



Growth Accelerator | SBIR Catalyst
2021 SBA Prize Competition

Growth Accelerator Fund Competition and SBIR Catalyst

2021 Competition Talking Points

Purpose

- The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Investment and Innovation will award over \$5 million in cash prizes to the nation's most innovative incubators, accelerators, and clusters with impactful and inclusive approaches towards supporting entrepreneurs in STEM/R&D.
- This SBA prize competition features two tracks intended to speed the launch, growth and scale of deep-tech small businesses and jumpstart critical activities around the country, such as new collaborations, targeted programs and support services for early-stage startups.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has presented numerous obstacles, including challenges for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) entrepreneurs who disproportionately drive the creation of jobs and contribute to the path toward economic recovery. SBA will use these prizes to jumpstart critical activities to support their growth and development.
- The prize competition aims for SBIR/STTR applicants to embody the full potential of the U.S. innovation ecosystem – finding ways for individuals from diverse and underserved communities to better participate, contribute and benefit.

Track One: Growth Accelerator Fund Competition (GAFC)

- Accelerators and incubators play an important role in supporting STEM/R&D startups as they transition into the market.
- GAFC prizes will infuse accelerators and incubators with additional resource capital to provide focused assistance to STEM/R&D entrepreneurs, including but not limited to support for company formation as well as awareness and education of the SBIR/STTR programs.
- The GAFC track will award up to 84 prizes of up to \$50,000 to successful applicants who focus their proposed efforts on assisting entrepreneurs in one of the following groups: women entrepreneurs, minority entrepreneurs, or applicant choice (i.e., rural veterans, individuals with disabilities, etc.).

- Contestants under GAFC must identify efforts to support entrepreneurs building technologies to address one or more of the following: Clean Energy, Supply Chain Resilience, Infrastructure, and/or other STEM/R&D areas.
- The GAFC track is also looking for multiple accelerators that help companies navigate SBA HUBZone opportunities.

Track Two: SBIR Catalyst

- SBIR Catalyst prizes will invest in collaborative partnerships to build and catalyze connections across entrepreneur support organizations (ESOs) that support innovation-focused entrepreneurs from underserved communities.
- A main contestant will submit a proposal involving multiple ESOs and partners from separate states/territories, or within a large geographic area.
- SBIR Catalyst awards will address current gaps in access to the innovation economy for communities of color, women entrepreneurs, and rural communities.
- Funded collaborations are intended to: (1) expand access to expertise and mentorship in areas required for early-stage technology development (including scientific, regulatory, reimbursement, business, legal, and project management), (2) build programs for training and equipping SBIR/STTR applicants to submit competitive proposals, (3) develop commercialization pathways for STEM/R&D companies, and (4) engage with other SBIR Catalyst partners to address and fill gaps in the innovation ecosystem.
- The SBIR Catalyst track will award up to seven prizes of up to \$150,000 to scale collaborative partnerships that catalyze connections and support for SBIR/STTR applicants and awardees.

Requirements

- Submission period: **May 26, 2021, 4:00 PM EDT to July 2, 2021, 4:00 PM EDT**
- Competition rules, requirements and additional information can be found at www.sbir.gov/accelerators.

Other

- Questions? Contact: accelerators@sba.gov
- Join a pre-application webinar June 2 at 2pm EDT – register at <http://bit.ly/GAFC21Webinar>.

Don't want to submit but are excited about inclusive entrepreneur support in R&D innovation? Serve as a judge – register your interest by June 9 at:
<http://bit.ly/JudgeGAFC21>.

Social Media

@SBIRgov

@SBAgov

#seedthefuture

#GAFC21

#SBIRCatalyst

Sample Tweets:

- To support STEM/R&D entrepreneurs, SBA will award over \$5MM to incubators, accelerators & clusters in a new #GAFC21 #SBIRCatalyst prize competition! [SBIR.gov/accelerators](https://www.sbir.gov/accelerators)
- Don't miss out! #GAFC21 prizes will infuse accelerators & incubators with resource capital to provide assistance to STEM/R&D entrepreneurs! [SBIR.gov/accelerators](https://www.sbir.gov/accelerators)
- #SBIRCatalyst prizes will invest in large-scale collaborative partnerships to support entrepreneurs from underserved communities in the STEM space #seedthefuture [SBIR.gov/accelerators](https://www.sbir.gov/accelerators)
- Don't want to compete in #GAFC21 or #SBIRCatalyst BUT you are excited about inclusive entrepreneur support in R&D innovation? Serve as a 2021 judge! bit.ly/JudgeGAFC21

Sample LinkedIn Posts:

- The U.S. SBA Office of Innovation & Technology will award over \$5 million in cash prizes to incubators, accelerators, and clusters with impactful and inclusive approaches towards supporting R&D entrepreneurs. Don't wait, compete in the 2021 GAFC or SBIR Catalyst competition! [SBIR.gov/accelerators](https://www.sbir.gov/accelerators)
- If you are excited about inclusive entrepreneur support in R&D innovation, but you don't want to compete in the 2021 GAFC or SBIR Catalyst, you can serve as a judge! Register your interest at bit.ly/JudgeGAFC21