SBIR Funding ImpactTestimonials

"SBIR funding has been transformative for Rhaeos. It enabled us to complete a 9-center pivotal study in support of FDA approval and funded clinical-grade device builds that have now been used on over 400 patients across the country. This critical early-stage support allowed us to spin out of Northwestern University and build the company in Illinois—creating 10 full-time jobs and allowing us to move into new lab and office space in Fulton Market. SBIR also enabled us to collaborate with leading institutions including Northwestern, Lurie Children's Hospital, UIC, Duke, UCSF, and others. In addition, it helped us reach key technical and clinical milestones that attracted top-tier investors and enabled us to successfully close our oversubscribed Series A round. Without SBIR funding, FlowSense may have never made it out of the lab and into the hands of clinicians caring for the over one million Americans living with hydrocephalus."
Anna Lisa Somera, Rhaeos, Inc

"A prior start-up I founded was funded by an SBIR and I have served as a reviewer of SBIRs many times since. I have seen how SBIRs move the commercialization of key science forward and how the knowledge gained through that work benefits many companies as the SBIR employees often go on to other companies later."
Kathleen Wolin, Circea LLC

"AgileMD, a health-tech startup, just completed an SBIR we received in 2021 to enhance eCART, a now FDA-cleared software as a medical device (SaMD), used to identify clinical deterioration in hospitalized patients and drive timely clinical assessment and intervention. We developed a real-time platform capable of running a high-performing AI algorithm on imperfect real-world data, generating risk scores from up to nearly 100 individual components derived from electronic health record data and updated the user interface to better visualize risk and support clinical decision. Today our company has 20 full-time employees and our tools have been used on over 4 million patients in over 400 hospitals. The SBIR was pivotal to that development."
Dana Edelson, AgileMD

"As a consultant and angel investor SBIR helps move companies to the point of being investable."
Clifford Turner, DNARP CONSULTING, LLC

"Cardio Diagnostics' first funding was an SBIR which helped the company reach a more attractive stage for other investors. It was key to the development of our technology and clinical

solutions that have now been commercialized, helping Americans with the prevention and detection of heart disease."
Meesha Dogan, Cardio Diagnostics, Inc.

"I had the opportunity to win two SBIR Phase I awards. They were key in helping our company achieve proof of concepts that unlocked another $20M in capital for our company. In almost 16 years of operations we went on to employ twenty people in the Champaign/Urbana area. SBIR/STTR funding unlocks significant economic development in communities all over the country."
Gerald Wilson, EnterpriseWorks, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

"I have been a participant in multiple iCorps programs that have been invaluable to the companies future success. SBIR can be the bridge to commercial success that startups need."
David Mann, TRACT Therapeutics

"In 2019, CareBand secured an NIH/NIA SBIR Phase I award that transformed its concept—a LoRa-enabled wristband able to pinpoint indoor/outdoor location—into a working prototype. SBIR dollars funded firmware engineering and a six-week pilot at Bethany Village, proving the device could capture real-time motion data and warn caregivers of agitation or wandering, a critical step toward commercialization. A follow-on SBIR (2021) let the team extend the same hardware and AI cloud to objectively measure how engaged residents are in assisted-living activities. That study, plus the credibility that comes with SBIR backing, helped CareBand land multiple U.S. patents and attract private investment, pushing the product from pilot projects to paid deployments with senior-living providers nationwide."
Adam Sobol, CareBand, Inc.

"In 2023, Grove Biopharma was awarded a Phase I SBIR with the aim to establish structure-activity relationship design rules for our bionic biologics platform applied to a neurodegenerative disease target. The data generated with SBIR funding was instrumental to accelerating other programs and securing Series A financing ($30M) in Q1 2025."
Paul Bertin, Grove Biopharma, Inc.

"Laborecom Therapeutics is a new company, just incorporated in October 2024. We applied for an SBIR in January of 2025 and received a very positive score indicating that we should be funded. We have now been in 'to be paid' status for over a month and are more than a month past our proposed project start date. Even with these limitations, the hope and traction that we can show with the positive SBIR score is something that can be a proof-of-concept for other investors and strategics. The SBIR program, held up by peer-review, is a way to clearly demonstrate that your company has merit prior to that first investment by an outside group. Without the hope for SBIR funding, certain companies might not ever get incorporated in the

first place."
Lucas Shores, Laborecom Therapeutics Inc.

