Develop training and guidance materials (e.g. FWA/ethics, webinars, and guidebooks).</p>

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Operational Goal #3: Simplify and streamline the SBIR/STTR contracting process.

We must make the program and contracting process as easy and simple as possible to ensure the government bureaucracy does not act as a barrier to entry. For individuals and companies new to the SBIR/STTR programs, simplicity is a key consideration when deciding whether or not to participate. Small businesses wishing to engage in the SBIR/STTR programs must complete several administrative hurdles, including: determining how to incorporate within a State, registering with the IRS, registering with Dun and Bradstreet, registering in the System for Award Management (SAM) to be eligible for federal awards, registering in SBIR.gov to be eligible for SBIR awards, and registering in the DoD SBIR/STTR database to be eligible for DoD awards. Many of these steps ask for the same basic information, and are a source of frustration for new entrants. Having an SBIR/STTR application system that automatically extracts and pre-populates repetitive information would be an example of how we can eliminate this barrier, while improving the quality of our data systems.

The DoD contracting process presents unique challenges. Currently, a single DoD-wide, enterprise solicitation for Phase I is used to make it easier for small businesses to engage in the program. However, each of the twelve or more participating DoD organizations has unique authority and procedures for contracting. This drives differences in the instructions for preparing proposals, which may be efficient for the individual contracting organizations involved, but inefficient for new entrants and a potential barrier to entry. Having a dozen different business processes for a single, critical function like contracting, on the same program, introduces variability and limits the potential effectiveness and efficiency that can be achieved. We must seek ways to improve the overall process to make it easier for all involved.

Operational Initiatives
Conduct analysis to identify metrics and baseline current performance. Identify sources of variability and barriers as input for the LEAN process.
Apply LEAN principles to improve agility/responsiveness/speed to market. Identify all the steps in the value stream, eliminating whenever possible those steps that do not create value.
Develop a plan and implement the new process in the appropriate guidance and training documents. Identify required resources for implementation.
Assess feasibility of establishing contracting centers of excellence. Develop a concept of operations (CONOPS). Conduct a cost-benefits analysis to ensure implementation costs are understood. Develop an implementation plan.

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Operational Goal #4: Seek new business model innovations that make the SBIR/STTR program more agile and responsive to needs.

One criticism of the SBIR/STTR program is that it is slow and cumbersome, making it difficult to interface with programs of record and fielded systems. Topics are generated on a rigid, fixed three-times-per-year schedule, which does not allow it to address emergent needs of the warfighter. Some of the Military Departments and Defense Agencies only participate in one or two solicitations each year, further restricting SBIR program agility and responsiveness to needs.

The SBIR program is unbalanced in other ways. SBIR program phases are usually fixed in duration, and typically delayed due to administrative burdens in contracting. Pricing for Phase I and II proposals usually come in at or near the maximum allowed amount. With cost and schedule criteria effectively neutralized, there is essentially no best value evaluation that can balance cost or schedule against technical merit.

Prime contractors, as large platform integrators, must assess the cost, schedule and technical risks associated with any new technology from the SBIR program. Enabling primes to directly influence the formulation of requirements may improve transitions to programs of record.

Operational Initiatives
Conduct analysis to identify characteristics of agility & responsiveness and related issues.
Identify options for improving agility & responsiveness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use various idea generation methods such as brainstorming, and surveys. • Assess new contracting/business models to improve agility/responsiveness/speed to market, including those identified in reports from the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Defense Science Board, and Defense Business Board. • Identify any new legislative authorities required for implementation.
Develop criteria for evaluation of new ideas and conduct assessments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rank order ideas. • Develop implementation estimates, for cost, schedule and performance.
Select ideas for implementation and develop implementation plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot implementation. • Policies and procedures.

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Operational Goal #5: Improve transition/commercialization performance.

Within industry, Research & Development proposals must demonstrate the potential to achieve a pre-defined hurdle rate or internal rate of return and projected Return on Investment (ROI) before an investment decision is made. Investments are made in early S&T as a feeder for longer-term R&D activities and to allow for investigation of disruptive innovations. These S&T projects are expected to have a lower transition rates commensurate with their risk/reward profile. Investments in later stage R&D are intended to satisfy near-term program needs and are expected to have higher transition potential. The SBIR program should support the investment strategy of each organization as reflected in their budget within Major Force Program 6 and Budget Activities 6.1 through 6.5.

