



June 16, 2020

Elden W. Hawkes, M.S.
Partnership and Innovation Specialist
SBIR/STTR Office of Investment and Innovation
U.S. Small Business Administration
403 3rd Street, SW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20416
Reference: FY20 Funding Opportunity No. SBA-OIIFT-20-001

Dear Mr. Hawkes,

I'm writing to voice support for Colorado Small Business Development Center Network's application regarding the U.S. Small Business Administration's Federal and State Technology Partnership Program grant opportunity. The Colorado SBDC's programming is deeply synergistic with our organization's mission, as we seek to support and connect entrepreneurial-minded researchers at federally-funded research labs with private-sector opportunities as well as programs that educate and nurture scientists and other researchers in innovative technologies to consider starting businesses.

The Colorado SBDC Network provides direct hands-on support - through workshops and specialized consulting -- to help our science and technology ventures to navigate the SBIR grant process. This statewide training and mentoring support is critically needed by emerging technology ventures and is not duplicated by any other organization in Colorado that I'm aware of.

The Colorado SBDC TechSource program has been building the pipeline of our innovative small businesses throughout the state, especially in our underserved (minority, women and rural) communities. With continued FAST grant resources, much more can be done to reach and support small business innovation companies statewide.

Specifically, the statewide Colorado SBDC TechSource program provides specialized expertise to help Colorado's early stage innovation companies to identify agencies and topics of relevance within the SBIR, to craft their proposals and commercialization plans, and to understand the tracking and compliance requirements. I attended one of their Innovative

Business Road Trip workshops in a past year and it was immediately relevant as I shared information with a few start-ups from the CO-LABS network.

Some more context of our interests: CO-LABS, incorporated in 2007, is a consortium of federally funded scientific laboratories, universities, businesses and leaders organized to nurture and champion Colorado as a global leader in research, technology, and their commercialization. Through events, economic analyses, strategic communications and networking activities we work to:

- PROMOTE Colorado as a global leader in research and technology
- EDUCATE the public about the labs' impact and importance of sustained funding for research
- CONNECT the labs, universities and businesses to facilitate partnerships and technology transfer

For our November 2019 annual awards event, Colorado Governor Jared Polis provided this perspective: "The discoveries coming from Colorado's world-class federal laboratories are a national asset, providing crucial scientific insight that shapes new technologies, creates new companies and inform new policies guiding the future of our state, the country and the world. I applaud CO-LABS for their mission to nurture and champion the important work of our innovation ecosystem, as these labs are making a safer, smarter and more sustainable world."

I regard the Colorado SBDC Network's programming as tangible and effective examples of how we connect and produce results borne of our respective networks. Your support of their application will leverage the network in which they already provide leadership and be a model for success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Powers", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dan Powers
Executive Director
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