



STEM-PRENEUR U.S. SBA FAST PROGRAM FAQs

What is the U.S. SBA FAST Program? The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) FAST (Federal and State Technology) Partnership Program is aimed at strengthening small businesses pursuits in innovation and commercialization of technologies. This will help keep the United States at the forefront of research and development. The FAST Program does this through the use of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs.

What are SBIR/STTR Programs? SBIR and STTR Programs are award-based programs that encourage small businesses to engage in research and development (R&D). These awards enable small business entrepreneurs to explore their technological potential and bridge the gap between an idea and commercialization.

Who are the target clients? This program will serve science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) focused small businesses and entrepreneurs across Indiana. A particular focus will be given to those located in Opportunity Zones, women-owned businesses, and rural small businesses and entrepreneurs.

What will The NIIC do as part of this project? The NIIC is the largest entrepreneurial support organization in STEM and applied research in the region. We will leverage our experience assisting knowledge-intensive entrepreneurs with state-wide business coaching and SBIR/STTR resources. Our NIIC Navigator® Online Learning Toolset provides rural and underserved entrepreneurs customized training and resource connectivity. They will also gain access to a network of existing SBIR/STTR specific resources that include training and education, connectivity to federal agencies, and assistance writing grant proposals. This project will also provide financial assistance for promising ventures through both a Grant Writer Assistance Pool and The NIIC's connection to investment and capital sources across the state to connect ventures as needed.

Who are the partners in this project? Mike Fritsch, NIIC Senior Entrepreneur in Residence, will provide expert support in the SBIR/STTR application process. The Innovation Connector located in Muncie, IN, will expand the network of business coaching resources. Purdue University will provide campus locations across the state to be regional connections to the diverse entrepreneurs involved in this project.

What results do you expect from this project? The project will create a statewide network of support to educate science-focused entrepreneurs and increase the number of SBIR/STTR applicants and awards, including underserved entrepreneurs in Indiana.

Who should be involved in the project? Participating entrepreneurs and small businesses can be at any stage of business and have a focus in R&D or an innovative technology. Opportunity Zone based companies, women-owned businesses, and rural entrepreneurs seeking assistance with their tech-focused idea or business will benefit from the services being provided through this project.

How can I get more information or get involved? We would love to hear from any organization or person who would like to get help, get involved or just learn more. Go to our website to find out more or contact Mike Fritsch, mfritsch@niic.net, telephone: 260-407-6442.



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Additional funding and resources are provided by host organization The NIIC. | theniic.org

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