

**261—106.4(15) Program description, application procedures, and delegation of functions.**

**106.4(1)** *General description.* The program provides technical assistance and financial assistance to applicants seeking SBIR/STTR funding. All awards of financial assistance must ultimately be approved by the board, after a recommendation by the committee, and an agreement must be entered into with the authority before moneys will be disbursed.

**106.4(2)** *Program components and activities.* The program has two primary components, a technical assistance component and a financial assistance component, both of which are intended to increase the number of phase I, phase II, and fast track SBIR/STTR awards for Iowa businesses. The corporation shall be the primary provider of technical assistance to applicants and shall also work with the authority to provide financial assistance.

*a.* In providing technical assistance, the corporation shall develop a pre-proposal submission component that facilitates expert peer reviews from commercial reviewers with in-depth market knowledge. The resulting reviews should provide the applicant with a set of recommendations and tips for troubleshooting SBIR/STTR proposals. The corporation shall ensure that the applicants develop and implement recommendations for their proposals based on industry best practices.

*b.* The corporation shall provide services that include the following:

(1) Detailed outlines and other tools to make the drafting of a proposal and other accompanying documentation less daunting.

(2) Reviews and critiques of iterative drafts to improve the structure and narrative of both the research and the commercialization plans.

(3) Evaluation of budgets and budget justifications to produce stronger applications and avoid “leaving money on the table.”

(4) Assistance with the electronic registrations and the application submission process.

*c.* In working with the authority to provide financial assistance, the corporation shall perform the functions delegated pursuant to subrule 106.4(4).

**106.4(3)** *Application and award procedures.* Eligible applicants may submit applications to the authority for financial assistance. To be eligible, an applicant must meet the requirements in rule 261—106.6(15). The applications will receive an initial review to confirm program eligibility before being sent to the committee for a recommendation on funding. The committee will provide its recommendation to the board for a final determination on the provision of financial assistance. The board may approve, deny, or defer each application for financial assistance under the program. The board will consider applications for financial assistance on a first-come, first-served basis. If the board approves funding for an applicant, the authority will prepare a required agreement specifying the terms and conditions under which the financial assistance is to be provided to the applicant.

**106.4(4)** *Delegation of certain administrative functions to the corporation.* The authority will delegate certain administrative functions of the program to the corporation. The functions that will be delegated are:

*a.* The initial application review process, including an analysis of whether the applicant meets all requirements of eligibility under the program and a recommendation on the amount of financial assistance to be provided and under what terms and conditions.

*b.* The tracking and monitoring of the applicant’s SBIR/STTR application progress as well as the eventual outcome. The corporation shall report annually to the authority on the results of the program.

*c.* The tracking and monitoring of agreement terms and conditions for applicants receiving financial assistance under the program.

*d.* The provision of technical assistance as described in subrule 106.4(2).

**106.4(5)** *Administrative functions not delegated.* The authority will retain, and not delegate, the performance of the following functions: (1) the final determination as to whether to approve, deny, or defer an award of financial assistance; (2) the disbursement of moneys provided for in an award of financial assistance; (3) the final determination as to whether there is a default in the terms of an agreement entered into under the program, including all decisions regarding appropriate remedies for such a default; and (4) any other function not clearly delegated to the corporation pursuant to subrule 106.4(4).

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