"Many of the companies incubating at Portal Innovations have benefited from the SBIR grants to move their technologies to be attractive for Venture investment."
Gianina Varea, Portal Innovations

"My former company Horizon Therapeutics benefited from programs such as this to grow from a handful of employees to over 2,000 employees with US headquarters in Illinois."
Joe Whalen, Immedica

"NIH funding enabled me to technically validate the performance of Vasowatch's postpartum hemorrhage biomarker, accelerating the commercialization of this life-saving maternal health technology. Ongoing SBIR funding is key to US healthcare innovation, saving lives and cutting healthcare costs."
Christine Rohan, Vasowatch Inc

"NSF Ph 1 & 2 SBIRs were critical to building out our team and manufacturing capabilities after spinning out from Northwestern. Not only great non-dilutive funding but also helped validate our approach for future investment."
Nick Sather, Amphix Bio

"Ohmx Corporation received a $2M phase 2 grant that allowed 3 researchers to keep working in R&D in Chicago for 3 more years."
Dimitra Georganopoulou, Qral Ventures

"Our small business helps startups navigate medical device development, FDA, and early manufacturing. Many of our clients would not have been able to fund feasibility work on their devices without SBIR funding. Our business is dependent upon both public and private investments being made in startups bringing new vital technologies to market and to patients."
Julie Byars, Ontogen Medtech

"Progenicyte supports the pursuit of SBIR (Small Business Innovation Research) and STTR (Small Business Technology Transfer) funding for iBio because these non-dilutive grant mechanisms are well-aligned with early-stage biotech innovation. iBio's work—particularly if it involves novel biologics, advanced manufacturing (e.g., plant-based platforms), or therapeutic candidates—fits the criteria for NIH, NSF, or DoD SBIR/STTR programs."
Keiji Asadq, Progenicyte Therapeutics, Inc

"Saros is developing an immuno-oncology formulation discovered at the University of Michigan. We have been able to progress this potential cancer therapy in Saros (by hiring scientists, performing tech transfer, improving the manufacturing process, generating a detailed development path and more) with a direct to Phase II SBIR grant. We plan to submit a second grant application soon to support toxicology work necessary for the IND application in order to move our technology into clinical development. None of this important work would have been possible without SBIR grant funding over the last two years."
Richard Johnson, Saros Therapeutics

"SBIR (and STTR) are a major part of new and transformative medtech development. Where the private investment world may find 'too risky', the SBIR world finds interesting worth the risk."
Christopher Wilson, EDGe Surgical

"SBIR and STTR funding are vital to the drug development pipeline. These funds allow promising innovators to derisk their assets from early, preclinical stages and refine their data packages so companies like Chicago-based Xentria have a better chance of further investing to advance that science. It takes a village to bring any asset to market, and if you remove these critical, early-stage funds, you are eliminating a vital link in that chain that cannot be easily mended. Every day, Xentria's venture partnering studio, Xturnpoint, evaluates assets from all over the country – with a focus on the Midwest and Chicago. We are currently in the final stages to invest in a novel, innovative modality from a Midwest-based innovator. The drug class they are developing is not well represented in the market, so obtaining proof of concept was vital to legitimize the asset and allow for funding matches from other entities. They received multiple Phase 1 and Phase 2 SBIR and STTR funds which helped validate the asset, and that validation was vital in securing Xentria's interest and potential investment. If you cut SBIR and STTR grants, there will be higher risk across the board for all upcoming projects and investments. Companies like Xentria would not be able to deploy as much capital because the risk to the investor would go up, thus limiting the capital that investors deploy – whether those investors are private VC firms or big pharma. The innovation in Illinois is impressive – we have scientists who may have the next cancer drug, autoimmune treatment, etc., but they will have limited opportunity and advancement options if these funds are cut. With federal funds significantly reducing or being removed completely, we must keep our state-funded science a priority."
Tom Shea, Xentria

"SBIR grants are vital to early-stage companies that are still too early in product development to garner angel investment. This is mission critical to Lake County Illinois startup community."
Michael Rosen, Rosen Bioscience Strategies LLC

"SBIR has been critical to the success of many health tech companies, including some of our fellow CancerX (Cancer Moonshot) companies."
Elaine Warren, Aventino Technology Solutions - SurvivorPlan

"SBIR program support my startup during the 'valley of death' period. With the help of SBIR funding we were able to rapidly develop and market our core technologies and bring the company to a successful exit."
Yuxin Wang, Mobile Imaging Innovations, Inc.

