



The Important First Step in Preparing for Your DOE SBIR/STTR Proposal: Talk to the Program Manager

The Dept. of Energy has issued the topics for its [FY 2019 Phase I Release 2 Funding Opportunity Announcement](#) (FOA). The solicitation opens Nov. 26, Letters of Intent are due Dec. 17 and proposals are due Feb. 4, 2019. The following DOE program offices are participating:

- Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response
- Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation
- Electricity
- Environmental Management
- Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
- Fossil Energy
- Fusion Energy Sciences
- High Energy Physics
- Nuclear Energy

If you're considering a DOE proposal, you may be wondering:

How do I know if DOE is interested in my idea?

The answer is incredibly easy: Ask the relevant Program Manager. The best time to do this is **AFTER** the topics have been released, and **BEFORE** the FOA is released (Nov. 26) ... in a word, **NOW**. After the FOA is released, Program Managers have some restrictions on contact so don't wait!

What do you need to do before talking to the Program Manager?

1. Review the topics once they are published.
2. Identify the topic(s) and subtopic(s) that best match your idea/innovation. You can find the email of the relevant Program Manager at the end of each topic and subtopic. The Program Manager for each subtopic is listed at the end of each subtopic.
3. Email Program Manager(s) directly and ask the following questions:
 - Does my innovation match the goals of DOE for this topic?
 - *If not*, ask if they can suggest other topics within DOE?
 - *If yes*, ask: What are the DOE priorities for this topic area? Do you see these priorities changing in the future? What are the most relevant applications for DOE (especially those that may not be obvious from the topic description)?
4. Prepare an Executive Summary and send to the Program Managers of each of the topics that you identified as potentially matching your innovation.

What to include in your Executive Summary

Your Executive Summary should be fairly brief, and no longer than one page. Use your Executive Summary as a basis for the Abstract that will be part of your Letter of Intent. Include:

1. Problem Statement / Competition
 - What is the problem being addressed? (Tip: use keywords from the topic description)
 - What are the currently-available solutions?

- What is the main direct competition?
2. Technology/Innovation
 - What is the specific product/service to be developed?
 - How will your approach solve the problem and how is it innovative?
 - What technical hurdles remain to be overcome?
 3. Company/Team (including any experience with previous SBIR awards)
 - What is the makeup of the company/team (including number of part-time and full-time employees)?
 - What is the revenue history, if any, for the past three years?
 - Have any team members previously taken similar products/services to market?
 4. Market Opportunity, Value Proposition, & Customers
 - Describe the anticipated target market and potential customer.
 - What customer needs does your innovation address?

You've got less than a month to contact Program Managers and get answers to important questions, so it's time to get organized and set priorities. If BBCetc can help, [contact us!](#)