



Just in Time (JIT) and Pre-Award Review

A Note for Companies Affected by the SBIR/STTR Reauthorization Delay

The five-month lapse in SBIR/STTR program reauthorization created significant uncertainty for companies with submitted applications to the NSF and NIH, as well as other agencies. It appears likely that this program will be reauthorized soon. Once this occurs, agencies will resume activity for submissions that were under serious consideration for awards. There is also the possibility that some agencies will revisit submissions that were previously reviewed and were considered competitive but not funded in recent cycles. If your application falls into either of these categories, now is a good time to be proactive.

We recommend reaching out directly to your Program Officer (PO) to ask whether a brief response addressing reviewer critiques would be helpful or welcomed at this stage. Some POs may be receptive to a 2-to-3-page document that acknowledges the reviewers' concerns and describes specifically how you would mitigate the issues raised -- particularly where those issues are addressable without a full resubmission. This is not a formal appeals process, and not all POs will invite this kind of outreach, but for companies with strong science and fixable weaknesses, a well-crafted response could make a meaningful difference.

When drafting such a document, focus on being concise, factual, and solutions-oriented. This is not the time to try to submit more data or change your submission. Acknowledge each substantive critique directly, explain what has changed or what you would change, and avoid being defensive. Keep the tone collaborative -- your PO is an advocate for good science, and this is an opportunity to demonstrate that the weaknesses identified are understood and manageable.

BBCetc can assist you in reviewing your reviewers' comments, identifying the most critical reviewer concerns, and drafting a targeted response for PO consideration. We can also assist with understanding and organizing the information needed for JIT or due diligence and with post-award management to ensure ongoing compliance.

Start preparing now for the pre-award requests if your proposal is likely to be funded. There are some documents that are consistently required, so preparing ahead can help you gather this information quickly.

Standard information that may be requested includes:

- Other support (both active and pending) for senior/key personnel
- SBIR or STTR Funding Agreement Certification
- Financial questionnaires
- Current Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet for the company

Other items that may apply to your application include:

- Certification of IRB approval
- Verification of IACUC approval
- Evidence of compliance with the education in the protection of human research participants requirement
- Leasing agreement

Your Program Officer or Grants Management Specialist may ask for additional items, so if you get a request, read the email from them carefully.