The SBIR program should have a higher rate of return when considering programs within Budget Activity 6.3 through 6.5. We should develop metrics to assess the transition potential for each SBIR/STTR project, as it progresses from topic selection to the end of Phase II activities. The Department should consider providing support to those areas having the most impact on transition success, including market research activities, technology scouting, matchmaking, partnering, and collaboration.

Operational Initiatives
Develop goals and incentives applicable to Government and industry for transition of small business R&D into Programs of Record and fielded systems.
Develop processes, procedures, and system requirements to track SBIR/STTR transition into Programs of record and fielded systems.
Establish appropriate policies, guides, and training (to include intellectual property rights and guidance to improve accuracy in SBIR reporting and database utilization).
Develop a robust matchmaking capability between SBIR/STTR companies and potential consumers of their innovations.
Establish an OSD program to provide transition assistance to SBIR/STTR awardees.
Support development of leading indicators, tracking, and assessment for probability of transition. Establish metrics for transition and commercialization performance throughout the department.
Improve topic generation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance topics to each organization’s investment profile (S&T/R&D). • Build a taxonomy that is meaningful to consumers of SBIR products and services. • Provide greater flexibility in topic submission.

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Operational Goal #6: Improve financial management

Small businesses are very sensitive to cash flow. This means the thousands of small business that receive SBIR/STTR awards each year rely heavily on the efficacy with which the SBIR/STTR programs get funded for execution and timeliness of payments. The SBIR/STTR programs require budget calculations to be made and submitted to the SBA within 4 months after the Agency appropriations are made. However, the federal budgeting process is often plagued with delays, and appropriations usually occurring well after the start of the new fiscal year. When faced with a continuing resolution, comptrollers typically view the SBIR program as a new start and fail to make a budget calculation or allocation.

The SBIR/STTR program must demonstrate fiscal accountability and responsibility by ensuring funding is 1) allocated in accordance with statutory provisions, 2) released in a timely manner, 3) obligated as quickly as possible to facilitate program execution, and 4) expended by making payments in a timely manner. The workforce must be proficient in all aspects of financial management, and demonstrate good stewardship of critical public resources.

Operational Initiatives
Improve SBIR/STTR budget calculations. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure all eligible extramural R&D accounts are identified by the cognizant Comptrollers throughout DoD.• Ensure budget calculations meet statutory requirements for amounts and timeliness.
Improve timeliness of funding release. Ensure funds get released uniformly throughout DoD.
Improve tracking of obligations and expenditures.
Conduct compliance reviews for budget calculations, discretionary technical assistance (DTA), administrative funding pilot program, and Commercialization Readiness Program.
Establish policy, guidance and training for SBIR/STTR financial management. Develop training for budget calculations.

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Operational Goal #7: Improve SBIR/STTR program data quality and data analytics.

Making meaningful changes to improve the SBIR/STTR programs means decisions must be backed by data and analysis. Our ability to make good decisions hinges on the availability of high quality data and a comprehensive analytics capability. In this era of big data, business analytics/intelligence techniques must be applied to the SBIR/STTR programs to gain insight into the factors influencing efficiency and effectiveness.

Data systems used by the SBIR/STTR programs must be designed for enterprise interoperability and allow for the provision of a common operating picture. For publicly available SBIR/STTR program information, every user in the SBIR/STTR community should have access to the same database and analytics capability, tailored to the needs of the user. For all other data, access must be restricted to the appropriate government users.

With any improvement program, the success in achieving desired outcomes is assessed by collecting and analyzing metrics. The SBIR/STTR program must have a comprehensive metrics program that identifies these desired outcomes and establishes traceability of these outcomes to success metrics.

Operational Initiatives
Establish a data team responsible for all data and data analysis responsibilities. Work collaboratively with the Services and Components.
Develop a process for identifying and analyzing data requirements for the SBIR/STTR program.
Conduct a review of current SBIR/STTR data requirements.
Conduct a review of SBIR/STTR IT infrastructure requirements.
Develop CONOPs for DoD-wide data discovery, analytics, and sharing.
Evaluate open source business intelligence/analytics platforms for use in the SBIR/STTR public data environment.
Establish a metrics program.