

Engaging Disadvantaged Groups in Tarrant County to win SBIR Grants



Adrian Denvir, *Director, SBIR Programming, UNT Health Science Center*

Dr. Adrian Denvir was born and grew up in Northern Ireland. He has a Ph.D. in Electrochemistry from The University of Southampton and has experience in developing and commercializing new to the market products. He is currently the Director of SBIR Programming at the UNT Health Science Center and lives in Richardson with his wife and two sons.

Project Description:

The SBIR Phase 0 Program is a Tarrant County funded initiative run out of The University of North Texas Health Science Center through the HSC Next Team. This two-year program is designed to increase awareness and participation in the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program through targeted outreach initiatives such as presenting at business support programs, providing mentorship and grantsmanship tutoring throughout the process, and offering 4-week bootcamps with ongoing support as needed through proposal submission at no cost to participants.

SBIR grants provide much-needed research funding to small businesses at no cost to shareholders without diluting ownership. Research projects make small businesses more competitive against larger firms. They allow small businesses to develop innovative new products to solve problems in the marketplace and grow in ways they might not be able to without this funding. It is the goal of this program to make these grants available to more entrepreneurs from all backgrounds in Tarrant County in order to increase the number awards granted here and to help grow local companies through innovation.

Project Goals:

1. Help the HSC Next Team to increase awareness of the SBIR Phase 0 program across sectors, cities, industries, and communities in Tarrant County.
2. Recruit and provide ongoing support for the formation of for-profit and non-profit partnerships that benefit from the Phase 0 Program and SBIR grants rewarded.
3. Encourage business owners to apply and participate in this Phase 0 program.
4. Increase participation from under-represented companies such as black-owned, other minority-owned, woman-owned, and veteran-owned companies.
5. Build a groundswell of community support for the extension of this program for another 10 years in Tarrant County, and eventually for all of North Texas.

Project Metrics from Working Group Activities:

1. Outreach activities, organizations, and people engaged from the Working Group.
2. Number and diversity of companies recruited into each cohort by Working Group.
3. Graduates from the Phase 0 Program and grants awarded to these participants.

Who is involved? Who else needs to be involved?

1. The project is being run by HSC Next and partners throughout the community.
2. This Working Group will support and augment their efforts through our networks.