"SBIRs and STTRs support our efforts to enable early career innovators, our Entrepreneurial Fellows, to transition academic findings into viable biotech companies. This funding mechanism allows innovative new approaches to treating patients to be de-risked at a stage where conventional funding sources, like venture capital, would not take that risk."
Eric Schiffhauer, Chicago Biomedical Consortium

"SBIRs helped me to build a company that sells the most successful search engine in a sub-type of proteomics (called top-down proteomics)."
Neil Kelleher, ImmPro

"SBIRs provided funding to our company when investors said our technology was too early. It got our company to the point where we now are attractive to outside investors and have received venture money and continues to provide validation on the technical side."
Gerry Sapienza, Opera Bioscience

"Simergent has secured $2M in NIH SBIR Phase I and II funding to develop a novel home dialysis device designed to increase access to home dialysis and reduce cardiovascular hospitalizations. Medicare currently spends $37B/year (7% of their entire budget) on dialysis patients. This SBIR funding is money well spent."
Steve Lindo, Simergent

"Syntax Bio's regenerative medicine discovery platform overcomes the longstanding challenges in stem cell derived therapies by directly controlling and accelerating cell differentiation. A shorter and more reliable iPSC differentiation process improves patient access by making stem cell discovery and manufacturing faster, less costly and scalable. Syntax's proprietary Cellgorithm technology mimics human development using a sequential synthetic biology CRISPR based system to generate a wide diversity of functional cell types to enable new cell and gene therapy product opportunities. Syntax Bio was fortunate to receive a Phase I NIH SBIR grant at the outset of our research operations. This grant provided critical support for the development of our early platform technology and served as important validation in our

discussions with potential partners and investors."
John Craighead, Syntax Bio

"The medical technology innovation ecosystem is fragile. The SBIR program has commonly made the difference between life-saving technologies and companies existing or dying from lack of funding."
Tyler Wanke, MadSci

"The SBIR funding allowed us to get started on our new concept - building up key data which we are now pitching to VCs."
Bryan Dickinson, PeptiForge

"The SBIR Phase 1 grant is crucial for the development of Immunebro's lead asset, IBT1116, a potential first-in-class, off-the-shelf T cell therapy for refractory and relapsed B cell malignancies, as well as B cell-mediated autoimmune diseases such as lupus."
Gongbo Li, Immunebro Therapeutics Inc.

"To the SBIR/STTR Program Administrators and Congressional Stakeholders, As the founder of Healthy Amplified (HA), I write in strong support of the reauthorization of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs ahead of their scheduled expiration on September 30, 2025. These programs were instrumental in HA's early development. An SBIR grant enabled us to validate and scale a digital health engagement platform specifically designed for underserved Medicare populations. This funding bridged the critical gap between university research and commercial application, directly allowing us to bring evidence-based tools into real-world healthcare settings. Without SBIR, our work would have remained confined to theory — not practice. The program helped us move faster, hire earlier, and ultimately attract downstream investment that has powered our growth and public health impact. SBIR and STTR are not just valuable; they are essential. Their reauthorization is vital to sustaining innovation, job creation, and competitive advantage across the U.S. economy — especially in biomedical and health technologies. Thank you for your continued commitment to early-stage science and entrepreneurship. We urge you to act swiftly to reauthorize these programs without interruption. Sincerely, William Nelson CEO, Healthy Amplified"
William Nelson, Healthy Amplified, Inc.

"We applied for an SBIR grant to apply our technology to aid stroke victims recovery through directed physical therapy."
Robert Quinn, SymGym Inc.

"We are an early stage startup with potential impact in neurodevelopmental, neurodegenerative, and mood disorders, which will most likely dissolve if the SBIR program is discontinued."
Yevgenia Kozorovitskiy, Neuroplastica

"We are bringing a device to market in the hemodialysis space with phase I, phase II and phase IIB SBIR grants. The limited profit margin due to strict reimbursement in this space dissuades development of innovative life-saving technologies and this would not have happened without the SBIR program."
Patrick Rousche, Hemotek Medical Inc

"We're developing a novel safer therapeutic for the most common childhood cancer. Given that it's an orphan indication, SBIR funding has been absolutely pivotal to the early proof-of-concept work of this cutting edge drug. It's vital for SBIR funding to continue in order to build a robust pipeline for superior therapeutics to improve health in the next generations."
Amanda Schalk, Enzyme by Design Inc.

"Without SBIR grant support, my startup would never have gotten off the ground. Our new product will reduce Medicare and Medicaid costs, reduce the negative impacts of inadequate clinical care capacity, while improving the daily lives of millions of women in the USA and beyond. But VCs repeatedly told me they would not 'underwrite' clinical trials. National cost savings are not how they make their money. Only the federal government has the data and the long-term incentives to make technology investments that are in our collective best interests. And, if NSF publications are to be believed (and I believe they are), government data shows clear ROI. So win-win. Let's go."
Melody Roberts, Liv Labs Inc.