



2013 NIH SBIR Grant Money Cheat Sheet™

If you've heard NIH Phase I SBIR grants pay up to \$150,000 and Phase IIs up to \$1 million over two years, *those amounts are actually just guidelines*. Many NIH institutes award SBIR grants that far exceed those amounts. So you may want to reconsider how much SBIR money to ask for. Maybe you can win more.

This cheat sheet can help you win more SBIR grant money in two ways. First, to help you understand your opportunities for higher SBIR grant budgets, it shows the full range of what new NIH Phase I and II SBIR grants paid in 2012. Second, it gives tips for planning your SBIR grant budget and convincing NIH your project deserves it.

NIH SBIR APPLICATION DEADLINES FOR 2013
April 5, Aug. 5, Dec 5
May 7, Sep 7, & Jan 7, 2014 (for AIDS-related applications)

What NIH SBIR Phase I Grants Paid in 2012

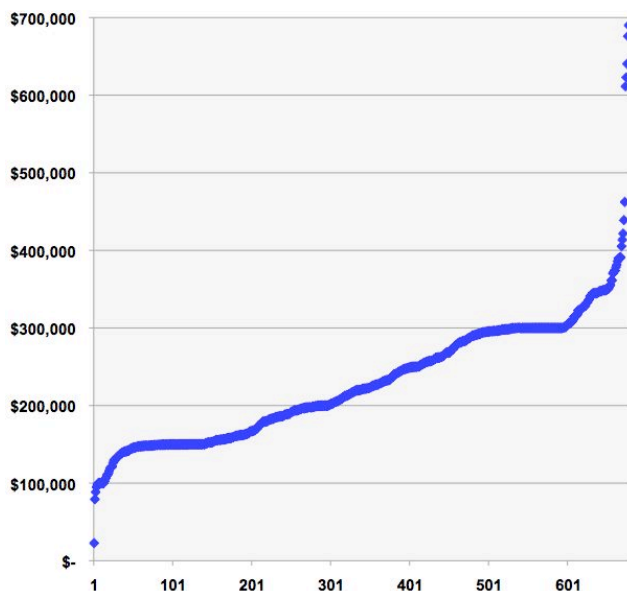
\$150K is not the real limit of what NIH SBIR Phase I grants pay. The figure below shows grant amounts for 678 new Phase I grants made by NIH during 2012; 82% were ≥ \$150K; 56% were ≥ \$200K; 40% were ≥ \$250K; 19% were ≥ \$300K.

Phase I grant amounts are not the same across institutes. See the table at right.

New SBIR Phase Is by Institute in 2012 (in \$000's; sorted by institute average)

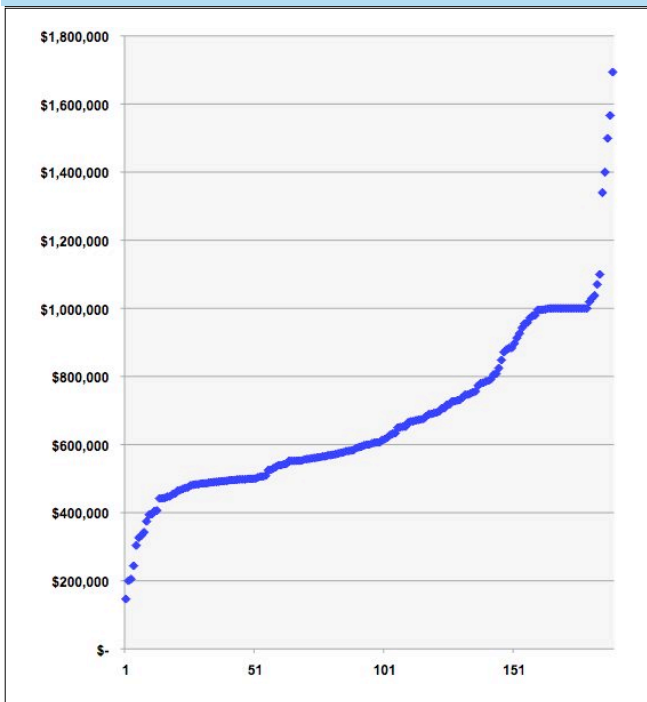
	Total Awards	Average Award	Min	Max
NIAMS	16	\$269	\$150	\$352
NIAID	104	265	103	300
NIMH	12	262	134	349
NHLBI	75	250	79	690
NHGRI	12	242	144	611
NEI	20	236	148	422
NCI	77	230	112	391
NIAAA	9	217	135	327
NCATS	31	214	138	386
NIGMS	72	211	100	414
NCCAM	3	208	197	222
NICHD	39	208	100	323
NIA	37	197	122	374
NIEHS	24	193	89	439
NIBIB	15	189	132	340
NIDCD	12	188	100	292
OD	10	186	140	327
NIDA	22	185	149	293
NIDCR	8	181	150	220
NIMHD	6	179	148	200
NINR	5	166	23	287
NLM	4	147	141	150

Amounts of 678 New SBIR Phase I Grants Awarded in 2012; 82% Paid ≥ \$150K



What NIH SBIR Phase II Grants Paid in 2012

NIH Awarded 189 New Phase IIs in 2012; 73% Paid ≥ \$500K in Year One



\$500K per year is not the real limit of what two-year NIH SBIR Phase II grants pay. The figure above shows 1st-year grant amounts for 189 new two-year Phase II grants made during 2012; 73% of 1st-year amounts were ≥ \$500K; 28% were ≥ \$750K; 12% were ≥ \$1 million.

