

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) SBIR Quick-Start Guide

This quick-start guide has been designed to get you started with a NIST SBIR proposal package.

The current solicitation for NIST can be found at this [link](#). This provides a general idea of all the requirements necessary to complete a NIST proposal package and what NIST is interested in funding under their SBIR solicitation.

For NIST, you will need the following registrations. It is important that you complete these registrations as soon as possible, as some can take up to 14 days to issue, and not having these in place can impact your ability to submit a proposal. Please reach out to the NM FAST team if you need assistance with any of these registrations. Additionally, the New Mexico APEX Accelerators (Formerly New Mexico Procurement and Technical Assistance Centers (NM PTAC)) can assist you in the SAM registration processes, including securing a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). You can contact one of their offices to receive one-on-one help. A list of NM APEX offices can be found at the bottom of their [Contact Us](#) page.

1. **SAM:** The System for Award Management, or SAM, is the first registration to complete in terms of priority. There are a few steps to getting your SAM registration in place. The first one is that you must create a Login.gov account, which you will be prompted to do when you click the registration link below. If you have never registered your business, you will also create a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) during this process; if you have already registered with the government, you will be able to transition your DUNS into a UEI, or it is already available to you in a SAM registration. While the digital portion of this registration can take up to an hour, as it requires quite a few markers for your business, including your foundation date, points of contact (which can all be the same person), and your ACH banking information, the information you input will go through a series of government checks. It is not unheard for it to be a four to six week process. Please plan accordingly. <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>. The following video walks you through this process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uv1YNAsINK>
2. **SBC Control ID:** This registration is required by the Small Business Administration (SBA), which coordinates the SBIR/STTR programs. You have to have your UEI, at minimum, to complete this registration. <https://www.sbir.gov/registration>
3. **Grants.gov:** This is the submission site for NIST along with a number of other agencies. You must have your UEI and SAM registrations completed. <https://www.grants.gov>

Though NIST does not require an executive summary to be submitted for idea validation, it is a good idea to reach out to a cognizant program manager for idea validation before starting your proposal narrative. When performing a topic match, NM FAST staff can put you in touch with the most relevant NIST program manager to discuss the fit of your innovative idea.

1. **Budget** – Phase I SBIR awards fund up to \$100,000 over a period of 6 months for a feasibility study. As NIST states in their solicitation, “The purpose of Phase I is for NIST to determine the technical feasibility of the research, preliminary commercialization merit of the proposed effort, and the quality of the awardee’s performance”. As you know the tentative scope of the work and the budget threshold, it is a good idea to start formulating some costs and making decisions on materials and equipment needs (if available).
2. **Collaboration** – If you are working with any other entities for a consultancy or subcontract to the project, it is a good idea to start formulating a work plan and action items for that relationship. You

will also want to start putting together rough numbers for a budgetary figure for this collaboration, as any administrative signatures or authorizations at your partner could delay the process.

3. **Required Forms** – Though we will send you a compliance matrix that lays out all of the necessary formatting requirements, sections, and content for your proposal, it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the information that needs to populate those sections, as well as begin any necessary research.
 - a. **Cover Sheet** – This document will cover basic information about the proposed project and includes a technical abstract section limited to 200 words and a potential commercial applications section limited to 100 words. Your abstract should be an introduction to your innovation and should be used to convince a reviewer that you understand the issue or problem the innovation addresses, why it is novel, and why NIST would want to fund your idea.
 - b. **Key Personnel and Bibliography of Related Work** – This portion of the proposal must identify all key personnel involved in Phase I activities whose expertise and functions are essential to the success of the project. Though there is not a required or specified format for this, offerors will need to cover those individuals' related education, experience, and publications. Where vitae are extensive, summaries that focus on the most relevant experience and publications are desired and may be necessary to meet application size limitations.
 - c. **Facilities and Equipment** – This will specify the availability and location of necessary instrumentation and facilities to be used to perform the proposed work. This is also a place to report equipment you have (teleconferencing, office computers, etc.) that will assist in communicating with project stakeholders.
 - d. **SF-424 Package** – Though grants.gov, you will have to submit a number of forms that make up the SF-424 package. Those some of these forms cannot be completed until your technical narrative and budget are finalized, such as the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, others like the SF-424B, Assurances-Non-Construction Programs require only a small number of checkboxes to be filled out. It is a good idea to go through the simple forms in this package and complete them early, as any overlooked sections in the scramble to submit may make your proposal package non-compliant.

The forms referenced above are simple to generate even if you only have a vague idea of what you would like to accomplish. Once you have a concrete idea of your path forward, the bulk of the writing will be done in other sections.

The NM FAST team has a suite of resources (e.g. YouTube instructional videos, check-lists, compliance matrices, etc.) available for use in proposal creation. Please reach out to Dana Catron (dderego@nmsu.edu) for more information.