

For Immediate Release

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Economic Development Partnership of Alabama begins program to help Alabama entrepreneurs pursue federal grants

Birmingham, Ala., March 13 - The Economic Development Partnership of Alabama announces the start of its new program to help entrepreneurs land lucrative federal grants.

The Alabama Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Assistance Program is now providing grant writing assistance for companies in the process of writing or resubmitting SBIR/STTR proposals.

The SBIR program is administered through the U.S. Small Business Administration to encourage small businesses to engage in federal research/research and development that has the potential for commercialization. Through a competitive awards-based program, SBIR enables small businesses to explore their technological potential and provides the incentive to profit from its commercialization. By including qualified small businesses, high-tech innovation is stimulated and the United States gains entrepreneurial spirit as it meets its specific research and development needs.

The STTR program is similar and focuses on the commercialization of high-tech research and innovation through a joint venture of small business and non-profit research institutions.

A goal of the new Alabama Launchpad program is to boost the success of Alabama companies receiving the highly-competitive funding. Since 1983, 144,000 awards totaling more than \$36 billion have been awarded directly to small businesses through the program.

More than \$40 million of that funding goes directly to Alabama companies each year. While Alabama has had some success, other states receive even greater funding, said Angela Wier, a vice president with the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama.

“We see an opportunity to help Alabama companies write more competitive proposals,” Wier said. “We believe the assistance will help companies avoid many common pitfalls that cause early elimination from the process.”

Companies can find an application for writing assistance on Alabama Launchpad’s website. Those accepted will receive valuable one-on-one counsel, strategic planning and a revision of their proposal as structured to fit their needs.

For more information, visit <http://alabamalaunchpad.com/sbir/>

The Alabama Launchpad program aims to provide support in three ways:

- Raise SBIR/STTR awareness for Alabama-based small businesses through a statewide network of partners that will advocate and host introductory SBIR/STTR workshops.
- Educate Alabama companies on how to compete for SBIR/STTR awards.
- Provide one-on-one writing assistance and proposal strategy from Greenwood Consulting Group, Inc. (GCGI), which has experience writing and reviewing SBIR/STTR proposals dating to when the program began in 1982.

Beginning March 28, Alabama Launchpad will host workshops across the state to assist Alabama's small businesses in securing more of these grants.

Alabama Launchpad has assembled a SBIR advisory committee for the 2014 program:

- Bill Waite, chief technical officer and co-founder of AEGIS Technologies, Inc. in Huntsville
- Troy Brady, licensing officer, Auburn University
- Mark Weaver, Ben May chair of Entrepreneurship and founding director of the Melton Center for Entrepreneurial Studies, University of South Alabama in Mobile
- Steve Ceulemans, vice president of innovation and technology for the Birmingham Business Alliance
- Rick Swatloski, director, Office of Technology Transfer for the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa
- Dave Winwood, executive director, UAB Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship and chief executive officer of the UAB Research Foundation in Birmingham
- Kannan Grant, director, Office of Technology Transfer at the University of Alabama in Huntsville

About the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama: Now in its 23rd year, the non-profit Partnership represents the private sector's contribution to economic development in Alabama. Fully funded by more than 70 leading companies invested in the state's long-term economic success, EDPA provides leadership and services that recruit new businesses to the state, retain existing businesses and renew Alabama's economy by encouraging innovation both within existing industries and through the commercialization of new technologies. www.edpa.org

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