Phase II grant amounts are not the same across institutes. See the table at right showing 1st-year Phase II awards. On average, total awards for these two-year grants could be double the amounts in the table.

New SBIR Phase IIs by Institute in 2012 (in \$000's; sorted by institute average)

	Total Awards	Average Award	Min	Max
NHGRI	2	\$1,123	\$746	\$1,499
NIAID	26	921	490	1,000
OD	1	848	848	848
NHLBI	23	800	374	1,694
NCI	18	723	488	1,100
NIDDK	16	713	465	1,340
NIDCD	4	640	509	756
NIAAA	4	631	447	972
NIGMS	18	622	327	1,030
NINDS	6	608	406	884
NIA	9	597	474	871
NIDCR	7	585	486	707
NIDA	9	567	480	754
NCCAM	2	557	553	561
NICHD	9	548	205	738
NEI	9	541	396	732
NIAMS	4	533	304	671
NIMH	11	512	333	750
NIMHD	3	442	244	581
NIEHS	6	430	200	504
NIBIB	1	146	146	146

Tips for SBIR Grant Budget Planning and Winning Higher Awards

1. Your SBIR grant budget must fit the institute where you'll apply. The tables above show NIH institutes differ widely in how many SBIR grants they award and in what amounts. Use the tables to estimate the award range your institute might consider for your SBIR grant. Then contact a NIH program officer for SBIR grants (each institute has at least one) and discuss your budget ideas. Program officers are nice people and want to help. It's a big mistake not to get their advice.

2. Do not propose research you cannot defend against reviewer attack. Obviously, you can increase your proposed SBIR budget by including more experiments in your research plan. However, each

new specific aim or line of investigation is one more for a grant reviewer to find fault with. A weak experiment will backfire by giving reviewers an excuse to kill your grant. Better to win a smaller award for excellent experiments than lose everything by overreaching with mediocrity. Remember also that reviewers have a sense of what things cost, so padding a budget with lots of extra money won't work. A high budget must be justified by excellent research at a believable cost.

3. The more money you ask for, the more important strong preliminary data becomes. It's common sense that the more you ask for, the more scrutiny from reviewers you can expect and the less NIH will be willing to give your research project the benefit of the doubt. So identify any experiments reviewers might find risky and provide strong preliminary data to assure them the risks of failure are very low, and therefore your big SBIR budget will not waste government money. I believe strong preliminary data is essential if you want to win an above average Phase I award. Even if the rules say preliminary data is not required for Phase I, I suspect very few grants win really big Phase I awards without it. Remember also that some of your competitors for big Phase I grants will present preliminary data. Why shouldn't reviewers expect the same from you?

4. Don't overlook NIH's SBIR special funding announcements. Even if you already have a SBIR project in mind, it's well worthwhile to search NIH web pages for special announcements of better paying, longer lasting SBIR grants. As an example of what's possible, the table at right shows some special SBIR funding opportunities from a few years ago. SBIR funding opportunities are always changing. Who knows, maybe they've just announced one tailor-made for you. Start looking here, under "Funding Opportunities": <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/sbir.htm>

SBIR Funding Opportunity Examples		
Project	Maximum Amount	Duration Phase I + II
Brain-derived GPCRs	\$1,850,000	5 yrs
Cancer Biology	\$1,800,000	4 yrs
Biomedical Computing	\$2,550,000	5 yrs
Bioengineering Nanotech	\$1,600,000	5 yrs
Delivery of RNAi	\$1,700,000	5 yrs
Translational Research	\$3,600,000	5 yrs

Not just Higher SBIR Awards, but Multiple Awards

Ever wonder how successful it's possible to be with SBIR grants? The table on the right presents a study I did using NIH's grant database, the NIH RePORTER, to look for multiple grant winners over many years. Here are 10 multi-SBIR winners that survived NIH's SBIR grant review gauntlet to win again and again between 2000 and 2008. The database did not disclose amounts of individual grants prior to 2008, so amounts in the Total Funding column are conservative estimates. Winning millions in research support is indeed possible if your product development research projects are closely tied to NIH's mission of improving health and you make the effort to become skilled in grantsmanship.

10 Big NIH SBIR/STTR Grant Winners (2000 - 2008)		
Company	Funded Projects	Estimated Total Funding
Radiation Monitoring Devices	71	\$28,706,000
Phylonix Pharmaceuticals	48	11,460,000
Physical Sciences	39	13,532,000
Panorama Research	37	8,770,000
Insightful Corporation	29	13,000,000
One Cell Systems	26	5,596,000
Kosan Biosciences	23	7,500,000
Ichor Medical Systems	22	6,010,000
Healthmark Multimedia	17	8,860,000
Biomedware	14	5,720,000
Grand Total	326	\$97,694,000

Need help winning a SBIR grant? Contact me at (301) 468-9510 or tom@sciencesherpa.com.

There's no charge for an initial consultation.