

Faculty Participation in SBIR and STTR Programs

Binghamton University recognizes that Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer Research (STTR) programs are intended not only to motivate small businesses, but also encourage and create partnerships with research institutions to promote the commercialization of innovative technologies. Each federal agency that sponsors these programs has regulations concerning the relationships between small business entities and research institutions. Specific regulations and requirements are detailed in the Request for Proposals (RFP) and the SBIR/STTR websites for the awarding agency.

Binghamton University faculty, and other members of the campus community, may be interested in participating in SBIR or STTR-funded activities. While involvement is encouraged, participation in these programs can create a conflict of interest when the University member holds equity with the business concern. Due to the potential for conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment/use of resources, individuals considering involvement in SBIR and STTR proposals, should be aware of the following:

- For SBIR projects and some NSF STTR projects, the primary employment (more than 50%) of the Principal Investigator/Program Director (PI) must be with the small business entity at the time of the award and for the duration of the project. Primary employment with the small business entity precludes full-time employment at another organization. ***Therefore, a full-time employee of Binghamton University may not serve as the PI of the SBIR or some STTR grants unless they have a reduced University appointment.*** Employees are responsible for seeking approval from the relevant Dean or Vice President before they serve as PI on any proposal being submitted for SBIR/STTR funding by a small business entity
- For STTR projects, the PI may be employed by the small business entity or the University, as long as there is a formalized, official relationship between the small business and that individual. The PI must commit at least 10% effort to the project. Combined with their University appointment, effort may not exceed 100%. ***Therefore, a full-time employee of Binghamton University may not serve as the PI of an STTR grant during the academic year unless they have a reduced University appointment or have a percentage of effort “bought out” by the small business via a formalized subaward agreement.***
- In most cases, Binghamton University employees cannot be the PI for the small business and the PI of a subcontract to Binghamton University on the same SBIR or STTR project.
- Small business entities may use Binghamton University recharge facilities for their portion of the work provided the small business is charged the stated rate as other non-Binghamton University entities and under the appropriate University endorsed agreements.
- University personnel and resources should not support the small business application or provide any pre- or post-award support; this includes the Offices of Sponsored Programs and Sponsored Funds Administration. The involvement of the University in such activities occurs only to the extent that Binghamton University is an intended sub-recipient in the research. In this case, the Office of Sponsored Programs will work with the Binghamton University PI to provide the appropriate proposal materials (i.e. letters of intent, budget) to the small business entity, as well as negotiate resulting subaward agreements for funded projects.

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Offices of Sponsored Programs or Sponsored Funds Administration at x7-6136.