



**Entrepreneurial  
Training & Consulting**

## **Writing your NIH SBIR/STTR Specific Aims: Impact is Key!**

We have found that the best first step in developing an SBIR/STTR proposal is to draft the one-page Specific Aims document. This section is the most important page in your proposal. In it you should state concisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcomes, including the impact that the results of the proposed research will have on the research field involved and/or on clinical practice. Remember that the reviewers will ultimately give your proposal a score based on what they consider will be the Overall Impact of your project, so if the impact of your technology is not the focus of your Aims, it probably isn't written correctly.

Think of the Specific Aims section as an Executive Summary that tells your story. The 2-3 primary reviewers will (hopefully) be subject-matter experts who will (hopefully) read your entire proposal, but others on Study Section may be more generalists in the subject area and will likely only read the Specific Aims and glance at your biosketches. This one page must pack a punch.

The Aims should be easily comprehensible to an educated lay person, i.e. someone not involved in the same area of research, so avoid acronyms, and technical jargon as much as possible. If you must use them, you must also first explain them.

Take a step back, read it aloud to make sure that the text flows. Check that you are really telling the story of your technology from the problem it is addressing, right through to the commercial application that explains how you as a small company are going to commercialize a product.

Because this is an SBIR/STTR the Specific Aims section must contain a summary of both the technological innovation, and its commercial potential.

BBCetc provides our clients with a recommended outline for the Specific Aims and other sections. Let us know if you'd like coaching on preparing your proposal. The place to start is completing and submitting our [SBIR/STTR Assessment form](#).